

NORTH OF RENO

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A sad soul can kill you quicker, far quicker, than a germ.

John Steinbeck

In Search of America

CONTENTS

PROLOGUE

THE ALL HALLOWS EVE HEIST

ONE

ZERO RISK ASSESSMENT

TWO

THE MOOSEHEAD MOTEL

THREE

A KNIFE AT A GUNFIGHT

FOUR

OCTOBER 28TH MIXTAPE

FIVE

WHAT GLADYS TRENTON COULDN'T FIND

EPILOGUE

AN OWNERLESS NAME TAG

OVER BLACK:

TITLE CARD APPEARS:

PROLOGUE

THE ALL HALLOWS EVE HEIST

RENO-TAHOE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

RENO, NEVADA

OCT. 31ST, 1982 2:00 AM

FADE IN:

BLACK SKY filled with low hanging grey clouds. Vast and endless. A gentle breeze WHISTLES. Snow flurries down to--

EXT. RENO-TAHOE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- NIGHT (SNOWING)

ROAR of a 757 taking off in the background as we come upon an UNMARKED VAN parked out of place in front of the BRITISH AIRWAYS CARGO HOLD. Engine runs, absent a driver.

SOUND OF A SHOTGUN BEING COCKED. Pronounced and dramatic, SMASHING US TO--

INT. BRITISH AIRWAYS CARGO HOLD - RENO AIRPORT -- NIGHT

AN EXTREME CLOSE UP ON: the business end of a shotgun staring us dead in the face. PULLING BACK... hypnotized by the abyss of the barrel awaiting to release a single serving of death.

SOUND OF WEATHER EMERGENCY ALERT BLARES in the background.

WIDER. Tail end of a robbery. Three MASKED GUNMEN hold up the place. Two GUARDS are out cold and zipped tied on the floor. CCTV wires severed.

IN THE OFFICE, the source of the ALERT, a TV SCREEN frozen with colored bars, reads: "Snow Storm Warning".

A large black duffle bag is launched towards us FROM THE BACK landing between the two other Gunmen. PUSH PAST THE BAG into the SAFE ROOM where a--

--young frightened employee, DOYLE LANCIE, loads the final bag, we catch a glimpse inside: giant bricks of bankwrapped CASH, each packet \$50,000. Bands read LONDON INTL. EXCHANGE. All shrink-wrapped in PVC plastic sheeting.

GUNMAN #3 slams the shotgun in Doyle's face, taking him out.

EXT. CARGO HOLD - RENO AIRPORT -- MOMENTS LATER

Gunmen remove their masks -- VINCENT McCREADY (28), FRANK, and Joey. Each man carries a duffle bag.

They exchange looks -- ready? A slight nod from all. They compose themselves. Fix their disheveled hair and clothes.

They placidly walk out, guns low and concealed. Their clothes and hair whipping up as a terrible wind picks up.

Joey leads, reaching the van when --BANG-- a pocket of blood explodes from his chest, coating the door window bright red. He lets out a WHIMPERED GASP, crumbling to the ground.

Vincent spins, gun up and ready, to find Frank training his aim on him. Good old fashion double cross.

Frank motions for Vincent's bag, gun thrusting forward to add emphasis.

Suddenly, SIRENS WAIL in the distance, growing louder as they approach closer. Catching Frank and Vincent by surprise.

Then --BANG-- a shot catches Frank in the shoulder from behind, spinning him like a top--

--REVEAL a bloody faced Lancie has come to, aiming a gun.

Vincent beelines towards the RUNWAY, escaping as--

Lancie fires another shot. WHIZZES BY. Aims again but FRANK draws, blasting away, taking Lancie down.

A swarm of SECURITY CARS pour in from around the corner.

FRANK turns on the approaching cars, cocking his rifle and making it SING.

SQUAD CARS brake to a SQUEALING HALT. OFFICERS explode from their vehicles, taking cover and RETURN FIRE.

A barrage of bullets tear through Frank, dropping him.

EXT. RUNWAY -- SAME

Vincent sprinting, panting, arms shooting like pistons. Duffle bag and shotgun swinging. Panic consuming him.

Racks of lights strobing their arrow sequence at the head of the runway flash, spotlighting Vincent running across.

EXT. CITY STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

SIRENS WAIL from every which way, taunting Vincent. He cuts across into three lanes of traffic.

HORNS BLARE. Vehicles scramble out of his way. He stops a sedan, pulls out a PROTESTING DRIVER, gets in and speeds off.

INSIDE SEDAN (MOVING). Vincent checks his mirrors, they're occupied with Frank and Joey. Beat. Takes a breath, relieved.

Sedan hugs a left turn DOWN ANOTHER STREET to find POLICE CARS ZIPPING past him in the opposite direction.

TIME SLOWS as the OFFICER in the final squad car exchanges a quick glance over at Vincent as he passes...

INSIDE SEDAN. VINCENT'S POV -- watching the squad car through the mirror... tension builds... every second toys with Vincent's nerves and then his worse fear comes to life as--

In the far distance, the SQUAD CAR busts a U-TURN. TWO MORE SQUAD CARS appear, giving chase.

INSIDE SEDAN. Vincent looks over to the bag of money next to him on the passenger seat and then at the oncoming pursuit in the mirror. Beat.

ENGINE ROARS. Vincent guns it up the hill. We don't follow.

Vincent and the police cars drive away becoming mere dots in the distance as the forewarned snow storm arrives, curtaining our view with a sheet of blinding white powder as we--

FLARE TO WHITE.

TITLE CARD APPEARS:

CHAPTER ONE

ZERO RISK ASSESSMENT

RENO, NEVADA

NOVEMBER 3RD, 1992 7:46 AM

TEN YEARS LATER

FADE IN FROM WHITE:

EXT. RENO, NEVADA -- EARLY DAWN

SERIES OF SHOTS of "The Biggest Little City in the World": tourist traps, casinos, the DESOLATE and the OPTIMISTIC walking the streets.

We move away from the city and indulge in the breathtaking scenery. Wetlands. Cloud-capped mountains.

The Sierra Nevada mountain range, dotted with patches of snow, sits looming in the background of a--

EXT. TRAILER PARK -- SAME

American flag lined porches. Pickup trucks parked out front. Blue collar community.

A beat up station wagon with winter salt stains lining the lower half and undercarriage passes through the gates.

INSIDE STATION WAGON. HENRY COLLINS (26) average Joe, blonde hair. Three day stubble. SONNY & CHER'S "I GOT YOU BABE" PLAYS on the stereo.

The car maneuvers to the driveway but comes to a stop finding another car blocking his spot -- a red Pontiac Firebird with a Soaring Phoenix emblazoned on the hood.

He maneuvers his car behind the trailer. The music shuts off as he ejects the cassette from the deck, putting it back into its case. The spine reads: "October 28th Mixtape".

Henry exits the car. Moves to the trunk, removing a red camping bag, sleeping bag, survival shovel, and a thermos.

Henry moves into his SHED. We don't follow. He's gone for a few beats and finally returns empty handed.

Swings open the gate and enters his front yard to find a nice big brown dog shit on his manicured AstroTurf. Patches of dead yellow grass mark former spots.

Henry scoops up the shit, throws it in the trash.

NEIGHBOR (O.S.)
Max get on your AstroTurf again?

Henry looks up to find his NEIGHBOR sitting on the porch, drinking a beer at nearly eight in the morning.

HENRY
Yes, he did. This is the 8th time.

NEIGHBOR

You keep count of dog shit? Man,
Henry, you sure got a lot of time
on your hands.

HENRY

Well, it's ruining my lawn.

NEIGHBOR

You mean your AstroTurf.

Henry SIGHS, annoyed. Exits to his trailer home.

INT. COLLINS TRAILER HOME -- SAME

Henry enters to find his wife DARLEEN (22) youthfulness and beauty masked by an ugly hot pink waitress outfit, her Doris Day blonde hair kept wound up with a pencil.

She sits having coffee with Henry's coworker ED GOLDBERG (38), pomade saturated slicked back hair. His polished 1972 Reno High Champion Quarterback ring is all we need to know about who Ed still thinks he is.

HENRY

(taking his coat off)

Darleen, I'm home.

ED

Mornin', chief.

HENRY

Oh, hey Ed.

DARLEEN

Henry, you're getting mud all over
the place.

Henry looks down to see he's dragged in a mess with him.

HENRY

It's just clay from the mountains.

DARLEEN

Whatever it is, take off your
shoes.

(as Henry does)

I didn't know you were coming back
so soon.

HENRY

I've been telling you for a week we
have that appointment.

DARLEEN

Well, if it's so important, why'd
you go on your trip?

ED

Whatchya do out there in nature,
anyway?

DARLEEN

(covering her laugh)

Henry went eagle watching again.

ED

Only time I ever bird watch is
through a rifle scope.

(shoots imaginary rifle)

BANG! BANG! Chicken dinner.

Henry pours himself a cup of coffee.

HENRY

So, what's up Ed, is it your turn
driving today? I should have told
you I was coming in late this
morning.

DARLEEN

He's been taking me to work on
account of you having the car.

ED

Just spreading my charity, Henry.

HENRY

Well, thanks for the help, but me
and the car are back now.

Ed looks out the window to the station wagon.

ED

Sure got a lot of salt stains on
your undercarriage there. Pretty
high altitude, huh? Kinda risky.
Must of been some eagle.

HENRY

It has to do with their migration
patterns and nesting locations.
Very few opportunities--

ED

Take it easy, Davy Crockett. We
don't need a lecture. Jesus.

Darleen snickers, can't help it. Ed joins in.

DARLEEN

Stop teasing him. I like that Henry
has a hobby.

ED

Oh yeah, Henry, hobbies are
important. And eagle watching is as
good as any. I'm just not that
sophisticated as you.

HENRY

Change your outfit, Darleen. We
don't want to be late.

DARLEEN

(stands)

Wish us luck, Ed.

ED

I'll do more than that. I'll say a
prayer, light a candle, and throw
in a rain dance for you two.

Ed puts his arms around both of them, squeezing them.

DARLEEN

Ain't he sweet, Henry?

HENRY

He's rotting my teeth.

Darleen smiles, exits. As soon as she does, Ed pushes Henry
off of him. Throws a playful jab at Henry's groin.

ED

Jesus, Henry, you try to squeeze a
stiff one in me?

Ed gives a snorting laugh.

HENRY

See you at work, Ed.

Ed doesn't get the hint, picks up his coffee mug. Sips.

ED

We've got parole hearings today.
Motormouth is going up.

HENRY

Yeah, Vincent McCready.

ED
What is it now, fourth time?

HENRY
Fifth. Knowing him, he's probably
got a speech rehearsed.

ED (PRE-LAP)
Sonofabitch got a tongue like the
Serpent of Eden.

INT. HEARING ROOM - RENO CORRECTIONAL FACILITY -- SAME

CLOSE ON VINCENT McCREADY, older now. Muscular frame still intact, even the glint of an outlaw in his eyes remains.

The only new addition is a Bible verse tattooed on his neck. Done in prison ink. Six verses in total.

Vincent's voice drips in a swarthy Cajun drawl in the middle of an impassioned speech. He grips a BLACK MEAD SEWN COMPOSITION BOOK tightly as if it was Gospel:

VINCENT
...and so Ladies and Gentlemen of the Board, in my time here at your fine institution I've investigated my condition and have concluded that I am in no way at fault for the decisions I have made, rather I am a product, nay "a victim", of a broken and failed society.

WIDER. Vincent stands in front of a three person panel, animatedly reciting his speech. To the side stands Vincent's court appointed ATTORNEY.

ATTORNEY
Vincent, you don't have to--

VINCENT
(to Attorney, sotto)
Shut up, I've got them exactly where I want them.
(back to board)
Now, I know that's no excuse but I've seen the error of my ways and have repented, reassessed, and reevaluated my life and by the grace of God have been cured. Amen.

After laying on the bullshit thick, Vincent places a hand over his heart and bows as if answering a curtain call. Grins revealing a sparkling gold cap on his front left incisor.

ON BOARD MEMBERS, exchanging bewildered looks.

MALE BOARD MEMBER

Thank you, Mr. McCready for that...
(struggling for a word)

...interesting speech, but if you had allowed me to speak I was going to inform you that after an exhausting investigation at the expense of Nevada tax payers, the State Supreme Court astonishingly granted your parole.

(fuck)

You're free to go, Mr. McCready.

VINCENT

So I memorized that for nothin'?

CLOSE ON: Vincent's rap sheet. Stamp plunges: Parole Granted.

INT. RENO CITY BANK -- DAY

ON a SENIOR BANKER, intently reviewing a loan application.

HENRY (O.S.)

It has a two car garage, four bedrooms, 2.5 baths, spacious dinning room, marble tile kitchen--

ON HENRY and DARLEEN. Henry leans over and taps a PROPERTY ASSESSMENT print out, showing property details and photos.

HENRY (CONT'D)

And it has two lawns, front and back. They're the prettiest lawns you've ever seen. Strong, nutrient filled soil. Green like the ocean. I can get lost in them for hours.

Henry looks over at Darleen, smiles -- it's gonna happen baby, we're getting a house. She squeezes his hand, smiles.

EXT. PARKING LOT - RENO CITY BANK -- MOMENTS LATER

A LOUD MUFFLED SCREAM leads us in to find Darleen leaning on the hood of the STATION WAGON, reading a TRUE CRIME book, highlighting specific passages as she does.

Henry sits in the car, gripping the steering wheel. Grits his teeth. Letting out a defeated YELL.

Resting on the dash is a crumpled up paper. Although wound up like a ball, we can clearly make out the word "DENIED".

The MUFFLED YELL dies out. Beat. Darleen, finally noticing the silence, looks back at Henry.

DARLEEN

You done in there?

Henry nods. Darleen gets inside the car. She tries to bury her disappointment in the book, ignoring Henry.

HENRY

I'm sorry, sunshine. Just that passion in me taking over.

DARLEEN

Yeah, you and that passion. Cursed up a storm at that poor banker.

HENRY

He had it coming to him.

DARLEEN

I'm angry, too, but you don't see me acting a fool. So embarrassing having the security throw us out.

HENRY

It just makes me so damn mad, Darleen. I never got a real shot.
(points at it)
They had this letter ready. Just had to press print. Merciless.

Henry grabs the DENIAL LETTER and reads from it.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Do not meet our standards... not sufficient... delinquent.

He crumples the letter once more, tossing it on the floor.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Bankers sure know how to tear a man down. Got so many words just to tell you you're no good.

(beat, then)

All a guy ever wanted was his own slice of paradise.

Henry pulls out a real estate pamphlet. In 14 point, Braggadocio font: "Your own slice of paradise!" Henry studies it, sags, defeated. Hold on Henry.

INT. OFFICE - RENO CORRECTIONAL FACILITY -- DAY

CLOSE ON folder being opened, it's Vincent's INMATE PROFILE as indicated by his grinning mug shot.

HENRY (O.S.)
Jesus, this guy is always grinning.

WIDER. Henry in his work uniform, a PRISON GUARD at the Reno Men's Correctional Facility.

Henry scans the pages with his index finger coming upon what he's looking for: Vincent's Parole Request reading Approved.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Oh, that's why.

Henry slides the file back into its container. Sound of the CLANKING of a cell door sliding open.

GUARD (PRE-LAP) (O.S.)
Open 45!

INT. VINCENT'S CELL -- MOMENTS LATER

Vincent is busy packing his books away as Henry enters.

HENRY
You're not set loose for another
two weeks, why you packing?

VINCENT
I'm not packing. I'm house keeping.
The books I am bequeathing to you.

HENRY
You learn that word in one of your
fancy books -- "bequeathing"?

Henry picks up one of the books off the stack. We catch the cover -- Anthony Robbins' "Unlimited Power". Henry makes a face and replaces the book.

VINCENT
So, where were you this morning,
Henry? Had to have that black kid,
Jerome, take me up. And he ain't
much for conversating like you.

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)
All he said was "uh-huh, keep
walking." Like I needed a reminder.

HENRY
Jerome is the strong silent type.
Does things at his own pace--

VINCENT
You're evading, Henry.

HENRY
What am I evading?

VINCENT
You haven't told me where you were
this morning.

HENRY
(hesitant)
I was at the bank.

Vincent makes a face -- picking up on something.

VINCENT
Is that why your shoulders are
sagging?
(studies him)
Two things in this world make a man
sag like that: money and women.
(sizing him up)
And judging by how low you're
saggin', I'm gonna say both.

HENRY
I guess you don't have to worry
about that with all that money
waiting for you on the outside.

VINCENT
(raises right hand)
Never proven in a court of law.

HENRY
Yet you spent ten years in here.

VINCENT
Appealed and won just this morning.

HENRY
Got off on some lawyer trickery.

VINCENT
That's why they call them
technicalities, Henry.
(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Technically they found no weapon or stolen money on me. Technically all they had was me fleeing the vicinity of a crime in a stolen vehicle.

(slams hand)

Bam! 15 years, I only do 10. And that time I gave...

(holds up journal)

...I got back an education to take on the world.

HENRY

If it isn't moldy and rotten. See, that's the problem with money, Vincent, it's a product of nature. You gotta worry about light, moisture, heat.

VINCENT

That's why they shrink wrap cash three times in PVC sheeting when they ship it out.

HENRY

Good to know if you're hitting off a currency hold during one of the worst snow storms in Reno history.

VINCENT

The things you learn from books.

HENRY

Or having to listen to your stories for nearly a year.

VINCENT

I thought you enjoyed our walks.

HENRY

How can I when you always leave out the most important part?

VINCENT

What's that?

HENRY

Where you'd hide half-a-million in cash.

GUARD (O.S.)

STEP BACK, LOCKING UP!

Henry backs out of the cell, eyes still locked on Vincent.

VINCENT

Looks like the story ends there again.

HENRY

That's where it always does. You could be just crying wolf. How am I supposed to believe you?

VINCENT

Thomas said the same thing to Jesus.

HENRY

And he proved it to him.

The cell door CLANKS closed, separating the two men. Through the bars we can make out the sheen of Vincent's golden grin.

VINCENT

Well, I guess I'm not as obliging as Christ was.

Henry turns, walks away as Vincent calls out.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I'm gonna miss you, Henry. And you know what, you're going to miss me, too!

Henry blisters, Vincent still HOWLING in the b.g.

VINCENT (O.S.) (CONT'D)

When I'm out you can buy me a beer!

INT. SHOW HOUSE - SUNNYSIDE SUBURBS -- LATER

Fully furnished middle-class slice of American Pie brought to you by the top family research firms and interior designers.

We're inside a development property showing off the living space and features. Cardboard appliances, glass food and drink are glued down.

OVER A SPEAKER: a recorded message in a SOOTHING FEMALE VOICE over PIPED MUSIC loops. Hypnotizing our checkbooks open.

RECORDED MESSAGE (O.S.)

(from speakers)

Two car garage, four bedrooms, 2.5 baths, spacious dinning room, marble tile kitchen...

COUPLES and FAMILIES tour the house. CHILDREN chase each other, SCREAMING.

We move away from the chaos arriving in the LIVING ROOM. Through the glass door leading to the BACKYARD we make out the silhouette of a MAN, his back turned to us...

BACKYARD - SAME

...it's Henry, sipping on a beer, fingers interlaced in plastic rings, two beers down. Buzzed.

He stares out at the lawn, the strands of grass swaying in the breeze like a ocean current. Transfixed.

AGENT slowly walks up on Henry, watching him admire the lawn.

AGENT

Just imagine it: family barbecues, catch with your son, dog running around -- the household lawn. It's important to a man. Helps keep his sanity, an emerald sanctuary away from the wife's nagging and the kid's fussing. Mowing it, nurturing it, watching it grow like one of his own children. Yessir, if a yard doesn't represent the American Dream then we've lost our way as a country.

Agent turns facing Henry, the salesman charm disappears.

AGENT (CONT'D)

(recognizing Henry)

Oh, it's you.

HENRY

Sorry, just got lost in the green.
Has that calming affect.

AGENT

Have you reached a decision yet,
this is your sixth visit.

HENRY

Work in progress. You can't rush these sort of things. Way I figure it, mortgage is like a marriage: minimum 20 year commitment.

Henry CHUCKLES trying to get a pity laugh out of the Agent who doesn't reciprocate.

AGENT

I understand, but unfortunately
this display home is the last
available unit.

Henry stops mid-swig, face drops not liking what he hears.

HENRY

You haven't sold it, have you?

Agent waves over to the busy flow of people.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Hold it for me.

AGENT

Doesn't work that way. It's a first
come, first served basis.

HENRY

How about I leave a deposit?

AGENT

Do you even know what ten percent
of half-a-million is?

Anger flashes on Henry's face, but he controls himself.

HENRY

Fifty grand. That's all?

Turns away -- where am I going to get that? Studies the
garden for a beat. Turns back to Agent.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I put down only 10 percent, I still
get the grass, right?

AGENT

On both lawns.

HENRY

Give me a couple of weeks.

AGENT

You've got one.

The Agent exits leaving Henry alone with his grief and beer.

INT. CASINO - RENO, NEVADA -- NIGHT

Cloud of smoke looms over the floor. We follow it down to herds of SENIOR CITIZENS, chain smoking and finger rapping the slot machines which cry out in BELLS and WHISTLES.

AT BLACKJACK TABLE. We find Henry gambling.

Next to him sits a rowdy crowd of RICH KIDS, Tahoe crowd. A WAITRESS swings by. Henry holds up his empty beer bottle.

HENRY

Let me get a beer.

WAITRESS

That will be three dollars.

HENRY

Players drink for free.

DEALER

He hasn't played a hand in the last twenty minutes.

(to Henry)

Buy in or leave the table.

Henry, insulted, stands, off balance. Pulls out his wallet.

HENRY

You think I can't buy into your stupid game?

(throws down a ten)

DEALER

Minimum bet is \$20.

LAUGHS and SNICKERS around the table. Henry shoots them the evil eye. Digs in his wallet again. He's short. Defeated and embarrassed, he snatches his ten back and bolts.

TIME LAPSE. Henry wanders through the maze of slot machines, still holding his empty beer bottle, checking every coin slot... coming up empty.

He makes his way to the CAFE where Darleen is waiting tables.

Henry smiles and watches her from afar. She moves to a table with THREE MEN. Takes their orders. They flirt with her as she returns their advances with a playful LAUGH.

One of the men runs his hand down Darleen's arm, caressing it. Henry sags.

ON DARLEEN.

DARLEEN
I'll be back with your order,
fellas.

AT THE BAR. Darleen puts in the order. Henry sneaks up behind wrapping his hands over her eyes. Darleen startles.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Jesus, Henry, don't do that.

HENRY
I was trying be romantic.

DARLEEN
Well, it wasn't. You startled me.
(checks her watch, then)
What're you doing here anyway?
Thought Ed was dropping you home.

HENRY
Wanted to surprise you.
(then)
Who were those guys you were
talking to?

DARLEEN
What guys?

HENRY
The guys at the table.

DARLEEN
Oh, just customers.

HENRY
You let customers rub your arm like
that?

Sees her ring finger sans ring.

HENRY (CONT'D)
And why aren't you wearing your
ring?

DARLEEN
You spying on me now? We've been
through this before: waitresses get
better tips if they flirt with the
customers. Way of the world.

Beat. Darleen pulls away. Moves down the bar, emptying ashtrays, trying to avoid Henry. He chases after her.

HENRY

I'm just saying, you don't have to seem to like it so much, is all.

DARLEEN

What's there to like? You think I enjoy being grabbed like a piece of meat? You think I like grinding all night in this place, busting table after table, coming home smelling like an ashtray?

(louder)

I'm down right exhausted and the last thing I need is you and your jealous notions RIDING ME!

Beat. People start to look. Darleen catches herself. Slaps on a plastered grin for the onlookers.

Henry drops his head like a chastised school boy.

Darleen shoots Henry a sympathetic look.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)

We've both had a long day. Go home, sleep it off. I'm working a double, I'll see you in the morning.

Darleen exits into the back. Henry watches her go.

INT. BEDROOM - COLLINS' FAMILY TRAILER -- EARLY MORNING

Henry lays asleep. A drunk mess. The sound of a car pulling in stirs him awake in a cold sweat.

Darleen enters. Moves into the BATHROOM. Removes her makeup.

Henry moves behind her, massages her tense neck. Her exhausted look reflects off of the mirror but allows the massage to continue. Henry places soft kisses along her neck.

He spins Darleen around. They passionately kiss. Henry lifts her up onto the sink, raises her dress up, lowers her panties and then lowers his underwear. Enters her.

Whatever passion was ignited with the kiss ends with the sex. Mechanical thrusts. Nothing sensual about it. Henry climaxes. Beat. Pulls out, puts up his underwear, returns to bed.

Darleen pulls away, turns on the shower. Undresses.

INT. SECURITY CHECK - RENO CORRECTIONAL FACILITY -- MORNING

Inside looks like a body builders convention, all the GUARDS except for Henry are yoked out. Tight fitting shirts, neck veins, tribal tattoos, orange tans even in the Fall.

Henry and Ed wait in line to go through a SECURITY CHECK. They're up next, they enter the SECURITY LOCK. Metal detector SIGNALS. In an instant, a red light saturates Ed and Henry. A lock ENGAGES, trapping them inside the passage way.

CLERK
(from side window)
Any weapons coming in?

Henry shakes his head no. Ed removes a pearl handled .38 Revolver from an ankle holster. Holds the gun up to the Clerk to notate in his ledger.

ED
.38 Special. Just got it.
(turns to Henry)
I call her Widowmaker.

He slides open the cylinder, fully loaded. Takes out one of the bullets. Holds that up for the Clerk, as well.

ED (CONT'D)
Full cylinder. Hollow-points.
(shows it to Henry)
See this bullet? It's like sex.
Controlled penetration, expands
once inside, followed by a wet,
sloppy explosion. And just like
sex, only one person is left
satisfied.

Ed LAUGHS it up. Slips the bullet back into the chamber, locks the cylinder. Places the gun in the open drawer. A green light activates, lock disengages, they pass through.

Ed collects the gun on the other side, reholsters it.

ED (CONT'D)
So, Darleen told me things didn't
go so hot at the bank.

HENRY
She told you about that?

ED
Hey. It's me, chief. You can tell
me anything. I'm a great listener.

HENRY
No. I'd rather not talk about it.

SLAM CUT TO--

INT. LOCKER ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

HENRY
(incessant, mid-sentence)
...you bare your soul, tell them
about your hopes and dreams...

Ed and Henry's lockers are across from each other, they undress from their civies into their uniforms.

Henry's only managed to get his shirt on, still in his boxers and dress socks, too busy ranting about his bank experience.

HENRY (CONT'D)
...instead they break you down into numbers: age, assets, down payment, cash on hand.

So much for being a great listener, Ed's too busy looking into a mirror, slicking his hair back like a greaser. Every so often he interjects with a--

ED
Uh-huh, ain't that a shame.

HENRY
--they punch these numbers into a computer and it spits out an answer: better off dead.

ED
At least you're good for something.

HENRY
Apparently so. Signed me up for their best life insurance. Labeled me a "Zero Risk Assessment."

ED
What's that mean?

HENRY
I'm a monogamous white male who doesn't drink, smoke, or speed.

ED
So what's the going rate for a wasted life?

HENRY

\$100,000 and I'd like to think of it as "yet-to-be enjoyed."

ED

Shit, between the damage my liver's done and all the hell my dick's raised, I'm lucky if my sorry sack could even snatch a buck-fifty.

HENRY

Well, I wish I could live in the lap of luxury like you, Ed, but I have spousal responsibilities.

The NIGHT SHIFT finishes changing into their civies. A few of the MUSCULAR GUARDS begin to make their way over to Ed.

Inside Ed's locker, next to his gun in holster, are pill bottles with various drugs. Throughout Henry and Ed's conversation, Ed nonchalantly deals to the Guards.

ED

Stop bullshitting me, Henry. We both know who you'd go to for money.

HENRY

Who?

ED

Your Uncle Bill Clinton. You didn't hear the news, redneck won it.

HENRY

You mean a government loan?

ED

No, you idiot, your friend Vincent McCready. I see you talking to him. Always got a smirk on his face, like he's the only one in on some joke and we're the punch line.

HENRY

What are you talking about?

ED

20 years punching the clock, I've seen a score of men come through those gates: swagger in their walk, youthfulness on their face. Then time happens and keeps on happening. Little by little, these walls break them down.

GUARD approaches Ed--

ED (CONT'D)
Biceps really coming in, chief.

They shake hands, transaction completed. Guard exits.

HENRY
Well, that's what prisons are for.

ED
After 10 years, Vincent still walks around like he's just finished fucking the prom queen. What do you think has kept him from breaking all this time?

HENRY
Maybe he's got a woman waiting?

ED
Pussy only makes weak men happy.
No, he's got something big planned.

HENRY
What do you think it is?

Another Guard approaches--

ED
Got that Viagra for you. 20 a pop
and you're Rambo in the pants.

Same routine plays out -- Ed's a regular Sav-on.

Ed waits for the Guard to leave, pulls Henry down to sit.
Hushed tones as they speak.

ED (CONT'D)
I was here the day Vincent was brought in. First thing he asks for was a journal.

HENRY
Sometimes a man's only got his thoughts to comfort him. Loneliness isn't a crime.

ED
This wasn't one of those "woe is me" type journals teenage girls write. You ask me, he's got something detailed and important written in there.

HENRY

Like what?

ED

Like where he's hid that unaccounted half million. I've heard him braggin' how he's going to live like royalty when he gets out.

HENRY

He's just telling stories. Trying to be popular with the inmates.

ED

Yeah? Then why's he always guarding that journal, never letting anyone near it. Don't need to be Kojak to figure what he's hiding.

A final pair of Guards approach. Ed busily deals to them while continuing to rant. His voice drowns out as Henry sits spellbound by Ed's extraordinary claims.

HENRY (PRE-LAB)

...and the whole time he's dealing in front of me, I'm thinking about that .38 Special in his locker.

INT. BEDROOM - COLLINS TRAILER HOME -- SAME

Henry and Darleen sit propped up in bed. TV glare lights the room. Darleen wears night cream and hair rollers.

ON TV: Current Affairs PLAYS -- replay of Bill Clinton winning the election -- oh, happy days.

Darleen's not interested in Henry's rant. Fixated on the TV.

DARLEEN

Gennifer Flowers said Clinton eats pussy like a champ.
(bites her lip)
Do you think that's true?

Henry grabs the remote, puts it on mute.

HENRY

Are you listening to me, Darleen?
Do you understand the situation
this puts me in? It makes me an
accomplice.

Darleen rolls her eyes, reaches for her true crime book on the night stand, flips through pages. Reads...

DARLEEN

You're only an accomplice if you actively assist in the crime. Sitting there while it happens doesn't count.

Henry grabs the book. Makes a face -- are you serious?

HENRY

I'm not getting legal advice from some cheap tabloid trash.

DARLEEN

(snatches it back)

It's not cheap tabloid trash. It's groundbreaking journalism.

Darleen unmutes the TV, irritating Henry.

HENRY

Gave the gun a stupid name, too.

(mockingly)

"Widowmaker." Apparently only kills married men.

(then)

To make things worse, ever since this inmate in my section got paroled, Ed's been on edge more than he usually is.

DARLEEN

You mean the one with the journal?

Henry turns off the TV, finally breaking the spell over her.

HENRY

I never told you about Vincent.

DARLEEN

Ed's always going on about him.

HENRY

What else did he fill your head with?

DARLEEN

Well... I did go to the library, read up on some old articles--

HENRY

--not you, too.

DARLEEN

They never *did* find that money.

HENRY

We're not having this discussion.

DARLEEN

FBI quit the search--

HENRY

--I said no.

DARLEEN

And the airlines stopped caring
when the insurance paid them out.

Darleen eagerly pounces up on her knees. Hopeful.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)

It has to be out there somewhere.

HENRY

That's enough of that. I have the
right mind to go into the Warden's
office tomorrow morning. Tell him
everything. Put a stop to all this.

DARLEEN

Ed helped you get that job. Don't
go stirrin' up the hornet's nest.

Henry studies Darleen. Frustrated, he jumps out of bed and
pulls out his track suit, dresses.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)

What are you doing? It's nearly
midnight.

Ignoring her, starts on the running shoes next.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)

Where you going, Henry?

Henry opens his drawer finding a walkman along with neatly
organized cassette tapes. Like the one in the car, the dates
the mixtapes were made are written on the spines. He selects
"October, 31st Mixtape."

DARLEEN (CONT'D)

Fine. When you get back you can
SLEEP ON THE COUCH--

Henry presses play on the Walkman, music cuts Darleen off.

EXT. STREET -- MOMENTS LATER (RAINING)

Headphones BLARING. Henry jogs, oblivious to the rain drops assaulting him. Anger covering his face.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - RENO, NEVADA -- EARLY MORNING

Empty. Thick, mud stained snow blankets the PLATFORM.

In the distance a HORN CRIES OUT. A train rolls in.

Train doors open revealing nobody. Beat. Then the sound of metal SCRAPING announces the arrival of--

ROY (late 50s). Dressed in Johnny Cash black trench coat and slacks. Hard miles on a hard face. He stands playing with an odd object... a magnetic fastener, flicking it open and closed like a switchblade. The source of the SCRAPING.

He steps onto the platform, snow CRACKLES under his polished leather boots. Lifts up a foot, muddy snow cakes the sole. Roy grimaces, eyeing the place with disdain.

His coat billows in the wind. He wraps it tighter, popping the collar. Makes his way out. No luggage.

As he walks away we can't help but notice the prominent bulge in the shape of a gun handle under his left armpit.

INT. SHOWERS - RENO CORRECTIONAL FACILITY -- MORNING

INMATES stand at stalls, showering. Henry along with another GUARD wait OUTSIDE. Henry takes a quick peek into the showers, checks his watch.

INT. VINCENT'S CELL -- MOMENTS LATER

We find Henry in the middle of carefully searching the cell.

He looks over at the toilet, jerks the back the paneling to reveal the JOURNAL taped to the back.

Henry eagerly flips it open: detailed drawn maps, directions, monetary figures. Ed was right, Vincent has a plan.

Henry pokes his head out to find the Guard at the end of the catwalk escorting Vincent and the other inmates back.

Henry quickly closes up the journal taping it to the back of the toilet panel. Moves it back into place.

VINCENT (O.S.)
What you doing here, Henry?

Henry turns from the toilet.

HENRY
Cell inspection before you leave.

VINCENT
I'm not gone for another week.

HENRY
Just in a hurry to get you out.
(smiles, then to Guard)
All clean here.

Henry exits. Vincent watches him walk away. Turns his attention to the toilet, furrows his brow.

He opens the toilet panel, ripping off the journal. He flips through checking it, tucks it under his jumpsuit.

INT. MESS HALL - RENO CORRECTIONAL FACILITY -- AFTERNOON

In the center. CHATTER of a mess hall. Vincent sits surrounded by other INMATES holding court.

VINCENT
You should've seen it, boys, had
the entire board eating out of the
palm of my hand.

The group erupts into LAUGHTER, Vincent included.

OFF TO THE SIDE we find Henry and Ed. Henry sits at a cafeteria table having breakfast, donut and coffee.

They look out into the main dining area at Vincent's group.

Ed leans against the wall, sunglasses still on. Even with the shades on we can tell their is an uneasy tension in his eyes. He lights a cigarette, inhaling deeply.

ED
240,000.

HENRY
(mouthful)
What's that, Ed?

ED

I said 240,000. That's my income
during my *rewarding* career as a
glorified babysitter for the State.

HENRY

Is that before or after taxes?

ED

What the fuck difference does it
make how it's computed?! All I know
is that that piece-of-shit is four
days away from walking into a
retirement.

HENRY

You still on Vincent's case? He's
not so bad if you get to know him.

ED

What the fuck are you saying to me,
Henry? I mean look at you.

HENRY

What about me?

ED

What kind of world is it when a
decent man who's struggling to
provide for his wife is worth at
best 240,000 alive and 100K dead?

Henry stops chewing, puts down the donut and studies Vincent
cavorting happily with his fellow inmates.

HENRY

Never thought of it that way, Ed.

ED

Well you should. Look at him,
smiling and laughing. When's the
last time you smiled? When's the
last time you laughed?

Henry's familiar frown returns. Ed is preaching the Gospel.

ED (CONT'D)

Asshole took up space for 10 years
and gets more than double of what
I've bled for when he gets out.

(then)

Tax free for your goddamn
information!

Ed spits. Takes a quick drag. Sucks in his upper lip.

HENRY
It's an American tragedy, is what
it is.

ED
Wanna hear a real American tragedy?
That dream house the bank is
keeping from you...

Like Lucifer whispering sweet nothings into Eve's ears, Ed
leans in close to Henry's and whispers:

ED (CONT'D)
...he can have it and you can't.

Henry clenches his donut, tearing it apart.

ED (CONT'D)
Yup, that's how I'd do it. Clean.

HENRY
Do what?

Ed gives him a look and Henry knows.

ED
Guy gets out of the pen, wants to
celebrate. Starts drinking and
keeps on drinking. Next thing you
know he's stumbling, takes a fall.
Simple blunt force trauma to the
head...
(takes a drag, exhales)
...or something like that.

HENRY
(lost in the thought)
...yeah, something like that.

ED
Or maybe not. What do I know? I'm
just talking out loud.

MESS HALL -- SAME

ON VINCENT and INMATES, LAUGHING.

MAN (O.S.)
Hey, McCready!

Vincent turns to find a flash of white, a blade -- not a shank stick, not a scrapped down tooth brush -- a masterfully crafted ceramic white knife stabbing towards his throat.

GUARD (O.C.)
(from top railing)
KNIFE! KNIFE!

Last second, Vincent blocks the strike from finding his throat as the MUSCULAR INMATE slashes at him.

Vincent grasps the blade, trying to push it away. The knife cuts deep into his palm. Fingers slippery with oozing blood, seeping between his knuckles.

A riot breaks out. ALARM sounds. Chaos ensues as bean bags are shot into the mass of swinging fists and legs.

We lose Vincent and his Attacker in the sea of INMATES.

CUT INSIDE the huddle of bodies where Vincent grapples with the Attacker. Finally managing to disarm him.

Vincent drives the knife into the Attacker's stomach. Skin tearing. Rapid bursts of blood. Attacker drops, clutching his stomach which pools blood.

GUARDS rush into the mass ripping apart Inmates entangled together. Batons swing, riot shields clash against bone.

OFF TO THE SIDE -- SAME

Henry stands from his place, looking for Vincent.

Ed takes a final drag, flicks the cig into the crowd.

ED
Let him bleed.

Finally, we see a Guard fish out Vincent, covered in blood.

Henry watches, shocked. Guards pull out the dying Attacker.

HENRY
Isn't that Randall from your block?

ED
Yeah. I think it is.

Henry eyes Ed, suspicious.

HENRY
Is this you, Ed?

ED
(scoffs)
Helluva imagination you've got.
(walking away)
Don't worry, Henry...
(stops, over shoulder)
It's not like you're an *accomplice*.

Henry's face falls -- his pillow has been talking.

INT. INFIRMARY - RENO CORRECTIONAL FACILITY -- LATER

Vincent lays on a gurney, cuffed to the rail. A small bag of blood being transfused. A NURSE finishes dressing his wound.

Henry enters.

NURSE
Come in, I'm finishing up in here.

VINCENT
(holds up hand with IV)
It's a flesh wound but the doctor insisted.

HENRY
Those bags are meant for the guards. We give blood in case we're attacked, not the prisoners.

Henry locks the blood bank refrigerator. Pockets the keys.

VINCENT
You must be here to give me a hard time 'cause I don't see any flowers, chocolates, or a get well soon card.

HENRY
This isn't a voluntary visit. I have instructions regarding your release.

Vincent waits for the Nurse to grab her belongings and EXIT. Henry closes the door for privacy.

VINCENT
What do you mean? They're trying to pull a fast one on me, Henry?
(panicking, bit of rage)
Goddamn Indian Givers, should've never trusted them--

HENRY

Calm down. They're not repealing
the order. It's actually good news
for you. Due to the security threat
you pose to the General Population--

VINCENT

Me? I was the one who was attacked.

HENRY

You've become unpopular since you
beat the parole board. You've been
issued early release. They're
letting you out tonight.

VINCENT

Well, I guess Lady Luck keeps
sucking my dick! At least one of us
is on a winning streak.

HENRY

Too bad we can't say the same thing
about Randall Johnson. He bled out
on the mess hall floor, you
wouldn't have happened to see who--

VINCENT

--buried that blade in his fat gut
like the filthy swine he was? Nah,
Henry, can't say I recall.

HENRY

You sure about that?

VINCENT

(covers his eyes)

Saw no evil, won't speak no evil. I
just want to be on my way as
ordered by the State of Nevada.

HENRY

I thought so. You're lucky no one
is talking.

LOUD SPEAKER (O.S.)

(crackling to life)

Henry Collins to the Warden's
office immediately.

VINCENT

Uh-oh, looks like you're being
summoned to the throne room Henry.

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Better run along and kiss the ring
before they get impatient and call
for your head.

Henry walks to the doorway, stops and looks back at Vincent.

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

The sound of a LEAKING GAS tank leads us into the scene.

Sitting under the Seal of Nevada is the WARDEN. Meticulously polished boots on the table, sipping from a flask.

We find the source of the leaking tank sitting in the back. This is SAM SNEED, his title he'll proudly tell you in a moment. A large man. Oxygen tank sits in a cart at his side. Plastic tubing snakes around his head and into his fat nose.

Sam's head is lowered as if in prayer, focusing on a file in his lap, rhythmically WHEEZING. A bureaucratic Buddha.

Henry enters, removing his hat. Warden stands. Sam doesn't bother, giving only a curt nod.

HENRY
You wanted to see me, Warden?

WARDEN
Yes, Henry, sit down.

Holds out flask to Henry who holds up his hand and smiles.

HENRY
Not while on the state's time.

WARDEN
This isn't a test of character,
son. Better take a good deep slug.

SAM (O.S.)
What the Warden is trying to say is
this isn't a courtesy meeting.

Henry turns and looks at Sam.

HENRY
Excuse me, who are you?
(then)
Warden, who is he?

WARDEN
That's Sam Sneed, he's the--

SAM
Director of Human Resources,
Federal Bureau of Prisons,
Southwestern Division.

HENRY
Sure must be a long placard back at
your office.

Henry makes a face at the Warden -- believe this guy?

WARDEN
I think Sam got a little carried
away with the title. All that's to
say is he audits all the employees.
(regretfully)
He says there was an inconsistency
with your background check.

SAM
More like a blatant lie.
(then)
I usually don't leave the demanding
confines of Headquarters, but felt
I should handle the matter myself
given the enormity of this breach--

WARDEN
Now, slow down, Sam. There's a
whole lot of trouble hiding behind
those words.

(then)
Henry, you bedding the Governor's
wife?

HENRY
News to me if I was, Warden.

Henry and the Warden LAUGH it up -- this must be a
misunderstanding, but the laughter is short lived.

SAM
Do you think I take this matter
lightly, Mr. Collins?

HENRY
No sir, I can tell you were a
serious man the moment I saw you.

Sam struggles from his chair. He drags his oxygen cart, tires
SQUEAKING, to the Warden's desk.

SAM

Warden, this man performed a feat
only the sliest of spooks from the
CIA have accomplished. He beat a
federally executed polygraph exam.

HENRY

That's crazy. How am I capable of
doing something like that?

Henry turns to the Warden, eyes pleading -- please, tell him.

WARDEN

He's right, Sam. I've known Henry
coming up 10 whole months and the
boy's craven. Thinks with his legs.

SAM

His juvenile record would indicate
otherwise.

Sam hands the Warden the file. Lips moving as he reads. Brow
furrows, lines wrinkling deeper with each word.

HENRY

That record was supposed to be
expunged, Warden.

Warden finishes reading, lowers the file. SIGHS.

WARDEN

Damnit Henry, you know what kind of
position this puts me in?

(holds up file)

Given the nature of what's listed
here, I'm morally, legally,
conscientiously -- pick one, any
will suffice -- obligated to
terminate you.

HENRY

What?! Warden, you can't do this. I
need this job.

WARDEN

Out of my hands, son.

HENRY

I'm going to appeal this.

SAM

You can try but I've already begun
the termination process.

Henry sits stunned. Drops his head, defeated.

HENRY

May I at least inquire as to how
you came into possession of my
juvenile record?

SAM

It's of little use. It was sent
anonymously. The envelope had no
return address, but the stamp
indicated it was sent from inside
this prison's mail room.

Henry sinks deeper into his pit of shit.

HENRY

Does that mean they work here?

SAM

It's obviously not the prisoners.

A cold finger touches Henry's spine. Darleen's foreboding has come true.

INT. HALLWAY - PRISON -- EVENING

Henry in his civilian clothes, carries a box of his belongings. He stops to look out the window overlooking the MAIN GATE.

Vincent walks into frame holding a trash bag of belongings. Gets midway to the gate, stops, turns as if knowing someone is watching. Spots Henry in the window.

Vincent nods, flashing his golden grin. Exits the prison.

Henry's eyes narrow, watching Vincent saunter away.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD APPEARS:

CHAPTER TWO

THE MOOSEHEAD MOTEL

FADE IN:

INT. CASINO DINER -- NIGHT

Henry enters. Takes a seat at the bar. Darleen exits, happy to see him. Leans over the counter and gives him a kiss.

DARLEEN

Hey there, baby. You hungry?

HENRY

You know, I don't think I've ever eaten here before. What's good?

DARLEEN

Most of the menu is kept under heat lamps half the day. I'll make sure Joe grills it fresh for you.

Darleen smiles her big smile. Henry breaks eye contact, how to tell this sweet thing such sour news, picks up the menu.

HENRY

Alright, I'll get the cheeseburger, fries, a slice of apple pie, a cherry coke and I was fired today.

Darleen stops writing. Henry waits to be chewed out.

She exits into the kitchen, pushing the door which flaps open and closed. With each flap the WHOOSH audibly intensifies.

HENRY'S POV -- with every swing of the door we catch a glimpse of Darleen's pent up rage unfolding like a stop animation flip book:

Grabs a plate... lifts it high... begins its descent down... DOOR finally stops swinging, coming to a close, obstructing our view as -- CRAASSHH. The plate SHATTERS off screen.

EXT. COLLINS TRAILER HOME -- NIGHT

Station wagon pulls in, parks. Darleen at the driver seat, Henry rides shotgun. She shuts off the car. The couple sits in the dark. Silent. Looking straight ahead. Then--

DARLEEN

I can't keep doing this. It's not what we wanted. We deserve better, don't you think?

Darleen faces Henry awaiting an answer which doesn't come.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)

You're broken right now and that's okay, everyone loses their way but you need to fix this.

She leaves Henry sitting alone as she exits into the trailer.

INT. WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT -- DAY

CLOSE ON SEAL OF WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT.

SOUND of an INCOMING FAX. TILT DOWN from the seal revealing the FAX MACHINE -- the printer head laboriously crosses the chassis. With each pass, words and logos begin to form: Department of Justice Letterhead appears.

Fax complete. A hand rips it out before we can read it.

SHERIFF JAMES ARNESS' OFFICE

DEPUTY KEYES KNOCKS on the door, holding the fax.

SHERIFF JAMES ARNESS, old school, revolver at the hip, heavy set. Bright white stetson rests low on his head.

He sits at his desk looking at two CAMPAIGN POSTERS in different colors, blue and red.

DEPUTY KEYES

You're not going to believe this,
Sheriff.

SHERIFF ARNESS

(not looking away)

Every time you start a sentence with "you're not going to believe this, Sheriff" my weekend gets shot to shit.

DEPUTY KEYES

Someone actually sent us a fax. And not just anyone.

Keyes holds out the fax to Arness who gives it a glance.

SHERIFF ARNESS

The Department of Justice? Must be an accident. Send it back.

(then)

Now, which one you like better, blue or red?

Arness holds up the posters, both read "Re-Elect Sheriff Arness. Keeping Vegas' Trash out of Reno."

DEPUTY KEYES
Red. The fax has your name on it.

Frustrated, Arness drops the posters and gives the fax a closer look this time. Reads.

SHERIFF ARNESS
Attention Sheriff James Arness, you are hereby ordered by the Attorney General to place surveillance on Vincent McCready recently paroled at the Moosehead Motel. You are directed to report his whereabouts to the Las Vegas FBI Field Office.

Arness looks up from the fax -- flabbergasted.

SHERIFF ARNESS (CONT'D)
You believe the tyrannical tone they're using with me? Not even the Mayor talks to me like that.

Arness points with the fax to a photo of himself shaking hands with the Mayor of Reno.

DEPUTY KEYES
That's how they talk out there in Washington. No "Please and Thank Yous", no sir.

Looks at the letter again. Pondering.

SHERIFF ARNESS
I remember this case. I was still a deputy. We found McCready three days later heading back down South. Broke down on the side of the road, freezing inside the car he stole. No money, no weapons.

DEPUTY KEYES
They thinkin' McCready's fixin' to go North again to fetch that money.

SHERIFF ARNESS
Aint nothin' out there but pneumonia. FBI had us searching all winter. Hell, half of Nevada was north of Reno hoping to get a piece of that money. Came back with empty frost bitten hands.

DEPUTY KEYES

Well, what do you want me to fax
them back?

SHERIFF ARNESS

I'm in the middle of a re-election.
I'm supposed to be out there
shaking hands and kissing babies.

DEPUTY KEYES

So is that a no?

SHERIFF ARNESS

It's not like I can tell the
Federal Government to mind its own
damn business, now can I?
(then, begrudgingly)
Might as well do what I'm charged
with.

Arness picks up a CB radio receiver, into radio...

SHERIFF ARNESS (CONT'D)

I need a parolee check at the
Moosehead Motel.

EXT. HENRY'S TRAILER -- LATE AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON a snail on the concrete, slowly moving along,
leaving a trail of slimy discharge behind it.

WIDER. Snail is headed to a mound of real grass growing from
the cracked pavement. Inches from reaching its safe haven.

RACK FOCUS to reveal Henry, sitting on his porch. Watching
the slug. We can tell he's been watching it for a while now.

HENRY

Come on. Almost there.

CRUNCH -- the snail's shell ruptures as a bicycle's tire
rolls over it... then the back tire.

A neighborhood KID on his bike ZIPS DOWN THE SIDEWALK.

Henry's face falls. He gets up and collects the dismembered
slug, placing it onto the mound of grass.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You made it.

Pause. Henry studies the dead snail coming to a realization. He springs up and enters his SHED leaving us for a few beats and then returns holding a black gym bag.

At that moment Ed's Pontiac pulls up. He exits carrying a six pack of beer.

ED

Heard you got hit with a haymaker,
bet you could use a cold one.

On the move, Henry snatches the beer.

HENRY

Get off my lawn, Ed.

ED

(scoffs)

This ain't no lawn, it's Astroturf.

Henry freezes, turns. Mans up to Ed, eye-to-eye.

HENRY

Then get off my fucking Astroturf.

Henry turns to leave, moving to the station wagon.

Darleen appears at the screen door to see what all the commotion is about.

DARLEEN

What are you doing, Henry?

HENRY

Fixing it.

Henry gets in. Speeds off. Darleen and Ed watch him go.

EXT. MOOSEHEAD MOTEL -- EVENING

HIGH HEELS CLACKING ON PAVEMENT announce a tight bodied BLONDE PROFESSIONAL wrapped in a sleek dress walking into frame, passing a flickering red neon sign, reading:

"MOOSEHEAD MOTEL -- FREE HBO"

We follow behind Blonde Professional as she leads us to the last ROOM. Knocks. Vincent answers.

VINCENT

You're late, that means it's free.

BLONDE PROFESSIONAL
I'm not a pizza.

Vincent yanks her inside, slamming the door shut.

CAMERA PANS across the street to find a deputy cruiser. Inside sits a DEPUTY, watching the room.

DEPUTY
(into radio)
Sheriff, caught sight of that parolee. A prostitute just entered his room. Want me to cite him for soliciting?

SHERIFF ARNESS (O.S.)
(from radio)
Hell no! I don't have the manpower to waste babysittin' a cheap crook. If he's out on the streets, he's our problem. Better he occupy himself indoors.
(then)
Get back on patrol. Check in on him in the morning.

Deputy drives off. We don't follow. CAMERA PANS, in the distance, watching from the shadows is Henry in his CAR.

Henry pops in a cassette labeled "November 3rd Mixtape."

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
We've got a special Election Day Mix!

Rock rendition of God Bless America plays.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Here's your first hour...

Cheap THUNDER SFX SOUND launching us into the first song.

TIME LAPSE -- tail end of a different song.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I've got two All You Can Eat Passes to the Golden Clam Casino--

Henry ejects the tape, label reads "November 4th Mixtape".

HIS POV -- Vincent's door opens, the Blonde gets thrown out in mid dress with crumbled up bills being tossed at her. She curses at the door. Picks up the cash and leaves.

BACK TO SCENE. Henry looks at himself in the rearview mirror. Then the SOUND OF KNOCKING ON A DOOR CUTTING US TO--

EXT. VINCENT'S ROOM - MOOSEHEAD MOTEL -- SAME

STOMPING FEET approach, muffled from behind the door--

VINCENT
You back again, you crazy bitch?
(door swings open)
I told you just the pinky--

Vincent stops mid-sentence seeing Henry standing outside.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Henry.

Henry pulls out the beer he snatched from Ed.

HENRY
You said I should buy you a beer.
So I bought you a beer.

INT. VINCENT'S MOTEL ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Cramped. Dim lighting. TV flickers, on mute in the corner. The journal rests on the night stand. We find Vincent and Henry a few beer bottles down.

HENRY
How does it feel to be a free man?

Vincent studies Henry for a beat. Scoffs.

VINCENT
Not really a free man, now am I?

HENRY
It's the conditions of your
release. You remember where you're
supposed to go, right?

VINCENT
Yeah, yeah. Check-in 36 hours.

HENRY
Better set your watch--

VINCENT
Already did.

HENRY

I'm just trying to make sure you
get a fair shot. Don't start losing
your way this early, Vincent.

Vincent downs the rest of the beer, belches. Tosses it.

VINCENT

That beer tasted like flat piss.

He moves to the window, looks out. Lights a cig. As he does, Henry quickly snatches a look at the journal.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

There was a cop car here earlier.
They're probably watching me.

HENRY

Nobody's outside.

Vincent continues looking out the window, lost in thought.

VINCENT

You know, there's two things you
never forget: the first time you
make love and the first life you
take. Only a special type of man
can say he's done both.

HENRY

And you're that special type?

VINCENT

What do you want to know?

HENRY

Splitting hairs, aren't we?

Vincent shoots Henry a look then returns to looking out the window.

VINCENT

Not much to say about the love
making. More lust than romance.
15 year old kid with a C-note in
the back of a pool room in New
Orleans. For hookers, they were
lookers.

(then)

Now my first kill, that's a better
story. It was two years after the
pool room, I'd already started
breaking into cars. One night I
take on a partner.

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)
He's the wheel man, I'm the booster. Seven cars in we hear sirens, amateur guns it out of there with me holding onto the door handle. I get dragged 15 feet, cops are waiting at the hospital. They give me three, I do one. First thing out, I get a revolver and a map. I make a few calls and this sonofabitch is out in Milwaukee.

HENRY
So you go to Milwaukee.

VINCENT
So I go to Milwaukee. I wait in his rat piss smellin' apartment for 12 hours till he gets home and I collected more than my money.

HENRY
So what you're saying is...

VINCENT
...what I'm saying is patience will leave you a satisfied man.
(turns back to Henry)
I didn't give up 10 years to have some phony law man keep me from my money. Understand, Henry?

Beat. Vincent looks out the window once more, paranoid.

HENRY
Wow. What a story, Vincent.

Henry chugs the beer. Wipes his sweat drenched brow.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Where's your restroom?

Vincent butts out the cig, shoots him a look.

VINCENT
In the south wing next to the rose garden. Behind you, asshole.

Henry puts on a contrived smile -- you got me. Exits to the--

BATHROOM -- SAME

Henry turns on the faucet. Stares at his reflection for a beat. Then checks his watch. Nerves eating away at him.

He puts on black gloves and takes out the survival shovel we saw earlier.

ROOM -- RESUME

ON VINCENT, stumbles onto the bed. Puts a quarter in the "Magic Fingers" machine. The bed vibrates, headboard smacking against the wall -- TUCK-TUCK-TUCK.

VINCENT
Man, been a long time, beer's
really hitting me.

Vincent closes his eyes, rocking, the motion calming.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Ever been on a sail boat, Henry?
The waves rock you back and forth.
Like a mother putting her baby to
sleep.

BATHROOM -- RESUME

Henry turns to the door, beads of sweat slide down his forehead. Places his hand on the door knob.

VINCENT (O.C.)
(compressed through door)
Yes, I figure it's the most natural
thing to be at sea, feel how you
did in your mother's womb.

ROOM -- RESUME

VINCENT
Safe. At peace. Not a care in the
world. I wonder if that's where you
go when you die... I wouldn't mind.

Vincent sighs -- what a thought? Vincent rocks in silence for a beat when the door CREAKS open behind him.

Light spills into the room casting Henry's outstretched shadow onto the floor, leading him inside.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You remember to wash your ha--

Vincent's smile fades into a scowl. Eyes Henry at the door holding the shovel, a weapon now. Trembling.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
What do you have there?

Henry is silent. His breathing labored. Vincent stands. Slowly makes his way towards Henry, hand out.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Whatever you're thinking of doing,
you don't want to do it.

TUCK-TUCK-TUCK -- the headboard rhythmically bangs against the wall like a clock TICKING away, counting down to--

--Henry exploding from where he stands, arching the weapon up and taking a hard swing at Vincent--

--who's on the move, throwing his body into the swing, blocking it with his forearm, grabbing Henry by the neck.

He SLAMS Henry against the wall, pinning him. Fingers bury into his neck turning his face beet red.

Henry's feet thrash about, struggling... his boot heels SCRAPING the wall, leaving jagged black scratches.

His breathing turns into a WHEEZE. Color draining from his face. Eyes drift, fading. Vision blurs.

He sends a desperate knee into Vincent's groin causing him to keel over, gasping.

Henry brings down the weapon across Vincent's head causing him to crash into the table. Bottles drop. Glass shatters.

Henry stands over Vincent, catching his breath. He studies Vincent's chest -- is he still breathing?

The answer comes as Vincent COUGHS up. Henry startles, arches the weapon up once more.

CAMERA drifts towards the shadow cast on the wall: hesitation at first... but then Henry hammers down. Faster. More brutal.

He finally stops. All sound is mute save for the TUCK-TUCK-TUCK of the headboard.

CLOSE ON: beer streams from the broken bottle... mixing with a puddle of blood... outlining the side of Henry's boot, next to Vincent's lifeless body.

Henry, heart pumping like a jackhammer, looks around, he's got to clean up quickly.

Pulls out a rag, wipes down the chair, bathroom door knob, and finally the beer bottle he was holding. Rips out the "Magic Fingers" machine, stopping the rocking of the bed.

Suddenly, we hear a POUNDING from the other side of the wall. Then a MUFFLED VOICE--

VOICE FROM OTHER SIDE OF WALL

Hey.

Henry freezes, not wanting to make a sound.

VOICE FROM OTHER SIDE OF WALL (CONT'D)

Everything alright in there? Heard a lot of... struggle.

Henry takes a step back. Glass CRUNCHING under his boot.

VOICE FROM OTHER SIDE OF WALL (CONT'D)

Hello?

Then... CLICK, the other tenant switches their TV OFF. Place goes deathly silent. Henry holds his breath.

HENRY'S POV -- the wall between the neighboring room. FOOTSTEPS heard moving from the other side.

CAMERA PANS following the sound of the FOOTSTEPS... arriving at the adjacent door connecting the two rooms.

ON DOOR KNOB, which is unlocked... it begins to turn, a slither of light from the neighboring room seeps through as the door cracks open.

Henry races across, RAMMING the door, SLAMMING IT SHUT. Placing his full weight against it. Locking it.

HENRY

We're fine. Just knocked the table over, small accident.

VOICE FROM OTHER SIDE OF WALL

You sure?

HENRY

Positive... thanks.

Beat. Henry waits for a response. The longest few seconds of his life... and then FOOTSTEPS move back towards the way they came. Sound of a television turning back on.

Henry looks down to find the blood drawing to him, he stuffs a towel under the door, blocking off the blood's path.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- SAME

We find Roy sitting on the bed, playing with the magnetic fastener, flipping through a phone book.

His coat undone, folded next to him. On top of it rests a 44 Magnum in a shoulder holster. He dials out a number, PHONE DIALS. BEAT. Then...

OPERATOR (O.S.)
Reno Men's Correctional Facility.

ROY
An inmate is scheduled for release
this weekend, I need to know
exactly what time.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
His name?

ROY
Vincent McCready.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
(beat as he searches)
McCready was let go earlier today.

Suddenly, the scraping abruptly comes to a stop.

ROY
Where's he staying at?

OPERATOR (O.S.)
The Moosehead Motel.

Roy looks down at his key chain, reads: "Moosehead Motel".

ROY
What room?

OPERATOR (O.S.)
Uh, hold on...
(then)
Sorry, doesn't say.

Roy hangs up. Dials "0" for Operator. RINGS... RINGS... RINGS... every RING teasing Roy.

INT. FRONT DESK - MOOSEHEAD MOTEL -- SAME

The phone RINGS. And RINGS. And RINGS. A hand written note next to the phone reads "Gone Fishin'".

In the back, a faint MOANING and GRUNTING can be heard.

CLERK (O.S.)
Just the pinky, goddamn it.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- RESUME

Roy, fuse burnt out, explodes from his seat, dropping the receiver, not bothering to hang it up.

He rushes out. On the move, scoops up his 44 holster, slinging it on with ease and controlled practice.

He bursts out of the room, flinging the door open and heads straight to the FRONT DESK with the RINGING of the phone preceding his arrival. GROWING louder as he draws closer.

Roy rushes into the OFFICE searching for the guest register.

CLOSE ON REGISTER: we scan along with Roy's finger searching for... there: McCready, Vincent 24 HOUR PAROLEE HOLD.

Roy snatches the key off the rack.

EXT. FRONT DESK - MOOSEHEAD MOTEL -- SAME

Just as Roy exits, he catches the tail end of what appears to be a station wagon fleeing away, burning rubber.

Roy gives it a brief thought then continues to run to the other end of the complex but is stopped once more by BLINDING HIGH BEAMS accompanied by a duet of a ROARING V8 ENGINE and SQUEALING TIRES.

A Red Pontiac Firebird flies by after the station wagon. Roy gives a full pause this time, eyes narrowing.

He dismisses it, coming upon VINCENT'S ROOM.

He's about to enter just as the neighbor's door opens and a MALE GUEST exits, the owner of the footsteps we heard.

He puts his hand in front of Roy, blocking his way.

MALE GUEST
I wouldn't go in there. They were
doing the sex act... violently.
Can't be too pretty inside.

Roy glares at the man who looks down at what he's placed his hand on -- the grip of Roy's magnum.

Eyes widen with fear, he cowers away, lighting a cigarette.

Roy enters VINCENT'S ROOM. Beat. He exits back outside. A look of disappointment and restrained anger covers his face.

ROY
(to Male Guest)
Call the police.

EXT. ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

Henry's car rushes down a rain-swept road, the rhythmic swish of window wipers on the icy glass put us in a trance.

Suddenly the car brakes, skidding off to the side of the road. Henry explodes from his seat and vomits.

Guilt, fear, remorse, and whatever else all expelling from him like an erupting volcano.

He catches his breath for a beat, wipes spittle from his lip. Looks down at his right hand and there, as if drawn to him, is Vincent's journal. His own Mark of Cain.

Henry drops it like a scalding coal. The journal falls open. A breeze whistles across catching the pages, causing them to flutter, faster and faster like a flip book. PUSH IN ON JOURNAL as we MATCH CUT TO--

INT. COLLINS TRAILER HOME -- LATER

Darleen flipping through the yellow pages, it lands on an ad for a divorce attorney. She bites her lip, anxious.

CLICK of the front door lock snaps Darleen out of her trance. She shuts the yellow pages closed.

FRONT DOOR. Henry's closing it shut behind him when Darleen steps around the corner, concern still overriding anger.

DARLEEN
Henry, it's one in the morning.
Where did you go? I was--

She stops short as she sees there's blood all over him. He stands there embarrassed like he was ten years old.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
What happened?

Henry moves forward slowly, hand searching for something to hold onto. Darleen grabs his arm and moves him into the KITCHEN. Sits him down.

Henry looks off into the distance, lost in a daze.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Look at me. Tell me what happened.

Henry pulls out the journal, puts it on the table.

Darleen's face falls, hand moving to her mouth. She knows whose journal that is.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
What did you do?

Darleen backs away towards the sink.

HENRY
(stuttered ramble)
He rushed me. I had to hit him. I could have stopped, but then momentum happened.

Darleen's face changes, more resolved now. Stiffer lip.

DARLEEN
Take off your clothes.

HENRY
What?

Darleen doesn't miss a beat: puts on dishwasher gloves, pulls out trash bags, rubbing alcohol, and a water basin.

Henry sits still as Darleen strips him out of his clothes.

DARLEEN
Did anyone see you go in?

HENRY
There was a hooker on her way out, but I waited till she was gone.

Throws the clothes in the trash bag.

DARLEEN
Shoes, too. You stepped in blood.

Darleen tosses everything into the washing-machine.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Did you touch anything?

HENRY
I wiped everything before leaving.

DARLEEN
Anyone see you leave?

HENRY
I don't think so. I didn't see
anyone.

She moves back to him, lowering to her knees, methodically touches his body, searching for wounds.

HENRY (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

DARLEEN
Making sure you weren't hit.

Henry looks down at Darleen caressing his sweat-drenched body. His breathing becomes heavy. He grabs her hand.

HENRY
I'm not injured.

DARLEEN
You're hurting me, Henry.

Darleen undoes his grip. As she does she studies his hands.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Your hands are unblemished.

HENRY
What are you talking about?

DARLEEN
You had to use a weapon. Where'd you hide it?

Henry looks away at the mention of it.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Tell me you didn't leave it there.

HENRY
It's in the shed. The black survival shovel.

Darleen SIGHS, relieved.

DARLEEN
Alright. We're going to be okay. No one will ever suspect you, Henry.

SERIES OF SHOTS -- pill bottle popped open - glass filled with water - a little white pill placed into Henry's palm.

Henry, now dressed in a shirt, looks down at the pill.

HENRY
What is this?

DARLEEN
It's to help you calm down.

She puts on her heavy coat and moves to the door. Henry reaches out, grabs her arm. Eyes pleading -- don't go.

HENRY
Where are you going?

Darleen guides Henry to the couch. Makes him sit.

DARLEEN
I'm going to be right back,
sweetheart. Have some water.

She takes the pill from his palm, puts it into his mouth, hands him the glass of water.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Drink.

Henry swallows the pill. Darleen guides Henry to lay down.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
You need to rest.

Henry drowses off.

INT. BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Darleen rushes to her bookshelf which could pass for the TRUE CRIME section at Barnes and Nobles.

She scans the spines with her finger, searching, we catch a few of the morbid titles: *Burning Desire, Sweet Poison, Blood Trap, The Ice Grave*.

She grabs a well worn book off the shelf, flips through it, notations and highlights cover the pages.

INT. SHED -- MOMENTS LATER

Cold fluorescent lights flicker on. Darleen stands wearing the yellow gloves again. A trash bag in her hand.

There in the center of the table, amongst the other tools, is the murder weapon. Blood staining the tip.

SERIES OF SHOTS: shovel is dropped inside a bucket -- filled from a hose -- Darleen scrubs the weapon -- towel dries it.

EXT. COLLINS' TRAILER -- SAME

Darleen walks over to the neighbor's house, opens their garbage can and dumps a trash bag inside.

STATION WAGON DOOR swings open -- Darleen with a flashlight wipes down the steering wheel, door handles, and so forth.

Cuts out blood stains from the carpet and seat, patching them with duct tape. Scans the rest of the inside -- all clear -- clicks off the flashlight.

INT. COLLINS TRAILER HOME -- PRE-DAWN

DARLEEN (O.C.)
Henry, wake up. Wake up.

HENRY'S POV: heavy eyelids struggle to open -- we slowly make out Darleen who stands dressed. Luggage packed behind her.

Henry sits up on the couch.

HENRY
What time is it?

DARLEEN
Four-fifteen. We have to leave
before it gets light out.

Rubs the sleep from his eyes. Sees the journal sitting on the table in front of him.

HENRY
Where are we going?

DARLEEN
You got fired. You came home upset.
I suggested we go on a trip to
clear your mind. Vegas, California.
Doesn't matter, as long as we hit
the road before the trailer park
wakes up and sees our car outside.

HENRY
You're creating an alibi.

DARLEEN
Just in case.

HENRY
We're not really going to
California or Vegas, are we? You
want what's inside that journal.

Darleen squats down, facing him eye level. Grabs his hands.

DARLEEN
I never asked you to do this, but
you went and done it and now we're
both involved.

Henry breaks eye contact. Darleen shifts his gaze back.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Look at me, Henry. I'm your strong
place, right?

Henry nods.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
You love me, right?

He nods again.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
I want to hear you say it.

HENRY
I love you.

Darleen smiles a satisfied smile -- good.

DARLEEN
This is what you wanted. Your fair
shot.
(colder)
And it is a fair shot. Don't let
your conscious tell you otherwise.
He was a criminal, a killer from
what I've heard. Man like him
doesn't deserve that money. It
should go to good, decent people.

HENRY
We're good, decent people, aren't
we, Darleen?

DARLEEN
Of course we are, baby.

HENRY
(beat, serious)
Are you sure about this? You need
to be sure about this.

DARLEEN
I'm tired of living one step behind
everyone else. Think of all the
sacrifices we've made. Think of all
the want and need we have. And then
think of what that money
represents.

(then)
Future is out there waiting for us.
New Year, New President, New
Beginning--

HENRY
New Home.

DARLEEN
That's right, honey.
(then, kisses him)
Let's burn this bridge, baby. I've
packed everything from the safe in
the bedroom.

HENRY
What about our belongings?

DARLEEN
The furniture is from a thrift
store and the lease expires at the
end of the year.

She grabs the journal and puts it into Henry's hands.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
No matter what happens, we'll bear
this cross as husband and wife.

EXT. COLLINS TRAILER HOME -- MOMENTS LATER

The station wagon quietly drives off in the dead of night.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD APPEARS:

CHAPTER THREE

A KNIFE AT A GUNFIGHT

FADE IN:

EXT. VINCENT'S MOTEL ROOM -- EARLY MORNING

Back at the scene of the crime. LOW ANGLE we're looking up at Deputy Keyes and Sheriff Arness looking down at us.

SHERIFF ARNESS
He gone and done Houdinied it.

INSERT SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHER SNAPS all with forensic rulers next to the following items: beer bottles, ripped out "Magic Fingers" vibrating machine, and the cherry on top -- a large puddle of blood staining the carpet absent of a body.

VINCENT IS GONE.

WIDER. The place has turned into a crime scene.

DEPUTY KEYES
Ever seen so much blood spelt,
Sheriff?

SHERIFF ARNESS
Whoever was on the end of this
brutal outshining is either dead or
bleeding out and gonna be dead.

DEPUTY KEYES
Bound to happen, someone beat
McCready into telling them where
he's supposedly keeping that money.

SHERIFF ARNESS
This was premeditated. Less than 24
hours after release. No forced
entry. Open beer bottles. McCready
knew his attacker.

DEPUTY KEYES
Suppose you want me to look into
his known criminal associates.

SHERIFF ARNESS
Any and all. In the meantime get
those samples off to the lab.

DEPUTY KEYES
Should I inform the Federal
Government of what's happened?

SHERIFF ARNESS

No. Put out an APB first, see if we can come up with a body to fax over to those G-men in Vegas.

(then)

And don't let any of this leak to the press. Last thing we need is to incite another searching frenzy for that money, not to mention what it'll do to my polling results.

EXT. BATHROOM - REST STOP -- SAME

SOUND OF A FAUCET running. SLURPING. We come along a trail of unraveled toilet paper coated with blood.

Follow the trail to a MAN with his head buried in the sink, cupping water in his hands and hungrily drinking it up.

The Man's head springs up, revealing Vincent. Still alive.

His hair drenched in water. Dry blood cakes the side of his bruised face, swollen and throbbing. Vincent grits his teeth in the mirror, his gold tooth covered in a bloody sheen.

EXT. ROAD - SAME

Snow covered woodland stretching to infinite. Sun spikes through the jostling leaves of towering trees looming over a single road leading up a hillside.

The station wagon climbs its way up, backlit by the sun as it traces the horizon.

EXT. PAWN SHOP -- MORNING

Pawnbroker swings the storefront security gate up. Unlocks his shop. Start of business. He enters, swings door closed--

A sun beaten leather boot jams the way. Follow the boot up to find it belonging to Vincent.

PAWNBROKER

We won't be open for another 20 minutes. You'll have to return.

Vincent breathing hard, perspiring. Looks around, paranoid. Pawnbroker catches on Vincent's bizarre behavior.

PAWNBROKER (CONT'D)

You need me to call an ambulance?

VINCENT

No, no ambulance. I just want a look at your guns.

Vincent tries to push in. Pawnbroker holds his ground.

PAWNBROKER

If you're looking to score some drugs, I want no part of it.

VINCENT

I just caught my wife fucking another guy and I don't have money for a lawyer.

Pawnbroker studies Vincent for a beat, then...

JUMP CUT -- CLOSE ON COUNTER: a revolver, a shotgun, and a hunting blade are laid out.

PAWNBROKER

Any of these at point blank would get the job done. You can castrate him if you'd like, but I consider that a half-measure.

VINCENT

What number wife you suffering, friend?

PAWM BROKER

Just got rid of my fourth.

Pawnbroker LAUGHS it up. Vincent joins in.

VINCENT

Cartridges.

PAWNBROKER

You must not be from around here.

VINCENT

Been a guest of the State of Nevada coming up ten years yesterday.

PAWNBROKER

Then you should be aware that pawn shops are not allowed to keep guns and ammo together.

Pawnbroker points to an "Re-elect Sheriff Arness" sticker next to a painting of an Aryan Jesus.

PAWNBROKER (CONT'D)

Take that up with the Lord and the
Nevada State Legislature.

VINCENT

They were in my bed. She moaned for
him like she's never moaned for me.

Without a second thought, Pawnbroker reaches under the
counter and slams down two boxes of ammo.

PAWNBROKER

That's from my private reserve.

VINCENT

How much?

PAWNBROKER

\$400 and I'll look the other way on
the paperwork.

Vincent smiles. In a flash grabs the Pawnbroker's right
wrist, snatches a blade and stabs it down through his hand,
pinning him. Pawnbroker HOWLS in pain.

Vincent loads the revolver a bullet at a time, taunting the
Pawnbroker who races to pull out the knife, struggling.

Countdown as the chambers are loaded: 6-5-4-3-2-1...

PAWNBROKER (CONT'D)

NO! NO! NO!

The Pawnbroker finally rips out the blade, a thick stream of
blood trails behind. He stabs at Vincent just as--

Vincent slaps the chamber shut, whips the gun up like a snake
-- CLICK-CLACK -- BANG!

Brain matter sprays over the Jesus painting looking like
Passion Friday all over again.

Vincent jumps over the counter, finds a plastic gallon water
bottle. Pops the lid off and chugs it down.

Digs into the Pawnbroker's pocket, wrestling out car keys.
He moves to a map spindle. Pulls a map, folds it out.

Vincent moves to the mirror, extends his neck giving him a
clear view of his Bible verse tattoo. Reflection sends back
the numbers in reverse. He checks his watch.

SOUND OF A DOOR UNLOCKING leads us into--

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Henry and Darleen enter.

DARLEEN
I'm going to take a shower.

HENRY
I'll order some food.

Darleen exits to the bathroom, starts the shower.

Henry digs around in the drawers searching for the phone book. He finds it, but instead picks up Gideon's Bible.

Henry fans through, opening on a random page.

CLOSE ON page, something odd, everything is redacted in black bars like a classified document save for a single quote in the center of the page, scrawled in thick RED INK, reading:

"LET NOT LIGHT SEE MY BLACK AND DEEP DESIRES."

He studies the line. Every letter. Every word. His finger tracing as he does... suddenly, he slams it shut.

Beat. Breathes. Fuck the Yellow Pages, picks up the phone.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Operator, information please.

SAME -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Henry and Darleen sit finishing up dinner. Fast food wrappers litter the table with a half drunken bottle of cheap wine.

A single candle stands between them. The flame dances, flickering light off of their faces in the dark room.

Henry pours out the remainder of the wine. Darleen takes a drink and squirms.

DARLEEN
This is pretty bad.

HENRY
Then why do we keep drinking it?

Beat. They share a look. Burst out LAUGHING together. A small happy moment. The laughter fades.

HENRY (CONT'D)
What are we going to tell our
parents?

DARLEEN
Same thing we told them when we got
married. Nothing.

HENRY
It always has just been you and me.

DARLEEN
Sure has. Came out here with only
enough money for a marriage license
and somehow we've made it this far.

HENRY
Remember when the front desk fouled
up--

DARLEEN
Yeah! Gave us the deluxe suite at
Caesars for two nights free.

HENRY
It was the Flamingo.

DARLEEN
Right. The Flamingo. You kept
complaining about the pink lights.

HENRY
Damn things hurt my eyes.

DARLEEN
(laughs, reminiscing)
We didn't have any money to go out
so we stayed inside all day...

HENRY
...in bed, naked...

DARLEEN
...uh-huh, ordered room service and
watched the sun come up through
those big hotel windows.

HENRY
(beat)
You think we could ever get back
there?

DARLEEN
Where?

HENRY

How we were... before I mean.

DARLEEN

Is that what you want?

HENRY

I'm just trying to find that girl I
fell in love with.

DARLEEN

I'm the same girl.

(then, off his look)

Okay, I guess it's no secret,
things haven't been so well between
us lately, but that's going to
change. We're only a day away from
our dreams coming true.

HENRY

You think the money will make it
right between us again? Be like
when we first met.

Beat. Darleen looks down, not having an answer for him.

DARLEEN

I don't know, Henry, but you're
living in the past and that's a
dangerous place to be.

Henry's face falls, her words stinging him like a viper.

Darleen blows out the flame throwing us into darkness.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Dark. Henry and Darleen are asleep.

Suddenly Darleen's eyes shoot open. She cautiously slips out of bed, doing her best not to wake Henry.

She stands, watching him for a minute, confirming that he's asleep. She slips into her clothes. Grabs the car keys.

INT. BAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Empty, save for a few drunk PATRONS asleep at the bar.
BARTENDER busily wipes down glasses.

Suddenly, the place comes to life. Everyone notices a disheveled and wet Darleen enter.

She shakes out her damp hair, cascading in the overhead light. Beads of water shimmer down her cleavage and in this moment we see Darleen in a new light. She scans the place.

Towards the back, in a booth, a figure sits concealed in the shadows. A hand pops out into the light.

Darleen makes her way over. The figure leans into the light revealing ED with three empty shots, working on the fourth.

ED

Hey there, cowgirl.

DARLEEN

Hey there, cowboy.

Darleen leans in, kisses Ed and sits down across from him.

ED

Were you followed?

DARLEEN

No, he was asleep when I left.

ED

Good, need to get you back before he finds you missing.

DARLEEN

He really did it, Ed.

ED

That's right, baby. Give a man the right kind of inspiration and there's nothing he can't do.

(then)

Makes me actually glad Vincent survived the prison attack.

DARLEEN

What are you talking about?

ED

I didn't think Henry would go through with it. So I had one of the inmates attack him during chow.

DARLEEN

You forget how they're supposed to write this up? Ex-prison guard kills former inmate, dies in search of hidden heist money.

ED

It was taking too long. I thought once Vincent got paroled, we'd miss our chance.

DARLEEN

You want to make it out of this, you stick to what I say.

ED

You're the expert.

DARLEEN

Now you made sure to clean up after him, right?

ED

Hell no. I wasn't going to clean up all that blood.

DARLEEN

What about evidence Henry might have left behind?

ED

Evidence?

DARLEEN

Like fingerprints--

ED

He was wearing gloves--

DARLEEN

What about skin cells and hair fibers and all the other things the human eye can't see?

ED

Hair fibers?

DARLEEN

Don't you know anything, Ed? It was in the book I gave you. Even highlighted parts for you to read.

ED

Any man wasting his time reading that many damn words is missing out on life. The book's been sitting in my trunk for two months now.

DARLEEN

Say the cops find something on Henry, last thing we need is the Sheriff on our trail while we're hunting down a murdered convict's stolen money. We need some, you know... *buffer time*.

ED

That don't even matter, I've been listening to the CB radio. There's no static about Henry. They're making it out as an old rival done Vincent in. We're in the clear.

DARLEEN

Not until we're in Canada. You brought your passport, right?

ED

Like you told me to. Just a 12 hour drive. I sat down and crunched the numbers, too. It's a buck-fifty Canadian to our dollar.

DARLEEN

Not including Henry's life insurance.

Pause. They exchange looks. Ed's a bit shaken.

ED

Can't we just tie him up and flee the country? He'll never find us.

DARLEEN

We talked about this.

ED

I know but the man's a friend.

DARLEEN

But nothing. Don't let that conscience get the better of you.

ED

Conscience got nothing to do with it. A man's got a soul and that has to go somewhere when you die. It's the hereafter I'm thinking of.

DARLEEN

Have you seen the world you're living in, Ed?

(MORE)

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Hereafter ain't got no say in this.
(beat)
No, that's fear talking. I smell it
on you from here.

Ed grabs her wrist tightly -- his manhood threatened.

ED
I ain't scared of no man.

DARLEEN
Good, because anybody who's ever
been anything never let fear make
their decisions for them.
(then, sotto)
When are you going to do it?

ED
After he's through diggin' it up.

DARLEEN
And how're going to do it?

ED
On top of the head like you showed
me.

DARLEEN
That's right, simple blunt force
trauma.

Darleen grabs Ed by the back of the hair and kisses him. She pulls back after a beat, leaving him hanging on for more.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Next time we see each other, we'll
be leaving together. For good.

She turns to leave.

ED
You love me, don't you, Darleen?

She doesn't turn.

DARLEEN
I've brought you this far.

ED
You mean "us" this far.

Darleen turns to face Ed finally.

DARLEEN
We're leaving at seven.

She grabs Ed's final shot from his hand and downs it.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
Don't be late.

Slams down the shot. Turns and exits.

INT. ROY'S CAR -- SAME

Roy cruises, counting the store front numbers.

On the passenger side we find ripped out phone book pages for gun shops. Four listings have been crossed out in red pen.

Roy slows as he approaches a new PAWN SHOP. The security gate shut closed as if the store didn't open for business.

Roy BRAKES, does a three-quarter turn shinning the headlights on the SECURITY GATE. It's been pulled down but the lock is missing from the slot.

PAWN SHOP -- MOMENTS LATER

DARK. DING-DONG -- the chime sounds as Roy enters.

DEEP INHALE. Stench of death lingers in the air.

We hear the cocking of a revolver. Then the fluorescent lights spark to life, revealing the crime scene.

Roy checks the mirrors in the corners.

ON MIRRORS -- a dead body slumped over the back counter, covered in blood. No sign of anyone else inside.

BACK OFFICE -- SAME

CLOSE ON CCTV -- security footage of Vincent killing the Pawnbroker plays out.

PAWN SHOP -- MOMENTS LATER

Roy pulls out the Pawnbroker's wallet removing an insurance card which reads: 1988 Blue Ford Truck, LIC. No. VDY431TR3.

He walks over to the map spindle to find a wrapper for a map on the ground. Picks it up, reads the label: North West Reno.

He finds the same map off the spindle and pockets it. Picks up a CB radio. Turns it on, it works.

Before leaving he moves to the phone, dials three digits and leaves the receiver off the cradle. As he exits we hear...

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)
911, what's your emergency?

EXT. REST STOP -- DAY

Henry is busy putting on snow chains while Darleen has a map unfolded on a table comparing it to Vincent's journal.

DARLEEN
I don't get it. He's got like six different maps drawn out.

Henry finishes with the final tire, gets up.

HENRY
They're not different maps, it's the same one redrawn six times. To take into account construction and geography over the years.

Henry flips over a few pages. Points to a series of encircled numbers with arrows pointing to other encircled numbers. Every few lines a circle is crossed out, replaced by another.

HENRY (CONT'D)
The routes may change but the destination stays the same.

Henry points it out on the real map. Darleen eyes it.

HENRY (CONT'D)
It's elementary level map work, simple directions based on unchanging landmarks. Things Vincent could recall visually.

DARLEEN
Guess I shouldn't have teased you about eagle watching.

She leans in and kisses Henry on the cheek.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)
How long till we get there?

HENRY

Oh, I say about four hours. Let me
get washed up, we'll hit the road.

Henry exits to the bathroom.

As soon as he does, Darleen pulls out her true crime book, rips out a page, writes something down. Rolls it up, slides it in between a crevice on the wooden bench.

MATCH CUT TO: a hand removing the note from the crevice. It's Ed. Henry and Darleen have since left.

He opens the note to find hastily written directions. Ed turns and enters his car, drives away.

EXT. ROAD -- NIGHT

The Pawnbroker's truck ZIPS into frame.

The windshield wipers wave a soporific beat. Glare of oncoming headlights and the roar of cars rushing by.

ON VINCENT, through the windshield.Flushed. He chugs down a water bottle and tosses it with the other empty ones.

Lights a cig, taking a deep drag. The ember burns bright orange replaced with grey ash. A cold sneer on his face.

A map sits on the passenger seat. Christian RADIO BLARES.

PREACHER (O.S.)

In a drunken fury the Lord laid
waste to all the first born. After
drinking his fill of blood, the
Lord God thus spoke, "My thirst for
vengeance has be quenched."

VINCENT

Amen.

He exhales a cloud of smoke, curling up around him.

PREACHER (O.S.)

Quench your thirst for vengeance as
well, friend, with a generous
donation to our ministry. Miracles
and blessings aren't free, you
know. Call now. Good Christian
operators are standing by.

The engines ROARS as Vincent speeds out of frame.

INT. WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT -- SAME

CLOSE ON FAX MACHINE -- another fax prints out, this time the letterhead reads "LAS VEGAS CRIME LAB".

SHERIFF ARNESS' OFFICE -- SAME

Deputy Keyes enters holding the fax.

DEPUTY KEYES

You're not going to believe this,
Sheriff.

SHERIFF ARNESS

What did I tell you about saying
that?

DEPUTY KEYES

We got another fax.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Didn't I tell you to unplug it?

DEPUTY KEYES

It's the lab results come back from
the McCready crime scene. They got
a match for the blood types.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Is that plural?

DEPUTY KEYES

Yessir, two matches. Blood near the
bed was McCready's. Odd thing, came
back matched for drug use.

SHERIFF ARNESS

That's no surprise. What else?

DEPUTY KEYES

The second blood was from the
attacker. Your hunch was right,
sir, it was someone McCready knew.

Keyes holds out the fax for Arness who looks it over.

DEPUTY KEYES (CONT'D)

Came from one of our own employee
databases. Suspect is a detention
officer at the Reno Men's
Correctional Facility. McCready was
an inmate there.

SHERIFF ARNESS
You get in contact with the prison?

DEPUTY KEYES
Yessir. Stopped by his residence as well. Only thing missing appears to be from a safe.

SHERIFF ARNESS
He's making a run for it.

DEPUTY KEYES
I already put out an APB. Boys up in Humboldt said they caught sight of a vehicle matching the description.

SHERIFF ARNESS
Humboldt. Isn't there a blizzard set to hit up there?

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD APPEARS:

CHAPTER FOUR

OCTOBER 28TH MIXTAPE

FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE -- PREDAWN

We track along with the station wagon winding up snowy roads.

Dissolve to STATION WAGON arriving at the entrance of an ABANDONED MINE SHAFT.

INT. STATION WAGON -- SAME

Henry and Darleen sit for a beat with the heater purring.

HENRY
Maybe we should wait till it gets light out.

DARLEEN
No, Henry, that's why I brought a flashlight for.

He gives her a concerned look.

HENRY

Let me check it out first.

DARLEEN

Don't lose your way.

HENRY

I'll light flares marking the way.

DARLEEN

I want to be there with you.

HENRY

I'll come for you. Stay here.

DARLEEN

Be careful.

Henry exits, moves to the trunk. Takes out a flashlight, flares, and a sledgehammer.

ON DARLEEN watching Henry through the windshield making his way into the MINE SHAFT.

Henry takes three massive swings at the wood beams boarding up the entrance. The sledgehammer smashes through creating an opening. He moves in, darkness swallowing him up.

Darleen sits anxious in the car. To calm her nerves, she messes with the radio dial, all static. Finding nothing.

She opens the armrest and digs through the collection of Henry's cassettes. She selects "Oct. 28th Mixtape".

She puts in the tape, it plays.

CASSETTE TAPE (O.S.)

Back for another 30 minute block of Oldies.

Sonny and Cher's "I Got You Babe" comes on.

SONNY AND CHER (O.S.)

They say our love won't pay the rent. Before it's earned, our money's all been spent...

A smile appears on Darleen's face. Suddenly, the pitch slows, becoming deeper...

SONNY AND CHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(deeper pitch)

I got you babe, I got you babe.

The song drops out replaced by another pair of voices. They are not singing.

VOICE #1 (O.S.)
 Yeah, he's leaving on another trip
 in a couple of days.

VOICE #2 (O.S.)
 How long is he gone for?

Darleen makes a confused face as the pitch distorts again and the song returns--

SONNY AND CHER (O.S.)
I got you to hold my hand
I got you to understand...

Pitch distorts, song drops out and the recorded phone call returns once more--

ED (O.S.)
 I'll start following him again when
 he gets back.

DARLEEN (O.S.)
 Have you talked to him about
 McCready, yet?

ED (O.S.)
 Not yet. Once his parole hearing
 comes up, I'll lay into him.

DARLEEN (O.S.)
 Alright, I'll get the insurance
 taken care of.

SONG comes back on--

SONNY AND CHER (O.S.)
And when I'm sad, you're a clown.
And if I get scared, you're always
around.

SLOWLY PUSH IN ON DARLEEN... fear washing over her. Her eyes widen -- a haunting realization, she knows the voices on the tape. It's her and Ed talking on the phone.

Darleen sits frozen as Henry exits the mine. Headlights shining over him.

She panics and HONKS THE HORN. HONK-HONK-HOOOOONK! We follow the ECHO of the horn out into--

THE WILDERNESS.

Where we find Ed with a flashlight in one hand and Widowmaker in the other. Standing next to his Firebird. He runs towards the direction of the blaring horn.

BACK TO SCENE.

Darleen tries to turn off the radio, instead fumbles with the dial, TURNING UP the VOLUME. The song BLARES with interjections of the recorded phone call.

Henry hears the phone call play out -- he knows she knows. He picks up his pace, running now.

Darleen locks the doors, jumps behind the wheel, turns the ignition. The cold engine STRUGGLES to start.

Darleen stomps the gas, twisting the key -- the engine COUGHS weakly and dies. She tries again, same result.

Henry is closing the distance between them, almost there.

Darleen turns the ignition once more -- the engine COUGHS... then sputters and fires to life. ROARING.

She cranks the gear shift down.

INSERT GEAR BOX: the notch slips from PARK three spots over -- CHINK-CHINK-CHINK -- into DRIVE.

Darleen stomps the gas, snow kicks up as chained tires spin, searching for traction causing the station wagon to jump, launching at Henry who dives out the way.

Station wagon zips by, skidding on the icy snow.

The steering wheel whips around, Darleen fights to grab control of it as the car fishtails to a stop.

ON HENRY, shaking off the fall, trying to climb to his feet.

Darleen opens the window.

DARLEEN
ED! COME OUT, ED! HE KNOWS!

Henry has finally gotten his footing, makes his way towards Darleen, reaching for the door handle when--

BAM -- he's pistoled whipped by Widowmaker. He drops.

HENRY'S POV -- Ed standing over him, his vision blurs...

The tape distorts back to normal. The MUSIC PLAYS CLEARLY.

SONNY AND CHER

*I got you babe. I got you babe. I
got you babe. I got you babe. I got
you babe.*

Song fades as we FADE TO BLACK...

Beat. We sit in silence for a moment in the dark. Then the sound of metal COLLIDING against stone. Muffled voices echo off the walls.

DARLEEN

C'mon... hit it. Almost... there.

CRASH we hear the rattling of STONES as they crumble down.

HENRY'S POV -- fading in. Red strobe of the flare. We're INSIDE THE MINE SHAFT.

Ed stands in front of a big gapping hole holding the sledgehammer. A pile of clay drenched rubble at his feet.

We can see their breath in the cold air as they speak.

ED

Ice snowed over four inches thick on the rest of the wall, but this spot was weaker.

DARLEEN

Doesn't matter. Just get in there and get the money.

Ed turns on a flashlight and crawls into the hole, disappearing. We stay with a jittery Darleen waiting with eager anticipation. Beat. Then--

A large duffle bag, the same one from the prologue, gets spit out from the hole with Ed following behind.

Ed excitedly drops to his knees and begins to unzip the bag. As he does, we begin to make out Benjamin Franklin looking back up at us. Ed continues to open it but stops short as--

CLICK-CLACK -- a dramatic noise in a small space.

VINCENT (O.S.)

Is that my money?

Vincent emerges from the shadows, the red light reflecting off his manic stare, bloodshot eyes, perspiration drenching his face. He grips a shotgun aiming it at the three of them.

ED

What the fuck?! I saw you die. I
saw Henry do it!

DARLEEN

You can have Henry, mister, he's
the one who tried to kill you. It
wasn't us.

WIDER. They stare each other down. Vincent looks haggard as
shit but still dangerous like a caged tiger.

CLOSE ON VINCENT'S GUN BARREL, it sways away from Henry and
holds on Ed and Darleen.

Vincent moves to Henry, pulls out a blade, cuts him free.

HENRY

I told you to set your watch.

VINCENT

You hit me harder than we planned,
asshole.

ED

What the hell is going on here?

DARLEEN

Can't you see we've been set up?
(then)
How long were you listening for?

HENRY

Since you asked me to file for Life
Insurance. Chapter one in every
book on your shelf.

VINCENT

Cut the shit. I did my end, Henry.
Now give me back my money.

HENRY

You're not exactly done.

VINCENT

You want him dead. Do it yourself.

Vincent hands Henry the blade. At that moment Ed reaches for
his ankle holster whipping up Widowmaker in a flash, FIRES.

CHICK-CHICK-CHICK -- Ed pulls the trigger. The chamber
rotates, all six chambers coming up empty.

Henry digs into his pocket removing hollow-point bullets.

HENRY
Works better with bullets.

Henry flicks them to the ground one-by-one.

ED
You fucker!

Without warning Darleen grabs the bag and makes a run for it. Bills escaping from the bag, fluttering in the air as--

--Vincent turns his aim onto Darleen when Ed throws the gun at his head causing a misfire. Shot rings out. ECHOING.

Henry takes after Darleen.

Ed charges Vincent, snatching up the sledgehammer on the move, swinging --CLACK-- knocks the shotgun away.

Ed takes another swing, Vincent rushes in, absorbing the strike, wrestles the sledgehammer away. They drop, grappling back and forth throwing punches and elbows.

The fight is brutal and unorganized. Spurts of blood paint clenched fists, knuckles tearing into skin.

INT. TUNNEL - MINE SHAFT -- SAME

Dark. Fading flares guide Darleen's way out.

Frantic, bag slugged over her shoulder. Darleen fights her way through the dizzying maze, hoping to reach the exit soon.

INT. MINE SHAFT -- RESUME

A powerful, bone crunching right hook throws us back in the scene as Vincent strikes Ed who stumbles backwards.

Vincent flips onto his stomach, his shotgun feet away. He crawls towards it, fingers digging into the dirt as...

...Ed dives for the sledgehammer, snatching it. They both simultaneously spring up, weapons in hand.

Vincent swings the barrel around as...

...Ed wheels the sledgehammer across...

BANG-BLAM! The sledgehammer connects into Vincent's stomach knocking the air out of him just as the shotgun FIRES. PELLETS SPRAY, catching Ed across the face, spinning him.

Beat. Ed collapses. Dead.

Vincent kneels over, COUGHING up black blood.

INT. TUNNEL - MINE SHAFT -- SAME

Darleen races toward the exit. In the distance a pin point of light stabs through... growing as she gets closer... she runs out, an explosion of early morning light bathes over us.

EXT. MINE SHAFT -- MORNING

Darleen squints, adjusting to the light. She jumps into the station wagon. Reverses. Snow churning up on the tires. She speeds off just as Henry appears.

Henry jumps into Vincent's stolen truck which sits with the car door open and engine running, left frantically by Vincent. He gives chase after Darleen.

EXT. ROAD - SAME

Darleen swerves on the road. Heavy snow showers down. The station wagon keeps flashing in and out of view.

Truck appears behind her, gaining. Both cars swerve. Snow clods and salt ricochet off the cars' undercarriage.

INSIDE TRUCK. HENRY'S POV -- the station wagon, a few yards down, suddenly vanishes as the whiteness devours the vehicle.

Henry speeds up... nothing but empty road. Where'd she go?

As the truck reaches where the station wagon disappeared... a LARGE BUMPER lays in the middle of the road.

Henry BRAKES, CRANKS THE WHEEL trying to avoid the debris.

He FISHTAILS. TIRES SQUEALING. Finally skidding to a stop.

Beat. Henry exits. A TERRIBLE WIND HOWLS. Snow slapping him across the face. He follows the trail of debris over the side of the road and down onto the LAKESIDE.

Henry looks down -- the station wagon has flipped over onto the embankment, resting on its roof. Smoke billows from the hood. Taillights flash.

He drops to his hip and slides down the hill. Opens the driver's door to find Darleen missing...

...a LARGE GAPING HOLE SHATTERED THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD gives us a view of the water -- Darleen has been ejected from the car.

Henry scoots as close to the edge as he can.

Suddenly, a head breaks through, popping out of the water. It's Darleen, forehead cracked, blood streaming down her face, she gulps down air, COUGHING UP.

She strains to crawl back onto the embankment, but with every stroke more icy snow CRUMPLES away teasing the finish line.

DARLEEN

Help... Henry... please...

Henry reaches out for Darleen, grabbing her hands tightly.

Henry shivers as well but not from the cold, his face registers hurt and anger.

DARLEEN (CONT'D)

It was Ed's plan. He hated you, he was jealous of what you have.

HENRY

Stop it. I heard the phone calls.

DARLEEN

We can go back to the way you wanted. I could still love you.

Henry studies Darleen. Her sweet lies no longer working. He loosens his grasp.

Darleen sinks back down, panics. Her arms thrash about. Taking in heavy water. Spits up. Struggling once more.

Her fight slows, dying out, becoming tired and weaker.

She plunges below... face submerging underwater... tip of her nose pokes out like a shark's fin until that too sinks away.

All we're left with is the icy water of the river.

EXT. MINE SHAFT -- MOMENTS LATER

TRUCK WINDSHIELD POV -- approaching the mine entrance. We find Vincent using the sledgehammer as a crutch making his way towards Henry, Widowmaker firmly in hand.

Now in the light we see that Vincent's appearance is more sickly than beaten.

Henry parks the car, remains seated. Checks his watch, stop watch running: 35 hrs 58 mn 26 sec.

VINCENT
This time it's loaded. Get out.

Henry doesn't. Eyes still locked on the stopwatch. Sees Vincent walking towards the door.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I said get the fuck out!

Vincent smashes in the glass with the butt of the gun. Glass rains over Henry. Vincent unlocks the door, snatches him out.

HENRY
If I'm dead, you won't get your money.

Vincent lets Henry get up.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Is Ed... did you--

VINCENT
Just like you wanted.
(then)
I need to be in Oregon by nightfall.
(cocks back hammer)
My money.

The gun shakes in Vincent's hand. Struggling to aim at Henry.

HENRY
(checks his watch, buying time)
You still going into Vancouver via Seattle, become a steel perp bonds investor?

VINCENT
Have fun reading my journal?

HENRY
You should thank me. I gave you a decoy out of Reno.

VINCENT
I'm going to thank you, alright.

Vincent stumbles closer to Henry, gun leading the way.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Thank you for robbing me, thank you
for nearly killing me.

HENRY
You're wrong, Vincent. You did die
in that motel room.

Fires the gun at Henry's feet, snow kicking up. LAUGHS in
between coughs.

VINCENT
Guess I've been resurrected.

Henry backs away as Vincent continues to move towards him.
His breathing shallow and difficult. Aim swaying.

HENRY
Only for 36 hours.

Vincent's watch ALARM SOUNDS. He looks down at the watch and
knows what Henry's done. Fear washes over him.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Been thirsty, Vincent?

Vincent COUGHS more violently, spewing up black blood.

VINCENT
You... sonofabitch!

The fear turns into rage as Vincent staggers forward and
FIRES -- BANG -- BANG -- stumbles forward some more -- BANG --
BANG. All shots go wide, WHIZZING BY.

Just as he gets close enough to get off his last shot, Henry
snatches the gun from Vincent.

HENRY
Gonna need that final shot.
(then)
If it's any consolation, it took me
two trips to figure out you
tattooed the coordinates on your
neck in reverse.

Defeated, Vincent peels over grabbing onto Henry.

VINCENT
(wheezing, dying words)
Feel the water coming, Henry?

BANG -- final shot tears into Vincent's chest. His body
crumpling back, falling at an odd angle.

DISSOLVE TO:

OPEN SNOWY ROAD. Henry makes his way on foot, arriving at a REST STOP. Moves to the only car in the parking lot, reaches under the left front tire, removing a magnetic key box.

Unlocks the door and gets in. Drives away. We don't follow.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD APPEARS:

CHAPTER FIVE**WHAT GLADYS TRENTON COULDN'T FIND**FADE IN:EXT. ROAD -- EVENING

We're back at the scene of Darleen's crash. A homicide wrapped up as an accident.

A CAR comes to a stop outside on the road. A WOMAN runs out of the car to check the scene, her face falls. She runs back up the hill and yells something into the side window. A heavy set MAN gets out and follows her back down.

Over this we hear PHONE DIALING. Beat. Beat. Line PICKS UP.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)
911, what's your emergency?

Heavy breathing of the Man and Woman, through gasps...

MAN (O.S.)
There's been an car accident!

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)
Sir, calm down. What's your name?

MAN (O.S.)
My name is George Trenton.

WOMAN (O.S.)
(from background)
Where's the body? I can't find the body!

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)
Was the body ejected from the
vehicle?

WOMAN (O.S.)
Where's the body? I can't find the
body!

GEORGE (MAN) (O.S.)
Damnit, Gladys, I can't talk with
you hollering about the body!

GLADYS (WOMAN) (O.S.)
But where's is it?!
(then, echoing)
Where's the body?!

ECHO blends in with the EMERGENCY VEHICLES sirens which appear on scene. George and Gladys point the way to police.

SERIES OF SHOTS: the station wagon is towed -- Firebird and the stolen truck are taken into inventory.

ARNESS (V.O.)
We found your wife's body a few miles down river. Goldberg and McCready shot it out while she fled. Unfortunately, she spun out and drowned.

BACK AT MINE SHAFT -- Sheriff Arness and Deputy Keyes along with FBI AGENTS take a tour of the crime scene.

The CAMERA PANS over the orgy of evidence being laid out:

-- Darleen and Ed's passports.
-- directions to and map of Canada.
-- Vincent's journal, torn and drenching wet.
-- Widowmaker next to Ed's Gun License.

HENRY (V.O.)
What was she doing up there?

SHERIFF ARNESS (V.O.)
No way to sugar-coat it. She and Ed were planning to elope to Canada with their ill gotten gains but were met by farce and tragedy.

DEPUTY KEYES (V.O.)
You see, all that was left from the All Hallows Eve heist was some 72 odd thousand rotted dollars.

CUT TO: the black duffle bag unzipped to find rotted stacks of 100 dollar bills in busted shrink wrap.

CLOSE ON upper half of three body bags, we find the frozen stare of Darleen, the eternal gasp of Ed, and the peaceful gaze of Vincent. Zippers close over their death masks.

DISSOLVE TO:

HENRY, in his robe, clutching a cup of coffee. Wipes a tear from his red, swollen eyes.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL we are back inside the COLLINS' TRAILER.

Sheriff Arness and Deputy Keyes sit in front of Henry.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Nothing like the pain of heartbreak, Mr. Collins, but you have to see the silver lining in all of this.

HENRY

Silver lining? My wife is dead, Sheriff.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Yes, but she was cheating on you. That oughta square the emotions.

Henry gives Arness a look.

HENRY

Things were pretty rough with us and I knew she was upset I got fired but I didn't think she'd take it this bad.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Hormones and true crime, that's what happens.

DEPUTY KEYES

They might even write one of them books about you.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Anything else you'd like to add to the statement you gave the operator this morning?

HENRY

Just want to reiterate what I said.

SHERIFF ARNESS

That you had a few drinks too many on account of being fired. You woke up in the afternoon and the car was already gone.

HENRY

That's right. She had already left to work, at least that's what I thought at the time.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Why'd you wait to call until now?

HENRY

She was working a double again. I wasn't expecting her till morning anyway, but when she didn't come back home I called the casino and found out she never showed up.

Henry breaks into a full on sob, gasping between cries.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I... loved her... so much.

Arness and Keyes wait till Henry finishes the performance.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Before we leave you to your mourning, I have one last question. We had a locksmith open Ed's locker at the prison for us, he said there was evidence of tampering.

DEPUTY KEYES

Someone broke into Ed's locker.
Picked the lock.

SHERIFF ARNESS

We were hoping you'd know who would want to get into there.

HENRY

Plenty of people. Ed sold drugs out of his locker.

Arness and Keyes exchange a look.

DEPUTY KEYES

Did he sell any amphetamines, stimulants... tranquilizers?

HENRY

(singing like a canary)

Sure. Sold all types. Uppers,
downers, pills, powders, liquids.

SHERIFF ARNESS

That explains McCready's toxicology
report.

HENRY

Excuse me?

SHERIFF ARNESS

His blood tested positive for a
cocktail of drugs which, over time,
induces respiratory breakdown. We
think Ed laced it in the beer.
Drugged him up to beat him down.

DEPUTY KEYES

Must of had themselves a real
struggle. Ed's blood was soaked
into the carpet, McCready's on the
sheets.

HENRY

I don't understand. You said they
died up north.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Ed tried to kill Vincent at the
Moosehead Motel the night after his
release. Unfortunately, he survived
and shot a pawnbroker's head off
for his truck.

HENRY

That's awful.

DEPUTY KEYES

(snickers)

His ex-wives didn't seem to think
so.

SHERIFF ARNESS

You watch your mouth, Keyes. That
man was set to vote for me.

DEPUTY KEYES

Sorry, sir.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Would you happen to know who Ed
dealt to?

HENRY

I wouldn't know. There was a lot.

DEPUTY KEYES

Figure I have to drug test all
those guards now.

SHERIFF ARNESS

You figured right.

Arness and Keyes get up to leave. Henry stands as well.

Deputy Keyes takes out a wrapped package from his bag.

SHERIFF ARNESS (CONT'D)

This was left in your box for you
at the prison. Warden wanted us to
pass it on to you.

HENRY

Thank you.

Arness shakes his hand, gives Henry's chest a strong slap.

SHERIFF ARNESS

Tough it out, son.

They turn and exit, as they do.

HENRY

Sheriff, can I get a copy of that
police report?

SHERIFF ARNESS

Cost you 10 cents per page.

After they exit, Henry looks down at his chest to find a "Re-Elect Sheriff Arness" campaign sticker stuck on it.

He sits down, opens the box to find stacks of books. An envelope with a letter sits on top with Henry's name on it.

Henry opens the letter, all written in beautiful cursive:

Dear Henry,

*I hope you find the treasures
in these books to warm your heart
as they have mine in this cold
desolate hell known as Reno. I pray
that we may meet in a new life as
true friends.*

*With Warmest Regards,
Vincent McCready*

Henry puts down the letter and looks over the book it was taped to: "Thomas Harris' I'm Okay, You're Okay."

Henry scoffs, tosses it back into the box.

ON DRAWER being opened. Henry in the BEDROOM. Removes a folder. Opens it.

CLOSE ON LETTERHEAD: RENO BANK LIFE INSURANCE POLICY. Darleen Collins. Zero Risk Assessment, Fully Insured \$100,000.

Move down to the subsections, reads: Double Indemnity Clause (Murder, Manslaughter, Accidental Death). \$200,000 pay out.

Henry closes the folder. Takes out a large suitcase, packs.

EXT. COLLINS TRAILER HOME - TRAILER PARK -- DAY

Henry exits carrying a bag. We track along as he moves to the back of the trailer. Opens the phone box.

He removes a recording device and shuts the box closed.

INT. SHED -- SAME

Henry slides a workbench and tool chest out the way revealing a false floor. Lifts it open.

Henry puts on gloves removes an empty blood bag, label reads "Reno Men's Correctional Facility, Employee: Goldberg, Edward Blood Type A Positive" along with various prescription bottles from Ed's locker.

Among them we find one of Darleen's well worn, highlighted True Crime books, cover reads FATAL DOSAGE with a photo of a spilt over pill bottle.

He stuffs them into a large metal ice bucket, adds Vincent's letter and books as well. Pours gasoline on top and throws in a lit match. Flame ignites burning his sins away. He covers the top, sealing it. Letting it burn.

He digs down deeper removing the red camping bag we saw in his opening scene. Unzips it revealing bricks of cash: the rest of the All Hallows Eve Heist score.

Inside is a piece of paper with calculations on it: \$428,788 - \$50,000 = \$378,788. Henry pens in Darleen's \$200,000, totaling \$578,788. He smiles and zips up the bag.

Turns out the lights, exits the shed. Beat. We're left alone in the dark for a moment when the door opens again.

Henry reenters finding his boots he wore "eagle watching" --
dried clay cakes the soles, same clay from the mine shaft.

He grabs the boots and exits.

INT. OFFICE - TRAILER PARK -- LATER

Henry finishes signing documents, handing them to the CLERK.

CLERK

What do you want me to do with the
furniture?

HENRY

Keep it, throw it away. I don't
care.

CLERK

Suit yourself. Where you headed?

HENRY

Away from here. There's nothing
left for me.

Another great performance as Henry slaps on a glum look,
picks up his suitcase, exits OUTSIDE where a TAXI waits.

INT. TAXI -- SAME

Henry enters. DRIVER looks at him through the rearview.

DRIVER

Where to?

HENRY

Just a short drive.

Henry reaches over the divider handing the Driver an address.

EXT. ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

Taxi drives down. Stateline sign appears, reading: "Welcome
to Beautiful California."

EXT. SUNNYSIDE SUBURBS -- DAY

Flying over an upper class suburb, DESCENDING toward a tree-lined street. A railroad of tract homes with green lawns, American flags, and SUVs in the driveway. White collar community.

We arrive outside the show house Henry was desperate to buy. A "SOLD" sign stands outside.

The taxi rolls into frame. Henry exits. Taxi drives off.

Henry stands in front, taking the place in. Heads to the front door, snatches up the "SOLD" sign. Unlocks it, enters.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD APPEARS:

EPILOGUE

AN OWNERLESS NAME TAG

NINE MONTHS LATER

SUNNYSIDE SUBURBS

SUNNYSIDE-TAHOE CITY, CALIFORNIA

JULY 4TH, 1993 2:07 PM

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON TRUCK GATE opening revealing bags of groceries.

Henry grabs the bags, enters the BACKYARD from a side gate.

The groceries are placed down next to charcoal, ice chest, and cases of beer. He's hosting a 4th of JULY BBQ.

Henry checks his watch, fires up his expensive grill.

Turns to exit when he spots something. Picks up garden shears and trims an overgrown blade of grass. Admires it. Perfect.

Henry picks up bags of ice, heads inside, we track along as--

KITCHEN -- SAME

Henry moves to the refrigerator door. Pictures of Henry's new life cover it: new friends, a new love interest, outdoor adventures and so forth.

He opens it, places the bags in. Moves to exit but stops in his tracks hearing the sound of metal SCRAPING.

Henry turns to find Roy sitting in the LIVING ROOM, playing with the same magnetic fastener.

Same Johnny Cash black wardrobe. Sits with his boots up on the glass table. Roy stops playing with the fastener. Beat. Dead silence for what feels like eternity, then--

ROY
Beautiful lawn. Better than the one in the brochure. Saw you added that extra wall in the family room.

Roy tosses the "Slice of Paradise" pamphlet onto the table.

ROY (CONT'D)
Would really chap that Banker's ass knowing you still got your dream house seeing as how you called him an "un-American sonofabitch."

HENRY
Who are you?

ROY
Be a gracious host, pour me a drink.

HENRY
What are you doing in my house?

ROY
A man doesn't talk without a drink...
(pulls back his coat,
revealing the .44)
...just not civilized.

Henry reacts instantly by taking out a pitcher of lemonade--

Roy shakes his head -*Tsk-tsk*- not that. Gestures to the BAR.

Henry puts down the pitcher, enters the LIVING ROOM. Moves to the mini bar. Holds up a bottle of bourbon.

ROY (CONT'D)
Mm-Hmm. Make it a double.

Henry pours out a glass, places it in front of Roy who doesn't drink, instead motions for Henry to sit.

ROY (CONT'D)
My Christian name is Roy Lacie and the answer to your second question is a bit complicated.

HENRY

Well, Roy, I have no idea who you are. I'm calling the police.

ROY

If I wanted to have this conversation through a glass window I would have called Sheriff Arness over in Reno.

Henry's face falls.

ROY (CONT'D)

I'm not blaming you for what you've done. You're just another victim of the American Dream.

(then)

We've all been to that place, bottom of the rock, wondering if God dealt us the wrong hand. Now most folks keep on betting till they're dead broke, trying to improve their lot in life, and then there's people like you, Henry, the book makers who fix the odds in their favor.

HENRY

If this is about money, I can drive you to the bank. \$50,000 yours, no questions asked.

ROY

Took me nearly a year to find you. Missed you at the motel. Saw you fleeing with Goldberg's Pontiac tailing you.

HENRY

Okay, make it \$60,000.

ROY

And in all that time, I was trying to figure out why you lied about having a juvenile police record. Better yet, why you purposefully sent the file to the Bureau Chief to get yourself fired.

Henry's hand rises to his forehead, becoming light-headed.

ROY (CONT'D)

Then it came to me. You needed a clean break from your old life.

(MORE)

ROY (CONT'D)

From your dead-end job, your broke down trailer, your cheating wife, and your no good friend. I always said, nothing more dangerous than a desperate man.

HENRY

You don't know what desperate is.

Roy responds by flicking the magnetic fastener.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Okay, Mr. Lacie. You don't want money and you don't want me arrested. What is it you do want?

ROY

This is my third time traveling out West. The first time was when I came to claim the body of my son, Doyle Lacie.

Roy tosses the magnetic fastener onto the table, it CLINKS on the glass, spinning to a stop, right side up. We realize the magnetic fastener is to a NAME TAG, it reads: DOYLE LANCIE, BRITISH AIRWAYS CARGO HOLD.

Henry's heart drops reading the name. He knows.

ROY (CONT'D)

He was a good boy. Real ambitious. Got accepted to a school out in Reno. Worked the night shift at the airport to help pay his way. Wanted no help from me and his mother.

(beat, affected)

One night three men walked in to a cargo hold, held the place up, and gunned my boy down. Out of those three only one man survived.

HENRY

(sotto, oh shit)

Vincent McCready...

ROY

After burying our son, the first words I spoke to his mother was a promise to kill Vincent McCready. She made me swear it on the Bible. Only when I had done so did she allow herself to mourn.

HENRY

But Vincent McCready is dead.

ROY

Not by my hand. I waited patiently for 10 years. Followed his parole closely. His life was owed to me and you stole it.

Henry drowns in sweat, eyeing Roy closely. Suddenly, he explodes from his seat, bolting for the KITCHEN. Reaches the sliding glass door when -- BANG!

A shot tears through Henry, sending him PLOWING through the glass door, SHATTERING.

Jagged shards rain down -- cutting and stabbing Henry who drops outside on the concrete. Broken glass embeds itself into his skin, gleaming in the mid-day sun.

Glass CRACKLES underneath Roy's boots as he takes his time walking outside.

EXT. BACKYARD - HENRY'S HOUSE -- DAY

Henry crawls on his elbows, trail of blood staining the concrete underneath. Looks up to find his cherished lawn waiting for him.

HENRY

...almost there.

Roy slowly follows Henry, watching him.

Henry reaches the grass, sinking into the lawn, but moves no further as Roy's boot pins his head down.

The cold steel barrel of the .44 glints as it enters frame, placed on the back of Henry's head.

ROY (O.C.)

You made it.

WIDER. A bright flash from the muzzle. Shot RINGS out. Birds flight from the trees.

At that moment like clockwork, the sprinklers turn on. The jet stream repeatedly slashing Henry across the face. Soon a pool forms around his body.

Beat. Roy holsters his gun. Turns and walks back inside. CAMERA TRACKS ALONG following Roy back into the--

INT. KITCHEN - HENRY'S HOUSE -- SAME

He moves into the LIVING ROOM. Stops by his glass of bourbon, downs it in one swig.

Pulls a rag from his pocket, wipes the glass clean, replaces it back among the other glasses.

Roy walks to the FOYER, exits. We don't follow, instead, CAMERA PANS into the FAMILY ROOM, coming upon...

A WALL TORN DOWN, exposing the wooden skeleton of the house. Ripped foam insulation and plaster litter the floor.

PUSH IN ON THE WALL, stacks of shrink-wrapped bills line the inside of the walls from floor to ceiling.

INT. ARNESS' OFFICE - SHERIFF STATION - RENO -- MORNING

Sheriff Arness enters. A year has changed the man, as evidenced by not one but two fax machines in his office.

In true political fashion Arness has flipped-flopped his view on the federal government as well. Gone is the photo of Arness and the Mayor of Reno. In its place are plaques from the FBI and the Justice Department.

Photos ops of Arness and Keyes at formal dinners shaking hands with Government Officials.

A framed campaign poster reads "Re-Elect Sheriff Arness -- FBI and Justice Department Approved."

A framed newspaper clipping reads: "Sheriff Arness wins re-election, unchallenged sixth year in a row."

He finds mail piled up on his desk. A package on top. Opens it first. Shuffles through the package's contents. His lips move as he reads, he stops midsentence--

SHERIFF ARNESS
KEYES! Get the Federal Bureau of
Investigation on the line, I just
solved the McCready case... AGAIN.

PUSH IN ON the contents of the package. We see the "Your Own Slice of Paradise" house pamphlet with it is a photo of the wall of money in Henry's house.

MUSIC CUE -- SONNY AND CHER "I GOT YOU BABE" kicks in.

FADE OUT.