

Three Neo-Noir Stage Plays

(based on the screenplays)

by

Karl J. Niemiec

Three Neo-Noir Stage Plays

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Small town, big crime. What do you do when you end up with all the bad money when all you're trying to do is get home to your good family? For French suit salesman, Vincent Boyer, in 1960, it's overcoming his greatest fears and finding a way to take the leap into making it home in time to save his loved ones.

What is a Neo-Noir story?

Neo-noir (English: New-black; from the Greek neo, new; and the French noir, black) is a style often seen in modern motion pictures and other forms that prominently utilize elements of film noir, but with updated themes, content, style, visual elements or media that were absent in films noir of the 1940s and 1950s.

About the Author:

When I left Los Angeles with a computer full of screenplays and launched my publishing company, I began to look into which stories I wanted to turn into novels.

After I began to direct children's plays in Indiana with great pleasure and success, I rethought my ideas about reformatting screenplays. I decided to select a few with similar genres and use the same reformatting technique I learned in writing Prolific Screenwriter that turns outlines into screenplays to turn them from screenplays into a book of stage plays.

I used this process as a personal formatting study for a class I created, Young Playwright. A one act play writing course, taught in class and on line.

Information at: <http://www.laptopublishing.com/young-playwright-course/>.

These Neo-Noir are the first of two books. The next will be a selection of comedies. I reformatted these three plays with the help of Final Draft.

The results of this reformatting and publishing process will also be used as part of a publishing class I teach at IUPUI. Write to be Published - The Business of Self-Publishing.

Karl J. Niemiec

GOING BAD

A Neo-Noir Stage Play

(based on the screenplay)

by

Karl J. Niemiec

CHARACTERS

This story is takes place during five year multiple-continuing flashbacks and present day so that all characters are seen in then-and-now continuing story perspectives.

DOC MITCHELL: Thirties. Almost finished his residency before getting shot up bad and left a cripple during a heist. Plays both a the cripple and healthy character.

JIM STOCK: Thirties. Works with Jules. White trash flunky thief. (Note: Would work well to cast twins because of makeup and staging.)

LEON POE: Forties. East Coast Gangster. Looking for what he believe to be his.

CHAZZ COLESON: Forties. East Coast Gangster. Driver for the Old Man, who is back looking for the money he believes to be his after being shot in the chest during the heist.

CORRINE: Early twenties. Has the kind of body men pay good money to watch.

DONNA CONNOLLY: Early thirties. Tall, slender, good looking... unsatisfied. A bitter-bitch over being jolted by Doc after the heist went bad, and being stuck with his school bills.

JULES STIMEN: Forties. A small time New Yorker born Fence. Lives part time on a boat.

OLD MAN: Old. Hitman who claims he killed Hoffa and cleaned up the murder of Kennedy and many others. In a fit of hallucination asks Doc to take his five million to his mother's church and give it to the church in her name for having a child like him.

EDDIE WHITING: Thirties. Ghetto-black. Patch over an eye. Airport baggage handler by day, petty thief by trade.

BULLHEAD LENNY BULCOWKI: Fifties. Drunk, ex-hospital custodian where Doc worked.

BARTENDER: Sixties. Just this side of a drunk himself.

MARGE NELSON: Fifties. Nurse at hospital where Doc worked.

SETTING:

A Neo-Noir, set in any major city with a harbor, lake or bay. The feel is dangerous, hot and gritty. A dark and sexually twisted existence of what bad money will do to even the best of people.

Two complete dramas unfold on stage in Multiple Flashbacks of Five Years Ago and Present Day scenes. Both then-and-now scenes take place on stage simultaneously and are shown with simple lights up and to black, or can be done pre-recorded V.O., for fluent staging. This is done as segues between scene and act changes to allow actors to go from one location to the next and back as both Flashback and Present Day Stories continue at multiple locations within scenes.

TIME:

Summer. Five years in the past and the present. Done in multiple flashbacks told about what happened by each character. Sets can be stark, using lights to separate multiple settings. The story and characters are the thing.

ACTS - SCENES:

ACT I - Scene One - Warehouse District Deadbeat Bar - Night

ACT I - Scene Two - Apartments - Next Morning

ACT I - Scene Three - The Coffee Can - Present Day - Day

ACT I - Scene Four - Inside County Hospital - Night

ACT I - Scene Five - Jules' boat - Night

ACT II - Scene One - Outside Grounds of Old Man's house - Day

ACT II - Scene Two - Inside the Coffee Can - Day

ACT II - Scene Three - Inside the Coffee Can - Day

ACT II - Scene Four - Inside Corrine's Home - Bedroom - Evening

ACT II - Scene Five - Darkened marina parking lot - Evening

At Rise

ACT I

Scene One

(Closing time in a Warehouse District deadbeat bar.

CHAZZ COLESON, (40's) in hat and overcoat veers to enter the local deadbeat bar..

The grizzled BARTENDER, (60's) just this side of a drunk himself, is closing down for the night. He looks up, his eyes asking nothing.

Chazz moves to the bar.)

CHAZZ

Two shots. That bottle.

BARTENDER

Sorry, pal wrong place. Closed.

(Chazz opens his coat, showing the Bartender what he's got.

Fearful, Bartender pours the two shots. He goes to put the bottle back....

...when LEON POE, (40's) hat and overcoat, steps up behind him and takes his wrist and makes him leave the bottle on the bar.)

LEON

We're looking for a man used to go by Doc Mitchell. Works here.

BARTENDER

I don't....

(Leon applies pressure to the Bartender's arm.)

CHAZZ

One body-two bodies... it don't make no difference.

BARTENDER

Woman who owns this joint... hires a gimpy guy to --

CHAZZ

-- That's him.

BARTENDER

I don't know him by that name but he's either in a heap out back, or in the can.

(Leon motions for the Bartender to pour them both another round. They down it.)

LEON

Anyone else work here?

BARTENDER

Not tonight.

(Leon heads for the back door and Chazz heads for the can at the back of the bar.

Chazz motions for the men's room door.

They both reveal sawed-off twelve gage pumps and enter.)

CHAZZ (O.S.)

We got a question for you, Doc?

BULLHEAD (O.S.)

Piss off, I'm takin' a dump, here.

LEON (O.S.)

Where's the old man's five million?

BULLHEAD (O.S.)

If I had his five million, would I be shittin' in this stinkin' stall?

LEON (O.S.)

You remember who we are?

BULLHEAD (O.S.)

Yeah, a couple of assholes. Now give a man his moment.

(Bullhead KICKS the stall door startling Chazz.)

Chazz's shotgun goes off, BLOWING a big CHUNK out of the door.)

CHAZZ (O.S.)

You've had it, Doc.

(Chazz and Leo enter the bar. They look at each other again. Leon disgusted. They find the Bartender gone.)

LEON

Ah shit, Chazz.

(The two men put away their shotguns.)

LEON

Some fun in the sun.

CHAZZ

And we still got two whole days.

(Leon SPITS . He looks around for a bar mirror.)

CHAZZ

There ain't one.

LEON

I got anything in my teeth?

LEON

Doc had a point, you know. Maybe we should'a asked him a few Q's.

CHAZZ

I got five years of kissing boss-ass and a slug in the chest from one of those pricks. I don't need to take Q's from any of them. We search Doc's glove box, we'll find where he lives, then the others. And what's left of our money.

LEON

As long as you're paying the dry cleaning. But I already got this out of the heap out back.

(Leon holds up a letter. Pulls out a photo of a woman. He hands it to Chazz.)

CHAZZ

From a girlfriend. Donna. Not the one he had with him that night. Posted four years ago. This address is where Doc grew up.

(hands picture back to Leon)

To his mother. She needed money. Cross town address. No phone.

LEON

From the looks of his heap she didn't get any.

CHAZZ

Maybe the other ones. Let's ask.

(Chazz and Leon exit the bar out the back)

End of ACT I

Scene One

ACT I

Scene Two

(Apartments - The next morning. Beautiful and sunny. Leon and Chazz look up the name on the call box. They find who they're looking for and BUZZ. They've changed out of their overcoats, now just dark suits.)

DONNA (V.O.)

We're full up this month.

CHAZZ

We're friends of Doc Mitchell.

DONNA (V.O.)

Who?

CHAZZ

Doc Mitchell. We'd like to speak to you about him.

DONNA (V.O.)

I haven't seen or heard from the bastard in five years.

CHAZZ

He worked downtown picking up drunks... takin' them home.

So what? DONNA (V.O.)

He's dead. CHAZZ

I'll be right down. DONNA (V.O.)

(DONNA CONNOLLY (30's) comes out of the front door. Tall, slender, good looking.. unsatisfied. A bitch.)

My friend works nights. Why don't we talk out here? DONNA

(Donna walks onto the apartment porch.)

You guys with the morgue? DONNA

Sometimes. LEON

He leave a will? DONNA

We're looking into it. CHAZZ

(Chazz pulls chair for Donna to sit under an umbrella. Leon lights her cigarette as he and Chazz get comfy.)

Nice place. CHAZZ

Pool heated? LEON

No. Got plenty sun out back. How'd you find him? DONNA

Drunk named Bullhead. CHAZZ

(She offers a cigarette. They decline.)

DONNA

Bullhead?

LEON

Know him?

DONNA

Lenny Bulcowski... custodian where Doc worked.

CHAZZ

That's him. When was the last time you heard from Doc?

DONNA

Like I said, five years ago.

(Chazz takes out the letter. She looks at it, reaching for it.
Chazz gives it to her. She opens it... looks at the photo.)

DONNA

I needed money, his mother claimed she didn't know where he was.

LEON

Guess she was lying.

DONNA

Screw her, she's dead.

CHAZZ

Glad to see you're not bitter.

DONNA

Who are you guys?

CHAZZ

Do you recall any of his friends? Someone he might have met just before --

DONNA

-- I want to know who you guys are.

LEON

We want to know what Doc did with all his money.

DONNA

Money? What money? I put his ass through med school while he baby-sat his mother. Was there money?

CHAZZ

That's what we want to know.

DONNA

What makes it any business of yours?

LEON

We're making it.

DONNA

I don't have a clue to what you guys are talking about. So please, don't waste my time with bullshit. Doc never had money, believe me. And the little he had went to his mother. All the expense and pain she had... should've just put her crabby ass to sleep.

(Chazz gets up like he's about to leave.)

CHAZZ

Then I guess if we find it... you won't be interested.

(Leon gets up.)

DONNA

Wait a minute... if there is --

(Chazz suddenly grabs her by the throat choking her, pulling her out of the chair.)

CHAZZ

-- It's ours!

(Chazz squeezes, cutting off all her air. Every time she grabs for his hands, he squeezes harder. Chazz and Leon look at each other as they wait. Leon checks his watch. He doesn't want to kill this one.)

LEON

She's close.

CHAZZ

Couple more.

(They wait. Chazz let's up. She gasps for air as she gets put back into the chair.)

CHAZZ

Next time I snap it.

(She sits there gasping, pissed, but even more scared. Leon and Chazz sit back and enjoy the shade.)

LEON

Secluded, this part of the block. Quiet.

DONNA

You killed him, didn't you?

CHAZZ

What happened to Doc and you?

(Donna eyes her cigarettes. Leon takes one out and lights it, puts it into her mouth. She inhale, thinking. Leon and Chazz wait. She exhale... and it pours out. All this time, needing to tell it all to someone.)

DONNA

Doc... almost finished his residency. He hadn't asked me to marry him. I understood he was waiting... for his mother to pass on. We didn't.... The last time I saw him he came home bleeding badly from the side. And he couldn't move his left arm. Blood dripping from his fingers. He packed a few things, clothes, and took off. He quit everything.. me, his mother. Just dropped out of our lives. His mother got by somehow... maybe he helped, I don't know. The dirty rotten... shit, he loved her, do anything.. but I loved him, you know.

CHAZZ

And you just let him go like that?

DONNA

He wouldn't let me help him.

CHAZZ

So maybe he found help somewhere else?

DONNA

There was another woman. Corrine... I can't remember the little tramp's last name. But she was no nurse's aide, or candy stripper, or whatever she was pretending to be. The bitch. Young, beautiful, a friend of hers had money. Lived on a boat... Jules. I met Doc there once for drinks after he'd gotten off work. Doc had a lot of energy... but not money... just dreams. She played him for a sucker. Probably right from the start.

CHAZZ

How so?

DONNA

She had tits... all right? And knew the value of them. Those others, there was something about those crumbs. They weren't like Doc. I didn't trust any of them.

LEON

Why?

DONNA

Because I didn't like them. Because I thought they were thieves. So I had Doc stay away from them. He did too, for awhile. Then he started coming home late again, and we'd fight. He may have screwed the little.... She went both ways... that I do know.

CHAZZ

Uh-huh....

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Donna's Flashback

(Yacht Club - Five years ago - Night. Off in a corner of the Marina, DANCE MUSIC drifts up from the deck of a twenty-four foot cabin cruiser. It's nice, but not new.

CORRINE (early 20's) shoes off, the kind of body men pay good money to watch, and kill to own. She dances slowly to the soft MUSIC in white stockings on the deck of the cruiser. She still has her hospital work clothes on... but unbuttoned like a stripper.

JULES STIMEN (40's), New Yorker Thief, POURS two drinks.

DOC MITCHELL, (29), strapping young med student, and Donna sit together at a table. Donna has a drink. Five years younger, not as hard. Doc has bottled water... watching Corrine.

JIM STOCK (30's), white trash flunky and petty thief, comes out of the cabin, SNOTTING his nose from blow.)

JULES

Jim, grab a bottle of tonic around the corner. Sure you don't want another one, Doc?

(Jim reaches for the tonic. Hands it to Jules, as he dances over to sit next to Donna. Jim smiles at her. Coke crumbs on his nose.)

DOC

I'll end it with this.

JIM

You want to dance?

DONNA

(sees the coke crumbs)

Thanks, no.

JIM

How about you, Doc?

(Jules moves over and hands Corrine a drink. She kisses him. He sits at the table.)

JULES

Shut up, Jim. You must see some real shit down there at County.

DOC

Very real.

CORRINE

Tell them how they stitched the wrong hand on the guys wrist.

JULES

That must've cost a bundle.

DOC

It was on purpose.

JIM

At least he could still jerk off.

(Jules gives Jim a look. Sees the coke crumbs!)

JULES

Dance with Corrine.

(Jim gets up and dances over to Corrine. She turns her back to the others. And secretly licks the coke crumbs from Jim's nose. Jim just about wets his pants.)

JULES

I try to avoid dead people. You know what I mean?

DOC

So do I, Jules.

JULES

Dead or alive, somebody pays the bill. Right?

DOC

It's a good racket.

DONNA

It's not just about the money. I mean, it can't be... just that.

DOC

There's the people.

JULES

So, you into medicine, Donna?

(Something catches Jules' attention. His eyes follow.)

DONNA

Administration... I, ah --

JULES

(Jules gets up.)

-- Excuse me.

(Jules goes down below. EDDIE WHITING, ghetto-black, (30's), enters. He has a patch over an eye. Dressed in an airport baggage handler uniform. He carries an expensive RIFLE CASE and jumps aboard.)

EDDIE

Sorry to interrupt.

(He dances past Corrine and Jim, following Jules into the cabin. Donna leans close to Doc.)

DONNA

Let's go home.

DOC

In a minute.

(Jim moves back to the table.)

JIM

Dance with her, Doc.

(Corrine motions Doc out to her. Doc looks at Donna then gets up to dance. Pulling her up with him. They move over to dance with Corrine.

Donna is slow to get into it. Gradually the three of them blend. Donna not wanting to dig it. But does.

Jules comes out of the cabin followed by Eddie. Eddie is putting money into his pocket. Eddie pinches Corrine as he goes to the bar.

Jules moves over to the table, watching them dance.)

JULES

You get tired?

JIM

She told me to sit down.

JULES

Hey, Doc, come here?

(Doc dances over to Jules. Leaving Corrine and Donna together for a moment. Donna looks a little uncertain. Corrine takes her hands.)

CORRINE

Just this song.

(They continue to dance. Donna playing shy.)

EDDIE

Yum, do that thing you do, girls.

(Doc sits across from Jules. They watch the women dance.)

JULES

Medical supplies... interesting business.

DOC

I suppose.

JULES

You must know a lot about that stuff.

DOC

I'm not ripping any off, if that's what you're asking.

JULES

Oh, you mean that. Eddie's dad needed money. Eddie, come here. This is Doc Mitchell. That's his girl, Donna.

EDDIE

Dances nice. I got to get back to work, Jules.

JULES

Tell your dad I said thanks.

EDDIE

Huh, oh, yeah, sure... later gators.

(Eddie takes off as the song ends. Donna moves over to get her purse. She's disturbed.)

DONNA

We have to go.

DOC

In a minute, honey.

DONNA

I have to work in the morning. And you've got to pick up your mother. Nice meeting you all.

(Donna glances at Corrine. Nothing pleasant there. She heads for the docks.)

DOC

Well, I guess we're out of here. Nice meeting you, Jules... Jim. Corrine, I'll see you at work.

CORRINE

Bye... she's interesting, Doc.

(They exchange looks as Doc goes. Corrine, still dancing, turns to face Jules as Doc goes after Donna.)

JULES

What did you say to her?

CORRINE

Just girl talk.

Black out on Donna' Flashback

Lights up on Present Day - Continuing

(Outside of Donna's apartment building. Donna stubs out her cig. Leon and Chazz are all ears.)

DONNA

In fact, the one called Jim, owns a coffee shop not far from here. On the boulevard, a couple of months ago, there was an article when his place opened up. The Coffee Can.

CHAZZ

And you went to see him?

DONNA

Yes, of course. He remembered me.

LEON

And?

DONNA

He'd been in prison.

CHAZZ

Where'd he get the money?

DONNA

Why ask me?

LEON

What about the others?

DONNA

After Doc came and went, I drove to where the boat was. Someone set it on fire. The dock master didn't know anyone by the name of Jules. The boat was registered to someone else.

CHAZZ

Who?

DONNA

He wouldn't tell me... I swear... it was a police matter. I was afraid for Doc, so I didn't push. He was never the same after meeting them... especially her... Corrine... they screwed up my life. I'm sleeping with a dumbass truck driver.

CHAZZ

Sounds like it.

LEON

Don't make us come back.

DONNA

Don't worry, I won't.

(They get up and leave.)

End of ACT I - Scene Two

ACT I

Scene Three

(The Coffee Can - Present Day. Chazz stops in front. He takes a newspaper from the trash can. He looks around and enters the shop, turning the "open" sign to "closed" as he shuts the door. Chazz crosses from the door. Leon comes in from the back.

Jim Stock is behind the counter GRINDING coffee. He doesn't hear them. Jim turns to find the two gangsters sitting at each end of his counter. Jim smiles... worried. He shuts off the grinder.)

JIM

Am I in a shit load...?

CHAZZ

Not yet.

JIM

Give me a minute. My girl has an audition... so I'm fillin' in. You try to run a business... it's showbiz... what can you do? Singers, you know... they gotta do. Besides she's so cute. So I...

(Chazz opens the paper, blocking view of Jim from the street, while Leon makes his way around the counter. Jim makes a move for a bat above the cash register.

But Leon grabs Jim by the back of the head. And forces his face down under the steamer nozzle. Holding it there just above the eye.)

JIM

What is this, a shake down? Take whatever you want.

CHAZZ

We just came in to read the paper. Have a cap. Talk about old times.

JIM

We know each other?

CHAZZ

Doc Mitchell. Our mutual friend.

JIM

You're mistaken. I never heard of him.

(Leon SPRAYS Jim's forehead with the steamer.)

LEON

That must'a hurt bad.

CHAZZ

I wonder what a machine like that would do to an eye? Heard you had a friend missing an eye. Guy named Eddie... worked out at the airport.

(Leon positions Jim's left eye right under the steamer and starts to pull down on the lever.)

JIM

I swear I don't know anything.

(Chazz continues to read his paper. Leon pulls down on the lever. Jim SCREAMS and tries his best to get away. But Leon has his big paw around Jim's throat. Pinning his back to the counter with a knee under his groin. Forcing him under the STEAM. Burning the hell out of Jim's eye. Chazz eventually looks up from his paper.)

CHAZZ

Check it.

(Leon stops and positions Jim's right eye under the steamer.)

CHAZZ

That looks bad. Poached even. You should see a doctor.

LEON

You see any docs lately, Jimbo?

(Jim's eye is boiled shut.)

JIM

I swear, I ain't seen him in years.

LEON

Too late, he's dead.

JIM

I'm not surprised.

CHAZZ

We heard you, a girl, and two other guys were great party friends of Doc's.

JIM

Who killed him?

CHAZZ

We did.

LEON

And we'll do the same for you, but real slow unless you tell us what you know about Doc.

(Leon hits the STEAMER a couple of times.)

JIM

Okay, okay.

CHAZZ

Get him some ice.

(Leon pulls Jim upright and pushes him towards the ice machine. He grabs some, and puts it in a towel. Gives it to Jim. Jim tenderly puts the ice to his face.)

CHAZZ

Start talking.

JIM

Shit, I'm blinded in this eye.

LEON

It's better than being dead in both.

CHAZZ

Ask Doc.

JIM

Sure, we met Doc. And his girl.

LEON

That would be Donna.

JIM

Yeah, out on Jules Stimen's boat. A whole stinkin' life ago.

Black out on Present Day

Lights up on Jim's Flashback

(Inside Julies' Boat - Five years ago - Jim's story - Night Just before Doc and Donna arrive for the first time. Jim takes a LONG HIT of coke from the small kitchen counter. Jules eats at a small table.)

JIM

So, what's with this doctor?

JULES

Corrine says he's interesting.

JIM

She doin' him?

JULES

It's business.

JIM

One and the same.

JULES

He's bringing his girl. I want you to keep your trap shut when they get here. Don't want to spook 'em.

JIM

Corrine dumpin' bedpans...? Come on. What's the angle? Drugs?

JULES

Medical supplies.

JIM

You think you can work him?

JULES

If he's workable.

JIM

Big dough.

JULES

I know a guy lookin' for machines. The big stuff. Wants to hit the delivery trucks. He needs someone on the inside above reproach.

JIM

Like a doctor.

JULES

You ain't as thick as you look, Jim.

JIM

Yeah, I dropped some.... Thanks.

(Jules smirks, hurting Jim's feelings.)

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Present Day -Continuing

(Inside The Coffee Can - Day.)

JIM

Donna only came just that once. She was a bitch anyway.

LEON

Yeah, we met. She had fond memories of you, too.

JIM

Screw her. She came in here... gave me a hard time.

CHAZZ

We don't care.

JIM

Doc didn't come back for awhile... Jules thought we scared him off. But Corrine kept workin' him at the hospital. Man this girl had it. Out to here. Jesus, I miss those days... hate them even more.

LEON

You can fantasize later.

JIM

Sorry ... like I said....

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Jim' Flashback - Continuing

(Outside Bar - Night. Doc waits at a table. Corrine crosses the street to him. Doc looks a little confused. She's out of uniform.)

CORRINE

Hey, Doc, you been avoiding me?

DOC

Of course not. My mother, she's been... well, she's not doing so good. So, I've... how've you been?

CORRINE

So-so. What's new with the girlfriend?

DOC

Working hard... but good. You look rather--

CORRINE

--exhausted. I know.

DOC

Shouldn't have to work so hard.

CORRINE

And I thought strippin' was shitty work. I count bedpans in my sleep. I need a cigarette.
(takes one out)

DOC

What happened to five minutes?

CORRINE

Sorry, I... would you do me a big favor?

DOC

I'll try.

CORRINE

I know you've got to go. But could we still stay for a drink?

DOC

What about your shift?

CORRINE

I got someone to cover for me.

DOC

This table okay?

CORRINE

Sure, I just need someone to talk to.

(sits bringing her chair closer to him)

DOC

I'm a surgeon not a shrink.

CORRINE

You're smart so you'll do.

(takes a long drink. Seeing Doc watch her.)

Sorry, I needed that real bad.

DOC

Don't be, I'm on my second one. What's up?

CORRINE

Jules, that second-rate prick. I'm having troubles dealing with him. Making me work like this, jotting notes about stuff I don't give a crud about.

DOC

So, why don't you just leave him?

CORRINE

He'd never let me go.

DOC

You're a big girl. Just take off.

CORRINE

And go where?

DOC

Anywhere. You'd look good on the back of a milk carton.

CORRINE

I'm not jokin' around, Doc. Come on. That's his Beamer I drive. I live in his condo. I spend his money.

DOC

Take a train or bus.

CORRINE

Alone?

DOC

If you have to.

CORRINE

You don't know Jules.

DOC

I guess I don't.

CORRINE

Help me, Doc. I'm going crazy. You know what a town like this can do to a girl built like me. I was strippin' privately when I was twelve. Jules has video and he's talkin' about postin' them on one of them web pages... you know, the dirty ones.

DOC

What can I do?

(Corrine's lips are close to Doc's. Her chest on his arm.)

CORRINE

I don't know, something. At least make my life more interesting.

DOC

Interesting?

CORRINE

Jules will never be man enough for me, Doc. The way that I see it. I've got all these pent up images in my head. You know?

DOC

I can understand.

CORRINE

Do you?

DOC

But there's Donna. We're --

CORRINE

-- I know. She's got a great ass.

DOC

So you did hit on her.

CORRINE

Who me?

DOC

I better stop drinking.

CORRINE

Think about it.

DOC

Believe me, I am. I've been with Donna for a long time, though. I couldn't do that to her... and my mom and I, we owe Donna a lot.

CORRINE

Maybe it's time you gave Donna something special. Like me.

Black on Jim's Flashback

End of ACT I - Scene Three

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

ACT I

Scene Four

(Inside County Hospital reception area - Doc's Story - Night.)

JIM (V.O.)

I'm just tellin' you what she told us. So, Doc's back around... when about a month or so goes by. Me, Jules, Corrine and even Eddie was there listin' to him tell it....

DOC (V.O.)

(in mid-story)

...this limo pulls up outside. And some old man is helped out by his driver. So, we put him on a gurney. The old man's clutching his chest, in awful pain. We all thought classic cardiac. Only the driver starts yelling for us to move faster, get him off the street. I don't know who's more hysterical the driver, the old man, or the nurse the driver threatened.

(Chazz, then a DRIVER, is at the hospital reception.

MARGE NELSON, (50's) a nurse takes his information. Doc exits a room up the hall. Passing by a custodian,

LENNY BULCOWKI, "Bullhead" (40's) sweeping the floor.)

MARGE

I need to know his name.

CHAZZ

That's my name right there. That's our address. That's all you need to know.

MARGE

I'm sorry, sir.

CHAZZ

Yes, you will be, Marge.

(Marge picks up the phone. Chazz glances and catches Lenny looking.)

MARGE

I'll have none of that. I'll call....

(Chazz takes her hand. Places the phone down. Slowly twists her wrist. He opens his coat. Shows her something.

Lenny turns away and heads up the hall.)

CHAZZ

This is a very delicate matter.

(Doc walks up to the counter. He knows something.)

DOC

Excuse me, sir.

CHAZZ

Back off.

DOC

It's about your associate.

CHAZZ

(almost happy)

He's dead?

DOC

No. He's fine now. We pumped his stomach. Mushrooms.

CHAZZ

What?

Mushrooms. DOC

Mushrooms? CHAZZ

He was hallucinating. DOC

He's not dying? CHAZZ

No. He's fine. I'd like to keep him here over night. For observation. Is that all right? DOC

If he's fine, I'll take him home. CHAZZ

He wants to stay here. With me. DOC

With you? CHAZZ

Yes. I said I'd stay with him. DOC

I don't know about that. CHAZZ

He's scared... thought he was dying. I'm happy to spend the night. I've reading to do... and I'm off tomorrow. DOC

I'll need to talk to him. CHAZZ

Fine. DOC

Where is he? CHAZZ

Up there... second door. DOC

(Chazz moves away leaving Marge with Doc.)

MARGE

He had a gun.

DOC

It's his business.

MARGE

He wouldn't give me the man's name. I'm calling the police.

DOC

Do me a favor, will you, Marge. Put him in a room by himself, for me. He's an interesting old fart. I want to talk to him. And please no police.

Black on Jim's Flashback - Doc's Story

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Jules' Boat - Night. Eddie gets up to get another drink.)

EDDIE

Wait a minute... anyone else want a drink?

JIM

Me.

EDDIE

So you wanted to stay with this guy? Even though you knew his Mook was packin'?

DOC (V.O.)

I felt for the guy... it might'a just been crap, but earlier...

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up - Hospital - Doc's Story - Continuing

(Doc and the Old Man are left alone. The Old Man is strapped to a bed. He's delirious with fear, guilt and mushrooms. Doc fills out his chart.)

OLD MAN

Come here... please come here.

DOC

You're fine.

OLD MAN

I'm a dead man, Doc. You hear me?

DOC

Not tonight.

OLD MAN

She tried to kill me.

DOC

Who did?

OLD MAN

The one with the big tits.

DOC

She's not here now.

OLD MAN

I was paying her... I couldn't breath, my chest, my heart... promise me --

DOC

-- You're in a hospital. We've pumped your stomach. You'll be fine in the morning.

OLD MAN

You got to promise me something.

DOC

Okay.

OLD MAN

Promise me you'll go to my home. There's a suitcase. Over five mil. Upstairs under the floor in the master bedroom. I'm not a good man. You should know that. I've sinned all my life and I'm gonna end up in hell for sure. I've sold my soul. Many, many years ago when I was just a dumb kid.

DOC

Okay, let's save this one for our follow up visit.

OLD MAN

You got to fix it for me. You're good, they'll listen to you. Take the money, all of it, to St. Michael's... back home... my driver knows the place. But don't tell why.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Go to confession. Father Donovan... he knows what I want. Leave it there. A shrine and a grant in my mother's name. Her maiden name... the name her father gave her. She was ashamed of me... How bad does a boy got to get so his own mother can't stand to see his face?

DOC

I don't know.

OLD MAN

This is the face. You're lookin' at that face. I've changed the world. With these hands. I've killed so many people. Important people. Good people... some not so good. Some deserved it. But I done it for money. Millions. For that money. Take it all. No one knows about it. Take it all. Give it to him. Promise me.

DOC

I promise. If you don't wake up tomorrow... I'll do like you asked. Okay?

OLD MAN

You promise?

DOC

Yes, I promise.

OLD MAN

Stay with me. I can't trust nobody. There's no good around me, just evil. Please, I'm dying

DOC

You're fine. At this rate you'll probably out live me. We'll put you in a nice safe... room.

OLD MAN

You'll stay with me?

DOC

Ah --

OLD MAN

-- Please. I got nobody who cares. No family. No friends... nobody.

DOC

What about your driver?

OLD MAN

Him? He's just like me. Evil. A vulture, waiting for me to go.

DOC

Okay, I'll stay with you.

OLD MAN

Thank you... thank you... go tell him. Tell him I'm staying with you tonight.

DOC

I'll be right back.

Black on Jim's Flashback - Doc's Story

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Jules' Boat - Night.)

CORRINE

Hey, don't forget me.

JULES

(getting him and Doc drinks)

I asked.

CORRINE

Well, I didn't hear.

JULES

Christ. Mushrooms, huh? Like 'em.

(makes her a drink.)

JIM

So who was this guy?

EDDIE

He said he didn't know. Remember the other guy filled the paperwork.

JIM

It was one of them rhetorical questions, dummy.

EDDIE

Rhetorical this?

JULES

This is gettin' interesting, so shut up, the rest of ya.

Back on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Doc's Story Continuing

(Doc sits with a schoolbook Doc is startled awake by the Old Man BABBLING in his sleep.)

OLD MAN

... then there was Jerry Steinberg. I was fourteen... no twelve... I shot him in the back, six times. Never saw his eyes... never look them in the eyes they told me... don't feel.

(Doc gets up to check the Old Man's pulse and eyes.)

OLD MAN

I killed a hooker once... no twice... just for kicks. Do' em and kill 'em, I don't know why. In the war... the big one... I killed hundreds of men, women and children. I dropped bombs. Big ones. I liked it. No eyes. I was a good killer... I'm a pro. Big man... I shot Kennedy. Never met him. Big political job. Pissed the wrong people off. Money people. Not by myself... but I got him. And Hoffa... that dumb son-of-a-bitch... his big mouth... sorry, Father... I cremated him... and his friend. I didn't kill 'em, but I cleaned 'em for... I never liked him anyway... burning... then I killed the others, the one who shot him, young kid, and the others who drove. Truck drivers. You see that movie? Daffy Hollywood. Never knew their names. I had to... nobody could know but me... just me. I got all the money. You can't tell? So I'm telling you, Father. Someone must know, someone must speak for me in the end. So God will understand. Please don't cry. In the end, won't he kill all his children? Isn't one soul as bad as millions? I've made millions, Father... millions. How much will it cost... because of me... to save the mother who had me? A boy like me? I made millions... millions... millions....

Black on Jim's Flashback - Doc's Story

**Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Doc's Story -
Continuing**

(Outside the hospital room, the Old Man a wheel chair. Chazz brings Doc unwillingly. Chazz moves away.)

OLD MAN

How ya doin', Doc?

DOC

Hectic.

OLD MAN

This will just take a minute. Last night I said some things.

DOC

You were excited.

OLD MAN

I thought I was a goner.

DOC

Yeah.

OLD MAN

Look, the things I said... did anyone else overhear our little conversation?

DOC

I don't think so.

OLD MAN

You'd tell me, if anybody did.

DOC

Of course.

OLD MAN

You spent the night with me... in my room.

DOC

You asked me to.

OLD MAN

I tend to talk in my sleep... I'm old... feeble-minded... did I say something?

DOC

I sedated you fairly heavily. You slept the whole night.

OLD MAN

Yeah, I felt rested. But you were gone when I woke up.

DOC

Your driver came in to relieve me. And another guy.

OLD MAN

Yeah, they told me. Listen, I want you to have this.

(The Old Man takes Doc's hand, searching for the truth.
When he let's go Doc has money in his hand.)

OLD MAN

If you knew what was good for you, you'd forget all about last night.

DOC

Figured that...

Black on Jim's Flashback - Doc's Story

DOC (V.O.)

...was the best thing. Then he invited me and my girl up for dinner sometime. Just like that. How about dinner... you and your girl?

End of ACT I - Scene Four

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

Act I

Scene Five

(Jule's boat - Night. Doc finishes his story.)

JULES

That's a hell of a story.

JIM

Hoffa and Kennedy? Come on... why not Marilyn?

(Doc takes out a crisp one-thousand-dollar bill from his wallet. He passes it around. The others pass it amongst themselves.)

EDDIE

That real?

JULES

Very real. And he's got five million in his bedroom?

JIM

I've heard some bullshit stories --

CORRINE

-- And you've told most of them, Jim.

JIM

Hey.

JULES

You don't know his name?

DOC

No.

CORRINE

But the address --

JULES

-- Forget about it... it's a good story, Doc. Shit, it's after four. I'm hittin' the hay. Get the hell off my boat. All of ya.

(Jules gets up, downs his drink. He looks at Corrine with a knowing look.)

JULES

Baby, I need the car early. You mind dropping her off, Doc?

DOC

Not at all.

(Doc leads Corrine away.)

JIM

That was interesting.

JULES

We're talking five million.

JIM

We're talking the mob. Doc's too smart for that. Hell, I'm too --

JULES

-- If I had the address... I could come up with something.

JIM

Ten says Doc never goes for it. We should stick with the medical stuff.

JULES

Screw that. We're talking five-mil. One last shot, one big score. All we need is Doc on the inside with one of these.

(Jules holds up a bugging transmitter and moves so he

can watch Doc and Corrine.)

JIM

With his girlfriend in the way? Come on --

JULES

-- Not his. Mine.

JIM

Corrine? And Doc? He'd still never go for it.

JULES

He'll go for it. If I know Corrine, he's goin' for it right now.

(Jim reacts to the look on Jules' face.)

JIM

You sicked her on him.

JULES

I don't have to like it.

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Marina Parking Lot. Corrine walks with Doc to his car.
She takes his arm and leans against them.)

DOC

Maybe this isn't such a good idea, us being alone like this.

CORRINE

Why? I've been thinkin' a lot about us, Doc.

DOC

Because I've been thinking too much about us.

CORRINE

Say the word and I'll leave him.

DOC

Corrine....

(He stops. She moves up, leans hard on him.)

CORRINE

Say it.

DOC

You'll get us in trouble.

CORRINE

With our share of five mil we could afford a lot of trouble. I could get away from Jules.

(looks back at the boat)

That lousy bastard. You could take better care of your mom.

DOC

That's hitting below the belt.

CORRINE

Just get the address. Jules will work out the details.

DOC

No.

CORRINE

Please. For me. I need this.

DOC

We're not ripping off the old man. I'm not helping you.

CORRINE

Fine!

(Corrine spins around, leaving him.)

CORRINE

I don't need your help.

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(From boat, Jules and Jim watch Corrine march back up the dock.)

JULES

Shit, he's not goin' for it.

JIM

Make her go down on me and I'll beat it out of him.

JULES

Shut up.

JIM

I'm serious.

JULES

So am I.

(Corrine jumps on the boat and storms past them and into the cabin below, SLAMMING the door.)

JULES

I didn't tell you to get pissed off.

CORRINE (O.S.)

He won't help us.

JULES

Just do as I told you.

(Corrine comes back out.)

CORRINE

Maybe he'll let you suck him off, Jules. Better yet, why not Jim, at least he might enjoy it.

JIM

Shit, for a million dollars, you bet I would.

JULES

Screw 'em, we'll do it another way.

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Inside County Hospital Emergency Reception Area .
Doc stops Corrine from thumbing through files.)

DOC

It's not in there.

CORRINE

Where's his file?

DOC

I put it in a safe place. I want to talk.

CORRINE

Just give me his file and get out of my face.

DOC

Corrine... let's talk, for a minute.

CORRINE

Only if you give me the file.

DOC

This thing, these people you're with, this is not good.

CORRINE

The old man is a killer... and deserves to get ripped off. Now give it or I start screaming.

DOC

If we go up there, to that house, and the money ends up missing, who do you think they'll come looking for? Us.

CORRINE

We don't do anything. We have dinner. The only time we'll leave the old man's sight is when I go powder my nose and call Jules. If they catch anybody, it'll be Jules.

DOC

There'll be alarms, armed men.

CORRINE

Jules knows that... he'll work it out. Just get us the address.

(rubs her body against him.)

Men want me, Doc. But you, you have me, just --

(tries to kiss him)

DOC

(holds her back.)

-- It's not like that. It can't be.

CORRINE

But, Doc --

DOC

-- I mean it, Corrine... my mom's.... If we do this, it's for her. And I tell Donna about it.

CORRINE

Whatever. Offer still stands

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Present Day - Continuing

(Chazz and Leon sip their coffee. Jim has ice to his eye.)

JIM

Can you believe that, the momma's boy? She might've been bullshit tin' but I doubt it knowin' him. We needed Doc in on this was all I cared. Why didn't matter. What's a little head among five million dollar partners? But you should've seen the look on Jules' face when she lied and told him it was the first time she liked it. And how big Doc's cock was. She liked to mess with him, you know. Am I boring you guys?

(Chazz and Leon just look at him.)

JIM

Anyway, at least I didn't have to.

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Doc shows up at Jules' boat. Corrine goes to him and gives him a hug. Jules watches this closely. Jim and Eddie are drinking and SMOKING POT.)

JULES

You got it?

DOC

I got it.

JIM

Five million.

EDDIE

If the old man ain't just some lunatic.

JULES

Shut up, both of ya. Get us some grub, Corrine.

CORRINE

What am I? The cabin girl?

JULES

Just get it. Don't give me a hard time.

(Corrine moves to her purse and takes out a PHONE.)

CORRINE

Chink, wop or spic?

JULES

There's leftover cold cuts down below.

CORRINE

Then eat it, Jew Boy.

JULES

Who the hell do you think you are?

CORRINE

Someone who is perfectly capable of deciding what and who she wants to eat.

JULES

Ain't this a bitch?!

DOC

Can we get on with this?

JULES

Back off.

(to Corrine)

Get down there.

CORRINE

I don't want your lousy leftovers, you cheap bastard. I want pizza.

(Jules SLAPS her. Doc shoves Jules away from Corrine.)

Jules PUNCHES Doc in the face. Eddie and Jim try to keep them apart. Finally, Doc kicks Jules' ass.)

(Corrine goes to Doc, looking at his hands. Jules is helped up by Eddie and Jim, he LAUGHS it off. Though his mouth is bleeding.)

CORRINE

You could've hurt your hands.

JULES

What about my face?

CORRINE

Nothing could hurt that.

JULES

You want some more, kid?

DOC

If you hit her again, yeah.

JULES

I'll hit her whenever I want to... she's mine. Understand?

DOC

Perfectly.

(Doc jumps off the boat and heads up the dock. Corrine turns to Jules and he motions for her to go after him.)

JIM

What are you, crazy? We need Doc

EDDIE

Are we gonna eat or what?

JULES

Order something. He'll be back.

JIM

What the hell is going on?

JULES

I don't mind her sucking on him when I tell her. I just don't like her braggin' about it. And I sure as hell don't like her wantin' more.

JIM

You are crazy... she was shammin' ya. Just to mess with your head for makin' her.

JULES

Order some pizza, goddamn it.

EDDIE

I don't know, them cold cuts sounded damn good to me.

(Jules shoots him a look. Eddie picks up the phone.)

Black on Jim's Flashback

End of ACT I

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

ACT II

Scene One

(Outside Grounds of Old Man's house. Jules comes back joining Corrine, Eddie and Jim.)

(Jules takes out a drawing of the grounds. The house is in the middle. He's marked trees and gates. He shows it to them, with a pencil.)

JIM (V.O.)

Anyway, we hiked up the hill and were huddled outside the Old Man's Mansion wall the very next day.

JULES

Either that tree or that tree, Eddie. Right now there's five of them prowling the grounds.

EDDIE

The one closest to the wall.

JULES

I want you to go out and practice with that rifle. Your life may depend upon it.

EDDIE

Don't worry... I know guns.

JULES

Jim, you wait out here for Eddie after you chain the gate. Stay put. If any shooting should start --

JIM

-- Shooting? You make it sound so romantic, Jules. Shooting. Like it's pulp fiction. Think about it. Leaving our cars so far away. We could be dead walking up here like this. You, me, ALL of us. Just get in, rob him, get out. Don't be shootin' people, Eddie.

JULES

This isn't a kid's game. You want a play date, go to your mom's. Start walking. Now.

(stares Jim down)

The three of us will be wired in. Corrine, the patio has tables with ashtrays. You and Doc get out there, whatever the reason, go out. Take smokes. If there's an alarm, he'll shut it off.

CORRINE

What if he turns it back on?

JULES

Watch him. See how he does it. If you can't, just say so and I'll enter up here. There's a vent to the attic. Whatever you do, keep him out of the master bedroom.

CORRINE

That's it? What if you can't find the money?

JULES

I'll find it. Five million... shit I can smell it from here.

EDDIE

I can smell something.

(The others look at Jim.)

JIM

I'm nervous.

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Present Day - Continuing

(Inside the Coffee Can - Day. Jim is looking at his eye in the bar mirror.)

LEON

Okay, fine, we can see wantin' the money. But what happened?

CHAZZ

Yeah, why hurt the old man? Why not just tie, gag and run? You knew we were there. It don't make sense. Why start the shooting?

JIM

Things went just as Jules planned. The old man comes by about a month later and Corrine as you know goes with Doc up to the old man's house. Only, from what I heard, the old man swung a little fruity....

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Jim's Flashback Continuing

(Inside Old Man's Mansion - a month later - Night.
The Old Man sits at the end of an elegant, candle-lit dinner table. Flanked by Doc and Corrine on either side.)

OLD MAN

Drink up.

DOC

I'm fine.

OLD MAN

Have some, I hate to waste this stuff. 1973 Zieregg Sauvignon Blanc. Manfred Tement, Austrian province of Styria. Grown right outside the Iron Curtain. So drink up. People died for this shit.

(The Old Man passes the bottle to Corrine. She pours herself some and hands the bottle to Doc. Doc sets it on the table.)

CORRINE

I'll drink his share. So where're you from?

OLD MAN

Back East.

CORRINE

New York, New Jersey?

OLD MAN

East of here. You two live together?

CORRINE DOC

Yes. No.

(The Old Man looks them over.)

OLD MAN

Which is it?

CORRINE

We have separate places. We just, you know --

OLD MAN

-- Hump a lot.

DOC

Ah --

OLD MAN

-- I would if I were you, kid. If you don't mind me sayin', Corrine, you're a very doable young lady.

CORRINE

I'm no lady.

OLD MAN

I was bein' polite. Why don't I show you the rest of the house?

(gets up)

Leave the bottle, I got other stuff. This way.

(The Old Man leads them out the door.)

CORRINE

So, how long have you lived here?

OLD MAN

None of your business.

(Doc and Corrine following the Old Man. The place is old, dark, and full of things from around the world.)

OLD MAN

Living room. Bar. Shit house over there, and there.

(Doc and Corrine go into the living room admiring Art.)

DOC

A Picasso?

OLD MAN

A forgery.

CORRINE

Mind if I smoke?

OLD MAN

Not in the house. I got lung issues.

DOC

There's an ashtray out here.

(Doc reaches for the porch door.)

OLD MAN

Hold on.

(The Old Man goes over to a box on the sideboard. Opens it and takes out a remote. Points it at a spot on the wall.)

OLD MAN

Helps me sleep at night. I'll be right back.

(Doc and Corrine exchange looks as they go outside. They sit at a tables. Doc takes her lighter and lights her cig. An armed O.S. MOOKS walks past.)

CORRINE

You need to get into the box.

DOC

You'll have to distract him.

(Corrine takes a drag, lets it out. She waves to the Mook.)

CORRINE

Nice night. Mook. This'll be easy.

(The Old Man comes out onto the porch.)

OLD MAN

You done?

CORRINE

Almost.

OLD MAN

Put it out.

(Corrine takes a deep drag, exhales. Eyeing the Old Man. Snubs the cigarette out on the table. Doc is stunned... but the Old Man just grins... locking eyes with Corrine.)

OLD MAN

I got something for you.

(The Old Man goes in. Followed by Corrine and Doc. Doc shuts the porch door and the Old Man takes the remote and points it back at the spot on the wall.)

OLD MAN

Make yourself at home, Doc. We'll be just a minute.

(The Old Man takes Corrine's hand and leads her away. Leaving Doc in the living room... alone. The Old Man leads her to the bar and nearly pins Corrine against it.)

OLD MAN

This is older than I am.

CORRINE

Then give me a stiff one.

OLD MAN

Can't... last time I nearly croaked.

(Corrine takes his hand and places it on her breast.)

CORRINE

Poor boy, maybe you could put me in your will.

(The Old Man smiles. They sip their drinks.)

OLD MAN

I want to watch you and Doc.

CORRINE

Do you? How bad?

(She takes his hand and puts it up under her dress.)

OLD MAN

Five grand bad enough for you?

(Corrine rubs the Old Man's crouch.)

CORRINE

No.

OLD MAN

Seven-fifty. I ain't askin'.

(Corrine takes the Old Man's hand out from under her dress. Sucks his finger. Then lets him take a lick.)

CORRINE

Ten grand. Cash. Doc's a little shy.

OLD MAN

You're right, you're no lady.

CORRINE

Business person. Let me get my purse.

(He reaches for her breast again. Corrine stops him.)

CORRINE

Doctor's orders.

OLD MAN

I'll just enjoy the show.

CORRINE.

(walks away)

Yes you will.

(She slowly lifts her dress to give the Old Man a show. She glances over her shoulder with a naughty smile. The Old Man watches... loving it.)

Black on Jim's Flashback

End of ACT II - Scene One

Lights up on Present Day - Continuing

ACT II

Scene Two

(Inside the Coffee Can - Day. Chazz and Leon look at each other knowing all about the Old Man's sex exploits.)

JIM

Ten grand just to do it. You imagine? I would've licked her dirty toes for a dime. But this lucky stiff was offered ten grand. All of us wired in. Jules man... damn. I'm gettin' a woody just tellin' ya. And the old man didn't even want in.

CHAZZ

He had to take pills. The last time scared him a little.

JIM

So you guys were friends of this --

LEON

-- It don't matter now. It's a diverse world. Ya know.

JIM

Don't I. So I chained the gates...

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Old Man's Bedroom. Corrine leads Doc over to the bed. There's a full bar on a cart beside a chair facing the bed.)

DOC

This is...

(Doc turns and Corrine pushes him on the bed. And gets on top of his chest. Her panties almost in his face.)

... Corrine.

DOC

(Corrine pins the Doc's arms over his head. Skirt high on her hip, ass showing for the Old Man.)

The Old Man positions himself in the strategically placed chair next to a table-bar, with a lamp, and gun on it.)

CORRINE

He wants to watch us do it.

DOC

He --

CORRINE

-- Ten grand, Doc. Think of your school bills and your mom.

DOC

Ten grand?

CORRINE

Fifty-fifty. You'd like to do me right now wouldn't you, Doc?

OLD MAN

An investment in your future.

(Corrine and Doc look eye to eye. They smile.)

CORRINE

What do you say?

DOC

It's your call.

(Corrine gives Doc a deep kiss, capping it off with a bite on his neck... and whispers....)

CORRINE

Make him get the money now.

(She gets off the bed and turns to the Old Man.)

CORRINE

How about down stairs on the pool table?

OLD MAN

I like it here.

(Doc sits up. Corrine moves over to the Old Man and takes his drink. GARGLES with it... and SPITS it back into his glass, handing it to him.)

OLD MAN

You're a nasty bitch, aren't you?

CORRINE

You have no idea.

(Corrine moves over to the bathroom door, slides in, looking at Doc as she enters. She closes the door.)

OLD MAN

Let me see your dick.

DOC

Let me see your money.

(The Old Man just smiles. He slowly gets up. Corrine sits on the toilet... PEES. During this, she takes the BUG RECEIVER out of her hair. Puts it in her ear.)

CORRINE (V.O.

They're in the master bedroom. He wants to watch us. You heard him. I tried that. He wants it up here. It's open and it's off. Think of something fast or I do him.

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Present Day - Continuing

(Inside the Coffee Can. They're losing Jim to the pain. He's looking faint.)

LEON

So, at this point they got to be thinking kill the old man or put on a show.

JIM

I don't know. I don't. Jules got in. The next thing... all hell is breaking loose.

CHAZZ

Yeah, we remember.

JIM

Then keep in mind, I'm still on the outside listening on the headset. But what I think I heard was...

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Outside The Old Man's Mansion. Eddie in tree. The upstairs bedroom window lights up from GUNFIRE. O.S. MOOKS can be heard running from all over the place towards the house. Eddie is FIRING with his high-powered rifle. He's about eight feet up, hiding behind the tree. He's got a headset on. Bullets STRIKE the bark.)

EDDIE

Screw this, I'm out of here. Start the car, Jim.

(Eddie jumps for the wall but slips and ends upside down with his ankle stuck in the fork of a branch. His face dangles about eye level from the ground. He's terrified as he tries to get free. FOOT STEPS quickly approach as he COCKS his rifle, twisting around to see.)

EDDIE

Oh, shit. I'm stuck, Jim.

(More SHOOTING. Eddie eye locks onto a gun barrel.)

EDDIE

Ah, damn....

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Outside the Old Man's Mansion - Jim has pulled the receiver out of his ear. Loud gun SHOTS come through it from the house. He fights not to run. Two distinct GUNSHOTS explode inside the wall.)

JIM

Come on, Eddie.

(He checks his watch. Shooting has stopped. Eerie quiet. He listens to his headset. Nothing. Getting up quickly.)

JIM

He's dead... I told him... goddamn it. We're all dead now.

(Jim puts the receiver back in his ear. He waits another anguishing five seconds, looks once more at the wall. Eddie appears at the top of the wall. He's having trouble but he makes it over. He crawls towards Jim. Blood covers his face, some of his hair and skull are missing.

He gets to his feet, stumbling towards Jim... his brain exposed... and SPLATTERS his ripped open face on Jim's chest. Jim screams. Blood everywhere, all over his clothing. Jim starts to crawl away... Eddie holds on.)

EDDIE

Take me with you. Please, Jim, don't leave me here.

JIM

You're a mess... you're dead... I told you... what am I suppose to do with you now?

EDDIE

Show me some respect. Put me in the trunk, at least.

JIM

I got good shit in there.

EDDIE

I'd do it for you.

JIM

Listen up, Eddie, there's a few leathers and things... keep them away from your face.

EDDIE (O.S.)

Remember me....

Black on Jim's Flashback

End of ACT II - Scene Two

Lights up on Present Day - Continuing

ACT II

Scene Three

(Inside the Coffee Can. Jim is noticeably disturbed by the retelling of Eddie. He's got real tears, and not from pain.)

JIM

That's all I heard. We made it to my car and were at the boat when Jules and Corrine got back. Corrine went crying down below. Jules said Doc tried to kill him in the house. And that Doc shot the old man. Right in the head. Jules had to shoot Doc just to get out. But we had the money. That's all I cared about right then.

CHAZZ

Doc double-crossed everybody. Took all the money. We got a problem with that.

JIM

Look, I know, I had my doubts, too. But you should've seen her... Corrine was hysterical when they showed up. Something went wrong up in that room. Jules had to go down and slap some reality into her before cops crashed our party.

LEON

Get to the point before you croak on us.

JIM

We were just about to split the cash when Doc showed up. He denied everything. Had a gun... he took it all, the bastard took it all and Corrine with him. I know, it sucks, but it's how it went down. This much I do know.

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Jim's Flash Back - Continuing

(Jule's Boat/Dock - Later. Corrine and Doc back down the ramp. Jim and Jules exit the cabin. Jim points a gun. Jules pushes it down. They watch Doc and Corrine leave.)

JULES

I'll see you again, Doc.

DOC

No you won't.

JIM

You just gonna let him go?

(Jules looks at Jim, then the gun.)

JULES

Throw it over.

(Jules picks up his spare gas canister and starts splashing it around the deck.)

JIM

What the hell?

JULES

Wipe and throw the gun over... as far as you can throw... and get out of here. I don't want to see your face around me again, Jim.

JIM

But we don't have the money .

JULES

With or without, that was the deal. Remember?

JIM

Yeah, but I thought --

JULES

-- You think too much, Jim. Throw the gun.

(Jim wipes the gun and throws it out as far as he can.)

JULES

Now beat it.

(Jim jumps from the boat to the dock.)

JIM

What am I gonna do? I got Eddie in the trunk.

JULES

You'll think of something.

JIM

That's it? You're serious? Who's gonna fence my stuff?

JULES

You'll find someone. I'm shutting down. Movin' on. I'd suggest you do likewise in case the old man's stories were true.

(Jim thinks this over. It's a scary thought. He heads for the dock. Jules grabs up a traveling bag and jumps off the boat. He lights his lighter and tosses it onto the boat. It BURST into flames.)

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Present Day- Continuing

(Inside Coffee Can, Jim really looks pissed. Still hurt from it all.)

JIM

All them years we'd been together. I came that close to shootin' them all. If Jules hadn't've stopped me... I don't know... I don't like shootin'... but five million dollars... maybe I would've.

(looks at them)

Back then... I'm a legit business man now.

CHAZZ

Yeah. So, where are they? Jules, Corrine?

JIM

Not a clue. I spent three years in prison for armed robbery shortly after, then two years on the street. I didn't get no postcards. The bastards... you know what it's like bein' a punk in prison?

LEON

Not lately.

JIM

Guy like me? I ain't sat straight since. Yeah, if I had found Doc back then... and don't think I didn't look... maybe I'd'a killed him. I don't know for sure.

CHAZZ

So Doc got the five million dollars.

JIM

Yeah. What did he do with all that?

LEON

Nothin'.

JIM

Jesus, this world stinks.

LEON

He was a gimp livin' in a dump, drivin' drunks home in a heap.

CHAZZ

A bum's bum.

JIM

I don't get it. Maybe he did give it to the church... or his mother.

LEON

We checked.

CHAZZ

So how do we go about finding the others?

JIM

Well, Eddie's dead... I know he ain't got it.

CHAZZ

Jules and Corrine.

JIM

Try the phone book.

(Leon slams Jim's hand on the bar with the bat.)

JIM

Okay, okay... shit, I was gonna tell. I went lookin' for them after I got out. Look what... I just had this counter done. But it was hopeless. They were gone. Then one day....

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Outside a liquor store's parking lot - DAY. Jim has positioned himself by the door. Sitting down. He's dirty.)

(O.S. A Porsche' pulls up and Corrine, looking like a million bucks, enters the stage.

Jim looks up. Starts to say something... then suddenly realizes who it is. He turns his head as she goes in. He thinks. He gets up and hides.

Moments later Corrine comes out with cigs and moves O.S. to her Porsche' STARTS it and drives away.)

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Jim's Flashback - Continuing

(Outside Corrine's Home - Day. Jim makes sure no one is watching and KNOCKS on the door.

Corrine opens it, expecting someone else. She's startled to see a bum. She slams the door. Jim sticks his foot in it.)

JIM

Ah, shit, come on, I'm not gonna hurt ya.

CORRINE

I've got a gun and I know how to use it, mister.

JIM

Relax, Corrine, or whoever you're callin' yourself. It's me, Jim Stock.

(Corrine slowly opens the door. She's got a big ROCK on her finger. She looks Jim over. He looks her over.)

CORRINE

What do you want?

JIM

Well, the bimbo's all grown up.

CORRINE

You look like shit, Jim.

JIM

Thank you. Seen Jules?

CORRINE

Not in years. What do you want?

JIM

What do you think I want?

CORRINE

Look, my husband will be home any moment.

JIM

Any moment. I'd love to meet him. Tell him some stories.

CORRINE

I don't have any money here.

JIM

I just need a few hundred bucks to get back on my feet.

CORRINE

I told you....

JIM

I'll wait.

CORRINE

If I gave you a few hundred you'll just be back.

JIM

I might... who knows? I missed ya, you know... I fantasized about your ass the whole time I was takin' it up there in prison. You think I'm kiddin'?

CORRINE

What are your plans?

JIM

I was thinkin' of, you know, opening up my own place... some place far from here.

CORRINE

How far?

JIM

Depends on you.

CORRINE

Just a minute.

(Corrine goes into the house and comes back with paper.)

CORRINE

It's my pager. Call it in one hour. I'll call my business manager and --

JIM

-- You got a husband and a business manager? What are you now, a movie starlet?

(Corrine just looks at him.)

JIM

I always thought you'd be good in porno. Jules had some footage of you. Talk about suckin' the chrome --

CORRINE

-- You through with all the bullshit, Jim? I'm offering you a second life.

JIM

I'm sorry. I'm... shit I need off these streets. I want to get clean, Corrine. You don't know... things ain't been... my mind ain't... I get this face... Eddie's face, it... remember...? He... shit.... I ain't eatin' right... this ain't right, you and me livin' so different like this.

(sees she doesn't care)

How much life we talkin'?

CORRINE

If I help you, I don't ever want to see your face again. You hear me? One hour. Call it. Minute after that I change the number.

(Jim lowers his head and nods that he understands. He looks back up at her. Corrine closes the door in his face.)

Black on Jim's Flashback

Lights up on Present Day- Continuing

(Inside the Coffee Can. Leon is making another couple of caps. He gives one to Chazz. They carefully sprinkle chocolate and whipped cream on them.)

JIM

His face... I live everyday with that shattered face.

CHAZZ

They stick with you sometimes.

LEON

So she set you up? Not a bad place.

JIM

Thanks, beats usin' a gun. She started a bank account in my name not far from here where I can only borrow upon it. For business purposes. "Coffee Can"... come to me while I was in. Ten grand.

CHAZZ

And you never saw her again.

JIM

I swear. It was the deal. She gave me a life. I'd let her live hers. I'm a changed man. A tad demented perhaps. But I'm definitely not goin' back to that other life. Ever.

LEON

So where do you suppose she got the ten grand?

JIM

She was married.

(Leon and Chazz look at each other.)

CHAZZ

Where is she?

JIM

Please, don't hurt her.

CHAZZ

We just want a chance to ask her the same questions.

LEON

Maybe you'd like to run this place by Braille?

JIM

Okay, okay.

(Jim tries to write down an address, but can't.)

JIM

Shit... you write it. 7543 Coast Shore. Last I knew, that's where she was. I don't even know if it was her place.

(They finish their coffee. Chazz finishes the sports page. After a moment Leon and Chazz move away from the counter. Jim stands there with the ice rag over his eye. They leave him alone. He moves over to make a phone call, but he stops with a startled look in his good eye! The phone RINGS on the other end.)

JIM

Don't... DON'T!

(Jim tries to cover up, but the bat smashes down on his head. Jim slides to the floor as Corrine picks up on the other end.)

CORRINE (V.O.)

Hello, hello?

(The phone cord slowly begins to be pulled upwards.)

JIM

Coming for you.

CORRINE (V.O.)

Who is this? Who..? Jim? Who, Jim?

(But Donna now has the phone.)

DONNA

Me, bitch.

Black on Present Day

End of ACT II - Scene Three

Lights up on Present Day- Continuing

ACT II

Scene Four

(Inside Corrine's Home - Bedroom - Evening . Corrine hurriedly packs more things. She's not even completely dressed. She's going away . Far away.)

CORRINE

Take that one. Give me a minute. I got one more suitcase to get.

(Corrine is startled to find Chazz and Leon at the bedroom door. She makes a run for the patio but Leon tackles her on the bed. And slaps her good. She shuts up.)

CHAZZ

Here's the story.

(Leon rips off her blouse.)

CHAZZ

You tell us everything or we play tag team. Jail house rules.

CORRINE

I don't know what you want.

(Leon RIPS off her pants, leaving her in panties and bra.)

CHAZZ

We want to know where the money is.

CORRINE

What money?

(Chazz UNZIPS his fly.)

LEON

He's gonna like this.

CORRINE

Look, I don't know who you guys are. Or what you want.

CHAZZ

We want to know who ended up with our money.

CORRINE

Are you sure you have the right person?

(Leon slaps her again.)

LEON

You want top or bottom?

CHAZZ

You know me. I'm a butt man.

(Leon flips Corrine over.)

CHAZZ

Where's Jules?

CORRINE

Okay, okay, I haven't seen him in years.

LEON

(starts to fondle her ass)

Nice. Real nice. Still perky after all this time.

CORRINE

I'm telling you the truth.

CHAZZ

How do we get a hold of him?

CORRINE

His office number is in my book. Over there. On the table.

CHAZZ

Who's got the money?

CORRINE

I don't.

(Leon slaps her ass.)

CHAZZ

Who does?

CORRINE

Doc does. You've got to know he was smarter than all of us.

LEON

Last we knew he had no brains.

CORRINE

I thought Doc was a sweet guy. I wanted to run away with him. I would have, but he went crazy.

CHAZZ

Humor us if we sound confused.

CORRINE

Doc was... he had this other side.

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Corrine's Flashback

(Yacht Club Parking Lot - Night. Corrine walks Doc back to his car after the fight.)

DOC

What did you tell him?

CORRINE

I... ah... I told him a little fib... about us... to get him mad.

DOC

Jesus... he throws a punch.

CORRINE

I don't want you sticking up for me again. Do you hear me? I can fend for myself.

DOC

You're welcome.

CORRINE

I don't want to see you hurt.

DOC

When this is over... so are you and Jules. I'll see to it.

CORRINE

Come on... I was mad at him... I had it coming.

DOC

You can't let that bastard.... Am I bleeding?

CORRINE

Careful what you say, Doc. I like you. At times I might even think I'm falling for you.

DOC

Corrine...

CORRINE

When this is over. If you still want this. We'll talk. But you see how he is. Jules will never just let me go on my own. We'll have to give him what he wants. She touches him around his bruised face.

DOC

Leave Jules to me.

Black on Corrine Day

Lights up on Corrine's Flashback - Continuing

(Inside the OLD MAN'S bedroom/bathroom)

CHAZZ (O.S.)

So, tell us about you and Jules that night?

OLD MAN (O.S.)

So let's see it. Drop your pants.

(The bathroom light CLICKS off. Corrine reacts. Corrine quietly enters the bedroom. Light from the windows are the only illumination in the room.

Doc is standing there with the Old Man's gun. His pants undone. A crazy look in his eye. He doesn't see her. The Old Man is in the chair... holding out ten grand. He's frightened.)

DOC

I told you not to touch it.

(Doc SHOOTS the Old Man right in the head.

Suddenly Jules enters from the hall. Doc FIRES at him. Missing. Corrine SCREAMS!)

(Jules FIRES back. Hitting Doc in the side. Doc flops down on the bed.)

Jules closes the door and moves over to Doc. Holds him down. Taking the ten grand.)

JULES

(to Corrine)

Stack shit in front of the door. Do it, now!

(Corrine, in near panic, moves over and starts stacking things against the door. Meanwhile... SHOOTING starts from outside around the grounds. Jules grabs Doc off the bed and throws him on the floor.)

JULES

Where's the rest of the money?

(Doc doesn't answer. Someone tries to open the bedroom door. POUNDING. Jules steps on Doc's stomach.)

JULES

Where... and I'll let you live.

DOC

Against the wall, beside the bed.

(Jules looks down, seeing Doc reach for the Old Man's gun. Jules kicks it under the bed.)

Jules moves to the wall and opens a floor plate behind the bed and pulls out a funny old child's suitcase. Maybe something the Old Man's mother gave him.

He opens it on the bed. The suitcase is full of thousand dollar bills.

Corrine moves to Doc, goes to her knees.)

CORRINE

Jesus, Doc. Why?

(Doc opens his mouth to answer but Jules pulls Corrine up and over to the patio door.)

(Someone starts SHOOTING at the lock on the bedroom door. Doc begins to crawl under the bed for his gun.

Jules opens the upstairs patio door and pulls Corrine out. Corrine takes one last look at Doc.

Jules FIRES at the bedroom door. The SHOOTING stops.)

Black on Corrine's Flashback

Lights up on Corrine's Flashback- Continuing

(Jule's Boat.)

CORRINE (V.O.)

We made it to our car. I was screaming at Jules for shooting Doc. He punched me out. Next thing I remember we were getting out of the car at the boat.

(Jules and Corrine run down the dock to the boat. Corrine is not cooperating with Jules. Jules pushes her onto the boat. Then takes her into the cabin and slams the door on her, turning on Jim. Corrine is SCREAMING inside.)

JIM

Is that it?

JULES

What do you think it is? Where's Eddie?

JIM

Eddie's in my trunk. Dead. I'm not sure about Doc.

(puts his hands over his ears)

You've got to do something about her.

(Jules drops the suitcase and heads for the cabin.)

JIM

What happened in there?

JULES

The son-of-a-bitch started shooting at us?

JIM

The old man?

JULES

Doc!

(Jim stands there in disbelief as Jules goes into the cabin. Jules inside the boats cabin and grabs a pillow and puts it over her face.

But she continues to SCREAM, until finally she starts to flail her arms and legs trying to get free.)

JULES

You gonna shut up, huh, you gonna shut up? You gonna shut the hell up?

(Suddenly Jim grabs Jules from behind and pulls him off Corrine. Jules punches Jim right in the face, knocking him down. Corrine gasps for air, throws the pillow at Jules.)

CORRINE

You prick.

JIM

What the hell's the matter with you, Jules? You could've killed her.

JULES

Shut up, the both of ya. Get the money and bring it down here.

(Jim goes out to get the money but stops. And is backed through the door by a gun to his chest.

Doc, who also has the suitcase of money, and bleeding bad, follows the gun in.)

DOC

Back off, Jim. Drop the gun.

(Jim drops the gun. Doc kicks it away.)

JIM

You're, you're, you're... Jesus... you're a walkin' dead man.

DOC

Yeah, which one of them did me?

(points the gun)

You or you? I say you.

(indicating Jules)

Get up, Corrine, get up!

CORRINE

But I didn't --

DOC

-- Pretty slick, hitting the breaker switch, Jules. Me and the old man playing show and tell. Don't look surprised, Jim. They weren't planning on splitting any of this.

(Jim looks from Jules to Corrine and back. Corrine turns around. Doc grabs her by the hair.)

DOC

We're backing out of here. And you're making sure I get to some friends who can fix me.

(Doc and Corrine start backing out the door.)

DOC

Sit down, both of you. Hold hands. I said hold hands.

(Jim takes Jules' hand. Jules gives Jim a look.)

DOC

That's how I want to remember you two sweet guys. Thanks for trying to screw me.

(Doc backs out with Corrine. Doc stumbles, moving away from the boat. He's still bleeding badly. Corrine is CRYING.)

CORRINE

You've got to listen to me.

DOC

I'm not interested in any more of your bullshit lies.

CORRINE

Me? You killed the old man. You fired at Jules. You're acting crazy.

DOC

Shut up. That sick old man touched me. It was dark. I didn't know it was Jules. But he damn sure knew it was me. I trusted you. And you left me there to die.

(Doc stops and puts his GUN to her head.)

CORRINE

I didn't want to leave you. You were shot bad. What was I to do? I don't know what happened... but it wasn't me. You shot first.

DOC

Shut up.

(Doc backhands her with the gun. She covers her head with her arms and goes to her knees.)

CORRINE

Please, Doc, don't do this... leave Jules his share or he'll find you.

DOC

Put your arms down. Get up. We got to get to my car.

CORRINE

You've got it all wrong. I'll help. Whatever you say. But Jules will find you... anyone connected to you. Me, your mom, Donna... you can't....

(Headlights flash on them. Doc pulls up. He lowers the gun to her heart so the driver can't see it.)

DOC

Eyes forward. You make a move and I swear to God I'll splatter what little heart you have left all over this parking lot.

(Doc coughs and drops to his knees. Corrine kicks him in the face and runs off into the dark. He looks crazed. He tries to get up but can't. He just manages to drag himself and the suitcase out of the light.)

Black on Corrine's Flashback

Lights up on Present Day - Continuing

(Corrine's Bedroom - Night. Corrine wipes her eyes blows her nose into the sheet.)

CORRINE

That was the last time I saw Doc. I called Jules to let him know where I was. He wanted nothing to do with me. Called me a bunch of horrible names.

CHAZZ

But you got his office number.

CORRINE

A year or so ago my husband and I ran across Jules at a luncheon. He gave me his card. The subject never came up.

CHAZZ

And you never called him.

(Corrine doesn't answer. Leon pinches her hard. She SCREAMS.)

LEON

You like that? I think she liked it.

CORRINE

Once. Jim looked me up a few months ago. He needed money. So I called Jules. I couldn't ask my husband for that kind of money. So Jules gave it to me to help Jim start a business. I'm married now to a very nice man. We're trying to have children. I made a few mistakes. But the past is the past. After what I've gone through I'll do whatever it takes to make it stay that way. Whatever you want. Just don't hurt me.

CHAZZ

What we want is the money? If Doc had it, what did he do with it?

CORRINE

I don't know.

CHAZZ

Then let's call Jules. Tell him Doc has found you, and he's coming here.

(Leon gets off her. She pulls the sheet off the bed and moves to the table. Chazz hands her the phone. She opens her phone book and PUNCHES numbers.)

CHAZZ

Tell him to come here right now.

CORRINE

Mr. Steadmen please. Jules? It's Corrine. He's found me. Doc! He's coming here, right now. Any minute. My car's in the shop! Please come, right now. Help me.

CHAZZ

Steadmen now, huh. You're pretty good at this hysterical game.

(Chazz looks at the phone book. Something's not right.)

Black on Present Day

Lights up on Present Day Later - Continuing

(Corrine's house. Jules enters the unlock door.)

JULES

Corrine?

(No reply. Jules reaches inside his coat.)

Corrine, you here?

(Chazz steps out of the dark... puts a gun to Jules. He pats him down. Taking a gun from Jules' coat.)

CHAZZ

Inside, Mr. Steadmen.

JULES

What's this?

CHAZZ

You'll remember soon enough.

(Chazz brings Jules into the house. Corrine is there with Leon. She's still got only the bed sheet on over her panties.)

LEON

Been a while since you had to watch another man with her, huh, Jules.

JULES

What's this all about?

CHAZZ

We want our money .

JULES

What money ?

(Leon grabs Corrine by the throat. Kisses her.)

CHAZZ

When we're done with your wife, Jules, we start on you.

JULES

My wife?

(Leon grabs Corrine and throws her down on the couch.)

CHAZZ

There's no home phone number in Corrine's book, Jules. And why? Because you live here. And though we didn't know what you looked like before, we do now.

(Picks up a framed picture of Corrine and Jules and SMASHES it against a wall.)

JULES

Okay, fine, we know each other. But we're not married. There's photos of other men there. You can see I don't live here.

(Chazz punches Jules right in the face. Jules slides down the wall near a closet.)

CHAZZ

I already owe you one for a hole in my chest, so don't push it.

(Jules and Corrine look at each other.)

JULES

All right, okay, I'll give you what's left.

(Jules moves over to the closet and opens it with Chazz right behind him. There's a FLOOR SAFE in it. Jules bends down and opens it. Chazz pushes him aside and reaches in, pulling out the Old Man's childish suitcase.)

JULES

There's over a million dollars there. Just leave us alone.

LEON

Isn't that romantic? All this time these two love-turds stuck together.

JULES

So you found the others.

CHAZZ

Yeah, we found them.

JULES

Then it was you in the house.

CHAZZ

We're friends of the old man. You took our money.

JULES

Your money?

LEON

Never said we were good friends.

CHAZZ

Waited for the old man to croak naturally. You beat us to it.

JULES

You're right, we did rip him off. But it was her. She came out of the bathroom and starting shooting.

CORRINE

He's lying, I swear.

CHAZZ

Are we suppose to give a shit?

JULES

I'm not a killer. She killed the old man. She shot Doc, too. You see she's got the money. This is her place. Not mine.

CORRINE

What the hell are you doing?

JULES

Nobody was meant to get hurt. But she hid a gun somewhere... and came out shooting. Maybe planning to cut us all out... I don't know... then Doc showed up thinking I shot him. But she fixed him real good. She told me herself.

Black on Present Day

End of ACT II - Scene Four

Lights up on Jules' Flashback

ACT II

Scene Five

(Marina darkened parking lot. Corrine holds two guns on Doc. His and hers.)

CORRINE

Don't look at me, just step over to the ditch.

DOC

Back there, I was... I thought --

CORRINE

-- What? That I loved you? Maybe I do. A little. Not enough to split five million.

(Doc moves over picks up the money.)

DOC

Take the money, just get me to my friend's --

CORRINE

-- Your friend a mortician?

DOC

Jesus, am I stupid.

CORRINE

I'll send flowers to your mom.

(Corrine SHOOTs Doc in the right shoulder and he falls into the darkness. Corrine keeps SHOOTING at him, pissed as hell... both guns.)

Black on Jules' Flashback

Lights up on Corrine's House - Continuing

(Corrine is pissed. The guys don't care. They push her down on the couch.)

JULES

I caught up with her at my condo. Or she might've cut me out, too.

CORRINE

You stinking liar.

CHAZZ

Look, it's been a long day. We got what we come for. So, why don't you move over close to her.

JULES

You don't need to kill us... please understand --

CHAZZ

-- Understand this.

(Chazz takes a SWIPE with his gun at Jules' head.

But Jules rebounds from the blow by grabbing Chazz's gun hand, twisting it around. And SHOOTING.

Leon with it. Leon, in shock, falls back, pinning Corrine to the couch.

Chazz SMACKS Jules in the face with the suitcase. Pulls the gun away, and SHOOTs Jules in the forehead. He turns around just in time to find...

Corrine still under Leon, but now struggling to take aim with Leon's gun.)

(Chazz FIRES first, but the bullet SINKS into Leon.
Corrine is finally able to pull the TRIGGER.

Chazz gets it good, just under the suitcase full of money.
He goes down. Slowly drowning in his own blood.

Corrine pushes Leon off her to the floor and gets up. His
blood soaking the sheet. She peels the sheet away, standing
there triumphantly... gun in hand. The Gangster slayer.)

CORRINE

Men are so stupid.

(Corrine runs into her bedroom, pulling on clothes
quickly, grabbing up her last suitcase.

Something stops her when it goes THUMP in the living
room. Corrine moves back into the living room, counting
the bodies.

She quickly moves to get the money. But it's not there.

She turns to find... Donna standing at the front door...
with the gun Chazz had taken from Jules. And the child's
suitcase full of money.)

DONNA

Hello, bitch.

CORRINE

Please. Jules made me do everything.

DONNA

Yeah, yeah, I heard the whole tear-jerker. Pardon me if I don't weep for any of you.

CORRINE

There's enough money in there for the both of us.

DONNA

There's not enough money in the world for the both of us. So here's taxes plus late
charges on the money you already spent.

(Donna SHOOTS Corrine. Corrine doesn't go down.)

DONNA

And this is for all the debt I got from Doc's unfinished med school.

(SHOOTS Corrine again. She still doesn't go down.)

DONNA

This is for ruining my life.

(SHOOTS her again. This time Corrine drops to her knees.)

DONNA

And this is for being a sick, double-crossing cunt.

(Donna SHOOTS her again. Corrine drops to the ground. Dead. Donna stands right over her.)

DONNA

And this... is for the memories.

(SHOOTS her again. Feeling vindicated. She turns to leave and finds Doc standing at the door. He's unarmed and crippled from his old wounds. Donna is shocked.

But not as much as Doc by what he's just witnessed.)

DONNA

Doc?

DOC

I'm too late....

DONNA

Try five stinkin' years too late.

DOC

I'm so sorry.

DONNA

You should be. You won't spend any of this.

DOC

No, Donna. For you. Because of the pain I caused you over that money.

DONNA

Pain? Look at you. I don't give a shit about the pain, you ass. Money, Doc. The money you promised me from all this would've been nice.

DOC

I know... I never got any.

DONNA

Of course, you were a fool then, and you're a bigger fool now.

(Donna points the gun at Doc. But instead, a GUN goes off from behind her. The BULLET RIPS right through Donna and... HITS the wall behind Doc.

Chazz's gun DROPS from his hand. He lies there barely alive.

Donna is in disbelief.. Blood oozes out of her mouth as she drops to her knees. Still trying to pull the trigger, and gets off a few wild SHOTS... SHATTERING things.

Doc moves to catch her... even before the gun CLICKS empty. He holds her up from the floor. BLOOD dripping through his fingers.)

DOC

Donna, I'm so sorry. I was wrong. I made a mistake. I trusted her. I should've listened to you. I'm not the person I used to be. Don't die... you can keep the money ... Donna...?

(Donna's eyes open back up. Her head is over Doc's shoulder, her mouth near his ear. She can barely talk.)

DONNA

Doc...

(COUGHS up more blood)

Oh, god... Doc....

DOC

Yes, baby, I'm here.

DONNA

Go fuck whoever you think you've become.

(Donna dies in his arms. Doc holds her. A GURGLING LAUGH comes from Chazz.

SIRENS fill the air as Doc looks around trying to decide what to do next... placing Donna down.)

(Chazz lies there looking up at Doc.)

CHAZZ

What a bitch.

(Doc sits there, empty. This is all his fault. And he knows it.)

CHAZZ

How did I mess up?

DOC

You killed the wrong sinner. That was Bullhead a custodian at the hospital in that stall. Never look them in the eye... don't feel.

CHAZZ

Words to live by. Bullhead, huh?

DOC

Yeah... collects cans and bottles. You gave him ten dollars to tell you where I worked.

CHAZZ

Jesus, that guy? Shit. My mistake... should've recognized the shoes under the door.

DOC

I watched you toss my place. Found Donna's letter missing. I tailed you... then Donna showed up at the coffee shop. She hurt Jim real bad. You guys didn't help. I had to stay with him... if I'da known... I messed up... I messed up real bad, didn't I.

CHAZZ

Nah, none of us is any good. But you, you meant well... did it for her and your ma. Put your medical future on the line for them.

DOC

It doesn't make it right.

CHAZZ

A lot of gray matter in-between right and stupid, Doc. You had to know I'd come someday.

DOC

The evil one. Yeah... I knew. I knew.

(Doc can't stop the bleeding. Chazz stops him.)

CHAZZ

I took a lot'a shit back east. You gettin' out of that house.

DOC

There was a vent. They were paying attention to you. Can I get --

CHAZZ

-- Take the money, Doc. Get a life. Leon's poc...ket ... your phone book. She's... the letter. Nobody from my world knows why we're here. Let me do one thing good, though. That punk in the Coffee Can. If he makes it, give him some. Tell 'em it's from us.

DOC

Okay. I will. Hey, this money, his life, did the old man really kill all those people? Kennedy, Hoffa?

CHAZZ

Somebody did.

DOC

I didn't kill the old man.

CHAZZ

Yeah, I'll tell him that when I see him.

(Chazz dies. Doc just sits there. The money is also just sitting there. What's left of the Old Man's five million. Doc looks around again, trying to think. He looks at Leon, Donna and Corrine. The SIRENS are closer.)

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END

WHEN THE RIGHT MAN FINDS YOU

A Neo-Noir Stage Play

(based on the screenplay)

by

Karl J. Niemiec

A Tragedy for the

Romantic in all of Us

(inspired by a true story)

6 M & 3 F The dark past of two young property developers catches up with them and takes everything away but their love for each other

CHARACTERS:

MARLEY GRAYSON: Early thirties. Graceful, classy, a real head turner and new owner of the local weekly newspaper.

BO FOSTER: Late thirties. Tall, manly, muscular, very talented woodcraftsman. Owns the arts and craft store.

ARROW: Bo's old dog. (Play can be done with or without).

SALVADOR TURK: Thirties. A gangly strange and dangerously secretive, mentally challenged man. Bo's childhood friend.

SAM NEGAHBAN: Fifties. An owner of a construction company.

HOOMAN ZANIB: Twenties. Simple minded construction laborer.

JACLYN: Forties. A plump, bossy newspaper office employee. JUDY: Fifties. An overly thin woman, newspaper advertising.

MATTHEW JONES: Seventies. A cranky old newspaper printer.

SHERIFF BROWN: Fifties. Small town cop.

SETTING: Inside and outside of the dimly lit McClure House - in Northville, Michigan. It's a majestic, Turn-of-the-Century Victorian home, with magnificent potential for the right amount of care and money. However, rundown, with overgrown trees and shrubs and vacant for many years. The horn like chimneys make it spooky and haunted looking at best. It sets on a slight hill above a small deep lake toward S.R, and overlooks downtown Northville further S.R. Also S.R., a rotted gazebo and dock runs along the lake and extends from the wraparound veranda; with a small family fenced-in grave yard. No one in their right mind would live there as is, let alone remodel it. There are grand front double doors that open onto a once beautiful foyer with a splendid staircase and a landing on the second floor that leads to bedrooms.

TIME:

Present day, Summer to following Spring.

Note: From TED Case Studies - Lake Superior Sunken Logs - <http://www1.american.edu/ted/sunkwood.htm>

In Checaumegon Bay, Wisconsin, on Lake Superior, the Superior Lumber Company is involved in the recovery of millions of sunken logs 60 feet below the bay's surface. Because the logs have existed for approximately 100 years at large depths and in very cold water, they have been preserved almost to perfection. Most of the old slow growth wood at the bottom of the bay was clearcut in the late 1800s from areas in Canada, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, and were floated downstream to ports in Lake Superior to be loaded onto ships for transport. During the 1930s, most of the northern Midwest old growth forest was deforested, and the large timber corporations had begun to leave the areas, along with all the timber at the bottom of Lake Superior. Today, treasure hunters like Scott Mitchen are involved in an effort to raise approximately one million logs to the surface of Lake Superior to be processed and sold to furniture makers, architects, contractors, instrument makers and the Japanese at incredibly high prices. The high prices are because there no longer exists the same quality of old growth lumber anywhere in the world that can compare to the lumber that was harvested by the U.S. and Canadian logging companies during the late 1890s to early 1930s.

CASE NUMBER: 421 - CASE MNEMONIC: SUNKWOOD
CASE NAME: SUNKEN WOOD USE

ACTS - SCENES:

ACT I - Scene One - Night: Front of McClure House

ACT I - Scene Two - Morning: Outside McClure House

ACT I - Scene Three - Late afternoon: McClure Gazebo

ACT II - Scene One - Day: McClure Yard

ACT II - Scene Two - Next morning: McClure House

ACT II - Scene Three - Hours later: McClure House

ACT II - Scene Four - Spring Day: McClure Gazebo

At Rise:

ACT I

Scene One

Darkly lit sidewalk in front of McClure House.

MARLEY GRAYSON enters the property from the street, heading toward the McClure House front gates. Her arms full of the blueprints and a briefcase. She can't see a thing. She steps onto the sidewalk and right into BO FOSTER checking a text while jogging. SMACK! Blueprints and cell phones flying. Bouncing back, but just before she loses her footing - BO recovers enough to stop her fall. Pulling her quickly, though inadvertently into his arms.

BO

Good evening.

MARLEY

Oh, my goodness. I'm so, so...

(right in his face)

Good evening. Ah....

BO

Bo Foster.

MARLEY

Marley Grayson.

BO

Right. From down the hall.

MARLEY

You live in my apartment building? With the dog.

(He lets her go. Starts picking up the blueprints. He's pissed about something and she's not sure why.)

BO

Yes, my dog Arrow. You're the News Paper Publisher?

MARLEY

Yes, that's me. I guess. Have we met?

(BO hands the blueprints over.)

BO

In a way. I was the person secretly bidding against you on McClure House.

MARLEY

That was you?

BO

Yes. And you have no idea how you've broken my heart. I've had my eye on this house for over a year.

MARLEY

I'm truly sorry... Mr. Foster.

BO

Now I've got my eye on you. And it's Bo.

(MARLEY gets everything back in her arms.)

MARLEY

Thank you, Bo. I think.

BO

Do you run?

MARLEY

Only when chased.

BO

Good. Nice to have finally met.

(BO jogs away. MARLEY stands there. She looks at the dark house then over at the town and lake. And heads up the front steps.)

(Inside McClure House Grand Foyer. MARLEY enters. She turns on a light.)

EVERYONE

Congratulations!

(MARLEY drops everything and lets out a blood curdling SCREAM. Only to find those standing there are as shocked by MARLEY'S reaction as she was finding them there.)

MATTHEW

Told you surprising her was a harebrain idea. Nearly killed the poor woman.

(MARLEY tries her best to compose herself. She looks over at her employees JACLYN, JUDY, and MATTHEW JONES.

The girls smile back warmly. MATTHEW frowns. SAM NEGAHBAN, in workmen's clothing, is doing his best not to laugh. SHERIFF BROWN, holds a tray of cookies. He's stupefied by MARLEY'S reaction.)

MARLEY

You guys. It's dark and spooky... Jaclyn, Judy, don't... thank you, you shouldn't have. I mean it.

MATTHEW

Don't blame us. Your new neighbors insisted. Just tell the Sheriff you'll vote for him... and he'll go home.

JUDY

Oh, Matthew, don't --

MATTHEW

-- Got a paper to put out. Now drink your coffees and eat your cookies and let's go back across the street and work.

JACLYN

You old coot, hush up.

SHERIFF

(Steps forward.)

Mr. Jones is right, Jaclyn. Marley, we just wanted to stop by and give you these. Cookies. We are the official McClure Park welcoming committee.

(SHERIFF hands MARLEY the cookies. MARLEY looks but finds no place to put them.)

SHERIFF

Home baked by the misses. Welcome to Northville.

MATTHEW

She's lived here five weeks, Sheriff. Owns the paper now, remember?

SHERIFF

Yes, and as of this morning the proud owner of McClure House. And founder of McClure Park.

MARLEY

Thank you, all. I'm more than surprised. Horrified even comes to mind.

MATTHEW

Old rotten dump.

SHERIFF

And it will once-again be a grand manor. I'm sure.

MATTHEW

Better hope her other grandma dies.

JACLYN

Matthew, now you hush. Marley's semi-retired.

(JUDY brings MARLEY a wrapped ream of paper.)

JUDY

For your first Great American Novel. Written in your soon to be restored dream home. McClure House.

MATTHEW

Be a haunted house story. Things movin' around up in here all the time. Scarin' the heck out of simple folks. Me workin' nights, I see things up here all the time.

(JUDY joins JACLYN, boxing MATTHEW in.)

JACLYN

Her contract with you says she can't fire you. There's nothing in it that says we can't hurt you. Now go on about your work, old-man - and let Marley enjoy her special day. Go on.

JACLYN

He's harmless.

JUDY

You just gotta kick-start the old coot's smile on special occasions. Come on, Sheriff, we'll buy you a beer.

SHERIFF

Now you're talking. Good night, Marley. Reach out if you need anything.

MARLEY

I'm sure I will. Thanks for the cookies. Good night, everyone.

(JUDY and JACLYN usher MATTHEW out the door.)

MARLEY

Sam, you have no idea how relieved I am to finally make this decision.

SAM

Don't worry, Miss Grayson. We'll get started on the final blueprints in the morning. Why don't we meet up here. Say, tenish, and we'll go over a few things I think you should know.

MARLEY

Know? Is there something wrong?

SAM

Oh, no. Nothing out of the ordinary. It's just that there was a fire up in the rafters back in 1950. They walled in some of it. And I think we should open it up and take a good long look at them chimneys behind it.

(MARLEY looks out the window. Reacts to who she sees.)

MARLEY

I see. I want to keep them of course. All eight fireplaces. I'm thinking of having new mantels carved. Each with a different material. Here, take these, it'll save me a trip.

SAM

(picking up blueprints)

There's a lot of critters living up in that area. And I can guarantee you they've made themselves at home. But don't fret. Happens in these old places sittin' empty for so long.

(MARLEY walks him to the door.)

MARLEY

Tomorrow then, Sam.

SAM

Can I tell you a little secret?

MARLEY

If it won't cost me a thing.

SAM

Been praying to get my hands on the McClure House for ten years. Dreaming of leaving it to my family. Even if this is as close as I get, you've made me a happy man today.

(looks out the window)

The gentleman you're keeping an eye on out that window, is from the craft shop. Don't think he'da used me. Looks like he'da done it himself. I sure would've.

MARLEY

Well then, Sam. Just keep that in mind when I start changing my mind on what I want.

SAM

Don't worry. Ask around town. I'll look after you.

(MARLEY looks out the window for Bo again. JACLYN comes back in. Big smirk on her face. MARLEY gives her a look.)

JACLYN

Just checked the office messages. You had a phone call.

MARLEY

Must've been a good one.

JACLYN

Didn't leave a name but said the chase is on. And it starts at the McClure House gazebo with Starbucks when you're done screaming in here.

MARLEY

Did he?

JACLYN

He sounded handsome.

MARLEY

Looks even better. But I think he's mad at me.

JACLYN

You go, girl. Take your phone - case I need you.

MARLEY

I'll meet you at the office in an hour.

(pats her purse)

JACLYN

(goes out the door)

Run don't walk, girl. If that was Bo Foster, I'm liable to beat you to him.

(JACLYN leaves as MARLEY catches her reflection in a mirror. She fixes her hair, before picking up the cookies and leaving out a side door leading to the gazebo, veranda and docks.)

BO sips STARBUCKS. A cup sits waiting for MARLEY. Arrow, his dog, is there at his feet. With them is a gangly man, SALVADOR TURK.)

MARLEY

Wasn't expecting you so soon.

BO

My business partner wanted to meet you. He's leaving for home soon.

(Marley sticks out her hand.)

MARLEY

How do you do? I'm Marley Grayson.

SALVADOR

(doesn't shake her hand)

Hello.

MARLEY

Cookie?

SALVADOR

No.

BO

Thanks. Counter person told me what you add to your coffee.

MARLEY

Thank you. Sheriff Brown brought these. So, where's home?

BO

Actually Wisconsin. Went to Cranbrook. Art school. Then Auto Design.

MARLEY

I'm sorry, you lost me. You're from Wisconsin?

BO

Salvador and I both are.

(MARLEY looks at SALVADOR. Trying to draw him into the conversation.)

SALVADOR

Rhineland.

MARLEY

Primarily a resort area. Isn't it?

SALVADOR

No.

(A moment of uncomfortable silence.)

BO

I came to Michigan to design cars. Salvador still lives there. Keeps an eye on Pop and some investments for me.

(MARLEY is very aware that SALVADOR isn't thrilled that she is there.)

MARLEY

Oh, so Cranbrook is here in Michigan. Right, right. On Woodward.

BO

Take it you're not from around here, either.

MARLEY

Me? No. No, I'm not.

SALVADOR

Where are you from?

BO

Sal.

MARLEY

Traveled mostly. From paper to paper. You know, living out of a briefcase. So how did you get from auto design to working with wood, again?

BO

Sal and I grew up in the woods. Owned chain saws.

MARLEY

You do chain saw carving?

BO

Some of it. A lot of hand carved furniture. But some power tools as needed.

MARLEY

Really, I was told you had an Arts and Craft Store. No one mentioned hand-carved furniture.

BO

It's been our little secret.

(BO indicates SALVADOR. MARLEY smiles at SALVADOR. SALVADOR still isn't pleasant.)

SALVADOR

Games about to start.

MARLEY

Right. Well, I really should be going.

BO

Hold on, Marley. Sal, I'll catch up to you.

SALVADOR

But --

BO

-- Ten minutes.

(Uncomfortable good-byes. MARLEY gets up. SALVADOR gets up and leaves.)

BO

It's okay. Please sit, I want to show you something.

(BO takes out a folder of photographs and hands it to MARLEY.)

BO

These are from ancient logs pulled from the Great Lakes. Some sank in the late 1800s. There's millions of them in Checaumegon Bay. At the bottom of Lake Superior, close to where Sal and I grew up. Arrow, the boss here, watches them.

MARLEY

(before opening the folder)

Good job, Arrow. So, are we talking like driftwood?

BO

Oh, no. That's the magic of it. The water's depths at near freezing temperatures preserved the wood.

MARLEY

Really? How'd you find out about this?

BO

Two guys are pulling them out of the lake. Salvador knows them. Hooked me up.

MARLEY

Ah, the middleman.

(BO stops MARLEY from opening the folder.)

BO

Now, hold on. What you're about to view is some of the most precious wood left on earth. The kind of wood they made the very first Stradivarius from. Incredible wood grains. A freak phenomena of nature. Like it was fresh cut just yesterday. We understand? This is between us.

(MARLEY looks to see if he's being serious. Kind of, sort of, but yeah. She opens the folder slowly. MARLEY stops.)

MARLEY

Before we go any further. Are you still mad at me?

BO

I'm not angry. I'm heartbroken. Take a look. I think you'll understand.

(MARLEY opens the folder, stunned at first then quickly with growing excitement goes through.)

MARLEY

Are these...? Wow, Bo. Where did you get these designs?

BO

Library, town hall, private photos. Your newspaper. Some of the original built ins still exist, but damaged. Others stolen. Once Sal found the wood, I decided to start fresh.

(points to the pictures)

Most of the originals were made right here in the very wood-shop I now own. Turn of the Century craftsmen tools.

(MARLEY studying the pictures closer. She's amazed. Almost afraid of the lunacy of it all.)

MARLEY

So, you're the one who's been stomping around up there in the dark scaring people. But... you didn't even own the house.

BO

Yes, measuring. Until you came along I had no competition. Other than Sam Negahban. But I heard he'd given up.

MARLEY

I had no idea.

BO

It was a surprise. I know how it looks. Relax. I had to act now. Most of this wood took over two hundred years to grow. It's no longer growing on Earth. Clearcut before 1930.

(He pulls out a piece of wood from his pocket - polished smooth. He hands it to her to feel.)

MARLEY

Old growth. The denser the forest. The lesser the light. The slower the growth.

(They almost hold the piece of wood together.)

BO

Right. Time made this grain a jewel. From my own backyard. Believe me, this wood is on a limited offer. You don't even want to know what this goes for on the open market.

(MARLEY continues through the pictures.)

MARLEY

Actually, I would.

(looks at Bo. A little moment again.)

BO

And you'd be wrong in thinking that.

MARLEY

Really? And what am I thinking?

BO

Mid-life crisis. I'm not even forty yet.

MARLEY

I just bought a bankrupt Weekly Newspaper. And a rundown haunted house. Overlooking a bottomless lake in a town I never heard of three months ago. You want to talk about life crisis? Or do we just want to call it a big whatever.

BO

Ok, big whatever.

MARLEY

I must have some of this.

(BO breaks out in a sly smile.)

BO

I was hoping you'd say that.

(He moves over to a canvas covering something against the house wall. And pulls it off. MARLEY is in disbelief. Before her is a magnificent hand carved wood fireplace mantel.)

MARLEY

Oh, my goodness, Bo. I want this. If you sell this to anyone else, I'll murder you in broad daylight.

(MARLEY moves to it, touching the finish.)

BO

Relax. I carved it for McClure House. It's the exact replica of the one that burnt in 1950.

(MARLEY turns to him. "Who is this man?")

BO

I told you. You broke my heart. I love this old place. It talks to me. It's waited all this time for me to find her.

MARLEY

Well, I'll have to find a way to mend it, won't I.

(Arrow jumps up on her.)

BO

I guess we start with a walk.

(They move up on the verandah overlooking the backyard. Arrow runs O.S. FLUSHING DUCKS.)

MARLEY

You should've let everyone know what you were up to.

BO

Are you kidding? I can't let local artists know I have this kind of raw wood in my warehouse. Once they started bidding on it, I couldn't afford not to sell it. They'd hate me for hoarding so much of it.

MARLEY

Oh, come on. Are you serious?

BO

Yes. Think about what was made from just this maple during the 17th and 18th centuries. The Stradivarius' back, ribs, and neck for starters. The long list goes on from there. Seriously, if craftsmen who repair instruments knew I was making built in chairs, molding and steps out of this wood, for this old house, without owning it, they'd string me up in that tree. Not even the people selling Sal this wood know what I'm doing with it. So, when I couldn't get Northville to commit to a practical or sane alternative, I decided to open my shop and wait them out. Hide what I was doing and build the furniture while stockpiling the wood.

MARLEY

Do you have enough to finish.

BO

Almost, I'm waiting on the last of the staircase. They haven't found it yet. But it's sure to be down there.

MARLEY

Of course I knew there were other bids. If it makes you feel better, I cheated.

BO

(gets up and walks into the yard)

Really. It all came down to a probate hearing for me.

BO (CONT'D)

I couldn't get past the McClure family estate being left to the City of Northville. Under the stipulation of finding someone to restore the house. And properly move the four McClure graves.

MARLEY

Enter your first mistake. Where there's a written will. There's a written way.

BO

Enter a lot of mistakes. Not all by the living. The plan was to parcel off the land and bring in two similar homes. And use the land sales to finish the remodel. But the City kept dragging their feet. And the neighbors kept voting no.

MARLEY

I don't blame them. Look at all this. Why change it?

BO

The place would've nearly paid for itself. The grand plan. Then you came along. With working capital, buying up that old paper, and an acceptable solution to burst my bubble.

(They stop at a picket gate. BO pushes it. A long eerie squeak. Inside is a graveyard with four carved stones. The McClures.)

MARLEY

I see. I guess it came down to a matter of how one interpreted the idea of the McClure graves being here.

BO

How did you get around the original McClure will? How will you get these McClures buried with the rest? If all the adjoining plots were taken? And don't tell me you bought them up. Because people other than me tried that. People with real influence and money.

MARLEY

Simple. It hasn't been announced yet. So button the lip until my paper's out tomorrow. Exclusive. You know?

BO

You better not make me look stupid.

MARLEY

I agreed to leave the graves here.

BO

But... come on, you're kidding, right?

MARLEY

There's nothing in the will stating that the bodies had to be removed. It just said if they were moved.

BO

Then they'd have to be put with the rest of the family. But if they're not.... Damn.

MARLEY

I gave this one-acre back to the City.

BO

Isn't that considered bribery in some states. Something bad?

MARLEY

It's called we're building a small park. McClure Park.

BO

That was darn right sneaky. But this land is zoned to build. Think what could be... there's enough room to.... Right, you wouldn't want someone to build. If it's a city park. They never will. Anyone wanting to move a house in --

(BO remembers something. Checks his watch.)

MARLEY

-- Can move it somewhere else.

BO

But you still cheated, right.

MARLEY

Yes. I cheated by digging into the archives of Northville Weekly. Which used to be a daily paper. And found who first owned the adjoining lots to the McClure land.

(They start across the five acres after Arrow.)

BO

All family members from what I've read. I cheated too. The news paper's archives are available in the library.

MARLEY

Of course.

BO

Damn. Have I said that? I just didn't get out of them what you did. A park. All this land was built upon by one McClure family member or another. Why not a park?

MARLEY

Right. Unofficially this area is referred to as --

BO

-- McClure Park. Damn. I could've grabbed the house and sat on it.

MARLEY

So, I merely suggested to my neighbors that we make it official. McClure Park.

BO

Merely. Sweet, Marley. Just leave the graves. Even the empty one for the missing child. Maybe put in a family statue in his honor. Damn. Why didn't we think of that, Arrow? I could've carved the statue of the boy myself. Damn, I made myself look stupid.

MARLEY

And I got myself a nice tax write-off to help me rebuild, too. And a basket of cookies from my new happy neighbors for keeping our adjoining land as is.

BO

Go ahead, rub it in. So, you're foxy and smart. I've got both my eyes on you now, sister. And Arrow does, too.

(MARLEY'S phone RINGS. She looks at the number but doesn't answer it. BO isn't happy about losing the house. She senses it.)

MARLEY

I'm sorry, Bo. Walk me back. You have to catch up with Salvador, don't you.

BO

Yeah, I better.

End of ACT I
Scene I

ACT I
Scene Two

Morning, front of McClure House - MARLEY has stopped BO from jogging again. This time on purpose.

MARLEY

Okay, honestly. Which do you like?

BO

Give me a break, Marley. I'm cooling down already.

MARLEY

Come on, run in place. Just tell me. Which one?

(SALVADOR walks up. BO and MARLEY stop.)

MARLEY

Oh, hello, Salvador. I thought you were leaving town.

SALVADOR

I didn't.

MARLEY

How was the game?

SALVADOR

We lost.

(SALVADOR gives BO a look.)

BO

Take Arrow for a walk first, will ya?

(whistles)

(SALVADOR leaves.)

BO

We're still waiting for wood. Okay, first off, which room?

MARLEY

Oh. I thought I told you, the foyer.

BO

Still? Then neither.

MARLEY

Come on.

BO

Look, you've got the grand-staircase splashing down. Railings at the top bending both ways. Twelve inch posts. Both stain and paint. As is, it's okay. But what I had in mind is something intricately carved. Dark and grainy. A focal point. Close to what was there originally but with better grain. Any kind of pattern beyond crown molding would only distract or clutter. Don't forget they'll be furniture, drapes, flowers and paintings.

MARLEY

Flowers?

BO

Yeah, someone's bound to buy you some - someday.

(BO whistles for Arrow. But Arrows gone.)

MARLEY

He's with --

BO

-- Oh yeah. Have fun. I'll be over in a few minutes.

MARLEY

Thanks.

BO

Go put your tennis shoes on.

MARLEY

I'll go up and down the stairs a few times while I wait for you.

(Bo smiles at MARLEY and jogs off. MARLEY retreats into the house.)

(Daylight, McClure House - Foyer is in shambles with the remodel. Damaged walls are stripped, floors torn up.)

(But in the middle of it all. On an exquisitely handcrafted round table is a great big bouquet of wild flowers.

MARLEY and SAM Negahban look it over.)

SAM

I have no idea where it came from. It was there when we got here. Damn fine work.

MARLEY

Have you met Bo Foster? Have you been in his Craft Shop?

SAM

No. But I've heard rumors about his work. Been wantin' to stop in. Tried once. No one seemed to be in.

MARLEY

Would you mind taking a minute to look at something? I want to introduce you. And show off the mantel he carved.

SAM

Now? He's a fairly private man.

MARLEY

Please? He's on his way. I just spoke to him. He's got drawings I want you to look at.

SAM

Fine.

(yells up the stairs.)

Hooman, I'm taking a break.

(POUNDING stops and HOOMAN ZANIB comes to the top of the steps. He might not be all there.)

HOOMAN

Okay, but I want to show you something before you leave.

SAM

Can it wait? I'm not going anywhere.

HOOMAN

Sure it can wait. Whole house can wait. It's me that can't wait.

(MARLEY looks concerned.)

SAM

We'll be right up. Give us a minute.

BO
(enters.)

Good, you're here.

MARLEY

Thank you for the flowers.

(BO looks over and sees the table and flowers.)

BO

What's this doing here?

MARLEY

Don't even pretend you didn't have Salvador drop it off.

BO

You're welcome.

(sticks his hand out to SAM)

Hi, what the rude girl meant to say was, I'm Bo Foster.

SAM

Sam Negahban. Those for me.

BO

Sworn to secrecy. Right?

SAM

May I drown in the lake.

(BO hands SAM a stack of drawings.)

MARLEY

Don't say stuff like that.

BO

What, sounds about right to me.

(SAM looks over a drawing of a grand staircase. He can't believe it.)

SAM

You could do this?

BO

Yeah, I had planned to - anyway. No time for it now.

MARLEY

He's just mad at me for outsmarting him.

SAM

Don't feel bad. None of us come up with it either. A park. I kicked myself real hard when I heard how simple it was.

BO

Actually it's the gloating that's got my jogging knickers in a knot.

SAM

It's a hell of a staircase. How much of the wood you got?

BO

Banisters and railings. I'll go with something else on the steps. Not sure yet.

SAM

You two figure it out. It's something to think about though. That's for sure if it looks anything like this table.

MARLEY

How can we not do it? Bo, please?

BO

I've got my shop, plus plans. I have to find a way to move all this stuff I've been holding on to. Before I move on.

SAM

Well, consider it. We won't need you right away. So you got time. But the mantel outside she wants. You can just leave it there?

MARLEY

I'll have a check in the morning.

BO

That's fine. I guess.

MARLEY

Thank you, Bo. We've been invited upstairs. Want to come.

(SAM sticks his hand out. BO shakes it. MARLEY and SAM start to climb the staircase.)

BO

I'm good. We can talk later.

(BO turns to look at the work that needs done. He wanted this house. Now she's after his woodwork. SALVADOR steps into the darkened window. BO doesn't see him yet. MARLEY pops her head back at the top of the stairs. Startling BO.)

MARLEY

Thanks for the flowers. And the table. I owe you dinner.

BO

Careful, or I'll take you up on that.

(They look at each other for a moment. Sparks. MARLEY smiles and leaves. BO looks at Arrow. Arrow WOOFs.)

BO

Yeah, woof is right.

(BO looks over as SALVADOR talks through window.)

SALVADOR

I'm heading down to the rail yard.

BO

Thanks, Sal. Pick me up about five pounds of these.

(Bo tosses SALVADOR a small nail. Arrow comes over to SALVADOR.)

SALVADOR

You gave her the table?

BO

It's flawed. They sent it back.

SALVADOR

Right.

BO

She's all right, Sal. Just go lightly. Come on.

SALVADOR

Sure.

(They exit. Moments later - Upstairs, SAM and MARLEY stand in the hall off the landing. SAM is going over all the photos from Bo's folder.)

MARLEY

Come on, you're killing me. What do you think?

SAM

He carved all that furniture for this house? Without even owning it first?.

MARLEY

Yes. But what do you think?

SAM

I think the question is: What does his shrink think?

MARLEY

Sam. That's not neighborly.

SAM

Are you aware of how much money he has tied up in that wood?

MARLEY

So, he's a little eccentric.

SAM

Marley, I'm eccentric. You're eccentric. That's just nuts.

MARLEY

The house sat empty for years. Please, Sam. He can sell the work anywhere.

SAM

The house is weird enough as it is. Now this guy... and that friend of his... but okay, you're the boss.

MARLEY

What about his work? He's extraordinary, isn't he.

SAM

I think it's the most beautiful work I've ever seen. But it's not gonna fit your budget. And the blueprints. We'd have to redraw the whole front of the house.

MARLEY

But you can do it?

SAM

Yeah, I can do it. If I have his help. He's got a good eye.

(The POUNDING from the master bedroom stops and HOOMAN sticks his head out of the door.)

HOOMAN

You got time now?

(SAM and MARLEY follow him down the hall.)

SAM

The paint is fine, Hooman.

MARLEY

Is there something wrong with the paint?

HOOMAN

It's what's behind the paint you need to see.

(SAM and MARLEY stop and look into a large hole. An old chest sits covered in cobwebs. With a heavy chain lying on the floor. There's an ancient lock broken open. The lid's up.)

MARLEY

Oh, my goodness, is that?

SAM

I'll be damned. It's a little boy.

HOOMAN

Called the Sheriff when you didn't come up. I couldn't figure why this wall was here. So I opened it. Looks like it was to hide fire damage.

SHERIFF (O.S.)

Nobody touch anything.

(SHERIFF BROWN walks up from behind them.)

SAM

Christ, Sheriff.

SHERIFF

Sorry, came up the service stairs. Who found him?

HOOMAN

I did. Broke open the wall and there he was.

MARLEY

He must be the missing boy?

SHERIFF

My guess he's Terrence McClure Junior. Disappeared June twelfth, 1919. Note said he'd run off. Guess he didn't.

MARLEY

What do we do?

SHERIFF

Nothing we can do. Not a single family member alive. Except bury him out back with the others. Sam, why don't you send your boys home. I'll get someone official over here to clean up. That okay by you, Miss Grayson? Could have him cremated.

MARLEY

No, that's fine. It's the right thing to do.

SHERIFF

Seein' he's got space on a headstone down there, I guess. I'll check with the Mayor. Just nobody touch a thing. I'll be right back. I want to take some pictures.

HOOMAN

Maybe put my picture in your paper. Since I found it.

MARLEY

Sure, why not. You're a local hero. Solved the McClure mystery.

(SAM looks out the window. BO'S and Salvador are still at the gazebo.)

SAM

You guys got this?

SHERIFF

Let's keep this under wraps until we work this out. There ain't a next of kin.

(SAM heads down the stairs as MARLEY goes to the window to look down at BO.)

SAM

No worries.

MARLEY

I'll have Jaclyn write something up. This will be big.

SHERIFF

Fine, but keep it simple. Until we find out what actually happened. Chances are he suffocated. But who knows how he really got in there, or why?

(MARLEY keeps an eye down below. The Sheriff goes back down the service stairs. HOOMAN goes about putting away tools.

BO looks up from a NEWSPAPER PHOTO. SALVADOR stops talking and puts the photo into his coat pocket.)

SAM

You got a minute?

BO

All day. Get back to me on that, Salvador. Just don't stress.

SALVADOR

Couple days, we'll know.

(sees SAM looking

SAM

How ya doin'?

SALVADOR

Fine. Parkin' the truck, Bo.

(SALVADOR continues past SAM. Looks back at BO. Walks off. SAM takes out the folder of photos.)

BO

What's all the commotion, Sam?

(SAM watches as SALVADOR leaves with Arrow.)

SAM

Something the Sheriff's looking into about the McClure family . So, that's your guy ? Seen him around town.

BO

Yeah. Middlemen. They make all the money .

SAM

How good are your blue prints on what you had planned for the McClure House?

BO

Pretty good. Did them up myself. Got them all on CAD.

SAM

Would you part with them if I were to buy up your furniture? Come work for me for awhile maybe?

BO

I don't think so, Sam.

SAM

Okay, well thanks. She wanted me to ask. I'll --

BO

-- Wait. She wants to buy up all my furniture?

SAM

Yup... it makes sense to use it all.

BO

And put it in McClure House? Just like that? Take my whole vision?

SAM

Well, Miss Grayson thinks --

(BO glances over his shoulder at the veranda.)

BO

What would she say if I just sold it all to a dealer?

MARLEY

(steps into view)

I'd say you were a big fat liar. What would you say to that?

BO

I'd say this is gonna cost you. And I'll need someone to mind the store.

MARLEY

I'd say we got a deal. If you promise to stop pouting over losing the house. Help us finish it before winter. And let me buy the furniture on time.

(BO looks at Sam. Then to MARLEY.)

BO

I guess I'm in.

MARLEY

Good. I guess you can tell him about the body we found now, Sam

BO

Body?

End of Act I
Scene Two

ACT I
Scene Three

McClure House - Gazebo - Late afternoon. MARLEY uses her laptop.

MARLEY

What do you think of this, Jaclyn?

(JACLYN is on the phone, she examines sheets of paper. Revealing copies of a photo of BO.)

JACLYN

I think we need to work in the air condition, is what I think. But if you ask me, you got it bad, girl.

MARLEY

What? I'm doing a profile on a local artist and his work.

(JACLYN hands the photo back.)

JACLYN

And I have Denial Washington's calendar on my bedroom wall because I still need to know what day it was back in 1999.

MARLEY

Give me a break.

JACLYN

Give me a break. You got "I will" written all over you.

MARLEY

I will what?

JACLYN

I will sleep with this man. You might as well face it. You're smitten. And there's a long hard road between "I will" and "I do". Remember that.

MARLEY

I don't know what you're talking --

JACLYN

(dials her phone)

-- Matthew, how many pages is the Foster profile?

MATTHEW (V.O.)

(speaker phone)

Four pages.

JACLYN

How many photos?

MATTHEW (V.O.)

Twelve.

JACLYN

Smitten, smitten, smiiiiitten.

MARLEY

Matthew, cut the profile to two pages and one photo.

MATTHEW (V.O.)

I'm a printer, not an editor. You want it cut, you should actually speak to him about something other than fabric or wood grain. There ain't a single bone in this article to help it walk to print. Lucky you got his last name right.

MARLEY

Okay, here he is now. Don't say a word. We're having dinner.

JACLYN

Uh-huh....

MARLEY

This proves nothing.

(MARLEY grabs her pen and pad. JACLYN gets up and smiles at BO as she goes by, turning to give MARLEY a look. MARLEY shows her a clenched fist. BO sits down and looks after JACLYN.)

BO

I see I'm not the only one with strange friends.

MARLEY

Jaclyn's not strange, just nosy.

BO

Comes with the biz. Right?

MARLEY

I wouldn't know. So, you ready for your interview?

BO

No. Why don't we go to a movie instead. Double feature tonight. Bogie films.

MARLEY

Saw them already.

BO

Well, I guess I'm stuck. You want a beer?

MARLEY

You brought beer?

BO

No, I thought we'd go over and play darts at Bud's.

MARLEY

Drinking in bars makes me want to smoke again.

BO

Well, I can't think of anything else to avoid this. So give it your best shot, Lois.

MARLEY

Okay. Why Northville?

BO

Drove through a few times. Didn't want to move all the way back to Wisconsin. Sal had mentioned the wood. Found this house crying out for my help. Haunted me actually. Like it wanted that wood to save her. And a shop with the space I needed for my art shop. The adjoining workshop in back was just a lucky bonus. Kind've like it was meant to be. A simple matter of breaking through a wall. Why you?

MARLEY

I felt the same way about the house. Like it chose me to invest in it and give it new life.

BO

And I thought you just came here to break my heart and gloat about it once a week in your paper.

MARLEY

Stop. You're making me feel wicked.

BO

Don't. I'm just kidding... half. You did the honorable thing by buying the built ins. No regrets. But, why Northville? Where's home?

MARLEY

Home is here. My father was Air Force. Me being a journalist. You know. Hotel life. The paper became available on the internet. I plan to write my Great American Novel in McClure House.

BO

Put down some roots in this old town?

MARLEY

Maybe. Spent the last seven years looking after my grandmother. Living in one hotel after another every season. Maybe I do need roots. So here I am. Hey, I'm suppose to ask the questions.

BO

Is that dinner you owe me still available?

MARLEY

I offered you dinner?

BO

I have Arrow as a witness.

MARLEY

How do you feel about delivery cooking?

BO

I thought I smelt something.

(MARLEY reaches behind her and brings up a bag of Chinese food.)

MARLEY

Hope you don't mind. I took the liberty of ordering.

BO

Looks like there's enough food here to feed five of us.

MARLEY

I got a variety pack. Just in case. Dig in.

(BO grabs the bag and takes out the containers. They both start opening them and serving themselves as they talk.)

MARLEY

Any problem with red wine?

(BO has his mouth full. MARLEY glances up, then back at her plate.)

BO

Don't do that.

MARLEY

What?

BO

You're setting me up. I can see the sprockets churning behind your eyes.

(He continues to look at her until she can't take it.)

MARLEY

Stop. Talented, kind, handsome, hardworking - what's the downside? Thirty-five, single. Mamma's boy? Gay perhaps?

BO

It's that apparent? Darn.

MARLEY

You're not gay. Are you?

BO

Not last they told me. Why?

MARLEY

You know. The man and his dog, thing. Flannel shirts. Work boots. Boyhood friend. Is that a real tape measure on your belt?

BO

Oh, I see. The Village People thing. Only gay men are artistic and macho. The rest of us are just incentive, out of shape, working-stiff bums.

MARLEY

Think about it. You have this Outer Craft-Shop, I'm a nice guy image. When just through magic shop curtains, there's this whole-other - obviously out of his mind - amazingly visionary guy. The real Bo Foster.

BO

Relax - I'm only out of my workshop. I'm a Craftsmen. You'll get use to it.

MARLEY

It's okay. I find them very handy these days. Like those shows on cable.

BO

Yeah, 'Bitter Hicks and Beer-Gardens'.

MARLEY

Okay, so you're not gay. Wise guy.

BO

Look who's talking, anyway. Beautiful. Somewhat mysterious.

(holds up one of the forks)

Refined taste. Overly intelligent. Seemingly wealthy. You know, just weird enough to be slightly out of butch camp.

MARLEY

Butch? I'm a little lady to the bone.

BO

Pantsuits? Dead giveaway. But most of all. You don't even have a dog. Not even a cat. At least I've a non-sexual excuse to be lonely.

MARLEY

Who said...? I can't think of a good reason to be lonely. What's yours?

BO

Just waiting for the right woman to find me. Who knows, maybe even the right man.

MARLEY

Right. You want dessert? Or a stroll through the park?

BO

Both.

MARLEY

I have it in the kitchen. Give me a minute.

(MARLEY leaves. Bo picks up her fork and wraps it in his hanky, putting it into his pocket.)

BO

I'm gonna stop by my place to grab a jacket. And, for the record, real men don't stroll.

MARLEY (O.S.)

Darn, I thought I had you.

Lights to black.

Lights up - Minutes Later.

(Through the missing Master Bedroom bay window, we find MARLEY and BO making love, overlooking the town. They are wrapped in the cloth that covered the mantel Bo gave her. If this isn't true love, it's a good act. It's so perfect it hurts. Or at least SOUNDS like it does.)

(Down below in the gazebo, a gloved hand reaches out of the dark and picks up a half glass of wine from the table.)

(It brings it up to SALVADOR Turk's face as he steps into the light. He sips. Thinking as he watches up at the window overlooking the street and town. SALVADOR can clearly see and hear MARLEY and BO making love up at the house. He's been cheated.)

Lights to black.

Lights up - NEXT MORNING

The sun is up. Marley is asleep in the McClure House master bedroom floor. BO has gone. POUNDING on the missing door frame. Marley rolls over to find JACLYN staring down at her.

JACLYN

Girl, that must've been one in-depth interview.

MARLEY

Jaclyn, what are you talking about?

JACLYN

You don't know?

MARLEY

Of course I don't know. What time is it?

JACLYN

It's time you smelled the coffee. Let me show you something.

(JACLYN comes into the room. And moves over to missing master bedroom window.)

JACLYN

Tell me what you see and hear out there?

MARLEY

You falling, if you keep this up.

JACLYN

Take a saner look.

(Marley moves to the window.)

MARLEY

Jaclyn, I've got too much on my mind to --

JACLYN

-- Oh, the whole town knows what's on your mind, girl. Look for yourself.

(JACLYN has Marley's attention now. She looks out the window.)

JACLYN

See or hear anything interesting?

(Marley looks around below. Then slowly starts looking beyond at the buildings. She realizes that the window where they made love overlooks the town. It sinks in - in stages.)

MARLEY

Oh, oohh... OOOHHH!

JACLYN

More like hoe, hhoee... HHHOOOE. Girl, I told you. You had it written all over your body.

MARLEY

Oh, my God!

JACLYN

You said that, girl. In fact, you said it many times from what I hear.

MARLEY

This is so.... Has he called?

JACLYN

Oh, he called. He's down in the gazebo. Waiting for a second cup of your hot-lovin'.

MARLEY

All right, fine. You were right, now go. Please? I need to run home and shower.

JACLYN

Uh-hummm. Press rolls in an hour. You got the edited pages?

MARLEY

Pages?

(JACLYN goes out the door.)

JACLYN

Girl, you got it so bad. You're late for work. You're the town slut. You better pull your act together. Judy had three calls from new advertisers this mornin'. Wantin' to place web smut ads.

(Marley wants to close the door on her but there are none.)

JACLYN

Bad, girl. Very bad. And what's worse? I'm so jealous I can't eat.

(Marley turns slowly from the door. What has she done?)

Lights to black

Lights back up - Continuing

MARLEY exits McClure House and BO is waiting in the gazebo for her with Starbucks. BO has a confused look. Marley can't believe this. She moves over to BO and sits.

BO

What did you write about me in your paper?

MARLEY

Nothing yet. Look, Bo...?

BO

I've had the most uninhibited conversation this morning. My shop is jumping. Fifteen people signed up for my art class.

MARLEY

That's not so bad --

BO

-- Half asked about nude models. The whole town acts like it got laid last night.

MARLEY

It did. Apparently, we were the center of attention... all night.

BO

Come again.

MARLEY

Oh, please.

BO

Marley.

MARLEY

Half the town watched and heard us enjoying Tiramisu.

BO

Tira...? Up in...? You're kidding?

MARLEY

I wish. I'm so sorry. I've got to go.

BO

Wait. Marley sit down. I've something I need to talk about.

MARLEY

Bo, can it wait? My paper is going to press without a main headline. And I apparently need to wash this slutty smirk off my face.

BO

No. Look, sit. Eventually our past will catch up with us.

MARLEY

What do you mean?

BO

We don't really know each other. But we know each other well enough. For example, I didn't exactly quit my auto design job --

MARLEY

-- Bo, I don't have to know this --

BO

-- Yes you do. And there's things I need to know about you as well. Just give me a minute. I was fired over an affair I had with a fellow employee.

MARLEY

Bo, really this isn't necessary. I --

BO

-- Yes it is. She wasn't exactly single. In fact, she was the boss' daughter-in-law. I want you to know. Because I want us to continue. And this might come back to haunt me.

MARLEY

The past is the past, Bo.

BO

I know this is sudden, but... I'm in love with you, Marley. From the moment I first ran into you. Truly. But I got her - she has my child. A two year-old boy. He doesn't know about me now. But someday, he might.

(MARLEY hesitates, then breaks down and cries.)

BO

Not exactly the response I was hoping for.

MARLEY

Bo. Please. I --

(BO gets on his knees. Reveals a beautiful white gold diamond ring. MARLEY eyes light up.)

BO

I made this from a stone my mother gave me. Knowing someday I would find the right woman for it. Marley, you are that woman. Let's start a family. Will you marry me?

(She throws her arms around and kisses him.)

End of ACT I

ACT II

Scene One

McClure House - Backyard - Day. The reception after MARLEY and BO'S wedding. A small ceremony. Only people we've met. JUDY and JACLYN have MATTHEW Jones boxed in. Bo's on the phone in the kitchen.

BO

Look, Salvador. I know what I said. Yes. I don't want to know. No... Sal... damn it. Where are you? I told you I didn't want to know. Are you sure? I knew it. Damn you. Salvador, you can't tell anybody about this. Please. I've... Sal... we're married. I know what I said. Take the damn information and burn it, Sal. Sal? I mean it. Take -- Sal, don't do this. Don't do this to us. It was a mistake. Just throw the fork away. Do it now!

(BO hangs up. Sam enters to get BO. BO is completely torn.)

SAM

Everything okay?

BO

Huh? Oh. Yeah. I'm married to a beautiful, mysterious woman.

SAM

Come on, let me buy you an eye opening drink.

(SAM gives BO a big handshake. They exit the kitchen as JACLYN and JUDY enter.)

JACLYN

It's a shame no one from their families could come and see all this.

JUDY

Jaclyn, you promised. We're her family now.

JACLYN

What? She looks so beautiful. It's a shame to have Sherriff Brown give her away. And Sam as his best man. It's... it's all I'm sayin'.

JUDY

Good.

(MARLEY comes in and the girls stop talking.)

MARLEY

What now, you two?

JUDY

Nothing.

MARLEY

Jaclyn?

JACLYN

I just... it's a shame that someone so beautiful - had to be given away by a toad like Sheriff Brown.

MARLEY

What's wrong with Sheriff Brown?

JUDY

She's just green with envy. Or just plain stupid.

MARLEY

Down, girls. Bo's father didn't want to make the trip.

JACLYN

Sure, his son gets married every day to the slut of Northville. His best friend wasn't even here.

JUDY

Jaclyn.

JACLYN

Honey, if you don't know what's up with that boy's family. Then you need to ask some serious questions.

(JUDY grabs JACLYN, marches her to the door.)

JUDY

Excuse us for one loud moment.

JACLYN

Let go of me, girl.

(JUDY pushes her outside.)

JUDY

Shut up, or stay out of this room. She's been married but five minutes.

JACLYN

And known the man but two months.

MARLEY

Wait a minute. Stop right there.

(JUDY and JACLYN come back inside.)

MARLEY

Judy, Jaclyn is right. Bo and I did rush into things. But it's okay. Bo's not on speaking terms with his father. It happens. This happens.

JACLYN

But... ouch.

MARLEY

I'm married to a wonderful man. We're in love. And we're renovating this house together. So shut-up and get out there and get drunk. Or you're both fired.

(JUDY pushes JACLYN out the door again.)

JUDY

Mouth.

JACLYN

We don't want to go there, girl.

(But MARLEY stands thinking. GIGGLING. She turns to find a FLASH of movement but no one is there.)

MARLEY

Hello? Hello?

(Nothing. Then from behind her.)

BO (O.S.)

Heellooo.

MARLEY

(heart up in her throat)

My goodness, Bo! You scared the bajeeves out of me.

BO

You look like you saw a ghost. What did you see?

MARLEY

Nothing, a flash maybe. But I heard giggling.

(They look at each other. BO moves to her. Kisses her.)

BO

He's just happy that he's finally buried with his family. Let's have a drink.

(BO tries to lead her out but MARLEY stops.)

BO

You okay?

MARLEY

I'm fine. It's just... I'm married.

BO

Me too. What a coincidence. Can I interest you in some married lovin'.

MARLEY

I'm very interested already.

(GIGGLING comes from the same spot. They look at each other, then to the spot. MARLEY and BO burst out of the house to a round of APPLAUSE and their FIRST DANCE. They compose themselves in each other's arms.)

BO

We have a ghost.

MARLEY

You said you wanted a family.

(They LAUGH, and dance away, as the small gathering joins them. JACLYN crosses her arm, eyeing them. JUDY pinches her playfully on the butt. JACLYN takes JUDY in her arms and they dance away. In the upstairs window, SALVADOR is watching as down below the first dance takes place. BO glances up to see him. SALVADOR lingers a moment, then steps back out of the window. BO's not happy about this.

Lights to black

Lights back up - Later

MARLEY, BO and Arrow at the end of wedding party.
BO and MARLEY sit in the gazebo with a bottle of wine
and cake. Arrow sleeps at BO'S feet.

MARLEY

Bo, I know we haven't talked much about this, so, if you don't mind, tell a little gazebo-tale about your childhood.

(BO cringes. It's a sore spot.)

MARLEY

Don't if it's --

BO

No, it's.... My childhood was fine. Great even. But Pop disowned me when I decided not to go into the family business after high school. Paint store chain.

MARLEY

House paint? Colors. And I accused you of being gay.

BO

That's because I see rainbows whenever I'm with you.

MARLEY

Foster Paints. The chain? That's you?

BO

Yes, well, no it's my pop. A very large chain. I have stock though. So there's income. It angers him that I make money without helping him. Salvador still helps out once in awhile. Sal likes to watch the trains unload. And I think he likes the fumes from the paint. He used to sniff it when he was a kid. You know getting high.

MARLEY

Not you?

BO

I had other ideas. I saw painted cars, not barns.

MARLEY

I see. I'm sorry about what this has done to Salvador.

BO

Yeah. I disappointed him.

MARLEY

Is he... he seems... so odd. Was it all the paint maybe?

BO

No. He's cool. His family were all odd. It's my own fault.

MARLEY

He got you all that wood.

BO

Yeah. There's not much he wouldn't do for me.

MARLEY

True friends are few and far between.

BO

Just before I went off to school he got into some trouble. Spent five years on probation. Couldn't leave the state. That was my fault, too.

MARLEY

He hurt someone?

BO

Kid came to the store looking for me. Heard I'd been with his girl.

MARLEY

Were you?

BO

Yeah. Deserved to have my ass kicked many times. Sal broke the kid's jaw. Nearly put out one of his eyes. Wasn't for Pop vouching, saying he was working, he'da done real jail time. This house thing. He's a little upset by it. It's --

MARLEY

-- It's not your fault. There's other houses in this area.

BO

You got to understand Sal. He gets something in his head. He fixates on that picture. He doesn't deal well with sudden change. It upsets him.

MARLEY

He looks up to you. Like a big brother.

BO

Pop, kind'a was Sal's Pop, for the most part. We had a plan. Buy one house, and bring in two others. Sell one off. Live next to each other. Like when we were dumb kids. Before our families imploded, his family owned a lot of farmland. Lost it all to the bank after his pop took ill. We've talked about this old place a lot. It's what he sees his future is supposed to be. He never fully got over me leaving the store. Now this. It's tough on him.

MARLEY

It's your life. Salvador and your father must see that.

BO

We'll go see Pop one of these days. Maybe you'll tell him who I married.

MARLEY

Come here and make love to me. And I'll confess everything.

BO

Even the lesbian stuff?

MARLEY

Wise-guy.

BO

How about making some up? You know, college-gazebo stories.

MARLEY

Maybe they're real, maybe not.

BO

Big tease. Tell me about living with your granny.

MARLEY

My parents died in a plane crash. From there, Granny ran my private life pretty much. The insurance money just kept growing with investments. Granny was a smart business woman.

BO

You never bought a home before this one?

MARLEY

No need to. Granny liked the feel of hotels. And I was always on the move.

BO

So where are your parents buried?

MARLEY

Why?

BO

I don't know.

MARLEY

Their bodies were never found. Many plane victims aren't. You may have read about it. Can we change the subject?

BO

You brought it up.

MARLEY

I'm sorry. I harbor guilty feelings because they were on their way to see me. I bought them the tickets.

BO

Shit happens.

(kisses her.)

I'm perfectly happy with the here and now. The past is behind us and tomorrow the Sun shall rise anew - a glorious day and shine upon our married life.

(MARLEY reaches over for her wineglass.)

MARLEY

To our future.

BO

And finishing the McClure House.

MARLEY

And our son, the ghost.

End of ACT II
Scene One

ACT II
Scene Two

McClure House - Day. The house is coming along very nicely. BO is seen at work on the staircase. MARLEY is on her laptop at the gazebo. She also has a card. BO looks up and sees her looking at the card. He recognizes it. He leaves the house and crosses to the gazebo. He takes the card and looks it over. Trying to mask his concern.

BO

On special days, Sal sends cards to us from my mother.

(MARLEY unpacks their lunch.)

BO

She passed away some time ago.

MARLEY

Did I miss this part?

BO

Apparently. I'm not sure.

MARLEY

This is a strange custom among friends in Rhineland?

BO

And not a topic Pop or I choose to speak about.

MARLEY

Or to me. Your family is getting to be quite colorful. Any one else in the closet other than Sal and our little giggling friend? Sisters maybe?

BO

No. It's been years since he's done this. When I was let go. You know, so we don't forget her. Sal misses her.

(looks the card over)

It's a belated wedding card.

(BO doesn't seem too happy about it. He doesn't offer it to MARLEY. But she holds out her hand anyway. He gives it to her.)

MARLEY

She has very masculine handwriting. "She's someone special". Simple and nice. She thinks well of me.

BO

Good old Mom.

(She hugs him. BO kisses her, and heads back to the house.)

BO

I love you. No matter what.

MARLEY

I love you back. Regardless.

(We can see in both their eyes that something is bothering both of them. MARLEY returns to the Internet. She's checking Wisconsin newspaper archives. Talking to herself.)

MARLEY

Nothing. There's nothing here, Marley. The paint shops are there just like he said. He's got no criminal records that you can find. And he is whom he says he is. An ex-auto designer who was fired. This is foolish, you know. But --

JACLYN

-- But, you know what?

MARLEY

(startled)

Jaclyn!

JACLYN

I coughed. Isn't it a little late to research the mystery lumberjack husband?

(has lunch)

MARLEY

Was I talking out loud?

JACLYN

Yes, and if you're gonna continue. Talk louder so I don't strain myself tryin' to hear you. So, what did you find on mister I don't know anything about?

MARLEY

Nothing. Everything is how he said it was.

JACLYN

But your woman's intuition is burning a hole in your commonsense. Girl, I told you that. When the perfect man comes through that door, you better be on your knees in prayer. 'Cause he has done come again. The rest of 'em ain't nothin' but apple eaters.

(MARLEY comes across something.)

JACLYN

What is it?

MARLEY

Nothing. Now go back to work.

JACLYN

Don't come cryin' to me when you find he ain't the man he said he was.
(answers her CELL as she leaves)

What is it, Judy?

JUDY (V.O.)

Will you leave the woman alone?

JACLYN (O.S.)

Oh, girl, you don't want to go there with me today.

(JUDY and JACLYN'S voices fade away But something is bothering MARLEY greatly. Her eyes well up with tears.)

MARLEY

Unsolved disappearance? She's someone special.

(having a breakdown, answers her phone)

Hello. Oh, could you please text him on his phone? Yes. Of course. Just a minute.
(calling out)

Bo. Phone call on my cell for you.

BO

(trots to the gazebo)

What's the matter, Marley?

MARLEY

Nothing. Work related stress. It's for you. Did you give out my cell phone? Said he couldn't reach you on yours.

BO

Hello. Hey, Sal. Yes we were. No, I... Come here, now.

MARLEY

What does he want?

BO

(looks sickened)

The wood.

MARLEY

Bo, what does he want? Bo --

BO

-- Don't worry. Sal's just.... He's coming here. I'll take care of it.

(BO moves D.S. toward the street. SALVADOR waits for him there. They walk into the house.

SAM sticks his head out an upstairs' window.)

SAM

-- Marley, something's wrong. His guy's here with him. Hooman took off a few seconds ago and didn't say where he was going. You see him send him back up here, pronto. I'll be back in about an hour.

MARLEY

Okay. I'll be right up.

(MARLEY enters the house and stops at the bottom of the stairs as SAM comes out. He motions inside.

MARLEY enters the foyer to find BO has SALVADOR up against a wall.)

BO

What did you tell them?!

(The men stop when they see MARLEY. BO lets SAL go. And pushes him towards the steps. MARLEY is taken back by this violent side of BO.

SALVADOR comes down the half-finished stairs and past MARLEY without a word.)

BO

Sorry, Marley, I --

MARLEY

-- What's going on? What's happening?

BO

Marley, it's nothing. The guy is putting a squeeze on me.

MARLEY

Why? What have you done?

(BO comes down the stairs. He tries to take MARLEY in his arms but she backs off.)

MARLEY

Bo. Tell me.

(BO sits on the steps. He wants to tell her the truth, but can't. He looks at her, trying his best to sound truthful.)

BO

The wood. He let someone outbid us. We won't get what we want until maybe spring or later.

MARLEY

This is about the wood?

BO

We're not just talking about any kind of wood. It's the only wood.

MARLEY

Bo, it doesn't matter if we --

(MARLEY LEADS HIM OUT TO THE GAZEBO.)

BO

-- It does matter. There's no telling how long it'll take them to dredge up another log to match the grain we've started. If ever. People as far away as Japan are bidding on this wood. I'll have to start over.

MARLEY

For crying out loud. This damn wood. You're driving yourself crazy.

BO

It's not getting his house. I should've known.

MARLEY

It's only wood. And you're acting like a wanted man.

BO

Only wood? Marley, this is our home. This is our vision. I can't finish the stairs right without it. I can't take him to court or kick anyone's ass. We're screwed if he doesn't get us back in line for that wood.

MARLEY

Stop. Calm down. No court, no ass kicking. If we have to wait, we'll wait. Just stop this secrecy stuff. You're scaring me. Tell me everything is fine. That we're okay.

BO

Everything is fine. The "We're okay" I'm not so sure of until I make a few phone calls to see who got our wood. I told you, Sal's the middleman. Without him, there's no wood to finish this place. Not the way we want.

(MARLEY unpacks the food, not letting BO see her face. He watches her for any sign that she knows what's going on.)

MARLEY

Good. I can't believe you two are acting like this. I should write your mother and tell her what bad boys you are.

(BO doesn't answer. MARLEY knows something. They're both in the game now. Bo takes his food inside as JACLYN enters gazebo.)

JACLYN

It's about time. You workin' out of this gazebo isn't conducive --

MARLEY

-- Not today, Jaclyn.

JACLYN

I need to have you sign off on these boutique articles before --

MARLEY

-- I'm serious.

JACLYN

Marley, the checks still haven't --

MARLEY

-- Do not make me yell at you --

JACLYN

-- And one of your workers just stopped by. I think he quit. He left something. I put it on your table there.

(MARLEY picks up the sealed note.)

MARLEY

Take an early lunch.

JACLYN

But --

MARLEY

-- Now. And no more deadlines. I don't care if the paper is late once in a while.

JACLYN

It don't work that way. We got trucks comin' to pick up bundles in forty minutes.

MARLEY

They can wait.

JACLYN

Please, you're not talking --

MARLEY

-- Have Judy call the advertiser's bank and verify the amounts of the available funds in their accounts. This is not new ground here, Jaclyn.

JACLYN

Can you read these over at least?

(MARLEY looks at JACLYN.)

JACLYN

Okay, fine. I'll have Matthew run these as is when I get back from lunch.

MARLEY

Not so hard, was it --

JACLYN

-- On lunch. It's your paper. I just work here.

MARLEY

Finally, we agree on something.

(MARLEY opens the note and reads. It's handwritten.)

HOOMAN (V.O.)

Meet me out back of the house, 10 A.M., sharp. Where I take my lunch, by the lake. Don't be late, your life depends on it. Just sit down on the end of the dock. I'll join you when I know you're alone. Hooman.

(This is greatly disturbing. JACLYN watches MARLEY.)

JACLYN

Marley? What is it?

MARLEY

I'm not sure. It's nothing. He's quitting, like you said.

JACLYN
(not buying it)

Girl, whatever it is, you best come clean. 'Cause you ain't a good liar. Or I'm gonna call the Sheriff.

MARLEY

Jaclyn, do you like working at my paper?

JACLYN

Not at the moment.

MARLEY

Give me the articles and get out of my gazebo.

(JACLYN hands over the papers. MARLEY watches her go, checking her watch. Finally, at the last second, she storms out of the gazebo. Reading the papers as she goes.

MARLEY hurries down the dock to the lake.)

(There's a brick boathouse with a dock running into the lake behind it.

MARLEY moves closer. There's a lunch bucket. Nothing else. So she sits down and waits as instructed. Going over the papers, checking them off. It's creepy. She's looking around for someone, anyone. But no one comes out of hiding.)

MARLEY

Hooman? Hello? Hooman?

(Getting nothing but a DEAD ECHO back. MARLEY looks around seeing the dock runs behind the out into the water. Realizing once on, there's only one dry way off. She looks down into the water.

We can see by her reaction that something O.S. is floating in the distance. She stands up in shock to get a better look.)

MARLEY

This isn't... NO! They can't.... Not now, please not now.

(She stumbles back in shock. Papers go flying. MARLEY realizes that she has put herself at risk. She's at the end of the dock. She looks around in panic. No one. She runs back towards the house. Frantic.)

(O.S., ducks suddenly FLAP up before her. Her key goes flying. She lets out another blood curdling SCREAM, flailing, barely staying on her feet.

From the look on her face, her life as she knows it is about to come to an abrupt end.

She makes it back to the gazebo and starts packing up her computer.

BO comes out to the gazebo to find MARLEY searching her purse for something. He rushes to her.)

MARLEY

Goddamn key, where are you?

BO

Marley? Honey?

MARLEY

Don't come over here.

BO

What's going on?

MARLEY

Just stay away. Go back into the house until I'm gone.

BO

Marley, this is crazy. Where are --

MARLEY

-- Bo, if you come any closer, I swear....

(BO moves towards her. MARLEY goes for her bag. BO grabs her. She pulls a knife out of her bag. And pushes him over the gazebo table.

They CRASH to the deck together. MARLEY on top of him, holding the knife to his throat.)

BO

If this is some kind of crazy foreplay, it's not working.

MARLEY

There's a man dead in the lake. Hooman. He's been strangled. He left me a note to meet him. Now he's dead. I'm getting out of here. Before I'm next.

BO

Marley --

MARLEY

-- Shut up. Just roll over.

BO

Shit, come on --

MARLEY

-- Roll over!

(BO rolls over and MARLEY uses the computer cord to tie his hands....)

BO

This doesn't make a lick of sense.

MARLEY

It makes perfect sense from my end.

BO

Apparently. Just tell me why we can't talk this out.

MARLEY

Don't play stupid with me, Bo. Where's the other key?

BO

Marley --

MARLEY

(puts the knife back to his throat.)

-- My goddamn car key.

BO

In my pocket. Marley....

(MARLEY finds the key.)

BO

What did Hooman have to tell you?

MARLEY

Why don't we ask your mother, Bo? Oh, that's right, she's missing, murdered by your best friend. Wasn't she?

BO

I... it wasn't Sal's.... She... please, it was an accident. I should've told you. The guy... Marley. I don't know exactly, he... she was leaving Pop. Making him sell the business. Taking her half of everything and leaving. She had a gun, and Sal protected himself. We did what we had to. To keep things the way they were.

MARLEY

Just shut up, Bo. I don't know what you and Salvador are up to. But I'm not waiting around to find out why you two covered up your mother's death.

BO

Who would want to harm you? What's happening here?

(BO rolls on his side to face her.)

BO

Just tell me this. Who the hell are you?

(MARLEY almost blurts it out, but she stops. There's a lot more to MARLEY than we expected.)

MARLEY

You son-of-a-bitch. I love you.

(MARLEY stands up to leave. She wants to stay. But knows she can't. She runs to the house.)

BO

Marley. Goddamn it. Let me explain. Let me help you. Marley? Don't end it this way. Don't run.

(MARLEY comes bursting back out the front door. Unfortunately, the SHERIFF is waiting for her.)

SHERIFF

Marley?!

(MARLEY walks towards the park. The SHERIFF goes after her. Catching up at a near run.)

SHERIFF

Marley. Wait.

MARLEY

What is it, Sheriff?

SHERIFF

Come on, now.

(MARLEY tries to step around him.)

SHERIFF

Give me a minute.

MARLEY

I'm in a hurry.

SHERIFF

I can see that. You want to explain why your newspaper articles are scattered at the end of the dock, where we found a body of one of your workers floating in the lake?

(MARLEY stops. What can she do?)

SHERIFF

That is Hooman, are you aware of that?

MARLEY

Yes.

SHERIFF

(waits for more)

Don't make me have to read you your rights.

(Just then, BO comes storming up. He stops when he sees the SHERIFF and MARLEY.)

End of ACT II

Scene Two

ACT II

Scene Three

McClure House - Hours later. SAM sits across the table
BO gave MARLEY from the SHERIFF.

SHERIFF

Relax, Sam, just tell me slowly.

SAM

All I know is that Hooman was a hard working young man. He's worked for me and my father since he was a kid. He walked off suddenly and didn't come back. So I walked to the lake to where he often feeds the ducks. I heard a scream and saw Marley running away in a frenzied state.

SHERIFF

Alone?

SAM

At first, I thought Hooman had an accident. Then I thought, why were they together. Then didn't know what to think. Then that. The cord around his neck. Dead. Why?

SHERIFF

(moves to the door)

You mind sticking around while I have someone take your statement?

SAM

Marley and Bo, they couldn't've done this. Bo was up at the house. Hell, Marley, she's a lady. Hooman may've been dim, but he'da put up a hell'va fight. You should talk with this man Salvador Turk. Bo's friend. Heard them arguing.

SHERIFF

Just sit tight. I'll talk to everyone.

(The SHERIFF goes outside to the gazebo and sits in front of MARLEY. He's not satisfied.)

SHERIFF

Alright, Marley. Why all of a sudden leave town? Why not stay here and get help?

MARLEY

I panicked.

SHERIFF

That's putting it mildly.

MARLEY

Sheriff, you go to a remote place to meet a man who wants to tell you something important. And you find him dead. What would you do?

SHERIFF

I certainly wouldn't flee town leaving my husband behind.

MARLEY

Sure, you're a man with a gun. I didn't know what to think. Surely, you don't think I killed him.

SHERIFF

Of course not, Marley... I just... why don't you go on back to the paper. Probably missed your deadline as it is. If I have questions, I'll get back to you on it. Gonna give Jaclyn a heart attack you keep working up here.

(MARLEY gets up to leave.)

SHERIFF

You have no idea why Hooman wanted to talk?

MARLEY

I thought it had something to do with the house. I'm paying out a lot of money. Sheriff. If I'm being ripped off. I want to know by whom.

SHERIFF

Are we talking Sam, or Bo?

MARLEY

Does it matter? Look, I have to work things out with Bo. Can we talk later? Give me an hour.

SHERIFF

Alright. I'll be back in an hour.

(The SHERIFF is even less satisfied.)

(But MARLEY heads for the house, past a window.

BO is working on a piece of furniture. He's using a LOUD band saw. He watches her go by.

She gives him a hard look. MARLEY enters from the back. He doesn't see her. The saw WHINES to a stop.)

MARLEY

Who knows I'm here?

BO

Shit, Marley. Make me cut off a thumb, why don't you.

MARLEY

Who knows, Bo?

BO

Just me and Salvador, at this point.

MARLEY

But you asked questions. Had people looking.

BO

No. Just Salvador.

MARLEY

Why?

BO

I have the right to know who I'm married to.

MARLEY

You bastard. You don't trust me?

(She gets up and runs out. BO has no choice other than to stop her. MARLEY pulls away, runs back into the house. BO'S right behind her. Running through the house. MARLEY wanting to barricade herself in room-after-room. But there's no locks on the doors.

BO opens doors until she has no escape. Finally the master bedroom door locks. She runs to the newly installed window where they made love.)

BO

(at the locked door)

It's not what you think. With-all my heart, I love you.

MARLEY

Then who killed Hooman? Sal?

BO

Long as it wasn't you or me, we're okay.

MARLEY

How much do you know?

BO

You're in some kind of a Witness Protection Program.

MARLEY

Do you know why?

BO

No.

MARLEY

You liar.

BO

Okay, I know it had to do with the death of your parents. I know there's a price on your head. And involved your job.

MARLEY

And your friend knows.

BO

Salvador's a little slow at times, but he's very good at finding out things. He came to me with an article that had a photo that looked like a younger you. I asked him to look into it. I didn't really care at the time. I was just keeping him busy. He was protecting --

MARLEY

-- He watched us through the window that night?

BO

No. He was at his place. I gave --

MARLEY

-- You gave him my fingerprints?

BO

Marley.... On a fork.

MARLEY

My fork?. You gave him my fork?!

BO

Yeah, I didn't know --

MARLEY

-- You moron. That fork belonged to my Great Grandmother. The set is a family heirloom from Austria. I've been looking all over for it. I can't believe this. You --

BO

-- To hell with your damn fork. I made a mistake. I tried to take the package back from him --

MARLEY

-- You gave him my fork the night you made love to me?

BO

Now, Marley, I know how this sounds.

MARLEY

You obviously don't! You, dumb son-of-a-bitch.

BO

I told him to stop. That I didn't want to know. If you'd just been honest with me. I wouldn't've --

MARLEY

-- screw you. I was protecting you. I was protecting us. What we have together. This life. And you --

BO

-- This isn't getting us anywhere.

MARLEY

You were pissed. And you wanted the house. Admit it.

BO

Okay. Yes. I wanted the house. But I didn't agree to go along with this. It's not why I married you.

(MARLEY kicks the door. Startling him.)

BO

I do love you, Marley, just know that. I can't help you if you don't believe me. I don't know what else to do? Tell me what we should do.

(But no answer from MARLEY.)

BO

Fine. I'll go talk it over with the Sheriff. Confess to being an idiot. I haven't done anything illegal.

(heads down the staircase)

MARLEY

Other than hide the death of your mother.

BO

Fine, it's time I came clean. I made a mistake not turning Sal in. My mother deserves better. If I see time, I'll deserve it. If you've got to run, you better start now.

MARLEY

Bo. Don't do this. I'll trust you. I'll find a way. Bo, don't tell them anything. We won't be safe.

(BO is out the door. MARLEY goes after him. In the yard she catches up. He turns. They kiss.)

BO

Then we're in this together? All the way to the end. Okay?

MARLEY

Yes. But you can't go to the Sheriff. Once my cover is blown, I'm gone. You have no idea what will happen next. I don't even know if they'll let me take you with me.

BO

Then we've got to talk to Salvador.

MARLEY

Can we prove he killed Hooman?

BO

I'd say it's a fair chance. We need to convince him to keep silent. To stay away from us. Or we tell.

MARLEY

He'll still want his house. He knows all about us.

(BO doesn't answer.)

MARLEY

Are you sure that's all Salvador wants?

BO

Let's hope so. The article he showed me. Marley, these people, what were you thinking they would do?

MARLEY

I was investigating Russian Officers. They were selling a stolen nuclear weapon to Iraq. I was just a good journalist writing a book when I stumbled onto the information. I was young and naive. Until they killed my parents. For revenge. Because the tickets were in my name, they thought I was on that plane. My book plans got changed because I was forced to give my research to the CIA. And these people got put in prison for life. In Russia. But one of them was killed. Knifed.

They murdered my family from inside a prison cell halfway around the world. And I got my life taken away. We need to know what Salvador wants. Or we should run now. You will not be able to protect me from them.

BO

Calm down. Come on. Let's get out of the yard.

(Bo leads her towards McClure House.)

MARLEY

Are you sure Salvador hasn't let anyone else know who I am?

(BO thinks it over.)

MARLEY

Has he, Bo?

BO

I guess there's only one way to find out for sure.

Lights to black

Lights back up - Continuing

Upstairs in the McClure House. BO reads a text on his phone.

BO

He's coming here. Now.

(SALVADOR was just outside on his cell phone. He comes quietly to McClure House.)

MARLEY

He's trying to put himself between us.

BO

My shop, your paper. I agree. We can't let him take all this away from us.

MARLEY

Are you listening to me? We'll have to shut him up.

BO

I've known him my whole life, Marley

(BO turns to MARLEY. MARLEY is looking at the door. Someone's there.)

MARLEY

(Lowers her voice)

I'm talking money ... we can't kill him... can we?

BO

If it was only that simple.

(Then a KNOCK. BO goes to the door.)

BO

Look, Salvador, this is a mistake.

SALVADOR

Don't make me yell out here. People can hear.

MARLEY

Don't let him in.

(SALVADOR KICKS the door open. He's got a gun.)

BO

Damn it, Sal. I just made that door.

SALVADOR

Quietly. Move back.

(At gunpoint they back to the window where they first made love.)

SALVADOR

You see, Bo. She's no good for us. She's trying to get you to kill me. She'll get everything then. All our work. If you get caught helping me again. She'll twist us two, our friendship, what we did, all around and still get all this because you're married. She used us. She'll make people think bad things about us. When it ain't that way.

BO

Sal --

SALVADOR

-- This was our house. She's just like your mom. Taking everything away again. Changing things. Throwing us out.

(MARLEY starts to speak. BO stops her with a hand.)

BO

Sal, it's not... she's not leaving.

MARLEY

Sal killed your mother so she wouldn't take your father's paint stores in the divorce. He murdered her, Bo. We can prove that if he doesn't leave us alone. Tell him!

BO

This isn't helping, Marley. It was an accident.

MARLEY

So you accidentally let him bury her?

(BO doesn't answer.)

SALVADOR

You told her? You know I was just trying to make her stay. Take this gun from her.

BO

You told me you got rid of her gun.

SALVADOR

I didn't.

(SALVADOR raises the gun. Points it at MARLEY.)

BO

I know, I know... wait, it's okay, wait, wait. Salvador, wait. She found out on her own. I didn't tell her. Give me a second to think --

SALVADOR

-- You got two. One --

BO

-- No matter what happens, it will be me they come looking for. We won't have this together. We'll have no place to hide. They'll put me away, too.

SALVADOR

You wanted wood. I got you wood. You promised me I'd always have a home here if I got you the wood you needed to rebuild your dream home. Well, I have dreams, too. And I had to do things you don't want to know about to make yours come true.

SALVADOR (CONT'D)

Now she has everything. And you're telling me I've got no place to go? That my dreams are no good any more?

BO

I didn't see this coming, Sal.

SALVADOR

She doesn't want me. She won't let me put my house out back. She wants it all for herself. Givin' my lot to the city. Leavin' those bodies on it. She's not good for us. She's not right about us. This ain't right about anything we planned.

BO

Okay, Salvador. I'm in. Just --

MARLEY

-- What?!

BO

Give me a second, Marley.

SALVADOR

You in, you kill her.

BO

Okay. There's no other way out. I can see that.

MARLEY

Bo?

SALVADOR

Good. So, how do we do it?

MARLEY

Bo?

BO

I'm sorry, Marley. I don't want to die over this just because you have to. Your friends will find you eventually.

SALVADOR

This is the 'till death do we part-part.

MARLEY

But you said --

BO

-- I do love you. What choice do I have? There's all this work still to be done on this place. One of us has to see it through. It's got to be me.

MARLEY

You son-of-a-bitch. You liar!

BO

Give me Mother's gun, Salvador.

SALVADOR

What? No.

BO

Sal, it's me, Bo. You know I'd never hurt you. Now give me the gun. Let me finish it. I helped you before. Didn't I? Lied for you. Told you how to dig a deep hole under the tree roots. I did that to protect you. Protect us and Pop. To keep things the way they were. Right?

SALVADOR

Snap her neck with your hands, then. Like I accidently did Mother when Pop told me to bring her back. Then I'll know for sure. I'll leave town and go work with Pop for a spell. Take her body with me and bury it back home. Deep in the woods like before. Once the tree roots get to her, she'll stay gone forever. Even them Russians won't find her.

BO

Then you shoot her. You want me to do it. Give me the gun. I can't have her looking at me while I choke her. I can't listen to her neck snap like that, I can't. Otherwise, you do it.

SALVADOR

No. You must kill her. Do her any way you can. I don't care. She dies, the house is ours. We'll find a way to fix all this. We'll tell 'em the Russians got her. But I'm not givin' you this gun. Just show me you're in this all the way. So we can make it like it was. Just you and me.

BO

Then we got a situation here.

MARLEY

Bo? Think this through. You won't get the house. First your mother. Now your wife. It'll all piece together. They'll check my computer, see what I've been reading about you.

BO

This isn't personal, Marley. It's business. Sal didn't mean to kill my mother. Did you, Sal? Sal?

(But Sal doesn't answer.)

MARLEY

It's lunacy. You'll both end up with life behind bars.

SALVADOR

Use that board. Beat her with it.

BO

Salvador, come on. Are you listening to yourself? That's soft wood. I'll have to hit her several times. She'll scream. You've heard her scream. Blood all over the damn place. We won't be able to hide that.

SALVADOR

Cops will think the people looking for her did it. So they found her. We didn't know, Bo. Hell, if I found her. Anyone can find her. They may even pay us for killing her.

BO

You did good, Sal. You did real good. But we --

SALVADOR

-- Once I started poking around on the internet. I was in. Look at her. She knows all about it. They're looking for Tammy Wright. Well here she is. Fingerprints don't lie. We found her. Nobody knows her around here but you and me. Says she was writing some investigative book on the war. But she could be some kind of double spy or something. We can't trust a woman who cheats like her. We don't know her. You see it? It could work. Just you and me, Bo. Like it was. As surprised as anyone about what she's hiding.

BO

Okay, Sal. I see it. You done good. We'll put your place further out back. Forget the third house. We got the park. We got her money. I'm her husband. I'll get everything.

SAL

Right, we don't need the third house no more. But it ain't like we planned. Maybe...

BO

Give me the gun. Let me get this over. Come on, be flexible.

(SALVADOR'S still not sure. Wants to. But it just doesn't seem right in his head yet.)

(Outside the house, SAM stops down below looking up at the window. He's looking at the unhappy shadows from the light in the window. BO bends down and picks up the two-by-four. Feels it. Soft grain. It'll have to do. MARLEY starts backing away. She glances out the window to see SAM move to the house.)

BO

It's okay, Marley. I've got to do this. I'll be quick. Just know I really love you.

MARLEY

Sure you don't want to strangle me like Salvador did Hooman?

SALVADOR

I done it for us, Bo.

BO

You had to, Sal. I know.

(SALVADOR is forced to move closer to MARLEY to keep her still. Slowly they corner her. BO draws back with the board. MARLEY cringes.

There's the little Child's GHOSTLY GIGGLE from behind them.

SALVADOR turns to look. SAM is at the door.)

SAM

What the hell's...?

(BO whacks SALVADOR with the board, again...and again. BO grabs up MARLEY and pushes SAM toward the door. They make a run for it.)

Black on Master bedroom

Lights up on backyard

(They run fast. But SAM isn't the fleetest of guys and falls down. BO comes back for him. SALVADOR is already out of the house. He's hurt bad.)

(He's got blood running down his face. Takes that moment to cut them off. Forcing them to go along the dock to the bottomless lake.

SALVADOR is right behind them, stopping to steady himself. He's a mess.

They reach the brick boathouse and the docks.)

MARLEY

This is crazy. What are we doing here?

BO

We've got to end this. Swim the lake.

MARLEY

What? What about you?

BO

He won't follow. He can't swim. It's your only way out of this.

SAM

We'll be sitting ducks out there.

BO

Get in the water. I'll wait for him. Go.

(BO kicks off his shoes.)

Black on Bo, Sam and MARLEY

Lights up on SALVADOR

SALVADOR reaches the docks, stumbles. Falling. Fighting to keep his feet. Crying a little.

SALVADOR

You lied to me, Bo. I trusted you. Bo? I need you. I'm bleeding. I'm hurt. Help me. Bo, please. Get me home to Pop. She's no good for us. She's... Bo, please don't do this... help me. Bo? I'll kill her for you, Bo. I can still kill her. It's not too late. It can still be like we....

(O.S. SPLASHING comes from out in the lake.)

Bo?
SALVADOR
(SALVADOR stumbles further out on the dock. O.S., MARLEY and SAM are swimming away. Blood in his eye. He sees BO's shoes.)

Bo!
SALVADOR
(But it's only two swimmers. Sal looks around.)

BO..!
SALVADOR
(He goes to the end of the dock. He aims the gun at MARLEY and SAM. Starts shooting.
O.S., SAM cries out. MARLEY swims harder. SALVADOR moves towards the brick boathouse, searching the water for BO when, WHAM. He gets slammed with a loose brick from behind. BO picks up the gun. Points it at Sal. Sal crumbles to his knees. Half alive. Confused that BO would do this. Reaching up to him.)

I always loved you, Bo....
SALVADOR

I know, Sal. I know.
BO
(BO SHOOTS him in the heart. SALVADOR falls into the water. BO grabs him before he sinks.)

End of ACT II
Scene Three

ACT II
Scene Four

The McClure House - Day. Spring The house is done.
Magnificent grand old place.)

(O.S., SHERIFF'S car pulls up. A door SLAMS. SHERIFF enters. He's not happy. He stops and looks at the house. Then to his happy town. SHERIFF heads for the gazebo.

MARLEY and BO are there drinking ice tea. They both look up and see the look on the SHERIFF'S face.)

SHERIFF

They found Sam.

MARLEY

Sam? Is he...?

SHERIFF

Out in the lake. Far side, on county land. All fenced off. Hard to get to, all the brush and what not. Ducks havin' eatin' most of him after the ice melted. But it's him.

BO

How?

SHERIFF

Hard to say the way he looks. They'll dredge for his truck.

MARLEY

That's terrible.

BO

Have you called his family?

SHERIFF

They're on their way. They found another. Buried along the lake shore. Shot in the heart. Wrapped in heavy plastic.

MARLEY

That's terrible.

SHERIFF

Yeah. Wisconsin gas receipts in his pocket. Might be your friend. You two wouldn't know anything about this?

MARLEY

Why would we?

SHERIFF

Bo's Wisconsin friend. Sam was your architect. Little things like that.

MARLEY

I just hired Sam. I don't know what else he was into. Perhaps he and Sal --

SHERIFF

-- I've known Sam a long time. Knew his daddy before him. Watched all his kids grow to be fine people. Sam wasn't into anything other than saving these old homes.

BO

He was a good man. Salvador was --

SHERIFF

-- an odd fellow, for sure. As you know, we've been lookin' for him since Hooman was murdered.

BO

All we know is he and I argued over being outbid on the wood we needed, and he took off. I don't speak to my pop, so I don't know if he went back home or not. We haven't heard from him since. You don't think -

SHERIFF

-- Tryin' not to think anything until I get all the facts.

MARLEY

As you know, Bo and I had to finish the house on our own. We couldn't bear to hire anyone else.

SHERIFF

Done a fine job, too. The investigation will hopefully bring everything to light. In the meantime, I hope you two aren't plannin' a vacation. In case we need your help.

BO

We're here to stay, Sheriff.

SHERIFF

Yep, the rest of your lives, I hope.

MARLEY

It's hot. Can we get you anything? Ice tea?

SHERIFF

I'm good. I'll let you know what we find. Could take a day or two.

BO

Okay.

(They wait for the SHERIFF to drive away.)

BO

What do you think?

MARLEY

Your call. I'm with you. Run or stay. If they won't let us stay together in their program, we're on our own.

BO

It's gonna be like this. Isn't it?

MARLEY

It'll come and go. What I did helped the world. And it helped you find me. That's all that matters to me now.

BO

It's a perfect haunted house.

MARLEY

I couldn't invent a better life.

BO

My guess, they're building a case against us right now.

MARLEY

I know. Even if it was self defense, the trial, my friends would find us. I'll make that call. They won't be happy about this. And we won't be able to wait for them.

BO

Understandable. I'll leave the paperwork on the kitchen counter. The house and shop now belongs to Sam's family.

MARLEY

Don't worry, they'll take good care of Arrow. And keep the shop open.

BO

And I'm sure Jaclyn and Judy will keep your paper alive. And Matthew employed without hurting him much.

MARLEY

Yes, they will, probably better without me in the way. And Matthew might even stop loosing his hair. What we built here will live on. People will remember us for it. And Sam would be happy if he knew his family was finally getting to live in McClure House.

BO

Yes he would. It will never justify losing him, but it will mean something to them knowing their father's dream of leaving them this beautiful home came true.

MARLEY

We're not bad people, Bo. Our love for each other, and what we did here, is proof of that. We found that boy, created a good honest life. Our past just wouldn't leave us in peace.

(MARLEY takes BO's hand. He kisses her deeply.)

BO

You're the girl for me. No matter where we call home.

MARLEY

You're the right man for me. You are my home.

(There's a flash in the upstairs window and they look up. Standing there is the figure of the young boy. He smiles, waves and fades.)

Lights Fade To Black.

CURTAIN

Bonjour, America

A Neo-Noir Stage Play

(based on the screenplay)

by

Karl J. Niemiec

CHARACTERS

VINCENT BOYET: Twenty-five. Clean cut, French suit salesman, wears dark rimmed glasses. He has a deathly fear of heights. In a panic he drove his rented car and family's suit samples off a bridge into a river. He's trying to get home to Salt Lake City to his pregnant wife.

DANE MORGAN: Forties. Local Sheriff. He's a hard living, fourth generation good old boy, and pig farmer.

QUINNLY SULLIVAN: Twenty-six. A dirty hot-sex about her that collects losers like dust to a TV. Waitress at the Spoon Café.

TRAVIS HIGHTOWER: Thirties. Scruffy - Bank robber.

LEONARDO HIGHTOWER: Thirties. Travis' cousin. Bank Robber, pool player.

JEREMIAH JOHNSTONE: Thirties. Small town lawyer, pool player.

ELI TWAIN: Fifties. A bullish peculiar, hairy neck chicken rancher.

BLAIR MOULDS: Thirties. Balding redneck. A short-order cook and owner of the Spoon Café.

CHERYL MOULDS: Twenties. Blair's wife and waitress at the Spoon Café.

ZACHARY: Seventies. He's owner of General Dry Goods Store.

TRULY DUNN: Thirties. She works the counter at Driftwood Whistle Inn. A plump, pleasant woman, with exquisite breast. Otherwise her appearance is bland as applesauce.

STATIONMASTER: Nineties. A hunched-over, willow of a man. He wears a vintage dark train conductor's suit and cap.

BROOKE: Twenties. A rail. Works at the Pool hall/Bar.

DEPUTY SHERIFF TOMCAT REILLY: Thirties. A cruel drunk bastard. One hundred pounds over weight. Cheating on his wife with Brooke.

BARTENDER: Forties. Missing an arm and an eye.

SHERI BOYET: Not seen. Twenties. American, pregnant, lives in Salt Lake City.

SETTING:

Based on the Neo-Noir Screenplay. The sets may be bare boned, exposed by dim lit moments as lights go up and down to bridge between continuing scenes.

If time stood still, it would expire here and turn into pig farmer and chicken rancher dust. These people are lost in the deep, unfriendly shadows of a nothing-town's underworld-money. Located in the broken heart of colorless America, and stuck to the bleached-out bones of Driftwood Crossing, Colorado - Founded 1872 - Population: 34 1/2. Sets: a Near ghost town, a rundown and decaying, Spoon Café, the Driftwood Whistle Flophouse, its Lobby/Pool Hall/Bar/Alley and bank across the street. Other sets exposed by dim light: Crossroads/ Boxcar/Park/ Salt Lake City Hospital Room/Two Homes.

TIME:

The hot, dry Summer of 1960.

ACTS - SCENES:

Scenes are often continues between locations with Lights Up and to Black as needed. Sometimes two or more sets are lit simultaneously to progress the story.

ACT I - Scene One - American Crossroads/Spoon Café - Sunset

ACT I - Scene Two - End of town - The Driftwood Whistle Inn - Evening

ACT I - Scene Three - Vincent's Room/Hall/Lobby - Night

ACT I - Scene Four - The Driftwood Whistle Inn Bed Rooms - Night

(Note: Only Vincent's Room needs lit but as written they all are with lights up and dark.)

ACT I - Scene Five - Lobby/Pool Hall/Bar/Alley/Crossroads - Night

ACT II - Scene One - Spoon Café - Daybreak

ACT II - Scene Two - Driftwood Crossing/Bank Robbery - Day

ACT II - Scene Three - Outside moving Open Boxcar/Train/Plowed Field - Day

ACT II - Scene Four - Inside Flop House - Night

ACT II - Scene Five - Outside/Inside Vincent's Home - Night

At Rise:

ACT I

Scene One

(American Crossroads - The Summer of 1960 - Sunset O.S., heading West, a rust-eaten 1940's Chevy chugs and squeaks to a sudden brake-grinding stop.

VINCENT BOYET, 25, climbs out. His fine European suit badly torn. Spotted with muck. Knees ragged. Elbows bloodied.

The Chevy drives on O.S. Destined for a ring job. Dust and engine fumes hits Vincent hard on a hot wind. He cleans his dark rimmed glasses, squints, taking in his new predicament.

He's at the end of a sunbaked gravel road sloping north a quarter mile through a no-light, bleached-wood town. At the far end, a dry gorge cuts deeply north and south under train tracks crossing an old stone bridge.

Continuing West is nothing but wispy sky, dry earth, distant mountains and the setting Sun. South is no better.

Vincent looks down at his feet. He's got one dress shoe. Then looks back at the no-where town.)

VINCENT

Bonjour, America.

(With misgiving, he takes a step and stops in front of a badly Sun blached sign: "DRIFTWOOD CROSSING, COLORADO" FOUNDED 1872.

Vincent brushes away dust. Revealing: chalky rock marks counting down the town's population: "37, 36, 35, 1/2.")

Black on Cross Roads

Lights up on Driftwood Crossing

(A half-lit BUZZING neon "SPOON Café" sign over the screen door. Vincent stops under it.

He turns away from stacks of stinking cages O.S. filled with SLEEPING CHICKENS on a vintage flatbed.

The local Sheriff, DANE MORGAN, 40's, exits the building. He's a hard living, forth generation good-old-boy.

JEREMIAD JOHNSTONE, 30's, a small time lawyer, follows. The smell hits them hard.)

DANE

Jesus Christ, Eli.

ELI (O.S.)

As I told you, Sheriff. I keeps 'em where I can sees 'em.

(Dane lets the door SLAP behind him.)

DANE

Dim-witted son-of-a --

JEREMIAD

-- Ought to throw a barbecue.

ELI (O.S.)

Be the last chicken you ever choked.

(Vincent and Dane eye each other as they pass. Their stark contrast as lucent as the BUZZING neon outside.

Jeremiad makes Vincent step out of his way. Shoving in a wad of chew, he leaves the Café and opens the next door and goes into The Driftwood Whistle Inn.

He turns at the SLAP of the Café screen door to find that Dane isn't following.)

JEREMIAD

Damn.... Come on, Dane.

DANE

I gotta run up to the house and make a few calls.

JEREMIAD

Shit, I'll spot you three stripies.

DANE

Find someone else to persecute tonight, J.J., I don't need you squeezing my balls.

(Jeremiad gets a laugh. Dane watches Vincent inside the café through the bug-stained Café window.

Vincent makes his way to an empty booth at the back. Two scruffy first cousins, TRAVIS and LEONARDO HIGHTOWER, 30's, finish up their meals at the counter. "Grifting losers" written all over them.

ELI TWAIN, 50's, sits in a booth by the window. A bullish peculiar, hairy neck guy. An oddly fitted plaid wool cap with chicken feathers on his head. He uses his fat tongue to get the last of the ice out of his glass.)

ELI

Can I have more water? You got more water, Quinnly? I could use water.

(QUINNLY SULLIVAN, 26, stacks clean glasses behind the counter. A dirty hot-sex about her that collects losers like dust to a TV.)

QUINNLY

Shut up, Eli. You can see I'm occupied.

(She gives Vincent the "one too many losers in this place already" look, as she swats the two at the counter with her wet towel. SNAPPING Leonardo good on the forehead.)

LEONARDO

The hell was that for?

QUINNLY

Travis, tell your dumb-ass cousin the next time he touches himself whilst givin' me the dirty eye, I take it out.

LEONARDO

I got me a heat rash.

(She plops down a menu in front of Vincent, walking away....)

QUINNLY

I'll give you a heat rash.

(... picking up a lousy tip from Dane.)

TRAVIS

Where ya suppose he got it from?

(Quinnly refills Eli's water. She shoots Travis a warning. He turns back around. He says something inaudible to Leonardo.)

LEONARDO

Shuddup.

QUINNLY

You've peed three times since you been here, Eli.

ELI

Eight glasses a day. That's what the doctor says. I got an enlarged prostate.

QUINNLY

He say anything about water on the brain?

ELI

(looks at his glass)

Nah, can't happen to a man. Can it?

(Quinnly goes back behind the counter.)

QUINNLY

None I met in this town.

TRAVIS

Come on, Leonardo, we don't have to take this kind of misuse.

LEONARDO

Damn straight. If I needed snapped by a floozy I'd'a stayed livin' with your mamma.

(Vincent reads the menu.

The two grifters LAUGH their way to the door. Turning to look at him as they exit. Leonardo now has a red mark on his forehead the shape of an L. He walks with a clubfoot.

Vincent looks up to find Eli studying him. Vincent holds up his menu to hide behind it.

After a moment Quinnly comes back.)

QUINNLY

Never mind him. You ready to order, slick?

VINCENT

Oui, madame. The meatloaf special. Extra side of brown jus... gravy.

QUINNLY

(yells over her shoulder)

Blair, we still got the special?

(BLAIR MOULDS, 30's, lifts his balding redneck head into the order window.)

BLAIR

I already told you, Quinnly.

QUINNLY

Boss says he's having the last.

VINCENT

Perhaps the trout. Poached if --

QUINNLY

-- Yeah, if we had it, but we don't. River's dry till October. Don't ask.

VINCENT

Okay, what does the boss suggest?

QUINNLY

He suggests ham and eggs. We got lots and lots of ham and eggs.

VINCENT

Great, I'll have three eggs up with home fries. Rye with jelly. Coffee. I'll skip the ham.

(Quinnly writes it down. But she doesn't leave. She looks at Vincent a moment.)

QUINNLY

That blood?

VINCENT

A little automobile trouble.

QUINNLY

Automobile. We don't get much foreign traffic.

VINCENT

You should post a sign.

QUINNLY

People would stop.

VINCENT

That's the idea. No?

QUINNLY

(walking away)

Not around these parts.

(Eli has gotten up. Stops at Vincent's table. Gives Vincent a long look. Stops short of saying something. Tips his cap. Heads out. After a moment Eli's smell hits Vincent. Quinnly clears the plate away from Vincent's table.)

VINCENT

Merci. Perhaps there's a local lodge where I could soak in a bathtub?

(CHERYL, short-dark, 20's, Blair's wife, enters from the back. Opens the register and starts putting the day's money in a MONEYBAG. Exchanges looks with Quinnly after eyeing Vincent.)

QUINNLY

A flophouse and pool hall next door. The view's no more unpleasant than the clientele.

Black on Café

End of ACT I - Scene One

Lights up on Driftwood Whistle Inn

ACT I

Scene Two

(The Driftwood Whistle Inn. Vincent stops below the three-story wood framed flophouse. The Café, bar and pool hall are all in the same building. The place is twenty years past tearing down. It leans toward a rail track.

Oddly, the town angles off the single railroad track. It causes the track to pass right below the back corner windows of the flophouse.

Note: Across the street, between the BANK and TRAIN STATION, is the GENERAL DRY GOODS STORE.

ZACHARY, 70's, stands watching from in front GDG Store. His clothes might have come from the 1800s. He motions Vincent enters the Inn.

Behind the counter is TRULY DUNN, 30's, plump with exquisite breast, otherwise bland as applesauce.

Through a door is two pool tables and a bar. Jeremiad Johnson is there drinking, playing pool by himself. He looks up from the ball when he hears Truly speak.)

TRULY

The only room we got available corners off at the tracks. I got to caution you. No one around here likes staying there.

VINCENT

No worries as long as there's a telephone, bathtub and hot water.

TRULY

No guarantee on the hot water. Let it run awhile though, so's it clears up. You need to make a phone call, you pick up the phone, it rings here. I'm Truly. I dial the number for you, and live right back there. Don't drive me crazy. I'm off at ten. You can find me in the pool hall back there after that. But don't. Unless the place's on fire or you're buying.

VINCENT

That's fine, Truly.

TRULY

Sign here. Address and phone. That's Seven-fifty a night. Calls are extra.

(Vincent signs the registry book.)

TRULY

Vincent Boyer. That French?

VINCENT

Oui, madame.

TRULY

Ain't you the soup de jour?

VINCENT

You know French?

TRULY

Hell no. But I'm willing you buy me that drink.

VINCENT

Another time, perhaps.

TRULY

You dumb enough to come back this way, I'll buy you that drink. Open door at the second landing. Room thirteen.

(Vincent pays with cash.)

VINCENT

A key?

TRULY

No key. Locks ain't worked in years.

VINCENT

Merci.

TRULY

You'll be fine. Ain't lost a Frenchman in months.

(Vincent heads up the rickety staircase. Vincent finds his room between two closed doors. The very back corner of the building. His door is open.)

Black on Vincent

Lights up on Vincent

(Vincent's room - Moments Later. He's using the phone. Lying on the bed. His one shoe off.)

VINCENT

Me, too... Good night, my love... Not to worry... rub the belly. Oui, soon as I step foot off the train. Sleep well, mon amour.

(Hanging up. Looks at himself in a mirror. Shirt has blood stains. His forehead, a cut above an eye. Scraped knees aching. Takes out the cash in his pocket. Not enough.

There's a KNOCK at his door. Vincent looks around before moving to the door. Dane stands at the door. Looking Vincent over.)

VINCENT

Bonjour, Sheriff. Vincent Boyer.

DANE

Had a fun day, I see.

VINCENT

Oui, a disagreement with my automobile over how to cross a very large river.

DANE

That right. Looks to me you lost.

VINCENT

Sadly true. It desired to swim the river, while I don't even wade in fountains without holding hands with a loved one.

(An uncomfortable moment as Vincent's joke falls flat.)

DANE

You need a doctor, you're out'a luck.

VINCENT

No, I'm --

DANE

-- General Store and the Station up the street are closed about now. But I'll have old Zachary and the Stationmaster stop up and help you set back on your journey.

VINCENT

Wouldn't want to bother --

DANE

-- No bother to me. They'll be up with something about your size and in your direction.

VINCENT

Wouldn't happen to know --

DANE

-- Probably not.

VINCENT

All right then. Was a pleasure to have met, Sheriff.

DANE

Don't be startin' no trouble, Frenchy.

(Dane turns to leave when he hears someone coming up the stairs. After a moment Zachary appears in the hall, winded from the climb. Looks at Vincent, until Vincent steps aside to let him in to plop the clothing boots on the bed .)

VINCENT

Very kind of you...

ZACHARY

Kind hell, I'm up here making a sale.

VINCENT

Oui, of course.

(Vincent goes through the shirt selections Zachary brought with him. There's an enormous contrast from what he's wearing and what his choices are. Nothing but Levi. Zachary watches Vincent closely as he examines the brass buttons on a Levi jacket. The buttonholes are very stiff.)

VINCENT

Quaint little town.

ZACHARY

Stale bread stick can be quaint, depending what you make of it.

VINCENT

How very true. Some of this fabric must be ten years old. No?

(Zachary gives him a suspicious look.)

ZACHARY

Ain't a day over eight. Levi is Levi unless it ain't Levi at all.

(Vincent selects a Levi shirt, pants and jacket.)

VINCENT

Very good, Levi it is.

(Zachary adds it all up.)

ZACHARY

Good choice. Fifty-five all together with the boots.

(Zachary takes Vincent's money. Gives him back change. Picks up the remaining clothing. Moves over to the open door. Zachary looks him over again.)

VINCENT

Merci.

ZACHARY

Welcome. Ask for an ass kickin' around these parts, you get one. Country American style.

VINCENT

Not on my list of things to do while lost in America.

ZACHARY

Good thinking. Traffic starts up again on the road about the time the crow cackles. Won't be much on Saturday if any.

VINCENT

Bright and early then. Gardez la foi.

(Vincent tries to close the door but a long hand with ghostly fingers stops it and pushes it back open with a chilling groan. Vincent steps out into the hall and looks around. No one is there.)

STATIONMASTER

No one out there, I saw.

(Vincent turns to find The STATIONMASTER (90's) hunched over, willow of a man. Dark blue suit and cap.)

VINCENT

Oh, pardon.

STATIONMASTER

(checks his pocket watch)

Times tickin'. You expectin' anyone else?

VINCENT

What? No. I wasn't positive I saw anyone about.

STATIONMASTER

Well, did you?

VINCENT

Sorry?

STATIONMASTER

You believe in spooks, boy?

(Vincent looks at The Stationmaster who looks like he could be right out of the stagecoach days.)

STATIONMASTER

This place is full of 'em, you look close enough. Something I can help you with?

VINCENT

... Oui, I'd like to inquire about a ticket out of town, Mister... ah --

STATIONMASTER

Stationmaster's good enough. Where to, young feller?

VINCENT

Salt Lake.

STATIONMASTER

Well, might find one that will take you southwest to Vegas... but definitely not northwest to Salt Lake. Could take the train and get off at Clear Water. Catch a bus from there.

VINCENT

At this point, it's important I get home.

STATIONMASTER

I see, big hurry, are we.

VINCENT

When is the next train?

STATIONMASTER

Train? Next train is due by in about two hours. But that's all it is, due by. The next passenger train ain't due in for another... oh...about...

(checks his pocket watch)

...thirty-two hours, thirteen minutes, and five seconds. I could put you down for a ticket.

VINCENT

Well, I've got time to think this out.

STATIONMASTER

Oh, you got time to think. Not much else to do. Just don't think big ideas around here.

(Stationmaster follows Vincent to the door. He pulls out a candle and a pack of matches from his pocket.)

STATIONMASTER

If I was you, young feller, I'd take this candle, pour me a nice hot bath, and sit in it as long as I could. Clear the spooks out of your head. Candle light does that to you.

VINCENT

Great then, I guess I'll take --

(Stationmaster shuts the door in Vincent's face.)

VINCENT

Spooks. In such an affectionate town?

Black on Vincent's Room

End of ACT I -
Scene Two

Lights up on Vincent's Bathroom

ACT I

Scene Three

(Vincent turns off the bath water. Sitting in it. Naked except a ring on his finger. Every muscle in his body aches. BUG LIFE from beyond the window grows out of the silence.

While enjoying the candlelight low RUMPUSES from the other flophouse TENANTS seeps through the night's ambiance.

At first, just a lot of UNINTELLIGIBLE MURMURING, CUPBOARDS BANGING, WATER RUNNING. The walls and floors being paper-thin. But slowly, parts of the DISCUSSIONS from the rooms begin to solidify.)

REILLY (O.S.

... tired of all this shit on.... wonder you got bugs.

Lights stay on in Vincent's Room

Lights up in Brooke Hope's Room

(From a Third Floor Room right above Vincent' room-Night. BROOKE HOPE, 20's, is a rail of a girl, and DEPUTY SHERIFF TOMCAT P. REILLY, 30's, is one hundred pounds over weight. The place is one big infested dust bowl.)

BROOKE

Then get out. Go on back to your fat butt wife. See if I care.

(Vincent tries not to listen.)

REILLY

Christ, you got a mouth. Look, this plate is from three nights ago. And Christ-ohmighty, look at the leg hair in this sink.

BROOKE

You heard me, Tomcat? Get out.

Black on Brooke Hope's room

(Glass SMASHES O.S., on the floor above. Long spooky echoing SCREAM from a girl that fades back into the couple up above now unintelligible... when from behind his headboard comes...)

QUINNLY (O.S.)

I'm tired, call me later. I want to lie down...

Lights remain up on Vincent's Room

Lights up on Quinnly's room - Continuing

(Quinnly's Second Floor room is right next to Vincent's. The headboards are against the same wall - Night. Quinnly spreads out across the bed. Still in her work clothes. Half filled bottle of rye sits on the nightstand.)

QUINNLY

... for a spell. Look, I don't sit around all day eating sticky buns. Fine... call me when you do.

(She SLAMS down the phone. LIGHTS a cig.)

Black on Quinnly's room

(Vincent thinks... then from the bathroom next door...)

TRAVIS (O.S.)

Throw me one of them towels, Leo.

Light up on Leonardo and Travis' Room - Continuing

(Grifters' Second Floor Room - Night. Leonardo throws a towel out of the bathroom then sets himself to crap. Travis cleans his GUN on the bed just outside the door.)

LEONARDO

What're we gonna bathe with, you keep usin' them as rags?

TRAVIS

You ain't got enough towels call that plump-apple at the front desk.

(Vincent reacts to hearing them so clearly.)

LEONARDO

I just might. That girl gets nasty, I'm tellin' you.

TRAVIS

Please don't. I just ate.

(The toilet FLUSHES. Leonardo comes out of the bathroom wanting to dry his hands.)

LEONARDO

Has a bright personality, too. The way she mentioned being in the bar... so we'd show up.

TRAVIS

For a pet maybe. And I got the feelin' she tells that to everybody 'cause she's desperate.

LEONARDO

Go about sleepin' with faces you be missin' a whole flatbed of good lovin'.

TRAVIS

Shiiiiit. Gonna give me gout. The good she'll do you.

(They sit there for a moment. Travis has his gun apart.)

LEONARDO

How much money do you figure that bank holds right about now?

TRAVIS

Are you hearing how dumb you sound?

LEONARDO

What? I'm just passing time.

TRAVIS

Well, I ain't passing time six-feet under because you got anxious.

(Vincent doesn't want to hear this.)

LEONARDO

I couldn't give less a care. I was just speculatin'.

(Vincent moves over and lies down on his bed. Leans over, looks in the drawer. Nothing but an ancient Bible.)

TRAVIS

Just shuddup, then. Hand me the oil.

LEONARDO

Damn, look what you're doin' to all them towels.

Black on Vincent's and Drifters Rooms

End of ACT I - Scene Three

Lights up on Vincent's Room

ACT I

Scene Four

(After a fitful sleep, MOANING wakes Vincent, coming through the wall from Quinnly's room. She's getting it GOOD. Her headboard starts POUNDING on the wall.

Vincent puts his pillow over his head as Dane starts to ORGASM like a pig in heat.)

Lights up on Quinnly's Room

(Dane rolls off Quinnly. In a fit of sweat. Reaches for her cigs. He lights two. He puts one in Quinnly's mouth. She takes a drag. He takes it out and tries to kiss her. She pushes his face away. Taking the cig back.)

QUINNLY

You know I hate that.

(Quinnly pours the last of the rye into her glass.)

DANE

What? It's a kiss.

QUINNLY

Your stash gives me hives. And your mouth stinks of pig shit and pussy.

DANE

Jesus... so I'll shave it.

QUINNLY

Just don't kiss me.

DANE

All right, all right, shit you're a screwed up broad. What's the matter? Your daddy used to give you hives?

QUINNLY

Piss-off. You want to kiss something, kiss my ass.

(They sit in silence for a moment, smoking. Dane is shaking his head, not wanting to antagonize her. He finishes the last of his rye and eyes the empty bottle. Vincent rolls over, enjoying the moment of silence, when....)

DANE

This time tomorrow things are gonna change, goddamn it. Leave all them stinking pigs to my brother. I got it all worked out.

QUINNLY

If I had an orgasm for every dumb son-of-a-bitch who's told me that.

(Dane moves over to the bathroom. Turns on the WATER in the tub and WASHES his penis at the sink.)

DANE

Honey, there ain't no one in this county who hasn't profited from this arrangement. One way or another.

(Dane comes out of the bathroom. Drying his crotch with a towel. Otherwise, he's standing butt naked. His belly hanging out. Not an overly attractive man by any means.)

QUINNLY

You got this all thunk out?

(Dane starts to put on his pants.)

DANE

You want money. I want you. Is that so bad?

QUINNLY

I'll let you know when I see my share.

Black on Quinnly's Room

REILLY (UPSTAIRS O.S.)

Goddamn, woman. I didn't say put an ice cube in this. I said put some ice in it.

BROOKE (UPSTAIRS O.S.)

I ain't your waitress, you jackass. I gave you what ice there was. You see any in my drink?

(A loud O.S. THUMP hits the floor above. Most likely her body. Followed by more broken glass.)

REILLY (O.S.)

Get your skinny ass outfitted for work. Right now, or I'll give you more of this.

(Vincent has heard enough. He gets out of bed and starts getting dressed as THUMPING and YELLING continue from up above.)

BROOKE (O.S.)

I'll get dressed when I feel like it.

Lights up on Hallway

(Dane exits Quinnly's Room. Vincent opens his door. Finds himself face to face with Dane. Dane sees the look on his face. He looks inside. The bed's a muss. He glances at the wall dividing the two rooms. Before looking back up at the yelling.)

VINCENT

Sounds like it might turn ugly.

DANE

Not to fret, I'm on my way to have a word with Reilly. About time for Brooke to go down to work anyway. You just enjoy the rest of your evening.

(Vincent goes back into his room. Looks at the bed, then to the door. Worried.)

A slow RUMBLE from underneath the building. "What the?" He moves to the adjoining bay windows looking out over the tracks. The track is right below.

A freight train APPROACHES. Its light glares right into the room. Its whistle BLOWS. Vincent is alarmed. It looks like the train is coming right through his room.

He stumbles back and over to the bed.

The entire building HEAVES and SHAKES while the train NEARS, PASSES, and DRIFTS into the distance. It's like experiencing a long drawn out earthquake. He sits there gripping his bed, his door having drifted open from the shaking.

Quinnly is watching him. Both amused and drunk. Her drink in one hand. Unlit cig in the other. Clad in a flimsy damp gown. Dripping from getting out of the bath.)

QUINNLY

Always come out here case this tongue depressant finally decides to collapse.
(steps into the room.)

VINCENT

Mon Dieu, my heart she... the tracks run --

QUINNLY

-- Yeah, dumb huh? Something to do with some old Clinamen mathematician a long-long time ago and that dried up river gorge over there. Come fall it'll have water in it again I hear.

VINCENT

Who'd put a building in such...?

QUINNLY

Was here first.

(Quinnly moves further into the room. Looking around.)

QUINNLY

This whole stinkin' town's been here for about forever. You ever hear of this dang place? Way out lost... all this lunacy. Have ya?

VINCENT

No.

QUINNLY

Nobody has, far as I know. Wasn't even listed on the train stops.

VINCENT

The people who gave me a lift knew.

QUINNLY

You notice they ain't with you. So, my question is, you got a match?

VINCENT

I do, actually.

(She leans down to him. Giving him the eye. And a look down her gown. Still dripping on the floor. He LIGHTS her cig. She takes the match and lights the candle. She steps back, looking about his room again.)

QUINNLY

You travel light.

VINCENT

Drove my rental into a river two states back. Came close to drowning.

QUINNLY

Congratulations. You made it to this inbred shithole. You look like one of them urban cowpokes in that getup.

VINCENT

It was between this and a Levi evening gown. And my knees are all skinned.

QUINNLY

What do you know, a sense of humor. What do they call that... self defecating?

VINCENT

Apparently.

QUINNLY

I bet you're married with kids, even.

VINCENT

Oui, Mon Sheri, our first on the way. A boy we hope.

(Vincent hands a wet PHOTO he's been drying with the candle to Quinnly. She looks at it, smiles.)

QUINNLY

Your wife's American, and real pretty. I bet your kid will be as cute as a puppy.

VINCENT

Points for not sounding surprised.

QUINNLY

She must be worried sick. Hubby bein' stuck way out here all by his lonesome.

VINCENT

Oui, I rang ahead. I didn't explain exactly all this. She knows I'm delayed but on my way.

QUINNLY

Business or pleasure?

VINCENT

Neither. It seems I'm an out of luck suit salesman. Soon to be lost of my job when my father finds how badly I've failed.

QUINNLY

What kind of suits?

VINCENT

Business suits. Haute couture. The best, from my family's shop in Paris. Completely hand stitched. But all --

QUINNLY

-- back there in your rental?

VINCENT

Oui. Our whole sample line. Vanished. Stolen by the river. Incroyable, just terrible. I've missed every appointment. It's a catastrophe. No? I can't tell my family. How do you say? I screwed up big time.

(Quinnly sits beside Vincent. Lots of leg showing, uncomfortable silence. He looks to the hall, expecting an angry sheriff at any second. Least he should screw up again.)

VINCENT

Maybe you should....

QUINNLY

So, you're out to save your family's business, Captain Frenchy?

VINCENT

Not exactly. I was to begin our American sales on my way from New York to Salt Lake. What a disaster. My poor father --

QUINNLY

-- is against you being here? Now this.

VINCENT

Oui. My Sheri inherited a beautiful home in Salt Lake City. There's a family debt, and we have a little one on the way. Her mother's sick. So, she is somewhat stuck. I am on my way from France to join her.

QUINNLY

Not exactly gay Paris, last I read.

VINCENT

No. She arrived just three months. Her mother is in a nursing home, so I... No matter, I'm on my way with my tail between my legs. I'm how do you say... such a loser.

(Quinnly moves to the bathroom. Drops her cig in the toilet. Adds water to her drink. Comes out. Lights another cig on the candle. BLOWS the smoke at Vincent.)

QUINNLY

Sorry. You're only a loser if you stop trying. Like my boyfriend who got the dumb idea to get off the tracks. We had one of them train passes where we could just come and go. Like a free ticket to Never-Never Land.

(She moves over to the window. Looks up and down the track. Dragging hard on her cig like she's trying to remember.)

QUINNLY

Only never means never, so you never really get there.

(turns back to Vincent.)

Turns out the loser did just that. Cum and went for a bottle of rye. And never came back to get me out of this place.

VINCENT

I'm sorry

QUINNLY

Don't be, there's a moral to this story somewhere. I got an angry mouth when I drink. But you know, you're the first in a long time I ain't got sore at. And I've had plenty already.

VINCENT

Maybe you ought to slow down.

QUINNLY

Don't push your luck. Maybe it's just because you don't want things from me. I don't get that much.

(Quinnly moves, almost pinning him to the open door.)

QUINNLY

You know, you're kind of cute when you shake like this.

VINCENT

Oui, well... that sheriff friend of yours, seemed fairly adamant about me staying out of trouble.

QUINNLY

So, being like this... close... is --

VINCENT

-- This? This is... big time trouble.

Lights up on Flophouse Lobby - Continuing

(Dane enters with a bottle of Rye. Stops. Goes to the counter. Opens the registry book. Looks up at the sound of Quinnly's VOICE.)

QUINNLY

I'm about to go crackers. You know? This place.

(pulls away from him, knowing he's right)

If I was you, I wouldn't wait for no train. I'd get out of here first light in the morning. If not sooner.

(comes back to him)

This town's not mentally sound by plenty.

VINCENT

Merci, I've been thinking just this thing.

(Quinnly looks at him real close. Examining his features. Searching every inch of it. She's so close her breath is on his face letting him smell her liquor.)

QUINNLY

You smell clean. You even sound clean. I ain't known clean since I been here. This stinking place. Nothing but inbred pig and chicken rancher stink.

(She kisses him. Hard. Pressing her body up against him. Feeling him up. He struggles to get away. She pulls back just as quick. Taking his breath away.)

QUINNLY

Always the losers, never the nice guys.

VINCENT

Maybe you should just flee this place.

QUINNLY

That an invitation?

(Dane stops in the open door with the bottle of rye.)

DANE

What is this?

QUINNLY

It ain't nothing. We're just talking about shit you ain't got the wit for.

DANE

You don't need to be talkin' shit with every drifter who comes through this town.

QUINNLY

He's not a drifter. He's a fine suit salesman.

VINCENT

And happily married. Very happy.

(Vincent displays the evidence of his wife. Dane doesn't give a shit about the picture.)

DANE

I'd be in a mighty big hurry to get back to her.

VINCENT

I'm on the road at sunrise. If not sooner.

DANE

That's the smartest damn thing I heard coming out of this room.

QUINNLY

Leave him alone.

DANE

You watch your mouth, girl.

QUINNLY

Or what? You gonna get all mean and ugly on me like your fat old Deputy Reilly upstairs?

DANE

I just might. If I have to.

QUINNLY

Shit, I'd wet my panties if I had some on.

(She drops her cig to the floor and steps on it with her bare foot. She blows the smoke in Dane's face.)

QUINNLY

I'd bob you so close we'd look like twins. Move it.

(pushes past Dane. Gives Vincent the eye.

And give me that.

(snatches the bottle, twist off the top)

You take all night getting back here, I'll talk to who the hell I want.

(She pulls from the bottle. Throws its cap down the hall as she goes back to her room. Dane stands there for a moment... shows his gun.)

DANE

Last warning... don't be startin' no trouble, Frenchy.

Black on Vincent's Rooms

End of ACT I - Scene Four

Lights up on Vincent's Room/Hall/Lobby

ACT I

Scene Five

(Vincent finds the hall dimly lit. Two figures step out of the dark on the stairs going up. Travis and Leonardo.)

TRAVIS

Café just about closed.

LEONARDO

You want something else you might find it behind the bar.

VINCENT

Sounds good, but... I just need to sit and think.

TRAVIS

It's your Friday night.

(The two men head down the stairs. The DRONE of a small airplane APPROACHING for landing GROWS overhead.)

Vincent comes down the stairs behind them attempting to leave the lobby into the street. He turns to look up at the plane and finds Travis standing right behind him.)

TRAVIS

Wouldn't be neighborly like to let you stand out here in the dust, now would it.

VINCENT

Listen, I --

TRAVIS

-- Come on, we'll buy you a beer. Hey, Leonardo, we got enough to buy our foreign friend a good American beer?

(Leonardo comes in from bar/pool hall, wanting to go back in.)

LEONARDO

We'll be winning at the table soon enough.

VINCENT

No please, I have --

TRAVIS

Good, you got money... you spot us the first round and we'll take it from there.

VINCENT

You're too kind, but considering --

LEONARDO

-- We goin' in, or what?

(Travis is all but dragging Vincent across the Lobby into the pool hall/bar.)

TRAVIS

Hold on to your pecker, Leonardo. Our froggy friend here just offered to stake us a round.

(Leonardo opens the pool hall's door, looking in.)

LEONARDO

Then get your asses on over. Looks like the table's about to free up.

Black on Lobby

Lights up on Pool Hall/Bar - Continuing

(Leonardo has made his way to a pool table in the center of the smoky room.

Jeremiad, the small-time lawyer and the best looking girl in the room, ISABEL, are there. He has the table as he finishes up a game.

Eli, the weird looking little chicken rancher, pays up. Brooke is waiting on tables. Deputy Tomcat Reilly is at the bar drinking next to Zachary.

A JUKEBOX BOOMS. Oddly with the lack of cars and trucks outside there's still a room full of LIFE. Travis pushes Vincent to the bar, brushing up against Reilly.)

REILLY

Hey, what's the rush?

VINCENT

Pardon --

REILLY

-- Pardon ain't gonna cut it you step on my hides again.

ZACHARY

(leans in on Reilly)

Don't be giving the boy here any of your deputy-doo shit, Reilly. Boy's a guest in this country.

(Reilly looks Zachary over and turns away to Blair and Cheryl, the young redneck couple who own and run the Café.)

REILLY

Let anybody in this place.

BARTENDER

Let you in, didn't we?

(The three of them get a LAUGH. Vincent looks around and is greeted with a knowing nod by both Zachary and the Stationmaster.)

Travis flags down the BARTENDER, 40's, missing an arm and an eye.)

TRAVIS

Three cold ones.

BARTENDER

Let's see some money.

(Travis pulls Vincent near.)

TRAVIS

Why don't we start a tab?

(Vincent reluctantly takes out his money and pays instead.)

TRAVIS

How'd you like to redouble that dough?

VINCENT

Generous, but....

(Quinnly, very drunk, enters the bar with Truly. They make their way over to a table near the pool table. Travis takes all three beers and works his way over to the tables and hands one to Leonardo.)

LEONARDO

Shit, would you looky there. Just like clockwork.

TRAVIS

Don't go buck-crazy on me now.

LEONARDO

I'm thinkin' I'm gonna lick me some salt tonight.

TRAVIS

And I'm thinkin' I don't want to kick some redneck stupid.

LEONARDO

How much our little friend holdin'?

TRAVIS

Close to two C's.

LEONARDO

He in?

TRAVIS

Does he get a choice?

(Vincent stands at the bar wanting to leave real bad. He heads towards the door. When he gets there an unlit cigarette is thrust in his face.)

QUINNLY (O.S.)

Still got them matches?

(Vincent finds Quinnly against him. Her breath stale from booze and smoke... steadying herself on his arm.)

QUINNLY

Couldn't sleep?

VINCENT

Restless night.

QUINNLY

There's local pig links behind the bar. Not bad, you catch them early.

(puts her cig to her lips)

You gonna light me?

(Vincent LIGHTS her cig.)

QUINNLY

You ain't leaving?

VINCENT

I was thinking maybe....

QUINNLY

Oh, come on... I just got here. You can't leave me with all these organ donors to gas to. It wouldn't be gentlemanly of you.

(Leonardo is RACKING them up on the pool table.)

LEONARDO

How about we play ten a ball?

JEREMIAD

What do you say we count your friend's money first.

(Quinnly uses Vincent to steady herself to the table where Truly already has drinks waiting for them.

Travis looks over and sees them sitting. He goes over to Vincent and leans down close to him.)

TRAVIS

Pull it out and put it on the table. Man wants to see how big our dicks are.

VINCENT

Pardonnez-moi?

QUINNLY

He means your money.

TRAVIS

Hurry up.

VINCENT

I think not....

(Quinnly puts her hand on Vincent's.)

QUINNLY

It's okay. I've seen these two play. You'll get your money back and some.

(Quinnly pulls Travis by the shirt down to her face.)

QUINNLY

You cheat Vincent. I hurt you.

TRAVIS

That a promise? Let go.

(Quinnly lets Travis go. Vincent takes out his money.)

VINCENT

Where's my beer?

TRAVIS

Order another, Leonardo was thirsty. Make it three, and whatever the girls want.

(Travis goes back to the pool table and Jeremiad.)

TRAVIS

You satisfied?

(Jeremiad looks Vincent over.)

JEREMIAD

Alright, closest ball.

(Leonardo takes a ball and pushes it with a cue stick right up against the far bank. Jeremiad does the same but his ball bounces back. So Leonardo breaks. While Leonardo runs the table....)

VINCENT

You trust these gentlemen?

QUINNLY

Sure. Small timers.... The tall one there, he ain't much but he can dance. And the dim one, he's the player. Met them over at a dance hall down the road.

(Truly leans over to Quinnly.)

TRULY

I think he likes me.

QUINNLY

Which one?

TRULY

Him.

(From across the table Leonardo looks past his stick at Truly. He grins.)

TRULY

Oh good, I'm gonna get manned tonight.

VINCENT

Where's your Sheriff friend?

QUINNLY

Screw him.

(She puts her hand in Vincent's lap.)

VINCENT

I need to get some air.

QUINNLY

Hold on, you're about to double your money.

(Leonardo sinks the last ball. Jeremiad is pissed.)

JEREMIAD

What the hell was that?

TRAVIS

I'll show you again if you wanna play double for nothing?

JEREMIAD

You guys professional?

TRAVIS

We look professional to you?

LEONARDO

I'm just in a good mood. You want another go, it's double for nothing.

(Jeremiad looks over at Vincent and Quinnly. Vincent turns to the drinkers crowding the bar.)

Eli smiling a toothless grin among them. He gives Vincent a welcoming look. Vincent looks away seeing Eli vetting him.)

JEREMIAD

I'm being set up here, ain't I.

STATIONMASTER

Be about time someone took our money back from you, J.J..

ZACHARY

Got a hundred on the dumb looking one.

BARTENDER

And which one might that be? The lawyer or the grifter?

STATIONMASTER

Shit. Which one's the grifter?

(Jeremiad gives the LAUGHING crowd a hard look. He turns back to Travis and Leonardo.)

JEREMIAD

Alright, but this game ain't over 'till I say it's over.

(Jeremiad takes out more of his money. Puts it on the table. Vincent tries to pick his up. Jeremiad pins the money to the table with a cue stick.)

JEREMIAD

I'll let you know when you can pick the money up, mister.

(Jeremiad goes back to the pool table. Brooke comes over and stands in front of Vincent. She's got makeup over a shiner.)

BROOKE

You need anything?

(Quinnly looks up at her, then over at Reilly. Reilly gives her back a smug look. Quinnly flips him off as he heads to the back door.)

QUINNLY

Why don't you come spend the night with me, Brooke?

BROOKE

Dane would love that.

QUINNLY

Shit, kick his ass to the floor. Pig wouldn't even notice.

(Brooke looks over at Reilly. Truly watches.)

BROOKE

I just might, at that.

TRULY

Enough with the butch shit, you two. Give us a round of beers.

(Brooke sticks out her tongue, hiking her ass as she walks towards the bar. Vincent leans into Quinnly who's watching Brooke.)

VINCENT

I must relieve myself. Which way?

(Quinnly blows smoke in his face. She looks him over.)

QUINNLY

Straight back. Don't get lost.

(Vincent gets up and gets jostled making his way through the crowd. When Vincent gets to the bathroom he also finds himself at the back door. The bathroom door opens and Eli stands there in the way.)

ELI

Come on in, four-eyes. I've been expecting you.

VINCENT

Oh, damn....

(The back door opens and a gush of fresh air hits him. Reilly enters. Vincent makes it out the door.)

Black on Pool hall/Bar

Lights up on Alley - Continuing

(Rear of Pool Hall/Café - Night Some motorbikes and cars but mostly farm trucks. Beyond them is nothing but open ground and the dry ravine that cuts across the track.

Vincent, having to go bad, looks around and starts walking towards the ravine when MUFFLED VOICES make him turn to look.

Dane carries MONEYBAGS into the Flophouse.

Vincent turns around quickly and ducks behind garbage cans. He thinks for a moment, looking his options over.

The two young café owners, Cheryl and Blair, come BURSTING out the café's back door, hot for each other. He pins her against the wall. Practically standing over Vincent. Starts groping her body.)

BLAIR

Oh shit, Cheryl, I'm gonna knock you up right here.

CHERYL

Not again, you ain't. Take me to the truck.

BLAIR

Shit, we don't need....

(looks down)

What the hell you doin' there?

CHERYL

Oh, my god, put my dress down, Blair.

BLAIR

I said....

CHERYL

The freak can see my panties.

VINCENT

I just needed fresh air.

BLAIR

Well you ain't gettin' any sniffin' around down there... move on.

(Vincent gets up, looking to Dane's pickup truck. Blair follows his eyes.)

BLAIR

Don't make me tell you again, boy.

VINCENT

Believe me....

(Vincent gets up, and runs Up Stage toward the road.)

CHERYL

You let that shit see my ass.

BLAIR

(looks after Vincent, running his hand back up under her dress.)

Hell, you probably liked it.

Black on Alley

Lights up on Cross Road - Continuing

(Vincent makes his way around the last building. Still having to go. Finds himself at where he entered town.)

Vincent takes a long awaited pee. No cars come by.

O.S., a TRUCK is leaving town. Vincent hurries to finish up. Arms in the air to get the driver's attention. Realizing it's Eli's chicken truck he searches for a place to hide. Nothing.

The chicken truck SCREECHES to a stop. Eli gets out with a bang of his door and enters stage.)

ELI

Looky here. Hey there, four-eyes. I hunted all over back there. Funny guy, out here waving your dill pickle when the pool hall got a perfectly good toilet.

VINCENT

Well I, I was leaving town and....

ELI

Shit dang, you're in lots of luck. I reside but a spit up the road.

(The smell trailing Eli's truck catches up with them.)

VINCENT

Oh... man....

ELI

Yeah, takes some gettin' use to. Place ain't much to look at but it's down wind to the coops and I got a hide-a-bed my hounds sleep on. Get you a bite of down home American vitals. You like possum stew? What do you say? Home baked biscuits? Sounds good. Don't it?

VINCENT

No... it's....

ELI

Eli. I seen you looking all shy in the bar. I ain't queer or nothing.. it's just the damn girls in these parts don't go for me. All these chickens and all....

VINCENT

Well actually, Eli, you see... it's just, I'll wait for a longer ride.

ELI

You sure? Not much but local traffic through these parts on the weekend. Could use the company.

(Vincent starts walking away. Eli follows.)

ELI

Vincent was your name?

VINCENT

I'm not interested.

ELI

Nobody's gonna say....

(Vincent stops... picks up a rock.)

VINCENT

Look Eli, I clearly stated I'm not interested. Now leave me alone.

ELI

Dang, ain't you something when you get all riled like that. I got television reception. Even got dirty photos of some of the local gals. You don't have to touch me. Doc says stimulation's good for --

(Vincent throws the rock and it SMASHES against a chicken crate, causing the chickens to THRASH about. Fearing for his chickens, Eli runs to his truck and peels of there as Vincent goes for another rock. The smell of the chickens lingers on. Feathers floating about.)

VINCENT

Bonjour, egg man.

Black on Crossroads

Lights up on Pool Hall/Bar - Continuing

(Inside Pool Hall/Bar - Night. Quinnly enters from outback to find Jeremiad out cold on the floor. Travis stands over him with a cue stick.)

TRAVIS

Damn it, Leonardo. See what you made me go and do? Damn it, I hate this kind of senseless violence.

(Leonardo picks up the money. Quinnly stops him.)

QUINNLY

Vincent's?

(Leonardo throws a wad of it back on the table, as Travis joins him in backing out. Reilly and Blair step in their way at the door. Both have guns.)

REILLY

Wouldn't be nice to leave it this way.

TRAVIS

You saw it, was an intervention. I might've saved that man's life.

(Truly comes up behind them.)

TRULY

Get out of the way, Reilly. How many times you whacked J.J. yourself?

(Reilly and Blair back off. Leonardo, Travis and Truly exit. Quinnly puts Vincent's money in her bra. Stands over Jeremiad.)

QUINNLY

Better get him some attention.

ZACHARY

He's a lawyer, how much could he bleed?

Black on Pool Hall/Bar

End of ACT I

Scene Four

Lights up on Café

ACT II

Scene One

(Vincent enters the Spoon Café - Daybreak. He looks like crap from being up all night by the road. The place is busy compared to yesterday.

Quinnly is at the counter and Cheryl is waiting on tables. The Stationmaster and Zachary sit at a booth. They are about to leave. Dane is at another table with Jeremiad.

Vincent looks around. Tables are all full. He goes over and sits at the counter.

Blair fry-cooks on the other side of the order window. Quinnly turns from buttering toast to find Vincent. She looks past him at Dane and Jeremiad who are looking back.)

(Vincent goes through his pockets and pulls out a handful of change. Puts it on the counter.)

VINCENT

Coffee.

(Quinnly pours him some. She takes the wad of bills out of her bra and tosses it down before him.)

VINCENT

Merci.

QUINNLY

Thought you run off?

(Vincent turns to see that Dane is still looking at him.)

VINCENT

Minor complications.

QUINNLY

I came to your room.

VINCENT

I was on the road praying for a ride.

QUINNLY

Guess you ain't got the thumb for it.

VINCENT

Helps if someone actually passes by.

(Cheryl hangs a ticket in the order window.)

CHERYL

Two specials, one up, one easy. Ham on both.

(Cheryl turns to see Vincent. Gives him a hard look.)

CHERYL

Ain't seen enough?

(Quinnly hands her the toast.)

QUINNLY

Take this to Barney.

(Cheryl takes the toast and walks away with a fresh pot of coffee.)

Quinnly gives Vincent a look. He gives her a look back. "Don't ask.")

QUINNLY

You missed a good time.

VINCENT

Not by much.

QUINNLY

You sore at me?

VINCENT

No. Frustrated. Eggs easy. Short stack. Maple if you please. And jus d'orange.

(Quinnly, miffed by his attitude. Hangs the order in the window. Blair takes the ticket and looks at Vincent.)

BLAIR

Hey, I thought I told you --

QUINNLY

-- Shut up, Blair... you're a lousy fry cook, in a dry bed town, get over it.

BLAIR

The guy was creeping around --

QUINNLY

-- Who'd know better, you ally cat?

BLAIR

I don't need no smart mouth....

(Blair looks to find Dane standing at his booth.)

BLAIR

I'm just saying, is all.

(Dane moves up behind Vincent, counting his money. Jeremiad leaves. Blair goes back to work.)

DANE

I was told you left town, Frenchy?

VINCENT

Tried. But no one offered, except the egg man.

(Dane drops money on the counter.)

DANE

Probably just wantin' company.

(Quinnly takes the money and RINGS it up.)

QUINNLY

Maybe he got it.

(Vincent gives her a look. Dane takes his change. Drops a couple quarters on the counter. Sits next to Vincent.)

DANE

Friendlier farm traffic up on the back road to Clear Water about twenty miles north. Might even hop a train.

VINCENT

Hate to see the back road if --

DANE

-- Safer up there too.

(Quinnly looks up at Vincent. This exchange doesn't go unnoticed by Dane. Quinnly and Dane lock eyes. The movement in the café slows down.)

DANE

Eat up. I'll walk you on up there.

Black on Café.

Lights up on Dane and Vincent.

(Dane takes out a cigar as they walk. Looks over at Vincent. Vincent looks ready to run. Dane unhooks his work REVOLVER and hands it to Vincent. Nice. Shiny.)

(He now can reach into his pocket for the lighter. Scratches his balls while he's there.)

Vincent just looks at the revolver, confused. Dane reaches into his pocket. Takes shells, he hands them to Vincent.)

DANE

Load that, will ya.

(Vincent can't believe what he's hearing. He slowly takes the revolver.)

DANE

You ever use one?

VINCENT

Not yet.

(Dane smiles. Vincent loads the gun. They stop at a railroad crossing sign at the track just outside of town.)
(A TRAIN is off in the near distance. Dane looks at Vincent. Vincent still has the revolver. Dane waits. Still with the cigar. Vincent is making up his mind. Vincent hands Dane the gun. With no place to hide.)

DANE

Trains slow-down to change tracks before passing through the mountains. The ones on this track move pretty fast. Just follow the road about five miles. There'll be at least four more before nightfall. You'll catch one of them.

(Vincent backs away. Dane CHECKS his gun to see if Vincent actually loaded it. Dane smiles at Vincent. The train starts SOUNDING its horn.)

DANE

You a God fearing boy, Frenchy?

VINCENT

Are you?

(Dane aims towards Vincent. Vincent walks backward trying to beat the TRAIN to get across the tracks.

Dane FIRES. The railroad crossing sign CLANGS with each shot just beyond Vincent's head. Vincent stands there in shock as the sign WIGGLES.)

DANE

New sign.

(The TRAIN blasts by between them. By the time it passes, Dane's nothing but a dust in the direction they came in. Vincent hasn't moved. The dust settles. There isn't a car in sight. The sun is coming up hotter than hell. Vincent turns to walk. Sweaty. He won't get far.)

Black on Vincent

**End of ACT II -
Scene One**

Lights up on outside of Café

ACT II

Scene Two

(Driftwood Crossing - Day. A TRAIN starts to approach the town.

QUINNLY comes out of the café. Stops out front of the FLOPHOUSE where Reilly sits on the stoop. His brimmed hat down over his eyes, feet out, SNORING.

THE TRAIN is getting CLOSER. Jeremiad steps out of the Pool Hall. Flings a SPIT of chew out into the street. Looks up towards the crossroads. He checks his watch.

DANE comes out of his office. He takes out a handful of shells and reloads his revolver. Quinnly stops there beside Dane. She looks over at Reilly to make sure he can't hear under the APPROACHING train.)

QUINNLY

Any sign of them?

DANE

I'm assumin' they tell time.

QUINNLY

How long?

DANE

Five minutes.

(Travis and Leonardo come strolling out of the flophouse feeling good.)

LEONARDO

What did I tell you about that girl?

(Travis takes in the town. Looks down at sleeping Reilly. Over to Dane and Quinnly.)

TRAVIS

Enjoyed being tied up, too.

(Dane and Quinnly look at Travis and Leonardo. Dane holds up four fingers. Travis nods and heads... across the road towards the bank. Leonardo follows. Travis and Leonardo enter the bank.)

Lights up on Inside Bank - Continuing

(Isabel is at a desk behind the bank counter. Cheryl is there finishing up a deposit and leaves. The building VIBRATES.

Isabel looks up to find Travis leaping the counter with a gun pointed at her. She reaches for a button underneath her desk.)

TRAVIS

Don't bother.

ISABEL

I knew you was no good.

LEONARDO

Grab them up, let's go.

TRAVIS

Open up.

(Isabel moves to a gate blocking the safe and pulls the door open. Inside are ten full money bags.

The TRAIN is nearly on the town... very intense. Everything RATTLES and SHAKES. They all yell.)

TRAVIS

Which one's got the most?

(Travis grabs her.)

LEONARDO

We got that chicken truck pullin' up outside. It's got our car blocked in. The cook from the Café pickin' up his wife and kids are there, too.

TRAVIS

Which bags?

ISABEL

They're tagged.

(Travis pushes her down to the floor of the safe. He checks some of the bags, grabs two.)

TRAVIS

Stay right there.

(Travis jumps back over the counter. Stops at the window with Leonardo. He hands him a bag.)

LEONARDO

We got the two from the café. The Sheriff across the street. The Deputy is still sunning himself. And that chicken truck still got us blocked in.

TRAVIS

Let's go. We're right on time.

LEONARDO

You heard what I said?

TRAVIS

Make him move.

Black on Inside Bank

Lights up on Driftwood Crossing -Continue

(Minutes later - there's been a shoot-out. The train's WHISTLE now BLOWING, moving away from town.

Brooke hold's Reilly in her arms. See's he's been shot in the back. He's dieing. Sobbing on her. She laughs softly, as she closes his eyes for the last time.)

BROOKE

You fat bastard, Reilly. You can't even die like a man.

(Quinnly is crunched down inside the door of the Lobby of the Flophouse, as Dane reloads his gun.)

QUINNLY

You moron, I thought you had this all worked out.

DANE

There's only two gallons of gas in that convertible.

QUINNLY

Well we're screwed now. They ain't in it.

DANE

Don't matter which direction they run in. I'll find them by the stink of that chicken truck.

QUINNLY

You didn't mention shooting Reilly.

DANE

Keeps it simple, don't it.

(He takes another GUN from his pocket. Gives Quinnly hard look. She takes it from him.)

DANE

Stay down.

(Zachary, Jeremiad and Blair enter stage with their guns drawn. The Stationmaster stands alone shaking his head at the mess.)

(Eli is crazily crawling on his knees picking up his chicken cages, trying to save his chickens... CRYING.)

ZACHARY

Ain't you goin' after them?

(Dane watches Eli in the street. Eli stands. Bleeding chicken in both hands. The Stationmaster locks eyes with Dane. He knows.)

DANE

Of course I'm going after them. Give me a minute to think this out. Blair, shut him up.

ZACHARY

There ain't no rules saying you have to give them a head start.

JEREMIAD

We're going with you.

DANE

No, you ain't.

JEREMIAD

They killed Reilly, for christ sakes.

BLAIR

We can't just let them go.

DANE

We ain't, Blair. Now, shut him up.

(Blair moves to Eli. Eli moves away. Blair takes a hold, pulls him close. Eli sobbing, holding bloody chickens.)

DANE

I want you all to wait here for the bank truck. Eli, don't make me hurt you.

(Blair takes Eli out of the road. Isabel and Cheryl have gone over to Brooke.

The Stationmaster looks at Reilly, seeing he was shot in the back. Thinking. Then looks to the convertible.

Then over to Dane. Thinks some more. Shaking his head. Fools. Checks his pocket watch.)

DANE

You got something to add, old man?

STATIONMASTER

Nothing to add. Time I called it a life, is all.

(The Stationmaster takes his guns back inside the train station. Dane keeping an eye on him.)

DANE

Get Reilly off the sidewalk. And clean this mess up.

ZACHARY

What do you want us to tell them bank people?

DANE

Tell them the truth. I'm out on business.

ZACHARY

You ain't gonna tell them?

DANE

You want the Feds poking their heads around here, Zachary? Any of you?

(The others don't.)

ZACHARY

I reckon you're right on that.

DANE

I'll square it with Tony and Davis after they fly in tonight. Isabel, you get on that bank wire and adjust what you think they took.

(Dane goes back to his car still unsure of the Stationmaster. A sudden GUNSHOT from inside the station.)

DANE

Get going, dame it.

(The others run towards the train station.)

QUINNLY

This better work.

DANE

You want out? Then get out.

QUINNLY

Screw it. I can't stay here. Let's find them, take our money... and get the hell out of this place for good.

DANE

We'll probably have to kill them now.

QUINNLY

You'll have to catch them first.

Black on Driftwood Crossing

End of ACT II

Scene Two

Lights up on Open Boxcar

ACT II

Scene Three

(Outside a moving open-boxcar - Train - Later that Day.

Travis gets a death grip on the railing. Swings the other money bag... onto the boxcar floor. Nearly flying to climb in.

O.S. Dane FIRES and... STRIKES Travis in the back, pushing him towards the door. A sickening OUTCRY.)

TRAVIS

Oh, sweet Mary, find me a way.

(Dane FIRES O.S.... Travis... feet DRAGGING in the gravel, is STRUCK in the leg.

Travis loses strength to hang on. But instead of falling off he is ABRUPTLY dragged onto the train by Vincent as he reaches out from the boxcar and grabs Travis' wrist. Vincent looks out of the boxcar to see Dane.)

Black on Vincent in Boxcar

Lights up on Dane in Field

(Dane is completely frustrated. He turns to find Quinnly sitting in the dirt.)

DANE

That son-of-a-bitch.

(Quinnly eyes blinking weakly. Life slipping from her. Her future rolling away. Dane runs past her, not noticing.)

DANE

Shit. Frenchy's got both bags. Come on, get off your ass. We'll catch 'em at the overpass.

(He looks back. Quinnly's blood just pumping onto her lap. A bad neck wound. Her gun on him.)

DANE

Jesus Christ!

QUINNLY

Let him go home to his wife.

DANE

He's got our money.

(Quinnly pulls the trigger, it CLICKS empty. Dane leans takes his gun back. Face close, almost kissing. Pushes her into the dirt. Quinnly lies in the clotted dirt. Dane watches her blood spill out, slowly she gets weaker. A dribble. There's more pain in his eyes than hers.)

DANE

This ain't how I planned it.

QUINNLY

If... I ... had... an... orgasm.... for every dumb....

(She dies. He walks off. Leaving his plan with her to rot.)

Black on Dane in Field

Lights up on Vincent and Travis in Boxcar

(Inside open Boxcar - Day. Vincent has pulled Travis to a corner of the boxcar. Travis bleeds real bad. Vincent pulls money out of a bag. Trying to stop the bleeding.)

TRAVIS

Thanks... it's a waste.

(grabs Vincent's hand)

Stop, Frenchy.

VINCENT

But I can --

TRAVIS

-- It's over. I'm done for.

VINCENT

How far to the next stop?

(Travis shakes his head. Vincent looks out of the boxcar, then back at the bags. Makes up his mind. Picks them up. He looks at the open boxcar door. He draws back with one to throw it out.

Travis manages to point his gun and FIRE, hitting just to the right of Vincent's head. Vincent ducks.)

TRAVIS

Drop the bags.

(Vincent drops the bags. He turns to find Travis fighting to keep the gun on him.)

VINCENT

This can't be good money, Travis.

TRAVIS

Laundered. Cincinnati Mob.

VINCENT

If we give it back, he'll let us go. No?

TRAVIS

You got family, right?

VINCENT

My wife is with baby. But --

TRAVIS

-- Get a clear picture. When we get into the mountains. Jump with the money.

VINCENT

But I don't want this. I just want to get home.

TRAVIS

With or without... you're a loose end to an inside robbery and murder. Somebody will....

(Travis passes out from the pain. Vincent crawls to the open door and looks out. Not sure what to do now.

Vincent reaches for the money bags again. This time Vincent drags the bags away from the door. O.S. Dane starts SHOOTING at the moving train.)

(Vincent scrambles for cover. Dane's BULLETS RIP through the wood boxcar.

Vincent scurries over to Travis and takes his gun out of his hand. Checks for a pulse.

He looks to see how many bullets are left. One bullet. He searches Travis's pocket's finding no other shells.

The SHOOTING finally stops, and Vincent looks out a bullet hole in the boxcar wall.

Vincent opens the money bags. Plush full of over a million dollars at least. He needs the money, but doesn't want it?

A hard heavy JERK rocks the train as it SLOWS DOWN, high on the side of a mountain.

Vincent looks outside at the steep terrain. He turns back to find that the JERKING has brought Travis back around. He's weaker.)

VINCENT

The train's slowing down.

TRAVIS

Climbin'. Careful, he can get on up here if he made it to the overpass.

VINCENT

Shit... you and Leonardo, what would you have done?

TRAVIS

Leap Clear Water Bridge. Three hun'... feet. Camps... we left a truck parked. Take this.

VINCENT

Three... but that's insane.

TRAVIS

Yeah, who'd a thunk? You'll make it... if you swim good. Take the key.

(Vincent can't swim at all.)

TRAVIS

All this money... and you.... Not a lick?

VINCENT

Oui, I was this close to drowning just yesterday. I'm in no big hurry to try again.

TRAVIS

It's coming up quick. Better fix your sights.

(feels for his gun.)

VINCENT

But... Christ, there must be police in the next town.

TRAVIS

That won't stop them. Who knows who they own out here.

(Vincent isn't sure. He doesn't have much time to think it out... because the bridge is coming up fast. He watches out the door. The ground drops off steep.

Vincent, near panic, grabs the bags. Puts the gun and his glasses in one, wraps them in his jacket. He takes out the picture and kisses it. Putting it into the bag. He grabs the key from Travis. And looks outside, then back at Travis.)

TRAVIS

Jump, Frenchy jump!

VINCENT

I can't!

(Dane swings into the boxcar from the other side.

Vincent stumbles back. Having to grab the side of the door to keep from falling out.

Dane runs at Vincent, grabbing at the bags. Travis trips him. Making him push Vincent back to the door again.

Only this time the weight of the bags make him teeter. He fights to keep from falling out.

Dane reaches for him again. But misses.

The train enters under the bridge trestles. Vincent is beyond fighting to regain his footing.)

TRAVIS

Do it!

(Out of sheer panic Vincent leaps with all his might. He just misses the first bridge trestle.

O.S. Vincent falls from the train, his VOICE screaming three hundred feet towards the rapids below. Weighted by a bag in each hand....

Dane moves to the door. He can't jump because of the bridge trestles. He wouldn't anyway. Not here. He watches below trying to see Vincent.

Whistle BLOWING, the train takes Dane into the mountains. Just before it takes him out of view of the river. He sees something.)

TRAVIS

Made it, didn't he.

DANE

Not yet.

(Smile grows on Travis' face as he dies. But not on Dane's.)

Black on Open Boxcar

Lights up on Clear Water River Shore - Continuing

(After a horrifying fight, the water slows down enough so that Vincent can make his way to shore.

He painfully realizes he's got a severely broken leg. But he's so scared and glad to be alive he just flops back. Shivering from the cold water.

Vincent puts his glasses on. He takes two sticks and makes a splint for his leg. Tying it with the sleeves of his shirt. He gets up and tests it. Puts on the jacket. Ribs killing him. He starts hopping slowly down the path. Dragging the bags.

Vincent realizes he can't just hobble around with all this money. So he crawls off the path.

He digs a hole between an interesting tree's roots and buries it. Minus the gun. Covering it with dirt then dried leafs and a stone.

He stands up, taking out the key. Shocking pain. He fights not to scream. Passes out, falling behind the tree.)

Black on Vincent

End of ACT II

Scene Three

Lights up on Dane's Home

ACT II

Scene Four

(Inside Flop House - Night. Dane enters to find Jeremiad Johnstone with a drink in the dark.)

JEREMIAD

Keep the lights off. Put your hands where I can see them, Dane.

DANE

Don't start with me, J.J..

JEREMIAD

You dumb pig farmer. What'd you go and do?

DANE

I caught up with them and killed them. Like I said I'd do. Why?

JEREMIAD

I found Quinnly. You kill her, too?

DANE

What do you think?

JEREMIAD

I found both your suitcases in the truck, is what I think.

DANE

Get to the point, J.J..

JEREMIAD

Where's the money?

DANE

That's it? You want in?

JEREMIAD

No. I want you out.

DANE

What'd you tell Cincinnati?

JEREMIAD

I just told 'em I was taken over, because you were dead.

DANE

That's how it is?

JEREMIAD

You got a better way out of this mess?

(Dane quick draws and SHOOTs, J.J. dead.)

DANE

Matter of fact I do.

Black on Flop House

End of ACT II

Scene Four

Lights up on Vincent's Home

ACT II

Scene Five

(Outside/Inside of Vincent's Home - Night. The lights are off both inside and outside of the house. The houses are spaced far apart.)

Vincent hobbles on his broken leg. He's got his Levi jacket over one arm and hand, one boot on. He couldn't be in more pain. Or look more pathetic.

Vincent looks the house over. He makes his way to the back of the house. He sits along the hedgerow... watching his house for signs of life.

His O.S. neighbor PULLS his pickup out of the garage.
DRIVING OFF.

Vincent goes O.S. A window BREAKS.

Inside his home sitting in the dark are Dane and his wife who we can't see.

His wife, SHERI, 24, blindfolded, gagged and tied to a chair in the kitchen, facing UP.

Through the window, in Vincent's living room, we find Dane drinking coffee and eat. The phone RINGS. Dane picks it up in the kitchen and puts it to Sheri's ear. Dane pulls the tape of Sheri's mouth.)

SHERI

Hello?

VINCENT (V.O.)

It's I, Vincent. Are you okay?

SHERI

Oui.

VINCENT (V.O.)

I am near, you understand? Let me talk to the Sheriff.

SHERI

Oui. He wants to speak with you.

DANE

So you made it. Good for you, Frenchy?

VINCENT (V.O.)

Sheriff..? You'll fail to find what you are after if you harm my family. If you want it, use a pay phone at the gas station at Main and Walker. I'll call you there.

DANE

Sorry, it doesn't work that way. You tell me right now or I start on your wife and the baby she's carrying. You got two seconds. One, two --

(Vincent is near panic.)

VINCENT (V.O.)

-- Wait, I'll tell you.

(Dane moves to the kitchen window, looks out.)

DANE

Just tell me. And when I get it, I'm your yesterday trouble.

VINCENT (V.O.)

(thinks)

Okay. There's a campsite about a half-mile back from where I jumped called Jokers Point.

DANE

Okay. I know it.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Look for a large dying oak tree just to the north. About a hundred yards off the river. There's a rock against its base. You can't miss it. Move the rock and dig between the two thickest roots. Everything is there.

DANE

You better not be lyin'.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Just let me come home. That's all I want from this.

DANE

Let me think this over.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Please, I'm begging you. I only want my wife and unborn child safe. To be with her. That's all I want. Not the money. I swear to you. If you just go, I know nothing.

DANE

Alright. Come on home. You got two minutes.

VINCENT (V.O.)

But you said --

DANE

I need to tie you with your wife to give me a head start. Hurry up. I'll meet you outside.

(Dane hangs up and takes out his gun.)

SHERI

Don't come. He'll kill both of us.

(Outside the house, Vincent enters the yard with the Levi jacket over his hand. FOOTSTEPS stop. Vincent turns to find Dane holding his gun on him.)

DANE

I thought I told you not to start trouble, Frenchy. Now Quinnly and the others are dead, and you are the only one standing in the way of me owning all that money. You see how it is, don't ya? Just you and me now, with ill-gotten money between us.

VINCENT

Wee, and I'm sorry for the others. I just want to go inside, to make sure my wife is okay. You can tie me up, whatever works for you. You can still take the money and go far from here. I give you my word. I'll never speak of what happened today. Ever.

DANE

Nah. You're still the loose end, Frenchy. You understand what that means?

VINCENT

Wee. Travis was very clear. As my father says, a single loose thread can ruin a perfectly good suit.

DANE

Suit? What suit?

VINCENT

My families business. You are my loose thread, no.

(O.S. A COP CAR and SIREN fills the air. Dane turns his head. Vincent falls sideways SHOOTING the gun he got from Travis from under his Levi jacket.

HITTING Dane as Dane pulls his TRIGGER. Dane hits the ground backwards.

Vincent hand goes to his face, as he just lays there, blood seeping down under his glasses and over his face.

A tense moment. Both could be dead. After a long pause, Vincent finally sits up. He adjusts his glasses, wiping the blood so he can see where he is at. Big smile.)

VINCENT

At last, I am home. How do you say, the winner. No? Bonjour, America.

(The night fills with cop lights and SIRENS)

THE END