



ROBBERS

PILOT

BY

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BASED ON THE NOVEL BY CHRISTOPHER COOK

TNT/Sony

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"That sounds just like a line out of a western. The outlaw gets the drop on the Sheriff, and the Lawman says, 'You don't shoot a man with his own gun.' And the bad guy rides off and lets the Sheriff live for another day.

It makes the outlaw -- what's the word? -- 'redeemable.'

Only nowadays people think that kinda' scene is bullshit. Not enough action. They wanna see the outlaw -- now he's a 'sociopath' -- kill the Sheriff in the most ugly of ways. Gotta have a lotta blood. 'Cause people get bored otherwise.

'You don't shoot a man with his own gun.' Fine last words, hoss. Think I'll write 'em down. Only this ain't your scene."

-- Johnny "Ray Bob" Matthews

ROBBERS

ACT ONE

On **DELLA**

The b.g. is out of focus -- it starts to become sharper. Behind her there's a glass window of the Greyhound bus station coffee shop. We can feel the buses pulling out.

Della (20s) is the **spine** of our story. And you cannot take your eyes off of her. Distracted, she looks at her watch.

DELLA
What time is it?

WOMAN (O.C.)
You got a little time --

DELLA
I broke my watch.

She did indeed. Shattered. A mess.

Sitting across the table from Della, is a woman, **LORETTA** (40ish), BFF, hair piled high, stylish in an East Texas kind of way, dumping Sweet and Lows in a cup of coffee. She takes Della's hand.

LORETTA
You gonna be okay, honey.

Della shakes her friend off, rummages through her purse -- she's got some Certs, playing cards, nail polish (metallic pink), a business card, worse-for-wear cell phone, couple of packs of Benson and Hedges, Nicorette, and a **.22**.

Loretta catches a glimpse of the .22, eyes go wide: *Shit!*

DELLA
I once heard a man on the TV
talkin' 'bout fate. Wonderin' if
it's the hand of God or the
'*confluence of cosmic events.*'

Della unwraps a pack of cigarettes.

DELLA (CONT'D)
I believe everything happens for a
reason...

CUT TO:

INT. CURL UP AND DYE BEAUTY SHOP - SUGARLAND, TX - PRESENT

DELLA (V.O.)
... And God helps them who helps
themselves.

DELLA is working on a **HEAVYSET WOMAN** with a bulldog face, slathering stuff on Bulldog's hair, clipping it with aluminum foil.

BULLDOG
Well, you know what they say? 'A
good man is hard to find.'

DELLA
You got one?

BULLDOG
Can't say that I do.

But Della is the **eternal optimist**:

DELLA
Well, I'm gonna find one. I firmly
believe that. Reliable, with a
steady job. And sensitive. Mr.
Dreamboat.

Della smiles, looks into the mirror.

DELLA (CONT'D)
And him and me and my two kids are
gonna live a happy life.

BLACK, THEN:

A chyron appears across the screen:

"D E L L A"

INT. HOLIDAY INN SUITES BAR - WEST SIDE OF HOUSTON - NIGHT

Della sips a screwdriver at the bar. Lots of chrome and glass, inset lighting. This is an upscale Holiday Inn.

VOICE (O.S.)
Yes'm, oilfield pipe. I sell it by
the mile, install it by the yard.

A **DRUNK PIPE SALESMAN** on the stool next to Della has his hand halfway up her skirt. She pushes it back down. He lets his fingers do the walking, again.

DRUNK
What you do again?

DELLA

I'm a model.

DRUNK

Like on stage? A stripper?

She pushes his hand away again, ignores the remark.

DELLA

Fashion. JC Penney. Dillard's.
Like that. For catalogs.

DRUNK

Okay. Sure, I seen you in one. I
remember now.

DELLA

Yeah? Which one?

DRUNK

One of my wife's. I mean ex-wife.
(looking at her tits)
That's right. The bra section.

Della puts her hand on her purse to excuse herself when the drunk reaches over and squeezes her right breast through her new rayon blouse. He squeezes hard.

DRUNK (CONT'D)

Yep, it's real all right.

Della flings her right arm and hits him in the nose. He falls off the stool and lands on the parquet. He is stunned for a nanosecond, then springs to his feet and gets in her face, balls his hand.

DRUNK (CONT'D)

You stuck-up --

He takes a swing at her. She flinches, closes her eyes. **But the punch never lands.** Della finally looks: A **TALL GOOD LOOKING MAN** has the Pipe Salesman in an arm lock. The TGLM looks like **GEORGE CLOONEY**.

GEORGE CLOONEY

Is this man bothering you, miss?

DRUNK

Bitch led me on --

George lifts up the man's arm twisted behind and the drunk makes an ugly face and grunts.

GEORGE CLOONEY

That's no way to talk to a lady.

George marches the drunk through the bar and out the door.

Della sits on the stool. She looks at herself in the mirror, fixes her hair. She reaches for the pack of Benson & Hedges on the counter, thinks the better of it, fishes in her purse for a Certs, when:

GEORGE CLOONEY (O.S) (CONT'D)
May I join you?

She looks up: *He has really blue eyes.*

DELLA
Yes. It's so nice of you to ask.

GEORGE CLOONEY
I assure you it is my pleasure.

Gawd, he's got good manners.

GEORGE CLOONEY (CONT'D)
I am an executive with a Fortune Five
Hundred company and I stay so busy I
hardly take time to eat much less have a
social life...

BLAH BLAH BLAH. She stares at his eyes and his teeth and his lips and hasn't heard a word he has said until:

GEORGE CLOONEY (CONT'D)
... You are the most beautiful
woman I have seen in a long time.
Would you care to join me in my
room for a drink?

Oh, my...

TWENTY SECONDS LATER

Della walks along an upper floor open walkway of the hotel atrium. She's woozy, but George Clooney has a steadying hand on her back.

TWENTY MINUTES AFTER THAT

Della is sitting naked on the edge of a chair facing the bed in Room 614. She sits hunched forward over her knees, her breasts pressing bare thighs, her hands holding a Bible from the night stand.

George Clooney is sprawled in the middle of the bed with a pearl plastic handle of a knife protruding from his chest. There is blood all over the bed.

She stands, passes around the end of the bed to the bathroom. Turns on the tap. Washes. Bloody water swirling down the drain. She looks up in the mirror. What the hell happened between twenty seconds and twenty minutes? Well...

He poured her scotch.

They danced to George Strait on the radio.

A kiss or two.

Another drink.

A lot of kissing. Touching.

On the couch. To the bed. Clothes falling off. Moaning. Legs open. Then:

George Clooney excused himself. Went to the bathroom. Came out with a wide leather belt and a set of handcuffs.

She came off the bed fast. He chased her into a corner. She kicked him in the balls. He hit her above the eye with the belt buckle. She kicked him again in the balls. He doubled over, dropped to his knees. She got to her purse. Pulled out that pearl-handled switchblade she got in Nuevo Laredo and kept for self-defense. Ping, the blade sprang out. She put the bed between them. He rose to his feet in a crouch, murder in his beautiful blue eyes. Slowly swinging that leather belt in a circle until it rolled up around his fist, buckle hanging. A wicked smile. Then he stepped onto the bed and lunged at her. She held out the knife, elbow locked. His chest slammed into it, knocked her down. He writhed on the bed like a snake, grunting, clutching the knife in his chest. She got to her knees. Half dead, he twisted and lunged at her again. They met on the edge of the bed. She grasped the knife and thrust the blade deeper.

And down he went.

RESUME:

Della blinks in the mirror, walks out of the bathroom.

DELLA

Damn. Damn. Damn.

She sits on the edge of the chair again, stares at the body.

Who was gonna believe this?

DELLA (CONT'D)

Damn.

EXT. PARKING LOT - HOLIDAY INN - MINUTES LATER

Della walks/runs, fumbles her keys, then throws her coat and the Holiday Inn Bible into a beat-to-crap Saturn.

INT. SATURN - CONTINUOUS

She tries to start the car. Nothing. Della beats the hell out of the steering wheel. For the first time, she cries.

DELLA

This goddamn piece of shit --

DELLA -- WALKING DOWN THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

Thumb out, skirt to her waist not to dirty it, pumps in her left hand because her feet are killing her, Holiday Inn Bible in her right. Her eye is swollen, black and blue. Thank God for a sliver of moon because it would be pitch black on this Texas state road.

A CAR approaches her from behind. She sticks out her thumb. The brights almost blind her as the car is upon her and...

It doesn't even slow. She turns, faces the retreating car.

DELLA

(almost crying)

Jerk!

Another 25 yards. Then another car. She tucks the Bible under her arm, sticks out her thumb once again, this time a little less enthusiastically. The car comes on fast, passes her -- once again.

DELLA (CONT'D)

Asshole --

But then:

The car stops abruptly.

THE PASSENGER sticks his head out of the window.

PASSENGER

Goddamn! We was doin' eighty when we saw you!

Della stares at the **RED 1978 CADILLAC ELDORADO.**

PASSENGER (CONT'D)
Well, you cummin' or not?

BLACK, THEN:

"5 DAYS EARLIER - MONDAY"

SOMEWHERE NEAR ODESSA

Above the rough terrain, threatening clouds: black, metallic green, scary as shit.

An isolated, faded clapboard farmhouse sits in the distance. THREE SHERIFF'S SUVs, gumballs on, are parked about 200 yards from the house on a dirt road that runs to the horizon.

SEVERAL DEPUTIES and **THE SHERIFF** are watching the house. The Deputies hold high-powered rifles with scopes. The Sheriff holds a revolver in one hand and an iPhone 6s in the other.

ON THE DIRT ROAD

A **DODGE RAM** fast, 90 mph, kicking up dust. Behind the wheel, **RULE HOOKS**. Next to him is a Walker Hound, **LEFTY** (as in Frizzell).

BLACK, THEN:

"R U L E"

Rule slides to a stop, gets out of the truck. Lefty jumps into the driver's seat, watches. Rule approaches the Sheriff and deputies.

The Sheriff motions to the house. Rule sees **TWO FIGURES** on the front porch of the house, small at this distance but visible.

SHERIFF
Mexican national. Broke outta
federal detention. Got a hostage.

RULE
Why don't you just put 'im down?

SHERIFF
That's my sister he's got.

RULE
I need to see 'em closer. Hand me
that scope.

A **YOUNG DEPUTY** passes over his .243 Winchester deer rifle. As Rule adjusts the scope, the two figures come into focus: A middle-aged **MEXICAN** wearing an orange prison jumpsuit is holding a **WOMAN** close, shielding his body. The Mexican's got a big ass butcher knife in one hand at her neck, a phone in the other. The woman is crying.

RULE (CONT'D)

What's he want?

SHERIFF

Hell if I know. Go home most likely.

RULE

Get 'im on the phone.

SHERIFF

(dialing)

Won't do you no good. He only speaks Mexican.

Rule takes the phone, holds it to one ear, listens to it ring until he hears and SEES the guy answer. **(The conversation takes place on Rule and through Rule's scope POV, the sound filtered through the phone.)**

RULE

You gonna do her?

THE MEXICAN

(confused)

Que?!

RULE

Yessir, I think you are.

THE MEXICAN

No entiendo --

BAM!

A **bullet** rips a hole through the Mexican's forehead at 200 yards. He drops. We would hear the Woman **SCREAMING** her lungs out, but the phone is smashed, and we barely make out the sound of her voice carried by the wind.

SHERIFF

Motherfuck --

Rule hands the rifle back to the deputy as the Sheriff rants and **the wind picks up...**

RULE DRIVING - A LITTLE LATER

Above the ground, whirling dust. And Rule -- Lefty riding next to him -- stares at the horizon. Rule's eyes betray him. He has seen a lot of shit in his day.

Lightning in the distance. And then it happens:

THE FUNNEL HITS

Chewing up the earth. Moving fast.

Rule slows the truck to a stop, watches in awe.

It's hard to tell if the thing is moving towards him or away.

BLACK, THEN:

"RAY BOB"

EXT. SHAMROCK CONVENIENCE STORE - LUBBOCK, TEXAS - DAY

The door opens, **RAY BOB** steps into the sunlight.

Ray Bob is the smartest angry man you ever met. But today he's feeling pretty good, alive. Got a couple of six packs under one arm, a carton of filtered cigarettes under the other. As he walks out like he doesn't have a care in the world, an **OLDER WOMAN** is entering. (N.B. Take a good look at her, we will see her later.)

RAY BOB
(holding the door)
Morning.

OLDER WOMAN
Morning. Looks like it's gonna clear.

RAY BOB
'You don't like the weather in Texas, just wait a month.'

Huh?

RAY BOB (CONT'D)
Samuel Clemens.

OLDER WOMAN
(entering)
Oh my. Well, thank you.

RAY BOB
You have a nice day now.

EXT. MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - LATER

Ray Bob is blowing the shit out of a row of his beer cans with a 9mm. Cigarette dangling from his lips. All James Dean-like.

Satisfied, he pops another beer. Leans against the fender of his red 1978 Cadillac Eldorado convertible. Unloads again.

BAM! BAM! BAM!

BLACK, THEN:

"E D D I E"

INT. HALLWAY - TEXAS STATE PRISON - ROBERTSON UNIT - DAY

EDDIE (DeREESE) LEDOUX (late 20s) hair puffed high in front, smoothed along the top, feathered on the side, escorted by **THE WARDEN**. Eddie's walking the walk. Three gates to go through. Past the row of stacked cells.

INT. RELEASE AREA - TEXAS STATE PRISON - ROBERTSON UNIT - DAY

A **GUARD** sits behind two-inch glass. Eddie signing shit, getting what he came in with.

WARDEN

Son, the world out there's a dangerous place. 'Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil.'

Eddie thinks about this.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

That's Matthew 6:13. Remember it.

EDDIE

Yessir.

The Warden hands him a small Bible. And a fifty dollar check issued by the great state of Texas. The Guard stamps the release papers -- sounds like a shot from a cannon.

EXT. TEXAS STATE PRISON - ROBERTSON UNIT - DAY

Eddie walks out. The big gates shut. Middle of nowhere. No one to greet him -- Eddie is alone in the world -- and no bus pulling over. Nuthin' to do but walk.

EXT. ROAD - MINUTES LATER

A half a mile from the prison. It's hot. Not a lot of traffic. Eddie thumbing. A sign on the roadside: PRISON AREA - DO NOT PICK UP HITCHHIKERS. A CAR passes, breaks:

That **RED 1978 CADILLAC ELDORADO CONVERTIBLE** again.

And behind the wheel, **RAY BOB**. Eddie throws his stuff in the car.

EDDIE
Appreciate it.

RAY BOB
Yeah. Well, I been there.

EDDIE
Where ya headed?

RAY BOB
Where ya wanna go?

And you get the feeling Ray Bob isn't only asking about a place.

INT. BAR - LATER

A honky-tonk with a jukebox. Not many customers. Eddie and Ray Bob shooting pool, drinking beer. Eddie treating courtesy of the state's \$50. Ray Bob is working the table. Eddie throws back some beer, savors the last drop.

EDDIE
You know what it's like to not taste a cold beer in three years?

RAY BOB
(laughs)
Kinda like a man goin' without pussy.

EDDIE
There's that. But this all is good. Not havin' to watch my own back all the time. That's a lonely fuckin' job.

RAY BOB
I hear ya. Where's your family?

EDDIE
Never had much of one.

Ray Bob nods, thinks, lines up a shot.

RAY BOB

So, what you gonna do with your life, pardner.

EDDIE

Me? I ain't much of a planner.

RAY BOB

Goddamn, you spent three years in a hole. Breathin' sweat and shit and piss and steel? I know you done some thinkin'.

EDDIE

Yeah well... I tend to drift, go where the wind pushes me. This prison shrink called it a 'character defect.' Said I need to change it. I keep meanin' to.

RAY BOB

Shrinks don't know shit. I saw a lot of 'em in prison. Gave me all these IQ tests. I passed 'em.

Eddie and Ray Bob share a laugh.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

Hoss, you gotta look at the big picture. Ask, what's your philosophy. Whatta you believe in?

EDDIE

Shit, man. I ain't that organized. Why you askin'?

RAY BOB

Cause I think this ol' world's run by a few assholes at the top. Always talkin' 'bout democracy, justice, fair play. Bullshit. They some cold sonsabitches. And they don't give a shit about you or me. Just stop pickin' their cotton, you'll find out. They runnin' a rigged game. Since I don't care to participate, I got a different approach.

EDDIE

Yeah? What's that?

RAY BOB

I fight back. I refuse to wear
their chains. I stay free at any
cost. And that makes me an outlaw.

EDDIE

They'll stick your ass in jail.

RAY BOB

Nossir. Live free, die free.
That's my philosophy.

EDDIE

You learn that from your daddy?

RAY BOB

My daddy couldn't find his ass with
both hands. But I got a feelin'
about you, hoss. You a lot like
me.

Eight ball, corner pocket. **BOOM.**

BLACK, THEN:

"W E D N E S D A Y"

And **LOUD MUSIC** from a car radio, getting closer and louder.

EXT. TWO-LANE ROAD - DUSK

Heat shimmers off the black top. Crossing the road:

AN ARMADILLO

Slower than shit. One second slower, he would be crushed by:

That **CADILLAC ELDORADO CONVERTIBLE** hurtling down the road.

Over the roar of the engine, the radio is blasting Johnny
Winter or Stevie Ray or ZZ or Lucinda -- and we try to keep
up with the car but it ain't ever gonna happen because it has
the biggest fucking engine ever put in an American car.

INT. CADDY - MOVING - AUSTIN, TX - NIGHT

Ray Bob and Eddie. Feeling free.

RAY BOB

Gim mee a smoke, hoss.

Eddie searches his pocket, fishes out the packet, looks,
smashes it, throws it out the window.

EDDIE

Pull into that 7-11.

EXT. 7-11 - AUSTIN, TX - NIGHT

The convertible noses up to the glass front plastered with signs for RC Cola and Texas Lotto tickets. Eddie jumps out.

RAY BOB

Listen. Don't buy those straights.
Get some filters.

EDDIE

Man, you know I smoke straights.
You want filters gimme some money.

RAY BOB

I'm broke.

Eddie laughs.

EDDIE

Then you shit outa luck, man. All
I got left is six dollars.

RAY BOB

Fuck you.

EDDIE

Well up yours sideways.

Eddie and Ray Bob laughin', talkin' shit that way because that's what 'running buddies' do.

INT. 7-11 - SECONDS LATER

Eddie enters, walks up to the register between the Lotto ticket stand and the display of Lone Star key chains.

EDDIE

Gimme a pack of Camel straights.

The **INDIAN OR PAKI CLERK** lays a pack on the counter.

INDIAN

Six dollars and one cent.

EDDIE

I got six dollars here. Where's
the spare penny bucket?

The clerk points to an empty plastic ash tray. All out.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
No problem, I'll catcha next time.

INDIAN
(pulling the cigs back)
It's six dollars and one cent.

EDDIE
You gonna hold up this deal over a penny?

INDIAN
That is what it costs.

Eddie frowns, flips the top of his Zippo open and shut in one hand. Snap. Snap. Snap.

EDDIE
Man. You jerkin' my chain.

INDIAN
I am jerking nothing.

EDDIE
Hell you ain't. What kind of country are you from?

INDIAN
Good country.

Eddie stares at him.

INDIAN (CONT'D)
Very fine country. Where we pay for what we get.

EDDIE
You givin' me the red-ass, pardner. This here's America. Hand me them cigarettes.

INDIAN
Six dollars and one cent.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
I don't believe this.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Gimmee the goddamn cigarettes.

INDIAN
Go. I call police. Get your license plate --

EDDIE
Fuck you, cocksucker --

Eddie reaches in his boot, pulls a little .22 revolver. The Indian is freaked, speechless. They stare at one another forever. Then Eddie lowers the gun. *This is crazy, fuck it.* Suddenly:

A SHARP CRACK. A hole appears in the clerk's forehead. His head snaps back. The Clerk stands there with his hands on the counter a moment, then slides down onto the floor. Eddie looks behind to his left, SEES Ray Bob standing just inside the door, his 9mm in hand.

RAY BOB
What the hell you doing?!

EDDIE
Wouldn't give me the cigarettes
cause I didn't have a penny.

Ray Bob jumps over the counter, grabs a carton of filtered cigarettes, kicks open the register, grabs the cash, shoves it in a sack, looks down at the guy laid out on the floor.

RAY BOB
Fuckin' moron. Never ever mess
with a man and his smokes.
(to Eddie)
Find that shell casing.

INT. ELDORADO - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie gets in shaking, snapping his Zippo open/shut.

RAY BOB
(counting money)
Shit. Maybe a hundred bucks.

EDDIE
For that you make me an accessory
to robbery?

Ray Bob stares at Eddie.

RAY BOB
Wasn't robbery. You can't rob a
dead man.

EDDIE
Hell you can't.

Ray Bob slams the car in reverse.

ON THE ELDORADO - TWO WHEELING IT OUT OF THE PARKING LOT

Eddie and Ray Bob still arguing.

RAY BOB (V.O.)

You can't.

EDDIE (V.O.)

Bullshit. They got a law for everything.

The Caddy barrels down the road, heading for God-knows-where.

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. BEDROOM - RULE HOOK'S HOUSE/RANCH - THURSDAY, 5:00 A.M.

Darkness. Phone rings. A night light goes on. Rule sits up in bed. *It's 5:00 A.M. for Chrissakes.* He picks up the phone, listens, then:

RULE

Lemme grab some coffee.

As he hangs up, we see for the first time a leg draped around him. *Damn! The leg is awesome.* And it belongs to **DANA**. Dana rolls over. Whatever she's selling, Rule's not buying.

RULE (CONT'D)

Gotta go.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Rule naked. Standing, taking a leak. Dana walks in, steps behind him, grabs/holds his dick while he pisses:

DANA

You know what I want for breakfast?

Rule has a pretty good idea.

DANA (CONT'D)

A big order of 'fuck me.'

Oh, what the hell.

Rule lifts her up against the wall. She starts to bite and scream.

CUT TO:

EXT. AUSTIN ROAD/7-11 - DAWN

The Dodge Ram pulls into the 7-11. Rule gets out, a double leather belt rig with a government-issue model Colt .45 strapped to one side. He heads toward the front door, nods at a **BABY-FACED APD OFFICER** as he walks inside.

INT. 7-11 - CONTINUOUS

Hearing a noise behind the displays, Rule leans on the counter, looks over.

BERNIE ROSE, Austin Police Department homicide detective, crouches over the body on the rubber mat.

BERNIE

I didn't call the Rangers.
(nodding at the stiff)
Abraham Krishna. Where's he get a
name like that?

RULE

Same place everybody gets a name.
Somebody gave it to him.

BERNIE

Heard about you and that Mexican
fella.

Rule's not going there. Bernie puts his face real close to
the dead man's forehead, studies the bullet hole.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Maybe a .40 S&W.

Rule stares at the Indian.

RULE

9mm. Slug around here somewhere.

BERNIE

9mm?

Rule nods.

RULE

Any idea who did it?

Bernie points at a surveillance camera.

BERNIE

No audio but we got some pictures.
First one -- looks like that skinny
dude in Aerosmith that wiggles his
ass -- comes in tries to buy a pack
of cigarettes. They get into an
argument. Bam. The Indian takes a
bullet to the head...

Rule grabs a Dr. Pepper and bag of peanuts. Breakfast.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

... from the man behind door number
two who's about five foot ten or so
wearing a T-shirt, blue jeans, and
a ring in his ear --

(MORE)

BERNIE (CONT'D)
(stands, wiping his pants)
Goddamn just look at that.

He points to a wad of chewing gum stuck to one knee of his brand new suit.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
That's a brand new suit.

Bernie limps over to the soda dispenser and pushes the ice button, catches a chunk of ice and presses it against the gum, all the while:

RULE
Got an angle on a car?

BERNIE
No -- Well hell, this ice ain't doin' it.

RULE
Tell you sumthin' works better.
Brake fluid.

BERNIE
Yeah? Beth says ice.

Bernie goes down the aisle to the automotive section, opens a can of brake fluid, pours a little on the gum.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
You know how many Indian or Paki store clerks we had shot in Central Texas the past month?

Nope.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
The civil liberties crowd is making noise. Claims they're hate crimes.

RULE
Maybe it's just karma.

BERNIE
Karma?

RULE
Like that gum right there on your new suit. Maybe you did something in a previous life to deserve that piece of gum.

BERNIE

Try sellin' that to my chief. He's a hard shell Baptist and thinks this ride's the big banana.

Rule grins.

RULE

Better get my gear.

EXT. 7-11 - SECONDS LATER

Rule pulls a black plastic trunk -- a rolling case -- out of his truck. Looks at the 7-11, then the highway. Taking it all in, trying to visualize what happened. It's already 90 degrees. Rule wipes the sweat off of his forehead.

ON ABRAHAM KRISHNA - MOMENTS LATER

Rule sets the case on the floor, goes to work.

INT./EXT. BATHROOM - 7-11 - AN HOUR LATER

Rule is in the bathroom washing the blood off his hands and the polymer print powder off his eel skin boots.

BERNIE

I'll be goddamned, Rule, would you look at this shit?

A large dark splotch has spread over Bernie's suit.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Beth bought me this suit herself. Damn brake fluid. Where'd you hear about that?

Rule puts his gun belt back on, starts to head out.

RULE

Don't rightly recall. But it got the gum off.

Rule stops short. Pulling up on the outside of the 7-11 is a State Crime Lab van. A **FORENSICS GUY** and his **ASSISTANT** get out of the vehicle, pull out their equipment, jaw with Baby Face. Rule ain't happy: **Fuck it.**

EXT. 7-11 - CONTINUOUS

Rule exits with Bernie, meets the Forensics Guys at the door. It's pretty fucking awkward.

FORENSICS GUY
Captain Willets said to go over it
again.

Rule tosses them an evidence baggie with a bullet slug in it.

RULE
Have at it.

Rule walks to the truck, Bernie in tow.

RULE (CONT'D)
Willets is an asshole with ears.

BERNIE
(glancing at the forensic
guys)
The new world order. Shit, you and
me are dinosaurs.

Rule pulls out a cigarette, lights it on the fly.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Me and Beth, we're talkin'
retirement. Cancun. Cozumel.

RULE
Beth'd like that. You'd die of
boredom.

BERNIE
(re: his pants)
She's gonna kill me anyhow.

RULE
Then we'll have a case with
evidence and motive. Cause on this
one all we got's some bad video and
a shit loada' smudges. And most of
'em belong to the dead Indian.

He opens the truck door, gets in.

RULE (CONT'D)
Give Beth my love.

BERNIE
Dinner? Long as you're in town.

RULE

There ya go.

Rule pulls away onto South Lamar. Bernie watches.

CUT TO:

THE CADDY

On the side of an isolated road running through Zilker Park. Ray Bob and Eddie aren't there. Because they are:

ON A LIMESTONE SHELF

Sitting over Barton Creek, counting their money, legs overhanging the edge. Rolls of coins: quarters, dimes, nickels. Ray Bob is the cashier.

EDDIE

I ain't hauling no rolls in my pockets.

RAY BOB

Put 'em down the front. Might draw some pussy.

Ray Bob divvies up the loose change.

EDDIE

Draw suspicion, what it'll do. We gotta go to a bank.

RAY BOB

I don't like banks. Got popped robbing a bank.

EDDIE

You said you never skanked a joint before.

RAY BOB

I lied.

EDDIE

Any particular reason?

RAY BOB

I need a reason? For practice. A man's gotta keep his chops up.

Eddie looks at a couple of swans drifting along the shore.

EDDIE

You talk a lot. But I don't know jack about you. What else you lie about?

RAY BOB

Get real, hoss. I pulled more heists you can shake a stick at. Case you didn't notice, I ain't no Boy Scout.

EDDIE

I was. 'Til they booted me out.

RAY BOB

What you do? Shoot the scoutmaster?

EDDIE

Naw. His old lady did. Caught him in bed with her sister. Shot 'em both. Used a twelve gauge with buckshot. Died in the saddle. A real asshole, too. Always yelling at us. Shoulda' given her a merit badge for civic duty.

RAY BOB

Or marksmanship.

Ray Bob grins, stacks the paper currency.

EDDIE

Man, it hurt when they bounced me. Lost my buddies. Plus, I wanted to be good at sumthin' --

RAY BOB

Look at that.

Ray Bob points down at the creek. **TWO GIRLS** in an aluminum canoe float past. The girl in front is a **BLONDE**, chubby with short hair; the other is a thin **BRUNETTE**.

Ray Bob stuffs the bills and rolls of coins into the plastic bag and takes off his T-shirt.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

Come on. Let me do the talkin'.

A DIRT PATH

Under trees, atop the high creek bank. Ray Bob and Eddie draw even with the canoe.

RAY BOB

Hey there you purty things! Wanna beer?

The girls look to one another. The Brunette rolls her eyes. They put their paddles in the water and stroke, pulling away.

EDDIE

You doin' great. Just look at 'em go.

RAY BOB

They ain't goin' nowhere. C'mon.

ON THE GIRLS

Paddling. Ray Bob and Eddie slide down the creek bank to a lower dirt path. They're closer now.

RAY BOB

Hey, it looks hot out there! Wanna cold beer?

The Blonde starts to giggle.

BRUNETTE

(scared)

Faster.

RAY BOB

Ain't no need to worry. We just a couple of fellas wanting to talk.

The girls dig in. So does the panic. They head for the other side of the creek.

ANGLE ON RAY BOB AND EDDIE

Scrambling back up the steep bank and onto a footbridge crossing the creek. The canoe passes under the bridge, headed downstream.

EDDIE

Let 'em go, man. They don't wanna talk to us nohow.

RAY BOB

Sure they do. C'mon.

THE GIRLS

They hear pounding feet. The Brunette screams and paddles even harder. The Blonde's breath comes in short ragged spurts. She shifts suddenly to one side to stroke deeper and the canoe tilts. She slides back to the middle and the canoe leans the other way, its gunwale dipping to the surface. Both girls scramble for balance. But the canoe begins to ship water. Then:

IT TIPS FOR GOOD.

RAY BOB AND EDDIE

Watch as the girls pitch over the side and begin flailing. Ray Bob slides down the bank and goes in after the Brunette. Eddie hesitates for a moment, then:

EDDIE

Well, shit.

Eddie goes in the water. Powerful strokes to the Blonde.

She almost drowns him, throws her arms around his neck and his feet slip from under him against the mud bottom. They both go down. She's holding Eddie so tight he can't get his head up. He struggles with her, pulls her toward the bank.

They fall on the bank intertwined, exhausted. She's sobbing.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Hey, you're okay. You're okay.

BLONDE

Don't hurt me. Please.

EDDIE

Shoot. I ain't gonna hurt you.

He strokes her arm and she throws both arms around him, starts to kiss him, as if by reflex... then quickly pushes him off. He rolls away, looks at her, can't go through with it. She lies there still, whimpering softly, eyes skyward.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I didn't mean to scare you.

BLONDE

That's all right.

EDDIE

I wouldn't a done it anyhow --

RAY BOB (O.C.)

Hoss...

EDDIE

Gimme a minute.

(speaking low)

Listen. I sure am sorry cause you
a real pretty girl. I mean that.
And you got a right to be scared.
You ain't the only one feeling that
way either, and that's a fact --

RAY BOB (O.C.)

What you doing, asshole?

Ray Bob is at a distance, gun in hand.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

There a problem?

Ray Bob checks the chamber of his gun. *Click.*

EDDIE

No.

(quietly to the Blonde)

Just stay there. Don't move.

Okay? Don't move til we're gone.

She nods, closes her eyes. The Blonde keeps her eyes closed
until their footsteps recede. Finally, she opens her eyes --
the terror replaced by something worse: **N O T H I N G.**

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

ON EDDIE AND RAY BOB

Walking away from the creek. Ray Bob takes his gun, tucks it away behind his belt.

RAY BOB

Man, I'm hungry. You hungry?
I know a place down the road.
Threadgill's. Chicken fried steak.
Cream gravy. Buttered rolls.

They reach the car. Ray Bob opens the trunk, pulls out some spare clothes, hands a pair of his own jeans to Eddie.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

How was she?

Eddie looks up, doesn't answer, doesn't let on.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

I bet she was sweet. I mean a little high-cholesterol for my tastes. I'm a lean meat man.

EDDIE

Scaring girls, man, that ain't outlawin'. What'd you do to the other one?

RAY BOB

What'd I 'do?' Shit, hoss, same as you an' that blonde. Had us a fine time.

Eddie starts to change, pulls off his shirt. On Eddie's chest, across his smooth white skin, is a dark blue jailhouse tattoo -- five short horizontal lines with some musical notes. Ray Bob stares at Eddie's chest, veers left:

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

What'd you play?

EDDIE

What?

Ray Bob nods at the tattoo.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Guitar.

RAY BOB

Yeah?

EDDIE

Used to play in a band. Southern boogie. R&B. The blues. Stevie Ray Vaughan kinda shit. Wish I'd stuck with it.

RAY BOB

Damn. Musician turned armed robber.

EDDIE

You the one shot 'im.

RAY BOB

And accessory to murder.

EDDIE

Jesus, man. All I wanted was cigarettes. Only reason I had a gun is you give it to me. I don't shoot people. All I did was steal some cars.

RAY BOB

How'd you get caught?

EDDIE

I wasn't. The other guy was. Only he talked.

RAY BOB

Some motherfucker squeals on me --
(drawing his fingers
across his throat)
You get the motherfucker back?

EDDIE

Who?

RAY BOB

Cat that snitched.

EDDIE

Naw. Never could find him.

RAY BOB

What's his name?

EDDIE

(beat)
DeReese. DeReese Ledoux.

RAY BOB

Luh-doo? What kinda name is that?

EDDIE

Cajun. From Lafayette.

RAY BOB

Well let's go find that prick. Cut
'im a new asshole. Where is he?

EDDIE

I dunno. Houston maybe. He moves
around. What you care anyhow?

RAY BOB

We runnin' buddies or what? You
stick with me, pardner, I ain't
ever gonna let you down. That ol'
DeReese Ledoux got some bad shit
headed his way.

ON EDDIE as Ray Bob slams the trunk.

INT. STATE CRIME LAB - RANGERS H.Q. - DAY

Stainless steel. LAB TECHS working away. In the middle of a
work bench at a spectroscope, **MOLINE**. Next to him, Rule.

MOLINE

Bullet's pretty distorted. 9mm.

No shit, Sherlock. Moline puts a second bullet, side by
side, under the scope.

MOLINE (CONT'D)

From a robbery a couple weeks ago
near Waco. And one more for your
viewing pleasure.

(placing a third bullet)

From the Shamrock shooting in
Lubbock couple days ago.

Rule takes a look.

RULE

These other victims Indian or
Pakistani?

MOLINE

Waco was a blond, blue-eyed kid,
night manager at a Dairy Queen.
Lubbock was 'Cody McCoy.' Couple
of typical Hindu cowboys, right?

RULE

(starting to leave)
Right.

MOLINE

Say Rule, you got a minute?

INT. HALLWAY - TEXAS RANGERS H.Q. - MOMENTS LATER

Moline at the water fountain. Takes a drink, looks down the hall, then turns to Rule:

MOLINE
I'm thinking about doin' it.

RULE
Doin' what?

MOLINE
Filing.

RULE
'Bout time.

MOLINE
I dunno, man... I'd sure miss her.

RULE
Miss her? All you do is complain about 'er.

MOLINE
She has her good points.

RULE
Name one.

Moline can't.

RULE (CONT'D)
Just file 'em. And I'll take you to Hooters.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)
Rule...

The voice belongs to **LENORA**, late 30s, African American, a *looker*, Captain Willets's secretary. (*Yes, Rule used to fish in the office pool. In fact, it helped break up his marriage but more about that later.*)

LENORA
Captain wants you in conference.

Well, shit.

LENORA (CONT'D)
Both of you.

Moline is caught, too. **Well, double shit.**

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - RANGERS H.Q. - MOMENTS LATER

Rule and other **RANGERS** and a couple of **LAB RATS** and Moline sit around the glass table. Across from Rule, **MARIA DELGADO**, early 40s, Latina, one of the few women in the Rangers.

CAPTAIN WILLETS (45) leads this rumble. Recently promoted, he is ambitious, an advocate of modern police protocol and a strait-laced fundamentalist.

Tucked to one side of the table is a **DEAF WOMAN** and her **SIGNER/HANDLER** -- brought in to see if they can "translate" the soundless security tape from the 7-11 shooting. The Deaf Woman intently watches one of the flat screens at the head of the table. She signs furiously.

SIGNER/HANDLER

'You-giving-me-the-redass-pardner-
this-here's-America-hand-me-them-
cigarettes-gimme-the-goddamn-
cigarettes.'

WILLETS

Anything else?

SIGNER/HANDLER

Yes.

Willets looks at her: *And?*

DEAF WOMAN

'Fuck-you-cock-sucker.'

Rule grins at Willets's discomfort.

WILLETS

I promised the Governor answers --

RULE

It's not a hate crime.

Willets eyeballs him.

MOLINE

Ballistics match killings in Waco
and Lubbock. Both vics were Anglo.

Maria Delgado pushes a couple of files across the table.

DELGADO

Gotta witness from the Lubbock
Shamrock. 82-year-old lady saw a
suspect leaving the scene.

(reading from her notepad)

(MORE)

DELGADO (CONT'D)

'He seemed like such a nice young man.'

Willets opens up the files, passes them to Rule. Rule SEES a picture of the OLDER WOMAN Ray Bob greeted at the Shamrock.

WILLETS

It's still our investigation.
Who's the APD detective in charge?

RULE

Bernie Rose.

WILLETS

Tell him to lose some weight. I want you to take a partner on this one. Delgado?

Maria Delgado looks up, half expects Rule's answer:

RULE

I work alone.

Tense beat. Then:

WILLETS

(dismissing the table)
Thank you. Rule, stay a minute.

The others leave.

WILLETS (CONT'D)

Only reason you're working this case is because some desk monkey in the Governor's office requested it.

RULE

Well, I did vote for 'im --

WILLETS

The Governor can have his poster boy. But I'm running this office now. And your leash just got shorter.

RULE

That it?

WILLETS

No, it's not. I'm initiating an OIG investigation into you shooting the Mexican in Odessa.

RULE

Do what ya gotta do. I ain't goin'
anywhere.

Rule leaves, doesn't look back.

INT./EXT. CADDY - MOVING - LATER

Eddie looking out the window. Life passing by.

RAY BOB

Where you from?

EDDIE

Louisiana.

RAY BOB

I ain't from nowhere.

EDDIE

Well, I been there too. Everywhere
and nowhere.

RAY BOB

Well then, ya know.

Ray Bob turns on the radio, pauses on a **PREACHER** bellowing,
warning against the end of days. Whore riding a seven-headed
beast. Land filled with plagues and awful suffering. Blood
over Babylon.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

You hear that shit?

Eddie shrugs.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

End of times. You know more'n two
hundred million people been killed
in the last century in wars and
concentration camps, shit like
that.

(beat)

And we were created in God's image.
What's that make God?

EDDIE

That's above my pay grade. Makes
me want a guitar, and get back to
my music. Only time I was happy.

RAY BOB

Makes me wanna eat.

INT. THE JALISCO - AUSTIN, TEXAS

Rule is sitting at the bar, nursing a long neck. On the TV over the bar of the restaurant, a news report about the 7-11 shooting. On the juke, Freddy Fender, "**Wasted Days and Wasted Nights.**"

Bernie walks in, zippered brief under his arm, takes a seat. He pulls out some APD police files, hands them to Rule.

BERNIE

Ran the tapes through our system.
Nada. But you know Graham Parsons,
APD robbery division?

RULE

Short fella with Tourette's?

BERNIE

Doesn't have Tourette's, just likes
to drop the F bomb.

Bernie pulls out some APD police files, hands them to Rule.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

But he does have a photographic
memory. That ol' boy on the tape?
The ass shaker? Parsons thinks he
remembers him. Maybe. But the
guy's not a shooter. Car thief.
Name's DeReese Ledoux.

RULE

Swamp rat?

BERNIE

From Lafayette. Fella down at HPD
thinks DeReese's in the Houston
area. But there's no listing and
the file's out of date --

A WOMAN'S HANDS cover Bernie's eyes. Bernie stands, kisses his wife, **BETH.**

BETH

Hey, Rule. How's Katie?

RULE

Livin' here in Austin. Don't know
if she's in school or out... We
been out of touch lately.

BETH
You should call her.
(to Bernie)
I thought we were going dancing.

Bernie stands up like Sir Galahad, extends his hand.

BETH (CONT'D)
Here?

BERNIE
Why not?
(to Rule)
Order us a round of Dos Equis?

As Bernie walks Beth closer to the jukebox:

BETH
What'd you do to your suit?

Rule flags the bartender, WATCHES Beth and Bernie shuffling around the floor:

Damn. They're good together.

EXT. PARKING LOT - THE JALISCO - AUSTIN, TEXAS - LATER

Bernie is putting Beth in her car, deeply kisses her. As Rule gets in his truck, he looks over:

RULE
Get a room.

Bernie flips him off, gets in his own Ford sedan.

INT./EXT. BERNIE'S FORD SEDAN - MOMENTS LATER

Bernie is driving down Riverside, listening to a LEARN SPANISH IN 22 DAYS CD, practicing. As he nears the intersection at Barton Springs Road, he sees THREADGILL'S. And as he is passing, Bernie SEES:

TWO MEN WALKING ACROSS THE PARKING LOT NEAR A CHERRY 1978 CADILLAC ELDORADO CONVERTIBLE.

Damn it if a man thinking of retirement wouldn't look great driving one of them babies...

Damn it if those two men don't look like the robbers from the 7-11 surveillance tapes --

Bernie pulls a wicked U-turn, punches a number in his phone.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SECONDS LATER

Bernie pulls alongside Ray Bob and Eddie.

BERNIE
Hey, fellas.

Ray Bob walks up to the driver's window.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
This a good place to eat?

RAY BOB
You oughtta know. You a cop ain't you?

BERNIE
I'm from out of town.

EDDIE
We ain't from here neither.

BERNIE
That right? Where you boys from?

RAY BOB
El Paso. Now I s'pose you wanna see some ID.

BERNIE
Might not be a bad idea --

Before Bernie can blink, Ray Bob shoves a pistol in the window against Bernie's face. Bernie still has both hands on the wheel, hardly time to recognize the make of the gun -- a **9mm Sig Sauer SP2022** -- when Ray Bob pulls the trigger.

The sharp report is muffled by the barrel pressed against flesh. Bernie jerks, slumps in the seat. His foot slides off the brake and the car rolls forward.

Ray Bob walks alongside the moving car and squeezes off another round into Bernie's temple. Then another. The car moves forward, runs into a lamp post. The car horn blares.

EDDIE
Goddamn! You done it now!

RAY BOB
Don't I know it. Gonna miss our dinner.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. THREADGILL'S - NIGHT

Rule drives through the circus.

A lot of **flashing lights**. Everyone comes out when a cop is murdered.

He gets out of his truck, ducks under the crime tape, steps up to Bernie's Ford, leans in to look. Over Rule's shoulder, an Austin homicide detective, **LIEUTENANT GARCIA**, a bony guy with a pockmarked face:

RULE

What happened?

GARCIA

He saw two guys walking across the parkin' lot. Thought he recognized 'em. Shoulda' waited for backup.

Bernie is lying sideways on the seat. Rule feels like he's been kicked in the gut.

GARCIA (CONT'D)

Beth's inside.

RULE

Christ.

GARCIA

Me and Bernie go way back. This is some shit.

RULE

I need those slugs when the M.E. pulls 'em.

INT. THREADGILL'S - MOMENTS LATER

Beth at the bar. Lost. Rule walks up, holds her.

INT. CONTINENTAL CLUB - AUSTIN, TX - NIGHT

Eddie and Ray Bob at a blues club. Just hours after killing a cop. It's packed. And loud.

A **YOUNG WAITRESS** delivers another round of beers, looks long and hard at Eddie. He's moving with the music, but his mind is far away. Snapping his Zippo. Over and over and over.

WAITRESS
I love the feel of that.

EDDIE
What?

WAITRESS
You know flickin' that Zippo thing.

She leans on the table.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
Kinda' therapeutic. I got an app
on my phone where ya can flick a
picture of a lighter. But it ain't
the same --

RAY BOB
Hey, I ordered a cold beer. This
ain't cold.

The Waitress stiffens, picks up the beer.

WAITRESS
(to Eddie)
You want another one, too?

EDDIE
Naw I'm fine --

RAY BOB
(to waitress)
Sure he does.

Ray Bob grabs Eddie's bottle, slams it down hard on her tray.
The Waitress stalks away. Eddie's back at his Zippo.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)
Suck it up, goddammit. It was
either him or us. He was a cop.

Snap. Snap. Snap.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)
We gonna be runnin' buddies you
better show them stones.

EDDIE
(getting up)
What? You gonna shoot ever'body?

RAY BOB
We ain't got that many bullets.

Eddie walks off toward the bathrooms. Ray Bob watches him go, follows. As they head toward the toilets, an **OFF-DUTY COP** working door security watches them.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Eddie and Ray Bob standing at the long metal trough. They are standing there forever. Silence. Then:

RAY BOB
You ever fuck a watermelon?

Eddie stares straight ahead.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)
Huntsville Prison Farm, I saw a guy do it. He said there ain't no such thing as a bad fuck.

EDDIE
Yeah. Well, what happened to the watermelon?

Eddie zips up, starts to leave.

RAY BOB
Who cares?

INT. CONTINENTAL CLUB - MINUTES LATER

Eddie crosses through the club, Ray Bob five steps behind. Ray Bob sees the Off-Duty Cop seeing Ray Bob seeing him. As he and Eddie get to the table, Ray Bob throws a roll of quarters on the table.

RAY BOB
We're leavin'.

Before Eddie can object --

RAY BOB (CONT'D)
Now.

Ray Bob leads the way. Across the floor, past the band, into the bowels/back hallway of the club. The Off-Duty Cop follows. Ray Bob and Eddie bang through the exit door into:

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINENTAL CLUB - CONTINUOUS

They can feel the Cop hot on their heels. What's Ray Bob gonna do? Two cops in one night?

Coming up to the Caddy:

RAY BOB
Keep walking.

They head past a few more rows of cars and Ray Bob sees:

A **DUALIE**. Windows down.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)
Get in.

INT./EXT. DUALIE - CONTINUOUS

Eddie gets into the driver's seat, reaches under the dash. Two seconds later they pull out. Ray Bob sees the Cop in the side mirror writing down their license plate.

ON THE COP - CONTINUOUS

Watching the Dualie peel out.

INT./EXT. DUALIE - TWO BLOCKS LATER

RAY BOB
Pull over.

The Dualie comes to a stop.

EDDIE
Where ya going?

RAY BOB
Gonna get the Caddy.

EXT. RULE'S HOUSE/RANCH - SAME TIME

Rule drives up, the weight of the evening on his shoulders, parks behind a Bronco. He sags seeing the car, **Fuck... Not tonight**, gets out and heads up the walk. Lefty bounds down the path. Rule absentmindedly pats the dog.

INT. BEDROOM/KITCHEN - RULE'S HOUSE - SECONDS LATER

Rule sees a body asleep in his bed, closes the door, quietly walks into the kitchen, removes his armor. Takes off his gun belt, drops it on the table. Takes off his shirt -- across this chest runs a ragged 12-inch scar (*N.B. More about that later*) -- drapes it on a chair. Opens the fridge, grabs a Dos Equis.

EXT. BACK PORCH - RULE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Even with the wind blowing, it is still hot. The hanging lamp is rocking back and forth. Rule sits on the porch steps, stares into the darkness.

Best friend dead, work trouble. One man against the world.

ON RAY BOB - SAME TIME

Driving the Dualie through a parking lot. Trailing behind him in the Caddy, Eddie.

Ray Bob pulls the Dualie into a parking spot, gets out, walks to the Eldorado. As he marches over, a big ass **FEDEX JET** passes close overhead because Ray Bob has parked in short term parking at **AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL**.

INT. THE CADDY - CONTINUOUS

Eddie slides over, Ray Bob climbs behind the wheel.

EDDIE

Never been on a plane. Where you s'pose they'll think we gone?

RAY BOB

Anywhere. Everywhere. Nowhere.

EDDIE

Always wanted to go to an island. Like Tahiti.

RAY BOB

So that's where we are, pardner. Sittin' on Tahiti. Like Paul Gauguin.

EDDIE

Who?

RAY BOB

Gauguin. The French painter.

Eddie pauses.

EDDIE

That the one cut his own ear off?

Ray Bob pulls out.

ON RULE

In bed with the sleeping form of the woman curled against his flank. He can't move without waking her. And he doesn't want to wake her, replaying the 7-11 surveillance video from memory. Mind in hyperdrive, over and over again:

Eddie walks in. Pack on the counter, then off. Words exchanged. The Clerk, excited, saying something. Then a hole in his head. From nowhere. The other one jumps the counter. Grabs the cigarettes. Grabs the money.

Even on the lousy video, it's clear: Mr. No Name is running lead. One angry, lethal dude.

DELLA (V.O.)

They give you any trouble, you tell them to mind.

CUT TO:

DELLA - **FLASH FORWARD** - BUS STATION/CONTINUATION

She pulls out a cigarette.

LORETTA

I brought up two boys of my own. Didn't kill or lose one of 'em --

DELLA

They just can't stay at my Momma's. Not now.

LORETTA

It ain't a problem --

DELLA

And they like Fruit Loops but only let 'em once a week on account of sugar making them all hyperactive and shit...

Della catches her breath, THEN:

She takes the business card that was in her purse, slides it across the table.

DELLA (CONT'D)

Got somethin' for you.

ON THE BUSINESS CARD

Embossed on the card is the name of Rule Hooks. Texas Ranger. With his telephone number.

DELLA (CONT'D)

Anybody... anyone comes looking for me or askin' 'bout the kids or stuff, you call this man. But you don't tell him where I am.

LORETTA

You wanna tell me how you got this?

No. Della turns the cigarette over and over in her hand.

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

What kind of trouble are you in, Della?

SMASH TO:

GEORGE CLOONEY

He's still kinda dead -- Della's in the b.g., almost dressed, on the phone *even though she is four feet from a bloody mess.*

ON DELLA - FAST, JAGGED JUMP CUTS

DELLA

(trying to keep it together, volume rising)

... Look Momma, can you just keep 'em for a bit?... I don't know when, Momma... You stopped taking your iron... Yes you did... You did too. That's why you're tired. Make sure Randy takes his medicine... How 'bout Waylon?... Whatd'you mean he's up?... Momma --
(softens)

Hey, sweetheart... Well if Randy smacks you just smack him back... I gotta go now... Mommy loves you.

She hangs up. Hyperventilating. Stares at the dead man on the bed. Not sure what to do next. She picks up George Clooney's Armani suit jacket, goes through the pockets, pulls out his wallet. ***Who is/was this guy?!***

There's a lot of cash. But she doesn't take anything -- she's got principles -- then curiously pulls out a CELL PHONE and a BUSINESS CARD. She looks at the card, looks at George, then back at the card:

Shit!

(N.B. And by the way that card looks remarkably like --)

SMASH BACK TO:

DELLA - **FLASH FORWARD** - BUS STATION/CONTINUATION

She stares at the card -- same one from the Holiday Inn -- resting on the table.

DELLA

It was a case of mistaken identity.
And then it never stopped.

BLACK, THEN:

"F R I D A Y"

EXT. MOTEL - MORNING

Rooms rented by the week or the hour. A swimming pool and ratty lawn chairs. The water in the pool is green -- and it's not from some fancy tile. Ray Bob and Eddie walk into:

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Ray Bob and Eddie step up to the registration counter. The **MOTEL MANAGER** looks up then back at his HIGH SOCIETY magazine. In the B.G. a crappy cathode TV. On the TV, LET'S MAKE A DEAL -- the new version with that "Mr. Personality/Mr. Entertainer" Wayne Brady guy who ain't that talented.

RAY BOB

We need a room.

MOTEL MANAGER

(not even looking up)
Twenty-nine dollars a day. In advance.

Eddie takes out two rolls of quarters, then two rolls of dimes, drops them on the counter.

EDDIE

You got HBO?

The Manager sizes them up, tosses a key. Room 107.

MOTEL MANAGER

Gonna need your license plate.

RAY BOB

We're on foot.

Eddie and Ray Bob leave. The Manager watches them go.

INT. BEDROOM - RULE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Rule is half-dressed, shirt off, sitting on the bed alone, lighting a cigarette even though he's got the morning "you're gonna die from this" cough. The phone rings.

RULE

Yeah.

MOLINE - IN THE LAB - INTERCUT

He looks like he's been licking the sidewalk.

MOLINE

The Indian and Bernie. Same gun.

Rule takes this in.

MOLINE (CONT'D)

Sorry about Bernie. These some bad boys. Real bad.

Rule still doesn't say anything.

MOLINE (CONT'D)

Rule, she didn't come home again.

RULE

Lay off the sauce, Moline. She's no good.

Rule hangs up hard. Dana comes out of the bathroom. Naked, she straddles Rule from behind, envelops him with her arms, goes to work on him.

DANA

Who's no good?

RULE

You ain't.

DANA

That was Moline?

RULE

That's right.

She moves her hand over that 12-inch scar. Rule starts putting on his watch.

DANA

C'mon back to bed. We didn't finish.

RULE

Yes we did. Leastwise I did.

DANA

Not me. It ain't like you to start sumthin and not finish.

He stands, finishes getting dressed.

RULE

The hell it ain't. You don't know me.

Rule is halfway to his truck.

DANA

Do so. Lot more'n you think.

EXT. THREADGILL'S - MORNING

Rule is standing in the middle of the empty parking lot where Bernie was murdered. The sun is beating down. There's some scattered crime scene tape on the ground. Bernie's car is long gone, only some deep ruts in the asphalt left behind by the tow truck that hauled it out of there.

ANOTHER ANGLE - POV OF RULE FROM INSIDE A CAR

Someone is watching him. The car door opens and closes. That someone is Maria Delgado. She crosses in front of the car.

ON RULE

He gets down on his haunches. There's some blood on the pavement.

RULE

(not even looking)
You following me?

DELGADO

Try answering your phone.

Rule stands, turns toward her, wiping off his hands, shrugs.

DELGADO (CONT'D)

Got two witnesses at University Medical Center. And APD found the Dualie. At the airport.

RULE

These boys ain't frequent fliers.
(heads to his truck)
Willets got you working this
investigation?

DELGADO

Don't put me in the middle.

Rule opens the door, but before he can get in --

DELGARD

Rule, I wouldn't fuck you over.

Rule looks at her. *Okay, then. Maybe.*

RULE

Do me one. Check out motels near
the airport.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR/ICU - DAY

Rule walking down the hall, enters the ICU. In one of the cubicles, the comatose BRUNETTE from the river -- head bandaged, face beaten, swollen. And sitting next to the woman, her best friend, the BLONDE. She looks up at Rule.

INT. NURSES STATION - ICU - LATER

Rule is trying to talk to the **FEMALE ATTENDING** who is writing on a chart.

RULE

I need to talk to the other girl if
she wakes up.

ATTENDING

There's massive damage.

RULE

What about the rape kit results?
DNA could put a name to the man.

ATTENDING

There's evidence. But it isn't
DNA. She was raped with the barrel
of a gun.

Jesus F'n Christ.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Ray Bob, boots on, TV remote in one hand, sprawled on a bed. Eddie is disrobing, gets into the shower. Ray Bob has one eye on Eddie. One eye on the TV. He's searching through the channels, hits a news account of the 7-11 shooting and the shooting in the parking lot. Changes to another channel. Same material, different newscaster. And another.

RAY BOB

(crowing)

Jesus Christ. Come lookit this.
We done hit the trifecta, pardner.
Channel 7. Channel 24. Channel
36.

INTERCUT BETWEEN EDDIE AND RAY BOB

Water cascading down Eddie. But it doesn't wash away the feeling:

What the fuck have I gotten myself into?

EDDIE

Listen, I been thinkin'. Maybe we
should split up.

RAY BOB

(O.C.)

What do you mean?

EDDIE

Cops gotta be all over this. They
lookin' for two guys.

Eddie starts to get out of the shower.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

It might be smart for a while 'til
shit settles down --

Eddie doesn't see it coming. Ray Bob, fast and frightening, slams Eddie against the wall, hand-to-neck, gun-to-head then jammed in his mouth. Eddie stares down the barrel.

RAY BOB

A runnin' buddy don't quit on a
runnin' buddy. You just don't do
that kinda shit.

EDDIE
(gun in mouth)
Ain't quittin' on ya...

Ray Bob has his finger on the trigger. Eddie is a millimeter away from a very messy kiss-off, then:

Ray Bob releases his grip, steps back. He fucked up. He knows it. Eddie knows it. We know it.

RAY BOB
Goddammit.

EDDIE
You asshole. There's a lotta shit you can't get with a gun.

RAY BOB
Lemme tell you somethin', Eddie. What we got's righteous. Ain't no need to split up. We're better together than alone.

Eddie's thinking.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)
Truth is, I give you what you give me. Family. And that is a powerful thing.

And with that Eddie nods. Ray Bob spreads his arms, hugs the soaking wet, naked Eddie. Off of this strange tableau, we

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The Motel Manager watches Ray Bob walk past the housekeeper pushing her cart and toward a coffee shop across the street.

SOMEONE ELSE'S POV - SAME TIME

From the motel room, Eddie watches Ray Bob cross the street, thinks about life and shit, thinks about his running buddy. **EIGHTEEN-WHEELERS** and **CARS** pass in front of him, slashing their way down the road, intermittently obscuring his point of view.

Eddie lights a cigarette, takes it deep into his lungs.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Ray Bob is paying the CASHIER. She's pretty, sixteen maybe.

RAY BOB
Keep the change, darlin'.

CASHIER
Thank you, mister.

RAY BOB
(smiles at her)
Don't you 'mister' me. Make me
feel like an old man.

She blushes. *He's kinda sexy.*

RAY BOB (CONT'D)
What time you get off?

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Ray Bob walks across the parking lot with a bag of food, SEES the Motel Manager watching from the window.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Ray Bob enters. The Motel Manager looks up, hangs up the phone.

MOTEL MANAGER
Morning.

The Motel Manager is nervous, trying not to show it. Beyond him, the crappy TV. And on the screen, **the 7-11 footage, then footage of a press conference with Willets.**

Maybe Ray Bob noticed it. Maybe he didn't. Or maybe he just wants:

RAY BOB
(shaking the bucket)
Ice? --

INT./EXT. RULE'S TRUCK - MOVING - SAME TIME

Rule is driving. But he's also looking at the case file. Pulls out the picture of Ray Bob from the 7-11 tape. **Who the fuck are you?** The phone rings. He answers.

INTERCUT: LENORA - RANGERS OFFICE

LENORA

Tip came in on a location for those two suspects. White Horse Motel.

RULE

Thanks. Willets know yet?

LENORA

Yeah.

RULE

Who gave it to him?

Maybe it was Delgado. Maybe the APD. But somebody just screwed the pooch!

LENORA

Rule, I dunno... But he's on his way in with APD and State SWAT --

Fuck! Dumbass!

RULE

Goddamn. You don't go in with an army --

Rule does a screeching U-turn, cuts across traffic.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

A lot of **LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLES** screaming to a stop. Willets leads this human armada into:

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

TV on, helicopters broadcasting aerials of the motel. And no Motel Manager.

EXT. MOTEL - SECONDS LATER

Rule's truck comes to a stop. He steps out in time to catch up with the "troops" as they kick open the door to:

ROOM 107

No bad guy in sight. In fact, the room is spotless. And quiet... **except for the shower that is on in the bathroom.**

A beat, then the bathroom door is thrown open:

Inside... **The Motel Manager, dangling fully-clothed, hands tied with curtain cord to the shower head, blood running from his mouth, down his clothes, blood swirling down the drain.**

Rule steps through. A **SWAT GUY** looks over at him.

SWAT GUY

They cut out his goddamn tongue.

Where are they?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - SAME TIME

Ray Bob and Eddie in coffee shop across the street. Brazen but out of harm's way. Ray Bob watches as Rule and Willets hurry across the staging area.

RULE AND WILLETS - MOVING

RULE

You played it wrong. These guys aren't morons.

Willets tries to ignore him.

RULE (CONT'D)

This is my goddamn case.

Finally, Willets stops, turns.

WILLETS

Back off --

SMASH TO:

RAY BOB

Ray Bob watching Rule: More words are exchanged between Rule and Willets. Rule walks away to his truck, opens the door, turns toward the coffee shop.

ON RULE

He stares at the coffee shop... sunlight glints bright off the window -- you can't see inside. But still he stares at it. **As if he senses something there.**

ON RAY BOB

Fixed on Rule. He knows. This is **THE MAN**. His challenger, adversary, doppelganger.

RAY BOB
(turning to Eddie)
Let's get the car.

They walk out the back of the shop.

EXT. VIADUCT - DAY

The Caddy is partially hidden. Ray Bob and Eddie head towards it.

EDDIE
Houston?

RAY BOB
We gonna find that DeReese Ledoux cat. He's overdue.

EDDIE
I dunno, man. DeReese might be hard to find. For all I know he's dead --

RAY BOB
We goin' to Houston. But first we need some jack.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

The Caddy pulls up in front.

RAY BOB
You're up.

EDDIE
I'm not shootin' no one.

RAY BOB
Just get the goddamn money.

Eddie looks at the liquor store. **Shit.**

INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Eddie enters, T-shirt over his head, .22 revolver in hand.

Behind the counter, an OLD MAN, stooped over like a hunchback, thin gray hair plastered to his skull with rose oil. He's eating a piece of beef jerky. There's no one else in the store.

EDDIE
(waving his gun)
This is a robbery.

The Old Man stares at him.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
You got cameras in here?

OLD MAN
You new at this, ain't you, son?

Eddie marches up to him.

EDDIE
Empty the register.

OLD MAN
Just don't squeeze that trigger.
I'm near enough dead already.

Eddie studies him -- the best he can -- through the armhole/fabric of the shirt.

EDDIE
Your name ain't Wade is it? Wade Hebert?

OLD MAN
Not the last time I checked.

EDDIE
Well give me the money. Put it in a sack. Rolls, too.

OLD MAN
That's what I'm doin' --

INT. ELDORADO - SAME TIME

Ray Bob watches Eddie in the store. Looks at his watch, then back at Eddie. *What the fuck is taking so long?*

RESUME

EDDIE
You sure you ain't Wade Hebert?

OLD MAN
(ignoring him)
You could just turn around and walk
out. That'd be my advice, son.
Just change your mind, walk on out,
save everybody the trouble. I
won't even call the law.

Eddie thinks about it, WHEN:

Ray Bob starts blowing the horn.

Eddie steps back to the door, SEES Ray Bob backing the Caddy
out like he's gonna leave, WHEN:

The SOUND of a DOUBLE-BARRELED SHOT GUN snapping shut.

Eddie turns. The Old Man has a gun trained on him. He
doesn't look so bent over now.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
I tried to tell ya.

BAM!

The Old Man blows one barrel, sending Eddie scurrying under a
hail of shot and exploding liquor bottles.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
And ya didn't listen.

BAM!

Another hail. Eddie ducks. Raises the gun over his head and
unloads without even looking.

BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! ... click.

SILENCE.

Glass and debris settle. Eddie rises up from behind the
aisle, stands there. *FUCK.*

The doorbell tinkles. Ray Bob enters, approaches the
counter, leans over it, looks down.

EDDIE
He dead?

RAY BOB
Let's just put it this way,
pardner. You done crossed an
existential line.

Ray Bob punches the cash register open.

EXT. EMPTY FIELDS - DAY

From nowhere, the Caddy appears like an apparition. Drives into the middle of a field, dust flying. Finally stops.

INT./EXT. CADDY - CONTINUOUS

Ray Bob turns to Eddie.

RAY BOB

Get out.

Ray Bob slams the car door, circles around the back of the car, slowly approaches Eddie.

Eddie stares at **the gun in Ray Bob's hand**. Then:

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

(whoops)

You done it now! You a goddamn outlaw!

He reaches into the back seat, pulls out a six pack, tosses a can to Eddie.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

Say it: 'I am a goddamn outlaw!'

A long beat.

RAY BOB (CONT'D)

Say it!

Eddie looks around.

EDDIE

Alright! Jesus! I'm a goddamn outlaw.

Ray Bob holds out his hand. He and Eddie shake. Ray Bob loudly snaps his thumb and finger when shaking, like it's some kind of secret handshake of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Outlaws.

Ray Bob embraces Eddie as the wind whips up the dirt.

DELLA (V.O.)

You ever read the bible?

DELLA AND LORETTA - **FLASH FORWARD** - BUS STATION/CONTINUATION

Buses and people coming and going.

LORETTA
Til I was fifteen.

DELLA
I been reading it off and on.
There's this story about the
prodigal son, how the older brother
got jealous cause the younger
brother had so much fun. And he
didn't even suffer for it?...

Loretta takes this in.

DELLA (CONT'D)
It's a good story...

Della finally lights that cigarette.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. THE CADDY - MOVING - PRESENT - NIGHT

A two-lane road in a place they call Texas.

EDDIE
That old man back there. Reminded
me of my Uncle Wade. Wade Hebert.

RAY BOB
Yeah? Ya'll were close?

EDDIE
Naw. Couldn't stand 'im. He was
always tellin' me what to do.

RAY BOB
Why didn't you just shoot 'im?

EDDIE
Because he was usually right.

RAY BOB
My momma was like that.

EDDIE
Usually right?

RAY BOB
Never wrong.

EDDIE
Why didn't you just shoot 'er?

RAY BOB
Who says I didn't? --

Ray Bob almost doesn't see it, at the last second senses something moving on the side of the road. Narrow miss, skids to a stop.

Eddie turns around on the seat, looks. It's:

DELLA - REDUX

Even from a distance, you can tell her eye is swollen, black and blue. You can almost make out the blood on her dress.

Eddie sticks his head out the window.

EDDIE
Goddamn! We was doin' eighty when
we saw you!

Della stares at the Eldorado.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Well, you cummin' or not?

Who the hell are these guys? Della thinks about it, THEN:

Ah, hell. She climbs into the back seat of the car.

ON DELLA

She takes in Ray Bob and Eddie. They have their secrets. So does she.

DELLA
Where ya headed?

RAY BOB
Where ya wanna go?

It's a familiar refrain.

And with that, Eddie reaches for the door and as it **SLAMS**:

SMASH TO BLACK.

TO BE CONTINUED