

Alpha Dog

**The story of Nick Markowitz
and
Jesse James Hollywood**

by

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**FIRST DRAFT
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Goodnight, baby
'till we meet tomorrow
Goodnight, baby
dreams will banish sorrow

for gina

INT. MANDALAY BAY HOTEL - DAY

A young man sits in front of a large window, the Las Vegas strip 38 floors below him. His name is JESSE JAMES HOLLYWOOD. He doesn't move, just stares out, the weight of the world in his blank blue eyes.

SUPERIMPOSE: LAS VEGAS, AUGUST 16, 2000

Someone is on the phone in the bedroom. His name is CHAZ SAULSBURY.

SAULSBURY

Well, what did you tell them? You what?
Why did you do that? Oh, fuck, Mom. I'm
hanging up. You don't even know what you
did.

Saulsbury moves into the living room. Jesse's still looking out the window.

SAULSBURY

Jesse?

Jesse blinks. He's almost in a trance.

JESSE

You ever have that dream? The one where
you did something, you don't know why,
but you can never go back? It's like
that. Fucking crazy.

SAULSBURY

Jesse. The Feds talked to my mom. Bitch
gave us up. They know we're in Vegas.
They've got my licence plate.

Jesse finally turns around.

SAULSBURY

We got to go, man.

INTERVIEW #1 - 16MM/1.33 RATIO - BLACK ON THE SIDES

The subject talks to an unseen INTERVIEWER and the credits roll

SUPERIMPOSE: JACK HOLLYWOOD

JACK HOLLYWOOD

You want to know what this is all about?
You can say it's about drugs, or guns, or
disaffected youth, or bad decisions, or
shit gone wrong or whatever you like.
But, this whole thing, if you want the
real truth, the very bottom, is about
parenting. Taking care of your children.
It affects everything. You pull the
string, it all unravels.

(MORE)

JACK HOLLYWOOD (cont'd)
And I'm not talking about role model
bullshit. Just taking care, that's the
deal, the whole magilla right there.
From the beginning to the end. You take
care of yours, I take care of mine.

INTERVIEWER
What does that mean?

JACK HOLLYWOOD
That's all I have to say about that.
Next question.

INTERVIEWER
Your son was a drug dealer?

JACK HOLLYWOOD
He sold a little weed, yeah.

INTERVIEWER
A little weed? He was a major supplier
to the San Fernando Valley.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
I don't know anything about that. But,
you know, boys will be boys.

INTERVIEWER
What about the DA's assertion that your
son got his marijuana from you?

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Not true.

INTERVIEWER
And you, in fact, have ties to organized
crime?

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Hey, what kind of amateur night horseshit
is this? This isn't an interrogation. I
don't have to be here. I'm a tax payer.
You're a real piece of shit, you know
that?

Jack Hollywood gets up and pulls off his mike.

EXT. COHASSET HOUSE - DAY

Jesse Hollywood's house is located in an upscale suburban
development in the Northwest corner of the San Fernando Valley.
It's one story, but nice. Four bedrooms, pool, manicured lawn,
Mercedes Benz, and a tricked out low-rider Accord sitting in the
driveway. Not bad for a twenty year old.

SUPERIMPOSE: WEST HILLS CALIFORNIA JULY, 2000

Rap music thumps out of an open garage. TOO SHORT is filling in the missing pieces as Jesse, WILL SKIDMORE, JESSE RUGGE, and CASEY SHEEHAN bang the weights. Jessie's doing big reps on the bench press.

SKIDMORE

Come on, Jessie. Twelve reps. You don't get twelve, you got no dick. You don't get twelve, I'm fucking your mom and your girl.

Jesse finishes the set and gets up. Twelve reps. He shakes out the pump.

JESSE

What'd you say? I couldn't hear you, you say you want to suck my cock?

SKIDMORE

Yeah, first you got to have one.

JESSE

What, your sister didn't tell you? I got a monster.

SHEEHAN

Yeah. Five foot three, hung like a flea.

JESSE

Shit. My dick's so big, it's got a knee in it. And don't even say shit to me, Casey. What are you talking about? You lift those three pound green aerobic weights.

(mimics effort)

Fucking embarrassing.

SHEEHAN

Hey, you don't need to lift a lot of weight to stay toned. It's all about reps.

RUGGE

Reps, my ass. You have tits like a girl.

SHEEHAN

That's so I can squeeze them when I jerk off.

The boys laugh. RYAN HOYT enters, knees muddy and wearing gardening gloves.

HOYT

All done, Jesse.

He pulls off his shirt and joins the workout. He moves to and old Universal machine and starts doing pull-downs.

JESSE
What are you doing?

HOYT
Back. What?

JESSE
Is it dark outside?

HOYT
What?

JESSE
I'm paying you for a full day, right?

HOYT
Come on, Jesse. I've been here since ten o'clock this morning.

JESSE
Fuck that shit. I asked you a question. Do you see the fucking moon, Ryan?

HOYT
But I did everything you said. The house is clean, I went to the store, food and beer are in the fridge, the grass is cut, Chump's fed, and all the wash is done.

JESSE
Well, I guess you shouldn't have finished so fast.

The boys smile and keep on lifting. They've heard it before

JESSE
Don't look at me like that. Get back to fucking work. Go wash the floors, scrub out the toilets, or better yet, pick up all the dog shit in the backyard. And if you finish too soon, dump it out and pick it back up again.

HOYT
(leaving)
That's messed up.

JESSE
What'd you say? The deal was a full day. I'm cutting you a big fucking break. So don't take advantage of me, because you're starting to piss me off.

HOYT
Okay, okay.

JESSE

When am I going to get my money, Ryan?
When?

HOYT

I told you, I get my check on Thursday.

JESSE

How much is the check?

HOYT

I don't know. Depends on the hours.

JESSE

Well, how many hours did you work, bitch?

HOYT

I can't remember!

JESSE

Okay, fuck it. We go to the bank on Friday. We walk in. How much am I going to get? Between your check and your savings?

HOYT

I don't know. Six hundred?

JESSE

Six hundred?

HOYT

Five, six hundred, yeah. I got to leave a hundred in the account.

JESSE

Fucking deadbeats, man. Go on, get the fuck out of here.

A car arrives in the driveway. Skidmore checks it out.

SKIDMORE

What up, little B? It's Brian.

INT. COHASSET HOUSE - EVENING

The den is the place for business. The doors are closed and only Jesse, Skidmore, BRIAN AFFRONTI, and Jesse's giant bull terrier, CHUMP, are inside. Affronti counts out money into two stacks on the coffee table. Eighty four hundred dollars.

JESSE

All of it, huh? Surprise, surprise.

AFFRONTI

Yeah.

In his notebook, Jesse crosses off the number 84 next to Affronti's name. There are other entries: Rugge, Sheehan, BEN MARKOWITZ.

JESSE

Okay, so?

Affronti rubs his hands together and his leg thumps involuntarily.

AFFRONTI

I've got this guy, right? He wants five. Plus my regular two. So, like, seven?

Jesse looks at Skids. It's a big jump.

JESSE

I don't know, B. I don't like having that much shit out.

AFFRONTI

I'll see my guy on Monday, I'll clear you right out.

Jesse looks at Affronti, studying him:

SKIDMORE

He's good, Jessie.

AFFRONTI

You don't need to tell him I'm good. I'm not looking for any fucking favors, Jay. If it makes sense, do it. If not, fuck it.

Jessie gives Brian the hairy eyeball, but Affronti doesn't flinch.

JESSE

Okay, we'll try it. Where are you going, right?

SKIDMORE

That's what I'm talking about.

JESSE

But come Friday, I don't want to hear any fucking stories.

AFFRONTI

You won't.

The notebook is open again, and Jessie's making a new entry.

JESSE

30 dimes. Lot of money, B.

AFFRONTI

Yeah, well. Actually, I was thinking. Seven pounds, forty-two's too much. I figured you'd give them to me for forty.

JESSE

Forty? No fucking way. You're getting them on the cuff.

AFFRONTI

Yeah, but I'm moving it for you.

Jesse's face tightens, then relaxes. Affronti's breaking his stones, but it's a good deal.

JESSE

You're unbelievable, you know that? Alright, give me your keys.

EXT. COHASSET HOUSE - EVENING

Jessie and Chump take a walk around the corner five houses down to the home of Jack Hollywood.

INT. JACK HOLLYWOOD'S HOUSE - EVENING

Jesse enters, moves through the house with Chump. Jack Hollywood and JOHN ROBERTS are watching a ballgame in the other room. His father barely looks up as Jesse walks by.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Hey.

JESSE

What's up?

Jessie moves down the hall to a back bedroom, which he opens with a key.

INT. JACK HOLLYWOOD'S HOUSE - BACK BEDROOM - EVENING

Against the far wall, there are many chest-high boxes. Jessie moves to one and rips it open. Inside are clear plastic vacuum sealed bags, each about the size of an airplane pillow, and each containing BC bud, potent green marijuana that gets its name from its place of origin, British Columbia. Jessie throws seven airplane pillows into a duffel and splits.

INT. JACK HOLLYWOOD'S HOUSE - EVENING

Jesse moves down the hall. As he passes the TV room, John Roberts calls to him.

ROBERTS
Jessie. Come here.

Jessie moves inside, giving his father and Roberts each a kiss. Jack absently pats the dog.

ROBERTS
What are you doing?

JESSE
Nothing.

Roberts is from Chicago and well connected. He takes Jessie's face in his big meaty hands, Italian style.

ROBERTS
Look at this kid, how handsome he is. You must be knocking them dead. You knocking them dead?

JESSE
No. Let go of me.

Jessie pulls away, but smiles. There's a lot of love between him and Roberts.

ROBERTS
What are you doing tonight? You chasing tail?

JESSE
No. Just chilling.

ROBERTS
On a Friday night? Jack?

JACK HOLLYWOOD
I know.

ROBERTS
Don't make me wonder about you kid. You sound like half a fucking fag.

JESSE
Yeah, yeah. Come on, Chump.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
In and out again? What'd I say about foot traffic?

JESSE
You want me to stay?

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Next time.

Jessie and Chump head out. Roberts calls after them.

ROBERTS

Remember what I told you. Men are not supposed to be monopolous. It's in our nature to spread the seed. Susan's a nice girl and all, but you got to plow some fucking fields. You hear me, you fucking fruitcake?

EXT. COHASSET STREET - EVENING

Jesse and Chump move through the neighborhood, Jessie's eyes seeing everything. If there was a burn, this would be the time for it. On the street, seven pounds in hand. Police cars would come, handcuffs, jail, lawyers. Too much to think about, so you got to be careful.

Jesse arrives at his house, stopping at Affronti's car. He fumbles with the keys when he hears the sound of a car approaching. His head snaps up, but it's not the cops. Just a young mother with kids and car seats.

Jesse opens Affronti's trunk and drops the duffel bag inside. No bust today, just another successful transaction.

INTERVIEW # 2

A man in a three piece suit runs his hands through his hair. He's looks like a young senator.

SUPERIMPOSE: RON ZONEN - ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY, SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

ZONEN

I know it sounds incredible in light of all that's happened, but these weren't bad kids. They talked tough, but most of it was an affectation. As much as they wanted everyone to think they were gangsters, nothing could be further from the truth. These were boys who played little league together. They grew up in beautiful homes. All, except for Hoyt, came from reasonably good families. They were, and I'm embarrassed to say this, living what's rapidly becoming for white suburban America, what I like to call the young person's rap version of the American dream. The girls. The dope. The money. The fancy cars. No parents telling them what to do. They were living "the life", and Jessie was the ringleader. Everybody looked up to him like he was "the man", and nobody better cross him. And he played his part to the "T". That is, until he locked horns with Ben Markowitz. Because Markowitz wasn't play acting.

(MORE)

ZONEN (cont'd)

National Tae Kwan Do champion, gang affiliations, in and out of youth authorities since the age of eleven, Ben was one legitimately tough hombre, and someone Jessie couldn't bully. But Jessie had this reputation to uphold. And that's when the problems started.

EXT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - NIGHT

BEN MARKOWITZ pulls up to his parents home in his '89 IROQ. He frowns when he looks at the house. Something is on his mind.

INT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - NIGHT

Ben's family - father JEFF, half-brother NICK, and stepmother SUSAN are at the dining room table. They look up as Ben walks in.

JEFF

Hey! I didn't expect to see you. Come on in. You hungry? There's plenty of food.

Ben sits down. Nick fills his plate, but Ben's a tweaker. And after sniffing speed, you're not that hungry. He pushes the food back and forth on his plate with his shaky hands before looking up at his father.

BEN

Can I talk to you alone a minute?

INT. MARKOWITZ STUDY - NIGHT

Ben enters and his father closes the door behind them.

BEN

I need to borrow money.

JEFF

I thought we talked about this.

BEN

Yeah.

JEFF

You haven't paid me back for the last time.

BEN

I know.

JEFF

It's not the money. You know that, don't you son? I just can't keep bailing you out all the time.

BEN

I know. You think I'd be here if this wasn't the last fucking stop on earth?

JEFF

How much?

BEN

Eight hundred.

Two quick knocks and Susan enters.

SUSAN

What's going on?

JEFF

Ben wants to borrow money.

SUSAN

For what Ben, drugs?

JEFF

Susan...

SUSAN

Well it's true. How many times are we gonna do this, Jeff? He shows up here stoned out of his mind, and you throw him money because you don't want to deal with it.

BEN

I need it, dad. I got a debt.

SUSAN

Look at him. His eyes are as big as saucers.

BEN

I'm working, goddammit! I got a job, I'll pay you back.

JEFF

Can't do it, son.

BEN

Right. Sorry to interrupt. Go back to your new fucking family.

JEFF

That's not fair.

SUSAN

(moving to him)

Ben.

BEN

Stay the fuck away from me.

And Ben is gone.

EXT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - NIGHT

Ben gets in his car, starts it. But before he can leave, Nick comes running out. Ben rolls down the window.

NICK
Can I come with you?

BEN
No kid. Not tonight, I got some shit to do.

NICK
I gotta get out of here, I'm going crazy.

BEN
I know. You alright?

NICK
Yeah.

BEN
Okay, then. Page me later or something.

INT. COHASSET HOUSE - NIGHT

Jesse, Skidmore, Rugge, Sheehan, and Hoyt are wasted. They pass the bong in front of Jesse's big screen. Draped across Jesse's lap is his girl, MICHELLE LASHER. A tattoo reading, "Jesse James" adorns her backside. Everyone is watching "Reservoir Dogs" for the ten thousandth time, reciting the lines as they come up.

JESSE
(to Michelle)
Get me a cerveza, will you?

HOYT
I got it, Jess.

Ryan hustles into the kitchen to get the beer.

RUGGE
Look at that slave-ish motherfucker. "I got it, Jess. I got it." He's like a spook.

SHEEHAN
He loves Jesse.

SKIDMORE
He does. Don't you, Ryan?

Ryan returns with a Budweiser.

HOYT

Yeah, I do. I owe him a lot.

RUGGE

No, I don't mean like that. I mean, you fucking love him. You'd do anything for him. If he asked you to suck his cock, you probably would.

HOYT

Shut up.

RUGGE

No, tell the truth. Tell me you wouldn't drop to your fucking knees and suck Jesse's cock in one second if he asked you to.

HOYT

I wouldn't.

JESSE

You wouldn't?

HOYT

Jesse...

RUGGE

You see that? You see how fucking in love he is with him? You are a full on, dick in the mouth, balls across the nose, dildo up the ass, 100% faggot.

MICHELLE

You guys are fucking mean.

Ryan's about to crack, but nobody gives a shit. The group keeps banging him, egging him on. Jesse's pissing himself, he's laughing so hard.

JESSE

Suck my cock, Ryan. Really. Suck my cock. Suck it.

Hoyt is so worked up, he accidentally knocks over a beer. He scrambles to clean it up.

HOYT

Sorry, Jesse. It's okay. Nothing got on the carpet.

JESSE

No. Suck my cock.

The doorbell rings, and Jesse's mood changes quickly.

JESSE
Who the fuck? You call Pink dot or something?

MICHELLE
No.

HOYT
I got it, Jesse.

JESSE
No, I got it. Suck my cock.

EXT. COHASSET HOUSE - NIGHT

Jesse opens the door to find Ben Markowitz. He's different from the rest of the crew - shaved head, covered in tatoos. Jesse throws his arms around him and pulls him inside.

JESSE
What up, Ben? You gotta start calling a motherfucker before you show up. You Christkillers ain't got no respect.

BEN
Yeah, yeah.

INT. COHASSET HOUSE - NIGHT

Jesse goes to pull Ben into the living room, but Ben stops short

BEN
We got a problem. You know that thing I was taking care of for you in San Diego? It's a washout.

JESSE
What happened?

BEN
I go down there, put the screws to him, do my thing. I tell him something bad's going to happen to him if he doesn't come up with the money, and like right now. He's tapped out but scared, so he sets up his neighbor and we beat the guy for one hundred and fifty bombs.

JESSE
Stories.

BEN
But the X is no good. It's bunk. I had a guy lined up to take them all. I mean, fuck, right? We would have made money on the deal.

JESSE

I don't want to hear it. That's your fucking headache. You told me to leave it alone. You said you would take care of it, that it was your debt, remember? And now you come here trying to nigger-talk me?

BEN

What do you want me to do? I can't exactly go back to the guy we ripped off and say, "Your shit was no good".

JESSE

Fucking stories, motherfucker. I still got to get paid.

BEN

I know. Calm the fuck down.

Ben pulls a wad out of his pocket.

BEN

I got eight hundred. I thought we could split it.

JESSE

Split it? Fuck that. Pay me.

BEN

I'm trying.

JESSE

How? You make dog shit at that fucking job.

BEN

Don't start pulling that shit with me...

JESSE

You're short, asshole.

BEN

Watch your mouth, you little fucking midget. I'm not one of your little faggot friends. Remember who you're talking to.

JESSE

Maybe you should refresh my memory.

BEN

Be careful, Jesse. I'm not fucking Hoyt.

JESSE

Then pay me my money, bitch.

That does it. Ben smacks Jessie, and they tumble to the ground, rolling around and knocking shit over. The boys run in and pull them apart. Susan is screaming, "Jessie, Jessie!" Jesse runs into his room and comes back with a pistol.

BEN

You point that thing at me, you better pull the trigger. Go on, you fucking pussy. Do it.

SKIDMORE

Nobody's shooting anybody.

SHEEHAN

Everybody fucking relax. Jesus, Jesse.

Jesse lowers the gun.

BEN

Yeah, that's what I thought.

JESSE

Get this piece of shit out of my house.

BEN

Fuck you, midget boy. You may have everybody else fooled around here, but I ain't buying it.

JESSE

Try me, Tattooeey.

BEN

Oh, I will. It's on. Ain't no turning back now.

INT. BEN MARKOWITZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ben and his girlfriend, WANDA, are fooling around beneath the sheets. They're sweaty, they've been going at it a while. There's a knock on the door. It's hard to hear with all the noise Wanda's making, but then the knock becomes louder. Ben clamps a hand over Wanda's mouth.

BEN

Shut up.

He throws a towel around himself and moves to the front door.

BEN

Who is it?

NICK (O.S.)

Nick.

BEN

Who? It's fucking midnight.

NICK

It's Nick.

Ben opens the door a crack until the chain catches it.

NICK

Can I crash here?

Ben throws open the door and yanks Nick inside.

BEN

Get in here. What are you doing, you fucking maniac?

WANDA

Who is it?

Wanda is standing in the door, half naked.

BEN

Put some clothes on, my brother's here.
(to Nick)
You want a drink?

INT. BEN MARKOWITZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ben, Nick, and Wanda sit around the kitchen table drinking a bottle of Tequila. They're getting drunk.

NICK

...She's always telling me what to do, what to wear, which girls she thinks are pretty. Like I can't even figure that out for myself.

BEN

That's Susan.

Wanda refills the glasses, pouring oversized amounts. Three fingers high in cheap tumblers.

WANDA

She loves you. You're her baby.

NICK

I know.

Nick gags his drink down and makes a face. Ben hands him a beer to wash the taste away.

NICK

But it's embarrassing. I mean, we have homework parties, you believe that? Homework parties. With hats and everything.

WANDA

No, like for birthdays?

NICK

I'm telling you. Sometimes she wakes me up by looking at me. I'll open my eyes and she's just there, like three inches in front of me face. Like this. Just staring, like she's in love or something. Breathing on me.

BEN

You're lucky. You know that, you little prick? My mother never gave a shit.

Nick downs another drink. The bottle is dead.

NICK

I know, but I'll trade you. I've just got to get out.

Nick pulls a pipe and dime bag out of his fanny pack.

NICK

I'm drunk. I've got to smoke.

BEN

Look at Nicky. All grown up with his little one-hitter and stress weed.

The phone rings. Wanda picks it up.

WANDA

It's Susan.

NICK

Fuck.

Ben takes the phone.

BEN

Hello. Yeah, he's here. We're talking. I said we're talking. Don't get your panties in a wad, Susan. I'll bring him home later. Yes, I know what time it is. Okay, fine.

Ben hangs up and turns to his brother.

BEN

You got to go back.

EXT. WEST HILLS STREETS - ARMINTA AVE. - NIGHT

Ben's IROQ comes tearing down the road, fishtailing around the corners. Wanda and Nick are screaming with laughter as the car screeches into the driveway.

Ben helps his brother out of the car. Nick's so unsteady, Ben has to walk him to the door. A light comes on, and the door opens, revealing Jeff and Susan. They are not amused.

BEN

You wanted him? You got him.

Nick isn't feeling well. He stumbles inside.

JEFF

You're a real son of a bitch, you know that?

Ben laughs, running to his car. The engine guns, and the IROQ speeds away.

INTERVIEW # 3

The subject lights a cigarette. His green shirt blends into the cool grey background.

SUPERIMPOSE: RYAN HOYT

INTERVIEWER

How much money did you owe Jesse Hollywood?

HOYT

At one point, it was twelve hundred. But eventually I got it down to two hundred.

INTERVIEWER

You owed him for marijuana?

Hoyt nods.

HOYT

At first, I would come to him when someone I knew needed some. But I was coming to him so often, he was like, "Why don't you take a whole one?" So, of course, I said yes.

INTERVIEWER

By a whole one, you mean a pound?

HOYT

Yeah. At first, it worked out, but eventually I started smoking more than I sold. And that's when it turned around. He began calling me at home, blowing up my pager.

INTERVIEWER

You were living with your mother at the time?

HOYT

No, that was only for a couple of months.

INTERVIEWER

A couple of months, when?

HOYT

A couple of months my whole life. My mother is an unstable person, and my dad had moved to Nevada, so I was basically sleeping on my grandmother's couch. But I stayed with Casey sometimes, and with Jesse. And that's the thing. I mean, I had known the guy for ten years, and here he was harassing me, like, "Where's my money, Ryan? I want my fucking money." Like every five minutes. I was looking for a job to pay him back, but he didn't believe me. So I wound up working for him.

INTERVIEWER

What'd you do?

HOYT

Just around the house, you know? Cleaning up, taking care of his dog. Working in the yard, planting flowers.

INTERVIEWER

Did you want to do that?

HOYT

No.

INTERVIEWER

Did you tell him?

HOYT

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER

What'd you say?

HOYT

I said, I didn't want to do that.

INTERVIEWER

But you did it anyway.

HOYT

Yeah, I owed him.

The tape continues to roll.

INTERVIEWER

How'd that make you feel, working for your friend?

HOYT

Embarrassed. I mean, come on. Everybody was always around teasing me, calling me the maid. Sure, I felt embarrassed. And it was weird between me and Jesse. He was really frustrated about the money. It got to the point where if I didn't pay him enough, he said he would up the debt a hundred dollars a week.

INTERVIEWER

And did that happen?

HOYT

Yeah. A bunch of times. I wasn't happy, but I couldn't talk him out of it.

INTERVIEWER

So you wound up paying him more than twelve hundred.

HOYT

Yeah.

INTERVIEWER

How long did this go on? Working at his house?

HOYT

From January, mid-January, to like August.

INTERVIEWER

Eight months for a twelve hundred dollar debt?

HOYT

I know it sounds brutal, but, yeah.

INTERVIEWER

Why didn't you just get a job, pay him back quicker?

HOYT

I don't know. I mean, I did at the end, but by that time it was too late.

INTERVIEWER

He was obviously taking advantage of you. Why didn't you tell him to go to hell?

HOYT

I couldn't. Look at the way he was treating me. Imagine what he would have done if I had told him no. I didn't want to lose him as a friend and I didn't want any trouble. I mean, look what happened between him and Ben.

INT. OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE - NIGHT

The crew - Jesse, Skidmore, Rugge, Sheehan, Hoyt, and Susan are drunk, laughing, and talking shit. They're finished with dinner but order more drinks from a tight-lipped Wanda, who's their server. Jack Hollywood and John Roberts admire young Wanda's rear end as she leaves.

ROBERTS

Look at that caboose. I'd crack that open like a peach.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Are you crazy, you fucking dinosaur? You can't do anything. You're dead. You got wrinkly balls.

ROBERTS

What?

JACK HOLLYWOOD

I said your balls are wrinkled. Two prunes in a sock.

ROBERTS

Your ass.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Your cock is like a fucking car without a battery. No juice. Do me a favor, will you? Leave all the pretty young girls to me.

ROBERTS

Yeah. Fuck you and the Virgin Mary.

Wanda returns with drinks and a check.

WANDA

Anything else?

ROBERTS

What do you got in mind?

Wanda's look freezes them.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Never mind my friend. Thank you honey, we're all done. Give me the bill.

JESSE

I got it.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Big shot, huh? You must be rich.

Everyone gets up and heads out. Jesse leaves the check, passing Wanda on his way out. They speak in threats.

JESSE
Tell Ben we stopped in.

WANDA
I will.

Wanda watches them leave, then goes over and picks up the bill. No money, she's been stiffed. But inside the check-holder there is a note. It reads, "Take this off Ben's tab."

INTERVIEW # 4

The young woman sits in a booth. A drink tinkles in her hand.

SUPERIMPOSE: WANDA HAYNES

WANDA
When I told Ben what happened, he flipped out, and I had to calm him down. Ben's like that. He's a very passionate person. But I told him if he was going to do something, that he should hit Jesse where it hurt.

INTERVIEW # 5

The subject looks different with a moustache, silky shirt, and slicked back hair.

SUPERIMPOSE: BRIAN AFFRONTI

AFFRONTI
So this fucking scumbag goes to Allstate and rats Jesse out. You see, Jesse had a car stolen by a mutual acquaintance and was trying to collect the insurance money. Ben salted the whole fucking deal. Insurance company got wind of it, they never paid. Cost Jesse thirty thousand dollars. Yeah, thirty thousand. We heard about it, and were like, "What the fuck"? Of course, he had to retaliate.

INT. OFFICES - DAY

Ben Markowitz, suit and tie, sits in his cubicle banging the phones. An EMPLOYEE sticks his head in.

EMPLOYEE
Mr. Johannson wants to see you.

INT. JOHANNSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Ben knocks before entering.

BEN
What's up, Pete?

JOHANNSON
Sit down.

Ben sits. His boss takes a moment before speaking.

JOHANNSON
Your probation officer called.

BEN
You talked to Mr. Lampington? I thought
he was out of town.

JOHANNSON
Yeah, I talked to him. He told me you've
been getting into trouble again.
Breaking into houses. Using drugs.
Speed, mainly.

BEN
That's not true.

JOHANNSON
Look, I went to bat for you when you
applied for this job. But we have a no
tolerance drug policy at this company...

Ben's eyes glaze over. He knows who's behind this.

BEN
(sotto)
That motherfucker.

JOHANNSON
I'm afraid I'm going to need you to take
a drug test.

Ben doesn't even respond. He just gets up and walks out.

EXT. WEST HILLS STREETS - NIGHT

A grey low-rider rumbles through the neighborhood, killing it's
lights and stopping in front of Jesse's house. Ben Markowitz and
two LATINO YOUTHS emerge from the Impala. They are pinned out,
eyes wild and flying high. One of the youths is holding a
shotgun and Ben carries an axe.

INT. COHASSET HOUSE - NIGHT

Jesse is asleep when he hears the first crash. He grabs his gun, gets out of bed and moves to the window.

EXT. COHASSET HOUSE - NIGHT

Ben is knocking out the living room window with an axe. Glass and wood shatter around him.

BEN

You want to play games, Jesse? Let's play some fucking games.

INT. COHASSET HOUSE - NIGHT

Jesse moves through the darkness, pistol stuck out in front of him. But by the time he reaches the living room, the intruders are already in his house. Jesse makes a decision. He backs into a closet, closing the door behind him.

INT. COHASSET HOUSE - CLOSET - NIGHT

Jesse is pressed up against the back wall, scared shit. He's trying to be quiet, but his breathing is loud, and his gun hand's shaking, but ready. He listens intently as Ben and company move through his house.

BEN (O.S.)

Come on, Hollywood. Come out and play.

Jesse listens as the boys move through his house, looking through all the rooms, breaking shit as they go. He presses his eye close to the crack in the closet door.

YOUTH

He's not here, man. Let's go.

YOUTH #2

I don't give a fuck what you say, I'm taking this fucking TV. What the fuck are you doing?

Ben's pants are down and he's crouched over in a squatting position. He's defecating right in the middle of the living room floor.

YOUTH

Wow, fool. What'd you eat?

YOUTH #2

Careful, don't step in it.

EXT. COHASSET HOUSE - NIGHT

The boys move out of the house, laughing.

INT. COHASSET HOUSE - NIGHT

Jesse moves to the window, watches the boys stuffing his television in the back seat. Ben looks at the house before getting in the car. For a moment, it looks as if he might see Jesse, but then he climbs in. The tires spin, and the Impala speeds away.

EXT. COHASSET HOUSE - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: AUGUST 6, 2000

A Ryder rent-a-truck sits in Jesse's driveway.

INT. COHASSET HOUSE - DAY

Jesse Rugge enters the house in flip flops and Hawaiian shirt.

RUGGE
Fiesta! We ready?

He moves into the living room to find everything packed up in boxes. The furniture is all gone - nothing left except the cream colored carpets.

RUGGE
What the fuck?

Jesse Hollywood and Skidmore are standing by the kitchen.

JESSE
Moving, bro.

RUGGE
Moving?

JESSE
Goddamn right. Too fucking hot. Too many assholes know where I live.

Hoyt is working in the other room, putting stuff into boxes. Skidmore indicates the broken window, it's frame shattered.

SKIDMORE
You see this?

RUGGE
Whoa. What happened?

JESSE

I come home last night, my window's busted and my TV's missing.

SKIDMORE

Tell him about the shit. Fucking crackhead Markowitz took a sideways shit on the living room carpet.

RUGGE

What? Where?

SKIDMORE

Right here, on the wet spot. Right here. A big fucking steaming crap. Long ways, like this.

RUGGE

Jesus.

SKIDMORE

Is that nuts or what? I wonder what he wiped his ass with? His hand? What if he wiped it on the couch? You think?

JESSE

I don't know, Fucko. I told you I wasn't here.

SKIDMORE

Whatever. That fool is nasty.

Jesse hits speakerphone and dials.

JESSE

And check this shit out.

A voice with a really bad Mexican accent plays over.

VOICE

"This is just the beginning, bitch. This is 'Li'l Shooter'. You're dead, holmes. You hear me, you fucking dwarf? I know where your mother lives. I know here your brother lives. I know where your Pappi lives. We're going to play some fucking games, holmes."

RUGGE

Markowitz?

JESSE

The fuck do you think? You believe that shit, after everything I've done for that motherfucker?

RUGGE

Fuck it. Let's get out of Dodge. Go to Fiesta, fuck some bitches.

Jesse looks at Skidmore.

JESSE

We got to pick up Brian. Hoytie, we're going to Santa Barbara for a couple of days. Get everything boxed up and out of here. I don't want to see shit here when I get back.

HOYT

Okay. Maybe if you guys are still there when I get finished, I can cruise up.

JESSE

Maybe.

RUGGE

Yeah, and maybe you can blow me.

HOYT

Fuck you, you dick. I want to come.

RUGGE

Yeah, yeah. Just make sure you get the shit smell out of the carpet.

SKIDMORE

I don't get it. What are we doing?

JESSE

Let's go break this fucking guy's head.

EXT. BEN MARKOWITZ'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jesse, Skidmore, and Rugge pile out of a white van, roll up the stairs, and knock on the door. Nobody answers.

RUGGE

He's not here.

Skidmore bangs on the door again.

RUGGE

I'm telling you, he's gone. His car's not here.

SKIDMORE

That don't mean shit.

RUGGE

And there's no lights on.

SKIDMORE

It's the middle of the fucking day. How are there going to be lights?

RUGGE

I don't know.

They stand there, the hot August sun beating down on them. Skidmore tries to peek through the window, but the blinds are drawn.

SKIDMORE

What are we going to do?

JESSE

I don't fucking know. But I'm not standing here like an asshole.

He spins and moves down the stairs, the boys following. But before Jesse climbs in the van, Rugge calls out to him.

RUGGE

Yo, Jay. Check it out.

Rugge has a rock in his hand. He throws it, breaking one of the front windows.

RUGGE

97 miles an hour, motherfucker.

Skidmore picks one up and chucks it, shattering the other window. The boys slap hands.

JESSE

You guys are fucking idiots. Let's go.

INT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - NICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Nick wakes up to the sound of an argument. Susan and Jeff are yelling at each other. We can't hear the words, but it's heated.

NICK

Jesus. Make more noise.

He gets up and moves downstairs in his underwear.

INT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - DAY

Nick's parents are by the front door. Jeff's dressed in tennis clothes. He wants to leave.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

He's fifteen.

SUSAN

Your tennis match will wait, goddammit! Jesus Christ, Jeff. For once in your life, don't be such a pussy. What are you thinking?

JEFF MARKOWITZ
Don't get crazy, Suze. It's not that big
a deal.

SUSAN
How would you know? You're never here.
You want him to turn out like...

JEFF MARKOWITZ
Like what, Susan? Like who? Say it.
Like Ben?

Nick stops at the bottom of the stairs.

NICK
What's going on?

Jeff and Susan stop and turn around. Susan hands Jeff a small
plastic water pipe.

SUSAN
You do it.

Jeff moves to Nick.

JEFF MARKOWITZ
Your mother found this in your room.

NICK
It's a pipe.

JEFF MARKOWITZ
I know what it is, it's a bong. You want
to tell me about it?

NICK
No.

JEFF MARKOWITZ
You smoking pot?

NICK
No.

JEFF MARKOWITZ
No? Look at me. We have to talk, son.

NICK
I don't want to fucking talk.

JEFF MARKOWITZ
Too bad. Sit down.

NICK
Alright, fuck. Get your hands off me.
Jesus. It's eight o'clock in the
morning. Can I put some fucking clothes
on?

INT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - NICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Nick enters, throws on a pair of pants, grabs his fanny pack, and opens the window.

EXT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - DAY

Nick climbs out onto the roof, jumps to the ground, and takes off.

INT. WHITE VAN - DAY

The boys are on their way to Santa Barbara, Rugge driving, Jesse shotgun, and Skidmore in the back.

The van comes to a stop sign by Taxco Trails park. A fifteen year old boy with a fanny pack walks down the street with his head down.

JESSE

Are you fucking kidding me?. That's
Tattooey's brother.

SKIDMORE

Where?

JESSE

Right there. That's Markowitz's brother.
Pull over!

The van pulls over and the boys get out. Nick Markowitz looks up as they approach him. He starts to run, but Jesse and Skidmore chase him down and tackle him into a wall.

SKIDMORE

What are you running for, bitch?

NICK

Why are you chasing me?

Nick's pretty strong and tries to get away. Rugge, Jesse, and Skidmore rain punches and kicks down on him to subdue him. Finally, Nick covers up as the beating continues.

NICK

Alright, alright.

INT. VOLVO - DAY

Through a windshield, someone is watching the assault.

A YOUNG MOTHER is driving with 2 nine year olds and a five year old in tow.

SUPERIMPOSE: PAULINE MAHONEY - WITNESS #1

PAULINE MAHONEY

Oh my God.

The kids see what's happening, too.

KID

Look, Mom.

PAULINE MAHONEY

I see it, Richard. We have to tell the police.

As she passes the van, the boys are lifting Nick Markowitz and taking him to the van. Pauline Mahoney takes note of the license plate.

PAULINE MAHONEY

4-J15-784. Let's all say it together so we don't forget. 4-J15-784.

The kids repeat the number over and over as the Volvo pulls away.

INT. WHITE VAN - DAY

Skidmore and Jesse throw Nick inside. Nick's in the back with Skidmore, but Rugge's so excited, he takes off before Jesse can get in.

NICK

Hey. You left him.

Rugge looks in the mirror, sees Jesse screaming. He stops the van, backs up, and lets Hollywood in.

JESSE

Fucking idiot.

EXT. INGOMAR STREET - DAY

4-J15-784 takes off and speeds away.

INTERVIEW # 6

Two young women sit in straight backed chairs. One of them is the young mother with the Volvo.

SUPERIMPOSE - PAULINE MAHONEY and ROSIE GITAU - WITNESS #2

ROSIE GITAU

I also called 911. I was driving by, saw what happened, and got out my cell phone right there.

PAULINE MAHONEY

But two different operators filed our complaints as assaults instead of kidnappings, so nothing ever was done. I mean, kids have fights all the time, right?

ROSIE GITAU

The dispatchers both were suspended, but so what, you know? They had the license plate. If they had done their jobs, it all would have ended right there.

INT. WHITE VAN - DAY

The van zips through the San Fernando streets, heading for the outskirts of town.

NICK

What's going on?

JESSE

Where's your piece of shit brother?

NICK

I don't know.

JESSE

Don't lie to me, you little fucking faggot.

NICK

I don't. He doesn't live at home. Who knows where he goes? I don't even fucking like him.

JESSE

Yeah, yeah. We'll see. He's going to kill me? He's going to threaten my family? I don't fucking think so.

Jesse's on tilt. He's so mad, he's talking to himself. Skidmore and Rugge shoot looks at one another.

SKIDMORE

What are we doing, Jay?

JESSE

Shut up.

The van moves through the foothills of the Simi Valley mountains. Nick looks at Skidmore.

NICK

I know you. Will, right? I used to come watch you guys play baseball. You know my sister Karen Brown.

RUGGE
Karen Brown's your sister?

NICK
Half.

SKIDMORE
Oh, yeah, right. You used to have that
little flat-top. What's up?

Nick shrugs.

JESSE
What is this, old fucking home week?
Listen, Jewboy. Your brother owes me a
grip of money. You're staying with us
until I get fucking paid.

NICK
Okay.

JESSE
You try to run, I'll break your teeth,
understand?

NICK
I won't.

The van stops in front of a long driveway. Waiting at the bottom
is Affronti, wearing loud Hawaiian shorts. He climbs in the
sliding door.

AFFRONTI
Fiesta!

The van takes off, but the atmosphere is icy. Affronti looks at
Skidmore.

SKIDMORE
This is Markowitz's brother.

AFFRONTI
I don't get it. What are we doing?

JESSE
We're shutting the fuck up, that's what
we're fucking doing.

No one says shit, and the van gets on the freeway.

AFFRONTI
Great.

Nick breaks the silence.

NICK
Can we smoke a bowl?

JESSE
No.

NICK
I have some weed.

Nick unzips his fanny pack. Inside are seven small mini-bags of pot and thirty valiums. Nick hands one of the bags to Skidmore.

SKIDMORE
Not bad. You dealing?

NICK
A little. Just to make my head.

JESSE
Let me see that. Give me that shit.
Hollywood takes one of the dime bags and inspects it.

JESSE
This better not be my fucking weed.

SKIDMORE
It's not. This shit's good. The Koosh?

NICK
No, but it's nice.

Nick hands him a pipe and Skidmore fires it up and passes it around. A beeping noise goes off. It's coming from Nick's bag. Jessie freaks.

JESSE
What is that? What the fuck?!!

NICK
It's my pager.

JESSE
Get that. Take all his shit.
Everything. And check his fucking pockets.

Skidmore takes everything from Nick and hands it to Hollywood. There's the weed, pills, an address book, a wallet, and a pager that keeps beeping. Jesse checks the number.

JESSE
Is that your brother?

NICK
No, it's my mom. You want me to call her?

JESSE
Fuck no.

Jesse turns off the pager, but it immediately beeps again.

JESSE
Motherfucker!

He rips a page out of the address book, the one containing Ben's cell number, rolls down the window, and throws everything else out - pager, address book, wallet.

JESSE
What's that?

NICK
What?

JESSE
That on your hand. Your ring. Give it to me.

NICK
Come on.

JESSE
Give it.

NICK
No.

Jesse climbs into the back and pushes Nick down. He grabs Nick's arm and wrestles the ring off his finger. It doesn't come easy. Jesse pushes Nick off of him and climbs back in the front.

JESSE
Fucking punk-assed bitch.

NICK
Come on, Jesse. You don't need that. It's shit. My grandfather gave me that ring. He gave it to my dad, and my dad gave it to me for my Bar Mitzvah.

JESSE
Fuck you. Fucking Jew.

He sets the ring on the dashboard. Rugge spies it.

RUGGE
Come on, Jesse. Give him the fucking ring. What's he going to do with it?

Jesse picks up the ring, throws it in the back hard. It clinks around on the metal floor before Nick gets it.

JESSE
All of you motherfuckers are some bitches. Every one of you.

EXT. PAY PHONE - LATE AFTERNOON

Jesse and Rugge are by the side of the road, the white van behind them.

SUPERIMPOSE: SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

RUGGE

We can't go to my place, I'm telling you.
My dad's there.

JESSE

I thought you said he was cool.

RUGGE

Yeah, well, you didn't tell me we'd be
bringing along a fucking hostage!

JESSE

He's not a hostage. I told you, I don't
know what I'm doing. I'm thinking.

Rugge paces back and forth, the cars zipping along on the highway next to them.

JESSE

Well, we gotta go someplace.

Rugge stops. He's got an idea.

RUGGE

I know someone we can call. But we got
to be cool.

EXT. RICKY HOEFLINGER'S APRTMENT - EVENING

The door opens to reveal HOEFLINGER, a twenty year old surfing guy with tight blond curly hair. He gives Rugge a hug and throws open the door.

HOEFFLINGER

Lot of dudes, Jesse.

RUGGE

I know.

INT. HOEFFLINGER'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Rugge, Hollywood, Affronti, Skidmore, and Nick Markowitz enter. Sitting in the living room are two girls and another young man.

SUPERIMPOSE: RICKY HOEFFLINGER, GABE IBARRA, SHANNA VAZQUEZ,
JAMIE DICKENSTREET - #'S 3, 4, 5, AND 6.

RUGGE
This is Hollywood. The guy I was telling
you about.

HOEFFFLINGER
Oh, yeah. Hey.

JESSE
Do you have a room we can use?

HOEFFFLINGER
A room?

JESSE
Yeah.

HOEFFFLINGER
There's a bedroom all the way back to the
right.

JESSE
Thanks.

Hollywood, Skidmore, and Affronti parade Nick through the living
room into the back. Hoefflinger and his friends look at each
other. Rugge tries to make small talk.

RUGGE
So, what's up?

HOEFFFLINGER
Not much. Just headed out to Fiesta.

RUGGE
Right. So, how you been?

Some banging sounds are coming from the back.

HOEFFFLINGER
What's going on, Jesse?

RUGGE
Nothing. They probably just wanted to
talk. You want me to go back there?

HOEFFFLINGER
Yeah. There's four guys I never met in
my bedroom. What the fuck?

RUGGE
I got it. I got it. Be cool.

Rugge moves to the back bedroom, opening the door to reveal Nick
Markowitz sitting on the bed, his hands and feet being bound with
duct tape.

RUGGE

What the fuck are you guys doing? Are you nuts? You can't do that.

JESSE

Shut up.

Hollywood slams the door shut just as a young man walks out of a pink-colored bathroom, a towel wrapped around his waist. But the young man has seen what's going on.

SUPERIMPOSE EMILIO JELEZ - WITNESS #7

JELEZ

What's all this? Who are you?

RUGGE

Uh...

JELEZ

Ricky!

Hoefflinger moves down the hall, sees his bedroom door shut.

JELEZ

They've got some kid tied up in your bedroom.

HOEFFLINGER

What?!

RUGGE

Look, Jesse's a little crazy right now. We stole this kid. I don't know. I don't know.

Hollywood has come out of the bedroom. He's got a gun stuck in his waistband.

JESSE

I thought I told you to shut your mouth. And you, mind your fucking business.

HOEFFLINGER

Mind my business? It's my fucking house!

JESSE

Jesse, you better put your boy in check. Tell him what fucking time it is.

Jelez nudges Hoefflinger, indicates Hollywood's weapon.

HOEFFLINGER

Fuck this. I'm out of here. C'mon, Meel. Jesse, I'm going to Fiesta. I don't want to fucking see anybody here when I get back.

RUGGE
No problem. You won't.

JESSE
One thing. Everybody's blind, right?
Nobody saw shit. Everybody keeps their
fucking mouths shut, this all goes away.
If not, you motherfuckers will be seeing
me again.

Hoeffflinger and Jelez move to the other room, gather the girls,
and start to head out. Rugge follows.

RUGGE
I'm sorry about all this, Rick.

HOEFFFLINGER
This is bullshit.

And they're gone.

INTERVIEW # 7

The young man behind the wooden rail now wears a suit and tie.
He speaks into the microphone.

SUPERIMPOSE: WILLIAM SKIDMORE

SKIDMORE
At this point, things were pretty
dubious. We started out going to Santa
Barbara to party, you know, shake it
loose a little, but now we had this kid.
Jesse was acting like an assholeGG,
ordering everyone around, screaming. It
was stupid. And when Jesse pulled the
stunt with the duct tape, I mean, fuck,
right? Throw a guy out of his own house?
Real smart. Right then, Brian and I knew
we had to duck out. It was getting
ridiculous, and Jesse was out of control.
He was retarded. I mean, he still
thought we were going to Fiesta.

INT. HOEFFFLINGER'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jesse's taking a shower, getting ready for a big night. He
finishes, puts on his clothes, checks his hair, and sprays on
cologne.

INT. HOEFFFLINGER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Skidmore and Rugge are playing a video game. Affronti paces.
Nick sits on the couch, his hands and feet still bound. When
Hollywood enters, he stops short.

JESSE

What's going on? Why aren't you guys ready?

AFFRONTI

What are we going to do with him?

JESSE

Throw him in the fucking closet. Pick him up later. Leave him in the van. What?

SKIDMORE

Jesse, I forgot. I got a date back in the Valley. I need to get back.

AFFRONTI

Me, too.

Jesse considers. He knows it's a mutiny.

JESSE

You just remembered now, huh?

AFFRONTI

That's right.

JESSE

You pussies want to go home? Fine. Take the fucking van.

NICK

You don't have to, you know? Put me in the closet. I won't run.

JESSE

Yeah, yeah. Do me a favor. Shut up before I shut you up.

SKIDMORE

Jesse...

JESSE

Save it, you're pathetic. I don't want to hear your fucking voice right now. Just drop me off on State. I'm going to fucking Fiesta. I'm not letting this little motherfucker ruin my weekend.

RUGGE

What about me?

JESSE

Change of plans, little Jay. You're staying with him.

RUGGE

What?

JESSE

I said all fucking queers are deaf, motherfucker. Read my fucking lips. He stays with you.

RUGGE

Why me?

JESSE

Because I fucking said so.

RUGGE

Don't fuck around, man. You know I can't take him to my dad's house like that.

JESSE

Then untie him, genius. You heard the kid. He ain't running. Are you?

NICK

No.

JESSE

There you go. You go home, tell Barron he's your new friend and he's spending the night. I'll swing by in the morning. Hopefully I will have spoken to Markowitz by then. He must be going crazy right about now.

EXT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - NIGHT

All the lights are on, and cars line the driveway.

INT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is full of activity. Family and friends are all there, trying to find out what happened to Nicky. Susan has Nick's palm pilot out and is calling all his friends. She is frantic, but trying to remain positive.

SUSAN

Hello, this is Susan Markowitz. Nick's mom. Is this Phil? Yes, I was wondering if you know where he is. No? Haven't seen him? Okay, if you hear from him, will you have him call me? It's an emergency. Thank you.

Susan's sister-in-law, MYRNA, moves to Susan to give her a report.

MYRNA

I spoke with the police again. They're still saying that they won't do anything for 48 hours. Asshole said kids run away all the time.

SUSAN

Did you tell them that he could be hurt somewhere? That he could have fallen? That he could be lying in a hole somewhere?

MYRNA

I told them. They said they'd keep an eye out.

Susan's sister, DENISE, moves over with a piece of paper.

DENISE

I mocked up a poster with Nicky's picture. See? It's got the address, phone, and police numbers. I'll have a thousand printed up by the first thing in the morning if he's still not home.

Susan looks at the poster and bursts into tears. It looks like the side of a milk carton.

Ben bursts through the front door and moves to his father.

BEN

What's going on?

JEFF MARKOWITZ

It's a madhouse. Your brother's scaring the shit out of all of us. And Susan is fucking hysterical, as usual.

BEN

Did you try his friends? Maybe he has a girl.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

Tried everything. Friends, cops, hospitals. Nothing. And we've been beeping him all day. Susan and Nick have a rule that if he doesn't return the page within ten minutes, it gets taken away, we cut off his balls, and he's grounded for life.

BEN

Well, maybe he lost it.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

Yeah.

BEN

You don't think he's out just fucking around? I mean, you can't keep the kid locked up in the house forever.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

I don't know, son. Maybe. We did have an argument this morning.

BEN

That's what it is, then, right?

JEFF MARKOWITZ

I hope so.

BEN

What do you think?

JEFF MARKOWITZ

I don't know. But we can't rule anything out. So I have to ask you a few questions, and I want you to tell me the absolute truth, okay?

BEN

Sure.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

Can you think of anybody that would want to hurt Nick?

BEN

No.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

You?

BEN

Me, what?

JEFF MARKOWITZ

You have a beef with anyone I should know about?

BEN

No.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

That person you owe money to?

Susan has moved over and has heard everything.

SUSAN

You owe somebody money? What are you saying? Oh, Jesus God.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

Stop it, Susan. Relax.

SUSAN

You relax.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

You're not helping.

SUSAN

I don't care! Our child is missing and you're worried about manners? Fuck you, Jeff.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

Fuck me? Alright.

Jeff Markowitz moves away. Susan turns to Ben.

SUSAN

How much? Tell me, Ben. Tell me how much it is, and I'll write them a check right now.

BEN

It's not like that, Susan.

Susan shakes Ben by the shoulders. She's wild now.

SUSAN

Then what is it like? Where is my baby? I want my baby!

BEN

Calm down! It's going to be alright. I'll find him. You hear me? I promise you I'll find him.

Ben spins and moves quickly to the front door.

JEFF MARKOWITZ

Where are you going?

BEN

Out.

EXT. WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD - PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT

A party is in progress. A hundred punk kids drinking, hanging out, and getting high in someone's parent's swanky house. Ben Markowitz moves through the party, cranked out of his head, looking for Hollywood. He asks everyone. He's fucked up and making a scene. Finally, he moves over to two people he recognizes, DE ROSA and KLEMASH. They're standing in a large group.

BEN

Johnny! Where's Jesse?

DE ROSA
I don't know, dog. Is he here?

BEN
That's what I'm asking you, dog.

He's right up in De Rosa's face, too close, before turning to Klemash.

BEN
What about you? Where's the fucking crew?

KLEMASH
Man, I ain't seen any of them motherfuckers.

Klemash turns away to resume his conversation, but Ben spins him around.

BEN
What the fuck was that?

KLEMASH
What?

BEN
You turn away from me? You give me your back?

KLEMASH
Get your fucking hands off me.

BEN
You can't even look at me, can you?. You must know something.

A black guy, YANCY, speaks up.

YANCY
Why you trippin', homey?

BEN
What? You got something you want to tell me? Then stay the fuck out of it, nigger-boy.

That does it. One of the other AFRICAN-AMERICAN GUYS steals on Ben, cracking him across the head. Bad move. Ben goes nuts, knocking out everybody around him. It's violent and brutal, and when it's finished, six guys are on the floor. Ben moves to the door, his chest heaving like an animal.

BEN
Anybody sees Jesse Hollywood, tell him Ben Markowitz is looking for him.

EXT. SANTA BARBARA - STATE STREET - NIGHT

Jesse Rugge and Nick Markowitz are walking to Rugge's house. They move down State street, the sights and sounds of Fiesta all around them. On the corner, there is a liquor store.

RUGGE
I'm going to get something. You want a beer?

NICK
Okay.

Rugge goes inside, leaving Nick alone. Nick looks around, and for a minute, he looks like he might leave. Just walk away and disappear. But then he sits down on the cement, his back resting against the front windows.

A few moments later, Jesse Rugge exits the liquor store carrying two 'fortys' wrapped in brown paper bags. He hands one to Nick, and they walk and drink. They turn a corner, and soon the Greyhound bus station is in front of them. Rugge stops. He pulls out a pack of cigs, offers one to Nick.

NICK
Don't smoke.

RUGGE
Go ahead, fuck it. It's good for you.

Nick takes a cigarette and Rugge lights it. Something's on his mind.

RUGGE
You know, I've been thinking. What if I told you that you could walk in there and catch a ride home? I turn my back and tell Hollywood you ran away in the middle of the night. What do you think?

NICK
I don't know, Jesse. I'm okay. I don't want to cause any problems for my brother. I think I'll just ride it out, see what happens.

RUGGE
Alright.

They start walking again, illuminated only by the light of the street lamps, and finally disappearing into the night.

MONTAGE

The screen splits into a triptych, three narrow images running simultaneously. The images are:

Ben Markowitz, moving around and looking in the windows of Jesse Hollywood's house. Nobody's home.

Susan Markowitz, house empty, lying on the couch, staring out the front window, waiting for Nick to come home. Jeff asks her to come to bed, but she waves him off.

Nick Markowitz and Rugge entering Rugge's home, where Nick is introduced to Rugge's father, BARRON, and his girlfriend, MELISSA, witnesses #8 and #9. Caught in a compromising position, Baron asks if the boys want to smoke some weed, but the boys decline and go upstairs to Rugge's room. Rugge throws a sleeping bag on the carpet and offers Nick his bed, but Nick takes the floor, and the boys crawl in. In the dark, Nick blinks a few times, thinking, as we move in tight on his face.

Ben Markowitz sits in his Irog, watching Hollywood's house from across the street. His eyes are huge, but his face reveals nothing. He reaches into the glove, pulls out a revolver, checks the cylinder, and waits.

Susan Markowitz lies alone in the darkness, still looking out the front window. She's exhausted. Her eyes close, then open, then finally close again. And she is asleep.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. RUGGE HOUSE - SANTA BARBARA - DAY

The early morning sun illuminates the Pacific, looming large behind the quiet, residential street.

SUPERIMPOSE - AUGUST 7, 2000 - DAY 2

INT. RUGGE HOUSE - DAY

Rugge and Nick are still asleep when Barron enters the room. He's on his way to work, his mood in sharp contrast to the magnanimous demeanor he showed last night.

BARRON

Wake up. Come on, you've got chores to do. Let's go.

Rugge blinks.

BARRON

It's Monday, I don't need you sleeping 'till noon. Hello?

RUGGE

I hear you. Jesus.

BARRON

There's coffee, but Melissa woke up late so I need you to straighten up the house.

RUGGE
I'm supposed to clean up after your party?

BARRON
I'm hungover like a bitch. Don't argue with me. I'm in no mood. You hear me?

RUGGE
Alright, fuck. Get out of my room.

BARRON
Yesterday I come home and your shit was all over the place. Besides, we had a deal, remember? You get a job and pay rent, or you work here.

Barron slams the door behind him. Nick sits up, looks at Rugge.

RUGGE
Fucking dick.

NICK
Don't worry about the work. I'll help you.

EXT. RUGGE HOUSE - BACKYARD/TOOL SHED -DAY

Rugge shows Nick around the property. There's a pool and a huge manicured garden. It's impressive. They move to a tool shed and grab fertilizer and a couple of red-handled shovels.

RUGGE
Barron's a botanist. Grows everything we eat right here - tomatoes, cucumbers, spices and shit. All organic. Motherfucker's a stone cold alcoholic and smokes like a chimney, but fuck if we don't eat healthy.

Nick smiles.

RUGGE
And check it out.

Rugge leads him over to about a hundred marijuana plants growing under a dark green net. Nick can't believe his eyes.

RUGGE
Daddy's pride and joy. He'll smoke them all, but it's my job to take care of them. Water them, pull the males, throw a little eggshells on them once in a while. They don't look like much now, but come November, they'll be sticky as shit.

NICK

Whoa.

RUGGE

Yep. Well, fuck it. Let's get to work.

EXT. RUGGE HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

Rugge and Nick are in the garden, up to their elbows in dirt and fertilizer, when the phone rings. Rugge moves into the house to answer it.

RUGGE

Hello? Hey, girl. Nothing, working.
You guys coming over? Yeah. You know I
do. Well, come on, bring my girl, and
we'll all get blown out, "doggito-style".

INT. ADAMS HOUSE - SANTA BARBARA - DAY

NATASHA ADAMS hangs up the phone. She moves into the kitchen, where her mother, ALLISON, is talking to GRAHAM PRESSLEY.

NATASHA

Mom, we're going to Jesse's.

PRESSLEY

Did you talk to him?

NATASHA

Yeah, it's all good.

ALLISON

When will you be home?

NATASHA

Don't know. Late, probably.

ALLISON

Say, do you think you can stay at Kelly
or Julie's? It's your father and my
anniversary tonight.

PRESSLEY

What, are you guys going to like have sex
or something?

NATASHA

Shut up, that's disgusting.

PRESSLEY

No, I'm interested. You going to go down
on him? You going to do a little
tubesteak boogie?

NATASHA

Ew.

PRESSLEY

Come on, be a sport. Go down on him. Live a little. You guys have been married for what, like five hundred years?

ALLISON

Graham Pressley, I will smack the shit out of you, you little skunk.

NATASHA

Alright, Mom, alright. We're leaving. Grab your keys, Graham. We've got to pick up Kelly and Julie.

EXT. RUGGE HOUSE - GARDEN - AFTERNOON

Nick Markowitz is digging up weeds from the hillside. He looks up to see Natasha Adams, Graham Pressley, KELLY CARPENTER, and JULIE BECKLEY being greeted by Jesse Rugge. After a moment, Rugge waves him over and introduces everybody.

PRESSLEY

Okay? Okay. Let's smoke some weed.

RUGGE

Alright, but nobody mess up shit. This house has never been so fucking clean.

INT. RUGGE HOUSE - DEN - AFTERNOON

A tall glass bong is being passed around. Pressley and Rugge are playing "Duke Nuke'em". Nick and the three girls are sitting on the playpen couch talking about music and skating.

PRESSLEY

Fuck that shit. The greatest skater of all time, ain't none of you ever heard of. Gator the skater. From OC, baby. Killed his girl and buried her in a surfboard bag.

Nick watches as Julie takes the bong. She's got red-blond hair that keeps falling in her face.

NICK

Anybody want a Valium?

He shakes the blue pills on the table and the girls grab them.

KELLY

How many do you take?

NICK
I take three, but I'm addicted.

Pressley wins, turns around, slugs down a beer.

PRESSLEY
Anybody high as me?

NATASHA
I am.

PRESSLEY
Five minutes and I'm already fucking ruined. This shit's creepy as a motherfucker. Why don't you let me hold some, Jay?

RUGGE
Rematch, motherfucker.

Julie finishes the bong, coughs, catches Nick looking at her.

JULIE
How old are you?

NICK
How old do I look?

NATASHA
Like, twelve.

NICK
Seventeen. But I do look young.

The phone rings and Rugge jumps up to answer it. As soon as he picks up, his demeanor changes.

RUGGE
Hello. What's up, Jesse? You talk to anybody? Why? I can't keep this kid here forever, you know? I am relaxed, I'm just saying I can't do this much longer. Nothing, just have some people over. Nobody, just some people. Chill out, dog, everything's cool. Alright, calm down, I'll clear it out.

Rugge hangs up and calls Pressley into his room.

INT. RUGGE HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

As Graham enters, Rugge flips him a bag of weed.

RUGGE
I need you to do me a favor, bro.
Jesse's coming over and I need the house.

PRESSLEY

Alright.

RUGGE

I need you to watch the kid for me.

PRESSLEY

Watch him?

RUGGE

Keep your eye on him. No phones, no leaving him alone.

PRESSLEY

No phones? I don't get it.

Rugge leans in, his voice low.

RUGGE

If I tell you something, can you keep your fucking mouth shut?

PRESSLEY

Yeah. Of course.

RUGGE

The kid's brother owes Hollywood money and Jesse's holding him as a marker until he gets paid.

Pressley lets it sink in.

PRESSLEY

That's fucked up.

RUGGE

Nah, it's not like that. Everything's cool. He's knows what's happening and he's good with it. No big drama.

Rugge indicates Nick and the girls laughing in the other room

RUGGE

Look at him. He ain't going nowhere. Just take him someplace, hang out, and bring him back in a couple of hours. Do you think you can do that for me?

PRESSLEY

I don't know, man. Sounds pretty fucking shady.

RUGGE

Dude. If I tell you something's okay, then that's what it is. Now are you going to be a big boy and take care of this for me, or not?

INT. RUGGE HOUSE - DEN - AFTERNOON

The girls turn around as Graham enters.

PRESSLEY
Alright. The party's moving.

INTERVIEW # 8

The young woman's hair is longer, but her eyes are unmistakable.

SUPERIMPOSE: NATASHA ADAMS

NATASHA
So Graham hustles us all out and over to my house, which was cool because nobody was home. But Jesse was acting so weird, I finally confronted Graham about what was going on. And that's when he told me about Nick.

* INTERVIEWER
That he was snatched?

NATASHA
Yeah, and the Hollywood of it all. I mean, here was this kidnapped kid in my house, and Graham was telling me, "Don't worry, it's cool, it's cool".

INT. ADAMS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

PRESSLEY
Tash, I swear to God, it's cool. Trust me.

Pressley and Natasha are in the hall. Graham grabs her arm as she tries to join the others.

NATASHA
Fuck you. Let go of me.

PRESSLEY
Will you fucking calm down? You're not supposed to know any of this.

NATASHA
Bullshit.

PRESSLEY
Jesus, don't say anything. You're going to get me in a lot of trouble.

She walks into the kitchen and straight to Nick. Everybody looks up as she walks in.

NATASHA
From who, Graham? Your little gangster
friends from L.A.? Ooh, I'm real scared.

PRESSLEY
You should be.

NATASHA
You're a little fucking faggot, you know
that?

KELLY
What's going on, T?

NATASHA
This guy's been fucking kidnapped.

PRESSLEY
No, he hasn't.

KELLY
You mean like, abducted kidnapped?

NATASHA
Fucking stolen. Ask him.

Everybody looks at Nick.

NICK
Yeah. They took me, but it's okay.

KELLY
They took you? Why?

NATASHA
His scumbag brother owes Jesse Hollywood
money.

KELLY
Whoa. So you're like a ransom or
something?

NICK
Yeah.

JULIE
Stolen boy.

Nick smiles.

KELLY
Wow. You don't look kidnapped.

NICK
I know. It's weird.

NATASHA

Hey. I want you to know that you can do anything you want. I don't play that shit. You want to leave, go ahead. You want to make a call, do it.

PRESSLEY

Shut up, Natasha, you fucking bitch. Jesus.

NATASHA

I'm a bitch? You're the little bitch.

NICK

Hey, you guys. No sweat, really. I really didn't have anything to do today, anyway. You know? My brother will pay the money.

JULIE

So, in the meantime, you're, like, on vacation?

NICK

Yeah. Sort of. Why not? Just another story to tell my grandkids.

KELLY

Cool.

NATASHA

Cool? What are you fucking talking about? This shirt is cool. Bob Marley is cool. You think kidnapping is cool?

KELLY

Yeah, it's exciting. I mean, how romantic. Doing that for your brother? I think it's fucking awesome.

NATASHA

Are you insane? This isn't a music video. This is real life!

NICK

Natasha...

NATASHA

This is wrong. Doesn't anyone think this is wrong?!

JULIE

Take a fucking Valium, Tash. It's not even any of your business.

NATASHA

It's my fucking house!

PRESSLEY

Can we all chill the fuck out? I'm going to roll the biggest fucking joint anyone has ever seen. Are you down with that, Nick?

Nick smiles.

EXT. RUGGE HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

A Mercedes pulls into the drive. Jesse Hollywood and Michelle Lasher are greeted by Jesse Rugge and led inside.

INT. RUGGE HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Rugge leads them into the den. Hollywood's holding a duffel.

JESSE

Sit down, Suze. Got to talk some business.

RUGGE

You want a drink?

MICHELLE

A piña Colada.

JESSE

It's not a bar, baby. There's no fucking piña Coladas.

MICHELLE

Not even those little cans?

RUGGE

No. But I got some wine. I can make you a spritzer.

MICHELLE

Okay.

INT. RUGGE HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

When Rugge walks in, there are airplane pillows on the table.

JESSE

For Barron. And for you.

Rugge inspects the bags with approval. Hollywood kicks his feet up.

JESSE

Where's the kid?

RUGGE
He's safe. Got my boy sitting on him.

JESSE
Who? You know what, never mind. I don't even want to know.

Hollywood's mood is calm, even. Different than we've seen him before. He fires a jay and hands it to Rugge.

RUGGE
So, what's up?

JESSE
I don't know what to do.

RUGGE
What do you mean?

JESSE
About the kid. It's tough. We could be in a lot of trouble.

RUGGE
We?

JESSE
Fucking skippy.

RUGGE
Me?

JESSE
You, me, everybody. Big-assed, serious-as-shit trouble. You can't just take a kid and have nobody notice.

RUGGE
That's what I told you. Didn't I say that? Fuck.

JESSE
You did. I was a giant fucking asshole, alright? Who knows what the fuck I was thinking? But still, we are where we are. Right now, you know? It's a big problem and we've got to fix it.

RUGGE
So, what do we do?

JESSE
I don't know. My head's up my ass. I've been up all night thinking about it, and I haven't so much as fucking blinked. Fuck. There's an answer here, a solution, but I'm not seeing it. I keep going in circles. I don't know, maybe we're fucked.

RUGGE

We're not fucked. What do you mean, fucked?

JESSE

Jail fucked, motherfucker. If we let the kid go, he runs back to Mommy and Daddy and rats us out.

RUGGE

Maybe he won't.

JESSE

Fucking tears and hysteria. Not to mention Tattooeey. Who knows what that crazy motherfucker is going to do? We'll all be looking over our fucking shoulders.

RUGGE

I don't think the kid will spill. I really don't.

JESSE

Yeah, but what if he does?

The boys consider.

RUGGE

Fuck that shit.

JESSE

You see what I'm saying?

RUGGE

I can't do no prison. I mean, come on. No fucking way. I just won't.

JESSE

Me neither, bitch. What the fuck do you think I'm talking about?

RUGGE

Fuck. I'm not kidding, Jay. I mean, this is fucking bad.

JESSE

The best way would be to get a hold of Tattooeey. Straighten him and all this shit out once and for all.

RUGGE

Where is that motherfucker?

JESSE

Who the fuck knows? Laying low, looking to shoot me in the fucking head. He's holding all the cards. I mean, think about it. That's what I'd be doing.

RUGGE
Stop already. Alright? You know how I
get with anxiety. My heart's beating
like a fucking machine gun.

Hollywood's head leans back. He's exhausted.

JESSE
Jesse? Jay?

RUGGE
Yeah? I swear to God, I'm
hyperventilating.

JESSE
I want to ask you something.

RUGGE
What? Fuck.

JESSE
Hypothetically, alright? This isn't
real. We're just talking, right? But
what would you say if I were to offer you
twenty-five hundred dollars to kill the
kid?

RUGGE
Kill him?

JESSE
Wax him.

RUGGE
Are you kidding? I can't do that.

JESSE
I know. Of course.

RUGGE
That's a fucking joke, right? It's
unreal.

JESSE
Yeah, I don't know what I'm talking
about. This whole thing has got me so
fucking spun, I'm reaching for shit.
Like I said, I need sleep.

RUGGE
Well, stop fucking around. I mean, can't
we just grease the kid? Tell him he did
the right thing. Tell him he's our boy
and that he can hang out anytime. You
know, throw a fucking arm around him.

JESSE
Give him a few bucks...

RUGGE

Right. And tell him that when his parents ask, that he ran away with a girl or something.

JESSE

Maybe.

RUGGE

I mean, we'd have to get the story straight, but we could make it work. I know we could.

JESSE

You're probably right. Especially if the number's good.

RUGGE

You see what I'm saying? I'm right, right? We take care of the kid, and it's handled. That way we're not running around acting like a bunch of niggers.

JESSE

Yeah, it makes sense. Done. See? You're smarter than me.

INTERVIEW # 9

The young woman looks better without the baby fat and bleached hair.

SUPERIMPOSE: KELLY CARPENTER

KELLY

When we went back to Jesse's, Hollywood was there. Natasha was freaked out, but Rugge promised her that he would personally make sure Nick got home, and so everything was pretty cool. It should have been weird, but it was really fun. We were all hanging out and laughing. Real loose, all friendly. Jesse was blending up piña Coladas, and everybody was butt-assed drunk. And the kid was cool, you know. Everybody liked him.

INT. RUGGE HOUSE - NIGHT

The music is thumping and the atmosphere raucous. Michelle and Graham are dancing, as well as PAUL and ERIKA GALARTI, witnesses #10 and 11. Julie notices scrapes on Nick's hands and elbows and pulls him into the kitchen.

INT. RUGGE HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Julie runs water in the sink. When she puts Nick's hand under, it jerks a little.

JULIE

Hurt?

NICK

No.

She cleans his hands, then his elbows, and then steps into him, close.

NICK

I'm fifteen.

JULIE

I don't care.

The sound of a throat clearing is heard. Jesse Hollywood is at the door.

JESSE

Can I talk to you a minute?

Julie slips away. Hollywood watches her go.

NICK

What's up?

JESSE

Just wanted to say sorry about all of this shit. I haven't talked to your fuckhead brother, but I will. This whole fucking thing is really ridiculous.

NICK

Yeah.

JESSE

You okay? Got enough to eat? Everybody treating you alright? You need some dough?

NICK

No, I'm good. Really.

JESSE

Okay. I know this is a pain in the ass for you, but it'll all get squared away soon, I promise.

NICK

Cool.

JESSE

Alright, I gotta jet, but you know something? You're a pretty stand-up guy. Your brother's a dickhead - I mean, he's my boy and I love him, but he's acting a motherfucking fool right now.

NICK

I know.

Jesse starts to move out, but turns around.

JESSE

I got a little brother, JP. You know him?

Nick shakes his head, "no".

JESSE

Good kid. Younger, thirteen. But I'd be proud if he held up under pressure like you.

NICK

Thanks.

JESSE

Anyway, tomorrow. This will all be over by tomorrow.

EXT. ADAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

It's late. Kelly Carpenter's car drops off Natasha in front of her house and takes off.

INT. ADAMS HOUSE - NIGHT

Natasha enters through the back door, sets down her keys, the Nick situation still weighing on her mind. Noises are coming from upstairs. The anniversary. Oh, shit. Gross. Natasha paces - she needs to talk to someone. The noises die down, and Natasha moves up the stairs.

INT. ADAMS HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

Natasha knocks on her parents door. The door opens to reveal Allison, wrapped in a sheet.

NATASHA

Hi.

ALLISON

Did you see the meteor showers?

NATASHA
No, I, uh...

ALLISON
The grunion are running, it's a full moon.

NATASHA
Great.

In the bedroom, the father is making weird sounds - half singing, half moaning. Freaky.

NATASHA
What's wrong with Dad?

ALLISON
Your father is really out of it. You should see him. We're really into each other. What's up? I thought you were spending the night out?

NATASHA
I was. I just need to talk to someone.

ALLISON
Talk?

NATASHA
Talk.

ALLISON
Now?

NATASHA
Yeah.

ALLISON
One night. I asked for one night out of the whole fucking year to make love to your father and you won't even give that to me?

NATASHA
But...

ALLISON
I'm X-ing, alright?! I can't understand anything you're saying right now!

NATASHA
Okay. Okay, Mom.

ALLISON
Fuck.

And the door closes.

INT. ADAMS HOUSE - NATASHA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Natasha moves inside and sits on the bed. Thinking.

EXT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - DAY

The house is full. Two police cars in the driveway.

SUPERIMPOSE: DAY THREE - TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2000

Once again, the screen splits into a triptych. The images begin with an exterior shot of the Markowitz house, the living room, and a kitchen shot. The images change as necessary to support the MONTAGE as it BEGINS:

INT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Family and friends surround an emotional Susan and Jeff Markowitz as the police finally take an official missing person's report. Wanda enters from the kitchen and whispers in Ben's ear.

WANDA

You have a phone call.

INT. MARKOWITZ HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ben picks up the phone, away from everybody.

BEN

Hello? Hello?

Finally, a familiar voice on the other end.

JESSE

Yo. It's me. The "midget".

BEN

You got some set of balls calling me here.

JESSE

What's the matter? You don't answer a motherfucking page?

BEN

We got nothing to talk about.

JESSE

I think we do, don't you? Straighten all this shit out once and for all?

BEN

Ain't no straightening out, motherfucker. I know it was you.

JESSE
I don't know what you're...

BEN
I know, Jessie. I know. And you're dead.

JESSE
Don't threaten me.

BEN
No. Fuck that, it's a promise. You hear me, you fucking punk-assed coward?

Ben's screaming now, at the top of his lungs and out of control. Jesse couldn't understand him if he wanted to.

BEN
No matter what you do, no matter where you go, you understand? I'm going to fucking hunt you down, cut your fucking throat, eat your motherfucking heart, and put your bones in the Goddamn motherfucking cocksucking wood chipper. You better hope the cops find you before I do. You hear me, you fucking faggot?

Click. Dial tone.

EXT. PAY PHONE - DAY - (INTERCUT)

Jesse hangs up, fishes in his pocket for more coins, then dials

INT. STEVEN HOGG - ATTORNEY AT LAW'S OFFICE - DAY

Hogg is the quintessential drug dealer's lawyer. Ponytail, smart, slippery.

HOGG
Hey, Jesse. What can I do for you?

JESSE
Question for you. Let's say someone owes someone I know money and won't pay. And that someone I know has his boys snatch the deadbeat's kid brother until he pays?

HOGG
What do you mean, snatch?

JESSE
Take him.

HOGG
And hold him? Like a marker?

JESSE
Yeah. What kind of problems is he looking at?

HOGG
Big ones. He asks for ransom, he's looking at life.

The words hit Jesse like a ton of bricks.

JESSE
Life?

HOGG
Yes.

JESSE
So what does he do?

HOGG
I don't know. He probably digs a deep hole. Why? What's the matter? You in trouble?

JESSE
Yeah.

Dial tone.

HOGG
Oh, fuck.

Hogg dials another number.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL ROOM - BIG SUR, CALIFORNIA - DAY
Jack Hollywood picks up his cell.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Yeah?

HOGG
Get your ass home. We got a mess.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Is it that Chang thing?

HOGG
No, it's Jesse.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Jesse? What is it? He get pinched?

HOGG
Can't talk about it on the phone.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Alright. I'm in Big Sur. I'll be home
tonight.

HOGG
Sooner.

Click. Dead line. Jack's wife, LAURIE, is getting a massage.

LAURIE
What's wrong?

JACK HOLLYWOOD
I don't know.

Jack dials a number.

INT. JOHN ROBERTS HOUSE - WEST HILLS - DAY

Roberts is drinking vodka and reading the racing form when the
phone rings.

ROBERTS
This is John.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Something's going on with Jesse. Go to
Hogg, find out what it is, and fix it.
I'll be home tonight.

ROBERTS
Got it.

END MONTAGE

EXT. RUGGE HOUSE - SANTA BARBARA - DAY

Nick Markowitz is working in Barron's garden again.

NATASHA (V.O.)
What's he still doing here?

Graham and Natasha are talking to a sweaty Rugge, who's taking a
break.

RUGGE
It's all good. I told you it's taken
care of. But you got to chill out, Tash.
You keep running your mouth, Hollywood
could go to jail, and we could all wind
up dead.

NATASHA
Yeah, right.

RUGGE

You don't know. That motherfucker's crazy. Last night he offered me 2500 bucks to kill the kid.

Natasha's eyes fill up and she becomes emotional.

NATASHA

What?

RUGGE

Oh, Jesus with the tears. Fucking relax, already. Have a period or something. Of course I'm not going to do it. I told him. I'm just saying, that's how spun he is. He's full of big talk when he's confused. It's fucked up, but with Jesse, you got to work him a little. Calm him down. Hey, look at me. I've got it under control, alright? Worse comes to worse, I'll tell everyone to go fuck themselves, put 50\$ in the kid's pocket, and stick him on a bus.

More tears. Natasha has got some faucets.

NATASHA

You promise?

RUGGE

I swear.

Rugge's celly goes off. He looks at the caller ID and points at the phone.

RUGGE

Jesse.

(picks up)

Hey. What's the word? Great! What time? Oh, alright, I'm going to have to take him to a hotel or something, then. My dad's bitch girlfriend is up my ass with a broom. Alright, I'll call you when I get straight.

Rugge hangs up.

RUGGE

The kids's going home. Hollywood's coming to pick him up tonight.

Graham and Natasha react.

RUGGE

What'd I fucking tell you? In a few hours we'll go to the Lemon Tree, have a victory blow out, and kiss the kid goodbye. Alright?

(MORE)

RUGGE (cont'd)
Now will you motherfuckers leave me alone? I've got to finish this fucking work.

EXT./INT. BANKS - MONTAGE - DAY

Jesse closes out his accounts. One bank, two banks, three banks, four. At Washington Mutual, the manager comes back to his desk and counts out the money - 25,290\$.

BANK MANAGER
Well, good luck. It's a lot of money. .
Would you like security to walk you to your car?

Jesse just laughs.

INT. JACK HOGG'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Steve Hogg is making moves. He is giving directives to his SECRETARY while Roberts paces.

HOGG
Keep paging him here, to my cell, to Jack, and to Mr. Roberts.

ROBERTS
It's his girlfriend's birthday today. You might want to try her. Michelle. I don't know the last name. Lassiter, maybe.

HOGG
Ask Jack. If he doesn't have the number, try 411. What are you looking at? Go, go.

ROBERTS
I can't believe it. Jesse.

HOGG
Alright, stay with me. We find Jesse. Get the kid. Wait for Jack. And walk him into his parents house. That's the plan.

INT. BECKLEY HOUSE - SANTA BARBARA - EVENING

The house is nice. The Beckley's have money, and today they are entertaining. A bunch of rich drunk guests being served appetizers off silver trays.

INT. BECKLEY HOUSE - JULIE'S ROOM - EVENING

Julie's putting on mascara in front of a full length mirror. She looks nice. Her mother, AMANDA, moves into the doorway. She's had too many bubbles.

AMANDA

Julie, come on out and have a glass of champagne. It's rude not to say "hi".

JULIE

I'm going out.

She slips on a dress and zips up the back.

INT. BECKLEY HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Julie and Amanda move through the party. It's crowded. A very drunk man with dyed hair and an overly loud laugh stops them.

MAN

Julie! I haven't seen you in years!

JULIE

Hi, Mr. Pacheco.

MR. PACHECO

(looks straight at her chest)

Look at you. All grown. You're a woman now, aren't you?

JULIE

Why, thank you, Mr. Pacheco.

On the move, Julie winces and Amanda grabs more champagne.

AMANDA

Won't you stay for five minutes?

JULIE

No, why? So you can pimp me out to all Dad's friends?

AMANDA

Charming, darling. So, where are you going?

JULIE

The Lemon Tree.

AMANDA

A hotel?

JULIE
Yes. It's a going away party for a
friend of mine.

AMANDA
On a school night?

JULIE
Mom. What the fuck do you care? You
have your party. Leave me the fuck
alone.

Julie's loud voice has gotten the party's attention. Amanda's on
the spot now.

AMANDA
No.

JULIE
No, what?

AMANDA
Give me the keys. That's my car, you're
my daughter, and I say you're not going.
Give me the keys.

She holds out her hand. Julie's face is red, but drops the keys.

JULIE
Okay, Mom.

Amanda's face is officially saved. The party can resume. Julie
walks straight into the kitchen, gets the spare set, and walks
out.

EXT. BECKLEY HOUSE - EVENING

As Julie starts the car, Amanda comes running outside, in plain
view of the entire party. She screams at Julie to stop, tries
the door, but it's locked. Julie flips her the bird as her
mother bangs on the window.

AMANDA
What are you, a whore?!

JULIE
Fuck you, Mom.

As Julie squeals out of the driveway, her mother screams after
her.

AMANDA
Nice girls don't go to hotel rooms with
boys!!

EXT. SHEEHAN HOUSE - WEST HILLS - NIGHT

Casey opens the door to find Jesse Hollywood and Ryan Hoyt.

SHEEHAN
What's up, buddies?

JESSE
Need to borrow your car.

SHEEHAN
Moving?

JESSE
Yeah, moving.

EXT. LEMON TREE INN - NIGHT

Graham's mother drops off Natasha, Kelly, Graham, and Nick.

SUPERIMPOSE: CHRISTINA PRESSLEY - WITNESS #12

INT. LEMON TREE INN - ROOM 341 - NIGHT

A party is in full gear. A dozen kids(#s 13-24) including NATHAN APPLETON, crowd the small hotel room and balcony, lounging on the two queen beds and patio, drinking beer and smoking wizeed. Nathan is passing a joint over the partition to A BLACK GUY(#25), on the next balcony over.

Nick enters and slaps hands with Rugge, who is having a heated discussion on his cell phone. He grabs a beer, follows Rugge into the bathroom. Kelly, Tash, and Julie slip in before the door is locked. Rugge's still yelling into his phone as Nick fires one up, and they hot box it. Finally, Rugge hangs up.

RUGGE
Fucking Ziggy.

NICK
That guy giving you a problem?

RUGGE
Yeah, why?

NICK
Let's go kick his ass.

RUGGE
Oh, all of a sudden, you're a tough guy?

NICK
I can fight. I'm a black belt in Tae Kwan Do.

RUGGE

Your ass.

NICK

I am.

A drunken Rugge suddenly grabs Nick around the neck, and the boys bounce around the bathroom. Nick pushes out of the headlock, and footsweeps Rugge, dropping him unceremoniously in the bathtub.

RUGGE

No, bitch. Hell, no.

KELLY

Quit fucking around. I spilled my
Goddamn drink all over myself.

NATASHA

You guys are fucking dorks.

Rugge gets up, swings at Nick, who blocks easily, and knocks Rugge to the floor again.

RUGGE

I'll be a motherfucker.

Graham knocks on the door.

GRAHAM (V.O.)

Can I come in?

RUGGE

No. We're fighting. No place for women.

NICK

Or queers!

RUGGE

That's right. Or queers!

GRAHAM (V.O.)

Come on. Open up. Fucking assholes.

The door opens, and Nathan sticks his head in, as well.

NATHAN

We're out of booze, Jay.

RUGGE

Already? Jesus, tell your little
freeloading friends to slow down,
alright? I'm not made of money, you
know.

Rugge gets up, moves out.

RUGGE
I'm going to the store. Keep everything
under control, G.

Rugge leaves and more randoms enter. Julie pulls on Nick's arm.

JULIE
Hey, stolen boy. You want to swim?

NICK
I don't have a bathing suit.

KELLY
So?

EXT. T.G.I.FRIDAYS - WEST HILLS - NIGHT

Ryan Hoyt, Hollywood, Casey Sheehan and Michelle Lasher stand in the parking lot. Hoyt throws a bag in Casey's car.

MICHELLE
I wish you didn't have to work.

Ryan gives her a kiss before getting in the car.

HOYT
Happy birthday, Shelly. Eat a piece of
cake for me.

JESSE
Call me. Let me know how everything's
going.

HOYT
I'll just talk to you tomorrow.

And Ryan takes off.

INT. LEMON TREE INN - ROOM 341 - NIGHT

Natasha Adams is on the phone. She strains to hear with the music so loud.

NATASHA
No, it's okay, Mom. It all worked out.
I'm glad you had a nice anniversary. I'm
fine, Graham's here. Yeah, Kelly and
Julie are around somewhere.

EXT. LEMON TREE INN - POOL - NIGHT

The swimming area is closed. Nick, Julie and Kelly have to hop the fence. It's dark, the only illumination from the pool light Nick watches as the girls start to peel off their clothes.

JULIE

Are you coming? Let's go.

As Nick takes off his clothes, we see just how young, how tentative he is. A first timer. Kelly dives in first, then Julie, the light dancing off the moving water.

KELLY

Get in.

Nick does a flip, and when he comes up for air, the girls are around him. But Nick is nervous, and soon the moment becomes awkward. Julie swims to the side, grabs a scarf out of her bag.

JULIE

Come here.

NICK

Why?

JULIE

I'm not going to bite you, Nicky.

Nick moves over to Julie. Nick's trembling, their bodies are so close.

JULIE

Now, turn around.

Nick does, and Julie ties the scarf around his head.

NICK

I can't see.

JULIE

Good.

NICK

I don't understand. What are we doing?

JULIE

If you catch us, you can have us. But you have to count to ten.

She gives him a quick kiss and swims away.

JULIE

Ready? Go!

Nick thrashes around, trying to catch them. They tease and taunt him, saying, "Marco" and "Polo". After a while, Nicky catches someone. He pulls off his mask to see who it is. Julie. He presses her up against the side of the pool and kisses her. Kelly swims up behind him and joins the embrace, kissing the back of his neck, his face, and finally, his mouth.

INT. T.G.I. FRIDAYS - WEST HILLS - NIGHT

Casey and Jesse sing, "Happy Birthday" to Michelle with the T.G.I. Friday's staff. It's off key, but the birthday girl is drunk, happy, and has new presents. She blows out the candles and makes a wish.

MICHELLE

Do you know what I wished for?

JESSE

No, what?

MICHELLE

I can't tell you. It's a secret.

SHEEHAN

That's right. Not supposed to tell.

Jesse's distracted. He gets up, gives Michelle a kiss.

JESSE

Right. Will you excuse me for a second?
I gotta make a phone call.

INT. LEMON TREE INN - ROOM 341 - NIGHT

Jesse Rugge gets the call.

RUGGE

Hello? Hey, Jesse. Yeah, we're here.
Great, how long? Okay. Yep. You got it.

He hangs up, goes to the stereo, and turns off the music.

RUGGE

Alright, that's it. Party's over.
Everyone has to leave. Nicky's going home.

EXT. LEMON TREE INN - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

It's clearing out. Everybody saying their good-byes.

NATASHA

Have fun. I'm glad you're going home.

Kelly kisses him on the cheek.

KELLY

See ya.

Julie moves over, her hair falling in her face.

JULIE

You okay?

Nick nods.

JULIE

Weird evening.

NICK

Yeah.

JULIE

But I had a good time.

An uncomfortable laugh between the two.

JULIE

Look, I like you.

NICK

I like you, too.

She slips Nick a piece of paper with her phone number.

JULIE

Will you call me?

NICK

Yeah. Yeah, definitely.

She hops in her car and closes the door.

RUGGE

Graham, you want to kick it?

PRESSLEY

I was going to catch a ride. Aw, fuck it. Alright, I'll see you ladies later.

Nick watches the Range Rover drive away, it's tail lights disappearing into the night.

EXT. LASHER HOUSE - CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

DOUGLASS LASHER opens the door to find Jack Hollywood and John Roberts.

DOUGLASS LASHER

Jack.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

I'm looking for my boy. Is he here?

DOUGLASS LASHER

No, they went out for Michelle's birthday.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Something important's come up. Do you
mind if we wait?

INT. LEMON TREE INN - ROOM 341 - NIGHT

Nick is asleep and Pressley is watching television when Ryan Hoyt arrives. Rugge opens the door.

RUGGE
Ryan, what are you doing here? Where's
Jesse?

HOYT
Change of plans, boychick. Where's the
kid?

Rugge indicates the other room. When Hoyt looks, he cannot see the sleeping Markowitz, only Pressley, who raises his hand in a wave.

PRESSLEY
What's up?

Hoyt's look freezes him.

RUGGE
What's going on here, Hoyt?

HOYT
Outside.

EXT. LEMON TREE INN - BALCONY - NIGHT

When Rugge walks outside, Hoyt is right on top of him.

RUGGE
What's the deal, Hoytie? Are you driving
the kid home, or what?

HOYT
What.

RUGGE
What?

HOYT
That's right.

Rugge tries to clear some room for himself, but Hoyt is right in his face with a wild-assed look in his eyes.

RUGGE
What the fuck are you talking about?

Hoyt smiles. He lifts up his shirt, revealing the butt end of a gun.

HOYT
The kid ain't going home.

RUGGE
But I thought...

HOYT
You thought wrong.

RUGGE
Fuck that. Jesse didn't tell me shit.

HOYT
The decision has been made. If Jesse wanted your opinion, he would have asked you. But he probably knew you were too much of a pussy.

RUGGE
Fuck you.

HOYT
Fuck me?

Hoyt grabs Rugge's head and slams it repeatedly into the wall.

HOYT
Fuck me? Fuck me, Rugge? Jesse sent me up here to take care of something and I'm going to take care of it. With you or through you.

Ryan moves in super-close to make his point.

HOYT
Who's sucking who's cock now, Jesse?

RUGGE
Fuck that. I'm out.

HOYT
No, you're in, bitch. I'm up here to clean your mess, so you're going to fucking help me, or the whole world is going to come down on your head.

RUGGE
Alright, fucking let go of me. What do you want me to do?

EXT. RUGGE HOUSE - NIGHT

Sheehan's car stops in front of the house. Hoyt and Rugge move around to the tool shed, where Rugge grabs two red-handled shovels.

HOYT

We need some tape.

EXT. LEMON TREE INN - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The car pulls into the parking lot.

RUGGE (V.O.)

Fuck that. No fucking way.

Rugge and Hoyt get out of the car. There's people in front of the hotel. Rugge starts walking away.

RUGGE

I'm not digging. I did my shit. This is the line, motherfucker. Everybody's got one and mine is a fucking grave, alright? You want to kick my ass, go ahead. Shoot me right fucking here. I don't give a fuck.

Hoyt watches Rugge walk away. Nothing he can do. Too many people.

INT. LEMON TREE INN - ROOM 341 - NIGHT

Hoyt walks in, heads straight for the bathroom. Pressley approaches.

PRESSLEY

Excuse me?

The door is open a crack. Through it, Graham can see Hoyt wiping down the mechanism on a TEC-9. Ryan notices, and kicks the door closed. A few moments later, he exits with a bag.

PRESSLEY

Where's Jesse? I need a ride home.

HOYT

I'll take you.

INT. SHEEHAN HONDA - STREETS - NIGHT

Pressley is silent as Hoyt drives, his nose stuck in a map. Pressley watches as Hoyt takes the 154 on-ramp.

PRESSLEY
I live that way.

HOYT
Shut up.

EXT. LIZARD'S MOUTH - NIGHT

Lizard's mouth is a rocky area in the middle of nowhere. In the day, you can see the vast expanse of the Pacific below you, but now it's pitch black and impossible to see anything.

Hoyt climbs out of the maroon car and opens the trunk.

PRESSLEY
What's going on, man?

Ryan grabs him by the arm and starts dragging him to the trail. Pressley, panicked, starts resisting, and then screaming for assistance. It doesn't help. No one can hear you out here.

Pressley is led up through the rocks and brush maybe two hundred yards until Hoyt finally spots the area he likes. He throws the shovel on the ground to indicate the area.

HOYT
Dig.

Pressley gets it now. He's going to die.

PRESSLEY
Dig what?

Hoyt pulls out the TEC-9 and points it at him.

HOYT
Something big enough for you to lie down in.

Graham starts shaking, and tears run down his face.

PRESSLEY
No.

HOYT
Dig!

Hoyt whips him with the pistol, and when Pressley goes down, Hoyt starts kicking him. Graham has the wind knocked out of him - he can't breathe - and when he finally gets a breath, he sucks in a mouthful of dirt. He lays there, coughing violently.

HOYT
I'm going to give you three seconds to get up, and then I'm going to shoot you in the heart. 1-2-3.

PRESSLEY

Okay, okay.

Pressley is sobbing now. He takes the shovel and starts digging. It's rocky - the shovel bangs off the ground. He has to kneel down to remove the stones with his hands, and he's crying so hard, he can't catch his breath.

HOYT

Go ahead. Cry for your mommy. She can't help you now.

Graham hears his mother's name and the floodgates open. He hacks away at the ground, but the hole is slow going.

HOYT

Dig, bitch.

PRESSLEY

I am.

HOYT

I don't got all night.

PRESSLEY

(hysterical)

IT'S HARD!!!

Hoyt laughs.

HOYT

Hey, don't be mad at me. You've got your cunt-assed brother to thank for this.

Something flashes across Pressley's face. A realization.

PRESSLEY

I don't have a brother.

Pressley starts laughing.

PRESSLEY

Do you hear me? I don't have a brother. You think I'm Nick, right? I'm not Markowitz. He's back in the room.

HOYT

Shut up.

PRESSLEY

I'll show you where he is.

Pressley throws Hoyt his wallet.

PRESSLEY

It says right there. Graham Pressley. I'm Jesse's boy. I've been helping you guys.

HOYT
Keep digging.

Hoyt looks at the driver's license, realizes the gaffe. Pressley crawls over to Hoyt.

PRESSLEY
Don't be upset. It's just a little mistake that's all.

Pressley is groveling. He literally kisses Hoyt's feet.

PRESSLEY
Don't kill me. I'm begging you. I'll do whatever you want. Anything.

Hoyt considers.

HOYT
Would you suck my cock?

PRESSLEY
What?

HOYT
Do I fucking stutter? You want to live, you suck my fucking cock.

PRESSLEY
Okay. If that's what you want, I'll do it.

INT. LEMON TREE INN - ROOM 341 - NIGHT

Rugge enters to find Nick sitting on the bed, watching TV. He looks around.

RUGGE
Where is everybody?

NICK
Graham said he needed a ride home, so that guy gave him one.

RUGGE
Oh.

Rugge sits on the other bed and they watch the tube. He looks over at Nick, considers. He knows he's dead.

RUGGE
You want to run to the store for me? Get some cigarettes?

NICK
They won't sell to me. I'm too young.

RUGGE

You want to go out? Take off some where?

NICK

I'm cool. I just want to watch this show.

RUGGE

Okay.

And they watch TV.

INT. LASHER HOUSE - CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

Jack Hollywood, Roberts and now Steve Hogg are waiting in the giant living room with Douglass and ELAINE LASHER when Jesse and Michelle enter. When Jesse sees his father, the floor falls out below him.

JESSE

Dad?

Michelle is quickly escorted out by her parents to have their own conversation.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Where's the kid?

JESSE

Who?

Jack is furious. He moves over to his son and starts smacking him across the face.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

You're going to get cute with me?
Where's Markowitz?

JESSE

I don't know what you're talking about.

Jack slaps him again.

JESSE

Dad, I swear.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Now the fucking lies? Do I have
"asshole" written all over my face? You
think you're so Goddamn clever? There's
a missing person poster on every fucking
corner!

ROBERTS

You're in deep shit, Jess. The cops pick
you up, and you're doing 25 to life.

JESSE

You don't think I know that?

JACK HOLLYWOOD

You took a shit on your life, you fucking moron. Now you got one chance to un-fuck yourself, and that's to come clean.

HOGG

Everyone's a little excited. What your father's trying to say is that we have a plan. You tell us where the boy is, we take him back home and have a sit down. The mother and father, Ben, Nick, you, Jack, me if you like. Your father will bring his checkbook, and we try to settle it right there.

JESSE

Never work.

HOGG

I'm not saying it will. You're probably looking at some jail time. But, if that's the only option, we walk you into custody, do it the right way. And if that happens, I guarantee you that you'll be doing the minimum sentence.

ROBERTS

Be smart, kid. Let the spooks do the hard time.

JESSE

Fuck that. No jail.

ROBERTS

Two years? Piece of cake. Winter, summer. Winter, summer. Done.

JESSE

No.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

What's your plan then, Einstien? You tell us how this all turns out.

INT. LEMON TREE INN - ROOM 341 - NIGHT

Rugge is on the balcony smoking a cigarette and Nick is still watching TV when Hoyt and Pressley return. Graham's covered in dirt.

PRESSLEY

Hey. What's up, Nick?

NICK

Nothing. What happened to you?

Oh, I fell. PRESSLEY

You fell? NICK

You Nick? HOYT

Yeah. NICK

I'm Ryan, I'll be your ride. You ready? HOYT

Not really. NICK

Hoyt smiles.

Come on, let's get you home. HOYT

Nick starts to gather his shit and Ryan moves out on the balcony Rugge's staring out into the night.

You coming? HOYT

I don't know. RUGGE

You gotta do this, JR. It's got to be unanimous. Jesse fucked up - he knows that. But we got to help him out. The kid goes home, everybody's looking at life. HOYT

Life? RUGGE

Life. We talked to a lawyer and there's no way around it. HOYT

Life, for what? For taking care of the kid? For letting him sleep at my house? RUGGE

You were there from square one. During the kidnapping. You sat on him the whole fucking time. You think you're going to walk? HOYT

Who the fuck knows? Life? RUGGE

HOYT

There it is. Jail. Forever. You think you can do that? Think about it. The kid lives or dies, it don't matter. It's still life. Just one way you have a chance.

RUGGE

Fuck. I mean, I like the kid.

HOYT

What's not to like? He's fifteen. He's just too much of a liability. Think about it. Send the kid home, you got Ben looking for you. You don't want that. You don't go along, Jesse don't trust you and he's coming after you. And you sure as shit don't want Jack Hollywood knocking at your door. We don't have a choice, man. We do this right, this whole thing goes away. Poof. Like a bad dream that fades away until sooner or later you don't even remember it anymore.

Jesse Rugge takes one last drag off of his cigarette before flicking it away.

RUGGE

Let me get my bag.

INT. SHEEHAN HONDA - NIGHT

Hoyt drives. Rugge shotgun. Nick and Pressley in the back. The Honda takes the 154 again, but Nicky's just a wide-eyed kid. Excited about going home.

NICK

My parents are going to kill me. I can see my mom's face. Ho, boy. But don't worry. I will never give any of you guys up. Never. You guys and me are like this.

Nick makes a fist and touches his heart. Rugge and Graham are solemn, and Hoyt just drives.

NICK

You know that, right?

PRESSLEY

Sure, Nick. We know that.

NICK

I'll just say I ran away. Fuck it, right? To Fresno or Bakersfield. Anyone know where Bakersfield is?

RUGGE

Say you were with a girl. They'll believe that.

NICK

Right. Like Julie.

The car winds up the mountainous road, but Nick doesn't notice. His mood's too good.

NICK

When I get back, I want to get my shit together. Start fresh. You ever feel like that, Jay?

RUGGE

What?

NICK

Just doing something. I don't know. Go to Europe, take a class, learn how to play an instrument. Guitar. That sounds hard, but maybe, you know? Any of you know how to play? It fucking bugs me I don't know how to do anything.

The car comes to a stop and parks. Hoyt turns around.

HOYT

Come on.

NICK

What are we doing?

HOYT

Meeting somebody who'll take you home.

NICK

Cool.

INT. VON'S SUPERMARKET - CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

Jesse stands next to a pay phone. He looks terrible, the stress has gotten to him. His skin is white and the veins bulge in his neck as he screams at his father.

JESSE

And what about Ben? Huh?! That motherfucker's an animal, he's not going to just let it go.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

You leave that little prick to me. That motherfucker might have an accident. You never know when someone's going to get hit by a bus.

ROBERTS
Call it off, Jess.

JESSE
This is so stupid. Nothing's going to happen. These guys are such fuck-ups, the kid's probably loose right now.

JACK HOLLYWOOD
Make the fucking call.

Jesse drops in the coins and dials.

INT. LEMON TREE INN - ROOM 341 - NIGHT

The room is empty. The phone rings and rings.

EXT. LIZARD'S MOUTH - NIGHT

Hoyt, Rugge, and Pressley walk Nick up the hill. It might be the valiums, the fact that he's going home, or just the beautiful night, but Nick's on top of the world.

NICK
I'm going to start being nicer to my mom. I know it's kind of gay, but if you think about it, I mean, she's a dork, but she's the shit, you know? She's my best friend. You know what I mean, Gray?

PRESSLEY
Yeah, I do.

Pressley's been up this road before. His heart is breaking for Nick. Out of the stillness of the night comes a sound. The boys look up to find TWO HIKERS coming down the hill.

SUPERIMPOSE: SCOTT AND DEBBIE SUBLETTE - WITNESSES #25&26(?)

This is the moment. If someone screamed for help right now, it would all be over. But they don't. The hikers say "hello" as they pass by. Hoyt and Rugge remain cool, but Graham is starting to freak out. He trembles as he watches the hikers, the last of hope, disappear from view. He's a nervous wreck.

PRESSLEY
I can't do this.

RUGGE
Come on, G.

PRESSLEY
No. Fuck you. I'm out of here.

NICK
Graham?

Pressley turns to Nick. He's snapped. Tears pour from his eyes

NICK

What's the matter? You're crying.

Pressley is shaking as he gives Nick an embrace. Then he runs away.

PRESSLEY

Goodbye, Nicky.

Nick watches him go, and for the first time, knows something's really wrong.

NICK

What's the matter with him? What's going on? Jesse?

Rugge looks at the ground.

NICK

Oh, no.

Ryan shoves him in the back, and starts pushing him up the hill.

HOYT

Move.

NICK

Please! I didn't do nothing.

The boys move up the mountain. Hoyt keeps shoving Nick along through the darkness.

NICK

Jesse? Jesse?

RUGGE

Relax. It's not what you think.

NICK

Yes it is. Oh, my God. Why? What'd I do? I thought we were boys.

RUGGE

We are boys.

NICK

There's nobody up there, is there? We're not meeting anyone.

RUGGE

Yes, we are. Don't freak out.

NICK

You promise?

RUGGE

Yes.

NICK

You swear?

RUGGE

Nick. Everything's cool. On my life, I swear to God.

They arrive at the spot of the grave and it all goes nuts. Nick sees the hole and the shovels, and starts screaming, begging for his life.

NICK

I won't tell. I swear to God, I won't tell!

RUGGE

We're not going to do this, right? Ryan? Are we really going to do this?!

NICK

You've got to believe me!

HOYT

Get him to shut up!

Hoyt pulls out the TEC-9 and points it at Nick.

HOYT

You want to live, you shut your fucking mouth!

NICK

Please! Please!

RUGGE

We got to think about this!

HOYT

I can't concentrate! Shut his mouth or I'm going to shoot him!

RUGGE

Okay, okay. Look, little man. You got to calm down, alright? Everyone's too nervous, alright? Got to be quiet, okay?

Nick is hyperventilating, but gets the picture. He tries to catch his breath, which comes in uncontrollable bursts.

NICK

Okay. Okay. I'm sorry.

Hoyt throws Rugge a roll of duct tape and Rugge moves behind him. Nick is squirming all over the place, terrified.

RUGGE

Relax. Now I'm going to tape you. Put your hands behind your back. I won't hurt you.

NICK

I know. I know you won't.

He tapes Nick's hands together. And then his mouth. Nick is trying to keep from falling to pieces.

Rugge wraps the tape around Nick's head, but before he can finish, Hoyt smashes Nick in the head with the shovel, knocking him down.

RUGGE

What are you doing?

He drags Nick over into the hole, and when Nick looks up, he sees the TEC-9 and screams through the tape.

INT. SHEEHAN HONDA - NIGHT

Graham Pressley hears the shots.

EXT. LIZARD'S MOUTH - GRAVESIGHT - NIGHT

Nine shells fire into Nick Markowitz in the matter of a millisecond. And it is over.

RUGGE

Oh, fuck. Oh, Jesus fucking Christ.

It's quiet for a moment. Both Rugge and Hoyt just stand there, looking at what used to be Nick Markowitz.

HOYT

I never did anyone before. I didn't know he would go so quick.

A buzzing sound emanates from Hoyt's pocket. Hoyt pulls out his pager, and looks at the entry. Jesse Hollywood, too late.

INTERVIEW #10

The woman has put on forty pounds. The life has drained out of her weary face, and her eyes are bleary and uneven.

SUPERIMPOSE: SUSAN MARKOWITZ

SUSAN

It was six o'clock in the morning. Jeff and I looked out the bedroom window, and there was several black cars and men in suits, and the doorbell was ringing, so it meant there were more. As soon as I saw them, I left my body. "We've found your son.", they said. "We've found him and it's bad news."

The triptych is back, the three images showing exactly where she is. The psych ward at Cedar's.

INTERVIEWER

Tell me about the funeral. Ben didn't show?

SUSAN

No. He said it was out of respect for me, but that's a crock. He didn't go because he didn't want to get hit.

INTERVIEWER

Excuse me?

SUSAN

Murdered. Shot. Killed. He owes money all over town. I know he owes 50 thousand to one dealer. It's the drug world, and they have their own rules. I mean, my son was killed over 1200 dollars.

INTERVIEWER

Do you blame Ben directly for Nick's death?

SUSAN

Not directly. But if it wasn't for Ben, Nick would still be alive.

INTERVIEWER

Are you saying you wish he wasn't born?

SUSAN

Who, Ben? Yes, probably.

She pulls out a small billfold. Her hands shake as she shows off a few pictures of Nick.

SUSAN

Can I tell you a story? When he was little, 10, he cried when I showed him Mexican jumping beans, because I wouldn't cut them open and let them free. Sensitive. You see, when my son died, I died. I loved him every single day of my life, and I wasn't afraid to show him. I have no one day of regret.

(MORE)

SUSAN (cont'd)
We lived, loved, argued. We lived our
life and it was a good one.

INTERVIEWER
What made you try to kill yourself?

SUSAN
I don't know. It seemed like a long time
to my natural death. And I was drinking.
The three times I've attempted suicide,
alcohol was involved. In the hospital, I
tried to slit my wrists. The wrong way.
I should have done them like this.

Susan smiles and draws a finger down her arm.

SUSAN
I don't know. Maybe it was the pills.
It's all bullshit, anyway. They say
everything happens for a reason. That
God must have a purpose for me. But if
He does, He better get the fuck down here
and show it to me. Because I don't see
it.

EXT. LIZARD'S MOUTH - DAY

A few kids are moving through a hiking trail when they are hit by
a terrible smell. The odor is coming from a mound of freshly dug
dirt that is now covered in flies. A HIKER puts a hand over her
nose and kicks at the soil, uncovering a human leg. She screams.

INT. COTTAGE HOSPITAL MORGUE - SANTA BARBARA - DAY

Ron Zonen and Detective KEN REINSTATLER move with purpose down
the halls.

REINSTATLER
Body was recovered up in San Marcos Pass.
Kid was buried in 11 inches of dirt.

ZONEN
Shallow grave.

REINSTATLER
Dirt's rocky out there. Hard digging.
We've fingerprinted the body, got a
positive ID from a prior marijuana arrest
on his school campus. After you.

INT. COTTAGE HOSPITAL MORGUE - DAY

Zonen and Reinstatler enter the autopsy room. A decomposed and
bloated body is on the slab. There are tags and ID's everywhere
and yellow sticks poking through the victim's skull and body.

REINSTATLER

Nicholas Markowitz, DOB 9-19-84.

ZONEN

What happened to him?

George Sterbenz, the CORONER, speaks up.

CORONER

The circular marks indicate the location of gunshot entrance wounds. The yellow sticks, the angle of entry, and the green arrows are points of exit. As you can see, all the entrance wounds are in the front of the body, head, neck, and torso.

REINSTATLER

The kid was put into a grave and shot 9 times point blank in the face.

ZONEN

Jesus.

REINSTATLER

Yeah.

CORONER

Gunshot "A" enters on the chin, goes through the oral cavity, through the tongue, and then passes through the cranial cavity, through the brain, and out of the basal skull. Shall I continue?

ZONEN

No. I get the picture.

REINSTATLER

15 year old kid, Ron.

Zonen takes in, then lets out a breath.

ZONEN

Anything else?

REINSTATLER

A lot, but nothing that means anything right now. We'll keep you posted. Oh, the victim's a resident of LA county. Parents listed him missing officially on 8-8.

ZONEN

LA, huh? Have you spoken to them?

REINSTATLER

No. That's all we got.

ZONEN

Alright. Pay the parents a visit. And release it to the papers, see if anybody knows anything.

EXT. MALIBU, CA. - SHEEHAN'S DAD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a blowout. The occasion is Ryan Hoyt's 21st birthday. The party is cracking, the gang's all there. Ryan's feeling no pain, his arm is draped over a good looking girl, STEPHANIE TENNEN's shoulder. Just days after the murder, and it's the greatest day of his life.

Jesse Hollywood is in attendance, as well as Skidmore, Rugge, Jack Hollywood, Affronti, and Casey Sheehan. They laugh and joke around with Ryan, give him presents, and show him respect.

Among all the merriment, Sheehan pulls Jesse Hollywood aside.

SHEEHAN

Hey. Ryan's been running his mouth about Santa Barbara.

JESSE

Yeah?

SHEEHAN

Yeah, about the Markowitz kid. You guys didn't use my car to do anything, did you?

JESSE

Don't worry about it.

SHEEHAN

What does that mean?

JESSE

It means, don't fucking worry about it. Alright?

Jesse gives Casey a look before walking away to join the festivities. Casey just watches him go.

INT. ADAMS HOUSE - SANTA BARBARA - MORNING

Natasha Adams is drinking a cup of coffee and flipping through the newspaper when she sees the article. "Boy Found Slain at Lizard's Mouth". Next to it, a picture of Nick Markowitz.

EXT. RUGGE HOUSE - SANTA BARBARA - DAY

Natasha Adams bangs on the door. She's hysterical. After a few moments, a sleepy and shirtless Jesse Rugge answers the door.

NATASHA

Nick's dead.

All the color falls from Rugge's face.

RUGGE

How do you know?

She shoves the newspaper at him and he reads. When he looks up, he is white.

RUGGE

I never laid a finger on him. You've got to believe me. I didn't know this happened. I can't believe it happened.

Natasha looks at Rugge. He's panicking. You can literally see his heart pounding in his skinny chest.

NATASHA

What's going on, Jesse?

RUGGE

I don't know.

NATASHA

Tell me the truth.

RUGGE

I don't! I think I'm getting set up.

NATASHA

Did you take him home?

RUGGE

Yes! I dropped him off in the Valley.

NATASHA

Where? At his house? What street?

RUGGE

I don't know. I swear, I just dropped him in the Valley.

Natasha takes a long look at him.

NATASHA

You better get yourself a lawyer.

EXT. SANTA BARBARA SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT -DAY

Natasha Adams, flanked by her parents and her attorney, walks up the steps and into SBSO.

INT. ROBINSON'S/MAY CO. - FALLBROOK MALL - DAY

Ryan Hoyt is trying on clothes. He looks at himself in the mirror as he inspects the new outfit. He looks at the SALESLADY for approval.

HOYT
So, what do you think?

SALESLADY
I like it.

HOYT
You like this one or the other one?
You've got to help me. I haven't bought new clothes.

SALESLADY
You mean, you haven't bought new clothes in a long time?

HOYT
No, never. First time.

SALESLADY
Come on.

HOYT
For reals.

SALESLADY
You're funny.

HOYT
Yeah. So, what do you think? I think I like this one.

SALESLADY
Definitely. That one fits you better.
But they're both nice.

She hits him with her best smile.

INT. FALLBROOK MALL - DAY

Ryan Hoyt, shopping bags in hand, walks through the mall wearing his new duds. Girls smile at him as he passes. His pager buzzes. It's a number he doesn't recognize. Oh, well. Check it later.

INT. HOYT HOUSE - DAY

Ryan moves into his grandmother's house with a spring in his step. He shouts for her, but she isn't home. The phone rings and he picks it up.

AFFRONTI (O.S.)
Look at the fucking paper.

Click. Dial tone.

Ryan scrambles through the house. Where does she keep the newspaper? Fuck. Finally he finds it, but doesn't see it at first. Then he spots the article. Nick Markowitz's body has been found. He panics. How much do they know? He picks up and dials, trying to find Jesse. No answer. He tries Skidmore.

HOYT
Hello, Kelly? Yeah, this is Ryan. Is
Will there? I need to talk to your
brother.

INT. SKIDMORE HOME - DAY

Kelly Skidmore is dressed in rollers and a yellow bathrobe.

KELLY
He's no here, Ryan. He's gone.

HOYT (O.S.)
Where'd he go?

KELLY
They took him. The cops were here, the
fucking SWAT team, and they took him.

INT. HOYT HOUSE - DAY

Hoyt hangs up and slams the phone into the receiver over and over.

HOYT
What the fuck?! What the fuck?! What
the fuck?!

He paces back and forth, unsure of what to do. His pager goes off again. Fucking unrecognizable number. He picks up the phone and dials it.

VOICE ON PHONE
Detective West here.

Hoyt hangs up. He's sweating buckets, his breath coming in gasps now. The pager goes off again. And again. It's blowing up.

EXT. SHEEHAN HOUSE - DAY

Hoyt knocks on Casey's door. When Casey sees who it is, he pushes Hoyt back off the landing.

SHEEHAN
You can't come in here.

HOYT
I'm in trouble, Case.

SHEEHAN
No shit, asshole. And with my car!
Why'd you do it, Ryan?

HOYT
I'm sorry!

SHEEHAN
Why'd you do what you did?!

HOYT
I said I'm sorry!!

SHEEHAN
You motherfuckers have any idea how much
trouble you put me in?!

HOYT
You?! I'm fucked Casey. This is it.
You've got to help me. Can you give me
your car?!

SHEEHAN
No!

HOYT
Can you drive me out of town?

SHEEHAN
Fuck no! Get the fuck out of here. Get
the fuck away from my house!

HOYT
I got no place to go!

SHEEHAN
I don't care! Not my fucking problem!

HOYT
Can I use your phone at least? I gotta
call Jesse. Please? Please?!!

SHEEHAN
There's a pay phone on the corner, but we
got to go right now. And after that,
you're on your fucking own.

They hop in the purple Honda and take off. A few seconds later,
a couple of nondescript sedans start their engines and follow
them.

INT. SHEEHAN HONDA - DAY

Hoyt turns around as the sedans fall in behind them. He's out of his mind. The flashing reds come on, and Sheehan's Honda is forced to the curb. Undercover officers surround the car with shotguns, and Ryan Hoyt is shoved to the ground and arrested, wearing his new clothes he will never need again.

MONTAGE - TRYPTICH

The convention starts again, the screen splitting to reveal Jesse Rugge busted outside of his Santa Barbara home, William Skidmore and the SWAT arrest, and Graham Pressley failing a lie detector test and being handcuffed. They are all processed, stripped, put into blues, and stuck behind bars.

EXT. PALM SPRINGS, CA. - DAY

It's a big, splashy hotel and it's poolside. A bunch of models in swimsuits surround the swimming area. Jesse Hollywood and Michelle Lasher sip fruity drinks and lay back in lounge chairs. Jesse's cell rings.

JESSE

Yeah?

JACK HOLLYWOOD (O.S.)

You remember that rock we talked about?

JESSE

What rock?

JACK HOLLYWOOD

The rock you were going to crawl under.
It's time.

EXT. INTERSTATE 15 - DAY

Jesse's Mercedes flies down the highway, heading north.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - GOLDEN HOUR

The "Empire" car dealership is right on the strip. Jesse and Michelle, big sunglasses, pay cash for a new silver Lincoln.

INT. LINCOLN - MONTAGE - HIGHWAY

Bill Wither's voice floats across the radio as the Lincoln heads east. Too Short's "Gangster's Holiday" fills the screen. Jesse looks at Michelle. Nothing but road and uncertainty before them. The states roll under their wheels - Nevada, Utah, Colorado.

EXT. COLORADO HIGHWAY - MORNING

The silver Lincoln winds its way through the Rocky mountains.

EXT. RICHARD DISPENZA'S HOUSE - MORNING

The Lincoln pulls into the driveway of a pine tree lined street. Jesse and Michelle get out and knock on the door.

SUPERIMPOSE: WOODLAND PARK, COLORADO

The door opens to reveal RICHARD DISPENZA, an old family friend and Jesse's godfather. He throws his arms around Jesse and pulls them inside.

DISPENZA

What the fuck? As I live and breathe!

INT. RICHARD DISPENZA'S HOUSE - DAY

Jesse drops a bag on the floor as he walks in.

DISPENZA

To what do I owe this fucking honor?
Everything alright? You look terrible.

JESSE

Driving all night. Li'l Sue, find a
shower, will you? I need to talk to
Richard alone.

EXT. DISPENZA HOUSE - DAY

A Woodland Park patrol car cruises the residential street. It slows when it passes the Dispenza house, then backs up and parks.

INT. DISPENZA HOUSE - DAY

Dispenza and Jesse have Jack Hollywood on the speaker phone.

JACK HOLLYWOOD (O.S.)

Goddamn it, Rich. There's no time. Get
Jesse the hell out of there.

DISPENZA

I will. I'm just saying, this kid needs
an attorney.

JACK HOLLYWOOD (O.S.)

You're not getting it, idiot. He doesn't
need a lawyer. He needs a Lear jet.

DISPENZA

Alright, Jack. Calm down. I'll take care of it. You hear me? You got my word on that.

A knock on the door and a uniformed cop enters. Dispenza and Jesse freeze.

INTERVIEW # 11

The subject is a detective now. The clothes are different, but we know the face.

SUPERIMPOSE: KEN REINSTATLER

REINSTATLER

How did we know Hollywood was in Colorado? One. He used to live in that area. He had friends there, roots there. Two. We looked at his phone records and there was activity. We also had a tap on Jack Hollywood's phone. And on top of that, two of his boys rolled on him. They said if things ever got too hot, that's where he said he would go.

INT. DISPENZA HOUSE - DAY

The cop is standing in the doorway, looking at Jesse and Richard

DISPENZA

What's going on, Mike?

OFFICER JAQUES

I saw a car I didn't recognize in the driveway, so I thought I'd check it out.

Jesse's shitting. The officer is giving him a really long look.

OFFICER JAQUES

Jesse? It's me, Mike Jaques. We went to school together? You were tight with my brother, Billy.

Jesse's dying.

JESSE

Oh, yeah. Right. Good to see you.

Jesse sticks his hand out, but the policeman gives him a big embrace.

OFFICER JAQUES

Don't give me that handshake business. How are you doing? Back in town for a while?

JESSE
Visiting, you know.

OFFICER JAKUES
Good deal, good deal. Listen, you should
give Billy a call. I'm sure he'd love to
hear from you. You got his number?

JESSE
Yeah.

OFFICER JAKUES
I'll write it down for you. 867-5309.
There you go.

Michelle comes down the stairs and walks straight back up.
Officer Jaques lets himself out.

OFFICER JAKUES
Take it easy. See you, Rich.

The door closes and they all breathe a huge sigh of relief.

INT. AIRPORT - COLORADO SPRINGS - DAY

Jesse and Michelle are at the gate.

MICHELLE
I ain't going.

JESSE
I'll come back and get you.

MICHELLE
No.

JESSE
Look at me. Do you love me?

MICHELLE
Yes.

JESSE
Do you believe me?

She smiles.

MICHELLE
No.

Now, Jesse smiles. The boarding call comes, and they look at the gate.

MICHELLE
I don't want to go. Let me stay with
you. I won't be any trouble.

JESSE

Richard's right. I can't travel with you. Look at you. You're too beautiful. The Feds would get us in five minutes.

Final call. Michelle's eyes are wet. Jesse brushes a hand along her cheek.

JESSE

I'll come back for you, baby.

Jesse watches as Michelle runs away.

INT. RAMADA INN - ROOM 349 - FOUNTAIN, COLORADO - DAY

Richard Dispenza gives Jesse final instructions before leaving.

DISPENZA

Alright. I got to go to football practice. Sit tight. No phone. No nothing. I'll be back later to bring you some food, okay? Hang in there, buddy. We'll get you out of here real soon.

Dispenza leaves. Jesse looks around the room. One bag. A bathroom. A kitchenette. His world is getting real small. Jesse turns on the TV. Whatever is on is unimportant. He watches for a minute, tries to light up a smoke, but he's out.

EXT. FILLMORE AVE. - WOODLAND PARK, COLORADO - DAY

Jesse walks down the street, the I-25 buzzing behind him. The usual - baseball hat down, sunglasses, coat collar turned up. As he approaches the Conoco, he is approached by four 13 year old white kids, wearing sideways caps, trying to be tough.

KID #1

Yo, cuz. You buy us some beers?

Jesse looks at the kid, but keeps on going. "Cuz"? You gotta be kidding. It's fucking Colorado. A hand stops Jesse, turns him around.

KID #2

What, are you deaf or something, Esse We said buy us some fucking Budweisers.

"Esse"? Jesse looks at the kids, shakes his head. It's official. The world is crazy.

JESSE

Sorry. Can't do it.

The kids call after him as he walks inside.

KID #3

You're a little bitch, you know that?

Jesse walks inside, buys his smokes. The door swings back open, but the kids are gone. Jesse moves down the boulevard until something catches his eye. Unmarked and patrol cars line the driveway of the Ramada Inn. Two more blue and whites speed toward the hotel, flashing reds on, sirens off. Are they for him? Fuck that. They're for him.

Jesse pulls out a wad. Not much. The rest of his shit, money, weapon, everything is back at the hotel. Gone. So, with three grand in his pocket and the clothes on his back, Jesse sticks out his thumb. Cars whiz by, but after a few moments, a yellow Volkswagen pulls over and picks him up.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The yellow VW drops Jesse off at the side of the road. He waves, and starts walking.

SUPERIMPOSE: COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

EXT. LEIGH SAULSBURY'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Chaz Saulsbury is working on his Autocross car in the garage when his mother, LEIGH, appears in the doorway.

LEIGH

Chaz? Jesse's here to see you.

SAULSBURY

Who?

LEIGH

Jesse.

SAULSBURY

Jesse who?

Hollywood appears in the doorway. Chaz can't believe his eyes. He moves to Jesse, gives him an excited hug.

INTERVIEW #12

The subject has a woman, PAIGE, by his side. She holds his hand and frequently tries to interrupt.

SUPERIMPOSE: CHAZ SAULSBURY

SAULSBURY

Yeah, it was unbelievable. I hadn't seen Jesse since '95, what is that, 5 years? I hadn't even spoken to him since '96. Plus, he shows up at my mom's house.

(MORE)

SAULSBURY (cont'd)
I hadn't lived there in 8 months. I mean, what a coincidence, right? Luck or fate or what have you. I look up and he's just there.

EXT. LEIGH SAULSBURY'S HOUSE - EVENING

The boys wave goodbye to Chaz's mother.

JESSE
Chaz, I'm on the run.

SAULSBURY
What do you mean, on the run? From the law?

JESSE
Yeah.

SAULSBURY
Far out.

JESSE
No, man. It's bad. I'm on the street.
Can I stay with you?

SAULSBURY
Absolutely.

INT. SAULSBURY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Chaz's apartment is small and messy. Dirty clothes, lava lamp, funky fish tank.

SAULSBURY
This is it. It's not much, but...

JESSE
Do you have a computer?

Chaz shows Jesse his shitty computer, and they fire it up. Jesse finds what he wants - An LA Times article pops up. "BOY'S DEATH LINKED TO DRUG DEBT". Jesse mumbles as he reads.

JESSE
..."four people arrested including a 17 year old"...What fucking 17 year old?
..."execution style murder, body riddled with bullets. Buried in a shallow grave?" What did they do, leave a fucking hand out? Idiots! So stupid! They fucked it up. Fuck!

Jesse spits at the computer screen. He's in a rage. Chaz considers him.

SAULSBURY
What's going on, Jesse?

INT. SAULSBURY APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Chaz is asleep in the bedroom, but Jesse is wide awake on the couch. He gets up, moves to the window, pulls back the blinds. Too dark, can't see shit, so he lies back down. Hands behind his head, he can't sleep. Every noise is the cops, breaking down the door and taking him away. All of a sudden, a phone ring breaks the silence. Jesse freaks, he moves into the bedroom, shakes Chaz. They look at each other.

JESSE
Answer it.

Chaz picks up.

SAULSBURY
Hello? Hi, Mom, what's going on? Jesse?

Jesse waves his hands. No. No. He's not here.

SAULSBURY
No, I'm not. He left earlier. Yeah, what news? Police? Yeah, I don't know, Mom. That's amazing. Yeah, it sounds like bad news. Definitely, if I see him, I sure will.

He hangs up. Jesse and he look at each other.

EXT. PIKE'S PEAK INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY - DAY

Autocross racing is fairly big in Colorado. Like motocross, only with cars. Chaz is in the third race, so Jesse is alone, walking around, freaked out that someone will notice him. People pass him, and it looks like they're staring. He's having a paranoid episode. Reality starts to bend. Security look like cops, people point, and everyone recognizes him.

Chaz's race is about to go off, so Jesse moves into the far end of the bleacher stands. He sees something out of the corner of his eye. It's Ben Markowitz. Now he's really going crazy. Markowitz disappears into the crowd, but there he is again, and now he's staring at Jesse. He draws a finger along his throat and mouths, "you're fucking dead".

Jesse blinks. There is no Markowitz. He's just losing his mind. Chaz's race finishes. He's third, but Jesse doesn't give a shit.

EXT. PIKE'S PEAK INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY - PIT AREA - DAY

Chaz is pumped by the race, but Jesse is in full panic mode. His eyes dart everywhere, there's a cop behind every rock.

SAULSBURY

So, what'd you think?

JESSE

Yeah, yeah. It was great. But we got to get the fuck out of here. There's way too many people here. Too many eyes. I'm a sitting duck.

SAULSBURY

Relax, man. Nobody recognizes you. Just a bunch of meatheads out here.

JESSE

Chaz, I'm serious. Let's roll man, get the fuck out of here.

SAULSBURY

Where?

JESSE

I don't give a fuck. Let's just go.

SAULSBURY

Alright, but I gotta put my car up. And we got those guys bringing that thing you want at seven.

INT. SAULSBURY APARTMENT - NIGHT

The clock reads 7:05. Jesse paces, checks the window every two seconds.

JESSE

Where are these guys? Are they coming?

A knock on the door and Hollywood nearly jumps through the roof. Chaz opens the door to let in DOUG DAVENPORT and CHESTER. Doug nods, but Chester doesn't say anything.

DAVENPORT

What's up?

SAULSBURY

Let's see 'em.

Davenport pulls out two pieces of false identification. One, a Georgia driver's licence and the other some state ID card. Both are very poor quality. As soon as Jesse sees them, he hits the roof.

JESSE

What the fuck is this?

SAULSBURY

What?

JESSE

Look at this, Chaz. What is this, a fucking color Xerox? You couldn't get into a fucking nightclub with this garbage.

SAULSBURY

Jesse...

JESSE

What happened? You fucking run out of library cards?

DAVENPORT

It's what you fucking asked for, asshole.

JESSE

Bullshit.

Jesse flips the fake IDs on the floor.

DAVENPORT

Hey, be careful. I'm not the one with my face all over the news.

Jesse freezes.

JESSE

What'd you say?

DAVENPORT

You heard me. Now, I want my fucking money.

SAULSBURY

Jess, you got to pay him.

Jesse stares at Davenport, but counts out 500 dollars.

JESSE

You're a bitch.

DAVENPORT

Yeah, we'll see who's the bitch.

And they're gone.

INT. SAULSBURY'S AUDI - NIGHT

Chaz and Jesse on an empty highway. They're approaching an interchange.

SAULSBURY

Well, here we go. What'll it be? North or south?

JESSE

What?

SAULSBURY

Canada or Mexico, man? That's what we're doing, right?

JESSE

Just keep driving.

SAULSBURY

What? Alright, dude. Whatever you say.

They ride in silence for the longest of times. Finally, Chaz looks in his rear view.

SAULSBURY

Jesse. What kind of car is that?

Jesse looks back.

SAULSBURY

Don't turn around, man.

JESSE

It's a sedan.

SAULSBURY

It's a cop.

JESSE

You're crazy.

SAULSBURY

I think it is.

The car becomes more visible as it gains ground. It's the police.

SAULSBURY

What are they doing?

JESSE

Running the plates. Fuck! I don't have my fucking gun!

SAULSBURY

What do you want me to do?!

JESSE

We're dead. We're fucking dead!

SAULSBURY

You want me to run?

JESSE

Go!

SAULSBURY

You want me to do it?!

The highway patrolman accelerates and passes them, disappearing into the night. The boys are so spooked, they have to pull over

EXT. - SIDE OF HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Jesse is freaked. He kicks rocks by the side of the road.

SAULSBURY

Hey. It's okay. We skated. What the fuck are you doing? We made it.

JESSE

I didn't skate.

SAULSBURY

Yes, you did. Do you even realize what a bullet you just dodged? Fuck, man. I can't take it if you're going to be so depressed.

JESSE

I did it, alright? I killed the kid. I ordered it and now he's dead. I'll never see my little brother again. My mother, my girl. I ruined my family, ruined their lives. All my friends are in jail because of me, and if the cops get me, I'm going to get the death penalty. So yeah, I'm a little fucking depressed.

SAULSBURY

So, we'll get you out of the country.

JESSE

I've got fifteen hundred bucks, Chaz. I can't live the rest of my life on that. I'm dead. Might as well kill me right here.

SAULSBURY

Jesse...

JESSE

No. I want to die. I want to die.

SAULSBURY

Well, then, fucking die already.

JESSE

Then kill me.

SAULSBURY

No. I'm risking my neck out here to save your fucking ass and all you can do is bitch.

JESSE

Kill me.

SAULSBURY

Shut up.

JESSE

You got to do it, Chaz.

SAULSBURY

Are you nuts?

JESSE

Kill me. Right now. I'm serious. Put me out of my fucking misery.

SAULSBURY

Oh, great. What do you want to do? Stand in front of my car while I run you over?

JESSE

Maybe. Or you could bash my head in with one of these rocks.

Jesse's indicating boulders that line the side of the highway

JESSE

Yeah. Do it. End it right here.

Jesse lays his head down sideways on a giant stone.

JESSE

Come on. Do it, C. I deserve it.

SAULSBURY

No.

JESSE

Do it, Goddammit! Smash my head, get back in your car, and forget it ever happened, you understand? Anybody asks, I fucking took off and you never saw me again.

SAULSBURY

Fuck, man. Which rock? This one?

JESSE

Bigger. That one.

Saulsbury lifts a basketball sized boulder over his head.

SAULSBURY

You sure? Goddamn. This is fucked up.

JESSE

Just do it.

SAULSBURY

Okay. You ready? One...

Jesse looks up at the giant rock. Chaz's hands are over his head.

SAULSBURY

Two...

Jesse jumps up, his adrenaline pumping.

JESSE

Wait a minute, wait a minute. Maybe you should hit me with the car.

Saulsbury drops the rock.

SAULSBURY

Shut up. You're a fucking idiot, you know that? Jesus, I was really going to do it.

JESSE

I know. But I wasn't kidding, I...

SAULSBURY

Shut up. You know what? We're going to Vegas. We're five hours out. We get a room, take a shower, and then we'll figure it all out.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - DAY

The Mandalay Bay hotel glimmers like a jewel on the strip.

INT. MANDALAY BAY HOTEL - BEDROOM - DAY

Chaz Saulsbury is on the phone with his mother.

SAULSBURY

I'm okay. I'm fine, Ma. I'll be home soon. No, I don't want to call an attorney. I don't give a shit about an attorney.

In the other room, Jesse looks out of the big glass window. He doesn't move, just stares out, the weight of the world in his blank blue eyes.

SAULSBURY (O.S.)
Well, what did you tell them? You what?
Why did you do that? Oh, fuck, Mom. I'm
hanging up. You don't even know what you
did.

Saulsbury enters the living room. Jesse's still staring out the window.

SAULSBURY
Jesse?

Jesse blinks. He's almost in a trance.

JESSE
You ever have that dream? The one where
you did something, you don't know why,
but you can never go back? It's like
that. Fucking crazy.

SAULSBURY
Jesse. The Feds talked to my mom. Bitch
gave us up. They know we're in Vegas.
They've got my license plate.

Jesse finally turns around.

SAULSBURY
We gotta go, man.

Jesse nods.

JESSE
LA. Let's go to LA.

SAULSBURY
LA?

JESSE
I got to find my father. He'll know what
to do.

MONTAGE

Saulsbury's Audi takes the I-15 back to Los Angeles. Through the Nevada desert and Death Valley. A flat out burn out through Barstow, Baker and the Pear Blossom highway. Down through Valencia, and soon they are back on the I-5, heading for the 118.

SUPERIMPOSE: SAN FERNANDO VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

EXT. SWEENEY HOUSE - DAY

The boys and the Audi, dirty and road-weary, stop in front of a shitty, one-story, Spanish style house. Chaz Saulsbury gets out of the car and knocks on the door. Mary Sweeney answers.

SAULSBURY

Is Duff here? I have information about Jesse Hollywood.

MARY

We're not interested. We have enough problems. You need to leave.

SWEENEY

Be quiet, Mary.

CHRIS "DUFF" SWEENEY comes to the door. He's balding, but his blond hair is to his shoulders.

SWEENEY

Who are you?

SAULSBURY

A friend. Jesse wants to get ahold of his father, and needs your help.

MARY

No, we don't want to have anything to do with that...

SWEENEY

Shut up, Goddammit! What's the message?

SAULSBURY

Tell him that the rabbit has crawled out from under his rock. Needs to talk to him.

SWEENEY

That's it?

SAULSBURY

Sagebrush Cantina, 2 o'clock. If he meets me there, I'll take him to him.

EXT. SAGEBRUSH CANTINA - DAY - TIME LAPSE

Chaz Saulsbury checks his watch. He's watching the cars come in and out of the parking lot. There's a lot of people, but none of them are Jack Hollywood. Finally, he gives up.

INT. COUNTRY INN - CALABASAS, CA - DAY

When Chaz enters the hotel room, Jesse doesn't look up. On the television is the news. Jesse's picture is full screen and the reporter is asking for the public's help in catching him. When the story changes, Jesse looks up.

SAULSBURY

He didn't show.

Jesse's face falls.

SAULSBURY
Maybe he thought it was a setup. Maybe
he's being watched. Who knows?

Jesse's expression fails to hide his disappointment.

SAULSBURY
Let's go to Mexico, bro.

JESSE
Yeah, I don't know.

SAULSBURY
Jesse, come on. I got to get home, man.
I got a life. I know this is the worst
time for you, but I can't do this
forever.

JESSE
Okay, man. I get it. You're right. But
I mean, what the fuck? You can't just
leave me here. Will you drive me to
Roberts' house? If that's a wash, I
promise, we go to Mexico.

EXT. JOHN ROBERTS' HOUSE - MAGIC HOUR

Saulsbury's Audi pulls up in front of John Roberts house, not
even a mile from home.

INT. SAULSBURY'S AUDI - MAGIC HOUR

Jesse turns around before getting out.

JESSE
I'll be right back.

SAULSBURY
Okay.

JESSE
I mean it. Five minutes.

SAULSBURY
Alright, I'll wait for you.

Jesse hops out of the car, goes to the back of the house.

EXT. JOHN ROBERTS HOUSE - DAY

The shot is wide. Jesse disappears. The Audi waits for a long
time, and then makes a U-turn and drives away.

THE EPILOGUE SCROLLS:

WILLIAM SKIDMORE RECEIVED 9 YEARS IN STATE PRISON FOR HIS ROLE IN THE KIDNAPPING OF NICK MARKOWITZ.

GRAHAM PRESSLEY WAS CONVICTED OF 2ND DEGREE MURDER. HE WAS TRIED AS AN ADULT BUT SENTENCED AS A JUVENILE AND IS REMANDED TO THE CALIFORNIA YOUTH AUTHORITY UNTIL THE AGE OF TWENTY-FIVE.

JESSE RUGGE WAS CONVICTED OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE AGGRAVATED KIDNAPPING AND RECEIVED A LIFE SENTENCE.

RYAN HOYT WAS CONVICTED OF KIDNAPPING AND 1ST DEGREE MURDER. HE IS CURRENTLY ON DEATH ROW AT SAN QUENTIN STATE PRISON.

AFTER ENTERING JOHN ROBERTS' HOUSE ON AUGUST 23, 2000, JESSE JAMES HOLLYWOOD DISAPPEARED. DESPITE BEING ON THE FBI'S 10 MOST WANTED LIST, HE HAS NEVER BEEN SEEN OR HEARD FROM AGAIN.

INTERVIEW #13

Jack Hollywood is back. He seems comfortable in front of the camera as he finishes our story.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

When I think about the boys, I will always remember them as baseball players that I coached in Little League. Skidmore was a center fielder. Fast, you could play him at any position, you never had to worry. Rugge was a second baseman and a leadoff hitter. Hoyt was a first baseman, slow, but good with the glove and could hit for a little power. And Jesse, my boy, oh man, he was beautiful. Our starting pitcher, he didn't overpower you, but he hit his spots and kept you off balance. Breaking ball, fastball, he had it all. The hours we spent practicing, playing catch. He could hit a matchbox from 60 feet 6 inches with any pitch you wanted.

INTERVIEWER

Baseball, huh?

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Yeah. That's what I wanted for him. To live a normal life. Maybe outside the system, but you know, house, family, kids. He'd do his thing, I'd do mine. Maybe buy a few houses together, fix them up.

INTERVIEWER

Right. So, what happened? What happened to Jesse? Where do you think he is he now?

JACK HOLLYWOOD

There it is.

INTERVIEWER

What?

JACK HOLLYWOOD

The million dollar question. What you, the cops, the FBI, the DA, everybody wants to know.

INTERVIEWER

Hey, I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't ask.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

Yeah, I understand.

INTERVIEWER

Someone had to help him get out of the country. Someone has to be sending him money.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

I don't know what you're talking about.

INTERVIEWER

Come on, I've got a story to write, and it's my job to make it real. Either I know, or I have to make it up.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

What happened, huh?

Jack Hollywood smiles as he reflects. After all the years, he still delights in skirting the rules. His face is like a lizard's - still, implacable. But the eyes are alive.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

I tell you what. Of course, I can't say anything on the record. The authorities would love to put me away for obstruction or contempt or any other fucking thing that they can think of. But if you turn that camera off, I might be able to take you a little further down the road.

The Interviewer fumbles with the camera. The image shakes, and the frame goes cockeyed, but it doesn't turn off.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

We good? Alright.

Jack gets up, lights a cigarette, walks in and out of the frame.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

When you're in the business I'm in, if you're smart, you prepare for a day when the cops are breaking down your door.

(MORE)

JACK HOLLYWOOD (cont'd)

You set up all these outs for yourself. Escape routes, contingencies. I just never thought I'd use them for my kid. So when I went to see Jesse, of course I knew I was being watched. I had a million Feds up my ass, so I had to get cute.

EXT. WEST HILLS STREETS - DAY

Jack Hollywood moves down the sidewalk. We see the surveillance - A sedan parked on the corner, another behind him, a woman on walking a dog and talking into a headset. They all surreptitiously follow him, keep him in their sights. But Jack turns into a cul-de-sac, walks through a neighbor's yard, and hops the fence. On the other side, a car is waiting. Jack jumps in, and the car takes off.

EXT. INGLEWOOD AREA - DAY

Jack has lost his tail. But just to be sure, the car drops Jack off on another cul-de-sac, and Jack hops another fence, where another car is waiting. Inside the car is Jesse James Hollywood. Jack grabs his son's face, kisses him, hangs on for dear life.

JACK HOLLYWOOD (V.O.)

When I saw my kid in that car, it was the greatest moment of my life. I had him, you know? Right in my hands. And I knew it was going to be okay.

INTERVIEW #13 (CONT.)

JACK HOLLYWOOD

We got him out of town. I can't tell you who helped me, or where he went, but we kept him on ice for about five weeks. And on the day we got him out of the country, I had to lose the Feds all over again.

INT. SEDAN - PORT ANGELES, WASHINGTON - DAY

It's an overcast day. Jack is being driven to meet Jesse. In his lap are two baseball gloves.

JACK HOLLYWOOD (V.O.)

I knew I was going to see my boy for maybe the last time, at least the last time for a while, and I wanted to bring him something. It was stupid, but I couldn't think of anything else.

EXT. SEASIDE - PORT ANGELES - WASHINGTON - DAY

The sedan pulls up to a grassy area not far from the water. On a rock sits Jesse, and when Jack gets out of the car, the father and son embrace one another. They talk for a moment, and then Jack hands him a glove.

The first image of a boat can be seen peeking through the fog. And while they wait for it to come and get Jesse, he and his father play catch. Finally, the boat arrives, and Jesse gets on. Jack watches as the boat disappears into the mist.

INTERVIEW #13 (CONT.)

JACK HOLLYWOOD

That was it. He was off to his new life. Of course, if he slips up, he's dead. What, you don't think they're going to give him the death penalty? I just wish that...

Jack Hollywood notices the camera. He looks directly into the lens.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

This is still fucking on, isn't it? You're in a lot of trouble, fucko.

He walks straight toward the camera. His face becomes huge.

JACK HOLLYWOOD

(into camera)

Everything I just said is a joke. It's bullshit. Just playing around. I take it all back.

The screen goes black.

THE END