

COLD IN JULY

by

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Based on the novel by
Joe R. Lansdale

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*A dark, dusty landscape stretches out to the horizon.
The sun dips below the vanishing point, its red-golden
rays just starting to fade.*

Three figures ride into the sunset. Only they don't move.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

PULL BACK to reveal what we are actually seeing: An old landscape painting hanging on a wood panelled wall.

TITLE: "East Texas, 1989".

Pull back wider to take in the rest of the quaint living room, and even wider until we're halfway down a long hallway, a bedroom door on either side.

The house is still.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

A couple sleeps quietly in bed. The frame is still. The only sounds are the muted crickets outside and the soft breathing from the man, RICHARD DANE (35). Beside him, his wife ANN DANE (33) lies wrapped in the shadows.

A long beat of dead silence... And then WE HEAR IT.

Glass breaks somewhere in the house. Quiet. Almost inaudible.

Another beat. Another quiet echo of a click from somewhere down the hall.

Ann rolls awake onto her side and listens sleepily. A snapping sound creeps into the open bedroom door. She rolls over and shakes Dane.

ANN

Richard... wake up...

His eyes pop open. PUSH IN slowly on Dane's face.

ANN (CONT'D)

Shhhhh... listen...

He does. A few beats of silence, then the rasp of a glass door being slid open. He comes up on an elbow and looks at the woman. More sounds from the living room.

DANE

Stay here...

He eases out of bed and pulls on a robe. He moves to the closet silently, opens the door and takes out an old revolver. He reaches for a box of shells on the shelf and spills them on the bed, then grabs a handful and loads the gun with shaking hands.

He looks at Ann, nods, then moves into the hallway with the gun held down. He passes another room and glances in the door. Their son JORDAN (4) sleeps in his tiny bed.

Down the narrow hall Dane sees a flashlight beam playing across the living room, flitting here and there. He inches forward in bare feet on the carpet. At the living room entrance he stops.

A MAN DRESSED ALL IN BLACK stands with his back to him. He shines his light around the room, stopping on the television. He considers it then turns the light on a framed photo on the table. He picks it up and looks it over.

Dane pulls the hammer back on the gun. Click!

Slowly the burglar turns around. His light falls on the man in his pajamas in the hallway with a gun in his hands.

Both men stand like fence posts. Dane squints into the piercing light, his hand trembling as he grips the trigger. Silence.

The burglar finally budes, raising his hands slightly. Dane's reflexes jump at the motion.

BLAM!

The kick back startles Dane as the shot goes off. The other man's head snaps back and the framed photo drops from his hand, shattering on the carpet.

A beat and then the flashlight drops too. Dane watches the flashlight roll to a stop near him. Its beam pools around his bare feet like watery honey.

The burglar stands still then steps back stiffly and sits on the couch as if very tired.

The sound of a trickle from the couch. Dane looks at the man and sees a growing wet spot from between the man's legs. It drips down the cushion. Dane's eyes go to the gun in the man's hand, still smoking.

Dane breaks his trance and picks up the flashlight, pointing it and the gun at the man on the couch. He inches forward slowly, and cocks the gun.

ANN

Richard...

Dane jumps around and Ann stands in the dark in her nightdress.

DANE

Goddamn!

She takes in the broken sliding door... the man on the couch.

ANN

Is he dead...

Dane inches forward, the flashlight glaring at the man lounging on the couch peacefully with a dark red hole where his right eye used to be. A spot of red grows larger on the couch under the man's head. Dane leans in and looks at the man's face closely.

Blood wells where his right eye used to be and spills down his cheek. Push in close on the man's one good eye. It's losing its luster, soft and brown as a doe's.

Dane looks past him at the wall above the couch. The landscape painting is spattered with blood. Dane blinks. Sweat beads his face and his breath is a short pant.

The veins in his temples twitch as his complexion goes green. He can hear his heart beating in his chest. He drops to his knees, steadying himself by holding the dead man's knee.

ANN (CONT'D)

Don't look at him...

Dane looks at the dead man, then at the gore on the wall.

JORDAN

Mommy...

Ann turns to see Jordan stepping out of his room, wiping his sleepy eyes. She blocks his view and carries him back to his room.

Dane rolls and sits on the floor, drained and frightened. He kicks the gun away in disgust. His eyes wander to the framed photo at the man's feet.

Behind the broken glass is an old B&W photo of a MAN in a rocking chair reading a book to a BOY in bed.

INT. TEXAS HOUSEHOLD - NIGHT - LATER

We hear muted voices and activity from the living room. We come across the refrigerator. Bills and notes are clipped under magnets. A calender is open to the month of JULY, 1989.

Red and blue police lights bounce off the windows.

In the living room three uniform police men and other detectives in suits mull about, collecting evidence and studying the scene. They speak in muted voices. One officer is wrapping Dane's gun in plastic.

On the worn couch, the dead man's body is laid out as the coroner zips him in a black plastic body bag. The coroner is wearing a pajama top under his coat and no socks.

Dane stands with his hands in the pockets of his robe as he watches the coroner zip the bag. He sees the dead man's profile, his dark curly hair spilling out from under the cap. Zip. The coroner closes the bag and two other men pick up the body and carry it out the front door.

Dane looks at the floor. A child's coloring book lies open surrounded by crayons. Near the crayons are a pair of fancy cowboy boots. He looks up past the blue slacks, ornate western belt buckle, gun, badge, shirt and tie.

SHERIFF PRICE (40s) looks at him with sympathetic eyes, then reaches out and touches Dane's arm.

PRICE

You okay son...

DANE

Peachy... aside from almost shitting myself...

PRICE

Don't blame you... must have been a scary thing...

Dane nods. He looks at the stained couch where the man sat and died. He glances at the wall, now streaked with blood. He takes a deep breath and dry heaves, leaning over, hands on his knees. Price takes his arm...

PRICE (CONT'D)

You should sit down...

Dane shakes his head and instead opens the fridge. He grabs a can of beer and cracks it open. He looks at the couch, the bloody outline of the burglar's body.

PRICE (CONT'D)
Name was Freddy Russel... been in
and out of the joint most of his
life...

Dane snaps out of it and looks at Price.

DANE
You know him...

PRICE
Like I know shit when I step in
it... scum bag should'a been
killed before he was born...
you're a hero Rich...

Price looks at him with a Hollywood grin.

DANE
I don't feel like one... I feel
sick..

Dane shakes his head.

PRICE
The guy broke in to the wrong
house... he's dead... you're
alive... your family's safe...
happy ending...

Dane picks up the shattered framed photograph from the
couch.

PRICE (CONT'D)
Gonna have to bring you in... make
a formal statement... I'll leave
one of the boys here with Ann and
Jordan...

Dane looks at him.

DANE
Let me tell her...

Dane turns and Ann is standing in the hall, her arms
folded across her, watching them.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT *

Dane sits in the back of the police car in an overcoat
and his pajamas. He watches out the back as they pull
away from his home, the only house for miles. Ann watches
from the porch.

He looks at the officer driving and then at Price in the passenger seat. He sees his own reflection in the rear view mirror. He slumps into the corner, watching the landscape roll by outside.

EXT. TEXAS COUNTY ROAD - NIGHT

The police car rolls along in the night.

It passes a gas station. The flickering neon price sign reads, "Regular- \$1.09 a gallon"...

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER - NIGHT

We see the word "SELF-DEFENSE" as it is typed out... Price pulls a sheet of paper from a typewriter and looks it over. Dane sits at a desk opposite Price in an office separated from an old fashioned jail house by glass windows.

PRICE

It'll go to the grand jury...
they'll no bill you... Should get
wrapped up by the end of the
week...

DANE

What about the courts...

PRICE

It'll never get there... No reason
to...

DANE

You sure...

PRICE

Textbook case of self-defense...
he's a known criminal and you're
an upstanding citizen with no
record...

Dane's eyes go to the old revolver wrapped in plastic on Price's desk. Price notices.

PRICE (CONT'D)

We'll have to keep it a while...

DANE

It belonged to my Father...

Beat.

PRICE

You'll get it back when we're done... He would've been proud of you...

DANE

For killing someone...

PRICE

For protecting your family... He'd understand...

DANE

I wouldn't know...

Beat.

PRICE

It's all over now Rich... go home... we'll take care of it from here...

He puts his hand out. Dane hesitates, then shakes it.

EXT. DANES HOME - NIGHT

Price's car pulls into the driveway where an officer stands under the awning. Dane goes to the front door as the officer nods good night and hops in the car.

The first glimmer of dawn is rising over the horizon.

INT. DANES HOME - LATER - NIGHT

Dane comes into the empty living room. He crosses the floor and sits in a chair. Ann comes in from the hall.

ANN

I got Jordy back to sleep... hopefully he'll think it was just a nightmare...

Dane looks at the blood caking the wall...

Beat.

ANN (CONT'D)

You okay...

His eyes stay on the bloody couch...

DANE

No...

She puts her arms around him. Dane doesn't take his eyes off the bloody mess.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MONTAGE

-Dane and Ann in the kitchen gathering cleaning supplies, Pine-Sol and a bucket and sponges and paper towels and garbage bags.

-Dane and Ann pulling the couch apart and dousing the carpet with cleaner.

-Dane and Ann wiping the bloody wall.

-Ann gathering shards of glass from the carpet as Dane cleans blood from the painting.

-Dane finishes wiring the broken door shut, then stares out into the dark night.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

The bloody wall has been cleaned and the couch is covered in an old painter's drop cloth. Dane drops a wet rag into a soapy bucket of red water. Ann comes in and sprays air freshener.

Dane empties the bucket into the kitchen sink and watches the red swirl down the drain.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER - NIGHT

Ann showers behind him as Dane scrubs his hands in the bathroom sink. She steps out of the shower pulling on a shear robe that clings to her.

She holds him and puts her head on his shoulder. He looks at himself in the mirror, almost jumping at her touch. They stand awkwardly as the sink continues to run.

She kisses his neck softly. Then moves to his ear. Her robe falls open and his hand inches towards her breast.

He closes his eyes. She reaches to unbutton his pants.

Dane lets her go and pulls away. He leans over the sink, breathing deeply. He collects himself, then buttons his undone pants. She closes her robe.

Ann wraps her hair in a towel and leaves Dane at the sink.

EXT. DANE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Red stained trash bags line the curb. The house sits peacefully in the calm East Texas morning.

INT. KITCHEN - DANE'S HOUSE

Little Jordan sits in a chair watching a cartoon. Ann is wearing a sweater and nice dress. She checks her make-up and pours a to-go mug.

Dane comes in wearing a bathrobe. He musses up his son's hair.

DANE
Morning, big guy...

JORDAN
Where all the police mans...

Dane and Ann share a look.

ANN
He could see the lights outside...

They both look at Jordan, then share another look, a silent agreement to be brave in front of their son.

JORDAN
I want seerul daddy...

Dane grabs a bowl and pulls a box down from the cupboard.

ANN
Did you sleep...

DANE
Not really...

He pours milk on the cereal and puts the bowl in front of Jordan, who ignores it and starts looking in the box.

ANN
You shouldn't go to work...

DANE
I can't stay here all day...

He tries to give her a smile just as Jordan pours the box of cereal all over the floor.

DANE (CONT'D)
Damn it buddy... What are you doing...

Dane rips the box out of his hand. Jordan starts to whimper. Ann takes the box from him as Dane tries to clean up the mess. Ann looks at the box.

ANN

Where's the box with the horse...

DANE

What horse...

ANN

I asked you to get the one with the toy in it... the horse... that's all he talks about...

DANE

You never asked me that...

ANN

No... you didn't listen... You were there yesterday...

Dane looks at Jordan who sits pitifully in his seat.

DANE

Big boys don't cry sport, okay...

Jordan looks up at his father. He bounces his head up and down, sniffing. Dane wipes the tears from his eyes.

Ann watches him.

ANN

You sure you don't want to stay home today... Get some sleep...

DANE

Go to work before you're late... I'll drop him off on the way to work...

ANN.

Okay... I'll see you later...

She kisses his head and goes out the door.

INT. BATHROOM/HALLWAY - LATER

Dane has redressed Jordan and is tying his shoe. Jordan squirms.

DANE

Stop jiggling...

JORDAN

Godda go pee...

Dane gets up.

DANE

Go ahead...

Jordan looks up, hesitating.

JORDAN

You gid out...

Dane looks at his son and steps outside. Jordan closes the door.

Dane stands in the hallway, listening to his son pee inside.

Long push in on Dane's weary face. His eyes start to water, and he fights to stay composed. As the toilet flushes, he wipes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

EXT. BEHIND FRAME SHOP - MORNING - LATER

Dane's car pulls up behind the shop and he gets out. He wipes his face with a hanky.

A newspaper boy rides through the lot tossing papers. Dane pulls out his keys and walks to the shop door and lets himself in.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK OF FRAME SHOP - MORNING

Dane is working on a frame. The hired help arrive, an attractive girl named VALERIE, tight dress, tight sweater and a nerdy black kid named JAMES. They all say good morning politely as Valerie and James pour some coffee.

Dane walks to the front of the shop and turns the closed sign around and unlocks the front door. The phone rings and Dane moves to it and picks it up.

DANE

Hello...

ANN (V.O.)

It's me...

DANE

Just a minute...

He turns his back on Valerie and James and stretches the phone cord around the corner.

DANE (CONT'D)

What's up...

INT. SCHOOL - TEACHERS LOUNGE - DAY

Ann stands on a pay phone. A couple of teachers sit at a table drinking coffee. They glance at her behind her back. In the hall a bell rings.

ANN

Richard... it's all over the school... the students keep asking me about it...

Outside the door a few kids gawk at her as they pass.

DANE (V.O.)

Shit... maybe you should go home...

ANN

I can't... I'm supposed to talk to the police later...

DANE

What the hell for...

ANN

I don't know... they want a statement... How are you feeling...

A beat. He lies.

DANE

Fine...

ANN

I'm sorry about this morning...

DANE

No I'm sorry...

ANN

I'll see you tonight...

Click. Dane stares at the phone then hangs up just as the front door bell jingles.

JACK CROW (50s) a sweaty, heavyset mailman enters, swaggering to the desk.

JACK CROW

Man that air conditioner feels
good...

He drops his bag on the floor and looks at Valerie
leaning over her table.

JACK CROW (CONT'D)

Cushy job you folks got here. Good
thing mine keeps me in shape...

He slaps his stomach, still looking at Valerie.

JACK CROW (CONT'D)

Course, you look in fine shape...

VALERIE

TV dinners...

He laughs garishly, then dismisses her and steps to the
counter leaning close and looking into Dane's face.

Dane looks away, but Jack stays at it.

JACK CROW

I hear you got you one last
night... Mack at the paper told
me...

Valerie and James look over.

JACK CROW (CONT'D)

I couldn't believe it was you at
first... Was it a nigger or a
wetback...

DANE

Take it easy...

JACK CROW

Hell... you should be proud... son
of a bitch breaks into my house he
better be ready to pick his teeth
out of his ass hole... I keep a
pump 12 gauge right under the
bed...

DANE

Drop it Jack... Okay...

JACK CROW

It's nothing to be ashamed of
Dick... if it were me...

DANE

My name ain't Dick and it wasn't
you... it was me... you got mail
leave it... if not... move
along...

Long beat as Jack mulls Dane's attitude over.

JACK CROW

You kill one bandito and you get
to talking pretty damn tough...
think you're fucking Clint
Eastwood...

DANE

Just leave Jack...

Jack Crow tosses the mail on the counter and it bounces
and falls to the floor at Dane's feet.

JACK CROW

Enjoy your mail cowboy...

He steps to the door and opens it then turns back.

JACK CROW (CONT'D)

Hope your air conditioner dies...

VALERIE

(to herself)

And I hope a rabid dog chews your
nuts off...

All three men turn and look at her. Jack Crow storms out,
the door clanging shut behind him. Dane and James stare
at Valerie. She blushes.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

He's such a windbag...

INT. KELLY'S DINER - DAY

Dane comes in the door and doesn't make eye contact with
anyone. Conversations get quiet. He goes to the counter
and sits. The WAITRESS steps up to him, her plastic badge
says "Kay".

DANE

Just a coffee...

She pours him a cup and speaks softly.

KAY

I heard what happened...

Dane's jaw tightens.

KAY (CONT'D)
People have big mouths... anyway
I'm sorry... it must be hard...

DANE
Thank you Kay...

KAY
How's Ann taking it...

DANE
Better than me... I'll tell her
you asked for her...

He takes his coffee and moves to a booth. He sits and
leans his head back on the cool leather cushion,
listening to a song on the jukebox.

The diner ambience fades out. He closes his eyes and sits
with his hands on the table, listening to the song.

PRICE
Hey Rich...

When he opens his eyes Price is standing at the counter
with another cop. Kay pours them coffee.

PRICE (CONT'D)
Feeling better...

DANE
Like a bucket of shit...

PRICE
That just means you're human...

DANE
What happens now...

PRICE
We bury the son of a bitch...

Beat.

DANE
When...

PRICE
Tomorrow... Greenley's Cemetery...
courtesy of the county...

DANE
He got any family...

PRICE

Just a father... and guess what...
he's in prison... shit don't fall
far from the tree... huh...

Price counts out some bills and sets them down. The two cops walk out of the diner. Dane watches them go.

INT. LOCKSMITH SHOP - DAY - LATER

Dane comes into the locksmith shop.

Dane looks at the wall of locks and security bolts, alarm systems and window bars around him.

EXT. MAIN STREET TOWN - DAY

Dane comes outside and moves down the street. He passes a furniture shop and stops, looking at the couches in the window. One is a loud patterned couch on sale.

Dane notices it. After a moment he enters the store.

INT. DANE'S SHOP - DAY - LATER

Valerie is sweeping up.

In the back, Dane works on repairing the shattered photo of the man reading to the boy. He peels the protective sheet from the new glass and takes in the image.

VALERIE

That your dad...

Dane looks up. Valerie stands over his shoulder looking at the photo, charmed by the captured moment.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

He's got big hands...

Dane nods, taking in the picture before packing it away.

EXT. DANES HOME - LATER

Dane pulls into the driveway next to a work truck full of painting gear.

INT. DANE'S HOME - LATER - DAY

Jordan is at the table, a mushed bologna sandwich in front of him. Mayonnaise drips from his chin.

Dane comes in the kitchen door. He cleans Jordan's face and pats him on the head.

Dane moves down the hall into the living room. Two painters are finishing up. One is patching the bullet hole where the picture was. A new loud couch is wrapped in plastic.

Ann is standing with her arms folded looking at the couch like it was a turd instead of furniture. She spots Dane and walks into the bedroom, shutting the door behind her. Dane takes a calming breath and moves into the living room. One of the painters wipes his hand on a rag.

DANE

Ted...

TED

Hey Rich... we'll be out of your hair in a little while...

Dane is looking at the bars on the windows. He steps over and inspects the new lock on the door.

TED (CONT'D)

The locksmith left the bill in the kitchen... he overcharged you...

Dane glances at the couch. It looks awkward in the room.

TED (CONT'D)

They took the old one out... Hey Peggy sent over a casserole... I put it in the fridge...

DANE

That was nice of her...tell her thanks...

Dane walks into the hall.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Dane comes into the room and finds Ann sitting on the bed, her elbows on her knees, her hands supporting her head. He closes the door and sits on the bed beside her. She gets up and starts changing out of her work clothes.

ANN

You could have asked me...

DANE

I wasn't thinking...

ANN

It looks like something from outer space...

DANE

We can take it back...

ANN

I thought we made up our minds together on things like that...

DANE

Could we talk about something beside the couch...

She stands in her bra and hangs up her sweater and pulls on a shirt.

ANN

Did you see the locksmith bill...

Dane lays back on the bed looking up at the ceiling. Ann steps out of the room. Dane lays there.

The phone on the table rings. Then it rings again.

ANN (CONT'D)

Can you get that...

Dane stares at the new bars on the bedroom window, not budging. After a ring the answering machine comes on.

PRICE (V.O.)

Richard this is Ray Price... I don't want you or Ann to be alarmed but there's something you should know... Freddy's father Ben Russel was paroled from Huntsville prison yesterday... Probably nothing to worry about... but I figured you'd want to know... if you have any questions feel free to call me...

Dane takes this in. He looks up and Ann is now standing in the door looking at him, concerned.

INT. DANE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ann lies sleeping. Dane sits in a chair by the window. He watches the night outside, then leans and looks out the window as a car moves slowly past and disappears into the night. He sits back and lets out a long breath.

INT. FURNITURE STORE - NEXT DAY

Ann looks through a book of colored fabrics. Outside the store a church bell rings the noon bell. Dane takes notice, checking his watch nervously, surrounded by new couches.

INT. BACK OF THE FRAME SHOP - DAY

The clock on the wall ticks, closing in on one o'clock. Dane works on beveling a frame. He glances at the clock.

He goes back to the edge, lining up the corners to the frame, but it won't sit right. He examines the cut and throws the piece in the scrap pile.

He looks at the clock again. Five minutes to one.

INT. FRONT OF FRAME SHAPE - CONTINUOUS

Valerie is eating her lunch. Dane hurries past her, taking off his apron.

DANE

I got to stop at the bank... lock
up if I don't get back before you
leave...

JAMES

Ain't you gonna eat your
sandwich...

But Dane is already out the door.

EXT. GREENLY'S CEMETERY - ROAD - DAY

Dane drives through the trees to a cemetery, sitting alone on a hillside. The air is heavy like molasses.

Dane slowly passes. He sees two grave diggers struggling with a plain pine box crate as an old preacher stands waiting impatiently, smoking a cigarette in a hurry.

One of the grave diggers is wearing a Hawaiian shirt with red and yellow parrots on it. He makes a joke and his partner laughs. They crank the contraption, lowering the box into the hole quickly.

There is no one else there. Dane passes the grave site and rolls slowly to a stop. He looks in the rearview mirror. No one but the grave diggers. He chews his lip.

He makes a U-turn, rolls into the cemetery and pulls under a set of trees in the shadows. He kills the engine.

The preacher stands over the grave and reads from his Bible. He finishes a passage quickly then walks to his old car, climbs in and pulls out.

Dane watches as the grave diggers push dirt into the hole. Dane looks at the fresh grave. Leaves rustle. Insects click. A bird warbles in the distance...

OLD MAN'S VOICE
(just outside car)
You're Dane aren't you....

Dane spins around at the voice and looks up through the side window. A large shadow falls over him.

A big MAN pulls a pack of smokes from his pocket. He is an older man but strong, like a bull in its prime.

Dane watches mesmerized, then snaps out of it and fumbles with the keys in his hand.

The man leans in and his face fills the window, weathered and pale, his eyes heavy and bloodshot. He stares at Dane with hound dog eyes, spits a fleck of tobacco and lips a cigarette.

Dane can't take his eyes off of him.

RUSSEL
Real nice of you to come... so you
could see the shit go in the
hole... very Christian of you...

Dane takes a deep breath. He glances around the cemetery, checks his rear view mirror, everyone's gone, not a soul in sight.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)
Peaceful huh...

Dane swallows. The man just stares at the grave.

DANE
I'm sure it won't make it any
better for you Mr. Russel... but
I'm sorry for what happened... I
didn't have a choice...

RUSSEL
You're right... I don't feel any
better...

Russel takes a deep drag, exhales smoke into the car, then turns as if about to walk off. But he stops and turns back.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)
Nice picture of your family in the
paper... Your boy looks just like
you...

Dane blinks. His face is sweating. He bites his lip.

DANE
What are you trying to say...

Russel just holds his hound dog stare.

RUSSEL
You have a nice day now...

Dane starts the car engine and pulls away without looking at Russel. He disappears in the rearview mirror as Dane punches the gas.

EXT. TOWN OF LABORDE TEXAS - LATER

A tractor trailer roars by a phone booth on the side of the road. Dane paces inside like a caged animal.

DANE
(to phone)
It's Richard, is she free...
Shit... Tell her not to worry but
to meet me and Jordan at the
police station... No, everything's
fine...

He hangs up as another car rips by the phone booth.

EXT. OUTSIDE DAY SCHOOL - AFTERNOON - LATER

A class full of young preschoolers romp in the school yard. We see young Jordan climbing behind some other boys on the monkey bars.

Dane's car revs past the playground and turns into the parking lot.

The car grinds to a stop. Dane looks around but doesn't see Russel, just other parents mostly women, waiting for their children. Someone says hi to him but he ignores it.

Dane rushes through the others and pulls Jordan off the monkey bars. He pulls him by the hand out of the school yard and towards the car.

He puts Jordan in the car then walks around to the driver's side.

He opens his door and is about to get in when he spots Ben Russel through the fence. Russel is watching the other children playing in the school yard.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Little Jordan sits on Dane's knee at Price's desk drinking a coke and crushing crackers on the desk. Price watches the boy but Dane doesn't make him stop.

PRICE
Who was there first...

DANE
I don't know...

PRICE
He say anything to you at the school...

DANE
No...

Price closes the door to the office.

PRICE
What do you want me to do here...

DANE
I want him arrested...

PRICE
For what... he hasn't done anything...

DANE
He threatened my son...

PRICE
He said your son looked like you... that's not a threat...

DANE
He showed up at Jordan's school...

PRICE
In broad daylight in front of a lot of witnesses... and did nothing... If he wanted to hurt you he would have done it at the cemetery...

DANE

He doesn't want me Ray... He wants my son... I know it... I want protection...

PRICE

We can't do that unless he gives us a legal reason to Rich...

Dane shakes his head, defeated.

PRICE (CONT'D)

Look... Unofficially... I can have a man check on your place... a couple times a day for a few days... give you some peace of mind...

Dane thinks it over. He watches Jordan who is oblivious to the conversation.

PRICE (CONT'D)

I'll do some rounds myself when I can... He probably just wanted to scare you... that's all...

Dane nods, trying to feel good about it.

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY - LATER

Dane, Ann and Jordan sit eating.

ANN

What were you thinking...
Richard... why even go there...

DANE

It was stupid... okay... I fucked up...

Jordan looks up when he hears Dane swear.

ANN

I don't like that word Richard...
not in front of Jordan... What are we supposed to do now...

DANE

I think maybe you and Jordan should stay with your Mom for a while... until this blows over...

ANN

What if he follows us... we'd be putting her in danger too... What about your dad's cabin...

DANE

It's too isolated... I don't even know what shape it's in...

JORDAN

I don't want the idghalada... Daddy... I want chips...

DANE

It's enchilada son and don't talk when other people are talking... it's not polite...

Ann thinks it over.

DANE (CONT'D)

I say we call in sick... Take Jordan out of school for a few days and let the cops take care of it... Let's wait him out... We got bars on the windows and alarms--

JORDAN

But I don't want...

DANE

GODDAMN it Jordan...

Dane slaps the table hard and Jordy's drink spills.

The boy's face collapses and he cries like a banshee. People in the restaurant look.

ANN

Richard...

She picks up the crying boy and carries him out of the restaurant.

Everyone looks. Dane ignores them but is red faced with embarrassment at his outburst. He pulls some bills out of his pocket and leaves them on the table then follows Ann outside.

INT. DANE'S CAR - DAY

Dane screeches to a stop at a red light. Jordan pouts in the back in a car seat. Dane peeks at him in the mirror.

Ann gives Dane a look. Behind them a horn beeps and Dane looks to see the light is green. The horn blares again and Dane slams the car into park and opens his door.

DANE

Asshole...

ANN

Richard...

But he is out and moving towards the car behind him.

DANE

What is your problem man...

He stops when he sees the driver of the car is an old man with thick glasses. The man looks at him with fear. Dane deflates and walks back to his car and gets in. He slams the door and tears out.

ANN

Richard... slow down for Christ's sake...

Dane eases off the gas.

EXT. DRIVE-WAY DANE'S HOME - EVENING - LATER

Dane, Ann and Jordan get out of the car in their drive way. Dane approaches the front door and pulls out his keys... but the door is ajar about three inches.

He stares at the open door and notices the busted lock. Then he scoops Jordan up in one arm and moves back to Ann.

DANE

Get back in the car...

ANN

Richard...

DANE

The lock's busted...

Ann climbs back in the car.

DANE (CONT'D)

Go to the Ferguson's and call the police... ask for Price...

He shoves Jordan in the car seat, then pops the trunk and takes out an old baseball bat.

ANN

Come with us...

DANE

Ann... Get... now...

He slams the car door.

DANE (CONT'D)

I said go...

Ann stares at him for a beat then breaks her gaze and backs out of the drive.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Dane pushes the front door open with the bat and moves into the kitchen. It is empty. He tiptoes into the living room. It too is empty. The back door is wide open.

He tiptoes down the hallway.

A creaking noise echoes from Jordan's bedroom. He turns and peeks in. The noise is coming from Jordan's wide open window, the curtain blowing in a slow rhythm.

The window bars have been opened and they creak back and forth in the wind. Dane closes them and locks the window.

As he does he sees Jordan's teddy bear sitting in the center of the bed. One of its eyes is missing. Cotton spills out from the hole where it used to be.

INT. DANE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dane paces around the kitchen while Ann watches a DETECTIVE examine the busted lock on the front door.

DETECTIVE

Whoever it was knows his way
around alarm systems...

DANE

You know who this was...

Price enters and looks over the alarm system.

PRICE

Can you excuse us a moment
Detective...

He leaves the room. Price takes a seat at the table.

PRICE (CONT'D)
You're right Rich... I was hoping
he'd just move on but it doesn't
look like that's going to
happen... we got reasonable
suspicion so that means we can
give you official protection...

Beat.

PRICE (CONT'D)
Course it would be better to catch
him in the act... but we'd need
your cooperation to do that...

Dane and Ann share a look.

DANE
What do you need us to do...

PRICE
Go on living normally... Go to
work... Take Jordan to school...
Be seen... everywhere you go we'll
have someone watching... Waiting
for him to make a move... And when
he does... We'll make our move...

The room is quiet for a beat.

DANE
So... we're the bait...

PRICE
For want of a better word...
yeah...

Ann goes to the sink. She stares out the window silently.

DANE
What do you say Ann...

She looks at Price. Then at Dane.

ANN
I just want this over...

DANE
Then let's get the sonofabitch...
Starting when...

PRICE
Starting now...

EXT. WOODS OUTSIDE DANE'S HOUSE - LATER

Thunder cracks in the dark sky above. Three police officers spread out quietly amongst the trees, taking position.

INT. DANE'S HOME - LATER - NIGHT

Price and Dane and Ann stand in the living room.

PRICE

I've got men posted in the woods... if he's watching, he's gonna see me drive away... it'll look like I was just making a regular visit...

Suddenly a BIG OFFICER comes out of the basement door. Dane and Ann turn startled.

PRICE (CONT'D)

This is Kevin..... he's gonna stay here with you... He's your insurance policy...

Price looks at Ann and Dane.

ANN

What do we do...

PRICE

Go to bed... get some sleep... Try not to think about any of it...

He exits. Dane locks the door. Kevin takes a seat near the hallway, facing the door.

Dane and Ann peek out the window as Price backs out and drives away. Dane closes the curtain and moves down the hall, Ann behind him. They stop and look in Jordan's room. The boy is sound asleep in his bed. Dane leaves the door ajar and he and Ann enter the master bedroom.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT - LATER

Hidden in the trees, police officers have the property staked out. They sit watching the house and surrounding area with binoculars. Price leans on a tree smoking a cigarette. In the distance, lightning flashes.

INT. DANE'S HOME - NIGHT *

Kevin sits in a chair. He pours himself a coffee from a thermos and reads a magazine.

The camera moves past him and down the hall, past Jordan's room and into the master bedroom.

Ann lays sleeping. Dane is awake looking up at the ceiling. Thunder rolls over the house.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Price glances at his watch. Rain begins to fall slowly at first then increasing. An officer hands him an umbrella.

A man whistles once and Price's eyes dart to the road. Headlights flicker through the trees a half mile away.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

We hear the muffled sound of rain on the roof of the house. Dane lies on the bed with his eyes open. He slides out of bed and grabs a robe from the closet, then closes the door quietly.

He moves into the hall. He looks in Jordan's room. The boy is sleeping. He continues down the hall, into the kitchen and turns on the light.

At the hallway entrance, Kevin spots car lights through the trees and moves to the window looking.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Price and the other officers watch as car headlights come down the road slowly... The men freeze.

The car speeds up and keeps going. Price exhales deeply and drops his smoke. The rain smothers it. His walkie-talkie crackles. Price holds it to his ear.

PRICE

Price here...

EXT. WOODS FURTHER DOWN - NIGHT

Three cops surround Russel's car in a clearing in the woods. One holds a walkie talkie to his ear.

OFFICER
Lieutenant... we just found his
car about a quarter mile south of
you... got a clear view of the
house from here...

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Price's eyes go to the house.

PRICE
Any sign of him...

OFFICER
Nope...

PRICE
Take two men and fan out... see if
you can flush him...

Price clicks off and raises his binoculars. The house is quiet. The kitchen light is on. He focuses in and we see a blurred image of someone at the sink.

INT. DANE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dane warms a glass of milk in the microwave and takes a sip. Kevin watches.

DANE
Any word...

KEVIN
Nothing so far... I'll wake you if
there's any news...

DANE
We appreciate what you're doing...

BAM! Thunder booms. Dane tenses. He finishes the milk and goes to his room.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A cop stands with Price. The wind whips the umbrella inside out and Price hands it to the Officer.

OFFICER
No sign of him Sir... rain's
washed any tracks away... ..

Price looks around, then stares long and hard at the house. The kitchen light is now off.

INT. DANE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dane tucks himself in next to a sleeping Ann. As his head falls on the pillow, we CUT TO something he can't see from his angle:

The bedroom closet door is now open. A slow but steady drip of rain leaks into the closet in a puddle.

In the ceiling of the closet, the door to the crawl space hatch is dangling open.

INT. JORDAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordan's face as he sleeps soundly in the dark.

Lightning strikes and illuminates the silhouette of a large man standing over the bed.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dane lies awake on the bed next to Ann who is out cold. The rain is still pattering the roof but the sound is different than before. Louder. Closer.

Then a louder drip from somewhere in the room. Dane's eyes follow the sound towards the closet.

INT. JORDAN'S BEDROOM

Jordan sleeps. In the darkness Russel sits down on the bed next to the boy. He watches Jordan breathing softly. His stare goes cold, his ice blue eyes a wash of pain, mourning, regret.

Suddenly Jordan rolls a bit and one of his arms hooks over Russel's wrist. Russel looks down at the boy's small delicate hand against the big paw of his own.

Jordan's hand squeezes around Russel's thumb peacefully. Russel's eyes quiver. His large, calloused fingers almost pet the boy's soft hand.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dane gets up, steps over and pulls the door open. Nothing there. The rain beats hard on the roof above, echoing in the closet. A tiny puddle on the floor. Then a drop. He looks up to the open hatch in the ceiling.

DANE

Kevin...

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dane shines a flashlight down the corridor.

DANE

Kevin...

Nothing.

DANE (LOUDER) (CONT'D)

Kevin...

He shines the light down the hall at Kevin's chair.

The chair is tipped over. Kevin is sprawled on the floor unconscious.

DANE (CONT'D)

(yelling)

HE'S IN THE HOUSE!

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Dane's voice echoes across the yard. Price drops his smoke and the walkie talkies light up with panicked voices.

PRICE

He's in the fucking house...
Move...

He and the other officers charge towards the house, a stampede of flashlights and uniforms.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ann bursts out of the bedroom door. But Dane is already on the move. Jordan's bedroom door is shut and locked from the inside. Dane fumbles with the knob.

DANE

JORDAN!!!

Silence on the other side. He backs up to charge.

EXT. FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

Price and his men streak through the rain, tearing through the yard. Flashlights bounce like fireflies.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ann tries to unlock the front door as the police bang on it from outside. Dane slams the door and bounces off.

PUSH IN on the locked door as Dane can only imagine what's waiting on the other side.

He picks up Kevin's chair and slams it into the door. Again. The lock splinters and the door swings in. Dane raises the chair and bursts into the room to find:

Nothing.

Jordan sits up in bed alone, looking at the open window. Rain and wind blow the curtains in.

Ann rushes in and wraps herself around Jordan. Dane looks in the corner.

The empty rocking chair slowly rocks back and forth.

Dane moves to the window, looking out as the rain pours down in the darkness. Cops bark into their walkies.

PRICE

The woods... let's move...

Dane closes the window and sits on the bed. Outside flashlights bounce and voices echo in the darkness.

He holds his son and wife as she sobs on the tiny bed.

EXT. DANE'S HOME - NIGHT

Dane and Ann stand at the door with Price. Groups of officers move about in the woods.

PRICE

We tracked him down to the creek
but the rain's making it hard...

ANN

How'd he get in the house Ray...

Price looks at Jordan sleeping in Ann's arms.

PRICE

He never left... he was in the
crawl space the whole time...

Ann and Dane share a look.

DANE

Jesus...

PRICE

We'll get him... I promise you...

A uniform calls Price over and he heads out through the rain. Cop cars roll out into the night.

Dane and Ann stand alone, surrounded by dark woods on all sides of the house. They shut the front door and lock it.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. DANE'S BEDROOM - MORNING - NEXT DAY

Dane's eyes snap open as the harsh light stabs through the curtain. His head turns to Ann's empty side of the bed. A note lays on her pillow:

"Took Jordy to school with me...".

Dane gets up and moves down the hall. He pauses at Jordan's room and looks in at the empty rocking chair, then moves into the bathroom.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

The coffee pot drips. The clock ticks.

Dane mops a stampede of muddy footprints off the kitchen tiles.

INT. CRAWL SPACE - LATER

Dane's head peeks through the hatchway into the crawl space. It's dark and eerily quiet. Plenty of spaces for someone to hide.

The phone rings off screen.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Dane stands in his bathrobe, the phone to his ear.

DANE

Laredo?

PRICE

(on the phone)

Yep... You know what's there don't you...

Dane doesn't.

PRICE (CONT'D)

Border crossing... piece of shit
went to Mexico...

DANE

Mexico...

PRICE

We called it in and the Federals
picked him up just south of the
border... got him detained down
there for now on account of
breaking parole then he's headed
back to Huntsville... They got him
Rich...

Dane exhales a breath of relief.

PRICE (CONT'D)

Listen... they finished the
paperwork on the Freddy file...
you can pick up your gun today and
get a copy of it... why don't you
stop down and close this out for
good... then you owe me a beer...

Dane smiles. He almost forgot how.

INT. DANE'S CAR - DAY

Dane drives with an old country song on the radio. He
drums out the beat on the steering wheel and pulls up to
the police station.

INT. POLICE STATION ADMINISTRATOR'S DESK - DAY

Dane taps out the beat on the counter as he fills out a
stack of forms. A FEMALE OFFICER comes from the back and
drops a large stack of paperwork in front of him.

FEMALE OFFICER

That's it... Fill out these last
two and I'll be back with your
weapon and the release...

She disappears in the back and Dane signs the last form.
He puts the pen down and waits for her to return.

He looks around the small cement block room. A phone
rings somewhere else in the office.

He starts reading the posters stacked and pinned over
each other on the bulletin board on the wall.

Emergency numbers. Crime statistics. Fund raisers. And wanted posters. One hard looking face after another.

Then he spots the piece of a familiar name on one poster. He pushes a few out of the way to see the name in full: "RUSSEL" printed on a poster buried behind two others.

He stops pacing. He lifts the corners of the new posters and pulls one out a little and we see the full name:

"FREDERICK RUSSEL: Wanted. Aggravated Assault. Armed Robbery."

He clears off the poster to get a look at the man he killed. But the face in the picture is not familiar.

This one has blonde hair... Blue eyes... Fair skin.

...He looks nothing like the man Dane shot.

INT. PRICE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Dane enters holding up the poster.

PRICE

What you got there...

Dane holds the poster out to Price.

DANE

What's this...

Price takes the poster and gives it a quick look, then crumples it and tosses it in a garbage can.

PRICE

Old news...

DANE

It says Freddy Russel...

PRICE

So...

DANE

So that's not the guy I shot... Is there some kind of mistake...

Price exhales and shakes his head.

PRICE

That's Freddy... It's a bad mug shot ... and not a very recent one... people change Rich...

DANE

Not that much...

PRICE

Maybe your memory's a little
fuzzy...

DANE

I looked in his face when he
died... That's not the guy...

The officer comes to the door with Dane's gun and
paperwork. Price takes them from her and shuts the door.

PRICE

You were in shock... it's
natural... I've seen people block
out memories like this all
together... that's the brain's way
of dealing with it sometimes...
Now go home and let me handle the
police work...

Price slides the clipboard in front of Dane. Dane's eyes
go from Price to the garbage can. He can't let it go.

DANE

Can I see that picture again...

PRICE

Look... You're on the wrong horse
here... don't ride it to death...
you came to me and I helped you...
you're safe... your family's
safe... You want the gun back or
not...

Dane thinks it over and signs the form.

DANE

What if you're the one making the
mistake...

But Price hands him the gun and is already leading him to
the door.

PRICE

Give my regards to Ann....

With that Price hustles Dane out of the station and shuts
the door. Dane is left standing alone in the hall.

INT. DANE'S FRAME SHOP - AFTERNOON

Dane sits alone at his desk. A newspaper cutout of Freddy's death sits in front of him.

He looks up at pictures on the wall. Portraits of faces. All kinds of faces.

INT. DANE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ann is out cold in bed. Dane lies next to her staring at the clock. 10:30 PM.

He gets up and moves through the house.

He goes in the kitchen and pours himself a glass of milk. He looks out the window.

He picks up the phone and dials.

PRICE
Sheriff's Office...

DANE
Ray... this is Richard Dane...

A hollow beat.

PRICE
What is it Rich...

DANE
That wanted poster... it's bugging me... That wasn't him Ray... I--

PRICE
We been through this... it's late... I'm busy... give it a rest...

DANE
Just hear me out...

PRICE
I did... I been hearing you out all week... I got other people to help Rich... You're not the only with problems... now get some sleep...

Click. Price hangs up.

Dane stares at the phone. He quickly re-dials. A YOUNG COP answers.

YOUNG COP
Sheriff's Office...

PRICE
Lieutenant Price please...

The voice on the other end hesitates.

YOUNG COP
He's unavailable at the moment...
Can I give him a message...

Dane hangs up. He stares out the window.

EXT. DANE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dane comes out the door and locks it behind him. He looks up and down the street then walks to his car and gets in. He starts the engine and pulls out.

EXT. COUNTY ROADS - NIGHT

Dane drives. Empty back roads.

EXT. PARKING LOT POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Dane pulls up and parks. He sits in his car looking at the police station. The parking lot is almost empty.

He is about to get out when a buzzer sounds and the side door of the station opens. Two cops drag a man out in handcuffs. Dane watches in the rearview mirror.

The man is Ben Russel.

Price follows them outside. Russel struggles and one of the cops punches him in the kidney and Russel buckles. They drag him to an unmarked car where another man waits behind the wheel.

They push Russel in the car and get in back with him. Price gets in the passenger's seat.

Dane ducks down as the car slowly pulls around the station and through the parking lot and down the road.

A few moments pass. Dane's face as he takes this all in.

He makes up his mind and starts his engine. He pulls out with his lights off and follows the unmarked car.

EXT. COUNTY ROADS - NIGHT

The unmarked car drives down country lanes in the deep woods. No other cars in sight.

Dane's car follows at a distance.

EXT. OLD DESERTED RAIL TRESTLE - NIGHT

The unmarked car sits. The two cops have Russel against the car and Price holds him.

The driver stands with a hypodermic needle and a bottle. He fills the needle and moves in front of Russel who kicks out but Price and the cops slam him onto the hood.

They roll up his sleeve and the man plunges the needle into Russel's arm. Russel's body goes limp.

The two cops drag Russel's unconscious body to the tracks and lay it across the rails.

Price walks up with a bottle of booze and opens it. He pours the booze all over Russel and breaks the bottle on the tracks.

He leans down and checks Russel's eyes then looks at his watch. He takes the cuffs off Russel.

The driver nods and all four men get in the car.

They drive away.

We pull back to reveal Dane in the trees above watching.

The night is still...

And then a train whistle blows in the distance.

Dane looks. A ways off a train is coming.

Dane runs from the trees to his car and jumps in and tears out.

EXT. OLD DESERTED RAIL TRESTLE - NIGHT

Dane's car slides to a stop kicking up dust. He jumps out and runs for the tracks.

He looks. The train is closing...

He rushes over to Russel's inert body. He slaps Russel's face a few times. Russel is out cold.

The train is closing...

Dane bends and grabs Russel beneath the arms and begins dragging him off the track.

The train whistle blows. The train closes...

Russel's shoelace catches on a loose railroad spike.

Dane yanks the heavy man.

The train closes...

Dane yanks and the whole shoe comes off. He drags Russel off the tracks and falls on his butt sprawling.

A second later the train roars past, demolishing the shoe as Dane watches. Cars whip past, kicking up dust and screaming into the night.

Then it's gone. Dane sits with the inert Russel in front of him. The train whistle fades as it roars away. Dane looks at the mutilated shoe.

EXT. DANE'S CAR ON BACK WOODS ROAD - NIGHT

Dane drives through twisting, unused dirt roads. He comes to a stop at an old beat down hunting cabin. It hasn't been used in years.

Dane gets out of the car and pops the trunk.

Russel is inside, still unconscious.

INT. HUNTING CABIN - NIGHT

An old fashioned coffee pot perks. We pull out to reveal an old pot bellied camp stove.

We pan down and there is a thick chain attached to the clawed leg of the stove.

We follow the chain and see Russel is tied and chained to the stove. His ankles are pad locked into the chain.

His eyes open slowly and adjust to the light.

Dane is sitting in a rocking chair watching him. He stands and pours himself a cup of coffee.

Russel watches as Dane sits in the rocking chair again.

The two men look at each other as Dane sips his coffee, not quite able to look Russel in the eyes.

DANE

Why do the cops want you dead...

Dane pours another cup of coffee. He sets it in front of Russel and loosens a rope so Russel can move his hands.

DANE (CONT'D)

Go ahead...

Russel reaches out with his bound hands and picks up the cup and takes a sip of the black coffee.

RUSSEL

Same reason you do...

Dane shakes his head.

DANE

What if I didn't kill your son...

Russel sizes up Dane, not sure what to think.

RUSSEL

Fuck you...

Russel looks at the chains.

DANE

There's no one around for miles so
don't bother yelling for help...
You're safer here than anywhere
else...

He gets up and goes to the front door.

RUSSEL

What are you going to do with
me...

DANE

I'll come back tomorrow... I got
some thinking to do...

Russel sits in silence as Dane leaves and shuts the door.

INT. DANE'S HOUSE LATE NIGHT

Dane slides into bed next to the sleeping Ann. She rolls over and puts her arm over his chest.

ANN

You okay...

DANE

Yeah... couldn't sleep so I went
for a walk... go back to bed...

She snuggles into the crook of his arm. Dane stares up at the ceiling.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Ann is checking prices. Dane pushes Jordan in the cart.

Ann knocks a roll of paper towel down and bends to pick it up and notices Dane's shoes. They are caked in mud and dirt.

She stands.

ANN

What happened to your shoes...

Dane looks down at his feet.

DANE

Oh... I drove out and checked on the cabin yesterday... must have stepped in some muck...

ANN

I thought you didn't like going there...

DANE

I don't but... Figured I got to clean it out sometime...

She raises her eyebrows.

ANN

And...

DANE

Dad didn't leave much behind...

She thinks about it for a beat.

ANN

What's that for...

Dane puts a gallon jug of water in the cart.

DANE

For the shop...

EXT. COUNTY ROAD - AFTERNOON - LATER

Dane drives. Ann sits next to him. Jordan is in the back in a car seat.

Dane is stopped at a railroad crossing. The gate is down and a train is roaring past. The sound of the cars shrieking by almost hypnotizes Dane.

He looks in his mirror and there is a cop car behind him. Two cops with dark sunglasses.

The train roars away.

Then a long beat.

ANN

Richard...

He looks from the mirror to her. The cop beeps his horn and Dane looks.

The train is gone and the gate is up. Dane pulls across the tracks and the cop car pulls around him and takes off. Dane's grip on the steering wheel relaxes.

EXT. HUNTING CABIN - NIGHT

Dane pulls down the dirt road and in front of the cabin. He looks and sees Russel on the porch, still bound up, but he has dragged the stove half out the door.

Dane gets out of the car with a bag of fast food. He pulls the gallon bottle of water from the car. He walks up to the porch and looks down on Russel.

DANE

We need to talk Mr. Russel...

Dane goes past him, around the stove and into the cabin.

INT. HUNTING CABIN - NIGHT

Russel is back in his chair. Dane has a burger and fries on the table and he puts a straw in the soda. Russel eyes the burger. Dane pushes the food in front of him.

Russel uses his bound hands to tear into the burger.

DANE

I think the cops have been lying to me from the start...

Russel barely chews as he eats. There's no sign he's even listening.

DANE (CONT'D)
And if so they've been lying to
you too...

Russel doesn't answer, just finishes the burger. Dane pulls the fries away from him.

DANE (CONT'D)
You gonna talk to me...

Beat.

RUSSEL
Where's my shoe...

Dane goes to the closet and finds an old pair of hunting boots. He dusts them off and sets them next to Russel.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)
What's in this for you...

DANE
They used my family as bait...
they almost got my son killed... I
want to know why...

Dane slides the fries back to him.

DANE (CONT'D)
But I don't know who to trust...

Russel sizes up Dane while he chews.

RUSSEL
You got my smokes...

Dane pulls out Russel's pack of cigarettes. He slides one out and puts it in Russel's mouth, then takes out some matches and lights it.

Russel inhales deeply on the smoke and then exhales.

DANE
When was the last time you heard
from your son...

Russel's eyes drop at the mention of Freddy.

RUSSEL
Not since he was a little kid... I
wrote him letters... He never
wrote back...

DANE

Were you going to see him when you got out...

RUSSEL

What the fuck else would I do after 20 years... That's all I thought about...

He looks at Dane and that ice cold stare comes back.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)

And then they tell me you shot him in the head... Imagine that was your boy...

Before he can think, Dane slaps Russel across the face. Surprised at himself, he leans back in his chair.

DANE

Don't mention my family again...

Russel dabs a spot of blood from his lip.

RUSSEL

Fair enough...

DANE

If I'm right about this... And I didn't kill your son... then you got no concern with mine...

Beat. Dane thinks it through.

DANE (CONT'D)

There's only one way to find out...

The two men look at each other.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Rain pours down on Dane's windshield.

His car rolls into the cemetery. He parks in the shadows under some trees. Russel pops up from under a blanket in the back seat, still tied up. He crawls out of the car.

Dane watches the rain pour down outside and he catches himself in the rearview mirror. Russel opens the car door and looks down at him.

RUSSEL

You backing out...

Dane gets out and grabs two shovels from the back. He hands one to Russel and they start off into the deserted cemetery.

They come up to the fresh grave and Russel leans on his shovel.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)
I'm gonna need my arms free...

Dane stares at the large old man.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)
Or you can dig it yourself...

After a beat Dane pulls a knife from his jacket. Russel looks at the knife. Dane notices.

Dane steps over and cuts the ropes around Russel's arms. Russel looks at the rope around his wrists. He looks at Dane who shakes his head.

DANE
Let's make this quick...

Russel lifts the shovel and stomps it into the loose earth and begins to dig. Dane looks around once then joins him.

They dig the grave up in silence. After a time Russel stops to catch his breath. He looks at Dane as Dane digs.

Russel is holding his shovel. Dane's back is to him.

Beat. Dane glances up. Russel looks down.

Russel begins to dig again.

They wipe the rain from their faces as they tear furiously at the earth. Russel digs in a frenzy. Dane stops to watch the old man as he tears through the mud, panting.

Bang! Russel hits wood. They both stop. Dane studies the old man's face. It is fearful of what they will find. He reaches in his jacket and hands Russel a flashlight.

Dane uses a screw driver to loosen the nails and pries the plywood lid up, then looks at Russel, who holds the flashlight. Dane tries to read his face.

RUSSEL
Just do it...

Dane lifts the lid of the coffin. The two men stare at what is inside. The growing storm drenches the hole.

A Frankenstein face greets them. The eye has been filled in with wax. The hands are crossed on the chest. The naked body is wrapped in a soiled sheet.

Russel lets out a long breath and leans on the dirt wall, trying to steady his breathing. Dane waits for a reaction.

Russel grasps for mud and roots to hold himself up.

Russel gets his breath and looks down into the coffin again. His eyes go to Dane who stands waiting. Russel gets control of himself. He looks down again.

DANE

You believe me now...

Russel nods, a new purpose to his movement. He shines the light on the corpse's hands and we see the finger tips have been snipped off.

RUSSEL

Look at his fingers...

DANE

Jesus...

RUSSEL

And the teeth...

Russel pulls the lower jaw open and shines the light on a set of mangled gums. We see the corpse has no teeth.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)

Someone don't want this fella'
identified...

He puts the light out and climbs out of the muddy grave.

Dane goes to climb out of the hole. He looks up and Russel holds out his hand to help him out. Dane looks at the hand for a beat then takes it.

Dane pulls the knife out and cuts the ropes around Russel's wrists. Both men pick up their shovels and start filling in the grave.

INT. DINER - FAR OUT OF TOWN - NIGHT

The truck stop diner is quiet. Outside the rain pours down. The two mud soaked men sit at a corner table. Russel eats. Dane drinks coffee. He notices Russel's large hands as he eats.

They sit in silence, weighing the options.

DANE

Guy that drove you out to the tracks... You know him...

Russel shakes his head.

RUSSEL

Didn't look like a cop... Maybe higher up...

Dane plays with some loose change on the table.

DANE

What if we talk to the wrong people about this... Lived here my whole life and I don't know who to trust with this...

Russel leans back in his seat.

RUSSEL

I used to know a guy... Kind of different... Not local, this was down in Houston... I did some work for him before I got stupid... Got some letters from him when I went away... then we lost touch...

DANE

What about him...

RUSSEL

He was a private investigator... You needed to find someone... he was the guy...

DANE

That was a while ago... how do you know you can trust him now...

RUSSEL

Like I said... Jim Bob's different...

Dane finishes his coffee. He slides a quarter to Russel.

DANE

You know his number...

INT. DANE'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

Dane is dressed in sweat pants and a tee shirt. He is loading the washer with his muddy clothes.

The door at the top of the stair opens and he looks up.
Ann is standing at the top of the stairs.

DANE

It's only me...

Ann comes down the steps and looks at Dane. She takes in
the muddy clothes, his filthy hands.

ANN

You scared the hell out of me
Richard... what are you doing...

DANE

I got stuck in the storm on my way
home... didn't want to track it
through the house... sorry...

He stuffs the clothes in the washer and shuts the door.
He goes to pour some detergent in but Ann comes over and
stops him.

ANN

That's bleach... you'll ruin
them...

She takes the bottle from him and picks up another. She
sprinkles it in and turns the washer on. It kicks in and
starts filling.

ANN (CONT'D)

I swear... it's like I have two
children... go on up and take a
shower... You're not getting in
bed like that...

Dane gives her rump a swat.

DANE

Thanks mom...

Ann swats back at him as he goes up the stairs.

INT. DANE'S SHOP - NEXT DAY

Dane is working in his shop. Jingle.

The door opens and Price steps inside, his hands fidgety.

PRICE

Morning...

DANE

Ray...

PRICE
You got a minute...

DANE
Yeah...

Dane is packing a box for a photo.

DANE (CONT'D)
What do you need...

PRICE
I was wrong to hang up on you the other night... You're concerned I understand that...

Dane tries to wrap bubble wrap around the photo.

DANE
Forget it... you were right... I got myself all worked up over nothing...

Price helps him get the photo wrapped up and packed.

PRICE
You're taking this well Rich...

DANE
Just glad he's headed back to prison...

Price's face loses some of its confidence.

PRICE
Any day now... Taking a little longer than we hoped to get him back over the border...

DANE
Ray... I'm sure you're doing the best you can... and I appreciate that... Important thing is he's no a threat...

Suddenly a bright red convertible Cadillac pulls up outside his shop. It's got curb feelers, fuzzy dice hang from the mirror and the radio blares a deafening lap steel guitar.

THE MAN behind the wheel looks like a country singer right down to the straw cowboy hat and pointy boots.

He gets out of the car and glances up and down the street, stretches, then steps up to Dane's shop's door.

The door jingles as he enters. He pushes his hat back on his head and takes in the shop. He takes in Price and Dane.

DANE (CONT'D)

Can I help you...

JIM BOB

You Richard Dane...

DANE

That's right....

He looks at Price. Price is eyeing Jim Bob.

JIM BOB

You're the man shot Freddy Russel
ain't you...

Dane just looks at him. Price steps forward.

PRICE

What's that got to do with you...

JIM BOB

Ben Russel's an old friend of
mine... was hoping you might have
some idea where I could find
him...

Dane doesn't know what to say. Price stands tall, eyeing Jim Bob.

PRICE

He left town... You want to know
more you can come down to the
station... This has nothing to do
with Mr. Dane...

Jim Bob smiles.

JIM BOB

Left town huh... Ain't that just
like Ben... He could have stopped
by on the way...

Jim Bob sees Valerie in the back and sizes her up.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

You have any trouble with him...
old Ben's a loose pistol... you
never know when he's gonna go
off...

PRICE

What'd you say your name was...

JIM BOB
I didn't... but thanks for the
information... wish he'd a told me
he was leaving town again... would
have saved me a trip...

He glances out the window of the shop.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
Nice town you got here... real
quaint... how's the food across
the street...

DANE
Not bad...

JIM BOB
Goddamn... Sign says best chicken
fried steak in the county... you
gentlemen have a nice day...

He tips his hat to Valerie and walks out and crosses the
street and goes into the diner.

Price watches him then turns to Dane.

PRICE
That pecker head talks to you
again, you let me know okay...

DANE
Thanks...

Price nods and steps outside. He eyes the red caddy and
takes in the Texas plates that read: "*RED BITCH*".

He climbs in his own car and takes off.

The phone rings and Dane picks it up.

DANE (CONT'D)
Frame shop...

JIM BOB (V.O.)
Mr. Dane... is that cop gone...

DANE
Yes...

Dane looks across the street and we see Jim Bob outside
the diner on a pay phone. He looks across at Dane.

JIM BOB (V.O.)
Name's Jim Bob Luke... I'm the
private investigator Ben Russel
told you about...
(MORE)

JIM BOB (V.O.) (CONT'D)
now you take as long as you
need... then you meet me over
here... you can show me where this
cabin is...

DANE
Give me a half hour...

JIM BOB (V.O.)
Good... gives me time to eat my
steak...

Jim Bob hangs up the phone and heads back into the diner.
Dane glances at the clock and starts sorting orders.

INT. JIM BOB'S RED CADILLAC - DAY

They cruise down the road. Dane stares at a bobble head
stripper dancing on the dashboard.

JIM BOB
Keep staring like that and you're
going to have to tip her...

DANE
That was risky playing with that
detective back there like that...

Jim Bob just smiles.

JIM BOB
I like to enjoy my work Mr.
Dane...

DANE
Just saying you ought to do your
homework first... That was--

JIM BOB
I know who he is... I followed him
to your shop... Right after I
stopped by your wife's school...

DANE
You talked to my wife... You
should have come to me first...

JIM BOB
I already know about you...

DANE
You know what Russel knows and
that isn't much...

JIM BOB

I know you moved your family out to that house last year to get some peace and quiet from living in town... Probably never thought you'd have a break-in in the country did you...

Dane looks out the window.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

I know you and Ann started dating in high school... I know your mom passed away just before Jordan was born... And I know your dad committed suicide when you were a kid--

DANE

Who said it was suicide...

JIM BOB

From what I saw the courts did ...

Beat.

DANE

Yeah well... I never bought that story...

JIM BOB

Got a habit of second guessing the police then too...

DANE

He had a old fashioned sense of right and wrong... I didn't see how suicide fit into that...

Jim Bob watches Dane looking out the window.

DANE (CONT'D)

Make the next left...

INT. HUNTING CABIN - DAY

The clock on the wall reads 3:00 p.m.

Dane sits in a chair. Russel sits smoking. Jim Bob is at the table across from Dane. Take-out Mexican food is laid out on the table.

Jim Bob has a file of news clippings and notes on the table.

JIM BOB

After I got old Hoss's call I did some digging and came up with this.... this one made it all the way down to the Houston paper...

He slides a clipping over where Russel and Dane can see it. Russel puts on a pair of glasses and looks at the clipping. The headline reads: **"Burglar Shot Dead in Laborde"**.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Not on the front page and not on the last... just casually placed right in the middle... Manages to mention Freddy's name four times... just in case someone missed it...

DANE

Why would someone be looking...

Jim Bob pushes another article in front of them.

JIM BOB

This one's six weeks old...

"Dixie Mafia Murder Trial Begins Today - Canary Sings at Mafia Trial"

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Someone got the papers to bury this one on a back page... Only mentioned Freddy's name once...

Dane reads it. *"State's Star Witness to Testify Today"*.

RUSSEL

So Freddy turned state witness...

JIM BOB

Looks like it... Sorry to break it to you Ben... your boy got mixed up with the Dixie Mafia... them boys ain't a lot of fun... found himself in the ass end of a Federal case...

DANE

What's this got to do with Price lying to us...

JIM BOB

Could be a lot of things...

RUSSEL

I don't care who he's running
with... If he's alive I want to
see him...

JIM BOB

Well first we need to relocate...
if Price is as slick as his
mustache then this can't be
headquarters for long... I need to
get you out of the County... plan
what we do next...

He turns to Dane.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Let Price sniff if he wants...
He's got nothing on you... I get
old Hoss here settled in somewhere
out of county I'll get in touch...
For now you go home... act dumb...
Let me do the legwork...

Dane nods.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

You got any clothes here Russel
can change into... he smells like
a fat whore's thighs...

Dane steps over and opens a closet. Some old clothing
hangs there.

DANE

Some of my dad's old hunting
stuff... help yourself to what the
moths ain't ate...

Dane looks at his watch.

DANE (CONT'D)

Lock the door when you leave...

Jim Bob is going through the closet. Russel sits smoking.
Dane and Russel share a look as Dane leaves.

INT. DANE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dane and Ann are on the couch watching TV. Jordan is
asleep between them, his head on Dane's lap. His fist
grasps one of Dane's fingers.

The TV light flickers.

EXT. DANE'S SHOP - MORNING

Dane gets out of his car and walks to the shop door. He lets himself in and turns the open sign around.

Just then he spots a black car with tinted windows parked across the street in a lot. It's the only car in sight.

He is about to turn on the lights to the shop when through the window we see TWO MEN come to the front door.

Dane ducks down under the counter and out of sight. There is a loud knock at the front door. Dane doesn't move.

A large framed photo hangs above him. In the reflection he can see the men at the front door.

They wear matching suits. They look official. And very serious. They knock again. This time louder.

Dane looks closer in the reflection. One of the men is the DRIVER from the night Russel was left on the tracks.

Dane freezes.

The agents peer inside the dark shop, then turn to walk away. Just then a MAN IN A HOODED SWEATSHIRT comes around the corner carrying some boxes and walks into the driver. The boxes fly. The men help the man pick up the boxes then walk across the street to their car.

Dane watches the car pull away. Then: KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

Dane jumps. At the back door the man in the hooded sweatshirt stands waving in at Dane. It's Jim Bob.

Dane opens the door and Jim Bob comes in and puts down the boxes.

DANE

Who were they...

Jim Bob pulls something out of his sweatshirt pocket and flips it open. One side has the driver's photo and an ID number. "*Agent Timothy Glen*".

The other side is an FBI badge.

JIM BOB

Fucking Bastards Incorporated...

Dane is staring at the ID badge.

DANE

Are you crazy...

JIM BOB
Like a fox with hemorrhoids...

He sets the ID badge down, covers it with a sheet of paper and rubs a pencil over the paper, picking up the imprint of the badge.

DANE
What does the FBI have to do with this...

He slides the paper over to Dane.

JIM BOB
That's where me and Russel are staying... you meet us there at 7:30 tonight and I'll see if I can't get you some answers...

He pulls up the hood of the sweatshirt and winks at Dane.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
I just love subterfuge... gets my blood bubbling...

And he's out the door and walking away. He drops the badge in a mailbox outside the shop.

Dane's left dumbfounded.

EXT. HIGHWAY - EVENING

Dane reads from the note as he drives past a road sign:
"Tyler - 40 miles."

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF TYLER - EVENING

The last rays of the sun kiss the landscape.

Dane pulls up to an old, run-down motor lodge with an adjoining Mexican food place and bar.

Across the two lane highway is a drive-in movie theater that has seen better days.

As Dane pulls up he spots Russel, wearing the hunting clothes and sunglasses, sitting outside the food joint at a table eating tacos and drinking a beer. Two other beers sit on the table.

Jim Bob is close by on a phone booth pay phone.

Dane parks and gets out. He walks over to Russel, glancing at Jim Bob who gives him a wave.

Russel slides a beer towards Dane.

RUSSEL

Sit down... have a beer... Jimbo's making a call...

Dane takes a seat and picks up the beer. He sips it. He is looking at Russel who is wearing some of his father's clothes from the hunting cabin.

DANE

The clothes fit you...

RUSSEL

Jim Bob's idea... it's a disguise... what do you think...

He waits for Dane's reply.

DANE

You look like Elmer Fudd...

Russel manages a smile. He stuffs a taco in his mouth and washes it down with beer. Jim Bob hangs up and walks over to join them. Russel hands him a bottle.

JIM BOB

How's it hanging little Hoss...

DANE

Anything new...

JIM BOB

Made a few calls about our Agent friend... Glen... turns out he's assigned to: guess where... Witness Relocation Program... you know what that is...

DANE

They start people over... right... new name... new place... gangsters and shit...

JIM BOB

You get the picture... framer...

He smiles at his own joke.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Gets me thinking... see if the
Dixie boys Freddy's testifying
against find out Freddy's been put
in the ground, well... no point
gunning for a corpse right...

DANE

Right...

JIM BOB

So a John Doe shows up in Price's
county... one town away from where
Freddy lives... all of a sudden
he's got something the Feds
want... a way to make Freddy
disappear... Old Price... he's
just a small town cop... probably
sees a promotion if he plays his
cards right... So he pulls a
little favor...

Behind them the sky has gone dark and the drive-in movie
screen lights up and a movie starts. It is western, men
riding horses into the desert.

DANE

Price was stooging for the Feds...
that's why he lied to me...

JIM BOB

At the start... Then the shit gets
deeper... Old Hoss here shows up
thinking you killed his boy, goes
off the deep end, and now Price
got shit all in between his
toes... he don't want to lose face
with the G-men so he tries to
Snidley Whiplash Big Ben here...
but you Lone Ranger old Russel out
of harm's way and El Kabong
Price's whole rodeo show... you
following me...

Dane nods.

DANE

So who's in that grave... And
where's Freddy...

Russel is watching the movie across the highway. Jim Bob
leans over to Dane.

JIM BOB

One nipple at a time son...

The phone in the booth rings and Jim Bob jumps up.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

That's for me...

He jogs over to the phone and answers it, then slides into the booth and shuts the door.

He glances at Russel who is watching the movie. His eyes gloss over with the recent news.

Dane looks across at the movie. Guns blaze. Horses fall. Men die.

RUSSEL

You want another beer...

He gets up.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)

Come on...

Dane gets up and follows Russel inside the cantina.

INT. MOTOR LODGE CANTINA - NIGHT

The place is moderately peopled. Some Mexican families eating. A few locals at the bar.

He and Russel make their way to the bar.

DANE

Good news about your son...

RUSSEL

If you call taking after his dad
good news...

Russel holds up two fingers to the bartender.

MAN'S VOICE

(offscreen)

Well... if it ain't Josie Wales...

Dane turns to see Jack Crow the mailman at a table filled with empty glasses. He's sitting with a trashy older woman with plaster for make-up and a bad blonde wig.

Crow steps up to them and looks at Dane. He is obviously drunk. He pulls himself up and squares his shoulders, his belly hanging over his pants. But he is a big man.

JACK CROW

You shoot any banditos lately...
cowboy...

DANE

Jack... you're drunk... leave me alone...

JACK CROW

Oooohhh... I don't want to make the gun man mad at me... let me buy you a drink and you can tell me how you shot that greaseball right in the eye...

DANE

I don't want your drink Jack... and I don't want your company...

Jack Crow takes offense.

JACK CROW

Got no time for the little people eh'... let me tell you something Mr. Dane...

He points his finger into Dane's chest but Russel intercepts it and rolls Crow into the bar. Russel places his fingernail on the base of Crow's fingernail and presses hard.

Crow is crippled with pain. Russel digs in harder and Crow winces and starts to whimper.

A few people look but most don't even notice what's happening.

RUSSEL

You want to dance with my friend here... you gonna have to dance with me first...

There are tears of pain in Crow's eyes. Russel lets go and Crow holds his thumb limply. The trashy woman comes over and drags Crow away by the arm. Crow lets her. He throws some money on the table and they leave.

Dane and Russel watch them go. Dane looks at Russel. The bartender brings them their beers. Russel pays.

DANE

You didn't have to do that...

Russel picks up two beers.

RUSSEL

I didn't want to see you have to hurt the fella...

He nods at Dane and walks off. Dane watches him go.

He picks up his beer and follows him outside.

EXT. CANTINA - NIGHT

Jim Bob is watching the movie. Russel gives him a beer and he and Dane sit again.

JIM BOB

Okay here's the deal... them Agents work out of the Houston office... odds are if Freddy has been relocated, it's gonna be somewhere close by... tomorrow me and Hoss head back to Houston...

Dane takes it all in.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Dane if you want to see this thing through you're gonna need to go on a field trip...

Both men just look at him.

DANE

I'd have to tell my wife something...

JIM BOB

Well see if she'll sign your permission slip and meet us back here in a few hours... We ride in the morning... break of dawn...

They all sip their beers and watch the movie across the highway in the night.

EXT. DANE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dane and Ann sit on the porch swing, rocking slowly back and forth. Ann grades papers. Dane finishes leftovers.

ANN

This is kind of sudden isn't it...

DANE

It a good opportunity... the gallery is gonna be huge..... it'll mean a lot for us...

He leans past her to put down his plate.

ANN

You been drinking...

DANE

I stopped and had a couple... I'm celebrating... if I get this contract... well... it'd be big...

Ann puts her work down.

ANN

You're serious about this aren't you... How long would you be gone...

DANE

You know I was so excited I forgot to ask... couple days... no more than a week I figure... you know gallery people... everybody wants to have their input...

ANN

I just don't like the idea of you going to Houston and me and Jordan staying here alone...

DANE

They got him Ann...

ANN

Don't make me sound girlie...

DANE

(lightening the tone)
Then don't think about girlie things...

She pouts.

ANN

Don't tease me Richard...

DANE

You should be happy... I've been waiting for something exciting like this...

ANN

I just don't want you working all the time... You need a break after... everything...

DANE

Maybe this is that break...

She looks in his face and sees what it means to him.

DANE (CONT'D)
I'll call you every day...

Ann stands and picks up an empty glass. Dane pulls her into his lap. She lets him.

They kiss. A warm genuine kiss. It lingers a moment then breaks like a gentle wave.

DANE (CONT'D)
I don't have to leave till
morning...

She gives him a look, just as Jordan comes out to the porch all sleepy eyes and hair tousled in his pajamas...

JORDAN
I woked up...

Ann stands and picks him up.

ANN
Back to bed buster...

She holds him close to Dane's face.

ANN (CONT'D)
Give Daddy a kiss good night...

Jordan leans in and kisses Dane's face.

JORDAN
You smell like beer...

DANE
My new aftershave... You like
it...

Jordan giggles and shakes his head no as Ann smiles and carries him to the doorway. She stops and turns to Dane.

ANN
You want me to get the big
suitcase...

DANE
Nah... I might only be there a day
or two... I'll pack light...

She carries Jordan inside. Dane sits in the swing. His face is a mask of contradictions of emotion.

Lying is coming easy to him lately.

INT. DANE'S BEDROOM - BEFORE SUNRISE

Ann sleeps under the covers. Dane lays beside her, spooning. He's fully dressed and his suitcase sits at the foot of the bed.

He strokes her hair and watches the clock.

INT. JORDAN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jordan sleeps with his arms wrapped around his favorite stuffed animal. Dane comes in and tucks him in. He gives the boy a kiss on the hand.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Outside the window, Dane loads the car and hops in.

PAN OVER to a note left on the fridge:

"I'll be back before you know it."

An engine roar creeps up over the soundtrack.

EXT. INTERSTATE - PRE -DAWN

The red Caddy screams along with Jim Bob at the wheel.

Smokestacks belch flames into the dawn sky. Russel sits in the passenger seat, the glowing embers on his cigarette burning red. Dane is in the backseat.

They rip past bobbing oil derricks and off into the dawn. The sound of flames and churning metal build to a scream.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE GUEST ROOM - MORNING

Dane bolts upright in a tangle of sweat soaked sheets. He takes in the room around him, catching his breath.

The room is small and the bed barely fits him.

EXT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE PORCH - LATER

Dane steps out to find Russel in a chair sipping coffee. In the field by the house a handful of pigs root in the dirt. An old Mexican man fills their trough.

Dane waves hello and sits on the steps. The sun beats down over Jim Bob's old but well kept farm house.

The Red Bitch pulls up to the house in a whirl of dust. Jim Bob gets out with a stack of papers in his hand. Dane moves aside as Jim Bob enters the house.

JIM BOB
Hope you boys like bacon...

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE - LATER

Jim Bob throws a wad of fresh meat in a pan. Dane dries dishes at the sink. Russel sits at the table looking through a stack of printed lists.

JIM BOB
Now since that trial... DMV issued
162 new licenses to males in
Freddy's age range...

He points to a new shorter list on the table.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
Out of that stack, 93 of them
unlucky bastards is married and
there's no record of Freddy hoeing
that road so...

He crumples up the list and tosses it.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
Out of the single dudes we got 47
Caucasians... But a whole 8 of
them's got registered
disabilities...

He sets three cold beers on the table.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
And out of that batch... 28 of 'em
are under six foot...

Russel opens the bottles and passes one to Dane.

RUSSEL
How many of them got blue eyes...

Jim Bobs pulls out a final list.

JIM BOB
A grand total of... Two...

DANE
So we try them both...

JIM BOB

Already did... At least the first
guy...

DANE

And...

JIM BOB

He didn't want any of the
collector edition nativity sets I
tried to sell him... and his
sorry ass still lives at home with
his parents...

He slides the last name to Russel.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

That leaves us with one brand new
license to a Franklin C. Miller...

He puts down a set of photocopied bills.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

The same Mr. Miller who just
ordered cable and a phone line for
his new home outside of Houston...
Previous address unavailable...

DANE

Not bad for a pig farmer...

JIM BOB

That's why I'm the fucking
detective and you build sissy
frames...

Jim Bob picks up the phone. The dial tone sounds.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Only way to be sure is to call
him...

Russel realizes they're looking at him and he freezes.

RUSSEL

What if he don't want to talk to
me...

The dial tone continues to hum in Jim Bob's hand.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)

What am I supposed to say...

JIM BOB

You had the last twenty years to
think about that Ben...

Russel stares at the phone.

RUSSEL
I want to see him first... Make
sure it's him... Then I'll do it.

He gets up and walks away. Jim Bob hangs up the phone.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET HOUSTON - DAY - LATER

The Red Bitch is parked on a tree lined street. Jim Bob is pointing at a pink bricked house down the block.

JIM BOB
That's his house right there...
Not the color I pictured...

RUSSEL
We're not sure it's him...

JIM BOB
You're not sure... But staring at
it ain't going to make it go away
horse... Your move...

Russel takes out a smoke and lights it nervously...

RUSSEL
I'll know when I'm ready... Maybe
drive by... see if he's home...

Jim Bob shoots Dane a look but wheels the Caddy towards the house.

JIM BOB
You want a moment alone or
something Ben...

RUSSEL
You make it sound like it's some
sort of showdown...

Jim Bob stops and begins to back up to the curb.

JIM BOB
Well... in a way, it is...

As he backs the car up, the garage door opens and a blue Chevy Nova backs out and down the drive at top speed.

DANE
Watch out...

Too late. BANG! The Nova slams the rear fender of the Caddy dragging it halfway across the street. Everyone is jolted. A little dog next door starts barking.

JIM BOB
God damn idiot...

RUSSEL
It might be Freddy...

JIM BOB
I don't care if it's Ronald
fucking Reagan...

He opens his door and gets out. Dane and Russel look as the Nova's door opens and a giant Mexican climbs out like King Kong.

He is wearing a blue Hawaiian shirt. He is nearly seven feet tall with a chest like a bloated beer barrel.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
Ain't they got no mirrors in cars
where you come from Chili lips...
What the dog shit is wrong with
you...

The Mexican reaches out and grabs Jim Bob's hat and pulls it down over his eyes so hard Jim Bob goes to his knees. The Mexican knees him in the face. Jim Bob sprawls on his back, stunned. The Mex kicks him in the ribs once. Then again. The little dog crosses the yard and keeps yapping.

Russel gets out of the car, holding a tire iron.

RUSSEL
Hey... That's enough...

The Mexican looks at him like he's crazy. He steps toward Russel who stands his ground, the tire iron in one hand.

JIM BOB
Hey Frito...

The Mexican turns and looks at Jim Bob with a shark's dumb grin.

Jim Bob opens the Nova's car door and slams it into the Mexican's balls. The air goes out of the big man and he grabs his sack falling to his knees.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
That's for my car...

Then Jim Bob spins and hook kicks the Mexican with his heel right in the temple and the Mexican falls over on his side out cold.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

And that's for my hat...

They all look at the fallen giant. Jim Bob picks up his ruined hat and fixes it the best he can and puts it on.

Russel walks over and begins rifling the unconscious man's pockets.

Jim Bob walks up to the front door of the house and rings the bell. Nothing... Russel digs in the man's pocket and pulls out a switch blade.

Jim Bob knocks on the front door loudly. Nothing.

Russel takes out the man's wallet and looks at the ID.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

It ain't Frankie Miller is it...

RUSSEL

No smart ass...

Russel notices something on the unconscious Mexican's ankle, then pulls the man's pant leg up a bit to reveal an ankle holster and a .38 snub nosed revolver.

JIM BOB

Good thing he wasn't in no OK corral mood...

Jim Bob looks at the Chevy Nova pressing against his car. He lashes out and kicks the Nova and with a rusted screech, the trunk pops open. Jim Bob looks in and stops in his tracks.

Dane steps over and looks in the trunk at three large boxes of video tapes with numbered stickers on their spines. There is also a baseball, a bat, and a catcher's mask.

DANE

He's moving...

Jim Bob kicks the Mexican once again then picks up one of the tapes, labelled "Batting Practice 16". He takes it with him.

JIM BOB

Let's see how his swing is...

They climb in the red Caddy and peel away, leaving the crumpled Nova and the passed out Mexican in the driveway. The little dog stands next to him yipping loudly.

EXT. ROAD LEADING TO JIM BOB'S - LATER

Jim Bob checks his beaten face in the mirror.

RUSSEL

What was he doing at Freddy's house with a gun...

JIM BOB

Oh so now it's Freddy's house...

Russel doesn't answer as they pull onto Jim Bob's road.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH SHOWER - DAY - LATER

Hot water gushes from the shower head. Russel steps into the shower and steps under the stream.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Dane stands in the kitchen on the phone. It is ringing on the other end. He waits, watching Jim Bob.

Jim Bob cracks a beer and pops the Mex's tape into the VCR. He rewinds it.

The tape stops rewinding and Jim Bob hits play.

Static and white noise.

Before Jim Bob can stop the tape, another image rolls and fades in and out on the tape.

The other phone line rings. Dane waits.

ANN (V.O.)

(On the answering machine)

We're sorry but we can't come to the phone right now... please leave your name and number and we'll get back to you as soon as possible...

Beep.

The screen blinks on, it ripples, then kicks in. A poorly done title sequence blinks on the screen.

"Batting Practice: Episode 16".

The title does a star wipe to handheld footage of a young Latina girl sitting on a bed.

Dane turns a bit, covering the receiver with his hand.

DANE

It's me... I'm in Houston and
everything's fine... I got a
meeting in a little while so I'll
call you back later let you know
how it went... love you both...

He hangs up and steps closer to the TV.

On the TV the big Mexican steps into the camera's eye
naked, wearing a stocking over his head and a baseball
cap. He mounts the girl on the bed.

JIM BOB

She ain't even old enough to
drive....

Dane doesn't know what to say. The girl in the video
coos.

INT. JIM BOB'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Russel walks in wearing his bath towel and closes the
door behind him.

He goes to the phone holding the paper with Frank
Miller's info.

He gathers himself and starts to dial.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH - CONTINUOUS

Jim Bob fast forwards the video until another person
enters the frame, sped up and grainy.

Jim Bob rewinds and hits play.

On the television a giant hand comes in to wipe a spot
off the lens. Dane watches the TV.

On the TV the hand has pulled away from the lens to
reveal the camera man, a catcher's mask on top of his
head. He blows into the lens, working on a spot on the
glass.

His blue eyes are all too familiar.

JIM BOB

Goddamn...

Then Freddy's face is gone and we pan back to the girl. Her eyes stare out at the camera, drugged and distant.

INT. JIM BOB'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Russel listens to the phone ring on the other end.

He starts breathing heavily.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH - CONTINUOUS

On screen the Mex is standing now, buttoning his baseball jersey. He mumbles to the camera man. And reaches out for the camera.

DANE

Turn this shit off...

Dane reaches for the remote but something stops him. The girl's muffled moans grow to a panicked plea. She's looking off screen at something. She tries to move but we see her hands and feet are bound to the bed.

Freddy appears in the frame, the catcher's mask over his face, a battered and stained aluminum baseball bat in his hands.

As he approaches the bed, cocking back the bat WE PAN off the TV screen and land on Dane's tortured face.

The girl screams something in Spanish but it's cut short by the sound of the bat.

Dane flinches at what he sees on screen. The bat sound rings out again. And again. Dane closes his eyes as Freddy and the Mex laugh over the TV speaker.

CLOSE ON: The faces of Jim Bob and Dane watching out of frame in disbelief as we hear the mayhem from the TV.
(*This scene is played entirely on their faces*)

Jim Bob clicks the VCR off. They sit still. Dead silence.

INT. JIM BOB'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Russel freezes. On the other end, the sound of a phone picking up before a young man clears his throat.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Hello...

Russel can't speak.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Hello...

Russel hangs up.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH - CONTINUOUS

The unmarked cassette now sits on the coffee table. They stare at it like it's a poisonous snake about to strike.

JTM BOB

We ditch the tape... Tell Ben I fucked up... we had the wrong house... Stall him a few more days... Tell him we can't find him... He'd never know any of it...

DANE

What about Freddy... You saw that trunk... There were a lot more where this came from...

JTM BOB

Probably keep on doing what he's doing...

DANE

Does that matter to you...

JIM BOB

Course it does Dane... He's a god damn freak... That little shit deserves a tire iron to the fucking skull...

He finally looks away from the tape of death.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

But we can't say nothing to Ben
about this... not yet...

RUSSEL

About what...

Russel is standing in the hallway with a towel wrapped around his waist. In that instant, he looks like a desperate man. His eyes go to the video tape on the table. Silence hangs in the air.

He goes for the tape but Jim Bob grabs it first.

JIM BOB
You've had a hell of a week Ben...
this ain't something to jump into
right now...

Russel tries to read their faces.

RUSSEL
He's my son Jim... You know
something, you better to tell
me...

JIM BOB
Do yourself a favor Hoss...

It doesn't phase Russel... He holds out his hand... Jim
Bob relents and hands him the tape.

Russel moves to the VCR and pops in the tape, fumbling
for the remote, frustrated with new technology.

RUSSEL
How's this thing work...

Jim Bob shakes his head and motions Dane to the door.

JIM BOB
You'll figure it out...

Russel looks up at Jim Bob with a pleading in his eyes.
Jim Bob pats his shoulder once and leads Dane outside.

The screen door bangs shut and Russel is alone.

His hand points the remote control and hits play.

EXT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Shots of the pigs. The farm. The landscape.

Jim Bob and Dane sit on the fence of the pig sty in the
shade. A breeze blows through the trees. An acorn falls.
A fat pig grunts and plops down in the mud and rolls. The
empty porch swing creaks.

Suddenly the screen door of the house bangs open and
Russel stumbles out in his towel and walks purposely for
Jim Bob. He pulls his arm back and makes a fist. Jim Bob
just watches. He could duck but he doesn't.

The punch loops out and smacks him like a hammer above
the ear, knocking him to the ground. Russel reaches for
Jim Bob's holster and pulls out a revolver. He looks at
Dane then heads for the house.

Dane looks at Jim Bob who moans in the grass, clutching his face. The front door slams again and Russel is back in the house.

DANE

Russel!

He leaves Jim Bob and sprints for the house.

INT. JIM BOB'S FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dane enters the house just as Russel enters the bedroom with the gun and slams the door behind him. The lock clicks.

Dane runs down the hall and tries the door. It doesn't budge.

DANE

Ben! Open the door! Ben!

He pounds on it with his fist.

DANE (CONT'D)

Goddamn it Ben! Open the damn door!

Nothing. He hesitates a minute then backs up and rams the door with his shoulder. The lock shatters and the door flies open.

Russel sits on the bed with the pistol pointed in his mouth, the hammer clicked back. The veins in his face bulge. His eyes are closed.

Dane stops in the doorway, frozen in place.

Beat. Russel's red eyes open. His lips tremble around the gun's barrel. He stares back at Dane.

DANE (CONT'D)

Ben... don't do this...

He steps forward, hand out, palm up.

DANE (CONT'D)

Please...

Russel's finger grips the trigger. The clock on the table ticks. Slowly, Russel lowers the gun and releases the hammer gently.

His face wells up, and his body convulses. Dane takes the gun from him and he empties the bullets into his hand, pocketing the gun.

He goes to put a hand on Russel's shoulder and Russel grabs him hard, burying his face in Dane's chest.

RUSSEL

You sons of bitches...

Dane lets the man hold on to him. Tears stain his shirt. He looks in the mirror and Jim Bob is in the hallway behind him watching, nursing his jaw.

Dane and Jim Bob lock eyes.

EXT. HOG HOUSE JIM BOB'S LAND - SUNSET

Russel sits on the fence by the pasture, smoking. He watches the pigs digging through the mud.

We pull back to reveal Dane on the porch watching Russel.

Jim Bob stands inside the screen door, drinking a beer.

Dane's face as he watches Russel pet one of the pigs.

EXT. JIM BOB'S RANCH - NIGHT

Flames lick the video tape. It sits in a pile of pictures and Jim Bob's headlines. The wallet crinkles and pops in the heat next to it.

Looking out the screen door we see Russel from behind watching the flames before him in a glowing pile in the yard. Empty bottles of Lone Star litter the steps.

He doesn't move.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dane lays in his tiny guest bed. He stares at the ceiling and watches the flames glow against the shadows. The TV plays silently in the corner.

JIM BOB

Can't sleep either...

Dane looks to see Jim Bob in the doorway looking deflated. He slides down the wall and sits on the floor, a pack of frozen peas against his cheek.

DANE

What do we do now...

JIM BOB

Up to Ben... It's his boy...

DANE

You must know some good cops...
Someone we can trust... We could
tip them off... send them the
tape...

Jim Bob sighs.

JIM BOB

I've been thinking the same... But
once it gets to Freddy, the feds
will get involved and they'll just
destroy the tape...

DANE

They're the law... He's killing
little girls...

JIM BOB

Mexican whores probably... Brought
over illegally... You've seen what
these boys will do to protect
their witness... With Ben on the
run I'm not taking any chances
with the cops... That's his
call...

Dane's eyes go to the TV. It's a commercial for Jordan's
cereal. A cartoon horse leaps into the cereal box and a
kid pulls out the toy horse, ecstatically.

Dane turns off the TV and lays back in bed. Silence.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Ain't it a fucked up world...

EXT. RANCH - EARLY MORNING

The sun is just about to come up over the farm yard.

Russel is gone from his spot on the steps, leaving a
circle of empty bottles.

INT. JIM BOB'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The coffee pot drips.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Russel sits on the edge of the tub. He pulls out a
straight razor and looks over its sharp steel blade.

He stands over the sink and lathers up a shaving brush.
He starts to shave his old gray whiskers.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE - MORNING

Russel sits on the bed in his skivvies, clean shaved and showered. He cleans his nails with a nail file. Next to him on the bed is a pair of dress pants and a nice snap button shirt. He pulls the pants on and slips his feet into a pair of new shoes. He grabs the shirt and buttons it, looking in the dresser mirror.

He is a new man.

INT. JIM BOB'S GUEST ROOM - MORNING

PUSH IN slowly on Dane, tangled in his hot, twisted sheets.

A gunshot rings out somewhere outside. Dane jumps.

INT. JIM BOB'S HALLWAY - MORNING

Dane stumbles into the hall, shaking the sleep from his eyes.

Jim Bob, still in his boxers passes him in a hurry.

DANE

Where is he...

EXT. PIG BARN - MORNING

Jim Bob and Dane come across the lawn. Russel stands with his back to them. He aims off screen and fires a pistol into the early morning air.

CUT TO an old scarecrow mounted to the fence. The bullet swipes its arm. Burlap and straw goes flying.

There is no humor in Russel's face. He takes aim again.

JIM BOB

You got a bone to pick with that thing...

RUSSEL

If the law won't do it... I will...

BANG! Russel fires again and nicks the scarecrow's chest, in a puff of dust.

Dane and Jim Bob take this in.

DANE

Jesus Ben...

RUSSEL

Shut up Dane... I brought that
little shit into the world...
Least I can do is take him out of
it...

DANE

You do and you won't be able to
live with yourself...

Russel spins on Dane, the gun in his hand.

RUSSEL

And how I do I live with myself if
I don't...

Dane stands his ground.

DANE

He's your son for Christ's sake...
no matter what he's done... he's
your own flesh and blood...

Russel takes aim again and this time hits the scarecrow's
head dead center. It explodes in half. Debris and shit go
everywhere. The pigs scatter looking for cover.

RUSSEL

That's why I have to...

He turns and walks back towards the house, straight
backed and tall. Jim Bob watches him. Dane looks at the
headless scarecrow in the field.

JIM BOB

I need a goddamn drink...

INT. TEX-MEX BAR - AFTERNOON

A mariachi band starts up on stage. A waitress carries a
tray of beers through the crowd of cowboy hat wearing
men. Couples dance. She makes her way to a back booth and
sets the beers in front of Jim Bob, Russel and Dane.

JIM BOB

Thank you darling...

He watches her walk off. Russel downs half his bottle in
one swig. Jim Bob looks at Dane, then at Russel.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

You thought about how you're gonna do this...

RUSSEL

Just walk up and do it I guess...

JIM BOB

What about the big Mex...

RUSSEL

If he's there I'll shoot him too...

JIM BOB

Good thing you got it all planned out... I was worried you were just gonna wing it...

RUSSEL

Don't get cute... You trying to count yourself in, just say so...

JIM BOB

I've done stuff like this before and you haven't... And don't underestimate the law... You fuck this up and you're either dead or back at Huntsville for good... either way he'll still be out there doing his thing...

They take a shot of whiskey and slam the glasses down. Dane watches them.

RUSSEL

You can back me up but let's make one thing clear... He's my son... I'm pulling the damn trigger...

JIM BOB

Sounds good on paper Ben but if it's shooting at me I'm shooting back no matter who it is...

Slowly both men turn to look at Dane. He stares at his beer.

DANE

You sure you want it this way...

RUSSEL

First thing I've been sure of in a long time...

Russel slams another shot.

JIM BOB

Look Dane... I'm not gonna beat around the bush here and Ben don't know how to ask so I will... we're gonna do this and we could use another set of hands... we need to get close to him and he knows both our faces... Nothing fancy...

Dane looks at Russel, at the new purpose in his eyes.

DANE

I didn't come all the way out here to sit on the sidelines.... I'll stay till you got it planned out...

JIM BOB

Fair enough...

He takes another shot and winces at it.

EXT. TEX MEX BAR PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

They pull out of the parking lot. A little further down the road, they roll past "SILVER SPURS" a roadside gun shop covered with signs.

Reverse on Dane. The window reflection dances over his face as the Red Bitch zooms along.

EXT. SMALL SHACK - NIGHT

The three of them stand on a weathered old porch. The FARMHAND from Jim Bob's ranch leans on the railing. His wife and daughter sit on a beat up couch next to them.

JIM BOB

Boys this here's Manuel... He's in the country legal but he ain't a legal doctor...

MANUEL

Ah... business...

He says something to his wife in Spanish and she takes the little girl inside. She smiles at Dane as she goes.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

The money up front like last time...

JIM BOB

Five hundred up front... If nothing happens to us you keep it... If we get holes in us I'll pay you whatever you need to fix them...

MANUEL

Last time it was five hundred just for you...

JIM BOB

And last time I didn't need you...

The little Mexican man lays it on.

MANUEL

Medicine is expensive... in this country...

JIM BOB

And I pay you good so save the fiddle music... Gonna need a car too... Something inconspicuous... Just a few days...

MANUEL

You can take my brother-in-law's truck... Fifty dollars a day...

JIM BOB

I can get that at Hertz, Manuel... I'll pay you twenty-five for the whole damn time...

MANUEL

It's a deal...

They shake.

JIM BOB

That was too easy...

MANUEL

It's got three flats...

They look out at the old, beat up Rambler sitting like a dead cow in the dirt.

EXT. MANUEL'S FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Dane jacks up the truck while Russel and Jim Bob roll new tires over to him. Manuel's little boy sits on a log nearby, watching them quietly.

EXT. FREDDY'S STREET - EARLY MORNING

The Rambler sits parked on the street. Jim Bob reads a farming magazine while Dane sips coffee. Russel watches the house.

After a moment, the Chevy Nova pulls up the driveway with the Mex behind the wheel. He honks and after a beat, Freddy comes out of the house.

For the first time, Russel actually sees Freddy. His jaw clenches as he watches his son, all grown up. Freddy glances up the street and almost looks right at Russel.

He hops in the Nova and it pulls out.

Russel lets out a deep breath. Dane watches him as Jim Bob shifts into gear.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

The Nova chugs along with the two men inside. A few cars back, the Rambler motors along keeping a safe distance.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - STRIP MALL - MORNING

The Mex's beat up Chevy Nova pulls into a spot in front of a video store. Freddy unlocks the front door and they disappear inside. The sign out front lights up.

The Rambler pulls slowly into a used car lot across from the video store. Jim Bob pulls under an awning.

Inside the store Freddy nods to a SKINNY MAN and steps around the counter. He opens the register and counts out some bills. The skinny man picks up videos and starts re-shelving them. Freddy hands some bills to the Mex.

JIM BOB

The video store's a cover... boy's
got more brains than you Ben...
must take after his momma...

Russel watches Freddy behind the counter. A beat passes and the Mexican comes outside. He crosses the street and heads towards a roadside diner. The three men duck.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Dane I want you to go in and look
around... this may be where we
decide to do it...

DANE

Here...

JIM BOB

It's either here or the house...
look for exit doors, side rooms,
stuff like that... and try to
appear normal...

DANE

What about the Mex...

Jim Bob pulls into the video store lot and parks.

JIM BOB

We'll keep an eye on him... he
starts back I'll beep the horn
twice... just make it quick...

Dane gets out and walks to the store. He glances across
the road where the Mex is entering the diner.

Russel's face as he watches Freddy.

INT. VIDEO STORE - CONTINUOUS

The bell above the door jingles. Dane steps inside and
moves quickly to the new releases, browsing titles.

He scans the store as discreetly as he can. He looks over
at the thin, pale man stacking westerns on the shelf.
Dane's eyes go to an EXIT sign then to the back door.
Another door next to it opens.

Freddy comes out from a back room, now wearing an
expensive looking suit jacket. He carries a box of what
looks like a brand new video camera and puts it on the
counter.

Dane has a hard time looking away. He walks slowly toward
the counter, picking up video boxes and putting them
back. He watches Freddy opening the new camera and then
without looking at Dane:

FREDDY

Is there something I can help you
with sir...

Dane looks around and realizes he's speaking to him.

DANE

Have you got "*Murmur of the
Heart*"... it's a French film...

The man stacking videos answers before Freddy can say
anything.

SKINNY MAN

We don't carry nothing foreign but
some Jap and Mex stuff...

Freddy looks at the man, then leans on the counter and
smiles a friendly smile at Dane.

FREDDY

That's right Sir... only Japanese
and Mexican stuff... maybe a few
British...

SKINNY MAN

We got Limey stuff?

FREDDY

These are modern times George...
I'd prefer you not use offensive
terms like that if you're going to
work for me... okay...

Dane takes in the polite young man behind the counter.

SKINNY MAN

I'm sorry Mr. Miller... I didn't
mean nothing by it...

FREDDY

I'm sure you didn't but I'd prefer
not to hear those kind of racist
remarks in my place of business...
customers or no customers...

SKINNY MAN

Yes sir...

Freddy looks at Dane, still smiling. He pulls out the new
camera, and plugs it in.

FREDDY

Now Sir... is there something else
I can help you with...

INT. JIM BOB'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Russel sits in the shadows of the truck watching his son
intently. Jim Bob's eyes go to the diner's front doors.
The Mex comes out with a bag of takeout and coffees.

Jim Bob honks.

INT. VIDEO STORE - CONTINUOUS

On the television a movie plays with a car chase. Cars honk and music swells. Dane doesn't hear the honk.

Dane glances at the clock on the wall above Freddy.

DANE

What time do you close...

FREDDY

Eleven PM sharp every weekday...

INT. JIM BOB'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Jim Bob blows the horn again. Through the window we see the Mex approaching the door. Dane stands inside. His back to the door.

INT. VIDEO STORE - CONTINUOUS

Dane's eyes scan the shop. He sees another closed door.

DANE

Do you have a restroom?

FREDDY

Sure, just around that corner...
First door on the right...

The bell jingles as the Mex ducks through the doorway coming down the aisle towards Freddy. He walks right past Dane, almost brushing him as passes.

MEX

They're out of chicken...

Freddy nods and takes a bag from the Mex.

FREDDY

Sir is there anything else we can help with...

All three men look up at Dane.

But Dane is no longer there. The door closes with a jingle.

EXT. VIDEO STORE NIGHT

Dane hustles over to the truck as Russel watches Freddy through the store window. Dane climbs in.

JIM BOB
You seen enough Hoss...

Russel waits then nods.

RUSSEL
What about guns...

JIM BOB
I got guns...

They pull out of the parking lot.

INT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

Dane watches Russel and Jim Bob sit at the table in the dark. On the table are various guns and boxes of shells, a shoulder holster and an ankle holster.

Jim Bob is spinning the chamber on a .38 snub nose. He puts it on the table next to a box of ammo.

JIM BOB
.38 Short barrel, no sight...
Figure'd I'd use that and the
sawed off... Ought to take down
the Mex pretty quick...

RUSSEL
I want something with a punch...

JIM BOB
I got an Ithaca 12-gauge
upstairs...

RUSSEL
No shotguns... Sounds messy...

JIM BOB
It is messy... The whole thing's
messy...

RUSSEL
I'm better with a pistol... Makes
it quick...

Jim Bob pulls down his boot to reveal a holster. He pulls out a .44 western style revolver and loads it.

JIM BOB
Then take this... And I want you
with the ankle holster...

RUSSEL
I'm fine with this...

JIM BOB
I'm not asking... I'm telling...

DANE
That's a lot of artillery for
killing two guys...

JIM BOB
I'd rather have too much than not
enough... it seems like they're
out at the same time every
night... Except weekends... but
we're not waiting that long...
Tomorrow's Friday... We do it
tomorrow night...

Dane stops what he's doing.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
That means tonight we go to bed,
sleep late... Tomorrow you can
help us with the truck, then we'll
drop you off at the bus...

Dane nods but has nothing to say.

INT. JIM BOB'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dane dries dishes at the sink.

Outside the window, Russel sits in an old rocking chair
on the porch, flicking his lighter on and off.

He flips open the zippo and the small flame dances in his
hand. He is transfixed by the glow. Then his big hands
snap down on the cover and the flame is snuffed out.

Dane finishes the last dish and looks at the table next
to him. Stacks and stacks of Jim Bob's research. Phone
records, maps, newspaper articles. He sees the original
article about him killing Freddy.

He slides it over to read it and another article behind
it falls out. An older one. He pulls the old article out.

"LABORDE MAN COMMITS SUICIDE".

Below the headline is the same photo Dane has framed. The
one of his dad reading to him.

Dane's eyes as he reads it.

INT. DANE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ann lays sleeping with Jordan by her side. The phone rings and she fumbles for it in the dark and picks it up.

ANN

Richard...

INT. JIM BOB'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

Dane sits at the table, trying to keep his voice down. He sips from a glass of milk.

DANE

It's good to hear your voice...

ANN

What's wrong... Are you okay...

DANE

I'm great... The deal's coming through baby...

ANN

That's great...

DANE

Another day or two and I'll be finished here...

Ann opens her eyes. A long pause.

ANN

You sound far away...

DANE

I'm still in Houston...

ANN

I don't mean it that way... I know there's no gallery Richard...

Dane is quiet.

ANN (CONT'D)

There never was...

DANE

It's complicated Ann...

ANN

I'm sure it is...

DANE

It has nothing to do with you... I promise you...

ANN

So tell me there's no one else...

DANE

There's never been anyone but you... I might be stupid sometimes, but I'm not that stupid... I just started something... And now I gotta put it to bed...

Beat.

ANN

Will you tell me when you come home...

DANE

I'll tell you everything... Like I said... it's complicated...

ANN

Then figure it out Richard... Whatever it is...

DANE

I will...

The sound of her breathing on the other end.

DANE (CONT'D)

I love you Ann...

Dane listens to the hum of the line, then a soft click. He hangs up slowly.

INT. JIM BOB'S GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

Dane folds his clothes and stacks them next to his suitcase. He starts to pack the rest, then he sits on the bed and puts his clothes down. He unzips a side pocket.

He pulls out a packing box from his shop and slides out a neatly wrapped package. He unwraps his father's gun.

He feels the weight of it in his hand. He puts it on the bed next to him and closes the suitcase.

The old steel glints in the moonlight.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Bacon fries in a pan. Russel is working on the ankle holster. Jim Bob gathers supplies on the table.

Blue electrical tape, shoe polish, and a bullhorn hood ornament.

Dane comes in the door.

He sits across from Russel. He pulls out the gun and sets it on the table. Russel and Jim Bob stop what they're doing.

They look at Dane. Dane looks at the gun, then to them.

He nods his head. Jim Bob and Russel look at each other.

They nod back.

Jim Bob hands him a big bull-horn hood ornament.

JIM BOB

Good... you can start with this...

EXT. JIM BOB'S RANCH HOUSE - MORNING

MUSIC BEGINS AND WE WATCH THEM THROUGHOUT THE DAY

-They work on the truck. Jim Bob uses the shoe polish to cover up part of the license plate.

-Russel is locking down a canopy on the back of the Rambler. He and Dane share a look as Dane makes a pin stripe line down the side of the truck with the tape.

-Russel and Dane help Jim Bob feed the pigs.

-Ann stands at a blackboard writing out an assignment.

-Price sits alone in his empty office.

-Freddy stacks videos behind the counter.

-The men arrange their guns at the kitchen table and count their ammo.

-Dane takes his dad's gun and sticks it in his waistband.

As the music rises we CUT TO:

EXT. JIM BOB'S RANCH - NIGHT

The screen door opens and the three men come out. They carry their guns to the truck canopy and load them into the back.

They hop in the cab, crank the ignition, and they pull out and down the drive into the night.

EXT. OUTSIDE VIDEO STORE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The pick up truck is parked in a dark parking lot across from the video store, engine off. They watch as the Mex turns the OPEN sign in the window to CLOSED.

JIM BOB

Boys sure are punctual...

DANE

What's the plan...

JIM BOB

We wait for them back at the house... When they slow down to go up Freddy's drive, we'll be in motion... We'll pull up to the curb, jump out and shoot at 'em through the windows before they can fight back...

DANE

And if their windows are rolled up...

JIM BOB

We shoot through the windows
Dane... Bullets break glass...

Dane looks over at Russel who rolls down his window and lights a smoke. Across the lot Freddy comes out of the store holding the arm of an old man with a cane. He walks the old man to the man's car, helps him inside, hands him his videos and waves as the old man pulls out.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Boy's polite... I'll give him
that...

Russel spits tobacco from his lip.

RUSSEL

His Mamma was big on manners...

Freddy goes back inside the store. The lights go out. Jim Bob starts the truck and rolls out.

INT. DANE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jordy is sound asleep. Ann slides a book from his fingers and puts it on the night table. She cradles Jordan in her arms, resting her head on the pillow.

She leans over to turn off the light. As it goes off.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET NEAR FREDDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jim Bob's truck headlights go off.

They sit a half a block down from Freddy's house. Jim Bob is smearing dark make-up on his face. Russel's face is already covered. He plays with his lighter nervously and he sucks down a smoke.

Headlights come down the road and the Nova appears.

JIM BOB

That's them... Let's make this quick...

Jim Bob shifts the pickup into gear as Dane and Russel check their guns.

They duck down as the Nova cruises by the disguised truck pulling up to the house.

Dane wipes his sweaty hands on his pants legs. Russel puts his hand on the car door handle, ready to open.

The Nova slows down a few feet from Freddy's driveway.

DANE

Tell me when...

A long beat passes, we see each man's face as he ponders the near future. They wait for a signal from Jim Bob.

Suddenly from the street behind them headlights appear over their shoulder, coming towards Freddy's house.

JIM BOB

Hold up...

An age passes as a dark van rolls slowly past Jim Bob's truck and pulls up to Freddy's driveway. Freddy and the Mex and the skinny guy get out of the Nova and go into the house. The van stops next to the Nova.

RUSSEL

Shit...

JIM BOB

They got company...

The garage door opens slowly as the van doors open. A young MEXICAN GIRL in a tight black dress and fishnets gets out of the van and lights a smoke.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

I don't like this...

TWO MEN climb out of the van and go into the garage. One slaps her ass on the way by and she giggles. They come back out with photo lights and a tripod, loading them into the van.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
Sons of bitches... Figures they'd
have plans on a Friday night...

Freddy, the Mex and the skinny guy come back out of the house carrying a camera and video cables.

RUSSEL
Let's just go... take 'em all...

JIM BOB
There's six of them down there and
we don't know if there's more in
the house...

RUSSEL
I don't give a fuck...

He pulls the door handle to get out. The dome light goes on. Dane fumbles to turn it off.

JIM BOB
Ben...

Russel is not listening. He opens the door. Click. Jim Bob holds a gun to the side of Russel's ear.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
Slow down old horse... we charge
on in there all San Juan Hill
like, odds don't favor us walking
out... we gonna do this my way
partner... you feeling me Ben...

RUSSEL
Take the gun out of my ear Jim...
I'm feeling you...

Jim Bob lowers the gun.

DANE
Look...

Down by the house the garage door closes and the van's engine starts. Freddy and the Mex get in the Nova with their equipment, start the engine and pull out. The van follows the Nova.

DANE (CONT'D)
What do we do...

JIM BOB
Follow them...

The truck rolls slowly after the other two vehicles.

EXT. HIGHWAY 59 NORTH - NIGHT

The pickup follows the Nova and the van down the highway. It rolls past exit signs. Dane looks at himself in the mirror, sweat beads on his brow.

Jim Bob grips the wheel. Russel fingers his lighter.

The Nova and the van take an exit. A moment later the truck comes into view and takes the same exit.

EXT. TEXAS COUNTRY ROADS - NIGHT

The Nova and the van cruise through a small, empty town.

They tail Freddy and his crew down winding country roads, past farms and woods. A ways down the road the van turns down a winding dirt drive off the main road.

The pick up stops at the turn off. Jim Bob pulls his binoculars from the glove box and watches as the tail lights of the Van fade away.

JIM BOB
There's a house down there...

DANE
What do we do...

Jim Bob looks nervous for the first time. Russel's nostrils flare with each breath. Dane sits between them.

JIM BOB
Last chance... There's a lot of cowboys down there Ben... Do the math...

RUSSEL
Fuck the math... I'm doing what I came here to do...

Dane looks down at his hands while they talk.

JIM BOB
I hear you Hoss... But we get one shot at this and we're outnumbered...

Dane looks at Russel. Russel tries to light another smoke, but his hands shake.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
Is this our shot Ben...

Russel finally lights the smoke and takes a big drag. His hands won't stop shaking.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)
Ben...

Russel looks at Dane. Dane looks at Russel. Dane pulls out his gun.

DANE
Let's do it...

Russel nods to Dane and he pulls out his gun.

DANE (CONT'D)
What about you Jim...

Jim Bob sees the look in their eyes. He grabs the shotgun from the rack.

JIM BOB
Okay... Break out the guns...

They roll out of the truck in silence.

EXT. OLD MANSION - NIGHT *

An old mansion sits a good ways off the road. The van and the Nova are parked outside.

Jim Bob, Russel, and Dane sneak down the dirt packed wooded drive and into a clearing in the woods. Dane looks at Russel's camouflaged, blackened face, the white eyes staring back at him almost calmly.

They look at the lights of the house through the trees.

JIM BOB
Follow me and stay low...

The three men duck behind trees and sneak up to a hedge in an outskirt of the front yard.

Jim Bob looks through the branches at four men standing outside of the house. The skinny man from the video store leads the smiling young girl to the front door and escorts her inside.

The others follow them in except for ONE BIG MAN, as large as a boulder, who stands guard outside. He lights a smoke.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

(whispering)

That leaves one outside... Five more in the house plus the girl... When we get in there it's seek and destroy... You hit one make sure they're good and dead and keep track of how many you drop...

RUSSEL

Just remember when it comes to Freddy I do the shooting...

JIM BOB

I heard you the first time Ben...

RUSSEL

What about this one...

JIM BOB

You two stay on this side of the house... I'll sneak across to the other side and come up on the left... Count to ten and then one of you get his attention... I'll do the rest...

Before they can say anything Jim Bob rolls out into the shadows. Russel and Dane sit alone, guns in hand. They look at each other and start counting together.

RUSSEL

Three...four...five...six...

DANE

Seven...eight...nine...shit

RUSSEL

Cover me...

Russel rolls to his feet and steps out of the brush.

Dane watches as Russel starts towards the house. Before he's halfway there, the man sees him and turns. He drops his smoke and goes for something inside his jacket.

Russel raises his gun but before he can do anything, Jim Bob swoops out of the dark and grabs the man by the head. His other hand makes a quick movement against the man's neck and he falls to the ground in a heap.

Dane and Russel come up beside Jim Bob and look down at a growing puddle of red from the man's sliced throat.

Jim Bob wipes the blade on his jeans and pockets it. He looks up at Dane and Russel.

JIM BOB

It's Howdy Doody time...

He jerks open the front door and goes in, shotgun raised. Russel and Dane follow.

WE FOLLOW THE ACTION IN ONE LONG TAKE:

INT. OLD MANSION - CONTINUOUS *

The foyer of the house is empty. Jim Bob goes straight for the stairs. Russel goes right and Dane goes left. He holds his gun out in front of him. He goes down the hall.

Dane comes to a door and opens it. A closet. He keeps moving around a corner and down the hall towards a room with the door shut. Suddenly the house erupts with sounds of gun fire and screams from upstairs.

The open door in front of him explodes into splinters as a shot rings out ahead of him in the hall.

One of the men from the van comes charging down the hall towards him. The man reloads his gun as he sees Dane.

He slams the clip into the gun and raises it. Dane raises his gun with both hands, aiming wildly. BANG! BANG! Both men fire at the same time.

The hallway explodes with flash and gun powder. Dane's bullet shatters the wall and Dane keeps charging. He crashes into the man as the man fires again. The gun goes off near Dane's ear, the bullet tearing a chunk of his ear away. His hearing goes out for a few chaotic moments.

They go down with Dane on top and the man's gun goes flying. He grabs Dane's wrist and they struggle for the gun.

BOOM! It goes off and the man's face disappears in a bloody pulp.

Dane stares down at the carnage. He puts a hand to his bleeding ear. He climbs over the man and continues through the door and finds an empty kitchen with a sandwich and all the fixings half made on the counter.

A microwave on the shelf goes off with a loud beep. Dane's eyes go to the sound, just as BANG!

The microwave explodes with a gunshot and popcorn and glass spray out. Dane dives for the floor behind a table and turns to see one of the men jump back into another hallway.

BANG! Another gunshot rings out from the hallway across the kitchen. Dane passes through the kitchen towards the door where the man just disappeared.

The man who slapped the girl's ass backs around the corner and stumbles backward towards him, his left arm hanging limp and dripping blood, a pistol hanging loosely from his fingers. The man hits the wall and slides down, leaving a trail of red as he sinks.

Russel comes into view, walks over to the man and puts the .357 to the top of his head and pulls the trigger. A flash and the man crumples to the floor in a heap.

DANE

Russel...

Russel spins on him, wild eyed and pale. Dane notices blood oozing from a wound in Russel's shoulder. More gunfire explodes from the second floor.

RUSSEL

Upstairs...

They both run for the stairs and start up as a dead man slides down on his back. They go over him and a door opens at the top of the stairs and someone screams like a dinosaur in pain.

Jim Bob comes flying out, smashes against the wall and melts... but still holds the shotgun. The big Mexican stumbles out the door.

He's the one who is screaming. The front of his shirt is dark and wet and the material sucks into his chest when he breaths. His eyes are wired with drugs and adrenaline.

Jim Bob spots Dane and Russel on the stairs.

JIM BOB

Shoot that ugly fucker... I gave
him both barrels...

Russel points the .357 at the Mexican's head and fires. The bullet snaps the Mex's head hard right and back as if on a spring. He screams something in Spanish.

The Mex grabs Jim Bob by the leg and slings him down the stairs where he smashes into Russel who bumps Dane, sending him sprawling backwards down the stairs.

The Mex starts down the stairs after Russel who stands his ground and pumps another shot into the Mex's forehead. The Mex's eyes goes blank and he tips forward like a giant, sliding down the stairs.

Dane side steps the body and follows Russel who is heading up. Jim Bob gets to his feet and slides more shells into the shotgun. The three men enter the hallway at the top of the stairs and see an open door.

They look in the room. A video camera sits on a tripod and another lays overturned on the floor.

On the bed is the girl from outside, tied up, gagged and spread eagle on the bed with a dead man in a suit lying across her legs.

JIM BOB (CONT'D)

Freddy and that skinny one are still in here somewhere... this fucker was putting the meat to her...

Dane steps over and pulls the man off the girl and rolls him over, it's Agent Glen. Dane realizes it just as the girl taps his arm with her foot.

Dane and the girl make eye contact. Her eyes motion towards a side door. Dane and Jim Bob follow her gaze. Jim Bob looks at her and holds a finger to his lips, then moves to the door.

Jim Bob cocks the shot gun and jerks the closet door open. Inside is the skinny guy, buck naked. He comes flying out screaming like a banshee and swinging a bat. He's on top of Jim Bob and brings the bat down into Jim Bob's back.

Jim Bob hits the man in the stomach with the double barrel and pulls the trigger. The blast sends the man back into the closet in a heap of video tapes and cables.

Russel kicks the bat away, and kicks another door open in front of him and quickly steps aside.

RUSSEL

Freddy... I'm Ben Russel... I'm your father... I've come to kill you...

Jim Bob and Dane move to the door frame near Russel. They all peek into the room. It is a big office, dark metal desk, chairs, filing cabinets and a big free standing fireplace. Freddy is crouched behind it but too big to be fully covered. Dane sees him and jerks up the his gun.

JIM BOB

There he is Ben... He's yours...

Russel looks but doesn't raise his gun. He hesitates...

Freddy steps out from behind the fireplace and raises a pistol and shoots Jim Bob twice quickly. The second bullet knocks Jim Bob through the open door.

RUSSEL

Freddy... stop it...

Russel raises his .357 but not fast enough. Freddy shoots Russel in the chest and Russel sits down hard as blood pumps from his chest.

Dane fires his gun blindly and splinters the fireplace but misses Freddy.

Freddy takes aim at Dane and squeezes the trigger. It catches Dane in the arm and he falls to the ground.

Dane crawls back against the wall, losing a grip on his gun. Freddy crosses the room towards him.

He raises the gun at Dane's face matter-of-factly. Dane looks up helplessly. Freddy's finger on the trigger.

BANG! BANG! Freddy's stomach bursts blood and his arm goes limp. He falls to his knees in front of Dane, revealing Russel a few steps away, his gun pointed at Freddy.

Dane watches as Russel crawls to Freddy and collapses in front of his son. The two men are on their knees, eye to eye, face to face, life drifting away from them.

FREDDY

Daddy...

They fall into each other like two fighters, each man's head on the other's shoulder. Russel puts his arms around his son. He raises his gun to the back of Freddy's head and speaks softly into his ear.

RUSSEL

It's me boy...

The gun shakes in his hand.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)

I love you son... I always have...

He pulls the trigger against Freddy's head. An empty click. Again. Another click.

Freddy pulls away from him. A spot of blood on his lips.

FREDDY

Well if that ain't some kind of
trip...

He cocks his own gun and raises it at Russel weakly.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

Say hello to Momma for me...

With that, a gun goes to the side of Freddy's head.
Dane's gun. He doesn't pause. He doesn't hesitate.

BANG!

Freddy teeters in place, a large exit wound on the side
of his head. His body goes limp and he collapses to the
floor.

Russel looks over at Dane, whose gun is still smoking.

The two men look at each other for a moment and Russel
falls into Dane's lap. His big, bloody hand grips Dane's
hand squeezing it.

RUSSEL (WITH HIS LAST BREATH)

My boy... my... boy...,...

Russel inhales sharply and lets out his final breath,
staring up at Dane.

Dane looks at the two dead men in front of him. He looks
around him at the carnage, then his own eyes close as he
leans his head on the door frame...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OLD MANSION - NIGHT (SLOW-MOTION)

The soundtrack is empty. Dane and the girl help a wounded
Jim Bob into the back bed of the truck. Dane dumps a
canister of gasoline over the front porch of the house
and uses Russel's lighter to light the fuel.

Flames race up the steps and engulf the front door.

Dane drives off in the car, the shell-shocked girl in the
passenger seat, cutting strips of a bed sheet into
bandages. She ties one around Dane's wounded arm as he
drives off and away from the flaming house of death.

FADE OUT:

EXT. JIM BOB'S RANCH - DAY - LATER

The pigs mull about in the sunlight.

Jim Bob sits in a chair on the porch, all bandaged up and pale, drinking a beer. The girl from the house finishes wrapping his bandage.

Dane winces as Manuel finishes stitching his shoulder.

PUSH IN on Dane, his bruised face, as he looks at the bloody paper towels at his feet.

He looks up and Jim Bob is watching him. He tips his hat to Dane.

EXT. DANE'S HOME - DAWN

The sun is just beginning to peek over the horizon.

Dane shuts the door to the Red Bitch as Jim Bob and the girl from the house pull away and into the sunrise.

Dane stands looking at his house in the pink dawn light.

INT. DANE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dane enters the house quietly. No one is up yet. He puts down his suitcase and reaches for a stack of mail.

He carries a grocery bag in while he goes through the mail. He stops on one letter and takes a seat on the new couch.

It's addressed to Dane, return address from "*Lieutenant Price, Laborde PD*". Dane opens it.

One sheet of paper. A photocopy of a wanted poster, with a picture of the man he first shot in his living room.

At the bottom, his name: "*Danny Cruez*".

Dane looks at the man's face.

He pulls Russel's lighter from his pocket and lights the bottom of the picture. He watches it burn, then drops it in a bowl on the table.

He reaches for the grocery bag at his feet and pulls out a new box of cereal. He opens the box and reaches around inside. He pulls out the toy horse.

He sets it on the coffee table and winds it up. He watches as it walks in circles on the table, its little gears churning softly.

He smiles.

Dane hears a creak from the hallway followed by tiny footsteps. He looks up to see Jordan's door is open.

Jordan stands in the hallway rubbing sleep from his eyes. He looks at Dane and the toy horse walking on the table.

Jordan smiles too.