

"ONE FALSE MOVE."
HURRICANE

By
Billy Bob Thornton
and
Tom Epperson

FADE IN:

EXT. A SMALL QUIET SOUTHERN TOWN - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

On the SCREEN appears:

STAR CITY, ARKANSAS
SATURDAY NIGHT

CUT TO:

EXT. A PRETTY WHITE FRAME HOUSE

The screen door opens, and out onto the front porch walks A BIG, HANDSOME MAN wearing a flannel shirt, blue jeans, and a baseball cap. The man walks out to the edge of the porch, looks out at the soft spring night. It's still and dark. A few crickets CHIRP. The man takes a sip of his beer. He seems restless. He looks up at the glittering starry sky--sighs.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A GLITTERING SEA OF LIGHTS - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

On the SCREEN appears:

LOS ANGELES

CUT TO:

EXT. A MIDDLE-CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD

The CAMERA's on a sidewalk, shooting up, so all we see is the disheveled head of a palm tree and a couple of smog-dim stars. And then suddenly filling the FRAME is a BEAUTIFUL YOUNG BLACK WOMAN. As she pauses for a moment, looking at something we cannot see, our TITLE appears:

HURRICANE

Another ANGLE shows us the young woman continuing up the sidewalk to the front door of a nice brick home. We hear MUSIC playing inside. As our CREDIT SEQUENCE continues, the woman RINGS the doorbell. After a moment:

FEMALE VOICE

Who is it?

WOMAN

Fantasia.

The door opens a few inches, revealing a stretched latch chain and the peering face of another young black woman: her name is JACKIE.

JACKIE
(surprised and pleased)
Hey, girl!

Jackie unhooks the chain, opens the door, and hugs Fantasia.

FANTASIA
Hey, Jackie, what's shakin'?

Fantasia enters, and Jackie closes the door behind them.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF HOUSE

Two young black men, BOBBY and DARREN, are sitting on a sofa.

JACKIE
(as she locks the door)
Bobby, look who's back from the dead!

FANTASIA
Hey, Bobby.

BOBBY
(arising and hugging
Fantasia)
Fantasia, how you been?

FANTASIA
Fine.

BOBBY
(very seriously)
So where's Ray?

FANTASIA
I don't see Ray anymore.

BOBBY
That's good.

JACKIE
That's real good. You know you're
always welcome here.

A third young black woman named DANIELLE has just emerged from the kitchen carrying a cake blazing with candles, which she sets down on a coffee table.

JACKIE (Cont'd)
You got here just in time, girl.
Bobby's just about to blow out the
candles on his birthday cake.

FANTASIA
Bobby, it's your birthday? How
old are you, 60?

BOBBY
That's your IQ, girl.

JACKIE
(indicating the
other couple)
Fantasia, this is Darren and Danielle.

FANTASIA
Hello--
(with sudden exasperation)
Oh shit--I left my purse in the car
and the door unlocked. I'll be
right back.

BOBBY
Hurry, girl, I gotta blow these
candles out pretty soon or I'll
have to add another one.

FANTASIA
(laughing)
O.K., old man.

Fantasia exits--Jackie locks the door behind her.

DANIELLE
She's nice.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PORCH OF THE HOUSE IN ARKANSAS - NIGHT

The screen door opens, and a PETITE PRETTY BRUNETTE looks out
at the restless man at the edge of the porch.

WOMAN
Dale, what are you doin' out here,
I thought you were watchin' HUNTER.

DALE
(without turning around)
I just got tired of it.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE IN L.A.

The doorbell RINGS, and Jackie goes to the door.

JACKIE
Fantasia?

FANTASIA'S VOICE
Yeah.

Jackie unlocks the door and opens it.

JACKIE
 (as Fantasia comes in)
 We gotta cheer up Bobby 'cause--

But Fantasia's not alone--rushing in behind her come two young men: a flashily dressed, high-strung white guy named RAY, tattoos on his arms, an earring in one ear, longish curly hair receding in the front, and PLUTO, tall, black, broad-shouldered, narrow-hipped, heavily muscled, his eyes behind his glasses absolutely cold. Both men have pistols. Ray shoves Jackie away from the door into the middle of the room.

RAY
 (with a bit of a
 Southern twang)
 All right, motherfuckers! Just lay
 down on the floor and be quiet!

There's panic and terror among the 4 birthday partiers as they begin to lie on their stomachs on the floor.

BOBBY
 What the fuck's going on, man?

JACKIE
 Fantasia?

FANTASIA
 (soothingly)
 Jackie, just be quiet, honey, and
 everything will be all right.

Pluto sees Bobby shoot a look at a near-by desk drawer. Pluto moves to the drawer, opens it, and pulls out a revolver.

BOBBY
 Man, what the hell is thi---?

Ray kicks Bobby viciously in the teeth.

RAY
 I told you to keep quiet, you
 motherfucker!

Pluto has drawn several lengths of cord from a pocket, and now, like a rodeo cowboy trussing up a steer, he quickly and expertly ties their hands behind their backs.

Ray kneels down in front of Jackie, and lifts her head up by the hair.

RAY (Cont'd)
 Where does Marco live?

JACKIE
I don't know, Ray.

Ray slaps her hard.

RAY
Where does Marco live, goddamn it?

JACKIE
(beginning to cry)
Ray, I swear I don't know.

RAY
Then how do you get your shit?
I guess it just flies over here.
Where does Marco live, bitch?

Ray slaps her again. Fantasia grabs his arm.

FANTASIA
Ray, you don't have to hit her
like that.
(to Jackie)
Honey, please, just tell him and
everything will be O.K.

Danielle has begun to SOB and WHIMPER too.

DARREN
Danielle and me don't know nothin'
about this, why don't you let us go?

Pluto buries his foot in Darren's ribs.

JACKIE
If we told anybody where Marco
lived he'd kill us.

RAY
What the fuck do you think we're
gonna do?

Ray slaps her again and again and again.

RAY (Cont'd)
Goddamn it, you're gonna tell me
or I'll slap your motherfuckin'
head off!

BOBBY
Jackie don't know where Marco stays,
I deal with him, she don't. I'll tell
you, man. You just leave her alone.

Pluto immediately hauls Bobby to his feet.

RAY
 (looking pleased)
 We're goin' on a little trip over
 to Marco's, man.
 (to Pluto)
 Catch you shortly, bubba.

Pluto nods. After a quick peek out the curtains, Ray pushes Bobby ahead of him toward the door, with Fantasia accompanying. At the door Fantasia hesitates, and looks back at the bleeding, hysterically weeping Jackie.

FANTASIA
 I'm sorry, honey. Just be cool
 and you'll be all right.

Now Ray and Fantasia and Bobby exit. Pluto looks down at the 3 helpless people on the floor.

PLUTO
 (softly)
 Lie here like babies.

Now Pluto moves to the table where the candles are still burning on the cake. They are now just nubs in pools of pale blue wax. He blows them out.

CUT TO:

EXT. PORCH OF THE HOUSE IN ARKANSAS - NIGHT

Dale Dixon has been joined by the pretty brunette, his wife, Cheryl Ann.

DALE
 Damn--I wish I had a cigarette.

CHERYL ANN
 Dale, now you know if you have one
 you'll start right back into smokin'
 again.

DALE
 (irritably)
 I didn't say I was gonna have one,
 I'd just like to, that's all.
 (pause)
 You put Bonnie to bed?

CHERYL ANN
 Yeah.
 (pause)
 Think I'm goin' to bed myself.

As Cheryl Ann turns and heads back inside, Dale realizes she's a bit miffed at him.

DALE
 (more warmly)
 Cheryl Ann?
 (she stops at the door)
 I'll be in soon--O.K.?

CHERYL ANN
 (with a forgiving smile)
 O.K.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARCO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

OPEN CLOSE ON A FINGER RINGING THE DOORBELL. Another ANGLE shows us Bobby. After a moment:

MARCO'S VOICE
 Who is it?

BOBBY
 It's Bobby, Marco.

MARCO'S VOICE
 Is it puddin' yet?

BOBBY
 It's thick enough for me.

MARCO'S VOICE
 Who wants some?

BOBBY
 Fred Boy and Daddy Gene.

As there's the SOUND OF A DOOR BEING UNLOCKED, the CAMERA PULLS BACK to show Ray and Fantasia standing, guns in hand, on opposite sides of the door. Now we see Marco, who has a big, smiling face.

MARCO
 (expansively)
 My man!

INT. LIVING ROOM OF MARCO'S HOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

CLOSE-UP OF A MASS OF DARK, TANGLED FILAMENTS--now the orange flame of a cigarette lighter moves INTO FRAME, and the flame suddenly leaps into the filaments with a crackling sound, the filaments smoking and shriveling. We hear MUFFLED SOUNDS of terror.

Another ANGLE shows us A BLACK WOMAN bound hand and foot, gagged,

sitting on the floor propped up against the wall--beside her is sitting Bobby, similarly bound and gagged. Ray, squatting beside the woman, jerks the lighter away from the woman's hair just in time to prevent a conflagration, and then looks up at Marco, who is standing with his hands tied behind his back, and Fantasia's gun pointed at him.

RAY

You see what I got in mind, man?

MARCO

(in a panic)

Hey, man, I got anything you want. Nobody has to get hurt. I got 200 bucks in that wallet on the table. Take it, man. I got a little crack and some toot in the right-hand kitchen cabinet.

RAY

200, you bullshittin' motherfucker! I know you, man. You get up and piss on 200 every morning, you lyin' motherfucker.

Ray flicks the lighter and applies it to the woman's hair again, but this time he doesn't pull it away, the flames climb up the side of the woman's thrashing head, her mute eyes are wild with terror and pain.

FANTASIA

(looking on in horror)

Ray, put it out!

MARCO

Stop it, man! Put it out! I'll show you where the shit is! Put it out!

Ray picks up a can of Coke, and begins to pour it over the woman's flaming hair--there's a HISSING SOUND, and steam begins to mingle with the smoke.

INT. BEDROOM IN THE HOUSE - A MINUTE OR TWO LATER

A dresser has been pushed away from the wall. A small section of the wall has been removed, to reveal a dark open space. Ray is kneeling in front of that space, and from it is pulling out clear plastic bags of white drugs, green cash.

RAY

(in ecstasy)

Aw, man. . .

INT. BOBBY AND JACKIE'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

OPEN CLOSE ON BOBBY'S BIRTHDAY CAKE, which now is about a third gone, and which is being sliced into again by a knife.

Another ANGLE shows us Pluto, sitting on the couch eating the cake and reading the message in a birthday card. The television's on. Jackie and Darren and Danielle are still lying on their stomachs on the floor, but Pluto has bound them more securely. They are gagged and "hog-tied"--their legs bent behind their backs and tied to their wrists. It is not a natural position for a human being to be in.

The phone RINGS. Pluto moves to it, picks it up. He doesn't say hello--just listens--then:

PLUTO
(simply)
O.K.

He replaces the phone--looks at the 3 helpless people, as he cleans the blade of his knife with a finger and then licks his finger clean of the crumbs and icing. Then he walks into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM

Pluto walks to the bed. There are several pillows on it. He picks up 3 of the pillows, strips off the cases.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Holding the 3 pillow cases, Pluto re-enters. He walks toward the TV. The 3 terrified people on the floor crane their necks trying to follow him, wondering what he's doing.

Pluto turns up the TV.

Pluto moves to the 3 people. He quickly pulls one of the pillow cases down over the head and upper body of Jackie, maneuvering her easily with his powerful arms. Then he moves to Darren, Darren shooting Danielle a last wild glance before the pillow case covers him. And finally Pluto slides the pillow case down over Danielle.

Pluto is now kneeling in front of Danielle. He takes his knife back out of his pocket, and pops open the blade.

CLOSE-UP OF PLUTO'S FACE as he begins to stab Danielle. We hear DANIELLE'S MUFFLED MOANS AND SQUEALS--each time the knife strikes home, Pluto emits a short violent breath--at the fourth or fifth breath, blood suddenly spatters his glasses.

INT. MARCO'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ray is deeply involved in ingesting a white line of cocaine on the glass-topped coffee table. Suddenly there's a CRASHING SOUND-- Ray looks toward the source of the noise.

Bobby and Marco and the woman with the burned hair are sitting propped up against the wall, bound and gagged, transparent plastic bags over their heads and taped tightly around their necks. The first desperate gasps must have removed all the oxygen from the bags, which are collapsed against their twisted features. Their eyes, in their final seconds of consciousness, are terrible to see. In his death agony Marco has kicked over a small table covered with framed photographs and bric-a-brac.

ANGLE ON FANTASIA, in a doorway, watching them with sickened disbelief.

FANTASIA

Ray, you said there wasn't gonna
be no killin'!

Ignoring Fantasia, Ray picks up one of the pictures that has fallen to the floor--it's a family portrait--Marco and his wife and a boy of about 6.

RAY

(agitated)

They got a kid. Hey, where's your
fuckin' kid?

The suffocating parents don't reply.

RAY (Cont'd)

Fantasia, look around for that kid.
We can't leave no motherfuckin' kid
here.

FANTASIA

I already been all over the house, Ray.

RAY

Well, look around some more, maybe
he's hidin' someplace.

Ray now returns his attention to the lovely white lines on the coffee table.

INT. THE BATHROOM

Fantasia comes in, turns on the light. She pulls back the shower curtains. Nobody's there.

INT. A BEDROOM

Fantasia enters. She looks around. There's evidence that a boy has been here: a baseball glove, a toy truck.

Fantasia kneels and looks under the bed: a toy robot, star of a Saturday morning cartoon show, stares back at her.

Now she looks toward the closed closet door. It's obvious that she's just had a sudden feeling about that closet--we, the audience, have a feeling about that closet.

Fantasia approaches it slowly, almost as though she is moving underwater.

There is the beautiful scene in THE YEARLING when the concealing forest greenery is parted by the little boy, to reveal the tiny hiding orphaned fawn. This moment, as Fantasia opens the door of the closet, is similar, except it is one of horror instead of beauty, as Fantasia now looks into the eyes of the wide-eyed and shaking CHILD.

CUT TO:

EXT. PORCH OF THE HOUSE IN ARKANSAS - NIGHT

Dale Dixon is now sitting on the front steps. The street in front of him is empty and dark and silent. We can tell he would still like to have that cigarette.

Now he hears, from inside the house, the sound of a very young girl WHIMPERING AND CRYING.

CHILD'S VOICE

Mommy? Mommy?

Dale watches as a light goes on in a window, and now he hears his wife:

CHERYL ANN'S VOICE

Hush now, Bonnie, Mommy's here--you were just havin' a dream, honey-- a bad dream--

On Dale's faintly troubled face, we

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. MARCO'S NEIGHBORHOOD - SUNRISE

OPEN ON THE SUN rising above some palm trees and house tops-- and then slowly PAN to Marco's house.

TITLE: SUNDAY MORNING

The house is now the center of a hive of activity: there are police cars crowding the street, the SQUAWK AND CRACKLE of police radios, LOTS OF COPS both blue-suited and in plain clothes, and curious and frightened NEIGHBORS gawking from behind restraining lines.

INT. MARCO'S HOUSE - THE LIVING ROOM

OPEN ON TWO COPS: DUDLEY "DUD" COLE AND JOHN McFEELY. They're homicide detectives from the L.A.P.D. elite Downtown Division. The men are contrasting physical and character types. McFeely is small and black and good-natured and extroverted. Cole is tall, a bit cerebral and inward-turned, with glints of both irony and sadness in his cool eyes. They do have in common, though, a shared reality: each in his half or two-thirds of a lifetime has seen more of the dark side of the world than most people would see in 50 lifetimes.

They are intently watching something--and now a new ANGLE shows us what: the CORONER'S INVESTIGATOR examining the bodies of Marco and his wife and Bobby. He's removed the wallet from Bobby's back pocket, and has opened it to reveal a large amount of cash. He counts it out.

CORONER'S INVESTIGATOR

157 dollars.

DUD

Takes out the small-time robbery motive. Has he got a driver's license?

The coroner's investigator finds Bobby's license, hands it to Dud.

DUD (Cont'd)
(looking at the license,
and then at the body)
John, meet Robert Post.

McFEELY
How do you do, Robert?

EXT. COLE AND McFEELY'S CAR MOVING DOWN A NEARLY DESERTED L.A.
RESIDENTIAL STREET - EARLY MORNING

McFEELY (V.O.)
You think it might be Hollywood?

INT. THE CAR

Dud Cole is behind the wheel.

DUD
What?

McFEELY
Star City. The kid says he heard
them talking about going to "Star
City," so maybe that's just slang
for Hollywood.

DUD
They call Hollywood that? "Star City"?

McFEELY
I think I've heard it called that,
yeah.

DUD
We'll call the Hollywood watch
commander.
(looking at the houses
they're passing)
Was it 3320?

McFEELY
(checking Bobby's
driver's license)
Yeah.

DUD
That's it.

Dud Cole eases the car over to the curb, and stops. On the
other side of the street and a couple of houses down is Bobby
and Jackie's house. Dud and McFeely look at it. It, along
with every other house on this early Sunday morning, looks
quiet and peaceful--but we also notice that all the windows
are filled with light.

McFEELY

It's pretty early for all the lights
to be on.

DUD

Isn't the front door cracked?

And now we can see that the front door seems to be open a
couple of inches.

McFEELY

I'll take the back.

EXT. THE STREET AND THE HOUSE

Dud and McFeely get out of the car. They're experienced cops
who have worked together for a long time, so no talk is necessary.
McFeely goes down the driveway and around the back, while
Dud goes up the front steps.

Now Dud notices some splotches on the steps--he knows well the
sight of fresh blood--and only now does he slip his hand
inside his coat and unholster his .38.

He pauses in front of the door--he stares at that 2-inch
opening--he listens--then he puts 1 knuckle against the door,
and gently pushes it open.

INT. THE HOUSE

ANGLE ON DUD COLE, as he enters, cautiously. And now, as he
looks to his right, the CAMERA SWIFTLY PULLS BACK to disclose
the whole of the slaughterhouse of the living room, the
encrimsoned pillow cases, the 3 hog-tied former human beings.

Even for one who has dealt often in death, the sight of it is
ever-fresh. Dud Cole stares for a moment, and then:

DUD

(calling)

McFeely!

INT. ROBBERY-HOMICIDE SQUAD ROOM AT L.A.P.D. HEADQUARTERS -
THAT NIGHT

OPEN ON THE GLOWING GREEN SCREEN OF A COMPUTER TERMINAL-- the
name RAY MALCOM is being typed in, and then immediately Ray's
sordid criminal past of assaults and robberies and auto
thefts and drug offenses appears line by line.

VOICE

So how'd you get the I.D.?

DUD'S VOICE

Neighborhood snoop across the street was looking out her window, recognized Ray's car parked out front, and then after a while she saw a big black guy wearing glasses come out of the house, get in Ray's car, and leave.

Another ANGLE shows us Dud Cole at the computer, with his LIEUTENANT looking over his shoulder.

DUD (Cont'd)

She didn't know Ray's last name, but thought he lived a few blocks away on Rutherford, so we knocked on doors till we found somebody that knew Ray, and knew his last name. McFeely's down in R and I right now pulling his package.

LIEUTENANT

And the guy with glasses?

DUD

They call him "Pluto"-- he's evidently been hanging out with Ray for the last few weeks--may be from out of town.

LIEUTENANT

"Pluto"? You mean like Mickey Mouse's dog?

DUD

Yeah--and like the Roman god of the Underworld.

LIEUTENANT

And the girl?

DUD

All we know about her is her name's Fantasia and she's good looking and kind of comes and goes but when she's in town she stays with Ray.

An excited McFeely bustles in with a folder-full of photocopied materials.

McFEELY

You're not gonna believe this. The kid heard 'em saying they were headed for "Star City," so we thought Star City might be Hollywood, right?

ANGLE ON PLUTO in the back seat. He is looking at Ray. We get the feeling that Ray's singing is getting on Pluto's nerves, if he does indeed have nerves to be gotten upon. But now, as the CAMERA PUSHES IN on Pluto, he shifts his gaze straight ahead. There is something sphinx-like and awful in his blank bespectacled look as he stares at the freeway rushing out of the night to meet them.

EXT. PARKER CENTER (THE L.A.P.D. HEADQUARTERS DOWNTOWN) - ESTABLISHING - DAY

TITLE:

L.A.
MONDAY MORNING

VOICE

Gentlemen, the fact that we have
6 bodies is nothing--

INT. PARKER CENTER - OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

Around a conference table are sitting Dud Cole and John McFeely, their lieutenant and CAPTAIN, the PRESS RELATIONS OFFICER, the ASSISTANT CHIEF, and CHIEF BRAD JENKINS, a small man with a thin, intense face.

CHIEF JENKINS (Cont'd)

The fact that 3 of them were discovered
next door to the Mayor's sister--

ASSISTANT CHIEF

(finishing the thought)

She gets upset when a dog howls.

PRESS RELATIONS OFFICER

Speaking of howls, the press is in
full cry. What can we give 'em?

CHIEF JENKINS

Dud?

DUD

Let's give them our suspect's name,
"Ray Malcom"--descriptions of the
other 2 suspects--say that 3 of the
victims were stabbed to death, but
don't give up the over-kill of over
50 wounds each, the pillow cases, or
the hog-tying. For the other 3 victims,
just say there were strangled--don't
give up the plastic bags. As for
the kid, just say there was 1 survivor.
Period. He's under enough pressure
as it is. We don't need to talk
about how we I.D.'d Ray. I'd like
to get out we believe they've fled
(MORE)

DUD (Cont'd)
the state. It just may get us
some national coverage, and make
it hard on them to travel.

(pause)
One more thing.

PRESS RELATIONS OFFICER
What's that?

DUD
Play it up that these assholes are
as violent as we've ever seen.

CHIEF JENKINS
What about this Star City thing,
Dud?

LIEUTENANT
You think it'd be a wild goose
chase if you went back there?

DUD
I put in a call to the Star City
P.D. last night. They said they'd
never heard of Ray, but the guy
I talked to said he did think he'd
heard of the uncle, and he was
gonna check him out. I'm waiting
for his call-back.

PRESS RELATIONS OFFICER
(looking at his notes)
Dud--they really as "violent as
you've ever seen"?

DUD
Dave, it scares me that these people
are out there loose in the country,
and I want everybody else to be
scared too. The first small-town
sheriff that stops them because they've
got a tail light out--

McFEELY
They're gonna have to have a special
election to fill the vacancy real quick.

The PHONE HAS RUNG, and the assistant chief has quietly answered
it. Now he turns to Dud.

ASSISTANT CHIEF
Dud?

DUD

(taking the phone)

Cole here. Put him through.

(after a moment)

Hello, Sgt. Dixon, this is Dud
C---right, I--I'm fine, how are
you, I--yes, I--

Dud, holding the receiver away from his ear a little, is evidently being overwhelmed by a torrent of loud talk.

CHIEF JENKINS

Dud, why don't you put him on the box so we can all hear him?

DUD

H--hold on a minute, Sergeant.

(putting his hand
over the phone)

Chief, we may not want to do that.

CHIEF JENKINS

Of course we do. Now what did you say his name was?

DUD

Sgt. Dale Dixon. But he may be a little overpowering on the box, Chief.

CHIEF JENKINS

(his patience wearing thin)

I appreciate your concern.

And now Chief Jenkins nods towards the box. Dud, with a you-asked-for-it raise of the eyebrows, pushes a button.

DUD

Sgt. Dixon, I've put you on the speaker phone so everyone can hear you. I've got Chief Jenkins here.

And now a hearty Southern VOICE booms out of the box. We've heard it before. It belongs to the bored, restless man on the porch--but now the restlessness and boredom have been replaced with pure excitement.

DIXON'S VOICE

Chief Jenkins? Los Angeles Chief of Police Jenkins? No shit? How are you, Chief Jenkins, it's a hell of a pleasure to meet you.

CHIEF JENKINS

It's nice to meet you, Sergeant. Now what we'd like to know is--

DIXON'S VOICE

I feel like I've known you half of my life. If I had a nickel for every time I've seen you in the papers and on TV I'd be one rich son of a bitch.

Chief Jenkins is a bit taken aback. Everyone around the table is beginning to exchange looks.

CHIEF JENKINS

I'm--flattered, Sergeant. Now about the uncle of Ray Mal--

DIXON'S VOICE

I guess they keep you pretty busy out there, don't they?

CHIEF JENKINS

Well, yes, I suppose that--

DIXON'S VOICE

I bet they do. It's just like this case we're all workin' on now. See, you've got 6 people dead out there at the same time. Now we don't get much of that here in Star City. Generally just 1 or 2 every few months. Colored boys generally. Just like out there. Every other Saturday night one of 'em sticks another one over a goddamn card game or some shit.

Everybody looks at McFeely.

CHIEF JENKINS

(hurriedly)

That's interesting, Sergeant, but--

DIXON'S VOICE

Craps sometimes.

Chief Jenkins looks to Dud for help, but Dud is suddenly engrossed in a hang nail.

CHIEF JENKINS

Sgt. Dixon, I think we should really discuss the--

DIXON'S VOICE

Now you were wantin' to know about this boy's uncle. Boys, I think we hit the jackpot. I just got back from the old man's house, and let me tell ya, it's the damnedest hide-out

(MORE)

DIXON'S VOICE (Cont'd)

I've ever seen in my life. It's out in the woods about 6 and three quarter miles northeast of town. There's old loggin' roads goin' off every which way and they all connect up to the highways out there. The woods around there are thick as hell and you couldn't find a goddamn soul in there if you didn't already know where to look and you boy's bein' from the city and all you'd be lost in 10 minutes, you'd starve to death and I'd be investigatin' you boys' goddamn skeletons. But I'm going out there with you so you don't have to worry. These folks you're lookin' for are gonna end up out there, I guarantee it. Chief, you can bet your ass on it. I'd get Dud Cole on the next airplane outa there.

CHIEF JENKINS

(interested)

So you really think this is a promising avenue of investigation?

DIXON'S VOICE

You're goddamn right it's a promisin' avenue. Looks like Al Capone invented the fuckin' place. I shit you not! Matter of fact I'll just go out there now and wait there for you. You never know. They might show up before you can get there.

DUD

(hastily)

No, don't do that, Dale. We'll be back in touch. Don't do anything yet. Wait for us to contact you.

DIXON'S VOICE

I'll be ready at the drop of a hat.

CHIEF JENKINS

Well, Sgt. Dixon, we'd like to thank you for--

DIXON'S VOICE

It's my job, Chief. Oh, and boys? We're gonna get these sons of bitches!

There's an abrupt CLICK, and then the loud BUZZ of a dial tone as the cops around the table stare at each other with a sort of stunned wonder.

EXT. THE LITTLE ROCK AIRPORT - NIGHT

The loud BUZZ of the phone dissolves into the ROAR of a jetliner coming in for a landing, and this TITLE appears:

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS
MONDAY NIGHT

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL

Dud Cole and John McFeely, looking pretty beat--they've probably only had a couple of hours sleep since Saturday night--lug luggage through the terminal. Dud glances at his watch.

McFEELY

So what time is it?

DUD

Nearly 2.

McFEELY

So how far's this Star City place anyway?

DUD

John, we've got miles to go before we sleep.

McFEELY

Spare me the fucking poetry, OK?

Dud looks faintly amused at McFeely's crankiness as they walk on through the nearly deserted terminal.

CUT TO:

A BLACK AND WHITE IMAGE OF RAYMOND BURR AS PERRY MASON making a sobbing woman confess on the stand that she killed her husband. PULL BACK TO SHOW we're in:

INT. A MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

There are 2 double beds. On one of them is Ray, eating out of a big bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken. On the other is Pluto, staring at the TV.

TITLE:

DEMMING, NEW MEXICO

Ray tosses a piece of chicken over to Pluto.

RAY
Here, bubba.

After a moment, Pluto picks it up, looks at it, then tosses it back to Ray.

PLUTO
(in his characteristic
monotone)
I don't eat that shit. It's nasty.
Don't you read the papers?

RAY
Man, it ain't nothin' but chicken.
Ain't nothin' wrong with chicken.

The bathroom door opens, and Fantasiā comes out in a swirl of steam. She's wearing nothing but a towel. She looks about as good as a woman can look.

RAY (Cont'd)
You want some of this, baby?

FANTASIA
I want some of this, baby.

She goes to the small table between the beds, where several lines of cocaine are already cut and waiting, shining white in the lamplight. She takes a rolled-up bill--a \$100 bill--and begins to ingest the white lines. Ray is looking on approvingly.

RAY
Now aren't you glad you come along
for the ride?

FANTASIA
Except you said there wasn't gonna
be no killin', Ray.

RAY
Well, I lied. And now you're in it
as much as Pluto and me. If we burn,
you burn, baby--don't you forget that.

Fantasia doesn't look as though she will. Ray looks with satisfaction at the cocaine.

RAY (Cont'd)
Yeah, we got enough of this shit to
last us through 1995.

PLUTO

We got enough to last us till we
get to Houston.

RAY

We ain't sellin' all 3 keys, bubba.

PLUTO

We're selling it in Houston. Billy's
the only person I know with enough
money to take it off our hands. It's
stupid riding up and down the road
with it.

RAY

What are you afraid's gonna happen,
man, we gonna get in trouble?

Ray grins and winks at Fantasia.

RAY (Cont'd)

Besides, man, I was plannin' on sellin' some to them country sons of bitches in Arkansas.

PLUTO

This Arkansas shit makes me nervous.

RAY

We'll be in and out. We ain't buildin' a goddamn house or nothin'.

FANTASIA

It won't be a problem, Pluto. What are you worried about?

PLUTO

My ass.

FANTASIA

I don't get you, baby. Why don't you ever loosen up and have fun? Don't you ever get high? I see you do as much of this toot as me and Ray put together and you never seem high. I don't even know why you do it if it don't make you feel good. Don't you want to feel good?

PLUTO

What do you want me to do, dance?

RAY

Man, this is the biggest thing that's ever happened to us, and you're just layin' over there like some big ol' brown turd. Fuck you.

Pluto can move astonishingly quick for a man his size. In a twinkling Ray's arm is twisted behind his back and his face is being pressed into the bucket of fried chicken.

PLUTO

(quietly, calmly, coldly)
Don't talk to me that way. We're going to Houston and sell this
(MORE)

PLUTO (Cont'd)

shit. The money we have won't last forever. Then I'm going to go to Chicago and get lost. I don't give a fuck what you do but if you're smart you'll go too. I don't want to hear any more bullshit out of your or her.

Now Pluto abruptly releases Ray, goes back to his bed, lies down, and resumes staring at the TV. Ray is gasping and coughing and wiping the chicken grease off his face with the bedspread.

RAY

(indignant, but not
too indignant)

I don't like bein' touched, man. If you got something to say, just say it. Don't be touchin' me and shit, all right?

Fantasia, meanwhile, still kneeling in the lamplight before her cocaine god, has been watching the scene with a sort of detached serenity, as something that has nothing to do with her.

FANTASIA

(to Ray)

He's right, baby. We have to sell the stuff in Houston. Think of all that money. And Pluto knows people in Chicago, and we can live off that money in Chicago for a long time. We'll buy all the toot we want when we get there and we're safe. Pluto's gonna take care of us in Chicago.

As Fantasia has talked, the CAMERA HAS BEEN PUSHING IN on her face, which is filled with all the innocent yearning of Dorothy longing to go behind the rainbow.

FANTASIA (Cont'd)

(softly)

We'll be safe.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A CAR MOVING DOWN A 2-LANE BLACKTOP ROAD IN A GREEN LOVELY LAND - SUNRISE

TITLE: .

NEAR STAR CITY, ARKANSAS
TUESDAY MORNING

INT. CAR

Behind the wheel of the rental car is John McFeely--Dud Cole is on the passenger side. The beginning of a new day and the freshness of a new place seem to have restored the cops' flagging energy.

DUD

Man, this is really beautiful.

McFEELY

Sure is greener than hell.

DUD

This is my first time in Arkansas.

McFEELY

This is my first time in the South.

DUD

Peace and quiet.

They pass a road sign that says: "STAR CITY: 3 MILES."

McFEELY

Three miles! Shit, I can't wait to get to that motel. Feels like I haven't slept in a week.

DUD

You know, John, I'm a country boy.

McFEELY

I thought you were born in L.A.

DUD

Unh unh. Malibu.

Suddenly, the silence of the morning is shattered by a loud HONKING. McFeely looks in his rearview mirror and Dud twists and looks through the back window.

A car is right on their bumper, horn BLARING and headlights flashing.

McFEELY

What the fuck--?

DUD

I think he wants us to pull over.

McFEELY

(speeding up)

Hell no--I saw EASY RIDER.

The car, continuing to HONK and flash its lights, speeds up too. When it tries to pull into the passing lane, McFeely swerves, cutting it off.

McFEELY (Cont'd)

You ain't gettin' over there!
Goddamn it, Dud, our guns are
in our suitcases in the fucking trunk!

DUD

John, I think you're overreacting.

McFEELY

Overreacting, hell--I saw DELIVERANCE.

Now the pursuing car deftly fakes McFeely out, pretending to try to pass again on the left, and then with a sudden burst of speed swerving right onto the shoulder and drawing up alongside the cops' car.

DUD'S POV: A BASEBALL CAP AND A GRINNING HANDSOME FACE in the window of the bouncing car just a few feet to his right. And now Dale Dixon holds up a gleaming golden badge.

DALE

(shouting)

Howdy!

DUD

John, pull over. He's a cop.

EXT. THE ROAD

McFeely slows and pulls over on the side of the road. The other car stops ahead of them, and out of the car pops Dixon, wearing his usual uniform of blue jeans and a flannel shirt. He strides quickly back to the cops' car, bends down, and sticks his big hand through the window.

INT. THE CAR

DALE

Dale Dixon!

McFEELY

(shaking the hand)

John McFeely.

DALE

(sticking his hand
across McFeely
to Dud)

Dale Dixon!

DUD
 (shaking the hand)
 Dud Cole.

DALE
 Well, Dud Cole in the flesh, I
 feel like we're old buddies already.
 Welcome to Star City, boys. We
 got a full day ahead of us so if
 you boys'll just follow me I'm gonna
 provide escort to the Day's Inn, you
 can unpack your bags and then I'll
 take y'all to get some breakfast at
 the Shack at exactly
 (checking his watch)
 O whatever fuckin' hundred hours
 it'll be in 30 minutes.

Now Dale strides purposefully back to his car, but just as
 he opens the door he stops and looks back:

DALE (Cont'd)
 (calling)
 Don't worry, boys! We'll get
 these sons of bitches!

Dud and McFeely exchange a look. Dale gets in his car, slams
 the door, and then takes off with a great SCREECHING of tires
 down the road.

DUD
 After him, McFeely.

McFeely grimly guns the accelerator.

EXT. THE ROAD

The cops' car takes off with a SCREECH of its own, trying to
 catch up with Dale Dixon, who is already a good 100 yards
 down the road.

INT. THE SHACK RESTAURANT - MORNING

OPEN ON A MIDDLE-AGED WAITRESS carrying 3 steaming plates filled
 with food across the cafe. The tables are filled with mostly
 FARMERS AND BLUE-COLLAR TYPES getting ready for a hard day's
 work. The waitress sets the plates down at a booth where
 Dud, McFeely, and Dale Dixon are sitting. Dale's police radio
 is sitting on the table, emitting from time to time SQUAWKY
 UNINTELLIGIBLE BURSTS of police chatter.

DALE
 You boys are in for a treat now.

Dale grabs a whole biscuit and stuffs it into his mouth.

DALE (Cont'd)

Fern, brings us an extra biscuit
or 2, will ya?

FERN

Sure thing, Hurricane.

DALE

The Shack has the best biscuits
in the whole goddamn state.

DUD

Excuse me, but--did she just call
you "Hurricane"?

DALE

Some people call me that, I never
have figured out why.

Dud and McFeely are digging in hungrily but they're no match
for Dale--henceforth to be known as "Hurricane"--who is
eating bacon and eggs and biscuits and hashed browns and
gulping coffee like it's some sort of contest.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

Anyway, like I was tellin' you
boys, as soon as I saw you boys
drive by I knew you must be the
boys from California. Cops look
the same everywhere, I guess--
(as Fern returns with
more biscuits)

Thanks, Fern, how's Walter?

FERN

Had his gallbladder taken out
yesterday.

HURRICANE

(slurping coffee--not
really paying attention)
Good for him. Anyway, like I was
tellin' you boys--

McFEELY

(eating a biscuit)
My god this is good! This is my
kind of food. Is it like this
everywhere in the South?

HURRICANE

Hell no, just in Arkansas.

(shouting across
the room)

Fern, we're gonna be needin' some
more biscuits over here in a--
Charlie!

A short 50-ish balding MAN with a bit of a paunch and a
dapper little moustache has entered the cafe, and now comes
to their booth.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

Here's my partner, Charlie Griffith.
Charlie, this is Dud Cole.

CHARLIE

(shaking hands with
Dud--in a twangy
Northern accent)

How are you, Dud?

DUD

Charlie, it's a pleasure.

HURRICANE

And this is Dan MacIntosh.

CHARLIE

(shaking hands)

Nice to meet you, Dan.

McFEELY

Actually, the name's John--John
McFeely.

HURRICANE

Yeah, right, McFeely. All those
goddamn Mac names sound alike to
me. Charlie, you had your breakfast yet?

CHARLIE

Yes, Jocelyn fixed me a very nice--

HURRICANE

Charlie's just been down here a
couple of years. He's a goddamn
Yankee from Detroit.

(slapping Charlie
on the back)

Ain't ya, Charlie? But he's a
good ol' boy.

Hurricane, wiping up some residual grease with a biscuit, has
already literally cleaned his plate, and now he takes a final

gulp of coffee and a swipe at his mouth with a napkin and grabs his radio and stands up.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

Well you boys about ready?

Dud and McFeely look at each other--they've hardly had time to make a dent in their wonderful food.

DUD

Actually, we're not quite--

But Hurricane is already striding past the cash register toward the exit.

HURRICANE

(slapping down
a bill)

Keep the change, Fern!

FERN

There ain't no change, Hurricane.
It's a 12 dollar check and you
just give me a 10.

HURRICANE

I'll catch ya next time, Fern.
(as he exits--over
his shoulder)

You boys comin'?, we hadn't got
all goddamn day.

Dud is eating a piece of bacon and McFeely is stuffing a couple of spare biscuits into his pockets as they and Charlie hurry to catch up.

CHARLIE

(sympathetically,
as they exit)

I haven't had a full meal since
I've known this son of a gun.

EXT. A QUIET COUNTRY LANE OUTSIDE STAR CITY - MORNING

The lane is deserted. Birds are singing, the wind is rustling through the tender green leaves of the mild Southern spring.

Suddenly, Hurricane's car comes tearing around a curve. It ROARS down the lane toward the CAMERA, accelerating, and then disappears beneath the CAMERA, leaving the lane empty again.

INT. HURRICANE'S CAR

Dud and McFeely are in the back. They seem to be actually

pressed back into the seat a bit, like astronauts experiencing G-forces. Charlie Griffith is in the front passenger seat, smoking a pipe and staring straight ahead. Hurricane, at the wheel, is one of those people that have to look you right in the eye when they're talking to you. He is controlling the car with a couple of fingers of his left hand, his right arm is resting along the seat back, and his head is craned around, with only an occasional glance at the road, as he looks from Dud to McFeely.

HURRICANE

. . .And if we got time while you boys are here I'll take you up to Stuttgart. That's the duck capital of the world. Not just the United States--

CHARLIE

(his voice flat
and tense)

Hurricane, watch the road.

HURRICANE

--The whole goddamn world. Another thing y'all might not know is that Arkansas raises more chickens than anyplace in the world. Not just the United States--

CHARLIE

Hurricane, watch the road.

HURRICANE

--The whole goddamn world.

EXT. A VALLEY AMONG SOME HILLS OUTSIDE STAR CITY - MORNING

OPEN WITH A LONG SHOT OF A RAMSHACKLE WOODEN HOUSE with a rusting tin roof, and a few white chickens pecking in the dust around it.

HURRICANE (O.S.)

See what I mean? Perfect hide-out.

And now the CAMERA BEGINS TO PULL BACK, to show we're looking at the house in the valley from a tree-covered ridge and the POV of Hurricane and Charlie and Dud and McFeely. The L.A. cops, in their well-tailored suits, present an incongruous appearance in this rustic setting.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

We'll be waitin' in the weeds up here, and when the bad folks show up, we'll put the stopper in the

(MORE)

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

bottle like
(snapping his fingers)
that. They'll be sorry they ever
heard of Star City, Arkansas.

DUD

What do you think, John?

McFEELY

It does look like a good place
to lie low.

HURRICANE

(encouraged by McFeely's
comment)

This'll be the easiest job you
boys ever worked. My chief told
me to give y'all 100% cooperation,
so me and my boys'll be out here
around the clock watchin' this
place and you boys can just stay
in town and drink beer and eat
biscuits and chase chicks.

DUD

Sounds great, Dale--but we'll help
out on the surveillance.

HURRICANE

Don't you trust us to do it right?

DUD

Of course we do, it's just--

McFEELY

I gotta take a leak.
(moving toward
some trees)

Are there snakes around here?

HURRICANE

Sure, but the only ones that are
poison are rattlesnakes, copperheads,
and water moccasins.

McFEELY

Great.

CHARLIE

There's the old man.

In the clearing in the little valley below, an extremely OLD WHITE MAN has come out onto the little porch of the house, and is slowly sweeping it with a broom.

DUD

(to Hurricane)

Do you know the uncle personally?

HURRICANE

I know just about everybody around here personally. But you know I been checkin' around, and nobody seems to know this Ray Malcom fella. If he ever did live here, he must've moved away a long time ago.

McFEELY (O.S.)

(excitedly)

Hey Dud--come here!

While a curious Dud and Charlie go see what McFeely wants, Hurricane, lost in thought, continues to stare down at Jeremiah Malcom.

ANGLE ON McFEELY among the trees, staring upwards. Dud and Charlie come into view.

DUD

(punnily)

What's "up"?

McFEELY

(pointing up
into a tree)

What the hell is that?

They all look up and see, looking down at them, an extraordinarily ugly animal with a naked head and dumb eyes.

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON THE RIDGE OVERLOOKING THE VALLEY, and Dud and McFeely and Charlie coming back.

McFEELY

Possum, huh? Sure was ugly.

CHARLIE

Some of the people around here eat 'em.

McFEELY

(looking disgusted)

My god--

DUD
Where's Dale?

Hurricane's nowhere in sight.

CHARLIE
(puzzled)
I don't know.

McFEELY
(in a moment)
Holy shit--

Dud looks at his partner, then follows his line of sight down the ridge to the clearing. Hurricane has just reached the edge of the clearing, and is now beginning to walk across it in his long strides toward the little house and Jeremiah Malcom.

DUD
(dismayed)
What the hell's he doing?

EXT. THE HOUSE

The old man is standing on his porch, throwing chicken feed to his excitedly CLUCKING chickens, as Hurricane walks up.

HURRICANE
How you doin'?

Jeremiah looks up at Hurricane with obviously age-dimmed eyes.

JEREMIAH
(in a deep, resonant
voice)
Huh?

HURRICANE
Doin' all right today?

JEREMIAH
Huh?

HURRICANE
(practically shouting)
I said are you doin' all right
today?

JEREMIAH
Yup. Doin' all right today.

HURRICANE
Do you remember me?

JEREMIAH

It gets too hot to be out here up
around noon time, 12 o'clock.

HURRICANE

Do you have a telephone?

JEREMIAH

Huh?

HURRICANE

Do you have a telephone?

JEREMIAH

Tell who what?

HURRICANE

(shouting)

Telephone!

JEREMIAH

I ain't got no telephone. You have
to go up at the gas station on
the highway.

Hurricane is beginning to look very frustrated.

HURRICANE

Heard from your nephew lately?

JEREMIAH

Huh?

HURRICANE

Ray Malcom! Have you heard from
Ray Malcom?

JEREMIAH

Yeah, I heard of Ray Malcom. That's
my brother's boy. I reckon I heard
of my own kin.

HURRICANE

Do you know where he is? Has he
talked to you lately?

JEREMIAH

Huh?

HURRICANE

When was the last time you talked
to him?

JEREMIAH

Talk to who?

HURRICANE

Ray Malcom.

JEREMIAH

Ray Malcom's my nephew. My brother's boy.

HURRICANE

I know that, goddamn it!

JEREMIAH

I have to feed these chickens before it gets too damn hot. It gets hot as hell round noontime.

Hurricane, his face red with frustration and the exertion of shouting, suddenly turns and begins to storm back across the clearing toward the wooded ridge.

HURRICANE

I hope you and those chickens have a goddamn heat stroke!

INT. RAY'S CAR, MOVING DOWN A FREEWAY - DAY

CLOSE ON PLUTO in the back seat, face half hidden behind U.S.A. TODAY.

TITLE: NEAR SMITH, NEW MEXICO

We hear MUSIC on the car radio, but we hear no conversation. We sense the ennui of long-distance travel. Pluto browsingly turns the pages of the paper.

But now suddenly it's obvious that something in the newspaper has caught Pluto's attention. The CAMERA BEGINS TO SLOWLY PUSH IN on Pluto's face. Now his eyes lift from the paper, look into the front seat. Pluto folds the paper carefully so that whatever he's been looking at is prominent--then he holds the paper toward the front.

RAY (O.S.)

(casually)

What's this, bubba?

And then, as we HOLD on. Pluto's face:

RAY (O.S.)

(in surprise and outrage)

Muh-ther-fucker!

EXT. A USED CAR LOT - DAY

ANGLE ON BLUE AND YELLOW AND GREEN AND RED PLASTIC PENNANTS fluttering in the wind against an impossibly blue sky.

ANGLE ON HANDS rapidly counting a great number of \$100 bills.

ANGLE ON RAY AND THE CAR SALESMAN, standing beside a car.

CAR SALESMAN

(happy to have made
such a quick sale)

She's all yours.

And the car salesman SMACKS the hood of the car with his palm.

INT. THE CAR MOVING DOWN THE FREEWAY - DAY

We hear the SMACK of the back of Ray's hand as it catches Fantasia in the cheek. Fantasia CRIES OUT and cowers on the passenger side as far away from Ray as she can get.

RAY

That fuckin' kid, goddamn it! Why
didn't you tell me about the fuckin'
kid?

FANTASIA

I swear to God, Ray, I didn't see
any kid! I didn't see any kid!

ANGLE ON THE NEWSPAPER lying on the seat between them. It's still folded open to the article Pluto found so interesting. The headline reads: "Suspect Sought In Murder Of 6 In L.A." There's also a photograph of a familiar face, and under the photograph this caption: "Mass Murder Suspect Ray Malcolm."

RAY

They know me now! You understand that,
goddamn it? They know my name, they
know my face, probably how long
my dick is--

Pluto sits in the back seat, watching Ray and Fantasia with no expression.

FANTASIA

I didn't see any kid, Ray, he
musta been hiding real good.

RAY

(raising his
hand again)
Quit lyin' to me!

FANTASIA

(hysterically)

Don't hit me no more! Pluto, don't let him hit me no more! We're gonna be OK, baby. We got rid of your car, they're not gonna find us.

RAY

Maybe they ain't gonna find you!

FANTASIA

They're not gonna find us. We're gonna be OK--we're gonna be OK--we're gonna be OK--

INT. STAR CITY CITY HALL AND POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Hurricane, Dud, and McFeely are lined up shoulder to shoulder staring into the CAMERA.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

OK, everybody--say "sooie."

Everybody smiles and says "sooie," and then there's the flash of a flashbulb. Now Hurricane rushes toward Charlie and gets the camera from him.

HURRICANE

Now let's get you in hear, Charlie,
(seeing a young police officer named JIMMY CROWNOVER walking by)
hell, let's get us all in here, Jimmy, come over here and take our picture.

JIMMY

I'm in a hurry, Hurricane--

HURRICANE

(thrusting the camera into his hands)
It'll just take a minute,
(lining up with the other three)
now let's get this one with our guns out. Wait a minute! Just be drawin' our guns! Jimmy, you snap it just as we get 'em clear of the holster.

Dud and McFeely exchange a look.

DUD

I'm not sure John and I should be--

HURRICANE

(not hearing a word)
OK, Jimmy, I'm countin' three. Then you snap. Get your hands on your guns, boys.

Very reluctantly, Dud and McFeely join Hurricane and Charlie in putting their hands inside their coats on their guns.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

All right, one. Two. Three!

They all draw. It looks like the Untouchables have just arrived. Jimmy snaps the picture and for just a split second we have a FREEZE FRAME.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

(as they put their guns away)
That was good, Jimmy,
(looking toward an ELDERLY
LADY sitting behind a
typewriter)
now let's get Miz Parmer in here--

JIMMY

Hurricane, I'm in a hurry! Miz Sellers just called. Peevey Nottingham's been sellin' her kid bootleg beer again and she's mad as hell.

HURRICANE

(importantly)
Hold on, Jimmy, I better handle this myself.
(to Dud and McFeely and Charlie)
Boys, let's go, we got a case.

CHARLIE

Dale, we already got a case.

HURRICANE

Hell, Charlie, we got Newton keepin' surveillance on the old man's house, he'll let us know if the bad folks show up--

Dud and McFeely look very dubious.

DUD

Actually, John and I were planning on going over to the motel and getting a little shut-eye.

McFEELY

Yeah, we're--
(feigning a yawn)
really sleepy.

EXT. A STREET IN FRONT OF AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

Standing near their parked cars, the towering Hurricane has his arm around the diminutive McFeely's shoulders, talking to him confidentially, as Dud and Charlie look on.

HURRICANE

Now, MacIntosh, this is gonna be a sting operation. We want to catch Peevey in the actual act of selling. He knows me and Charlie, and Dud doesn't look like the sort to be buying liquor at the bootlegger's.

McFEELY

I do?

HURRICANE

Well, you're--younger.

McFEELY

Won't he be suspicious, I mean, a stranger?

HURRICANE

Just tell him you're a colored traveling salesman. Peevey ain't the smartest.

McFEELY

Is this Peevey dangerous?

HURRICANE

Oh, Peevey's cut up a few fellers, but he's not too bad, he's a little shit like you.

McFeely doesn't look too reassured. The elementary school's on the edge of town, and now Hurricane points to a dirt road leading back into some woods.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

See this road? Just drive down that to the first fork and take the right one. Peevey's place is the last house on the right at the dead end. You can't miss it, there'll be 10 or 12 old redbone hounds in the yard.

McFEELY

Dogs?

HURRICANE

Don't worry, they won't bite unless you're nervous. They sense nervousness. Just don't

(MORE)

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

be nervous. Now, we'll be sneakin' up through the woods there. When you make the buy, there we'll be. Dud, Charlie? Let's go.

Hurricane and Charlie get into Hurricane's car. As McFeely moves to the rental car, he motions for Dud.

McFEELY

Dud, this is crazy! Can't you talk to him?

DUD

John, we'll need his cooperation later on, so--let's just go with this. Besides--this oughta be a snap for somebody who worked vice in Hollywood for two years.

And Dud gives McFeely an encouraging clap on the back.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A RAMSHACKLE HOUSE IN THE WOODS - A FEW MINUTES LATER

McFeely drives up, gets out of the car. He surveys the yard. At least the dogs aren't around. He crosses the yard and starts up the steps. Suddenly it sounds like World War III has broken out. A whole fleet of redbone hounds comes charging around the corner of the house. The BARKING is deafening. The lead dog is the biggest. He goes straight for McFeely. McFeely runs up the steps and starts to bang on the door. The lead dog has his teeth in McFeely's pants leg and is shaking his huge head violently from side to side.

The door opens, and a tiny balding man with a cataract in one eye is standing there with a pine-knot stick in his hand. PEEVEY NOTTINGHAM reaches past McFeely and whacks the big hound on the back.

PEEVEY

Bocephus! Get down goddamn it! Go on!

Bocephus lets go of McFeely's pants leg and drops back a pace or two and falls into formation with the others. They all sit on their haunches and pant and stare at McFeely. Peevey is staring at McFeely in much the same way as the dogs.

PEEVEY (Cont'd)

What do you want?

McFEELY

You think they're--OK now?

PEEVEY

As long as you don't move and you
ain't the law they'll leave you
alone if I tell 'em to.

McFeely is sweating and his pants are torn and he is the law.

McFEELY

(clearing his throat)
I was passing through town and I
heard I could buy some liquor
from you.

PEEVEY

(suspiciously)
Who told you that?

McFEELY

Some guys at the drugstore in town.

PEEVEY

What was their names?

McFEELY

Uh, Bob. Bob and Tom.

PEEVEY

Was they white or colored?

McFEELY

One white, one colored.

PEEVEY

Which one was colored?

McFEELY

Bob.

PEEVEY

I ain't never heard of no colored
fella named Bob.

McFEELY

I think that was his nickname. Tom
called him Bob, but the lady at the
counter called him--Luther.

PEEVEY

Old man Luther Lambert?

McFEELY

Yeah, I think so.

Peevey Nottingham regards McFeely cannily with his one good eye and his one blank white one--then:

PEEVEY

Come on in then.

Casting a relieved glance at the panting fleet of hounds, McFeely enters.

EXT. THE WOODS

Hurricane, Charlie, and Dud--with Hurricane leading the way naturally--are circling through the woods, trying to be as quiet as they can. Briars are clawing and clutching at Dud's citified clothes.

INT. PEEVEY'S HOUSE

Peevey is looking at McFeely, suspicion still obviously nagging at him.

McFEELY

Nice place.

PEEVEY

Why are you passing through town in a suit like that and why don't you just drive to the county line on your way through and get liquor? The next county's wet.

McFEELY

I'm staying overnight here. You see, I'm a colored travelling--
(hearing what he's saying)
I'm a traveling salesman.

PEEVEY

What do you sell?

McFEELY

Uhm--suits. Like this one I'm wearing.
(holding the coat open
for inspection)
A very nice Ralph Laurens.

PEEVEY

I don't need no suit.

McFEELY

Well--could I buy some liquor?
(sincerely)
I really need a drink.

PEEVEY

Well--I guess it's all right. What do you want?

McFEELY

Oh, how about--a nice bottle of burgandy?

PEEVEY

I don't know what that is. I got beer and whiskey. It'll cost you double the liquor store price. Schlitz, Bud, Pabst, and Old Crow and Old Granddad, take it or leave it.

McFEELY

I'll have a six pack of Schlitz and a bottle of Old Crow.

PEEVEY

I'll be right back.

Peevey exits into a back room, then returns a moment later with the booze, which he sets down on a table.

PEEVEY (Cont'd)

That'll be 7 dollars for the beer and 12 dollars for the whiskey.

Peevey's back is to a curtainless window in the side of the house, and now McFeely's eyes widen a little as he sees Hurricane's big head rising into view like the Great Pumpkin.

PEEVEY (Cont'd)

Well--you buyin' or ain't ya?

Hurricane makes a "go ahead" motion with his hands and then pantomimes counting out money. McFeely takes out his billfold, counts Peevey out some bills. Hurricane's face disappears from the window and there is a SOUND LIKE THUNDER on the porch and Peevey looks startled and then the locked front door is kicked open by Hurricane and Hurricane storms in with Charlie and Dud bringing up the rear.

HURRICANE

All right, Peevey, on the floor!
You're under arrest!

Peevey reaches in his pants and pulls out a pistol. Like lightning Dud and McFeely have their guns drawn and, holding them with both hands, pointed at Peevey. Hurricane unconcernedly walks over to Peevey and simply takes his gun away.

HURRICANE

Give me that goddamn gun, Peevey. You know you're not gonna shoot me. You

(MORE)

THE PICNIC TABLE, a little later. The feast is in full swing.

McFEELY

I just can't get over this food. This is the best food in the world.

DUD

Isn't it?

CHERYL ANN

Well, we have to have good food around here to keep Dale on an even keel. He gets real grumpy when he doesn't eat well.

Bonnie is sitting in her father's lap eating off his plate. Her mouth is smeared with barbecue sauce. McFeely catches her eye and winks at her. She winks back.

McFEELY

Thank god Bonnie looks like her mother and not you, Hurricane.

HURRICANE

(good-naturedly)

That's for damn sure, MacIntosh.

Jocelyn is starting to shiver a little and rubs her arms.

JOCELYN

Charlie, honey, go get my jacket from the car, will you?

CHARLIE

Honey, why don't you just lean up against me? I'll keep you warm.

JOCELYN

I want my jacket, Charlie.

Charlie nods, gets up, and goes for her jacket. Hurricane leans over to Dud--in a low voice:

HURRICANE

I've never seen anybody as henpecked as Charlie. Jocelyn leadshim around like a puppy.

JOCELYN

Hurricane, did I hear my name down there?

HURRICANE

No, Jocelyn. Just men talk. I gotta tell you boys, I was just damn impressed

(MORE)

HURRICANE (Cont'd)
 with the way y'all operated today on
 the sting. You boys had those guns
 out before you could say Tom Thumb.
 Cheryl Ann, you should've seen it.
 Little Johnny MacIntosh there just
 flat hoodwinked Peevey Nottingham.

McFEELY
 I really didn't do anything, Hurricane.
 You're the one who--

HURRICANE
 Modest too. I figured you would be. I
 tell you what, between me and you boys
 and Charlie, I know 2 niggers and a white trash
 headed this way that are in for a rude awakenin'.

There is a sort of silent gasp from the entire table. Horrified,
 Cheryl Ann kicks Hurricane under the table hard in the shin.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)
 Goddamn, Cheryl Ann, what the hell
 is wrong with you, you nearly broke
 my gosh durn leg.

Cheryl Ann makes a slight motion of her head toward McFeely.
 Suddenly Hurricane realizes what he's just said, and his face
 colors.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)
 (trying to cover up)
 Yup--that white trash and those--Nigroes--
 are sure gonna be surprised.
 (turning his attention to
 Bonnie, who's a mess)
 Bonnie, let's try to get some of this
 food in your stomach.

McFeely looks more amused than offended.

McFEELY
 (to Dud, in a low voice)
 You gotta watch those Nigroes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN OF HURRICANE'S HOUSE - DUSK

Dud comes in off the back porch. Cheryl Ann is tending to
 something in the oven.

DUD
 Cheryl Ann, I just wanted to thank you
 again for supper. It was great.

CHERYL ANN

You and John aren't leaving, are you?
I'm baking some cookies. Dale loves
cookies.

DUD

We'll stay for the cookies.

CHERYL ANN

(hesitantly)

Dud, I--I want to apologize about Dale's
comment before. I bet John feels terrible.
Dale didn't mean anything by it. He just
grew up talking that way. It's just habit.
Dale doesn't have a mean or ungenerous
bone in his body.

DUD

Hey, I understand, and I know John does
too. We both think your husband's quite
a guy.

CHERYL ANN

(with a relieved smile)

He really likes you and John. I
can tell. You know, I've never seen
Dale this excited before. This is
about the biggest thing that's ever
happened to him--this case, I mean.

DUD

It's a big case.

CHERYL ANN

You think these people are really
coming to Star City?

DUD

(fervently)

I sure hope so.

CHERYL ANN

They're pretty dangerous, aren't they?

DUD

(softly)

Yes.

CHERYL ANN

(hesitantly)

Dud, would you--kind of keep an eye on Dale?
I know how he is and--well, I just don't
want him getting in over his head.

I'll keep an eye on him.

Cheryl Ann smiles her appreciation.

EXT. THE BACK PORCH

Dud comes out the door. Hurricane, Charlie, and McFeely are standing along the edge of the porch, digesting their barbecue, gazing contentedly out into the green twilight. Dud joins them.

DUD

(to Hurricane)

This is really a nice place you have.

HURRICANE

Yeah. Good house. Good yard. Good wife. Good kid. I consider myself a lucky man.

McFEELY

Hurricane, where's your bathroom?

HURRICANE

What do you need to do, pee?

McFEELY

Yeah.

HURRICANE

Hell, pee off the porch here, I do.

(unzipping)

Matter of fact, I'll join you.

McFEELY

(looking toward the house)

But what about the--

HURRICANE

(already in full stream)

They're busy. They're not comin' out here.

McFeely looks at Dud, who gives a when-in-Rome-do-as-the-Romans-do shrug. McFeely unzips, joins Hurricane. The smoke from Charlie's pipe drifts out into the green dream of the evening. Suddenly, from the doorway:

CHERYL ANN

Who all wants cookies?

The startled McFeely tries desperately to stop peeing and almost gives himself a sex change operation zipping his pants back up. Dud and Charlie are laughing at him.

HURRICANE

We all do. We'll be in there in a minute.

Cheryl Ann disappears from the doorway. Hurricane, finishing up, repacking his gear, gazes thoughtfully out into his big back yard.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

Yeah, I'm one lucky man all right. It's like a couple of weeks ago. I went over to Oaklawn Park in Hot Springs, I'll have to take you boys over there one day, it's one of the nicest race tracks in the country. Anyway, I bet on a 30 to 1 shot. Horse called Color Me Bad. Son of a bitch came in! Won by 3 lengths. I like to have shit a brick sideways. Anyhow, that's the way things go for me. Never hardly lose a coin toss. My mama used to tell me I was born under a lucky star.

And now Hurricane looks into the deepening darkness of the sky and notices low in it the evening star.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)
 (dramatically pointing)
 And there it is by god! My star!

The CAMERA PUSHES over Hurricane's shoulder in and in and in on the star, shining pure and clear and serene, and then we:

DISSOLVE TO:

ANOTHER POINT OF LIGHT, and then we PULL BACK TO SHOW the point of light is moistly glistening in:

FANTASIA'S EYE.

INT. A CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Fantasia is standing in front of the magazine rack looking at a SOAP OPERA DIGEST.

TITLE: ODESSA, TEXAS
 TUESDAY NIGHT

Fantasia looks over at Ray, who is standing at the front counter holding a 6-pack of beer and putting a frozen burrito in the microwave.

FANTASIA
 (holding up
 the magazine)
 Look! Erica's on the cover.

Ray gives a "so what?" nod. Fantasia takes the magazine and 1 or 2 others, and moves to a display stand of road maps.

FANTASIA (Cont'd)
 Ray, should we get a map of Houston? They've got all kinds of maps.

CASHIER
 (bored)
 Y'all going to Houston? Wish I was.

RAY
 We don't need a map, baby. Don't
 you want somethin' to eat?

INT. CAR PARKED OUT FRONT OF THE CONVENIENCE STORE

Pluto is sitting in the back seat. Now a car pulls up next to him. Pluto looks at it. It's a Texas State Police car, its tall aerial rocking back and forth. As a STATE TROOPER gets out, Pluto looks straight ahead. His face twitches very slightly.

INT. THE STORE

The trooper enters.

TROOPER
 How are you, Tracy?

The CASHIER, a cute young woman, smiles at the trooper.

CASHIER
 Good, Bill. How are you?

TROOPER
 (heading for the
 coffee pot)
 Lonely, just like you. You
 know we have the 2 loneliest
 jobs in town.

The trooper, as he takes a drink of his coffee, gives Ray the once-over--just the routine eyeballing a cop gives any stranger in his territory. At the best of times Ray is not what you would call stable, and now he looks as though he's about to shatter into a billion bits.

INT. THE CAR

Pluto observes the scene inside the store.

PLUTO
 Be cool.

INT. THE STORE

But Ray doesn't look cool at all. Fantasia has moved over to him, hoping to head off any uncool action. The microwave makes a PINGING RING.

FANTASIA
 (with a smile)
 Your burrito's ready, honey.

RAY
 (in a whisper)
 He's watchin' me--he knows who
 I am--

FANTASIA
 (in a whisper)
 No he doesn't--

CASHIER
 Bill, you going to the rodeo?

The trooper looks away from Ray. He leans easily on the counter. He likes the cute cashier.

TROOPER
 You bet. You?

Fantasia, to her horror, sees Ray slipping his gun out of the waistband of his pants.

CASHIER
 Sure I am. I'm in it.

Fantasia grabs Ray's hand.

FANTASIA
 (in a frantic whisper)
 No, Ray--

TROOPER
 Yeah?

CASHIER
 I'm barrel racing this year.

TROOPER
 Is that right?

INT. THE CAR

Pluto tensely watches the struggle between Ray and Fantasia taking place beyond the unknowing cop.

INT. THE STORE

Fantasia gets Ray to put the gun back in his pants.

TROOPER
 You'll never get me up on a horse.

FANTASIA
 (in a normal voice)
 Mm, that smells good, honey,
 you gonna share it with me?

She is half pulling Ray and his beer and his burrito toward the cashier's counter. Now they put their goods down in front of the cashier.

CASHIER
That be all for you?

FANTASIA
That's all.

TROOPER
(good naturedly)
Now you're not gonna drink that beer and drive, are ya?

FANTASIA
(with earnest sweetness)
Oh, no sir, we'd never do that, this is for later--

TROOPER
Just kidding.

CASHIER
Seven ninety-five.

Ray gives the girl a 20.

CASHIER (Cont'd)
(giving Ray
his change)
Y'all have a nice night.

FANTASIA
(including the trooper
in her smile)
Y'all too.

Fantasia and Ray exit. The trooper thoughtfully watches them walk out to the car where Pluto is waiting.

CASHIER
She's too young for you, Bill.

TROOPER
(returning his attention
to the young cashier)
I like 'em young.

INT. RAY'S CAR, MOVING DOWN THE FREEWAY WEST OF ODESSA -
A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT

Ray is looking in his rearview mirror.

RAY

Shit! That trooper's right behind us, man.

Fantasia starts to look around.

PLUTO

Don't look back--be cool.

FANTASIA

What do we do if he pulls us over?

RAY

(accelerating)

He ain't gonna pull us over.

PLUTO

Slow down, Ray. Don't panic.

RAY

That motherfucker recognized me, man--he knows who I am--

PLUTO

If he'd recognized you, he would have arrested you in the store. All he's doing is looking us over--a white boy and a "nigger" girl in Texas, that's all it is. Right now he's running a check on our plates--

FANTASIA

(happily)

But we got rid of Ray's car so we're OK, right?

(to Ray)

We're OK, baby.

INT. TROOPER'S CAR

The trooper is watching Ray and Pluto and Fantasia. Now a business-like female VOICE comes from the radio.

RADIO

542.

TROOPER

542, go ahead.

RADIO

On your out of state plate, New Mexico license number NE245, apparently the vehicle is recently purchased. There are no wants and there's no current registration available.

TROOPER

10-4.

(after a thoughtful
pause)

Would you check the teletype board for the last couple of days? Seems like I recall a teletype out of California where a male and female, black and a male white were wanted for some murders.

RADIO

542, stand by.

INT. RAY'S CAR

Ray has slowed down to 45.

PLUTO

Speed up, man, you'll make him suspicious.

RAY

(mutteringly as he angrily accelerates)
"Slow down," "speed up," make up your fuckin' mind--

INT. TROOPER'S CAR

The trooper, looking a bit impatient, picks up his radio.

TROOPER

542.

RADIO

542. Go ahead.

TROOPER

Have you found that teletype yet?

RADIO

Still looking, 542.

The trooper shakes his head, looking frustrated. After thinking a moment:

TROOPER

542. I'm gonna go ahead and pull 'em over.

INT. RAY'S CAR

Ray and Fantasia look dismayed as the trooper's colored lights

come on behind them.

RAY

Fuck!

FANTASIA

What are we gonna do?

PLUTO

Pull over.

RAY

(as he pulls off the
road--touching his
gun)

I'm gonna blow his fuckin' head off--

PLUTO

We're gonna be cool. We're gonna
play it by ear. We're not gonna
kill him unless we have to. We're
not gonna be stupid.

EXT. THE FREEWAY

Both cars are stopped now. The trooper has the car and its occupants illuminated by his spotlight. He gets out of his car.

INT. TROOPER'S CAR

RADIO

542.

EXT. THE FREEWAY

But a big diesel truck THUNDERS past at that moment, and the trooper, as he walks away, doesn't hear the transmission.

INT. TROOPER'S CAR

RADIO

(a bit louder)

542--come in.

EXT. THE FREEWAY

But as chance or some dark destiny would have it, another big truck comes THUNDERING past, again obliterating the sound of the radio. And now the trooper is out of earshot.

INT. RAY'S CAR

The trooper surprises the occupants by going not to Ray's, but to Fantasia's, side of the car. He shines his flashlight

into the car, filling in the stark shadows made by the spotlight--he shines it in the back on Pluto and the floorboard and the seat, and in the front on the seat and the floorboard and on Ray and on Fantasia, paying extra attention to the position of everybody's hands. Now he taps on the window with his flashlight, and Fantasia rolls it down.

FANTASIA
(with a smile)
Oh it's you again, hello!

INT. TROOPER'S CAR

The disembodied female VOICE on the radio now sounds definitely worried.

RADIO
542. 542. Come in. I've found
the teletype. Repeat. Have found
the teletype. We have a named
suspect.

EXT. THE FREEWAY

CLOSE-UP OF RAY'S DRIVER'S LICENSE, which the trooper is shining his flashlight on. Now the car registration is illuminated.

The trooper looks across Fantasia at Ray.

TROOPER
You've got a New Mexico plate and
registration, and a California
license.

FANTASIA
(very relaxed)
We had California plates, but our
stupid car blew up in New Mexico,
and we had to get a new car.
(with good-natured
reproach)
I told you it would never make
it, Ray--
(turning back to
the trooper)
But he wouldn't listen. I just
hope this one makes it.

TROOPER
Makes it to where?

FANTASIA
Philadelphia. My mother lives
there, she's been kinda sick
(MORE)

FANTASIA (Cont'd)

lately, and Ray's my boyfriend, so he got stuck with the job of taking me there. Richard's our friend, he's just along for the ride. We weren't speeding or anything, were we?

Fantasia's easy charm has made a good impression on the trooper.

TROOPER

No ma'am.

RAY

So what the fuck you stop us for, man?

Ray has just proceeded to make a bad impression on the trooper.

TROOPER

I want you to get out of the car, 1 at a time. You first, ma'am.

Ray and Pluto exchange a worried look. Fantasia starts to open her door, but suddenly Ray opens his door and gets out. The trooper has his gun out in a twinkling and points it over the top of the car at Ray.

TROOPER

Get your hands up!

RAY

Hey, calm down, you told me to get out, you said "you first, man"--

The car is a 2-door, and now Pluto comes out of the back seat. The trooper feels the situation getting out of control, and he grabs Pluto roughly by the collar.

PLUTO

What are you doing, man? You said 1 at a time--

The trooper has his gun trained on Ray, using Pluto as a sort of shield.

TROOPER

(to Ray)

Step on over to this side of the car! Keep your hands up where I can see 'em!

Ray, his hands up, comes on around the car.

RAY

Man, what's the matter
with you, you told us to get out--

FANTASIA

(acting frightened)

Ray, do what the man says!

TROOPER

(his hands full--a quick
glance over his shoulder)

You just stay right there--

(to Ray)

Put your hands on the car--spread
'em out--now spread out your legs.

(giving Pluto a
little shove)

OK, same thing--now spread your
legs--

The trooper has Ray and Pluto in control now. He begins to turn his head toward Fantasia.

TROOPER (Cont'd)

OK, ma'am, now--

The last sight the trooper sees on this earth, out of the corner of his eye, is Fantasia, who is a lot closer than he expected, who is standing in fact right behind him with a gun. She fires a bullet into his ear.

Fantasia stares down at the body of the trooper with a look of numb horror.

RAY

(exhilarated)

All right, baby--all right--

Now Ray grabs Fantasia's arm, and the two of them and Pluto get back into their car. They take off down the freeway, leaving the trooper lying on the roadside in a growing pool of blood.

Suddenly the fleeing car veers over the median strip, makes a fishtailing U-turn, and then heads back the same way it came. We hear very faintly from inside the trooper's car:
"542, come in!"

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE CAR MOVING DOWN THE FREEWAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER
THAT NIGHT

INT. THE CAR

RAY

Man, this is crazy, goin' back
into town?

PLUTO

(calmly)

This car's been I.D.'d. We'll
leave it on a side street with
the keys in it and the plates off--
it'll be stolen before the cops
find it.

(checking his watch)

It's not 8 o'clock yet. We'll
go to a used-car lot and buy
another car. Then we'll go
on our merry little way.

FANTASIA

But Pluto, the cops are gonna be
comin' this way--

And then down the freeway they see bright rotating lights
coming towards them, a whole line of lights, and then a
series of police cars whip past, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, . . .

They all look back at the cop cars receding into the night.

PLUTO

That's the idea.

EXT. STAR CITY - ESTABLISHING - DAWN

The sun is still just a pale promise on the eastern horizon.
On the tall steel structure of a gun-gray water tower is
painted: STAR CITY. This TITLE appears:

EARLY WEDNESDAY MORNING

And then as the CAMERA DRIFTS OVER the still-sleeping town,
we hear a sudden sharp KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

ANGLE ON THE DOOR as it is opened by a groggy Dud, clad only
in boxer shorts.

Over Dud's shoulder we see Hurricane's big grinning face.

HURRICANE

(thrusting a styrofoam
cup and a white paper
bag at Dud)

Coffee and biscuits!

EXT. THE MOTEL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Dud, now fully dressed, and Hurricane come out.

DUD

(still sleepy)

You do realize it's 5:30 in
the morning.

HURRICANE

(completely serious)

Is it that late?

They're heading for Hurricane's car, but Dud is obviously remembering the wild rides of yesterday.

DUD

Uh, Hurricane--why don't we take
my car? The rental won't be as
obvious as yours.

INT. DUD'S CAR MOVING DOWN A STAR CITY RESIDENTIAL STREET -
A FEW MINUTES LATER

Dud, at the wheel, already seems to be having second thoughts about his desire to drive, because Hurricane, though in the front seat, is proving to be the ultimate back-seat driver.

HURRICANE

Stop sign! OK, go ahead. There's
Jack Rynder's dog, look out! OK,
speed up. Stop sign!

EXT. THE RIDGE OVERLOOKING JEREMIAH MALCOM'S PLACE - EARLY
MORNING

Hurricane, Dud, and a young Star City cop named PAUL are looking down into the valley at the rusty-roofed house.

PAUL

It's been quiet as a Sunday morning.

HURRICANE

Damn!

(counting off the
days on his fingers)

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday--
they've had plenty of time to get
here, Dud. What if they don't
show up?

DUD

Then I guess we'll be heading back
to L.A.

HURRICANE

Damn! I want those folks so bad I can taste it. Hey, Paul, we got us an I.D. on that other colored boy. The one they call Pluto.

PAUL

Yeah?

HURRICANE

They called Dud from L.A. last night.

DUD

His real name's Lane Martin. Out of Chicago originally. Quite a rap sheet, a lot of violence, including manslaughter.

HURRICANE

You know that son of a bitch has an I.Q. of 150? That's more than you and me put together, Paul. And you know how they got the I.D. on him? Fingerprint on a goddamn birthday card! It was so faint you wouldn't have known it was there, that's what Dud said, but their lab boys used Super Glue and laser beams and I don't know what all else to bring it out and then they popped that sucker into their computer and 3 seconds later out popped the name Lane Martin! State of the art, by god! The day we get a computer in Star City's the day it'll snow on the 4th of July. There he is feedin' his goddamn chickens again.

Everyone looks down the hill at the old man who has come out on his front porch and is scattering feed.

PAUL

So I hear the gal's quite a looker.

HURRICANE

Fantasia? They say she's a colored version of Marilyn Monroe, that's all. You know if you ask me I don't know why a beautiful woman ever turns to a life of crime. All they gotta do is put their hand on their hip and flutter their eyelashes at ya and they can get any goddamn thing they want anyhow. Isn't that right, Dud?

PAUL

Why do they call you "Dud" anyway?
Down here a dud's a firecracker
or a bomb or somethin' that don't
go off. So why do they call
you that?

DUD

(a bit stiffly)
Because I don't like people
calling me "Dudley."

HURRICANE

(walking off)
Dudley, got somethin' I want to
show ya.

EXT. A POND IN THE WOODS - MORNING

OPEN ON A DRAB-COLORED DUCK, WITH 3 DUCKLINGS in single file
behind her, moving across the pond.

HURRICANE (O.S.)

Ran across 'em Monday mornin' when
I was pokin' around out here.
Thought you bein' a city boy and
all you might enjoy seein' some
real live wild ducks.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE AND DUD, standing on the bank of the pond,
watching the ducks. Wisps of mist are floating across the
serene water, in which are mirrored tall green trees. It's
an idyllicly beautiful setting.

DUD

(sincerely)
I wish I had my camera. My kids
would love this.

HURRICANE

(looking a bit
troubled)
Dud--about yesterday.

DUD

What about it?

HURRICANE

When I dropped Charlie off last
night, he told me you were pissed
off at me for goin' down and
talkin' to the old man.

DUD
(uncomfortable)
I wasn't "pissed of" exactly--

HURRICANE
If I fucked things up, just
tell me--man to man.

DUD
I don't think anything was "fucked
up." We might have decided to
talk to the old man anyway. It's
just that we should've talked it
over first--formed a game plan.

HURRICANE
We'll do that next time; form a
goddamn game plan!
(in an uncertain voice)
I just don't want you thinkin' we're--
incompetent, down here in Star City.

DUD
(touched by Hurricane's
vulnerability)
Dale, if every cop in the country
had half the energy and dedication
that you have, this country
wouldn't have a crime problem.

HURRICANE
(relieved, pleased)
No shit?

DUD
No shit.

HURRICANE
Well, since that's how you look
at it, I got something else on
my mind. Now if I'm full of shit
you just tell me, all right?

DUD
All right.

HURRICANE
Well--I've been thinkin' about
movin' out to L.A. and joinin' up.

DUD
Joining up with--what?

HURRICANE

Los Angeles Police Department! I'm tired of all this small town shit-- bootleggers and stopsign-runners. I want to take a shot at the big time. I think you and me and MacIntosh'd make a hell of a team. So--what do you think?

Dud is quietly flabbergasted by Hurricane's proposal.

DUD

(carefully)

That's--quite an idea--

HURRICANE

Yeah, I thought so my-- Uh oh.

Dud follows Hurricane's gaze out across the pond.

ANGLE ON THE MOTHER DUCK AND HER LITTLE DUCKS, still unconcernedly cruising. But now we see behind the ducks some 10 or 12 feet a sinuous weaving line, a small malignant-looking head.

DUD

(in vague horror)

God--

Dud looks back at Hurricane--Hurricane is reaching inside his flannel shirt.

Dud looks back out across the pond. The last duckling in the line is still blissfully ignorant of the elongated death that has it in its sights, and is now only a couple of feet behind it.

Dud looks back at Hurricane. Hurricane is aiming his pistol carefully. He FIRES. The report of the pistol ECHOES across the pond and around the woods. An explosion of water and scales replaces the snake's head. The duck and ducklings now skitter in terror across the water toward the nearest bank.

Dud looks back at Hurricane, extremely impressed by the shot.

DUD

Wow--

VOICE

(yelling)

Hurricane, you all right?

Hurricane and Dud turn around, see a Smokey-hatted Arkansas STATE TROOPER making his way down the hill to the pool.

HURRICANE
(yelling)
Blowed the head off a cottonmouth!

TROOPER
Paul told me you were down here.

HURRICANE
Dud, this is Larry Gullledge, he's
our local Smokey. Larry, this is
Dud Cole. The Dud Cole.

TROOPER
(shaking hands)
How are you, Dud?

DUD
Fine, how are you?

TROOPER
(handing Hurricane
a teletype)
Last night some folks killed
a Texas state trooper in Odessa.
Says here they got reason to
believe they're headed for Houston,
but seems to me they might fit
the description of the ones you boys
are after.

HURRICANE
Look at this, Dud.

TROOPER
They got a photograph too.

DUD
How'd they manage that?

TROOPER
Just before the folks shot the
trooper, they were in a 7-11 market,
and you know how those stop'n'robs
have those cameras.

HURRICANE
Get that picture for us, Larry.

DUD
It'd be a big help.

LARRY
Well--it might take some doin'--

McFEELY

Better. You know that damn Hurricane drank as much beer as I did, but he didn't even show it. Those good ol' boys can put it away.

Speaking of the devil, in the background, through the window. we can see Hurricane's car pull up in the parking lot, and Hurricane get out--Dud and McFeely don't notice him.

DUD

Yeah, ol' Hurricane's definitely a force of nature.

McFEELY

Wish I'd seen him off that snake.

DUD

It was some shot.

McFEELY

You know, I like ol' Hurricane.

DUD

Tremendous fella.

Hurricane enters, toting his police radio. The booth Dud and McFeely are sitting at is just around the corner from the entrance and the cashier's station, and thus Dud and McFeely don't see Hurricane come in. As he passes the cashier's station, Hurricane looks into the glass case which is filled with candy bars. Fern being now nowhere in sight, Hurricane goes behind the counter and helps himself to a candy bar.

DUD

You know what he told me this morning?

McFEELY

What?

DUD

He said he was thinking about moving out to L.A. and joining the police department.

McFEELY

(with a disbelieving guffaw)

You're kidding.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE, behind the counter unwrapping his candy bar, and now suddenly hearing himself being discussed.

DUD
 Honest to God. He said he thought
 you and I and he'd make a hell of
 a team.

McFEELY
 (laughing louder)
 Oh shit--

DUD
 (imitating Hurricane's
 voice)
 Said he's ready to take a crack
 at the big time!

McFEELY
 (laughing still
 louder)
 Jesus--so what did you say?

DUD
 I told him I thought it was an
 interesting idea.

McFEELY
 That's got to be the funniest
 thing I ever heard.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE'S FACE, all the color draining out of it.

McFEELY (Cont'd)
 Think about ol' Hurricane roaming
 around Parker Center in that
 baseball cap.

DUD
 (imitating Hurricane
 again)
 "You can bet your ass on that,
 Chief!"

McFEELY
 (brushing tears of
 laughter away from
 his eyes)
 Man, a yokel like that wouldn't
 last 10 minutes in---

FERN (O.S.)
 Hurricane, what are you doin'
 back there?

Fern has come out of the back room. Dud and McFeely stare
 at each other.

FERN (Cont'd)
Only employees is supposed to
be back there.

HURRICANE
(coming out from
behind the counter)
I was just gettin' me a candy
bar, Fern.

FERN
You gonna pay fer it fer a change?

HURRICANE
(getting some change
out of his pocket)
Sure, Fern.

And now Hurricane walks on around to Dud and McFeely's booth.
It's a moment of agonizing discomfort for everybody.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)
(dispiritedly, but
without rancor)
Hi, boys. Saw your car parked
out front.

Dud and McFeely look as though if they had the power to change
into a liquid and dribble through the cracks in the floor,
they would immediately do so. After a long pause:

DUD
Dale, we, uh--

HURRICANE
Dud--I want to apologize for
runnin' off at the mouth like I
did this mornin'. I guess I kind
of put you on the spot.

McFEELY
Listen, Dale, we didn't mean that--

Hurricane's police radio lets loose a few SQUAWKS.

HURRICANE
That's me.
(clicking on)
Yeah, this is 210, what is it?

RADIO
Jimmy Crownover just got back
from Little Rock with that picture--

But Hurricane is already charging toward the door.

EXT. STAR CITY CITY HALL AND POLICE DEPARTMENT - ESTABLISHING -
LATE AFTERNOON

INT. CITY HALL AND POLICE DEPARTMENT

Hurricane and Dud and McFeely are walking rapidly down a corridor and then turn into the police squad room.

HURRICANE

Where's Jimmy?
(spotting him)
Jimmy, you got it?

JIMMY CROWNOVER has a manila envelope in his hand.

JIMMY

It was there on that puddle jumper
just like Larry said it'd be--

Hurricane snatches the envelope from Jimmy, takes out a glossy blown-up picture. Ray and Fantasia, as they stand in the 7-11 in front of the counter near the now-dead trooper, are clearly identifiable.

JIMMY (Cont'd)

(looking over
Hurricane's shoulder)
Is it them?

DUD

That's Ray Malcom, all right.

McFEELY

And that's gotta be our mystery
girl, Fantasia.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE'S FACE, as he stares at Fantasia. Hurricane looks stunned.

HURRICANE

(his voice slow
and flat)
Her name's not Fantasia.

Everyone looks at Hurricane curiously.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

It's Lila. Lila Davis.

DISSOLVE TO:

FANTASIA--or "Lila Davis." There's a child-like look of wonder on her face.

FANTASIA

It's so pretty. . .

FANTASIA'S POV: A BIG-CITY SKYLINE AT SUNDOWN--tall mirror-like buildings look as though they're painted with frozen fire.

TITLE: HOUSTON, TEXAS

INT. CAR

The fugitives are on a busy rush-hour freeway. Ray is behind the wheel, as usual, with Pluto in the back. They couldn't care less about the pretty sunset.

ANGLE ON RAY, as his eyes flicker routinely toward the rearview mirror. Suddenly his eyes widen.

ANGLE ON RAY'S FINGERS ON THE STEERING WHEEL--the knuckles grow suddenly white.

RAY'S POV: THE REARVIEW MIRROR. A Houston police car is right on their tail.

It is as though Ray is frozen, unable to utter a sound, like a man who has just discovered he's sharing his sleeping bag with a snake. After a few endless moments:

FANTASIA

(turning toward Ray)

Ray, isn't it pretty, it looks just like a--

RAY

(between clenched teeth)

Shut up!

Fantasia looks at Ray curiously. Suddenly there is the JOLTING HOWL OF A SIREN. Fantasia looks around in alarm.

The police car jerks to the right, siren yelling and lights flashing, and disappears at high speed down an off-ramp. In the car, there's an all but audible collective sigh of relief at the realization that somewhere in the bowels of downtown Houston a crime has been committed. Ray looks pale.

RAY

(in a solemn mutter,
his teeth still clenched)

I'm gonna have to stop by a goddamn gas station.

EXT. AN APARTMENT IN A MODERN APARTMENT COMPLEX - EARLY EVENING

ANGLE ON A PINPRICK-SIZED PEEPHOLE in the door. Now the light inside is momentarily blocked out, indicating there's an eye there.

ANGLE ON PLUTO, RAY, AND FANTASIA, standing in front of the door. It's opened by a fat man with a long blond pony tail. He's wearing jeans and no shirt. A long operation scar seams his bloated white stomach, and he has an earring in one ear. This is BEAVER.

BEAVER

(cautiously)

Pluto, what's the rap?

PLUTO

How are you, Beaver?

(noticing Beaver eying
his companions

suspiciously)

They're OK, Beaver. They're
the ones holding.

BEAVER

Come on in.

INT. THE APARTMENT

The apartment presents the appearance of an expensive place inhabited by slobs. On the sofa a GIRL is lying on her side. She's MOANING softly and her jaw is swollen. Another MAN--white, as they all are--is sitting in an armchair in front of a TV. He's smoking a joint, and is switching the channels aimlessly with a remote control.

PLUTO

This is Ray and this is Fantasia.

Wary nods.

BEAVER

That's Joey, and that's Kim over
there whining. She just had a
couple teeth yanked out.

KIM
(with great effort)
Fuck you, Beaver.

BEAVER
Have a seat if you can find one.

Pluto sits in a chair. Ray and Fantasia sit down at the table in the dining area off the living room. Ray nervously lights a cigarette.

BEAVER (Cont'd)
So let's see this multitude of snow, Pluto.

PLUTO
Where's Billy?

BEAVER
He's not here.

PLUTO
That's obvious, Beaver. Where is he?

BEAVER
He's still in New Orleans.

PLUTO
When is he gonna be here?

BEAVER
Tomorrow night.

PLUTO
Why didn't he tell me this?

BEAVER
He got hung up. When he talked to you he didn't know he was gonna get hung up.

PLUTO
We'll just have to wait for him.

RAY
Man, we can't wait around till tomorrow. Fuck that shit!

PLUTO
We'll wait till tomorrow. We'll stay here.

BEAVER

Well, Pluto, I don't know. There's not much room here and--

Pluto fixes Beaver with a silent stare, and it's obvious that Beaver is suddenly experience a chill going down his spine.

BEAVER (Cont'd)

--And what the fuck, you can take my room. I've slept on the couch before.

KIM

Fuck you, Beaver. I'm not moving.

EXT. STAR CITY CITY HALL AND POLICE DEPARTMENT - SUNSET

Dud and McFeely and Hurricane and Charlie emerge. Charlie, as they move toward Hurricane's car, is looking quizzically at the photo of Ray and Fantasia.

CHARLIE

You mean you know this girl, Dale?

Hurricane looks different than we've ever seen him--preoccupied, inward-turned.

HURRICANE

She's from here. Moved away 5 or 6 years ago--before your time, Charlie.

CHARLIE

And her mother still lives here?

HURRICANE

Far as I know.

McFEELY

Looks like we've been watching the wrong friggin' place.

CHARLIE

(as they get
in the car)

What if they've already come and gone?

DUD

What if they're there right now?

Looks are exchanged, doors are SLAMMED, and they're off.

INT. BEDROOM IN BEAVER'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Fantasia is sitting on the bed in nothing but a T-shirt and panties. Ray is sitting in a chair smoking a cigarette.

RAY

I swear to God, I don't think you have a fuckin' brain sometimes.

FANTASIA

Look who's talking.

Ray jumps out of his chair and grabs Fantasia's arm.

RAY

Don't fuck with me when I'm pissed off, baby. You know better.

FANTASIA

I'm going to Star City, Ray. Period.

RAY

Well then you're gonna have to walk 'cause I ain't goin' to Arkansas and get my ass caught. If Pluto heard you talkin' about goin' up there again he'd pull your goddamn head off.

FANTASIA

It's none of Pluto's business what I do. Hand me that telephone.

RAY

For what?

FANTASIA

I'm calling home and telling them I'm coming.

RAY

How you gettin' there, smart-ass?

FANTASIA

I'll take the bus.

RAY

What if they're watchin' the bus station?

FANTASIA

I'll take the bus to Sheridan or some place and have my brother pick me up.

RAY

Then how are you gonna get to Chicago? Ride the bus for 3 goddamn days?

FANTASIA

You and Pluto will come through and pick me up. It's on the way.

RAY

What if Pluto won't do that?

FANTASIA

It's not out of the way. You won't be there 5 minutes.

She cuddles up to Ray, and starts to kiss him.

FANTASIA (Cont'd)

Will you be able to make it for a whole day without me?

Ray starts to respond to her kisses.

RAY

I don't know, baby.

FANTASIA

I just want to see my baby, Ray. My other baby, that is.

RAY

(smiling)

I'll miss your pretty ass.

Fantasia kisses him again, long and slow--then:

FANTASIA

Hand me the phone, baby.

Ray hands her the phone. She dials a number. After a moment:

FANTASIA (Cont'd)

Hello, Ronnie? Hi, baby, it's Lila! Yeah! How are you, baby? Yes, I know, it's been a long time. I'm in Texas. Listen, Ronnie, I'm coming home. Tomorrow. Listen to me. I'm in a little trouble. No, it's gonna be fine. Listen to me now. Don't tell anybody I called, Ronnie. Not even Mama, not yet, I'll just see her when I get there. No, Ronnie, don't worry. It's

(MORE)

FANTASIA (Cont'd)

gonna be fine.
 (with a sweet,
 dreamy smile)
 I'm coming home.

EXT. A SMALL WHITE FRAME HOUSE IN STAR CITY - NIGHT

The house sits on a sidewalkless street in the shabbier, the black, section of town. The front porch light is on, so is the living room light.

TITLE: WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Now we see a woman move briefly past a window.

HURRICANE (O.S.)

It looks to me like just her
 mama and brother's there.

INT. HURRICANE'S CAR

The car is parked a couple of hundred feet away from the house, just around the corner on an intersecting street.

DUD

(as they gaze at
 the house)
 So what kind of people are they?

HURRICANE

Good people. Christian people.
 I can't believe Lila's got mixed
 up in shit like this.

McFEELY

Hurricane, I'm still not quite
 clear how you know this girl.

HURRICANE

I arrested her for shopliftin'
 at Clevenger's Drug Store. She
 was just a kid, just out of high
 school. Hell, all she took was
 some lipstick and that shit
 they put on their eyes, it wasn't
 worth 10 bucks, and I could tell
 right off she wasn't bad, just,
 sorta, high-spirited, hell, like
 I was when I was her age, I was
 practically Public Enemy Number
 One around here when I was growin'
 up, but there were some folks that
 took an interest in me, and talked
 (MORE)

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

to me, and, well, that's what I tried to do with her. And I thought I was gettin' through to her, but then one day she just up and disappeared. Her mama told me she'd decided to take off for Hollywood and be a movie star. Anyway, that was about 5 years ago, and that was the last I heard of her till now.

CHARLIE

She's come a long way from stealing lipstick.

HURRICANE

I don't believe she killed anybody. I mean, hell, that kid in the closet-- she opens up the door, sees him, then she shuts the damn door. That proves she's not a killer.

McFEELY

Pardon me, Hurricane, but that don't prove shit.

Some BLACK PEOPLE walk by on the street, stare at Hurricane's car curiously, talk among themselves.

DUD

We're attracting attention.

McFEELY

Honkies in Jive Town. Do we talk to the mother?

DUD

What if she tips off the daughter?

HURRICANE

(after a pause)

She wouldn't do that.

INT. FANTASIA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON MRS. DAVIS

MRS. DAVIS

She wouldn't do that! Not my Lila!

The living room is modestly furnished, but clean and neat and homey. MRS. DAVIS, a matronly 50-ish woman, confronted by Hurricane and the 2 L.A. cops, is in tears. In the

background, quietly watching, is a clean-cut 18-year-old BOY.

HURRICANE

Miz Davis, have you heard from Lila?

MRS. DAVIS

No I haven't--not since last summer--
Mr. Dixon, you know Lila, she
wouldn't do what they're saying
she did--they musta kidnapped her,
brainwashed her--

HURRICANE

Miz Davis, the best cops in America
are after Lila and those other 2
fellas.

Dud and McFeely, hearing Hurricane's generous description,
exchange a look.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

They're gonna catch 'em. It would
go a lot better for Lila if she
turned herself in now.

DUD

Ma'am, Sgt. Dixon's right. We can't
make any promises, but if your
daughter cooperates with us, that
will be taken into account later.

MRS. DAVIS

I haven't heard from her--but if I
do, I'll tell her what you said.

HURRICANE

(turning to the
young black man)

Ronnie, you heard from your sister?

RONNIE

No sir.

HURRICANE

Would you tell us if you had?

RONNIE

Yes sir.

VOICE

I'm hungry.

Everyone looks toward the source of the voice. A LITTLE KID
of about 5 has come out of a back room. He's an extremely
good-looking kid, with light, cafe au lait skin, brown hair,

and whatever color eyes Hurricane has, the kid's eyes are that color.

MRS. DAVIS

Byron, don't bother us now, honey.

Hurricane is staring at the kid.

HURRICANE

Who's that?

MRS. DAVIS

Why, this is Lila's boy. Didn't you know Lila had a boy?

(taking him and
hugging him,
comforting in him)

And he's a pretty boy too.

The little boy stares from out of his grandmother's embrace at Hurricane. Hurricane has a look on his face that can best be described as thunderstruck.

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Dud, McFeely, and Hurricane are walking toward Hurricane's car. Hurricane is obviously not in the same world as the other 2.

McFEELY

It makes sense now. The deaf old codger in the woods didn't make much sense.

DUD

Yeah--Fantasia's coming home to see her child. Hurricane, what do you think about putting an around the clock surveillance on this place, and keeping the surveillance going on the old man's place just in case? Can we muster the manpower?

(when Hurricane
doesn't answer)

Hurricane?

HURRICANE

Right--round the clock--

They've reached the car now, where Charlie is waiting. Hurricane and McFeely are getting in on opposite sides.

McFEELY

Hey, Hurricane, just how well did you know this gal anyway?

HURRICANE
What do you mean?

McFEELY
(with a twinkle
in his eyes as
he glances at Dud)
Well I'll be damned if that kid
didn't look a lot like you.

HURRICANE
That's a goddamn lie!

Everyone stares at Hurricane's rage-contorted face. After a moment of stunned silence:

McFEELY
Hey--I was just kidding, man.

Now they all begin to get silently into the car.

INT. THE CAR

Charlie is gazing at Hurricane from within a puzzled and disapproving cloud of pipe smoke.

CHARLIE
What's the matter with you, Dale?

Hurricane doesn't answer.

INT. HURRICANE'S HOUSE - THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON CHERYL ANN, who has fallen asleep reading, a novel across her chest.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE, who is gazing in at her thoughtfully from the doorway.

INT. KITCHEN

Hurricane opens the refrigerator, takes out a carton of milk, and takes a long drink right from the carton.

Hurricane's little daughter Bonnie walks in in her nightgown.

HURRICANE
What are you doin' awake, girl?

INT. BONNIE'S BEDROOM

Hurricane is pulling the covers up under Bonnie's chin.

BONNIE

I don't want you to go away,
Daddy. I want you to stay
in here with me.

HURRICANE

Honey, Daddy has to go sleep with
Mama. She'll be scared.

BONNIE

She won't be scared, she's asleep.
I'm the one that's scared. I'm awake.

HURRICANE

Goddamn, you're logical.

BONNIE

(sweetly)
"Goddamn."

HURRICANE

Bonnie, I'll wash out your mouth
with goddamn soap. Now if I
was to tell you a bedtime story,
would you try to go to sleep?

BONNIE

Yep.

HURRICANE

OK. Once upon a time there was
3 bears. A big daddy bear and
a mama bear and--

BONNIE

You told me that one last time. I
want a new one.

HURRICANE

(thinking)

OK. Let's see. How about the
story of Hansel and Gretel? Did
I ever tell you that one?

BONNIE

I don't think so.

HURRICANE

One time there was 2 little kids
named Hansel and Gretel and
they were brother and sister.

BONNIE

Did they live at Star City?

HURRICANE

No, I think they were Germans.

BONNIE

Cousin Jerry's got a German.

HURRICANE

Cousin Jerry's got a gerbil, honey.
Germans are people, they're not rats.

BONNIE

Oh.

HURRICANE

Anyhow, Hansel and Gretel liked candy better than anything in the world and one day they were walkin' through the woods way out back of their mama and daddy's place and they come up on a house. But it wasn't just any old house, this house was made out of candy and cake and all sorts of goodies, and the whole house was covered in icing. It was like a dream come true for Hansel and Gretel, and they started eatin' off chunks of that house like there was no tomorrow. Well, directly somebody came out of the house and caught 'em eatin' the front porch. It was an old craggly-lookin' lady and she was madder'n a wet hen. She got Hansel and Gretel by the ears and led 'em into the house.

BONNIE

Was she a witch?

HURRICANE

Well, you're gettin' kind of ahead of the story, but yeah, she was a witch. She told 'em they didn't have any business eatin' on her house that way, but if they'd like to stay there and live with her then she'd give 'em all the candy and things they wanted. She told 'em she was lonely and needed some company. Well, Hansel and Gretel really went for that idea--all the candy and cookies they wanted. But then Gretel says to Hansel, "What about Mama and Daddy? They'll miss

(MORE)

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

us." Hansel says, "To hell with them, Gretel, I'm stayin' here where the cookies are." And they did. Well before long they found out that they weren't there to keep the old woman company at all. They were there bein' held as prisoners. The old woman locked 'em up in a cage out back and they got all the cookies and candy they wanted all right. But it was because the old woman was trying to fatten 'em up so she could pop 'em in the oven and cook 'em.

And now Hurricane is no longer looking at Bonnie, but into space--it's as though he's forgotten Bonnie is there.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

(softly)

Now let me tell you about that oven. It was black, and it was greasy, and it was awful, and then when it got fired up it was hotter'n the fires of hell. And that was where Hansel and Gretel were gonna end up--burnt to a cinder--all 'cause they couldn't keep their hands off that fuckin' candy house.

(with increasing
passion)

Their whole goddamn lives thrown away--ever'thing they ever stood for--their whole fuckin' lives a lie--

Hurricane is suddenly brought back to the present, because Bonnie, frightened by her father, has begun to cry. Hurricane quickly and guiltily gathers Bonnie up in his arms.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

I'm sorry, honey. Daddy's sorry.
Don't cry, sweetheart. Hush, now. . .

EXT. A BUS MOVING DOWN A HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Fantasia is sitting by the window looking out at the night.
A middle-aged WOMAN is sitting next to her.

TITLE: TEXAS
LATE WEDNESDAY NIGHT

WOMAN
(offering her a
pack of gum)
Juicy Fruit?

FANTASIA
No thanks.

WOMAN
So how long has it been since
you've been home, honey?

FANTASIA
A long time.

WOMAN
How long are you gonna stay?

FANTASIA
Just one day.

WOMAN
One day? It hardly seems worth it.

FANTASIA
It's worth it.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY

The bus roars past the CAMERA, becomes lost in the night.

EXT. DUD AND McFEELY'S CAR PARKED AROUND THE CORNER FROM
THE DAVIS HOUSE - MORNING

TITLE: THURSDAY MORNING

INT. THE CAR

Dud is reading the ARKANSAS GAZETTE, while McFeely is staring
thoughtfully at the house.

McFEELY
If they show, they're gonna
give us trouble.

Dud looks up from his paper toward the house--he's thoughtful
now too'.

DUD
They've killed 7 people that
we know about in the last 5 days,
(MORE)

DUD (Cont'd)

and they're facing the death penalty in both California and Texas. You can bet they're gonna give us trouble.

McFEELY

You know something, Dud? In 16 years as a cop, I've never fired my gun in the line of duty.

DUD

Fired mine once--in the air.

McFEELY

Hell, the last time I had it out of the damn holster was when I was changing holsters.

DUD

You're forgetting the Peevey Nottingham case.

McFEELY

(with a wry smile)

Oh yeah.

INT. STAR CITY POLICE STATION - MORNING

ANGLE ON JIMMY CROWNOVER, sitting with his feet up on a desk, looking through a comic book. Now Hurricane comes in.

HURRICANE

Jimmy, what the hell are you doin'?

JIMMY

Readin' a funny book.

HURRICANE

(pushing his feet
off the desk)

I can see that, goddamn it. You're supposed to be out watchin' the Davis house.

JIMMY

I was, Hurricane, but then Dud and MacIntosh come by and said they'd take over for me.

Hurricane looks suddenly depressed.

HURRICANE

(quietly)

Yeah, they're takin' over all right. Not that I blame 'em any.

JIMMY

What's that you say, Hurricane?

HURRICANE

I said gimme one of your cigarettes.

Jimmy gives Hurricane a cigarette and a lighter.

JIMMY

I haven't seen you smoke a
cigarette in 2 years.

HURRICANE

I'm just gonna smoke this one.

Hurricane lights up, inhales deeply, and then exhales a slow
blue stream of smoke.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

I'm not startin' up again.

EXT. A BUS STOPPED ON THE MAIN STREET OF A SMALL TOWN - DAY

ANGLE ON FANTASIA--or, as we will now call her, since that
is her Arkansas name, "Lila"--getting off the bus, carrying
an overnight bag. She's the only passenger disembarking,
since this is not a major stop.

TITLE:

SHERIDAN, ARKANSAS
THURSDAY AFTERNOON

VOICE

Lila!

Lila's brother approaches her.

LILA

Ronnie, is that you, baby?

(as they hug)

God, you're all grown-up! I
can't believe it.

RONNIE

You're looking fine, Lila.

LILA

I'm feeling fine, Ronnie. I'm
almost home! I'm gonna see my
baby!

RONNIE

Lila--you can't go home.

INT. RONNIE'S CAR, WHICH IS PARKED DOWN THE STREET - A
FEW MINUTES LATER

Lila is near tears.

LILA

I didn't do those things they
say I did.

RONNIE

I know that, Lila, that's just
my point--running away makes
you look guilty.

LILA

I already look guilty, and looking
guilty's being guilty for black
people. I won't get a fair trial--
and I'm not going to no prison.

RONNIE

But Lila, Sgt. Dixon said the cops
that are after you are the best
cops in America--

Lila looks sharply at her brother.

LILA

Dale Dixon?

RONNIE

Yeah, he was the one that was
by the house. You used to know
him, didn't you?

LILA

Yeah--I used to know him--
(after a pause)

Ronnie, I didn't come this
far not to see my baby. Now
they're gonna be watching our
house, so you gotta leave me some
place outside of town, and then
tonight you bring my baby out
to see me--and then tomorrow
I'll be gone.

(as Ronnie looks
hesitant)

Please, Ronnie! Your sister's in
trouble, she needs your help.

RONNIE
 (still uncertain)
 Well--I guess I could leave you
 at a motel--

LILA
 Not a motel--some place with no
 people around.

RONNIE
 (after thinking
 a moment)
 I got a friend of mine that lives
 out west of the highway this side
 of town--he's gone working construction
 for a few weeks--I can probably
 get into his house--

Lila throws her arms around her brother's neck and kisses
 his cheek.

LILA
 Oh, Ronnie, that'd be perfect!

EXT. THE STREET

Ronnie's car pulls out into the street, turns a corner, and
 is gone.

EXT. HURRICANE'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

TITLE: THURSDAY NIGHT

INT. LIVING ROOM

Cheryl Ann is curled up on the couch in front of the TV. Now
 Hurricane enters in his usual hurricanic way.

HURRICANE
 (heading toward the
 front door)
 I'm gonna be out there all night,
 honey, so don't you wait up for me.

CHERYL ANN
 Dale, wait--

HURRICANE
 (stopping at the door)
 What?
 (realizing)
 Oh.

Hurricane rushes back to Cheryl Ann, kisses her on the cheek, and heads for the door again.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

Don't wait up for me now--

CHERYL ANN

(in exasperation)

Dale, wait--

HURRICANE

(stopping at the
door again)

What the hell is it?

CHERYL ANN

Come here.

Hurricane approaches her with puzzlement, and she gets up off the couch to meet him.

HURRICANE

What's the matter, Cheryl Ann?

CHERYL ANN

(as she goes rather
shyly into his arms)

The matter is--I want you to be
careful. If those people show up
tonight, the first thing I want
you to do is call Dud and John.

HURRICANE

I'll call Dud and John, I'll call
Charlie, I'll call the state police,
I'll call the U.S. Cavalry, I'll
call every-fuckin'-body. You can
count on it.

CHERYL ANN

'Cause if anything ever happened
to you--

HURRICANE

You'd get a hell of a check from
the insurance company.

CHERYL ANN

Dale--it's not something to joke
about.

(sniffing him--
disapprovingly)

Have you started smoking again?

HURRICANE

I swear you got a nose like a goddamn' bloodhound--I had a couple smokes, I'm not startin' up again--

And Hurricane once more starts toward the door.

CHERYL ANN

(grabbing him by the shoulders--physically restraining him)

Stay still for a minute, Dale! Please.

HURRICANE

I'm still, what is it?

Cheryl Ann is looking searchingly into Hurricane's face.

CHERYL ANN

(softly)

Are you in some kind of--trouble?

HURRICANE

Naw, course not, why do you say that?

CHERYL ANN

Because you've been acting so--strange.

(pause)

Dale--do you know how much I love you?

HURRICANE

(softly)

I hope as much as I love you, Cheryl Ann.

CHERYL ANN

Whatever it is--we can work it out. We've been through a lot together, and--we can work it out.

The phone RINGS. Cheryl Ann, rather reluctantly, moves to answer it.

CHERYL ANN (Cont'd)

Hello? Oh hi, Dud. Fine, how are you? Yes, he's right here.

But Hurricane is halfway to the door.

HURRICANE

Gotta go, babe. Tell him he
just missed me.

CHERYL ANN

(in exasperation)

Dale--

But Dale is out the door. Cheryl Ann places the phone back
up to her mouth, and musters a smile.

CHERYL ANN (Cont'd)

(pleasantly)

Dud?

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Dud is sitting on the edge of the bed, phone in hand, while
in the background McFeely sits in a chair, cracking open peanuts.

DUD

No, that's OK, Cheryl Ann, it's
nothing important. Just checking
in. Well, that's where he should
be. OK. You too. Bye bye.

Dud hangs up the phone, looking thoughtful.

DUD (Cont'd)

Have you gotten the feeling
Hurricane's been avoiding us today?

McFEELY

I'd avoid us too. I'd hate our
guts. We were talking trash about
him yesterday and he heard every
word of it.

DUD

I don't think that's it.

McFEELY

What's "it" then? The girl maybe?
He's weirded out 'cause he knows her?

DUD

Wouldn't you be?

McFEELY

I guess so. He doesn't have to be
so damn touchy about it though. He
practically took my head off last
night. Peanut?

And McFeely flings a peanut across the room which Dud deftly catches.

CUT TO:

A FACE.

The face is big and square and white--very white--with a homemade skull tattoo on the upper left forehead and a blond flat top. The neck below the face is thick, suggesting that the body below the neck is large and powerful. The source of illumination comes from directly above the face, suggesting an old-time police or military interrogation--and we can infer that we're in Beaver's apartment in the dining alcove, and that the illumination comes from the lamp dangling above the table. The lamp gouges the white face with stark lines and shadows. The face breaks into a slight, insincere grin, and a silver tooth sparkles. As the face begins to speak, we have this TITLE:

HOUSTON

THE FACE

Listen, Pluto, you know I'd gladly pay you what we agreed on if I had the money. The fact is, I just don't have that much. Times has been hard.

(pause)

But I need this dope. All of it. 'Cause I can turn it. For a lot of money. You leave me an address, and you'll get whatever is coming to you. Soon.

(pause)

Look, I know you guys are on the run. You need whatever you can get. It's better than nothing. Right?

(pause)

We're true friends, aren't we, Pluto? Let's lighten up a little. This town's hot and so are you. You got no one else to trust but me--charmin' Billy. The bottom line, I guess, is--take it or leave it.

The face grins again its insincere, silver-toothed grin. Suddenly a huge black hand shoots INTO FRAME, grasps the throat beneath the astonished face, and then face and hand disappear OUT OF FRAME and there's the CRASH of Billy and his chair hitting the floor and we

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP OF PLUTO'S FACE, looking directly down into the CAMERA.

PLUTO

I drove several hundred miles out of my way for this, Billy Boy, and I'm not leaving here without every cent you promised me.

CLOSE ON BILLY again--we'll INTERCUT GIGANTIC CLOSE-UPS OF HIS AND PLUTO'S FACES through the rest of the SCENE. Pluto's thumb is mashing into Billy's Adam's apple. We HEAR Ray urging Pluto on like a pro wrestling fan:

RAY (O.S.)

Stick him, Pluto! What the hell you waitin' for? Cut the motherfucker!

But Pluto is content to continue strangling Billy one-handed. Now we see Billy's own huge hands encircling Pluto's thickly muscled neck, trying to do some strangling of their own. Then we hear a COMMOTION and then the SOUND OF BLOWS AND KICKS and Beaver YELPING in pain.

RAY (O.S.)

(screaming)

Don't fuck around, fat ass! I'll give you another scar in your fat belly, you son of a bitch! On your face, fat ass, move, goddamn it!

Meanwhile, Billy's eyes are beginning to bulge and his white face is turning red and his grip on Pluto's neck is weakening. Now we hear from Kim, the dental casualty:

KIM (O.S.)

Please stop it! You'll kill him!
You'll kill him!

Unfortunately for Kim, she has evidently attracted Ray's attention, for she cuts loose with a PIERCING SCREAM of pain, which suddenly ends in CHOKING NOISES AND MUFFLED GRUNTS.

RAY (O.S.)

Is this the spot, sweetheart? Is it? Goddamn it! Is it? How about I just blow your girlfriend's goddamn head off so she don't have any more toothaches! You'll give us the goddamn money, won't you, Billy?

Billy's face manages a nod, yes. Pluto's hand instantly lets go of Billy's throat. Billy begins to COUGH AND GASP. Pluto's hand, almost tenderly, pats Billy's cheek.

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CLOSE ON PLUTO'S IMPLACABLE FACE.

PLUTO

(softly)

True friends always come through
in the--"clutch"--don't they,
Billy Boy?

EXT. THE DAVIS HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is dark, the neighborhood is quiet--Star City rolls
up the sidewalks early.

TITLE: FRIDAY MORNING
12:40 A.M.

INT. HURRICANE'S CAR

OPEN ON A HAND stubbing out a cigarette in an ashtray full
of cigarette butts.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE, lifting his eyes from the ashtray to the
house. We can now see that Hurricane is parked in a different
spot than the previous surveillance location, on a dark side
street that gives an unexpected line of sight across a couple
of back yards to the Davis house.

Now Hurricane picks up a manila envelope off the seat, slides
the 7-11 photo of "Fantasia" and Ray out of it. He stares
at Lila.

There's movement in the deep shadows at the side of the
Davis house.

EXT. THE HOUSE

ANGLE ON RONNIE, gazing up the street.

REVERSE ANGLE, from the corner where the cops have been
keeping their surveillance--but there's no car there.

Ronnie goes to the house, opens a door, and hustles Byron,
the little kid, out toward his car. Byron looks sleepy and
dazed.

INT. HURRICANE'S CAR

ANGLE ON HURRICANE, watching Ronnie and Byron get in the car. Ronnie starts up the engine, cuts on his lights, backs out, heads slowly down the street. Hurricane starts up his own engine, but he doesn't turn on his lights.

He pulls out into the street, turns a corner, and sees the red tail lights of Ronnie's car. Hurricane reaches for his radio--but as he is about to click it on, he hesitates--now he puts it back.

A SERIES OF SHOTS take the 2 cars out of Star City onto the highway, and then off the highway onto a small secondary road running through the woods. We have ANGLES on Ronnie and Byron, lit by the green glow of the dashboard lights, and on Hurricane in his dark car, lit only by whatever natural light is filtering down from the heavens. It seems almost strange to see Hurricane silent, even though it is a tense, eye-of-the-storm silence.

Finally Ronnie's car turns off the secondary road onto a winding bumpy unpaved road. Hurricane is staying just close enough to keep the tail lights in sight as they play hide and seek with him among the trees. Now Hurricane sees the lights of a house up ahead, and the tail lights slowing down in front, and Hurricane sees an even more rudimentary road right in front of him and now he turns and feels his way down it through the darkness and then pulls off it in a space among some trees.

EXT. THE WOODS

Hurricane gets out of his car. He moves through the woods a short distance, and now we see from HURRICANE'S POV:

LILA, between a little white cottage and Ronnie's car. She is kneeling in front of Byron, hugging him and making a fuss over him, and we can hear the SOUND OF HER LAUGHTER AND HAPPY TALK, though we can't understand the words. Byron stands before his mother rather stiffly, while Ronnie, off to the side, looks on. And now Lila stands up and takes Byron by the hand and all 3 of them move toward the house and enter, and the door closes behind them.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE, standing in the darkness at the edge of the woods, gazing at the house--and now he closes his eyes, leans his head back, rubs the back of his neck.

HURRICANE

(softly)

What the hell am I gonna do?

Hurricane opens his eyes, finds himself staring up through the trees at a glittering inverted sea of stars.

EXT. RAY AND PLUTO'S CAR MOVING DOWN A HIGHWAY - NIGHT

TITLE: TEXAS
2:35 A.M.

INT. THE CAR

An obviously exhilarated Ray is driving, with Pluto on the passenger side.

RAY

Man, Pluto, you know somethin' people never seem to get through their thick fuckin' heads? Not to fuck with me! These assholes never learn not to fuck with me. You see what happens to 'em when they do?

(pause)

We should of killed 'em. That's what we should of done. Killed 'em.

If Pluto were the type of guy who rolls his eyes, he would be rolling them right now. Ray reaches for the radio, which is on a rhythm and blues station, and switches it to a TWANGING COUNTRY TUNE.

RAY (Cont'd)

Man, I can't wait to get out of fuckin' Texas. Big motherfucker. Seems like we been drivin' across it for 3 weeks.

PLUTO

We'll be out of it soon. It's all gonna work.

RAY

Yeah, Chicago, look out! Hide all that young sweet-smellin' pussy! Ray Malcom's on his way!

PLUTO

Of course, we have to pick Fantasia up in Star City first.

RAY

Yeah, that's right--

PLUTO

The question is--why?

RAY

What do you mean, bubba?

PLUTO

We don't need her.

RAY

She's my woman, man!

PLUTO

So?

RAY

And she saved our ass back on
the highway--mine and yours.

PLUTO

Then I'd say she's fulfilled her
purpose. So you care about the
(MORE)

PLUTO (Cont'd)
 bitch. So what? Caring's a trap.
 Any time you care for anything or
 anybody but your own sweet ass--
 that's a trap.

RAY
 Pluto, man, we're goin' to fuckin'
 Star City. And that's fuckin' that.

PLUTO
 (very quietly)
 It's stupid.

EXT. THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

OPEN ON HURRICANE'S FACE. We hear faint SOUNDS OF TALKING,
 and of a car door SLAMMING.

TITLE: 3:38 A.M.

HURRICANE'S POV: Ronnie and Byron are inside Ronnie's car.
 Lila is hugging and kissing Byron through the window. Now
 Ronnie starts up the car, and begins to head back up the road
 they came down. Lila is waving.

LILA
 (calling)
 Bye, baby!

Hurricane watches as the car passes not too far from where
 he is. Now he looks back at Lila. She is gazing after the
 car till its lights are lost in the woods. Now she turns,
 and walks slowly back toward the house.

INT. KITCHEN IN THE HOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

Lila is standing at the sink, washing some dishes.

REVERSE ANGLE: Over Lila's shoulder, we see Hurricane quietly
 enter. His gun is out. He stares at Lila for a long moment--
 then:

HURRICANE
 Lila!

Lila turns. For a moment, there's no expression on her face--
 no surprise, no fear, no anything, just a neutral registering
 of what's in front of her-- and then a smile appears.

LILA
 Dale!

Drying her hands on a dish towel, she takes a step toward him.

LILA (Cont'd)
How are you, baby?

HURRICANE
Stop right there!

Lila stops.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)
Turn around--put your hands on
the sink--where I can see 'em--
spread your legs--

Lila follows Hurricane's instructions with an air of faint amusement.

LILA
Simon says?

Hurricane quickly pats Lila down.

LILA (Cont'd)
Can I turn around now?

HURRICANE
Why don't you just stay like that?

Lila, very deliberately, turns around, crosses her arms and leans back against the sink, and looks at Hurricane with a slightly mocking smile. Hurricane looks just a bit disconcerted.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)
Where's your 2 pals?

LILA
Ray and Pluto? They'll be here soon.

HURRICANE
How soon's soon?

LILA
Well, let's see. They called me around 11, and said they'd got their business done and were just about to leave. It's about an 8-hour drive from Houston, so--

HURRICANE
You're sayin' they're gonna be here about 7 o'clock?

LILA
That's right, baby.

Hurricane glances at his watch: it say 3:47.

HURRICANE
How do I know you're not lyin'
to me? How do I know they're
not gonna be here any minute?

LILA
(softly)
I'm not lying to you, Dale. What
are you gonna do with me?

HURRICANE
(motioning her toward
the living room with
his gun)
Go on in yonder.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Lila comes in, Hurricane behind her. Hurricane goes to the
phone, picks it up.

LILA
What are you doing?

HURRICANE
There's some fellas from L.A.
that want to meet you, Lila.

LILA
(with an edge
of desperation)
Dale--let me talk to you for just
one minute--put down the phone--
please, Dale.

Hurricane hesitates--then puts down the phone.

HURRICANE
All right--

LILA
Tell me what your plan is--what you
think's about to happen.

HURRICANE
Well--I'm about to make a phone call,
and in about 20 minutes there's gonna
be a whole bunch of cops out here.

(MORE)

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

And then we're gonna be waitin' in the weeds for those 2 bastards, and by god if they don't give themselves up peaceful, we're gonna make mince-meat pie out of 'em.

LILA

It's not gonna work, baby.

HURRICANE

Now why's that?

LILA

'Cause Ray's real nervous, and he said he was gonna be callin' me from the road to make sure everything's still cool--and if I don't answer the phone when Ray calls, no way are him and Pluto gonna show.

HURRICANE

We'll just keep you right here then, and you can answer the phone.

LILA

Now why would I want to do that, baby?

HURRICANE

Well, it's like Dud Cole said, if you help us out, it'll go better for you at your trial--

LILA

Bullshit! I'll stay here with you till they call, Dale, but you gotta promise to let me go. And that means you can't be callin' those L.A. cops out here, 'cause they ain't gonna cut that deal with me.

(pause)

You can have me, or you can have Ray and Pluto. Think about it, baby.

Somewhere from out of the surrounding dark comes the CALL of a whip-poor-will--mysterious, haunting, mournful.

EXT. THE HOUSE

An ANGLE through black tree branches establishes the loneliness of the place--and then we HEAR the whip-poor-will again.

INT. THE HOUSE

LILA

Listen to that whip-poor-will!
 You know what they say about when
 you hear a whip-poor-will--that
 means somebody's gonna die soon.
 What's the matter, Dale, you
 scared it's gonna be you? You
 scared to take on Ray and Pluto
 by yourself?

HURRICANE

I'm not worried about them--

LILA

Maybe you oughta be. They're bad
 boys from the big city--and you're
 just a hayseed cop from Arkansas.

Lila, watching Hurricane, gives this taunt time to sink in--
 and then she suddenly changes her tone.

LILA (Cont'd)

(looking at
 his gun)

You gonna keep pointin' that thing
 at me? What you think I'm gonna
 do, jump on you and strangle you to
 death? This is me, Lila. Now
 you know I didn't kill nobody,
 Ray and Pluto did all the killing,
 and they told me they'd kill me
 if I didn't go along, but that
 didn't stop me from saving the
 life of a little kid out in California
 that Ray wanted to kill--

HURRICANE

I know about that--

LILA

(indignant)

Yeah, you know about that and there
 you stand pointin' that gun at me--

Hurricane, a bit sheepishly, lowers his gun. Lila obviously
 feels as though she's getting somewhere--but then:

HURRICANE

Lila, even if I wanted to, I can't
 make a deal to let you go.

Hurricane picks up the phone and begins to dial a number. Lila watches him, a wild glint of helplessness in her eyes.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

I just don't have the legal authority--

LILA

(quickly)

You didn't have the legal authority to fuck me when I was 17 but that didn't stop you then!

Hurricane's finger stops in mid-dial.

LILA (Cont'd)

You gonna pretend you didn't see that little boy? What's the matter? Why don't you say something? Do you hate it that much that a kid of yours has nigger blood?

HURRICANE

He's not my kid--

LILA

"Not your"--? He's nearly as white as you are--

HURRICANE

That don't prove anything--

LILA

Dale, I know you think I'm some kind of whore, but you were the only man for me back then--he's your kid--and you're gonna send the mother of your kid to jail, and you're gonna let those 2 killers loose and they're gonna roam the country and kill more people and those people's blood is gonna be on your hands, Dale, it's gonna be on your hands--

Hurricane slowly hangs up the phone--and now he looks at Lila. She meets his looks with a meltingly sweet, tender, and grateful smile.

INT. RAY AND PLUTO'S CAR - NIGHT

They are moving through the deserted streets of a town.

TITLE: 4:55 A.M.

Now they pass 2 signs, a small one that says: "TEXARKANA, ARK. POP. 37, 985," and a huge one that says: "WELCOME TO ARKANSAS!"

CLOSE ON PLUTO looking at the huge sign.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

CLOSE ON HURRICANE. All the lights in the house are now off, and in the faint starlight we can see him standing at the window, smoking a cigarette, looking out at the road down which Pluto and Ray are to come.

ANGLE ON LILA, sitting in an armchair and looking at Hurricane.

LILA

How come we have to sit here in the dark like this?

HURRICANE

'Cause I don't want to be a sittin' duck if they show up out there.

LILA

I told you, they won't be here till it's daylight.

(pause)

I hate the dark.

Now Hurricane looks at Lila.

HURRICANE

Lila, how come you to get mixed up in all this shit? All this drugs, and killin', and--

LILA

Ray. Ray Malcom.

HURRICANE

How'd you meet him, did you know him from here?

LILA

Naw, Ray moved away from Star City when he was just a kid. When I moved out to L.A. I was staying in Venice with some friends. A whole lot of black people from Arkansas

(MORE)

LILA (Cont'd)

lived in that neighborhood. Ray isn't black, but he grew up around blacks-- him bein' "white trash" and all--and that's where I met him. Meeting Ray-- well--it was like meeting the devil-- and it was like he dragged me straight to hell.

HURRICANE

How come you to hang around with somebody like that?

LILA

(with a meaningful
look at Hurricane)
Baby, Ray got me "on the rebound"
you might say.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE'S FACE as he reacts to this.

LILA (Cont'd)

Ray paid attention to me--I mean,
even if you beat up on somebody,
(touching her bruised cheek)
that's payin' attention to 'em.
I know gettin' involved with Ray was
stupid--but seems like I'm always
makin' the wrong choice. But I'm just
tryin' to live, baby. Is that a crime?
I'm just tryin' to live!

Lila starts to get up.

HURRICANE

(a bit sharply)
Where you goin'?

Lila stops.

LILA

Get my cigarettes, they're in my purse.

Hurricane looks across the room at the table on which her purse is resting. Now he reaches into his shirt pocket.

HURRICANE

You can have one of mine--

LILA

(starting to
move again)
I smoke menthol, baby, you know
that--

HURRICANE

I'll get 'em.

Hurricane moves to the table, opens the purse. He peers in--sticks his hand in--and pulls out a pistol. He looks at Lila.

LILA

(with a dismayed
laugh)

Baby, I forgot that thing was even in there. Ray gave it to me for protection. I don't even know how it works.

HURRICANE

You pull the damn trigger.

LILA

Dale, quit lookin' at me like that. You think I was gonna shoot you or something? That's crazy. That'd be like shooting myself. Now can I please have my cigarettes?

Hurricane just keeps looking at Lila for another long moment--and then he slips the gun--it's a small gun, a ladies' gun--into his jeans pocket--then he takes Lila's cigarettes out of her purse, and gives them to her.

LILA

Can I have a light, baby?

Hurricane takes out a matchbook, strikes a match. As he holds it out, she puts her own hand on his to steady the flame.

LILA (Cont'd)

(chattily--determined
to act as though nothing
is wrong, as though Hurricane's
not still staring at her
suspiciously)

So does that wife of yours treat you right?

HURRICANE

Yeah, Lila--she does.

LILA

That's good. What's her name again? Thelma Lou?

Hurricane can tell Lila is mocking him.

HURRICANE

Cheryl Ann.

LILA
Oh yeah. So do you and Cheryl
Ann have any kids yet?

HURRICANE
One.

LILA
Boy or girl?

HURRICANE
Girl.

LILA
What's her name?

HURRICANE
Bonnie.

LILA
How old is she?

HURRICANE
Four.

LILA
You don't really want to talk about
your family with me, do you?

HURRICANE
No, Lila, I don't guess I do.

LILA
Yeah, I don't blame you.
(suddenly getting up)
Oh--I got something for you.

HURRICANE
(sharply)
Where you goin'?

Lila is moving toward the kitchen, Hurricane right behind her. Now she looks back over her shoulder, raises her arms in the air, and waggles them in mock fright.

LILA
Don't shoot me, officer!

INT. KITCHEN

Lila and Hurricane enter.

LILA
Can I turn on a light?

HURRICANE

No, now what the hell are you--?

Lila opens the refrigerator, and light spills out from it into the kitchen. She pulls out a half-eaten cake.

LILA

I put it in here so it wouldn't get stale.

She puts the cake on the counter.

LILA (Cont'd)

(nodding toward
the refrigerator)

Can I leave that open so we can have a little light?

She goes to the sink where she was washing dishes and takes out a large knife, which she dries off. Then she begins to cut the cake.

LILA (Cont'd)

This is our baby's birthday cake.

She holds a slice of cake toward Hurricane. He shakes his head.

LILA (Cont'd)

Suit yourself.

(beginning to
eat the cake)

Mm, it's delicious. You should have some.

HURRICANE

Today's his birthday?

LILA

Naw, it's not till October. But I left him with Mama before he was 2--that means I've missed his last 4 birthdays. So we just celebrated all 4 of 'em last night.

HURRICANE

(uncomfortably)

Does your mama know about--?

LILA

About what?

Lila knows full well what.

LILA (Cont'd)

Oh. Nobody does, except you and me. I never wanted to cause you any trouble, Dale. I still don't.

(with a laugh)

I bet Bonnie'd be surprised if she knew she had a half brother livin' over in Nigger Town.

Lila holds out the cake toward Hurricane again.

LILA (Cont'd)

Dale, you gotta have a bite of our baby's birthday cake.

HURRICANE

Quit callin' him that--

Now Lila is moving toward Hurricane.

LILA

Why?, that's what he is--

(pushing up the
cake toward Hurricane's
mouth)

Here--

HURRICANE

(grabbing Lila's
wrist)

Goddamn it, I told you I don't want any!

The cake falls to the floor. Hurricane and Lila are now only inches apart. And now Lila moves to close the gap.

LILA

(softly)

What do you want?

Lila's lush warmth is pressing against the whole length of Hurricane's body, and Lila's lips are close to his, and Hurricane looks somehow dizzy, like a man with vertigo standing at the edge of a precipice--and then suddenly, with the hand still holding Lila's wrist, he slowly pushes Lila toward the living room.

HURRICANE

Get back in there--

INT. LIVING ROOM

Lila, with Hurricane behind her, moves into the darkened living room. She climbs into the armchair, she curls up into a

ball. In a moment, Hurricane hears the soft sound of WEEPING.

HURRICANE

Lila?

LILA

Why'd you ever mess with me? Why didn't you leave me alone?

Hurricane is now standing behind the chair, with a helpless look on his face as he gazes down at Lila.

HURRICANE

I--I was all mixed up at the time, Lila--me and Cheryl Ann were goin' through a bad time--

LILA

I wonder if that's how it was when Mama met my daddy, maybe he was just goin' through a "bad time." My daddy was a white man, did you know that, Dale? Course, I never did know him, sound familiar? But that's why I look kinda white, 'cause my daddy was white--and I guess 'cause I looked kinda white, you figured you'd fuck me, what the hell?--but 'cause I looked kind of black, you figured you'd dump me, what the hell?

HURRICANE

Lila, it never was like that--

Out of some dark treetop come a few clear crystalline NOTES OF BIRDSONG. Lila looks toward the window--and now she begins to seem calmer.

LILA

It's gonna be daylight soon.

(pause)

I remember I was so scared of the dark when I was a kid. I'd wake up in the middle of the night, and I'd just know I wasn't going to sleep again till it was day, and I'd lay there curled up in a little ball in the middle of the bed 'cause I didn't want nothin' reaching up from under the bed to grab me, and I'd think about

(MORE)

LILA (Cont'd)
 everything I was afraid of--but
 I remember as soon as I heard a
 bird sing I would always go to
 sleep. It wouldn't matter if
 it was still dark outside, it
 was like when I heard a bird
 singing I knew night was as good
 as gone--and I'd fall right asleep.

The bird lets drop a few more crystalline NOTES. Hurricane
 is gazing down at Lila, who, in turn, is gazing toward the
 window, beyond which the sky is barely beginning to brighten. . .

EXT. THE MAIN STREET OF STAR CITY - DAWN

The time and temperature sign on the Star City First National
 Bank flashes: 59°, and then: 6:21.

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE THE DAVIS HOUSE - DAWN

Charlie's car is moving slowly along.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR

Charlie is peering down every alley and side street he passes.
 He has the radio mike in his hand.

CHARLIE
 211 to 210.
 (pause)
 211 to 210.
 (obviously greatly
 puzzled)
 Dale, where ya at?

Now Charlie sees a heavy-set black MAN of about 60 at a wooden
 work table in his yard. Charlie pulls over, as the man looks
 up from his work: he's in the process of dismembering the
 slippery green corpses of several enormous frogs.

JUNE
 Howdy do, Mr. Charlie!

CHARLIE
 (from the window
 of the car)
 Good morning, June. I'm looking
 for Hurricane, have you seen him?

JUNE
 No sir. I haven't seen Mr.
 Hurricane this mornin'.
 (MORE)

JUNE (Cont'd)
 (hoisting a frog
 by its leg)
 Ain't these mighty fine frogs?

CHARLIE
 Sure are. Listen, June, I know
 you to be an observant fella.
 Have you seen that daughter of
 Mrs. Davis over there lately?
 Lila?

JUNE
 Lord have mercy, no, Mr. Charlie!
 She been gone from over there for
 a long time.

CHARLIE
 Seen any strange cars coming or
 going over there? Any cars with
 out of state plates?

JUNE
 No, can't say as I have.

CHARLIE
 Nothing sort of funny, or out of
 the ordinary, over there at all?

JUNE
 No sir.

CHARLIE
 (beginning to
 drive away)
 OK, June. Thanks for your help.

But suddenly something occurs to June.

JUNE
 (calling)
 Mr. Charlie!

Charlie stops the car, and June walks over to it.

JUNE (Cont'd)
 Mr. Charlie, you said anything
 funny round the house there and
 I ain't seen anything funny round
 the house but I seen something a
 little peculiar that had something
 to do with that house but it wasn't
 actually round the house. You
 (MORE)

JUNE (Cont'd)
wouldn't be interested in nothin'
like that, would ya?

INT. LIVING ROOM OF THE DAVIS HOUSE

Lila's mother and brother and son are all sitting on the couch, obviously just roused out of bed. They are being faced by Charlie and Dud and McFeely. Somewhere in the scene is a clock that shows this time: 6:46.

MRS. DAVIS
Now Ronnie, if you know something
about Lila bein' here you tell
these gentlemen. Your sister's
in trouble, but I don't want you
bein' in trouble.

Ronnie looks nervous but resolute.

RONNIE
No ma'am, I don't know anything
about that.

CHARLIE
Ronnie, June Hawkins down the street
just told me he was out most of the
night gigging frogs south of town,
and that when he was driving back
he saw you driving along in front
of him, and that Byron here was
with you. Now where had you and
Byron been at 4 o'clock in the
morning?

RONNIE
We've been here all night. June's
mixed up. He's getting old and
he doesn't see very well.

Dud now scoots his chair a little closer to the kid.

DUD
How are you this morning, Byron?

BYRON
Just fine.

DUD
A little sleepy?

BYRON
Yeah, I guess so.

DUD
Did you go out last night and stay
somewhere with your uncle Ronnie?

BYRON
No.

DUD
Are you sure?

BYRON
Yeah.

DUD
You didn't see a lady last
night? A pretty lady?

BYRON
No.

DUD
Are you sure?

BYRON
Yeah.

DUD
Did your uncle Ronnie tell you
to say that?

BYRON
Yeah.

ANGLE ON RONNIE rolling his eyes in dismay.

DUD
So that's just "pretend"?

BYRON
Yeah.

DUD
Well, let's not play "pretend"
anymore. Let's play "really"--OK?

BYRON
OK.

DUD
So did you see a pretty lady last
night?

BYRON
Yeah.

DUD

Was she your mama?

BYRON

She said she's my mama.

DUD

Where did you see her?

BYRON

In this house in the woods.

This next question's a big one.

DUD

Byron--could you remember how
to get there?

BYRON

(after a thoughtful
pause)

I think so.

EXT. THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS - MORNING

The sun is now up, and is shedding a low lovely golden light
over the house and the surrounding trees.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF THE HOUSE

OPEN ON A WATCH: it shows 7:13.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE, standing at the window, looking from his
watch to the outside, and then to Lila, sitting in a chair,
smoking a cigarette.

HURRICANE

You sure they're comin'?

LILA

They said they would.

HURRICANE

Maybe they've left you high and
dry.

Lila looks agitated.

LILA

Dale--you gotta let me go anyway.

HURRICANE

I can't do that, Lila.

LILA
 You said you would! We made
 a deal.

HURRICANE
 The deal was that you help me
 catch 'em--

Lila is up out of the chair now, moving toward Hurricane.

LILA
 I'm trying to help you, Dale--it's
 not my fault if they don't come--

HURRICANE
 (shaking his head)
 Lila--

LILA
 (getting desperate)
 You can't let 'em put me in jail!
 What's gonna happen to our baby
 with me in jail?

HURRICANE
 Your mama'll keep takin' care of
 him--and I'll start givin' her
 money for him--

LILA
 Why don't you just give him the
 money? Why don't you say, "Byron,
 I'm your daddy"?

HURRICANE
 I don't see what that would--

LILA
 Him and me's got as much right
 to you as your wife and daughter,
 just as much right. We'll run
 away together--real far away--
 (her hands imploring
 on his chest)
 You were always wantin' to get
 out of Star City and now we will,
 baby--you and me and Byron, far
 far away--we'll be safe!

The phone RINGS. Hurricane and Lila look at it. It RINGS
 again. Lila moves to it. In the middle of the third RING,
 she picks it up.

LILA

Hello?

(looking at Hurricane--
brightly)

Hi, baby! Yeah, everything's cool!
Everything's so cool! Where you
callin' from? What's the name of
the gas station? Oh Ray, you
already passed the turn-off. It's
about a half mile back up the
highway. Yeah, you want to turn
right at this place called Cothern's
Bait Shop, there's a little road
there. It's not far, baby, you'll
be here in 10 minutes. Hurry!
I miss you!

Lila hangs up the phone. She and Hurricane look at each other.

EXT. A GAS STATION ON THE HIGHWAY - MORNING

Ray comes out of a phone booth. He walks back toward the car,
where Pluto is waiting. The car is parked so as not to be
easily seen from the highway.

As Ray moves OUT OF FRAME, the CAMERA PICKS UP a car that is
passing on the highway. It's Charlie's.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR

Charlie, Dud, McFeely, and the little boy are inside. They
approach a road that bisects the highway.

DUD

Byron, is that the road you
went down?

Byron looks at it thoughtfully--then shakes his head.

INT. THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS

OPEN ON HURRICANE'S GUN, as Hurricane doublechecks it.

Hurricane, standing beside the window, looks at Lila.

HURRICANE

Lila, when they get here, I want
you to get them inside the house
and away from their car. You
open the door, wave at 'em, talk
to 'em, let 'em see everything's
OK. Then I want you to go on
(MORE)

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

back in the kitchen and stay there till I tell you to come out. That way in case they get trigger happy, you'll be out of the line of fire.

LILA

And then you'll let me go?

HURRICANE

I said I would.

Lila smiles.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR

Charlie's car is approaching Cothorn's Bait Shop and the road that runs off beside it.

DUD

(as Charlie slows
the car)

Now is that the road, Byron?

Byron looks at it long and hard, scrunching up his face--finally:

BYRON

I don't think so.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY

We watch Charlie's car move on past the road, continue down the highway. The CAMERA stays at the intersection. In a few moments, Ray and Pluto's car appears, and turns off the highway down the road.

INT. RAY AND PLUTO'S CAR

PLUTO

Let's get in and out of here fast.

RAY

(in emphatic agreement)

Bubba, you got it!

And now we have A SERIES OF SHOTS that should attempt to create the same unbearable, building tension the audience experienced when they saw the final minutes ticking off to high noon for Gary Cooper, or when Alan Ladd was riding to meet Jack Palance at Grafton's Saloon:

HURRICANE, standing at the window and looking out at the road.

LILA, watching him.

THE COPS AND THE BOY in the car, turning off the highway now down the wrong road.

DUD

You're sure this is it?

THE BOY, uncertainly nodding.

RAY AND PLUTO on the road that leads to the house, looking around a bit uneasily at the thick green woods.

HURRICANE at the window.

LILA lighting a cigarette.

BONNIE, at the kitchen table in Hurricane's house, a bowl of cereal in front of her, and CHERYL ANN pouring milk into the cereal, and Bonnie picking up a slice of banana and putting it into her mouth.

RAY lighting a cigarette.

A GHASTLY BUCKET OF LEGLESS FROGS being dumped slitheringly into a trash can by JUNE HAWKINS.

THE COPS AND BYRON, on a narrow rut of a road with branches whipping the windshield--and now coming to a dead end at a dump sight.

HURRICANE at the window.

PLUTO, with the passing trees reflected in the lenses of his glasses.

CHARLIE, head cranked around, car in reverse, branches whipping the rear window.

HURRICANE

LILA

BYRON

BONNIE AND CHERYL ANN

DUD AND McFEELY

RAY AND PLUTO

And finally, HURRICANE, at the window, and LILA watching.

INT. THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS

HURRICANE'S POV: RAY AND PLUTO'S CAR, nosing into the little clearing in front of the house.

Hurricane quickly moves away from the window and toward the kitchen.

HURRICANE
You got it straight?

Lila nods--and then Hurricane motions toward the door. Lila opens it.

EXT. THE HOUSE

Ray is getting out of the car.

LILA
(waving from the door)
Hi, baby!

RAY
Come on, Fantasia, let's go.

LILA
It'll be a few minutes, Ray. I gotta pack my stuff.

RAY
(exasperated)
Aw, baby, what's there to pack? All you had was that fuckin' little bag--

LILA
I won't be long, y'all come on in.

INT. THE HOUSE

Hurricane, standing just inside the kitchen door, is watching Lila.

HURRICANE
(in a whisper)
OK, Lila.

Lila moves away from the door toward the kitchen. As she reaches Hurricane, she goes up on tiptoe and plants a quick kiss on Hurricane's lips.

LILA
Be careful, honey--I love you.

And now Lila hurries past Hurricane and disappears behind him into the kitchen.

EXT. THE HOUSE

Pluto has gotten out of the car now too, and he and Ray are moving toward the house.

RAY
(grumbling)
Goddamn it, what's she been
doin' all this damn time,
gotta fuckin' pack--

They go up the front steps, begin to go in the open door.

INT. THE HOUSE

Hurricane, gun raised and at the ready, is standing out of sight just inside the kitchen. Ray comes in, followed by Pluto.

RAY
Fantasia?

Hurricane steps out with his gun levelled.

HURRICANE
Police officer, freeze, goddamn
it! Get your hands up! Get down
on the floor!

As they raise their hands, Ray looks astonished, Pluto merely very alert.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)
Hurry up, goddamn it! Down on
the floor!

Hurricane has taken a couple of eager steps forward into the living room. As Pluto and Ray get down on the floor, Pluto's eyes flicker over Hurricane's shoulder.

RAY
Who the fuck are you, man?

REVERSE ANGLE: We're seeing what Pluto sees--Lila coming out of the kitchen--all we can see are her head and shoulders over Hurricane's shoulder.

HURRICANE

I'm Dale Dixon, Star City P.D., you
son of a bitch, and I--

And now Ray sees Lila, and instantly realizes what the set-up is.

RAY

You goddamn bitch!

LILA

(a stricken look
on her face)

Honey, I'm sorry, I--

HURRICANE

(looking back over
his shoulder)

Lila, stay back in--

This moment of distraction is what Pluto's been waiting for. With that quickness that we've seen in him before, he gets his knife out and the blade flashes open and he plunges toward Hurricane.

Hurricane looks back toward Pluto and shoots him in the chest. Pluto's momentum carries him into Hurricane and he pops the knife between a couple of Hurricane's ribs as Hurricane jams the gun into Pluto's chest and fires again. Pluto falls. Ray, like a jack rabbit, is already out the door.

Hurricane, hand to the wound in his side, staggers to the door.

EXT. THE HOUSE

Hurricane comes out on the front steps. Ray is halfway across the yard to his car.

HURRICANE

Stop!

Ray is pulling his gun out of his pants. Hurricane draws a bead on Ray, but as he's about to fire suddenly Lila appears from behind and grabs Hurricane's arm.

LILA

Dale, don't!

Hurricane's shot goes wide and Ray turns and fires a shot at Hurricane. The back of Lila's head erupts in a sudden crimson flowering, and she drops at Hurricane's feet. Ray fires again, and the bullet hits Hurricane near his left shoulder under the collar bone.

Hurricane manages to squeeze off three quick shots. Each one strikes home in Ray's body. Ray twists and jerks and falls and groans and dies.

And now, except for the SOFT SOUNDS OF WIND AND BIRDS, all is silence in the little clearing in the woods. Hurricane looks from the body of Ray to the body of Lila, at his feet.

HURRICANE
(in numb horror)

Lila--

The gun slips from the grievously wounded man's fingers. It is all he can do to stay on his feet. Now he begins to stagger toward the woods as fast as he can, trying to escape the enormity of what's just happened. He leaves a trail of blood that glistens in the bright morning sunlight.

ANGLE ON HURRICANE, moving through the woods. He reaches his car, where he left it hidden the night before. He opens the door, gets in, without closing the door tries to jam the key into the ignition, but it drops to the floorboard, and now Hurricane, looking faint, puts his forehead against the steering wheel.

Soon he lifts his head. He realizes he is in no shape to just drive off, and that there is police business to be attended to-- and he reaches for the radio.

HURRICANE
(into the radio--
weakly)

210. 210. 210 to anyone on Channel

1. Come in.

(pause)

Hurry up, goddamn it--

RADIO
Hurricane, this is 234, what's
goin' on?

HURRICANE
Need help out here--

RADIO
What's your 10-20?

Hurricane, blinking his eyes, looking weak and dizzy, doesn't answer.

RADIO (Cont'd)
Dale, what's your 20, where you
at?

HURRICANE

Two miles down Sulpher Springs
Road--at a house--on a little
road off to the right--

RADIO

Is there an address?

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR

Charlie and Dud and McFeely and the boy, still wandering lost in a maze of back roads, are monitoring the transmission.

HURRICANE'S VOICE

Randy, I don't know if there's
a goddamn address--just get
me some help out here--and an
ambulance--I've got 3 suspects
down, and I'm hurt--

RANDY'S VOICE

How bad you hurt, Dale?

HURRICANE'S VOICE

Been shot, stabbed--you name it--

The cops are listening to all this with amazement--Charlie is making a quick turn-around.

McFEELY

Three suspects down?

DUD

(to Charlie)

Sulpher Springs Road, you know
where that is?

CHARLIE

(accelerating fast)

Yeah.

INT. HURRICANE'S CAR

Hurricane replaces the radio mike. There's nothing for him to do now but wait. His breathing is labored. He leans his head back against the seat, and closes his eyes.

The CAMERA IS SHOOTING across Hurricane's body, out the open car door, into the sun-dappled and windy woods. And now, in a gap between some leafy branches, we see Pluto's head and shoulders appear.

Now the rest of Pluto's body appears as he walks slowly toward Hurricane, led to him by the trail of blood. His shirt is dyed red with his own blood. He has his knife in his hand, and his bespectacled face is staring straight ahead at Hurricane, whose head is still lolling back on the seat.

Pluto's wounds are probably mortal--only sheer raw unquenchable animal will power is keeping him on his feet. Now he is within a few feet of Hurricane, and now Hurricane opens his eyes and sees Pluto out of the corner of one just as Pluto is bending to come into the car. Hurricane grabs Pluto's knife arm, falls back onto the seat with Pluto on top of him.

In the struggle between these 2 badly wounded men, Hurricane quickly begins to lose. Pluto's face is terrifying in its dark and blank determination, and Pluto's knife is beginning to cut into Hurricane's neck.

Hurricane remembers Lila's gun.

Hurricane's left hand is trying to keep the knife out of his jugular. With his right hand, Hurricane reaches toward his jeans pocket. Lila's gun is there, making a small hard outline. He pulls it out.

Hurricane puts the gun against the left lens of Pluto's glasses, and pulls the trigger.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR

The car is moving rapidly down the narrow road that leads to the house.

DUD

Is this the way, Byron? Are you
sure this time?

BYRON

Yeah.

Suddenly, as they round a turn, like some ghastly apparition, drenched with blood from his own 3 wounds, plus Pluto's, Hurricane appears in the middle of the road.

McFEELY

(his most passionate
oath ever)

Sweet Mary mother of Jesus!

Charlie slams on the brakes, and he and Dud and McFeely, taking out their guns, jump out.

CHARLIE

Dale, what happened?

DUD

Lie down--lie down, Dale--

They help Hurricane to lie down by the road. He's obviously going into shock. Dud and McFeely strip off their coats. Dud rolls his up into a ball, places it under Hurricane's head--McFeely covers Hurricane with his.

HURRICANE

One of 'em's in my car--just over
yonder behind those trees--other
2 are in front of the house--

CHARLIE

I'll take the house.

McFEELY

Hold on, Hurricane.

Now the 3 cops move away quickly, leaving Hurricane by the road.

ANGLE ON DUD AND McFEELY, as they reach Hurricane's car. They see feet sticking out of the open door. They approach the car cautiously, guns at the ready.

The inside of the car looks as though a hog has been freshly slaughtered there. Pluto is lying on his back. His glasses have slipped down crookedly over his face--only jagged fragments remain of the left lens. One eye stares at Dud and McFeely. The other eye isn't there anymore.

Dud and McFeely look at each other, unable to conceive of the circumstances that put Pluto in Hurricane's car.

CUT TO:

CHARLIE, coming out of the house after checking it out. Now Dud and McFeely come out of the woods. The three meet at a point between the bloody bodies of Ray in the yard, Lila on the steps.

DUD

(softly)

What in God's name happened here?

CUT TO:

CHARLIE'S CAR. The ANGLE is on the lower half of one of the open front doors. Now 2 small legs appear.

Byron, forgotten in the excitement, walks over to Hurricane. Hurricane's eyes are closed, his face is very pale.

BYRON

Are you dead, mister?

Hurricane opens his eyes, looks up at Byron.

HURRICANE

(weakly)

Naw--not quite--

BYRON

Where's the lady at?

HURRICANE

Over yonder--

Byron begins to move away, but Hurricane reaches up and grabs his arm.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

(urgently)

No--stay here with me--

Byron looks back down at Hurricane.

HURRICANE (Cont'd)

(more softly)

Stay here with me--

And now the boy drops down on his knees by Hurricane, and Hurricane takes his hand.

The dappled sunlight plays on the man and his son as they look at each other. . . .

FADE OUT

THE END