Producer: Joel Silver

"ROADHOUSE"

Written by

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Based on Material by

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Dalton has a degree in psychology from NYU.
He drives a new Mercedes.
His entire worldly goods fit easily into the trunk.
He carriès his X-rays and medical records with him.
He keeps in superb condition a body that has been shot and stabbed and had more than 30 bones broken and has been screwed back together by an impressive array of stainless steel screws.
He has already worked in almost half the states in the Union.
He makes a lot of money.
He is the best there is at what he does.

He is a bouncer.

"ROADHOUSE"

FADE IN:

EXT. "THE ARSENAL" (ATLANTA, GEORGIA) - NIGHT

An enormous place situated on the edge of town, the club is built from something that looks like an old warehouse or airplane hangar. In keeping with the times, the abandoned body of a WW II jet has been painted, hung with neon, stands directly in front of the entrance to the place... which is surrounded by a sea of parked cars.

A lineup snakes from the door into the lot which is jammed to the gills. It's only 10 P.M. and already the place is sizzling, filled to capacity. The parking lot's wall to wall with a testament to the New Materialism. BMWs, Jags alongside of the usual sedans and pickup trucks. LOUD, RAUCOUS, backbeat driven ROCK AND ROLL emanates from the club, BOOMS out over the lot. The Arsenal used to be a funky, Country-Western roadhouse, the type of place that averaged more than a couple casualties a night, blood on the floor, brawls out in the parking lot. Not anymore.

INT. "THE ARSENAL"

Jammed wall-to-wall, the place is incendiary with raw energy. The band does hot rock and roll laced with Cajun funk. The bar is in overdrive. The crowd is sleek, dressed to impress, anxious to flash expensive watches, Am Ex cards... whatever they're holding at the moment, anything that'll get them laid with the right person.

And whatever kind of a place The Arsenal started out as, it's been tamed into submission for the moment. Now it's got a richer clientele and a wine list. In general, it's every restaurateur's dream; a second chance at raking in the bucks. A new lease on life.

ON BAR

The bartenders are consummate pros. The waitresses are quick, friendly, have a great pass defense. The half-dozen bouncers, without jackets, are in constant movement, shifting through the crowd, barely discernible. One gets the feeling that all this curiously understated control of The Arsenal's patrons, hence its new upscale image and financial success emanates from one person:

DALTON

As he leans into his customary shadow near the bar. Sneakers, jeans, loose-fitting shirt. Nothing happens in here he doesn't see, or sense, or anticipate...

CROWD

into the music, clapping, dancing, shaking great bodies...

THREE GUYS

at a table. Pussy prospectors. They have a sign propped on the table offering Free Mustache Rides.

ONE OF THEM

tries hitting on a definitely upscale GIRL as she moves past them...

GUY
Hi, I'm an unemployed missionary, know where I might find a missionary position?

She looks him over, mulls over whether she's into slumming for tonight. Then:

GIRL
That the only position you're interested in?

GUY
That a skill-testing question?

She likes his line. She sits. MUSIC UP...

EXT. "THE ARSENAL"

The bouncer on the door succumbs to the pleas from two women and admits them from the lineup... As an airport limo pulls up. From it steps TILGHMAN, a man in his 50's with something on his mind. He exchanges a few clipped words with the bouncer, shows a business card, is allowed inside...

INT. "THE ARSENAL"

Another bouncer tries to find someplace to seat the two women, can't. He trolls them past the table with the three mustaches. The women read the offer. They sit down. The grins beneath the mustaches turn to shit-eating smiles...

BAND

winds up its number to raucous appreciation, wet themselves down from standby beers, and head right into another driving number...

DALTON

gets his ever-present coffee refilled by one of the bartenders, winds his way through the press of bodies toward the front door...

AT TABLE

TWO WOMEN sit alone, getting off on the music. A pair of HARD-NOSED DUDES pull up chairs, uninvited...

HARD-NOSE #1
You ladies for fun or profit?

WOMAN #1
What?

HARD-NOSE #1
Do you come for free, or does it cost?

WOMAN #1
Go fuck your fist.

Hard-nose #2 drops a hundred bill on the table. Woman #2 pierces it with the metal nail file she's been using and flicks it back...

HARD-NOSE #1
Okay, ain't no big thing.

Dropping her eyes to his crotch:

WOMAN #1
I can see that.

Pissed, Hard-nose #1 puts his shoe on her chair and sends her over backwards in a jumble of skirt, legs, panties...

TILGHMAN

steps from the owner's office, the owner behind him. The owner indicates he might want to watch how this gets handled...

TWO BOUNCERS

move in. #1 up front, #2 behind...

BOUNCER #1
Easy, bud.

Hard-nose #1 rocks him back with a straight arm to the chest. Bouncer #2 clamps his arms around Hard-nose #1 from behind, pinning his arms vice-like, ready to duck-walk him to the door...

BOUNCER #2
Lighten up, man. You need some air, is all.

Hard-nose #1 decks him. Two more bouncers move in...

BAND

knows better than to stop playing. But they exchange knowing glances, eyes following movement across the floor.

THEIR POV - DALTON

He steps up to the fringe. It's a momentary standoff, the Bouncers following his standing directive that it never happens inside unless there is no other way. Hard-nose #1 locks his sneer on Dalton...

HARD-NOSE #1
How 'bout it, Dalton? I always wanted to try you.

DALTON
No thanks.

HARD-NOSE #1
I think maybe I can take you.

DALTON
Maybe you can. That's not my job.

He nods to the Bouncers to get them out, starts to turn away. Hard-nose #1 scoops the nail file from the table and slashes, catching him along the ribs. It takes two Bouncers to restrain Hard-nose #1...

HARD-NOSE #1
You and me, Dalton.

Dalton knows he's been cut, has no need of feeling or seeing the blood. More resignation than anything else, he nods and indicates the Hard-noses precede him. The crowd crushes in to follow. Tilghman follows. But at the door, as soon as the Hard-noses are through it, Dalton turns and walks away...

OUTSIDE

The Hard-noses realize Dalton has done a number on them. And four of the Bouncers are lined across the door... Tilghman is impressed. The band hasn't missed a beat. The place smoothly shifts back to normal...

INT. "THE ARSENAL" - MINUTES LATER

Dalton waits while one of the bartenders boils water. Tilghman walks up...

TILGHMAN
Talk to you a minute?

DALTON
What about?

TILGHMAN
Workin' for me.

Dalton takes the carafe of boiling water. Tilghman follows him, to:

EMPLOYEE WASHROOM

Dalton disinfects the cut, fishes a suture needle from the carafe with a pair of surgical clamps, and commences with the first of four neat, practiced stitches. Tilghman has never before seen anyone sew themselves up, and finds it excruciating to watch. Dalton's glance says, "So, talk..."

TILGHMAN
Name's Tilghman. I got a place outside Kansas City called The Double Deuce.

DALTON
I heard of it.

TILGHMAN
Well, I got some trouble. It used to be sweet, now it's the kinda joint you sweep up the eyeballs after closin'.

DALTON
Sounds familiar.

TILGHMAN
I came into some money. I want to make a little better life for myself. I need somebody to help me clean the place up. I need the best.

DALTON
Wade Garrett's the best.

TILGHMAN
Garrett's gettin' old.

DALTON
He's still the best.

TILGHMAN
I want you.

DALTON
Five thousand up front and two hundred a night, cash legal tender, and all medical expenses.

Tilghman counts out five thousand...

DALTON
I'm an independent contractor. When the job's done, I walk.

TILGHMAN
I got some tickets. We can leave for the airport soon's you're done for the night.

DALTON
Planes scare me. I'll get there.

Tilghman starts for the door, hesitates...

TILGHMAN
I, uh, thought you'd be bigger.

When there is no reaction from Dalton, he leaves. Dalton ties off the sutures. They are textbook perfect. CREDITS UP and OVER the following SERIES of QUICK SHOTS:

EXT. ATLANTA STREET - NIGHT

Dalton drives a battered old junker up to an all-night garage. Parks it in the street. Walks into the garage on foot, waves past the security guard... Moments later he drives out in a Mercedes 560SEC, silver, Euro headlights, P7's on Centra wheels, New York plates.

INT. DOWNTOWN HOTEL - DALTON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Is transient traditional. But neat as a pin. It takes only minutes to gather up his stuff. There isn't a whole lot. But there are two prized possessions. A road sign that warns It is Forbidden to Throw Stones at This Sign. And a set of Japanese chimes hanging outside the open window. He takes both...

EXT. FREEWAY OUT OF ATLANTA - NIGHT

The Merc comes to a ramp onto the superslab.

INT. MERCEDES

Dalton sets two radar detectors behind the rear seat and aimed out the rear window, plugs them into wired-in connectors, does the same with a pair on the dash and aimed forward. He puts the Merc in gear, feeds the radio a cassette. MUSIC IN...

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

The Merc flashes past, flying low, passing the sparse traffic as though it were parked...

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

The speedo shows he's cruising at 110 mph. He works a hard rubber ball in one hand as he drives, switches it to the other... The Merc rolls through the night, a car built for just this kind of high speed transit. Rock solid, glued to the pavement.

EXT. ARKANSAS STATE POLICE CAR - PRE-DAWN HOUR

Parked partially concealed off the freeway...

INT. POLICE CAR

The uniform is cooping (sleeping). The MERC WHISTLING past snaps him awake. He grabs for the instant-on radar, fumbles, drops it. By the time he gets it aimed and squeezes the trigger, it's too late.

INT. MERCEDES

Dalton saw the cop, but knows he's clear, keeps it at 110. CREDITS CONTINUE OVER:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN

First light is spreading from the east. The Mercedes tears along as...

INT. MERCEDES - ON DALTON

drives as he speaks into the car phone receiver balanced between ear and shoulder.

DALTON
-- Jasper, Missouri. A house called the Double Deuce.
(beat)
I told him to get you.
(beat, smiles)
That's just what he said.

Absent-mindedly has pulled the rubber ball from his pocket, squeezes it while he talks... A long pause, then:

DALTON
Hell, Wade -- I'm way too old to start chasin' women.

Hangs up. CREDITS CONTINUE OVER:

EXT. MISSOURI STATE LINE - DAY

The Merc makes Missouri at 110 and holding.

EXT. CORNFIELDS OF HEARTLAND - DAY

Daytime traffic is considerably heavier, but here the freeways run flat and true and enable Dalton to keep the Merc hustling.

EXT. KANSAS CITY - DAY

The Merc eases past the official welcoming sign...

EXT. MISSOURI FLATLANDS - DUSK

Beautiful, green, empty for miles -- Dalton tears past the sign that welcomes him to "JASPER, MISSOURI. Population 10,000." The place is in the middle of nowhere; peaceful, isolated.

EXT. PARKING LOT OF DOUBLE DEUCE - NIGHT

Dalton drives the Mercedes into the lot, parks it.

EXT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - NIGHT

ESTABLISH, a low, sprawling roadhouse. The Stars and Stripes flies from the roof. MUSIC spills into the half-empty parking lot. There is no lineup. CREDITS END as Dalton pushes the doors to the Double Deuce open. Stands there.

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - HIS POV - VARIOUS SHOTS

It's a zoo. Chicken wire protects the band from thrown bottles and flying bodies. Only half full, half of those are drunk or high, half of the half are looking for trouble, and what's left are anxiously thinking of finding a safer place to hang out in. Staff are demoralized, lethargic. Those of the five bouncers who haven't given up entirely are merely going through the motions. A couple are more into connecting with women than keeping the casualty count down. Across the far side of the room, at the line of pool tables that runs along the wall there, a fullfledged brawl is going on between competitors... One guy has already passed out on the long staircase that runs up to a balcony on the back wall overlooking the bar. His friends just left him there. The waitresses, in shorts, high heels and tank tops, are pawed and hit on constantly. The bartenders have a war zone stare. The Double Deuce is an enterprise out of control. But...

THE BAND

is sensational. It's lead is PHIL CODY, a blind kid who plays from a low stool with a Fender Stratocaster guitar laid flat on his lap. They're wound tight, nearing the end of their set...

ON WALL

is a glass jar. In it is a condom. Below it says "Break In Case of Emergency." To which a handwritten addendum clarifies "The jar! The jar!"

AT BAR

A tobacco chewer is using an empty beer bottle for his juice while he enjoys the music...

THE BODY (DENISE)

sits alone at a table up front. She has a dynamite body and nobody knows it better than she does. She crosses to the bar, eating up the attention but coolly ignoring the stream of lines tossed her way...

PAT the bartender pours it, takes her money. Pat's a smug, smarmy dark-haired punk, about 30. The hired help at the Double Deuce seem to stay away from direct contact with the guy whenever possible. A BARFLY tries his luck on the Body.

BARFLY
Vodka rocks, whaddya say you'n me get nipple to nipple?

She looks him over, a meat market appraisal, then guns him off with:

THE BODY
I can do that without you.

It pisses him off enough that he has to be restrained from following her. He breaks away. A big, tough bouncer named MORGAN intercepts and slams a fist into his gut, flings him towards the door. The Barfly collides roughly with other patrons, sprawls. Morgan picks him up, laughs a crazy laugh, and crashes him through the crowd and out the door...

INT. WOMEN'S WASHROOM

We see JUDY, a waitress, enter. As if on cue she is followed by three women...

AT TABLE

HANK, one of the bouncers, blond, lanky, late 20's, sidles up to run a line on a girl he has singled out:

HANK
I get off at two, and I'd love to get you off about a half hour after that.

She accepts the pass. Walking away, he shoots a fist in the air like a jock having just thrown a touchdown...

PHIL CODY

is ending the set with an extended riff, spidery fingers of his chording hand blocking triads and executing flashing lead solos on the fretboard, his picking hand stabbing, wrenching, flailing; the playing brilliant, the sound vintage rock-blues. Riotous applause follows. The band's audience may be sex-crazed drunks and badasses but they know their music. A beer bottle sails against the chicken wire, showering them with brew...

VOICE IN CROWD
You're paid to play, play!

DALTON

steps around the wire and up to Cody...

DALTON
You work one mean axe, my man.

CODY
And I thought you'd be bigger.

They laugh, embrace. The rest of the band acknowledge Dalton. Cody gropes for a towel to wipe off the beer. Dalton hands it to him...

CODY
We heard you were comin', man. This toilet's worse than the one we worked in Dayton.

DALTON
Yeah?

CODY
She's a mean scene. Blood on the floor, every night. Must've offered you some kind of cash.

DALTON
Enough. Bouncer with the weird laugh. He a bone-breaker?

CODY
You mean the big guy, Morgan? Yeah.

A FAN, in full squirm, homes in on him...

FAN
I just love the way you play.

CODY
Thanks. You sound beautiful.

He holds up his hands as if wanting to touch her face...

FAN
(laughs)
Well, I am...

CODY
Would you mind?...

FAN
Oh... sure, go ahead.

Instead he drops his hands to her waist, up and down. One of his routines that never fails. She laughs, goes with it. Dalton starts to ease away...

DALTON
Later, amigo.

CODY
Dalton?

DALTON
Yeah.

CODY
I'm glad you're here, man.

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - LATER

The drunks are drunker, the rowdies rowdier, the women wetter. Cody and the band are into a new set...

AT TABLE

are two couples. One of the women has breasts that could claim a world ranking with Mammaries Contemporaneous. She's mighty proud of them, her HUSBAND no less so. A GAWKER at the next table can't keep his eyes off her.

HUSBAND
Ever seen a better pair'a attitudes?

The Gawker blinks. Is he talking about his own wife?

GAWKER
Can't say I have. My compliments.

DALTON

is standing to the side of the bar, idly observing the bartenders pulling beers, pouring drinks, making change...

THE BODY

slo-walks from her table to the bar for a fresh vodka, rocks. Her name is Denise. She isolates Dalton with her gaze, sizing him up, but his attention is on:

DALTON'S POV

of three shot glasses already filled and tucked discretely away at Pat's station.

BACK TO SCENE

He's distracted by Hank's tentative:

HANK
Are you Dalton?

Dalton nods. Hank sticks his hand out...

HANK
I'm Hank. Word is I'll be workin' for you.

DALTON
Is it?

When he glances back to the shot glasses, one is gone...

HANK
(when no response)
Well, wouldn't blame you if you passed on the job. The last few months it's gotten double ugly in here.

Dalton is now watching:

AT BAR

A buddy of the tobacco chewer is wandering past, pauses. Seeing the tobacco chewer is engrossed listening to the band, and there is an open beer bottle resting invitingly before him, he takes a mouthful. Of tobacco juice. Realizing, he sprays it all over the chewer, the bar, and Pat. Pat produces a tape-wrapped rubber hose, whacks him alongside his head. The man drops, out cold. Morgan and another bouncer come to drag him out, taking the innocent tobacco chewer with them...

AT TABLE OF MAMMARIES CONTEMPORANEOUS

The Husband is getting a real kick out of the Gawker staring at his wife. Finally:

HUSBAND
Twenty bucks and you can kiss 'em.

GAWKER
Say what?

HUSBAND
Ten a kiss, here and now.

The Gawker can't believe this. But the two couples think it's a giggle, coaxing him, enjoying immensely the attention they're drawing. The woman opens her top, gives him an unfettered view. The Gawker takes the chair vacated by the Husband...

DALTON

stands with Hank, neither aware of the side show...

DALTON
Who's the one badass been causin' you the most grief?

Hank takes a second, then smiles.

HANK
Well... that depends.

DALTON
On what?

HANK
On what you call bad.

Hank just shakes his head, drifts off into the crowd.

AT TABLE OF MAMMARIES CONTEMPORANEOUS

The Gawker is in mammary heaven, examining them, stroking them, blowing on them. But not kissing them. To the woman, the other couples, the onlookers, it's a yuk. Even a bouncer watches. The Husband, however, has become impatient...

HUSBAND
Ten a kiss, go ahead.

The Gawker keeps on keeping on. No kissing...

HUSBAND
Hey, pal, whaddya doin'? You gonna kiss 'em or not?

GAWKER
I can't.

HUSBAND
Whaddya mean, you can't?

GAWKER
I haven't got twenty bucks.

The crowd sees the humor in it, erupts. The Husband doesn't see it, and erupts all over the Gawker. The bouncers wade in, no effort to mediate. Fists fly, blood splatters. In moments it's a full scale bar brawl...

DALTON

remains content to watch from beside the bar...

CODY

plays, immersed, resolved to ignore -- or overpower -- the bedlam around him.

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - LATER

It's closing time. The joint looks like a battlefield after a loss. Blood on the floor. Bouncers sitting around licking their wounds. The band putting away its gear. The only patrons left are the Fan waiting for Cody, the girl waiting for Hank. Tilghman stands outside his office door, surveying the mess. He glances at Dalton, still beside the bar. Every eye in the place follows Tilghman's. Dalton picks his way through the debris and out the door.

EXT. USED CAR LOT (JASPER) - DAY

Dalton enters the lot on foot, having left the Mercedes behind, heads over to a 1968 Buick Riviera. Leans down to look in the window with interest. USED CAR SALESMAN approaches, gets his glad-handing smile ready. Dalton just looks up at him blankly.

EXT. AUTO JUNK YARD (OUTSIDE OF KANSAS CITY) - DAY

Dalton drives his newly purchased, torn-to-shit Buick Riviera into the auto junkyard.

EXT. JUNKYARD - DUSK

Dalton has filled the Buick's trunk so full of spare tires he has to sit on the lid to get it closed.

INT. BUICK - MOVING

He's driving back to the city... when he passes something that draws his interest. He stops, pulls a U...

SMALL HORSE BARN

Just off the road and enclosed by wire fence, it has stalls and corral area for about ten horses. It is the only building for miles. A dog-eared old RANCHER is unloading hay from a pickup. Beside the gate is a hand-scrawled sign: Room For Rent. Dalton climbs from the Buick...

DALTON
How far from here is the room?

The Rancher, a deliberate codger in the full light of day, looks him over. Finally points to the second floor of the horse barn...

IN ROOM ABOVE HORSE BARN

The room is sparsely furnished in Early Western Gothic, rustically utilitarian but sturdily comfortable. Bed at one end, door leading to a cramped bathroom. At the other end a fridge and stove and table, shutters opening onto a narrow river that runs directly behind the horse barn. The river is about ten yards wide, separates the Rancher's land from that of Brad Wesley. Wesley, who we'll come to know later, owns everything situated on the far side of the river, all that the eye can see from the vantage point of the window. Dalton stands a minute... looks off towards Wesley's ranch house. Fences create the look of a fortress. Surrounded by the land itself, magnificent and green, that leads down to the banks of the river.

RANCHER (O.S.)
You honest?

DALTON
(turns to him)
Yes, sir.

RANCHER
Expect me to believe that?

DALTON
No, sir.
(nods down at river)
Nice.

RANCHER
Brad Wesley's place.

DALTON
Every swim in it?

RANCHER
(turns to head downstairs)
I don't use nothin' Wesley uses.

Dalton follows him down the stairs to the corral. The Rancher wheels on him...

RANCHER
Like horses, do you?

DALTON
If they like me.

RANCHER
Wouldn't steal 'em, would you?

DALTON
No, sir.

RANCHER
Callin' me sir is like puttin' an elevator in an outhouse. Don't belong. I'm Emmet. Just Emmet. So, what d'you think?

Dalton has to smile.

DALTON
I'll take it.

RANCHER
I must'a had a thousand people look at that room this past year. No phone, no television, no conditioned air, no tolerance for the fragrance of horse shit. Nobody wanted it. How come you do?

DALTON
You're just too persuasive for me.

The Rancher almost smiles...

RANCHER
It ain't the money, you understand, but if I don't charge you somethin', the Presbyterians around here are likely to pray for my ruination.

Dalton can't read him yet, isn't sure...

RANCHER
How's a hundred dollars a month strike you?

DALTON
Fine.

RANCHER
(peering at Chevy)
You can afford that much?

DALTON
If it keeps you in the good graces of the church.

He hands him two hundred cash...

RANCHER
Ain't it peculiar how money seems to do that very thing?

He laughs. Dalton laughs. They shake on it.

EXT. HORSE BARN - THAT NIGHT

The Rancher has gone. The Merc is beneath an overhang at the rear of the barn, unseen from the road. He finishes placing a cover over it. The horses warily follow his every move. He takes an armload from the Chevy's back seat, goes up the stairs...

IN ROOM ABOVE HORSE BARN

The first thing he does is mount the sign that warns It is Forbidden To Throw Stones at This Sign, then hangs the Japanese chimes outside the shutters.

EXT. HORSE BARN - NIGHT

Dalton moves from the trunk of the Mercedes to a level spot of grass just a few feet from the back of the barn. He carries a long object wrapped in a sheet. When he unwraps it we see that it is a long post. A makiwara. At the base, the makiwara is about four inches wide. But the back has been cut away so that it tapers to only three quarters of an inch in thickness at the top. Dalton carries the makiwara over to a spot in the grass, embeds it in the ground, bracing it with stones. The tip of the post rises just to his solar plexus. To this tip Dalton secures a pad of hard rubber and canvas, ties them in place with rope. Dalton steps back for a second, calmly regards his work. He pulls back and shifts his stance -- then with frightening speed, suddenly strikes out with the edge of his closed fist. The air RINGS with the sound of his FIST HITTING the CANVAS, but the board springs back to its original position.

INT. HORSE BARN - ON HORSES - NIGHT

corraled there. Cocking their heads, as we and they hear the RHYTHMIC SMACKING of the MAKIWARA. Fifty punches to the right side, fifty to the left. Over it all, the intriguing sounds from the WIND CHIMES above.

CUT TO:

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - THAT NIGHT

A crowd every bit as explosive as last night's. Cody and the band are playing at an Uzi-pace. The rites of lust are in high gear...

DALTON

stands near the bar, working his rubber ball, eyes continuing to assess risk and calculate strategy.

HANK

stands with another bouncer, STEVE. About 30, shorter than most, dark-haired, speaks with a slight Southern twang. Not all the predators are male, for a WOMAN strolls up to Steve and drops her eyes to his wedding band...

WOMAN
Aw, you're married?

STEVE
Uh... yeah.

WOMAN
Is your wife?

Steve grins, leans close and whispers something. She nods. He guides her towards the women's washroom, leering at Hank:

STEVE
I'll be back in a lick.

DALTON

observes Steve and the Woman enter the washroom... Dalton's attention is now on:

ERNIE BASS

He leads his lady in, followed by two more couples. All are black. Mid-thirties. This crowd is uniformly white. Bass and his friends coming here is in itself a provocation. He knows it. Everyone knows it. None of the bouncers offer to find them a table. Finally STELLA, one of the waitresses, takes the initiative and seats them...

BOUNCER MORGAN

finishes with a skirmish, walks up to Dalton, surly, agitated...

MORGAN
How'd you like to tell us what the fuck's goin' on? You gonna be helpin' us out or not?

DALTON
I'll let you know.

MORGAN
Shit, you don't look like much to me anyways, not when I always been hearin' how you had balls big enough to come in a dump truck.

DALTON
Opinions vary.

Morgan walks away. Is replaced by a young waitress, cute CARRIE (ANN) NASH. She stands appraising him, stubs out her cigarette on the bar behind her...

CARRIE
Don't let him bother you. Morgan was born an asshole and just grew bigger.

Dalton looks over...

CARRIE
I'm Carrie Ann. Nash.

Dalton gives a perfunctory smile.

CARRIE
We heard of you before.

DALTON
(disinterested)
Yeah?

CARRIE
From the place outside of Austin? ... The Sundance?... That place real tough was it?

DALTON
Sure.

CARRIE
No tougher than here, though, huh?

DALTON
Worse.

CARRIE
Couldn't of been.

Dalton looks over at her. But Carrie Ann just smiles at him, a dry smile...

VOICE (O.S.)
(from a table nearby)
Hey! Carrie! How about it, huh?

Carrie winks at him, picks up a tray of beers on the bar -- hustles them OUT OF FRAME, as -- Dalton's gaze shifts to the Bass table. They're being hassled by jerks next to them.

BASS TABLE

The women are apprehensive. Bass is cool...

JERK #1
Somebody should'a done you a favor, Jackson, and told you you got the wrong paint job to be bringin' in here.

Bass looks for a bouncer, waves Steve over...

BASS
We'd like to wait for the next set, and we'd appreciate it if we could do it quiet-like.

STEVE
You came in knowin' it'd cause a shit storm. So, the way I see it, you're way outta line askin' any of us to step up for you.

He walks away. The Jerks gloat...

RESUME - BANDSTAND

Morgan comes over, intent on Cody...

MORGAN
This Dalton character, what the fuck's his story?

CODY
His story is, you fuck with him, he'll seal your fate.

Morgan snorts, looks over, leaves...

MORGAN
Yeah? Well, so far he hasn't shown me shit.

BASS TABLE

The Jerks at the next table have taken Steve's play as a license to escalate. And Bass has about had enough...

JERK #2
Hey, buck, don't matter if you walk or get carried out, that squeeze of yours is stayin'. I intend to rub up against her a while and see what it does.

BASS
You could rub your needle dick up against a dog in heat for as long as you wanted and all that dog would do is scratch itself.

Jerk #1 leaps up and throws a right at Bass. Bass slips it and clubs him to his knees with a left hook over the top... Cody hears it start, raises his hand and rotates a finger as a signal to the band. They head for their instruments. They start playing furiously, it instantly distracting much of the crowd away from the fight...

DALTON

Hank is still with him. Dalton jerks his head towards the Bass table. Out of the corner of his eye, Bass catches this gesture. Although momentarily surprised at receiving the direction, Hank hurries towards it...

BASS TABLE

Jerk #2 fires a punch at Bass. Bass takes it in the ribs, hammers him with a right. Morgan and Steve close in. But Hank is there first. Bass backs off. Hank takes the middle ground, pushes everybody apart. He glances expectantly at Bass. Morgan and Steve grab both Jerks and show them the door. Bass gathers his lady, his friends, walks out slowly, directly past Dalton... looks at him for a moment as he passes, as if in a slight show of thanks. But Dalton just looks back at him, carefully neutral.

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - THAT NIGHT

Exhausted staff stands around, sweep up, etc. They look to Dalton, but Dalton just stands there. Tilghman walks up, guardedly optimistic for the first time...

TILGHMAN
It was a good night... nobody died.

DALTON
It'll get worse before it gets better.

Tilghman deflates. Dalton walks out.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Dalton heads over to his car, sees waitress Carrie Ann sitting propped against the bumper.

CARRIE
Give me a ride, Dalton?

Dalton checks out tonight's damage to the car -- somebody's run a long scratch against the entire side, ripped off the antenna...

DALTON
Haven't you got a car?

CARRIE
It's broke.

Carrie Ann climbs off, pulls open the door, climbs in...

CARRIE
I'm right nearby...

INT. DALTON'S CAR

Dalton pulls out of the parking lot. Carrie gestures to the right. They ride in silence. Carrie pulls a cigarette out of her bag, waits for Dalton to light it. He doesn't. She lights it herself...

CARRIE
Just up the street here...

Long pause.

CARRIE
... They say you won't fight.

DALTON
(disinterested)
Uh-huh.

CARRIE
I told them you weren't a fighter, you were a lover.

DALTON
(pause)
What if I'm neither?

Carrie turns and smiles at him.

CARRIE
That'd be a shame.

Carrie points out the small wooden house to the side...

CARRIE
Over there. The white one.

Dalton slows at the curb. Carrie sits there for a second, then shrugs "what the hell." Turns to him:

CARRIE
You want to come in?

Dalton shakes his head; no thanks.

CARRIE
Well all right, Dalton.
(climbs out)
Thanks for the uh, lift.

She watches as he nods good night. He smiles slightly, pulls away from the curb, moves off up the street.

INT. HORSE BARN - LATE NIGHT

Dalton lies asleep. From FAR OFF: sounds of LAUGHTER... SHOUTING. Then raucous MUSIC as it drifts across the river from somewhere on Brad Wesley's place... Dalton moves over to the window.

HIS POV

In the darkening light we can just make out Wesley's place bubbling over in something like a party -- shadows of Wesley's henchmen moving about the place... raising bottles of booze, chugging them down. Drunken brawls. Women in various states of undress teasing the men, then backing away from the strung lanterns to disappear in darkness... the men following, laughing. Under the light given off by the lanterns, the effect is eerie. Nightmarish, like some modern inferno. CAMERA LOOKS for some figure that might be Brad Wesley. Nothing. Dalton sits down on the wooden chair in front of the window. Looking off into the darkness, reaches out to silence the WIND CHIMES so he can hear better. The MUSIC from Wesley's place GROWS, becoming one with:

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - ON CODY - NIGHT

assembling with other band members, tuning up. It's an hour before the doors open...

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - LIQUOR STOREROOM

Dalton has assembled the bouncers. Tilghman is present...

DALTON
Morgan, you're outta here.

Morgan gapes at Tilghman. Tilghman hands him a pay envelope...

MORGAN
Why?

DALTON
You don't have the right temperament
for the trade.

Morgan puts his face in Dalton's, his glare murderous...

MORGAN
You cocksucker.

Dalton won't make eye contact. For a long moment it is on the edge. Then Morgan wheels, storms out. The others can't figure Dalton...

He turns to one of the waitresses, Judy. We saw her followed into the bathroom by three other women earlier...

DALTON
You're out too. We're selling booze here. Not coke. At the bar. Not in the john.
(beat)
Anybody else here dealing?

Nobody else answers. Judy turns, just walks out the door.

DALTON
I'm tellin' you straight out, it's gonna be my way or the highway, so anybody else wants to walk, do it now.

Steve is the only one who squirms. Hank is solid. As are BOBBY and YOUNGER... both in their late 20's. Bobby looks like a surfer-jock. Chews gum, eyes always focused elsewhere. Younger's the cowboy of the group.

DALTON
People lookin' for a good time won't come to a slaughterhouse, you know what I'm sayin'?

He waits until it's acknowledged... Bouncer JACK THE BEAR nods. Jack's big, real big -- arms and legs like wooden posts. Massive.

DALTON
You've got too many people comin' in here lookin' for trouble, too many forty-year-old arrested adolescents, too many power drinkers, too many trustees of modern chemistry, too many whackos. It's been known to happen. It's gonna change.

BOBBY
Sounds good, but a lot of these guys we can't handle. One on one, we get wiped. Even two on one.

DALTON
Those, I want.
(MORE)

DALTON (CONT'D)
The rest I want you to be nice to. If somebody gets in your face and calls you a cocksucker, I want you to be nice. Ask him to walk, but be nice. If he won't walk, walk him, but be nice. If you can't walk him, one of the others'll help you, and you'll both be nice. I want you to remember it's a job, it's nothin' personal.

STEVE
Bein' called a cocksucker, that's personal.

DALTON
No, it's two nouns that when combined and applied within the constricts of contemporary vernacular are intended to engender anger and elicit a prescribed response.

Everybody just looks at Dalton -- nobody gets him. He tries another approach.

DALTON
I want you to be nice. Be nice until it's time not to be nice.

BOBBY
How'll we know when that is?

DALTON
You won't. I'll know.
(pause)
You're the bouncers. I'm the cooler. All you got to do is watch my back, watch each other's backs and take out the trash.

Now everybody understands.

CUT TO:

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE"

The crowd is swelling to its customary size. Just inside one of the two GIRLS entering pauses to hand the DOORMAN something...

DOORMAN
What the hell's this? I asked for your I.D.

GIRL
Oh, I thought you said my I.U.D.

The Girls giggle at their little joke. The Doorman rolls his eyes... lets them through... The Body is at her table. Dalton is changed now, still consummately relaxed but with a primed, focused intensity. He's ready, on his game. He points to one of the coffee makers behind the bar...

BARTENDER
Leaded or unleaded?

DALTON
Leaded.

He takes the coffee, surveys the action... The crowd is humming. The band is into high gear. At a table down front a woman climbs up and grinds into her interpretation of table dancing, encouraged by her LOUDMOUTH boyfriend, who hollers at Cody:

LOUDMOUTH
Cody, it's a pure shame you can't see these parts move...

Hank tries to persuade him to haul her down...

HANK
Do me a favor and get her down off there. Whatddya say?

LOUDMOUTH
I say let her dance.

Hank reaches for her. Loudmouth shoves him. Hank mumbles to himself:

HANK
Be nice... be nice...

Dalton is suddenly there. Intent on Loudmouth. Indicating the door...

DALTON
Take the train. Now.

Loudmouth reaches back behind his belt, as if to pull back to roundhouse Dalton -- when his hand reappears, it's clutching a thin switchblade. Loudmouth slashes at Dalton, comes within an inch of Dalton's face... when Dalton grabs his wrist, and twists Loudmouth over and takes hair with his other hand and slams Loudmouth's face into the table. Twice, three times. Blood splatters on table dancer's feet. It is so quick it startles. Hank and Bobby help Loudmouth out. He goes bent over and catching blood from his shattered nose into cupped hands. The table dancer mutely climbs down, trails. Dalton heads back for the bar...

CODY

smiles, leans into the mike, says real quiet:

CODY
The name is Dalton.

CROWD

pays rapt attention...

THE BODY

is sufficiently impressed to consider him worthy of having her...

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - LATER

A FELLA using one of the wall phones terminates a heated exchange by ripping the receiver out by the cord. Younger steps up friendly, but firm:

YOUNGER
Ma Bell ain't gonna like that.

FELLA
Ma Bell sucks.

YOUNGER
Maybe so, but you'll have to tell her from another phone.

About to resist, the Fella shrugs. Younger escorts him out. When they pass Dalton, he lets Younger know he handled it righteous...

INT. WOMEN'S WASHROOM - LATER

Steve is in one of the stalls with a girl. His pants are dropped. Her skirt is hiked. He's humping her against the wall...

DALTON

leans against the door. The stall moves with their rhythm...

DALTON
Yo, Steve?

The stall stops moving. Dalton smiles, informs Steve:

DALTON
You're history.

We will not see Steve again.

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - CLOSE ON PAT THE BARTENDER'S HAND - LATER

As he takes a previously filled shot glass from below the bar and hands it to a patron, is about to pocket the cash when a hand prevents him. The hand belongs to Dalton.

DALTON
You've been goin' through a bottle every ninety minutes and skimmin' off nine shots a bottle. And on drafts you've been skimmin' one every seven.

Long pause. Pat looks from Dalton to Tilghman who approaches... sees the confrontation. Back to Dalton:

PAT
So?

DALTON
So you're out of here.

Long pause. Pat looks at Tilghman. Tilghman looks suddenly anxious, indecisive.

DALTON
He's costin' you three hundred dollars a night.

TILGHMAN
(beat, then)
You heard him. You're fired.

Pat takes a moment, looks from Dalton to Tilghman, who wipes sweat from forehead. Breaks out in slow leer:

PAT
I didn't hear you say it.

TILGHMAN
I'm saying it now.

Pause.

PAT
(quietly)
You sure?

ON DALTON

Confused. Looks to Tilghman. But Tilghman refuses to meet his gaze...

DALTON
Get out.

Pat takes a second, continues to smile, slowly peels off the bartender's jacket he wears, drops it on the floor, moves around the bar and heads through the crowd out the door.

ON CROWD

As it ripples to make way for Pat. The bouncers and waitresses look from one to another, then back at Dalton.

ON CODY AND BAND

Strike up the next number -- Pat seems instantly forgotten...

INT. HORSE BARN - ON DALTON - MORNING

Lies asleep. Hears MOVEMENT from below, as if a warning from the HORSES of someone's approach. Dalton's instantly awake. Turns over, looks out...

CARRIE ANN

approaches, stands there, looks up at him. Raises the brown paper bag she carries.

CARRIE
I brought you some breakfast.

INT. BARN (UPPER FLOOR)

Carrie climbs the ladder into Dalton's room. Stands there, looks at him. Dalton takes a minute -- then sits up, grimaces in pain as he does every morning. Carrie looks away -- Carrie takes a glance at Dalton's body, covered with scars, every muscle sore... as he throws his legs over the side of the bunk... She can't help but react in pain with him.

DALTON
How'd you find me.

CARRIE
Wasn't too hard.

Dalton's naked, but makes no attempt to cover himself, stands moves over and pulls on his jeans.

CARRIE
What'd you do there last night.

Dalton bends over, sees if his knees still work. Tests the rest of his body. Everything's tight.

DALTON
What d'you mean.

CARRIE
You fired the bartender, Pat?

Dalton reaches for the bag, opens it, takes out the roll inside, starts to eat.

DALTON
He was skimmin'.

CARRIE
You shouldn't a done that, Dalton.

DALTON
Yeah? Why's that.

CARRIE
You just shouldn't of.

Then she starts to laugh. Dalton looks up from his coffee.

DALTON
What's the joke.

CARRIE
No joke.
(laughs)
I think I'm lookin' at a dead man.

Dalton stands, pulls on his shirt.

DALTON
Seems like everywhere I go I hear that same joke.

Carrie stands, looks over at the sign that reads: "It is forbidden to throw stones at this sign." Over her shoulder:

CARRIE
Don't complain to me, something tells me you bring it on yourself.

Dalton looks at her and smiles.

INT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE" - LATER

The crowd is up to speed. Cody and the band have the pedal to the metal... Among those at the bar are Ernie Bass and his woman.

STELLA

is at the bar for an order. A ROMEO puts his hand on her arm...

ROMEO
I need a woman.

STELLA
I see one, I'll warn her.

She tries to wrench her arm away. Romeo won't let go. Dalton steps up. His hand on Romeo's arm is sufficient. Stella leaves with the order.

THE BODY

comes through the front door. Bouncer -- JACK THE BEAR -- offers to get her a table. She declines, makes her own way. He watches her swing...

JACK THE BEAR
Venus de Milo with tits.

HANK
You mean arms.

JACK THE BEAR
Yeah, those too.

GUY

is arguing with his buddy, pushing him. Bobby takes him from behind and starts to duck-walk him out. The buddy bangs Bobby in the head. Hank is there. Hank duck-walks the buddy out. It's smooth, a minimum of dislocation. Dalton watches... as Jack comes up...

JACK THE BEAR
Bobby says those guys are bad news. I wasn't on the door when they came in, so I don't know if they're carryin' or not.

DALTON
One of 'em's wearin' a hook ring, right hand.

TABLE WITH FOUR GUYS

They're hassling a young guy and his lady...

HOOK RING
Honey, after you tell this fag to fuck off I'm gonna eat you 'til you die.

He leers, darts his tongue at the guy's lady. From behind, Dalton grabs the tongue between thumb and forefinger, jerks Hook Ring's head back over the chair...

DALTON
Don't be rude.

One of Hook Ring's friends lunges at Dalton, a buck knife in his hand. From a nearby table, Ernie Bass leans over, clubs the friend's forearm with his beer glass, knocking the knife loose, pops two short jabs into his face then drops him with a solid shot.

Jack and Bobby take the other two out with brief flurries. It's over in moments...

CODY

keeps the band cooking, asks one of them:

CODY
What's happenin'?

BAND MEMBER
Dalton's playin' worm with a guy's tongue.

Cody makes like he's cleaning something gruesome from his own tongue...

DALTON

Still with Hook Ring's head back over the chair. Blood flows from where his thumbnail is pressed into the tongue...

DALTON
Take the ring off and leave it on the table.

Hook Ring does not hesitate. Dalton takes the ring, leads him to the door, releases his tongue and tosses him out. The bouncers follow with the other three. Bass and his lady are about to leave. Dalton stops them...

DALTON
Thanks, man.

BASS
No need.

Dalton indicates they follow him over to:

BAR

Where he shows the hook ring to Younger...

From the face of the ring he unfolds a small hook not unlike a bottle opener...

DALTON
Once one of these tough guys has beat on somebody bad enough they're out of it, they hook this in the guy's nostril and rip the front of his nose out. That way he'll always remember who did him, or so the melody goes.

Dalton comes from the bar with a pair of pliers, crushes the ring and tosses it on the table... pours Bass and his lady drinks...

Dalton pours him a fresh beer, her another drink...

DALTON
Do you have a job?

BASS
If that's a joke, I'm not laughin'.

DALTON
I can use you.

BASS
Here? I should tell you, man, I'm black.

Dalton isn't going to play that game, and Bass can see it. He extends his hand...

BASS
I appreciate it. This is my wife Cora.

DALTON
Hi, Cora. Do you have a job?

Turns to waitress Stella --

DALTON
Set 'em up.

They stand and follow Stella who shakes her head in amusement... Dalton looks over at Jack -- who nods towards Tilghman's office. We FOLLOW: Dalton as he moves behind the bar, knocks twice and enters Tilghman's office to see:

INT. TILGHMAN'S OFFICE

Two men standing opposite Tilghman. The one who does all the talking is TOMMY O'CONNOR. Next to him is the smaller but lethal ED TINKER. Tilghman's standing behind his desk, openly afraid. Ex-bartender Pat stands directly across from him. All bravado, suddenly the tough guy with O'Connor and Tinker here to back him up.

DALTON
Problem?

PAT
No problem. A little mistake is all.

DALTON
What's that?

PAT
(smiles at Dalton)
My job.

Dalton looks to Tilghman, who, embarrassed, looks away.

PAT
Maybe you don't understand.

DALTON
Why don't you explain it to me.

Dalton moves so that he's leaning on the door to the office. Tinker stands, lunges at Dalton... threatens:

TINKER
I'll explain it to him!

O'Connor shoves Tinker back into his chair...

O'CONNOR
Siddown, shithead!

Tinker sits, subdued for the moment. Pat smiles at Dalton:

PAT
He must like your cologne.

Takes a moment, then:

O'CONNOR
Mister Tilghman's changed his mind. And that's all you need to know.

DALTON
I'm afraid I'm gonna have to know a little more than that.

O'Connor looks to Tilghman.

TILGHMAN
I think... maybe we'll... bring him back. No harm done.

PAT
(to Dalton)
Satisfied?

But Dalton doesn't move.

DALTON
No.

As if by second nature, O'Connor reaches out, grabs Tinker before he can lunge at Dalton...

O'CONNOR
Dalton, Mister Tilghman may own this bar, but the liquor he serves is supplied to him by Brad Wesley. Pat McGurn is in the employ of Mr. Wesley, his uncle, not Mister Tilghman.

Pat swaggers back a couple steps... sums it up:

PAT
I'm stayin'. You're goin'.

DALTON
Yeah?

Pat whips an eight-inch bowie knife out of his belt --

PAT
That's right.

-- Waves the blade slowly back and forth in front of Dalton, the light glinting off of the blade, flickering over Dalton's face...

Pat smiles, utterly confident. Dalton takes a quick step to his left, as if in fear... placing himself to the right of the blade rather than directly in front of it.

PAT
Hahahaha... C'mon Dalton, you an' me! --

Pat waves the knife back and forth once, twice, slowly, teasingly...

PAT
What're you, chickenshit? What're you afraid of, Dalton? Me?...

Woosh. Pat takes another pass at Dalton. Dalton stands his ground, jerks to the right... Behind Pat, Tinker and O'Connor watch, obviously there to protect their charge...

PAT
-- That it? You scared to fight me, Dalton?... Big bad Dalton. You want to make up, Dalton? That it?...

Dalton jerks to the left as the knife passes, as if frightened, and, as Pat laughs in delight at his response -- Dalton's right hand rockets forward -- his fist smashes Pat in the nose, pops him fast, breaking his hose in one shot. All at once:

Pat screams, drops like a stone. Blood from his broken nose all over the floor. Tinker and O'Connor both lunge at Dalton --

But Dalton has turned by then, taken O'Connor and shoved him out of the room... onto the barroom floor...

-- into the arms of Hank and Jack who take O'Connor and drag him away from Tinker. Screams from the crowd as the fight explodes out of the office. Dalton rushes Tinker -- who by this time has pulled a knife. Slashes at Dalton, catching him in the arm and side. Comes at him again. Both go crashing over a table, Tinker's knife goes skittering across the floor. Dalton punches Tinker repeatedly, the blood from his arm staining Tinker's face as well. Until Tinker lies there unconscious... Dalton stops, as if coming to, looks around as if suddenly remembering where he is.

OFF IN BACKGROUND

we see Pat McGurn huddled in a ball on the floor, hand to nose, tries to keep from crying. Shirt front covered in blood from his nose. Jack reaches down, pulls Dalton up...

JACK
You'd better take care of that.

Dalton looks down, realizes for the first time that he's been hit bad. The other bouncers run O'Connor and Tinker out of the place, Cody strikes up the group...

JACK
You need any help?

DALTON
No.

And he moves off the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Dalton sits on an examining table as DOCTOR ELIZABETH ELLSWORTH approaches him... Dalton's looking off at nothing at all, seems a little lost, preoccupied with his recent actions during the fight...

DOC
Have you been attended to?

DALTON
No. Ribs, this side.

Dalton looks at her, his eyes widen for an instant, then he looks away. Ellsworth lays on the hands. Dalton can't help but react. There is instant chemistry.

DOC
Missed the artery. You're a lucky man.

Dalton smiles at this idea.

DOC
How'd this happen?

DALTON
Natural causes.

DOC
(peers at cut)
Looks like a knife wound.

DALTON
Like I said.

Reaches down, hands the Doc a file from his case. The Doc scans the pages of extensive medical records...

DOC
You're a bouncer?

DALTON
Uh-huh.

DOC
Well, Mr. Dalton, you may add eighteen stitches to your dossier of thirty-one broken bones, two bullet wounds, eight puncture wounds and four stainless steel screws.
(prepares to suture)
That's an estimate of course. I'll give you a local.

DALTON
No thanks.

DOC
Do you enjoy pain?

DALTON
Pain don't hurt.

Moves closer to him, focuses in on the wound, starts stitching him up.

DOC
(nods at folder)
Says you've got a degree from New York University.

DALTON
(pause)
That's right.

DOC
What in?

DALTON
Philosophy. Psychology...

DOC
Yeah?

DALTON
Uh-huh.

Doc continues stitching...

DOC
What'd you study?

DALTON
Little of everything. Man's search for faith. That sort of thing.

DOC
(amused)
Come up with any answers?

DALTON
(smiles)
Not too many.

DOC
How's a guy like you end up a bouncer?

DALTON
Just crazy I guess.

Doc notices him staring at her.

DOC
You okay?

DALTON
Sorry.

Doc smiles. Dalton looks away, a little nervous. Looks down at completed sutures.

DALTON
Nice work.

She stands there, looks at him. Dalton looks back at her. Stands...

DALTON
(hesitant)
I'm over at the Double Deuce. If you wanted to stop by some time ... have a cup of coffee or something.

DOC
If I'm in the neighborhood you mean?

DALTON
Something like that, yeah.

Hands him back his file. Intrigued.

DOC
Maybe I'll do that.

She smiles, turns, walks away. Then turns back, tosses over her shoulder:

DOC
For that line of work... I thought you'd be bigger.

DALTON
Gee, I've never heard that before.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dalton moves back through the parking lot to his car. Takes a look at it. The windshield's been smashed. Dalton wipes the broken glass from the hood; just another night.

CUT TO:

EXT. AUTO PARTS STORE - DAWN

The light is just rising as RED WEBSTER, owner of the store, looks at the newly-holed windshield in Dalton's car, turns a critical eye to the Buick itself...

RED
A new windshield's gonna cost more'n this old beater's worth. My advice is scrap her.

DALTON
I like her. Order me one...

RED
Take a few days.
(looks at broken aerial)
The aerial I can give you now.

Turns, walks into the place. Dalton follows. Red flips on the lights.

DALTON
You open early.

RED
Open early, stay late. Here you go... You the boy from The Double Deuce?

Dalton nods.

RED
I figured you'd be by. Want to put in a standing order?

DALTON
(smiles)
Naw -- I'll pay as I go.

RED
Name's Red Webster. How long you figure on staying?

DALTON
Don't know. Not long.

RED
That's what I said twenty-five years ago.

DALTON
What happened?

RED
Got married. To an ugly woman. Never do that. It'll take the energy out of you right away.

He follows Dalton out of the store, watches as he changes aerials... Continues...

RED
She left me though. Found somebody even uglier than she was. That's life. Who can explain it?

Dalton moves to pay Red.

RED
Five bucks.

DALTON
You stayed on?...

RED
I fell for the place.

Dalton looks off for a second, then back at Red.

DALTON
You know Brad Wesley?

RED
Yeah. Why?

DALTON
Just asking.

RED
He's the meanest son-of-a-bitch there is. If he was a dog I'd take him out and shoot him. That's all you need to know.

INT. HORSE BARN - DAWN

Where Dalton assembles some gear to take to town -- throws running clothes, ankle weights, etc. into a gym bag, which he throws over his shoulder. Climbs down the ladder from the loft.

EXT. HORSE BARN

Dalton climbs into the Buick. Pulls away, down the dirt road to the main road... passes the rancher Emmet. They exchange a wave. Dalton follows the road as it circles next to the brook, then looks off to his right...

EXT. ROAD LEADING TO WESLEY'S ENTRANCE - DALTON'S POV

A sedan and a pickup with monster tires pull off of the main road into the entrance. Just inside the two vehicles pass a Cadillac about to leave the place. The pickup and sedan pull over to the side of the road.

Dalton drives on.

EXT. ENTRANCE

We WATCH as Tinker and O'Connor stumble out of the sedan. With Pat not far behind. He's obviously been taken to a doctor somewhere. His nose has been convered with a bandage and taped, swollen to half its size, his eyes are black and blue...

Humiliated, Pat takes a look towards his uncle's car, then pulls away from the group, heads back up the drive to the house.

Two other henchmen climb down from the pickup as BRAD WESLEY hauls himself out of the Cadillac, and none too pleased, surveys his recently humiliated employees... as one of the henchmen JIMMY RENO leans over to give Wesley the news. Wesley looks from Tinker to O'Connor, grows more angry as he listens, looks back at the receding form of his nephew, Pat. Then turns to the two, smiles, suddenly seemingly amiable.

WESLEY
(patient)
-- Was it that I explained it to you wrong? Is that it?

O'CONNOR
No boss. You didn't --

WESLEY
Pat's got a weak constitution, you boys know that. That's why he's workin' as a bartender -- He's my only sister's son. And if he doesn't have me who's he got? And if I'm not there, you're there!
(turns to Reno)
I should'a had you go, Jimmy.

Jimmy smiles, obviously knows he's Wesley's favorite. Wesley shakes head in disgust at the other lackies...

WESLEY
Now I think that one of you boys owes me an apology. I'll leave it to you to decide which one of you wants to say you're sorry.

TINKER
I'm sorry, boss! I'm --

O'CONNOR
I'm sorry, boss.

Wesley reaches over, pats Tinker's shoulder as if Tinker were a dog, maybe the family pet.

WESLEY
(kindly)
I believe you, Tinker.

Tinker's shaking, suddenly relieved...

WESLEY
But you, O'Connor -- something makes me not believe you.
(pause)
You'd better try it again. Because if there's one thing I can't stand, it's a man who's untruthful --

O'CONNOR
I'm sorry, boss.

WESLEY
(as if he didn't hear him)
-- If there's one thing that disgusts me, it's a man who can't admit when he's wrong.

Wesley's working himself up into a silent rage... as:

O'CONNOR
(futile)
I swear to God, boss, I'm sorry --

WESLEY
You disgust me, O'Connor. And you know why you disgust me?

O'CONNOR
No boss, why?

Wesley turns on him like lightning, slams his fist into O'Connor's face, full force -- breaks his nose. O'Connor screams.

WESLEY
Because you bleed too much. You're a bleeder.

Indeed O'Connor's bleeding from his nose -- down his shirt...

WESLEY
And you know something about bleeders?

Hits O'Connor in the face again. O'Connor spits out some teeth as Reno and the other henchman from the pickup GARY KETCHUM, grab O'Connor, hold him, as:

WESLEY
They're messy. You're a messy bleeder.

Wesley smiles, satisfied with his own conclusions -- punches O'Connor in the stomach as if punctuating:

WESLEY
And you know what else?

Kicks him in the balls. O'Connor doubles over.

WESLEY
You got no strength!
(astonished)
You got no endurance to pain!

Wesley brings his fist down on O'Connor's neck, drives him down to the ground...

WESLEY
And I'll tell you something else...

Kicks O'Connor into the dirt, rolling him over in the process. Stares down at O'Connor's bloody mess of a face...

WESLEY
You're ugly. But you want to know something?...
(suddenly kind)
C'mon, get up, get up... go on, it's okay... you'll be okay --
(snarls at men)
-- Help him up!

They drag O'Connor up... until he's standing on his own feet, unassisted...

WESLEY
You're gonna be just fine -- because I like you.

O'Connor hardly has a second to thank the boss when -- Wesley hauls off and slugs him. Bam. O'Connor hits the ground, unconscious. Silence. Reno can't help but laugh, shuts up as the boss looks over at him. But when the boss smiles, everybody smiles!

WESLEY
Now get this piece-of-filth coward out of here.

Wesley climbs back into his Caddy -- pulls away.

EXT. ROAD NEAR WESLEY'S PLACE - DAY

Moments later.

As Dalton heads towards town in his Buick... sees the figure of the Cadillac coming at him as if at the speed of light. The Caddy shifts from this side of the road to that. Left and right, back and forth -- almost as if Brad Wesley's looking to play chicken with Dalton... But when the Cadillac finally rockets past Dalton he and we get a good look in CLOSEUP. Wesley IN PROFILE. And what's that he's doing? We can just make out the strains of... SINGING.

WESLEY
(sings)
'... 'Cause I wear a silly grin,
the moment you come into view...
Chances are you think that I'm
in love with you.
... Just because my composure
sort of slips, the moment
that your lips meet mine...
(coughs)
In the magic of moonlight --
when I sigh "Hold me close, dear"' --

("Chances Are" -- Stillman and Allen -- 1957)

ON DALTON

His gaze shifts, following Wesley as he passes, as if their eyes may meet at some point in the passing. But Wesley merely tosses the steering wheel this way and that -- gyrates the car from one side of the lane to the other in rhythm! Doesn't even notice Dalton. He sings, his head thrown back in cheerful abandon, a man contented. The sound of his LAUGHTER ECHOES after the car has disappeared, seems to follow Dalton down the empty road.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP IN TOWN - DAY (BREAKFAST TIME)

Carrie Ann seated across from Dalton. Dalton looks over the menu, looks up:

DALTON
What do you suggest?

The waitress just stares at him.

CARRIE
He'll have eggs.

Waitress pours them both coffee, then leaves.

CARRIE
Johnny Mathis?
(MORE)

CARRIE (CONT'D)
(butters toast)
I thought he was more of a Country-Western fan.

DALTON
(flags waitress)
This isn't coffee. Do you have any coffee?...

Waitress takes coffee away. Dalton turns back to Carrie.

DALTON
He can do whatever he wants. As long as it's not inside the Double Deuce.

CARRIE
Charitable.

Waitress delivers breakfast. As Dalton digs in:

DALTON
(concludes)
I'm a peaceful man. Whatever anybody wants to do is okay with me. As long as it doesn't happen in my bar. They can kill each other in the middle of the street. Down to a man. And it still wouldn't be my problem. Inside the bar is my problem. Outside the bar I don't give a fuck.
(pause)
Where'd Wesley make all that money?

CARRIE
He worked the land. And just about everybody on it.

DALTON
What about you?

CARRIE
(slow smile)
That'd be uncharitable.

Waitress pours Dalton a new cup of coffee.

CARRIE
They say you learned to fight like that in Japan.

DALTON
They do?

CARRIE
At a dojo.

DALTON
That's right.

CARRIE
How'd you end up doing something like that?

DALTON
Just passing through --

CARRIE
You run away, Dalton? That it?

Dalton looks up at her, covers with a slight smile, merely continues eating his breakfast.

CARRIE
Was it a woman?

Dalton prefers not to answer...

DALTON
A woman?

CARRIE
Yeah, Dalton. You know, a woman.

DALTON
(dry smile)
Something worse.

Carrie can't help but laugh. Waitress stands next to him, pours him a new cup of coffee. Waits while he tries it, looks up at her:

DALTON
I guess you don't have coffee.

CUT TO:

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - NIGHT

The crowd is bigger, slightly more mellow. The place is jammed to the gills. Cody plays. CAMERA REVEALS that the chicken wire is gone -- no longer needed. Hank, Bobby and Younger stand near the bar like usual. Over in the corner a guy has the Body pressed against a wall, giving her a hard time. Dalton tries to politely persuade him to leave. The guy resists. Dalton drops him. Tilghman comes over, surveys the crowd happily -- Dalton ignores this as the Body looks him over. She follows him back to the bar...

BODY
Why don't you look me in the eye, Dalton?

DALTON
I'm shy.

She corners him against the wall. Rubs up against him, whispers.

BODY
Would you be shocked if I said I'd like to go to my place and fuck?
(runs hand up his leg)
It ain't gonna kill you. You might like it...

She takes Dalton's hand -- places it firmly on her inner thigh, just above the knee... The Body's got a miniskirt on, no stockings. As she pulls Dalton's hand up the inside of her leg, the skirt starts to rise...

BODY
(whispers)
C'mon Dalton...

Dalton looks down at the Body's exposed thigh... can just make out something on the inside of her leg... What's that? Dalton squints down at it.

OUR POV

from under the rising hem of the Body's skirt -- the beginnings of a tattoo. It has writing on it but we can't seem to make it out...

BODY
(hushed)
Don't mind that, baby, a little accident...

Dalton looks up at her: I'll bet. As:

ERNIE (O.S.)
Boss? -- Problem over here...

Dalton extricates himself from the Body's grasp...

DALTON
Excuse me...

Heads away from her, back to the bar. Jack's standing there smiling.

DALTON
What's the problem?

Jack nods back at the Body as if to say; that's it. Dalton sees Tilghman at the door of his office, nods at him. Dalton moves the few feet to him... Tilghman's got ahold of some pay cards...

TILGHMAN
What's this, you put on a black guy and his wife?

DALTON
Anything wrong with that?

The tone prompts Tilghman to hesitate, takes careful assessment. After a long moment...

TILGHMAN
They'll have a rough way to go, both of 'em. She won't make nothin' on tips.

DALTON
They know what they're doin'.

Tilghman knows if he makes an issue of it, Dalton's gone. He backs down. But Dalton's busy looking over his shoulder. Jack follows his gaze to:

FRONT DOOR

THREE DUDES have just come in. They look capable of handling themselves, but other than that...

DALTON

sees what we don't...

DALTON
See it?

It takes Jack a moment before he does.

ON DUDE #1'S BOOT

A razor blade juts out from the toe of the right one. Flashes in the light from the neon over the entrance. Dalton and Jack take divergent paths to:

FRONT DOOR

Dalton comes up to the Dudes straight on. Jack comes from the side. The Dudes size it up rapidly...

DALTON
You're in the wrong place.

Dude #1 has squared on Dalton. The other two are eyeing Jack...

DUDE #1
What makes it the wrong place?

Dude #1 smirks, cups his ear...

DUDE #1
I didn't catch what you said...?

The Dude kicks out at Dalton with the razored boot. Dalton jerks out of the way, then drives a fist into the center of his chest with such velocity it knocks him off his feet. Jack takes Dude #2 in a bear hug and batters him into Dude #3...

EXT. "THE DOUBLE DEUCE"

The Dudes come crashing through the doors, Dalton and Jack on them. Dude #1 is bug-eyed, still trying to gulp air into his lungs. Dalton takes a punch to the ribs from Dude #3, counters with a shot to his head, then takes him out with a series of explosive body punches. Jack and Dude #2 exchange punches, grapple against a car. Jack ends it with a head butt that renders the Dude unconscious. Dude #1 aims a kicks at Dalton's groin. Dalton narrowly avoids the blade, snatches the boot and jerks the Dude off his feet. He shifts behind him as he's getting up and claps his hands sharply over the Dude's ears. The Dude grasps his ears as though his head's about to blow. Then Dalton slams his boot into the side of the Dude's knee. The Dude goes down in a writhing ball. Much of the crowd has spilled out to watch. Hank, Bobby, Younger. Dalton and Jack turn to go back inside...

JACK
Not too bad, boss.

DALTON
Give me the biggest, toughest guy in the world; you smash his knee he'll drop like a stone.

Denise, the Body, stands aside... looks at Dalton with frank admiration. She moves as if to approach Dalton when Wesley's man Reno takes her by the arm. She resists. Reno drags her off, through the crowd. Dalton takes notice of this, quickly lets it pass... The crowd parts to let Dalton and Jack through... As the two move back towards the entrance, Dalton passes:

DALTON
Hiya, Doc. Lookin' for somebody?

Dr. Elizabeth Ellsworth stands mid the crowd, smiles at him...

DOC
You.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE

Dalton guides Doc through the crowd -- off to a somewhat less populated spot behind the bar. Nevertheless, the noise is awesome. Dalton smiles, gestures to a stool there in the corner, as...

DOC
I picked the right night.

Dalton moves a few feet away to a mirror -- checks the bruise on his cheek from the fight...

DALTON
They're all pretty much the same around here.

DOC
(rises)
Let me take a look at that.

DALTON
(waves her back down)
I'm used to it.

Swabs the cut clean for a second, then looks around. Suddenly takes a look at the place as if a stranger might: a zoo.

THEIR POV AT NEARBY TABLE

Bouncer Bobby has taken a chair across from a guy causing trouble, trying to politely tell him to straighten up his act. The guy runs his mouth at Bobby. Then his eyes nearly pop and his hands shoot under the table... and we know Bobby has him by the balls.

The guy's buddy leaps up to come to his assistance... instead leaps up into Hank's grasp from behind. Doc looks at Dalton. Dalton at Doc. An embarrassed smile.

DALTON
Would you...
(tentative)
like to go to someplace that's got a little more...
(searches)
decorum?

INT. DINER - THAT NIGHT

It's a small all-nighter in a mean streets section. But the coffee's good. Dalton and Doc sit in a booth. On a stool at the counter opposite them is a derelict in a stupor. He's nodding off, leaning further and further...

DOC
Are you always better than they are?

DALTON
Pretty much.

DOC
Never been put down?

Dalton takes a second. His eyes cloud for a second.

DALTON
Not really.

DOC
How'd you explain that?

DALTON
If you examine it, you'll find that the ones who go looking for trouble are really not much of a problem to somebody who's ready for them. I suspect it's always been that way.

DOC
And... you like it.

DALTON
I'm not sure I'd describe it as something I like. Not anymore.

DOC
Then why still do it?

DALTON
A reluctance to leave something you feel you've developed a certain ability in, I suppose... There's a certain romance to it I guess.
(shrugs)
And there's always the money.

The derelict is just about to topple over. Dalton straightens him up, returns...

DOC
Somebody has to do it?

DALTON
Somebody has to <u>pay</u> somebody to do it.

DOC
Might as well be you.

DALTON
Why not.
(beat, dry smile)
I'd better take you home. I keep talking, you'll go off thinking I'm a nice guy.

He makes a gesture as if to rise, but Doc just sits there. Slow burning smile. Heat between them. Dalton gets nervous. Doc watches him sweat a little.

DOC
(smiles)
I know you're not a nice guy.

Then she stands. The derelict is again about to fall. Dalton again straightens him up. The GRILLMAN bitches...

GRILLMAN
Pretty soon I'm gonna hav'ta start chargin' the bum rent.

Dalton tosses a ten on the counter, starts Doc for the door...

DALTON
Tonight's rent.

INT. DOC'S CAR - THAT NIGHT

She pulls up beside Dalton's Buick, it's now the only car left in The Double Deuce's lot. And now the rear window's smashed...

DOC
Your fan club?

DALTON
They are devoted.

He gets out, goes around to her side...

DALTON
(self-effacing smile)
Can I see you again?

Long pause. She smiles at him.

DOC
You live some kind of life, Dalton.

DALTON
Too ugly for you?

DOC
I didn't say that.

where owner Red Webster watches, dull-eyed, as Henchman Owen Karpis moves through the store, idly flicking tools, equipment, whatever's in his sight to the floor, from shelves... countertops. An obvious tactic for intimidation. Karpis stops, smiles, shrugs at Webster: "You see -- that's the way it is." Waits for a response from Red.

Red says nothing, stands there, watches. Karpis takes a hammer, walks down the aisle of lightbulbs, smashes each one he passes with the hammer as if playing a xylophone -- then laughs to himself: what a swell bit!

RED
Tell you what I'll do.

Karpis stops -- turns to him.

RED
I give you half what I give him. You take care of me. How 'bout that?

Karpis thinks this over, likes the sound of it so far. Approaches. Red says nothing. Karpis puts the hammer down on the counter.

RED
Deal just between you n'me. You'll make yourself a little something extra, I'll save myself a little.

Karpis thinks this over.

RED
Better'n what he does for you? Just between you n'me?

Red watches, waits. Will Karpis go for it? Finally:

KARPIS
I ain't gonna say nothin' to nobody.

CUT TO:

EXT. AUTO PARTS STORE - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER)

As Dalton's car pulls up across the street --

A long pause.

RED
Ten per cent. To start.
(beat)
But maybe I just made myself a little better deal...

CUT TO:

INT. HORSE BARN - ON DALTON - NIGHT (TOWARDS DAWN)

asleep -- hears the SHARP CRY, of a MAN as it drifts across the river, wakes him...

KARPIS (O.S.)
No!... No!... No!...

Dalton throws himself over to the window -- looks out.

HIS POV

across the river at Wesley's place. The dawning light just illuminates the figures of Wesley and the other henchmen dragging the figure of... Owen Karpis down towards the bank of the river. Dalton squints.

He can just make out: A sudden glint of light on the long object that Jimmy Reno carries. After a moment we make it out as... an axe. From our distance we see the tiny figure of Karpis struggling to get away -- then pleading...

KARPIS
Mr. Wesley -- I --- please ---
I ---

And then the figure of Brad Wesley as he strides over from the side --- Wesley looks around; what a beautiful morning. Then turns to answer one of the two MEN with him...

WESLEY
Naw. Too much wind. What's par over at that course anyway?

MAN #1
(CARL STOUT - local judge)
Four, Brad.

MAN #2
(KURT POMEROY - police chief; laughs)
Like hell.

KARPIS
Please! I ---

Wesley turns back to pleading henchman:

WESLEY
You did real well in town, didn't you, Owen?
(to Reno)
Hurry up with that, Jimmy. I'm gettin' cold out here.

KARPIS
--- Please, Boss. I'm sorry!----

Wesley considers for a moment, as if actually listening to Karpis' please, but then he turns to his two guests, Pomeroy and Stout, pleasantly invites them to:

WESLEY
Why don't you wait inside. Have yourselves a little breakfast?

POMEROY
Sure, Brad.

They take off, back up to the house. As the boss turns to Karpis, smilingly asks him:

WESLEY
You like Frankie Valli?

KARPIS
(pause)
Uh -- yeah boss, I do.

The boss hums a little something from Frankie Valli -- taps his toe a moment along with the beat...

WESLEY
You know something Owen: you steal from me? You gonna be singin' just like him.

FROM FAR OFF

We see that the henchmen have dragged Owen over to a stump usually used for chopping wood. One of the guys has reached down between Owen's legs... In everybody's bad dream of castration -- we see the axe fly. A final scream from Owen. Then Owen falls down in a heap over the stump. Silence as the henchmen look to Wesley for comment. The Boss considers for a second.

WESLEY
Well...
(shrugs)
... Now I guess he can sing all of those Frankie Valli songs.
(sings)
'walk like a man, talk like a man, my son --- '

Reno and Tinker laugh as:

WESLEY
Get him up.

O'Connor limps the few steps over to the stump, checks Owen out.

O'CONNOR
He's dead, boss.

WESLEY
Dead!

O'Connor nods.

WESLEY
How could a man die of something like that?
(beat)
I guess he just lost his faith. Y'know when a man loses his faith he's all set to die. He's just looking for somebody to tap him on the shoulder.

RENO
It wasn't his shoulder, boss.

WESLEY
I wasn't speaking literal.
(pause, sincerely)
I even liked that boy! I was gonna call up Hollywood and get him a singing contract!
(sings)
'... walk like a man, talk like a--- '

The boss stops suddenly.

WESLEY
Well, you'd better haul him down there.

Reno and Tinker start to drag the body of Owen down towards the river. The trail of blood leaves a pattern in the dirt as they go. Tinker looks at this, can't help but start to cry.

WESLEY
(kindly)
What's the matter, Tinker?

TINKER
(through tears)
Aw, I dunno, Mr. Wesley. I guess I'm gonna miss him.

WESLEY
We'll all miss him, Tinker. But the day that Owen reached into my pocket, that's the very day the Lord called him Back Home. And who are we to stand in his way.

TINKER
I -- I guess so.

WESLEY
(malicious smile)
Now don't you go losin' your faith too, Tinker.

TINKER
No Boss.

WESLEY
No boss, what?

TINKER
No boss, I won't lose my faith.

With that, Owens's body is unceremoniously kicked into the river. All the henchmen gather round. Wesley stands at the head, on the bank of the river -- looks down, then begins:

WESLEY
Dear Lord --- the world is in a terrible mess. Just a terrible mess. A lot of people have lost their way. They've lost their faith. And their trust in their fellow man. Too many VCR's I guess. Now we're here asking that you take your son Owen back to heaven with you -- and make him better. Make him a trusting man finally. We've forgiven him down here, Lord, and hope that you'll do the same.

EVERYBODY
Amen.

They stand there for a second --- then Wesley dismisses them:

WESLEY
Now you boys head on back up the hill. I got to say good-bye to Owen in my own way.

The boys disappear back up the hill... When all is silent, Wesley leans over the body:

WESLEY
(tenderly)
Owen, look what you made me do.

But then, as if to punctuate: Wesley spits on Owen's body! Then takes his foot, shoves the corpse the few remaining feet down into the river itself. Watches, satisfied as the current starts to pull the body downstream...

CLOSEUP ON WESLEY

As his vision suddenly refocuses on something directly in front of him. It is Dalton. Standing directly opposite, on the far bank of the river. His eyes wide, slightly deadened. He regards Brad Wesley with little emotion. We suspect he's probably witnessed Owen Karpis' end with much the same lack of emotion. Wesley looks up at Dalton. For a second his expression seems to mimic Dalton's. Then... he breaks out in a long, slow smile.

WESLEY
(deadly)
Lovely morning, ain't it?

ON DALTON

Doesn't respond.

WESLEY
Yes, it is. What's your name, son?

DALTON
Dalton.

WESLEY
You the one who fired my nephew?

DALTON
(beat)
Yep.

Wesley takes a moment, then laughs in appreciation.

WESLEY
Yes--yes, a good one, a good one.

Slows to a chuckle, then wags his finger at Dalton like some naughty little boy caught.

WESLEY
Don't let it get out of hand though, Dalton. Wouldn't want to see it get out of hand!

Wesley waves so-long, then turns and continues his morning stroll up along the river bank.

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE - NIGHT

The lines to enter the place have grown, snake around the place. Dalton surveys the line casually, checking things out. Notes the presence of two of Wesley's henchmen -- Ketchum and Reno, as they lean up against Ketchum's pickup, smoke a cigarette... watch the place. Dalton looks past them, then re-enters the bar...

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - NIGHT

Jumping as usual -- but there's a new feel about the place. Less rowdy, less violent. Dalton's brought a little law and order to the bar. CAMERA MOVES THROUGH the crowd, LINGERS ON Cody and Dalton. Carrie talks as she drops them both a beer...

CARRIE
--- That must've been Kurt Pomeroy. Dark haired, overweight?...

DALTON
Flashy dresser.

CARRIE
That's him.

DALTON
What's he do?

CARRIE
(beat)
Police Chief.

A beat, as Dalton takes this in. Ernie just gives a quick snort of laughter.

ERNIE
What's the matter, Dalton? Haven't you ever seen a couple good-ole-boys havin' some fun for theirselves...

CARRIE
(under her breath)
Another guy with him? Taller?... Wears a vest, probably?..

DALTON
Yeah.

CARRIE
Carl Stout.
(beat)
County judge.

CODY
(gestures to beer glass)
Another one, Carrie.

Carrie gives him another.

DALTON
The guy owns everybody?

CODY
(sarcastic)
'Cept for you, Dalton.

CARRIE
(turns to Dalton)
You'll be around as long as Wesley wants you around. Not a second longer.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE - 4 AM

Closing time, just before dawn. The parking lot has emptied out somewhat -- the crowds pretty much gone except for a few stragglers and employees that trickle out the door... Dalton emerges from the Double Deuce. Sees Doc waiting there in a convertible. Dalton approaches. Stands there.

DOC
I hear you're the new marshal in town.

DALTON
(smiles)
You heard wrong.

DOC
I'm a desperate woman.

Dalton pulls the car door open, climbs in, as Doc STARTS the ENGINE...

DALTON
Dangerous maybe, desperate never.

Doc pulls away. Passes the sedan of O'Connor and Reno who sit in their car, share a beer -- keep tabs on the comings and goings at the bar. O'Connor turns to Reno, grins:

O'CONNOR
Uh-oh.

Reno smiles with delight.

RENO
Dig a hole.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Doc's convertible cuts down the road, through the darkness.

INT. DOC'S CAR

Moves back towards Emmet's place.

DOC
Where is it?

DALTON
(points)
Over here --

DOC
(dry)
Couldn't you have found any place a little further out?

DALTON
(smiles)
No.

CUT TO:

INT. HORSE BARN - NIGHT

Dalton leads Doc past the horses over to the ladder up to his place...

DALTON
It's quiet and the horses let me know if anybody comes around...

INT. DALTON'S ROOM

Doc turns to him.

DOC
I love it.

She takes in the place. The sign, the sound of the WIND CHIMES filters in... Dalton sits down -- watches as Doc moves about his room. She's looking through the place, smiling slightly -- inspecting things as she goes.

DALTON
I saw your picture in Red Webster's place.

DOC
He's my uncle.

DALTON
Nice old guy.

DOC
He raised me. That's why I moved back here. Now we take care of each other.

DALTON
How come you never got married?

DOC
I did get married.

DALTON
And?

DOC
Didn't work out.

DALTON
How come?

DOC
Just didn't I guess. We met in Chicago. At school. We were great friends before we got married. I guess I picked the wrong guy. What about you?

DALTON
(evasive)
Oh, I don't know...

ON DALTON

Doc's back turned to him. His gaze follows her around the room. Vulnerable. But he remains silent. Doc goes over to the partially closed closet door -- gives it a nudge. It swings open, reveals a hook on the other side, upon which hangs a leather shoulder holster with a .45 automatic.

DOC
Colt?

DALTON
Gold Cup.

DOC
Mind?

Dalton shrugs; be my guest.

DALTON
Careful. It's loaded.

Doc picks up the gun, slides the action back and chambers a round.

DOC
Don't worry. It's on safety.

She takes a step to the window, looks around for a second, aims. FIRES off THREE ROUNDS in less than a second. She's good at it.

CUT TO:

INT. WESLEY'S DINING ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

Wesley sits mid-dinner, the soup spoon he holds frozen for a second between bowl and lip. He hears the report of THREE MORE RAPID FIRE ROUNDS. He stares off, places the sound, then, with only a flicker of emotion, carefully lowers his spoon and resumes eating.

RESUME DALTON'S ROOM

Where Doc turns away from the window to Dalton.

DOC
Nice.

DALTON
Jesus. You hit anything?

DOC
(smiles)
I hope so.

DALTON
I thought doctoring and guns don't mix.

Doc hangs the gun back on the closet door...

DOC
It's the difference between action and violence. I hate violence. But when I've put five in the black sometimes I feel like I'm in a state of grace.

She turns to him. Dalton remains where he is. Long past when he should make his move. He smiles. With no prompting, Doc starts to undress. Smiles, unbuttons her blouse... Doc drops the blouse, heads over to him... unzips the skirt as she goes...

DOC
How come you're not saying anything?...

She leans over, kisses him. He responds.

DALTON
You can hear me...

Doc kisses him again... leads him over to the bed...

FADE TO:

INT. DALTON'S ROOM - LATER

Doc has been dozing. She glances around. Dalton's nowhere to be seen. She goes to the open shutters. It's a warm night. A gentle night breeze sways the meadow grass and moves the CHIMES. Her hand caresses them... She steps back to the bed, gathers up a sheet and wraps it around herself.

ON ROOF

is where she finds Dalton, lying on his back, gazing into the heavens. The tin roof is modestly sloped but requires she be careful climbing up. She imitates him, only their fingers linked...

HEAVENS - FULL SHOT

A blanket of stars against an ink-black sky. Breathtaking ... She lies down next to him. Traces a surgical scar on the back of his shoulder. Without looking:

DALTON
Little Rock.

DOC
Caught you by surprise?

DALTON
(dry)
Who would've thought a 70-year-old woman'd be carrying a .38.

Doc laughs. Dalton smiles. Kisses her absentmindedly, still looks up at the stars. Doc lightly touches all of the scars on his chest... shoulders... traces them like a constellation...

DOC
You'll have a lot of pain when you're older, Dalton. You could be crippled if you don't slow down.

DALTON
That's what they say.

DOC
You already know that?

DALTON
No, I just said that's what they say.

Pause, Doc shifts onto her back...

DOC
Where will you go from here?

Dalton shrugs -- he doesn't know.

DOC
You could stay, Dalton.
(beat)
If you wanted to.

Pause.

DALTON
I don't think so.

DOC
Just keep movin', huh?

DALTON
That's right.
(flip)
Don't want to lose control.

DOC
Never stopped?

DALTON
Once.

A long pause. Dalton censors himself for a moment, then:

DALTON
I fought for someone but I fought too hard and I lost what I fought for. Since then I just haven't felt the pull.
(beat)
Doc, you scare me a little, I think.

DOC
Why?

A long moment, then:

DALTON
Take a look, Doc.

Points up at skies...

00454

DALTON
Cassiopea. Comes around once every 60 years -- only time you're gonna see it in this lifetime.

Turns and looks at her... truly affected. Now Doc's looking up at the skies.

DOC
Ever made love on a rooftop, Dalton?

DALTON
Not in a long time, Doc. You?

He props himself up on his elbow, leans over... kisses her.

CUT TO:

EXT. WESLEY'S PORCH - NIGHT

Wesley sits in his usual chair. Rocks back and forth. Concentrates on the middle distance.

HIS POV

Across the river, lit by moonlight, unaware of Wesley's presence, Dalton and Elizabeth make love on the rooftop of the horse barn. Brad leans forward in his chair. Can just make out the curve of Elizabeth's body, notes as she and Dalton roll over, and she begins to move above him.

ON WESLEY

All emotion smothered, his rocking unconsciously mimics the rhythm of the joined lovers.

SLOW FADE TO:

EXT. HORSE BARN - DAY

The Rancher is trying to wrestle a new watering trough from the back of a pickup. Dalton comes down the stairs, on his way to work. He helps with the trough... Doc's car is gone.

RANCHER
You had a woman up there with you?

DALTON
That's right.

RANCHER
(skyward)
Lord, don't give me no lip.
(to Dalton)
Where'd she get to?

DALTON
She'll be back.

RANCHER
If you was smart you'd pitch your tent.

DALTON
A lot of the time I'm not as smart as I'd like to be.

The Rancher fixes him with an amused squint...

RANCHER
You never know, son, maybe she'll be smart enough for both of you.

CUT TO:

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - ON TWO GUYS - LATER ON THAT NIGHT

arm wrestling at a table. The WINNER gets to deep tongue the LOSER's woman... After he does so, he wipes his mouth and:

WINNER
Honey, I bet you could suck-start a Harley.

The Loser slams his fist down on the table...

LOSER
Die high, asshole.

Lunges across the table at the Winner. Typical brawl between friends, bouncers moving towards the fight to stop it... Dalton overseeing from across the room...

AT BANDSTAND

Cody's on a break, takes a pull on a beer, turns to Dalton next to him.

CODY
What's the word, Dalton?

DALTON
Not much.

CODY
That's not what I hear.

Dalton says nothing.

CODY
Word is you're spending time with Elizabeth Ellsworth.

DALTON
Yeah?

CODY
A lot a time.

DALTON
Yeah?

CODY
Know who had a thing for Elizabeth Ellsworth, Dalton?

Dalton doesn't answer.

CODY
Brad Wesley. As I hear it, she left town and he went nuts. Small town, huh, Dalton?

Dalton just looks away...

CODY
Of course that's just the word...

When suddenly there's a sound of an ENORMOUS EXPLOSION. Those involved in the brawl stop... as all in the Double Deuce react to... the sounds of GROWING SIRENS. Then, most of the bar move quickly towards the doors... pile out onto the street.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Dalton follows the crowd as it seems to move as a unit towards the site of the blast: Red Webster's Auto Parts store.

EXT. RED WEBSTER'S STOREFRONT - DALTON'S POV

Ablaze. The roof already having caught fire -- send huge spirals of flame up into the night sky. Lighting up...

FACES

of the crowd as they watch in horror and...

RED WEBSTER

who stands watching. Ashen.

The firemen move to put out the fire but it's evident that the place won't be saved. Some from the crowd move to help them -- Dalton among them, but the firemen push them back -- shaking their heads... Instead they move to hose down the buildings nearby so the fire won't spread. In itself an admission of their surrender of Webster's store...

FROM UP STREET

The figure of Dalton. Moves slowly, a bit shaken, back across the street to the bar. We see the beginnings of others trickling back behind him.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE

Dalton enters the bar. Empty except for Cody and Ernie Bass, the new bartender. Both look to Dalton when he enters.

CODY
Let me guess.

Shakes his head, starts to play as others enter the bar ... return to their tables, talking quietly among themselves. Bass sets up more drinks. Brad Wesley and his men; Reno, Tinker and Ketchum enter. Wesley's got his arm around his girl friend, Denise, The Body. Takes a look around, then announces:

WESLEY
Nothin' they could do!

Settles at a table. He and Reno head directly to the bar. Orders:

WESLEY
Seagrams.

Bass pulls the bottle over, moves to pour the drink but Dalton takes it from him, pours the drink himself.

WESLEY
Well, thank you...

Dalton doesn't answer. Wesley takes a look at him, then throws the drink back.

WESLEY
This place is like a morgue!

Gestures to the door...

WESLEY
(calls)
C'mon in, boys!
(to Cody)
Play something, Cody!

Cody plays. The FIREMEN from the blaze enter -- Wesley, humanitarian, waves them over to the bar...

WESLEY
C'mon up here! -- c'mon now --
(to Bass)
It's on me. Whatever they want.

FIREMAN #1
Thanks, Mr. Wesley.

WESLEY
You men risked your lives!

Wesley throws back another one himself.

WESLEY
Save a no-good, draft-dodging faggot like Webster --
(an afterthought, to Fireman next to him)
I'll bet you fought for your country, didn't you?

FIREMAN
Yessir, I did.

Red Webster enters. Dejected, lost, exhausted. Moves to the bar... Wesley eyes him.

WESLEY
(to Fireman)
'Course you did.

DALTON
(evenly)
How about you, Mr. Wesley.

WESLEY
Frozen shores of Chosun, friend. Broke my heart. War's a terrible thing. No trust between men, that's what does it. 'Course...
(turns back to bar, looks at crowd)
... I came back home, put everything I had left into this town. Ask for a little contribution towards keeping it up and everybody digs deep to help except for... Red Webster.

Webster downs his drink. Gives a sharp rap of laughter. Without turning to face him:

RED
You're a liar, Wesley. And a pig.

WESLEY
I guess now you'll be having that fire sale, huh, Red?!

Henchmen laugh like morons. Wesley, comedian, feels like he's on a roll! The entire bar goes silent.

WESLEY
Y'know, come to think of it, we bought a --
(turns to Reno)
Didn't we buy a fan belt over his place last week?...

RENO
Yeah, we did.

WESLEY
How much did we pay for that fan belt, Jimmy?

Reno walks behind the bar, takes a bottle and pours himself a drink. Bartender Bass looks over at Dalton, but Dalton nods to let it pass as:

RENO
We payed about $5.25.

WESLEY
Well, didn't we just buy that same fan belt down at the mall on 17 for -- how much did we pay?

RENO
Three and a quarter.

WESLEY
Three and a quarter! I can't believe -- how much?

RENO
Three and a --

WESLEY
You're tryin' to make money off of me, Webster, that's what you're tryin' to do.

Webster just turns, looks at him. The whole bar is tense. Dalton's eyes shift back and forth, watch the argument build... Henchman Ketchum shoves somebody off of a chair, takes it himself... Bouncer Jack looks at Dalton, but Dalton just nods for him to let it pass...

WESLEY
(casual)
Well, I don't like that.
(to crowd in bar)
I'm lookin' out for you people.
If he's doin' that to me -- what's
he chargin' you?!
(to Webster)
I'm surprised we even allow scum
like you in this town.
(a helpful aside)
I was gonna call on that David
Horowitz guy but it'd take too
long to get on T.V. I have to
fight back my own way.

Girl friend Denise shakes it over to Wesley, whispers something in his ear...

WESLEY
'Course you can dance!
(calls)
Cody! Something with some balls
to it!

Cody plays. Denise gets up on the table and starts to move with the music, then, having the attention of everybody in the place -- starts to peel off her clothes piece by piece. Flips her stiletto heels to the crowd one after the other... Reaches under her skirt... rolls down her stockings... in time to the music.

Wesley's tapping his foot, watching in appreciation. Tilghman emerges from his office to see this -- looks over at Dalton, horrified.

ON DALTON

Moves evenly over to the table. Wesley takes in this move, then merely turns back to watch Denise...

ON DENISE

who, noting Dalton's newfound attention, begins to dance just for him. She shimmies over to his side of the table -- unzips her skirt, slides out of it...

Smiles at Dalton. Sways to the music. We can just make out the tattoo on her inner thigh: PROPERTY OF BRAD WESLEY. Denise, clad only in skimpy underwear, shimmies for the crowd. But keeps her eyes on Dalton every second.

Henchmen go wild. Wesley laughs in appreciation. Reno throws a BOTTLE, it CRASHES to the floor. As if a signal, other henchmen now move through the place; randomly destroying things.

Dalton leans onto the table that Denise is on. Looks up at her, crooks his finger at her: time to get down.

DALTON
Dance hall's closed.

He reaches up as if to help her, but Denise just laughs, continues to strip in time to the music --- takes off her bra, leans down, wraps it around Dalton's neck...

As Dalton just stands there, reaches up to take Denise by the waist to drag her down, we hear Wesley's laugh of appreciation.

WESLEY (O.S.)
Go right ahead, friend. You seem to have a way with the women!

Dalton looks over at Wesley a moment, then:

DALTON
You look real good, Denise.

She smiles; thanks.

DALTON
You feelin' as good as you look?

DENISE
Yeah, I feel good.

DALTON
But do you feel as good as you look?

He takes her by the waist, pulls her off of the table, Denise laughs, rubs up against himn on the way down, glances toward Wesley. Wesley's smile is like stone.

DENISE
(giggles)
You sure you know what you're doin'?

DALTON
I like a woman who can take a joke.

DENISE
What joke's that?

DALTON
That joke you're with.

Dalton seats her down right next to Wesley. The game is suddenly over. Wesley goes ashen. As, <u>all at once</u>: Reno shoves his way through the bar -- towards Dalton -- everybody steps back, expecting the worst --

RENO
Why, you foreskin...

As if by signal, Bobby and Hank each move for Tinker and Ketchum, one on one. Bobby tackles Ketchum, drives him back against the bar... as Wesley takes a step back prefering to let Reno do the dirty work on Dalton for the present. Reno slows, then stops feet from Dalton. Leers an invitation at him:

RENO
Dues time!...

Reno takes a step away from Dalton... then shoots a wheel kick at his head. Dalton is prepared, leans away from it. The crowd spills back. Tables and chairs fall. Bouncers clear them away. Cody and the band keep playing... Carrie steps over next to Bass -- looks on in horror, expecting the worst... Reno moves on Dalton going to the attack with supreme confidence and a lot of aggression. His style of karate is Okinawan. His initial moves are linear, simple, more force than finesse. Dalton blocks, bobs, weaves, shuffles, slips, dodges, and slides, his defense so practiced and complete it appears almost effortless. He allows Reno's strikes to come exceptionally close, but his footwork and balance are of a higher order, enabling him to remain elusive. Reno pauses in his attack, taking stock, forced to. Altering his technique to Korean, with the emphasis on kicks, Reno returns to the attack. All the while Denise is circling the perimeter, yelling.

DENISE
Kill him, Jimmy! Kill the mother!

Crescent kick, front heel, side snap, roundhouse, back, Dragon Tail, Reno tries them all, and more. He is expert enough to constantly vary his target, never going for the same part of the body in succession. Nothing lands. Dalton's reflexes are quicker and his movements smoother, more flowing, more natural. He begins to subtly break Reno's balance at will, pushing him, pulling, trapping. Putting him on notice. Until... Reno fakes a kick to the left. Dalton starts his defensive move. Reno spins and delivers a glancing kick to Dalton's side. Dalton circles away, twisting to assess how seriously he's hurt. He concludes nothing is broken. Reno comes aggressively again, sensing his chance. Dalton lets him come in. The fighting is in close now. Dalton takes a hold, slams Reno to the floor with frightening force. And now he is hurting. Reno gets up in pain, yet goes on the attack again. Dalton fakes, then delivers a kick to the side of Reno's head. He's out. He can't get up. Cody and the band stop playing. Dalton picks up Reno by the back of his shirt -- tosses him at the feet of Wesley.

DALTON
Take him to a hospital. Then maybe to a remedial fighting school.

Wesley looks over at his other two henchmen -- both having been put out by Hank and Bobby, who unceremoniously carry the two through the place and dump them out onto the street... Wesley stands, slowly. Realizes he is alone, unprotected. Silence in the place as all of the townspeople look to Dalton. Shock and certainly some awe here... they've never seen Brad Wesley defeated like this before... Neither has Wesley. Jack moves, drags Reno out of the place, tossing him on the street as well. Wesley -- turns to look at Dalton. Like ice. Eyes shaded like a snake, full of death. Then, he smiles. A slow burner.

WESLEY
This isn't working out, Dalton.

Then Wesley turns, abruptly walks out of the place. Faces in the crowd follow him as he goes. When the door slams behind him, the faces turn back. Now they all look toward Dalton. But Dalton just stands there for a second, then moves back toward the bar, tapping Cody on the shoulder in the process. Cody plays.

CUT TO:

INT. RED WEBSTER'S HOUSE - DAY

Red moves through the place packing things in cartons. Doc helps to lug things out into the back of a pickup. A NEIGHBOR sits watching. Dalton stands in the middle of the room as:

RED
I'm goin'.

NEIGHBOR
We can salvage the place, Red. Build up again.

RED
Nope. Goin' to Tucson. My sister's got a real nice condo there.

NEIGHBOR
But you've got insurance, don't you? --

RED
(packs carton)
Twenty years I've seen Wesley get richer and everybody around him get poorer.

DALTON
Can you prove he started the fire?

RED
Who're you gonna prove it to?
(beat)
Only one person you want to prove anything to and that's Wesley himself.

Doc and Red exchange glances. Dalton notes this, looks away. Red puts the carton down he's packing, wipes off his hands as:

RED
You scared him last night.

DALTON
(beat)
I scare a lot of people.

RED
Not Brad Wesley. He's never been afraid of anything. But last night I saw him afraid.

ON DOC

She knows Welsey; she's afraid, too. Red looks at Dalton expectantly. Dalton knows what he's asking. Silently refuses him. Red smiles, decides to let him off the hook. Pats Dalton's arm.

RED
I'll think about you, son.
(smiles)
You gave me some satisfaction.

Starts Dalton toward the door...

RED
Oh -- Dalton, do me a favor?

DALTON
Sure.

RED
Keep an eye on her for me.

Dalton leaves Red and Doc there talking, moving through the place.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

Dalton watches his clothes swirl in the washer -- then moves to a pay phone in the corner, drops in a handful of coins, dials.

INT. STRIP JOINT (TOLEDO, OHIO) - NIGHT

Somewhere like that. It's small and seedy, the kind of place worked by a bouncer just starting out or a cooler past his prime and too proud to accept the reality. WADE GARRETT, late forties and lanky, has seen a lot of action and a lot of parties, and possesses a genuine, fun-loving nature that is at once too infectious to resist. A banner above the tiny stage announces Rambo Wet-Panties Night. The auto-worker and steel-hauler audience is armed with black plastic miniature Uzi submachine guns. The Uzis emit hard streams of water. These are directed at the G-strings of the strippers. At a table down front, a blue-collar starts to climb onto the stage. Garrett pulls him back by the belt. Wearily:

GARRETT
Easy, Rambo, I know you want to make the world safe from Commies, but you're gonna have to do it from down here...

Blue-collar's buddies turn their Uzis on him. He has to cover his eyes. He's drenched. He shakes his head. But grins. The BARTENDER holds up the phone, shouts over the noise:

BARTENDER
Garrett! Some guy name of Dalton!

GARRETT

goes straight for it, anticipating. He has a slight but permanent limp. We INTERCUT, the brief conversation uneasy and shaded with meaning for both. While they talk, the Bartender pulls beers and cleans the head off each with a straight razor...

GARRETT
My man!

DALTON
How you doin', buddy?

Glancing dubiously at the demeaning spectacle that is his present employment:

GARRETT
Aw, I'm in hog heaven. Hell, yes. What about you?

DALTON
I'm all right.

GARRETT
Must be --all that money you're makin'.

DALTON
Got a guy here who's makin' me uncomfortable's what I got.

GARRETT
What's the name?

DALTON
Brad Wesley.

Wade stops for a moment --

GARRETT
About my age -- from San Antonio originally I think.

DALTON
You know him?

GARRETT
I think I heard of him. Stay cool, son. Where's the funeral, right? Heard the one about the prostitute who had the appendectomy? Now she makes a little money on the side. See you, youngster.

DALTON
Yeah?

GARRETT
You bet.

Hangs up. Dalton stands for a moment -- the receiver still in his hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. HORSE BARN/BANK OF RIVER - LATE AT NIGHT

Where Dalton sits, smokes a cigarette, stares off across the river at nothing at all. The sky above him is filled with stars. Silence except for the GURGLING of RUSHING WATER. And, the CREAK of the RUNNERS on a ROCKING CHAIR. It belongs to...

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE PORCH OF BRAD WESLEY'S RANCH HOUSE

Where Wesley sits on the porch chair, surveys all that is his. Wesley's got a thorn in his side. He contemplates this as he rocks. Wesley looks over... down across the river. Sees the figure of Dalton sitting there. Backlit by the moon. Watching him?

WESLEY (O.S.)
'... I'm just a fool...
A fool in love with you.
-- I hope, and I pray
that some day --
I'll be the vision of your
happiness...
(yells)
What're you looking at?! What're
you looking at, boy?!

(NOTE: "Earth Angel" -- Williams, Hodge & Belvin -- 1954)

RESUME DALTON

As the ECHO of WESLEY's VOICE FADES. But Dalton merely looks up at the night sky -- he seems not to hear Brad Wesley's voice at all -- or if he does, he chooses at this moment to ignore it.

EXT. PASTURE OUT IN COUNTRY - DAY

A beautiful afternoon. Wind whips through the grass. Dalton and Doc walk ahead of their two horses --

DALTON
They could stop him easy if they
wanted to.

DOC
You could too.

DALTON
That's not my job. I'm not paid
to stop him.

Walk along in silence for a second...

DALTON
They never want to do it themselves.
I been to a hundred towns and every
one of 'em's got a guy like Wesley.
No difference. Seems like people
like it that way. Somebody to tell
'em what to do and when to do it.
Somebody they can hate but not do
anything about. Just like sheep.
So it goes.

He walks for a second, then:

DALTON
Did you love him?

Pause. Doc seems startled, then:

DOC
I was seventeen. He wanted to marry me. I said no. He wouldn't leave me alone. So I left.
(pause)
He was different then.

They walk on silently until:

DOC
(tentative)
You could stop him.

DALTON
I could.

DOC
What are you afraid of?

Dalton doesn't answer, until:

DALTON
I don't get involved.

DOC
Not ever?

Dalton turns and looks at her -- takes a moment, then utterly serious:

DALTON
No.
(beat)
It's different. I don't get mad anymore.

A long pause. Dalton's a few steps ahead...

DOC
Dalton...

But Dalton walks ahead.

DALTON
If you keep on me, Doc, I'll get soft.
(beat)
See you.

Doc lets him go.

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE - THAT NIGHT

A car pulls into the lot... Wade Garrett leans out the window -- asks guy assigned to the lot:

GARRETT
You got a runty little guy workin' here? Named Dalton?

The guy just stares at him -- amazed, directs him on.

EXT. PARKING LOT

As Wade Garrett parks his car -- climbs out. Pauses for a second to straighten his knee... looks up. Spots two of Wesley's henchmen: Ketchum and Reno, lounging out on the hood of Reno's car -- just watching the place. Wade gets these guys as trouble immediately, but passes them by. Goes to enter the bar.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE

Wade walks in the doors of the Double Deuce -- takes a quick look around.

FROM HIS POV - BAR

Fairly cleaned up compared to the Double Deuce that Dalton walked into that first day. The clientele still full of locals, but now there's some businessmen thrown into the mix, with their wives. And the crowd's better behaved in general. No chicken wire up over the band. Everybody seems a little better dressed. More money to spend. Much like The Arsenal in Atlanta; the place has got its second chance...

Wade heads over to the bar. Looks to find Dalton. No Dalton. Screams over the din of music to Jack the Bear:

GARRETT
Where's Dalton?

JACK
(screams back)
Who're you?

GARRETT
Who'm I? Is that what you said?

JACK
Take it easy now, Dad...

Takes a beer, slides it a couple feet towards him. Wade stands there, astonished over the "Dad" remark:

GARRETT
(nods at beer)
That'll have to wait.

Wade whips around looking for somewhere to vent his anger over the remark... as Cody suddenly does a take on Wade's voice...

CODY
(to Jack)
Hey, that's --

ON WADE

As next to him, a MOUNTAIN of a man, seated next to the stage watches a girl dancing. Whenever her gyrations bring her near, he spits at her.

WITH GARRETT

He crosses to the Mountain...

GARRETT
Don't do that.

The Mountain rises. To tower over Garrett... as Jack and Hank look on in amazement...

MOUNTAIN
Wanna fight, dickless?

GARRETT
You know how?

The Mountain nods, supremely confident. And, indeed, we are compelled to doubt there is anything anyone could do when faced with this imposing a mass. Even Garrett seems to wonder...

GARRETT
How tall are you?

MOUNTAIN
Six-seven.

GARRETT
How much you weigh?

MOUNTAIN
Three hundred.

GARRETT
What the hell am I supposed to do with you?

Wade takes a second, as if deciding whether to actually fight this guy, when... The Mountain merely grins malevolently. Turns to Cody:

GARRETT
Get set to play hurtin' music, Cody.

Cody just nods... now he recognizes the voice for sure ... With a look at Jack and Hank -- "watch this."

Garrett shoots his foot out, turned, and racks it against -- the Mountain's right knee. The Mountain goes down where he stands. Garrett kneels, to put his face in the Mountain's face, to taunt, to make his point...

GARRETT
I was just talkin' until you set yourself and put enough weight on that knee I could bust it back... You know how to fight? Why? 'Cause you're big enough to pick up a car and eat it?... Sorry, friend, but you don't know the first fuckin' thing about it...

He rises, starts for the bar...

GARRETT
Oh, my, that pain's a bitch, ain't it?

Jack and Hank exchange a look of astonishment as Dalton shows -- Garrett straightens his knee... heads back over to the bar, passing Dalton on the way -- who reacts with expected surprise...

GARRETT
Youngster...

Dalton smiles in welcome...

GARRETT
(picks up beer from bar)
You're a little late.

Dalton turns to the assembled group of astonished bouncers, makes his formal introduction.

DALTON
Gentlemen: Wade Garrett.

Wade lifts his glass to them, as they look at Wade; a living legend.

HANK
Holy shit.

GARRETT
Exactly.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE - LATE NIGHT

Just after closing time. Dalton emerges from the bar with Wade just behind him. Take a look at the Buick.

Ravaged again. Wade just looks over at Dalton; a dry grin: of course.

DALTON
Get in.

EXT. AUTO JUNK YARD - NIGHT

Dalton and Wade load up the Buick's trunk with tires. Wade tosses them to Dalton, Dalton chucks them into the trunk... Silence until:

GARRETT
How'd I look back there.

DALTON
I seen you in better shape.

GARRETT
Don't I know it.
(rallies)
I was the best cooler in the business. I'm still none too shabby. Hear?

Dalton stops -- just looks at him.

GARRETT
Aw, shit. I'm quittin', Dalton. That's what I come to tell you.

Dalton stops, takes a look at Wade. Dalton takes a step nearer to Wade -- instantly affected. Like father and son. Brothers. Wade sits down on the bumper of the Buick, wipes the grime off of his hands.

GARRETT
My knees, my shoulders... my hands. I've been racked so many times I'm down to bone on bone.
(beat)
They hurt when I get up in the morning, they hurt when I make a fist. Sometimes they just hurt all the time. I can still make a fist but...

Wade's hands are swollen and misshapen by bone spurs and scar tissue...

GARRETT
I made the money, youngster. I made big and I spent big. That's all somebody can ask for.

DALTON
(offers)
I got plenty of money, Wade...

GARRETT
Don't need it. I got enough. I'm gonna go to Austin.

DALTON
Live the simple life.

GARRETT
I didn't say that.

Wade smiles at him. Dalton chucks the last tire into the trunk. They tie it closed, move to get into the front seat.

GARRETT
Besides, every year some new punk walks in the door of wherever the place is I'm at, looking to wipe the floor with me. And every year they get a little bigger, and I get a little smaller. I think something in me wants to walk away while I can.

Turns to him:

DALTON
That so terrible?

GARRETT
I don't know.

DALTON
What time is it?

GARRETT
About six.

Dalton takes the next turn --

DALTON
Somebody I want you to meet.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE - DAWN

Dalton and Wade stand expectantly as Doc leaves the place, quits for the day -- sees them both standing there, smiles, shakes her head.

GARRETT
I should a known.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Doc, Wade and Dalton seated at a corner booth, breakfast on the table in front of them. Mid conversation:

Dalton's subdued, as result of the recent confrontation... Doc points at a long scar on Wade's forearm...

GARRETT
(happily recites)
1975. Albequerque. Three guys. One of 'em was an Indian. He was the one with the knife. Good with it too...
(nods at Dalton)
... He got his head cracked.

Dalton smiles at Doc.

DOC
(points at scar on cheek)
What about this?

GARRETT
'67. Times were more peaceful then. Not in Bakersfield though.
(beat, nods at Dalton)
He got his head cracked.

Dalton laughs.

GARRETT
(points at scar near neck)
--This one I'm sentimental about...

DALTON
(smiles)
A woman.

GARRETT
A woman wanted in 12 states... You know how to dance? I feel like dancing.

DALTON
It's eight a.m.

GARRETT
Isn't there any place in this shithole of a town open? Excuse me.

INT. MAIN STREET BAR - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

The JUKEBOX in the corner PLAYS some fairly recent hit. Wade guides a much amused Doc around the empty place while the bar owners set up the place for the lunch crowd. Over in the corner, Dalton's seated in the booth, half watching, half dozing.

He and Wade have both been up all night. But Wade's still going strong. Nods at Dalton tenderly:

GARRETT
Great out of the gate. Not much stamina.

DOC
This the part where you tell me what a great guy your friend is?

GARRETT
(snorts)
Not hardly. This is the part where I tell you I want you for myself.

Doc laughs. Wade laughs. Dalton wakes up, calls to them:

DALTON
Whatever he's sayin' to you you can be fairly sure it's a lie.

But Dalton gazes at the two of them with sadness. The NUMBER ENDS, Doc and Wade head back to the booth.

DOC
Excuse me, gentlemen...

She heads off for the ladies' room.

GARRETT
What's wrong, youngster?

DALTON
(shrugs)
Seein' the three of us --

GARRETT
What's past is past. This isn't Memphis.

BEHIND HIM

We see Carrie Ann and Jack The Bear enter the place, move quickly to the counter, lean over, talk hurriedly to the bar owner... who glances off towards the street... Dalton follows their gaze, but can see nothing from where he sits...

GARRETT (O.S.)
--Bartender! -- I'm waitin' patiently ---

Jack The Bear stops off at Dalton's booth just long enough to drop:

JACK
You pass by the Caddy dealership at the intersection?

Dalton looks at him, confused.

JACK
Wesley's putting a little something down on a new car.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MAIN STREET INTERSECTION - DAY

Onlookers and the locals move towards the horrible noise of the GUNNING of ENGINES, GRINDING of TRUCK GEARS.

EXT. CADILLAC DEALERSHIP

Wade, Dalton and Doc move along with them. Then stop.

THEIR POV

Brad Wesley's unhappy with his Cadillac! He's finally done something about it --- pulverized the thing and had henchman Gary Ketchum drag it back to PETER STROUDENMIRE'S dealership with his truck. Other henchmen Jimmy Reno and Pat McGurny stand by happily and watch the boss lay it on the line for Stroudenmire --- Wesley circles the hunk of junk that was once his car. Kicks at what's left of it ---

WESLEY
(livid)
---told me it'd been fixed. The wipers, the fucking windows won't go down ---

Wesley kicks through a window with his boot -- the whole thing'd be funny if it weren't so horrifying --- rancher Emmet and Carrie look on as well as other band members from the Double Deuce... Wesley leans to hear what local Police Chief Kurt Pomeroy has to say, then dismisses it with:

WESLEY
Naw, never mind ---

Turns to Gary Ketchum, seated in his pickup truck with the monster wheels.

WESLEY
Ketchum, drive through there! --

Henchman Ketchum nods, GUNS the ENGINE. Reaction from the crowd. Horror as would be expected, when rancher Emmet suddenly pulls open the door to the Bronco, drags Ketchum out from behind the wheel --

EMMET
Oh no --

-- Ketchum pulls away from Emmet easily -- and sends the rancher sprawling on the ground... Dalton moves to help him up.

WESLEY
(impatient)
Get up there, Ketchum.

CARRIE
(screams from crowd, derisive)
What're you doing, Brad?

Wesley turns to the crowd, incredulous.

WESLEY
This man runs a dishonest shop!

ON DALTON

watches. Grows more angry. Doesn't make a move. Doc looks up at him, but Dalton merely looks straight ahead.

WESLEY (O.S.)
Makes victims of you people! Is that what you want?...

CAMERA REVEALS more and more members of the crowd look to Dalton as if he might stop Wesley. But Dalton just stands there --

WESLEY
(sincerely)
You lost your faith, Stroudenmire. That's what it is. And it's made you an abuser. You probably can't help yourself.
(to Ketchum)
Drive through there, Gary.

Ketchum climbs back into the cab of the truck... Carrie moves to Dalton's side.

CARRIE
Do something.

DALTON
It's not my fight.

WESLEY
What's that?

Wesley turns to Dalton, then spots Doc standing next to him. He reacts.

WESLEY
Got a problem, Mr. Dalton? Why hello, Elizabeth.
(beat)
Looking as lovely as ever.

Doc doesn't say anything.

ON DALTON

his eyes shifting from Wesley to Doc.

WESLEY
What a pretty blouse. Blue's always been your color.

RENO
I knew a whore in Juarez. She looked good in blue too.

TINKER
Black and blue, you mean.

Dalton's losing it... bounces on his feet for a moment. Hands clench involuntarily. Wade whips around to Dalton.

GARRETT
Don't.

WESLEY
Don't what?

ON CROWD OF ONLOOKERS

moving to back Dalton. Henchmen move just slightly off behind Wesley.

OFF TO SIDE

CODY
(to Band Member)
What's goin' on?...

BAND MEMBER
Dalton's just standin' there.

CODY
He ain't doin' nothing, right?...

RESUME WESLEY AND DALTON

WESLEY
Come'ere, Dalton...

Wesley smiles his good-ole-boy smile at Dalton as he walks toward him. Waves a friendly wave to the crowd, gestures to them to relax. He turns aside to confide privately to Dalton, his smile receding...

WESLEY
(hushed)
Dalton -- y'know when I look at you I see a little bit of me when I was younger.
(smiles for benefit of crowd)
I've let a lot of things pass. You know I have. But if you move against me now, I'll take it out of the skin of every living thing in this town. Don't be stupid, son. Let a man have his fun. Else I'll have you carted away like ten pounds of dog shit.

Dalton looks at Wesley. Filled with hatred. But leans back the slightest bit; he's not going to do a thing... Wesley's expression calms, his negotiation seemingly over ... turns to Ketchum, still seated in the truck...

WESLEY
(calls impatiently)
Well, what the hell're you waiting for, Ketchum? Drive through there!

And with that, Ketchum nods, GUNS the ENGINE and, much to the horror of owner Stroudenmire -- drives directly through the main plate glass window of the dealership. Glass goes spraying all over the place. Wesley cranes to make sure that Ketchum's doing maximum destruction to the place, then smiles, relieved, when Ketchum proceeds to drive his truck over the four brand new Cadillacs lined up in the showroom. The monster truck's got great traction. It climbs over the cars like a tank, squashing them one by one.

REACTION FROM CROWD

Dalton watches, as if he can't turn away. Doc looks at him, then moves to take his hand, but Dalton pulls away.

Townsfolk look at Dalton; obviously skeptical of him now, disillusioned. All covered with the noise from the DESTRUCTION of the CARS -- the GRINDING of METAL, BREAKING of GLASS, a TIRE EXPLODES... as the Bronco bounds off of the last destroyed Cadillac and exits through the rear of the showroom, out a garage exit... Much of the crowd remains, but Dalton turns suddenly, cuts through them. Stops at the edge of the crowd -- turns to Doc.

DALTON
I can't watch this.

DOC
Well then stop it!

DALTON
I can't.

Seeing that she's about to protest he just turns and walks away.

DOC
Dalton --

She follows him up the street, away from the crowd, away from Wade and the others... Walks next to him.

EXT. INTERSECTION

... walks next to him, looking at him steadily. Dalton seems to be exploding inside, has no idea where he's walking, just turns the next corner. Turns to her finally. She's still right next to him.

DALTON
I was in love with a woman. She was married. Her husband came home. I lost control and he was dead. I killed an innocent man for nothing. She never looked at me again.
(beat)
I'm only good at one thing. I never lose. I can't lose. But sometimes the price is too high.

INT. THE DOUBLE DEUCE - NIGHT

Jumping. Dalton off behind the bar in his usual stance -- a little more subdued than usual. The crowd's got less overt admiration for Dalton... here and there a tinge of dislike, disappointment. Picks up a beer from Ernie --

ERNIE
Heard about today.

Dalton doesn't say anything. Just drinks it. Ernie looks at him; he's never seen Dalton drink on the job before.

ERNIE
You helped me out, Dalton. You need me for anything I'll be there.

DALTON
(dismisses this)
Thanks, Ernie.

Across the room -- Bobby and Hank try to lift some mean belligerent DRUNK from his chair. The guy's been slapping at his wife, screams:

DRUNK
-- Well, where the fuck've you been for two straight days, goddamnit --

Tilghman joins Dalton -- stands there watches...

TILGHMAN
Jesus. I thought this shit was over.

DALTON
Guess not.

Drunk kicks out at Bobby, connects. Bobby doubles over, reels backwards, leaving Hank alone for the second. Drunk turns on him, as Dalton moves in from the rear... grabs him...

DALTON
We'd all be grateful if you took the train.

Drunk whips back and forth -- tries to see who's holding him.

DRUNK
Who's that? -- Dalton? Who's that --

DALTON
It matter?

DRUNK
Sure. 'Cause if it's Dalton I suddenly have the idea I could take him.

Laughs hawkishly. Drunk pulls away from Dalton -- turns to face him. He laughs again, then comes out low, tackling Dalton, driving him back against a table and chairs...

ON CARRIE ANN

Watching from the side, stands next to Wade, shakes her head in fear, watches Dalton... Dalton has taken damage to his side, but doubles up the Drunk with a shot to the gut, turns him around and delivers four sharp, deliberate shots to his kidneys...

DALTON
These are your kidneys back here... You're gonna remember them for a while...

Cody signals the band -- picks up with some music to cover, but everybody around can still hear:

DRUNK
Fuck you, Dalton! Fuckin' coward!

Dalton reels back for a second, then rockets forward and banks the Drunk's head off of the band's platform. The Drunk goes down. Dalton stands there for a second as if it's not over -- but Bobby and Hank move in, drag the Drunk away. Dalton moves back through the crowd to the bar. Passes Wade, just looks at him without saying anything...

CARRIE
You --

DALTON
I'm okay.

Picks up a beer from Ernie takes it over to Cody, sits down next to him on the band's break. Hands the beer to him...

CODY
Good... good...
(chugs beer, then)
You want some friendly advice Dalton? Get the fuck out of here. Just pack your trunk and hit the road.

DALTON
You lookin' out for my welfare at this late date?

CODY
It's gearin' up, my man.

Dalton looks at him, realizes that of course this is true.

CODY
I don't want you to step over the line is all. Head south. You'll find another spot in a minute. Money just as good. I'll meet you.

DALTON
Next town's gonna be just like this one, Cody.

CODY
Then move on. There's always a next town, Dalton.
(beat)
Take my advice. Move on.

EXT. LOCAL PASTURE IN FLATLANDS - NIGHT

Dalton lies on the hood of the Buick. Above him the skies are filled with stars. His arms crossed under his head, he stares up at the skies. Strangely statisfied, he makes no sounds, nor does he move. Just looks up at the sky above.

EXT. PASTURE - DAWN (TIME LAPSE)

Dalton seated on the hood of the Buick -- his legs dangling over the fender. He smokes a cigarette. The sun rises in the sky behind him.

OUR POV - BEHIND HIM

Off behind him we see a sedan pull up, silently coast to a stop on the dirt road that leads into the pasture. Two small figures climb out of the car, move into the field... towards Dalton. When Dalton looks over, Tinker and O'Connor are closing in. They stop, stand there.

O'CONNOR
We been looking for you.

Dalton says nothing.

TINKER
Wesley wants to see you.

Dalton says nothing.

TINKER
Let's go.

DALTON
(a beat)
There's no need for me to bring my gun, is there?

TINKER
(to O'Connor)
What a joker.

Dalton looks at the two a moment, then shrugs, climbs off of the car -- walks the dirt lane to the sedan waiting there, climbs inside.

EXT. GATES TO BRAD WESLEY'S PLACE - DAY

The sedan pulls in, PASSES CAMERA. Dalton's face framed by the car window.

EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE TO WESLEY'S RANCH HOUSE

Where the car pulls to a stop. O'Connor gets out, goes around and opens the door for Dalton, who takes his time climbing out. Then he follows the boys inside.

INT. WESLEY'S HOUSE

is enormous as would be expected. Expensive fittings on the garish side. Tinker and O'Connor lead Dalton through the place to:

INT. WESLEY'S LIVING ROOM

On the far side of the house. The living room is surrounded by the porch that looks directly down on the river... and past that, Emmet's place with Dalton's horse barn.

Wesley's seated in that same rocker on the porch as usual. He's eating steak tartare for lunch. And a beer. Off in the back somewhere: The sounds of an AEROBICS TAPE. Denise does her workout somewhere in the bowels of the house. Wesley looks up -- gestures for Dalton to take the chair opposite. Dalton just stands.

WESLEY
You want a beer, Dalton? What'll you have?...

Waves a dismissal at Tinker and O'Connor --

WESLEY
And shut the door.
(to Dalton, familiar)
I can't listen to that crap. Sit down! Sit down!

Dalton sits.

WESLEY
What about some lunch?

Dalton says nothing.

WESLEY
Suit yourself.

Goes on eating the steak tartar with relish. Dalton looks over at a photograph hanging on the wall.

WESLEY
I see you looking at a picture of my grandfather.

DALTON
(dry)
Looks like an important man.

WESLEY
He was an asshole. You're a smart boy, aren't you, Dalton?

Dalton just looks at him.

WESLEY
Just not too realistic. Hell, Dalton, when I came to this town it was nothin'! I brought in a mall --- I got the Fotomat in here, I got the Seven-Eleven -- J.C. Penny's comin' here because of me! Ask anybody, they'll tell you.

DALTON
You've gotten rich off the people in this town.

WESLEY
(laughs)
Of course I have! And I'll get richer! I believe we all have a purpose on this earth. The Lord gives everybody a role to play in the grand scheme of things. A destiny. I have a faith in that destiny. It tells me to gather all to me that is mine.
(pause)
Christ, you get paid for beatin' people up. Tell me you don't enjoy it? Course you do -- wouldn't be human if you didn't.

Dalton says nothing.

WESLEY
(smiles)
I got a cousin down in Memphis, Dalton. Says you just about tore that poor boy to ribbons. Said it was self-defense at the trial but you and me, we know better, don't we? It was love, wasn't it?
(pause)
You in love now, boy?

Dalton goes white with anger, moves to rise...

WESLEY
Relax, relax... How much would it take to get you to come work for me.

DALTON
There's no amount of money.

WESLEY
Well of course there is! We just haven't settled on it yet!
(MORE)

WESLEY (CONT'D)
Well, you think about it, I don't need an answer today. Meanwhile, I don't want any more bad feeling in town. I hope your answer's yes. Right now we're having a hell of a lot of fun. But should the answer be no -- that'll be the time I won't want to see your face again. If I do, you'll be mind to do with whatever I choose.

Dalton looks at Wesley, then down past him... to the river, and to his home in the horse barn there.

HIS POV

The place is tiny, vulnerable.

WESLEY (O.S.)
Tinker! Pie! Desert!

Turns back to Dalton:

WESLEY
Think about it, Dalton.

Dalton says nothing.

WESLEY
You understand me?

Nothing. Looks at Wesley -- whose warmth has suddenly faded. His expression cold, icy. Eyes like a snake's.

WESLEY
I hope so. Fighting me would be foolish.

DALTON
How's that.

Wesley breaks out in a grin.

WESLEY
Hell Dalton, you say you'd only kill for money. I was in love once too... but I kill for pleasure.

Dalton looks at him steadily, but Wesley can only smile, pleasure-filled! Tinker shows up with his pie, places it in front of him... as Dalton stands, walks past him. Wesley signals his henchmen to let him pass as he digs into his pie -- then:

WESLEY
(calls after him)
I'll be expecting an answer!

CUT TO:

INT. HORSE BARN - LATE THAT NIGHT

Wade wakes up in the middle of the night. Looks out the window of the horse barn. Sees Dalton landing punch after punch on the Makiwara.

ON DALTON

Hips low to the ground, his body turning with each punch. He strikes at the board... thump, thump, thump... Wade climbs down the ladder, joins him there. Dalton's covered in sweat.

GARRETT
You got it bad, don't you?

But Dalton doesn't stop, just continues to strike at the board... in the same rhythmic fashion.

GARRETT
(nods at Mercedes)
Let's crank that thing up!

DALTON
For where.

GARRETT
Mexico, maybe. Kick back, pull ourselves together. We can be out of here by dawn. Never see this place again.

DALTON
You can go any time you want.

GARRETT
Aw, shit.

DALTON
You oughta split.

GARRETT
You're just an idiot. Tomorrow you'll be feeling better.
(climbs stairs back to loft)
Know what an idiot you are...

CUT TO:

INT. HORSE BARN - NIGHT (TOWARDS DAWN)

The sound of HORSES WINNYING, BUCKING around in their stalls. The little light from dawn breaking through from under the barn door carries with it... smoke.

INT. HORSE BARN - UPPER FLOOR

As Dalton and Wade wake suddenly, scatter down the stairs half-dressed, Dalton pulls on his shirt...

THEIR POV

It seems as if the horse barn itself is on fire.

EXT. HORSE BARN DOOR

The two of them push open the door --- revealing: the source of the flames: Up the road to the right; Emmett's house, its roof lit up with fire, sparks shooting up into the sky through the trees. Dalton and Wade take off up the road towards the house. They are passed by: A carload of locals, some of whom we've seen before. And behind them, a farm truck -- heading towards the house. To join a number of others just arrived to help fight the fire... Screaming to each other, dragging water up from the river down below to douse the growing fire -- the flames shooting and leaping from one part of the wooden roof to the next...

ON LOCALS

trailing down the banks to the river to bring up more water. Their faces covered with soot, smoke... The fire department is nowhere in sight. Dalton moves to haul water up from the river's bank and circles around to the back of the house.

EXT. BACK OF EMMET'S RANCH HOUSE

Off behind the group of those fighting the fire there. Emmett among them. Dalton moves up behind them standing there as if deciding where to join in himself when: Dalton cuts his eyes left, to something just O.S. Hidden in the darkness of the trees, moving quietly back towards the incline down to the bank of the river... It is the form of Jimmy Reno. Disappearing into the brush.

ON DALTON

Drops the bucket he carries to the ground. Water lost in a fire. Takes off into the darkened brush himself.

EXT. BANKS DOWN TO RIVER

Wooded here. Darkness covering the movement of Reno as he moves through the brush. SOUNDS of the firefighters FADE OFF...

ON DALTON

Utterly concentrated. Listens for Reno, as if trailing him, cuts through the darkness.

CLOSE ON RENO

Turns to look over his shoulder, aware of another's presence, turns close to the ground, moves upland for a minute rather than down to lose whoever follows him...

ON DALTON

Stops, then turns himself stands there for a second, then cuts straight through the brush, ending up on the bank of the river... stands there waiting. Twenty feet from him Jimmy Reno falls from the trees, lands on his knees and comes up standing, back lit by the red of the sky. His back to Dalton. Dalton waits a second, his eyes adjusting, then rockets up the bank of the river full force at Reno. Reno turns just as Dalton reaches him, catches him on the side pitching Dalton down into the wet sand of the river. Dalton dragging Reno with him. Reno rises first, loses his footing in the mud and sand, then regains his stance, punches Dalton over and over again, drives him down into the mud... Dalton keeps trying to pull away from Reno enough to insure some footing, then bucks against him. They seem to richochet off of one another for a second... and in that separation we see the glint of the morning light off of the gun Reno has pulled from his belt. It moves as if in SLOW MOTION, rising from OUT OF FRAME until level with Dalton... up towards his chest...

ON DALTON

His head turning slowly, catching sight of the gun... his eyes cast first downward, then up into the face of Reno... following the arc of the pistol... watching quietly... as if for a second deciding whether to take some action or not...

CLOSEUP ON DALTON'S FACE

Gathering emotion, and then concentration. A look of such intensity as we have not yet seen. Dalton pulls back and levels a punch at Reno's neck. The GUN GOING OFF in the process, FIRING past Dalton's side as Reno crumples down to the ground dead. Time seems to pass as Dalton looks down at the body of Reno. There is no movement there. No breath. Dalton turns, facing the opposite shore, facing the home of Brad Wesley. High up on the ridge there Wesley's porch is just lit by the breaking dawn -- the light surrounding the porch is yellow light. And Wesley's chair there seems to be occupied, although at this distance we can't really tell.

RESUME ON DALTON

The sky behind him red from the fire in contrast to Wesley's. Dalton steps slowly down into the water of the river, tugging the body of Reno until it floats easily by itself...

ON DALTON

Walking waist high in water, his hand balanced on the body of Reno as though it might escape him. Dalton's face is once again cool, his expression is emotionless as he moves towards the center of the stream... And then, once there, gives the body of Reno a shove. Back towards Brad Wesley... it drifts the five or so feet directly in that direction. With Dalton standing just behind it. The push Dalton gave it sends it almost as far as the opposite bank.

DALTON
(calls)
Wesley! Wesley!...

But there is no answer until, from way up on the porch:

WESLEY (O.S.)
(strained with anger)
What is it, boy?!

DALTON
(calls)
The answer is no.

ON BODY

Seen like a ceremonial boat returning home.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. BRAD WESLEY'S PORCH - ON WESLEY - AT THAT MOMENT

As he stands on his porch lit by the rising sun. Looking down on the river...

HIS POV

The body of Jimmy Reno, his favorite, drifting towards shore as the small figure of Dalton trudges wearily back towards shore...

RESUME ON WESLEY

As he seems to explode with rage inside. His face pale with it. Ashen. All of the evil in the world seems centered in his expression...

WESLEY
(hums)
"... but when he jokes my honey...
he's a dog ---
His jokin' ain't so funny.
What a dog.
Johnny is the joker
that's a-tryin' to steal my ba-by..."

("Bird Dog" -- Bryant -- 1958)

EXT. ROAD LEADING TO RANCHER'S HOUSE - DAWN

CAMERA FOLLOWS Dalton as he moves quickly down the road towards Emmett's house. He is dirty, soaked to the skin, clothes caked with mud from the banks of the river. Looks up towards the house.

HIS POV

The fire out, the place half-burnt down, smoke still rises to the sky. Pretty much deserted. Dalton looks around; no Wade.

Dalton passes a few townsfolk as they trudge back up towards the main road. Plainly exhausted, grimy; there's little difference in Dalton's appearance. Bouncer Jack passes among them.

DALTON
(to him)
--You seen Wade?

JACK
No. Think he took off to town
with somebody...

Looks around; Wade's not with any of the last bunch. Dalton turns, hurries back to the horse barn...

INT. HORSE BARN/DALTON'S ROOM - DAWN

Where Dalton strips his bed, throws his clothes into a canvas bag, moves to the closet door... pulls the .45 automatic in its holster off of the hook there... throws it into the canvas bag.

INT. HORSE BARN/DOWNSTAIRS

Dalton throws back the canvas that covers the Mercedes, tosses the canvas bag into the trunk and slams it shut.

EXT. DRIVE UP TO EMMETT'S RANCHHOUSE - DAY

Dalton whips the Mercedes out of the barn, onto the road that leads to the main road...

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES

As it heads out. Dalton looks to his right... towards Wesley's place. But all seems still there. No movement. Nobody apparent outside...

EXT. ROAD LEADING TOWARDS TOWN - DAY

Mercedes speeds towards town.

INT. MERCEDES

Dalton pulls a small slip of paper from his jeans, unfolds it, checks the address written there.

EXT. SMALL WOODEN HOUSE AT EDGE OF TOWN - DAY

Doc's house. It's nine A.M. when the Mercedes pulls up the curb in front of the house. Dalton looks left and right as he climbs from the car, heads up the walk.

EXT. DOC'S HOUSE

Where Dalton knocks and waits. Doc emerges from the place, dressed in a robe, looks at him startled. Immediately pleased at his presence. Then seeing his expression, her pleasure fades...

DOC
Dalton --

DALTON
(pushes past her into the house)
I can't find Wade.

INT. DOC'S HOUSE

Elizabeth follows him inside. Dalton looks around for a second; it registers that he's never seen the place before, as:

DOC
-- What's wrong?

DALTON
You've got to get out of here.

DOC
What --

DALTON
Get your stuff.

DOC
Why --

DALTON
Go on. Get your stuff.

DOC
Dalton -- I can't just --

DALTON
I killed Jimmy Reno.

Doc stands there, stunned...

DALTON
Come on! --

Looks around, pulls a closet door open, finding nothing of use there, throws open the next closet he comes to... locates an old suitcase on the floor of the closet, shoves it at her...

DALTON
--Get your things...

DOC
Where're we going?

Doc moves to some drawers, as if on automatic pilot, drags things out from the dresser, piles them haphazardly in the case...

DALTON
(corrects her)
You're going.

Doc stops, turns around to face him.

DOC
Where am I going?

DALTON
I don't want to know. Just go.
Call me.

DOC
(pause)
Where am I going to call you?

DALTON
I don't know. Let's go.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT OF DOC'S HOUSE - DAY

We see the two cars, Doc's convertible, and Dalton's Mercedes, pull away from the curb, each in opposite direction. They pass each other.

DOC'S POV

Looks over at Dalton as she passes. He glances at her briefly, then turns back to the road, seems a thousand miles away already.

EXT. ROAD INTO TOWN - DAY

Just at the edge of town. Where the road becomes Main Street. Dalton slows, then slowly cruises the street. Looks left and right, scans the building fronts and doorways to stores. Looks for Wade. Nothing.

EXT. PARKING LOT BEHIND DOUBLE DEUCE - DAY

As Dalton pulls up directly behind the building, parks just behind the back entrance to the place. Climbs out of the car.

We hear the FAINT RINGING of the TELEPHONE from inside the place. Dalton uses his key, enters.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - DAY

Dark. Empty, the chairs piled up on the table tops. Dalton moves to the phone on the wall behind the bar, switching on a light.

Picks up the receiver. Just listens. We hear Brad Wesley's voice. Cheerful, energetic!

WESLEY (V.O.)
Top of the morning!

Dalton says nothing. Wesley continues congenially.

WESLEY (V.O.)
Here's what's on for today: Wade or Doc?

DALTON
What...

WESLEY
One of 'em dies.

A long pause, Dalton takes this in.

DALTON
I'll make you a deal. Me for them.

Wesley gives a sharp rap of laughter at this.

WESLEY (V.O.)
I could take you out any time, Dalton. That'd be easy.
(MORE)

WESLEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But I don't believe in doing the easy thing. I believe in doing the right thing.
(beat)
Who's it gonna be?

Dalton moves this way and that, glances around the Double Deuce as if Wesley or any of his men might be here, standing right next to him, or watching him from some corner. But the place is deserted...

DALTON
You know I can't answer that question.

WESLEY (V.O.)
(amused)
Well then, I guess I'll just have to flip a coin! Hold on a second.

We hear nothing for a moment, then the sound of a COIN CLINKING on the glass tabletop. Another second until Wesley picks up the receiver and:

WESLEY (V.O.)
Well Dalton, I'd sure like to tell you how it turned out.

And then he hangs up, leaving Dalton standing there, the line gone dead in his hand.

EXT. BACK OF DOUBLE DEUCE - DAY

Dalton emerges, moves back to the Mercedes, opens the trunk, pulls out the canvas bag, slams the trunk closed.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE

Dalton enters, pulls the holster from the bag. Pulls an extra clip out and then, tosses the bag in a corner. Slides the action of the .45 back and forth a couple times, takes a clip and jams it in the handle. Slides the action back and chambers a round. Shoves the extra clip in his pocket.

There is NOISE from the side entrance. A thud as a body slumps against the door. Then, a CAR PEELING away.

Dalton moves to the side door, opens it. Revealing:

Wade crumbled to the floor just outside the Double Deuce.

Dalton rushes over to him, checks outside... nobody there. Drags Wade over to Tilghman's office...

INT. TILGHMAN'S OFFICE

... and onto the couch there. Wade's been beated to within an inch of his life. Face bloody, clothes ripped. Just barely conscious.

DALTON
You alright?

WADE
Yeah.
(pause)
They said I got off lucky...

But Dalton then realizes that Wesley must have gotten hold of Doc instead...

DALTON
I got to find Doc.

WADE
(tries to rise)
Let's go...

DALTON
(pushes him back down onto the couch)
Don't give me any shit. I'll be back.

Wade sinks back onto the couch. Dalton's plainly relieved and overjoyed at Wade's return.

DALTON
Then we'll take a ride.

WADE
(faint smile)
Okay, youngster...

Dalton leaves him there...

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Dalton strides through the place. Up to the on-duty NURSE at the registration desk.

DALTON
Doctor Ellsworth?

NURSE
Who are ---

DALTON
It's an emergency. Call her.
(pause)
Please.

By his sheer intensity Dalton wills the woman to pick up the phone, refers to the on-call sheet, and dials. Waits a moment, then:

NURSE
Who---

DALTON
She'll know.

NURSE
(into receiver)
Doctor, I have a...

Listens, then just hands the phone to Dalton.

DALTON
(into receiver)
Where are you.

Dalton glances at the clock.

DALTON
I'll pick you up.
(beat)
No -- meet me at the Double Deuce. Wade's in bad shape. Ten minutes. Hurry.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE - DAY

Dalton pulls around the back of the bar, parks, climbs out of the car. Obviously has beaten Doc back to the place.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - DAY

As Dalton enters. Looks around. The light's still on in Tilghman's office, but the door to it is open, scattering light out onto the floor of the bar itself...

Illuminating the figure seated on a stool at the bar. Hunched over. Dalton approaches:

DALTON
--Wade? What the fuck're you ---

Reaches Wade's side, moves to take him by the arm when...

Wade merely falls forward, dead. Onto the bar's surface.

Time slows for Dalton as he reaches forward in a horribly futile move as if to steady Wade, like he's had one too many drinks.

All color drains from Dalton's face as he turns the body of Wade toward him... sees the knife in Wade's chest, and then, the note pinned there as well, covered in creeping designs of Wade's blood, that blithely informs Dalton:

"It was tails."

A long moment. Disbelief, horror, then: the sound of the side door opening, tentative footsteps...

Dalton can hardly bring himself to look up, face Doc who stands there. He moves to her, stops her from getting to Wade...

By the time he has reached her, his expression is numb. He says nothing, except for:

DALTON
I'm gonna kill Wesley. I'll gonna kill him right here.

EXT. DRIVEWAY TO WESLEY'S PLACE - DAY

Doc walks directly up the drive. Her steps are even, she looks neither left or right. It's as if she's seen the place a hundred times before.

EXT. WESLEY'S HOUSE

As Doc walks directly past Ketchum and O'Connor. Ketchum looks to O'Connor: Search me. Let her by.

Doc moves to the side of the house, glances down off of the patio there.

HER POV - WESLEY

on his putting green putting a few into the ground.

BACK TO SCENE

She watches him for a second, then moves down the steps, heads across the green to him.

EXT. WESLEY'S PUTTING GREEN

WESLEY
(looking up)
Elizabeth. What a lovely surprise.

DOC
Dalton says he wants to see you.

Wesley turns back to his golf, steadies his club...

WESLEY
All he has to do is pick up a phone.

Doc takes a second, then, softly:

DOC
I wanted to tell you.

Wesley looks up, sharply, pulled by the tone in her voice, then, exclaims in disbelief:

WESLEY
By God! He trusts me with you!

DOC
(pause)
I told him not to worry.

Wesley's moved by this, touched by her. Rather matter-of-fact:

WESLEY
You know I've never stopped loving you Elizabeth.

DOC
(softly)
I know, Brad. I knew it when I moved back here.

Pause. Tentatively:

WESLEY
Are you comin' to say goodbye?

DOC
I don't think so.

Wesley seems to react; he softens. Moves to test the waters:

WESLEY
(his most sincere)
He's a drifter you know. To see you with somebody like that, it'd be a shame.

She doesn't argue this. Wesley takes it as a sign. Breaks out in a thankful smile.

WESLEY
How about I make you some lunch and then you'n me'll slide on down to the Double Deuce and pay a visit to our mutual friend.

INT. WESLEY'S LINCOLN CONTINENTAL - DAY

As Wesley drives down Main Street. Newly optimistic, with Elizabeth at his side, Wesley seems at sudden peace with his world! He looks about.

WESLEY
I love spring! How can a man --

Wesley pulls over to the curb directly across from the Double Deuce. They climb out as he takes Doc's arm as if to guide her, and concludes:

WESLEY
---see all this and not believe there's a God.
(smiles sweetly)
You wouldn't by any chance be settin' me up, now would you Elizabeth?

She looks back at him, pale, blank. As if in response to some silent command:

Out from the doorway behind her steps henchman Gary Ketchum. He is joined by Tinker.

Then O'Connor.

And finally... bartender Pat McGurn steps out from the alley next to them. All four of Wesley's henchmen join him... fall in step behind him.

He turns to nephew Pat --

WESLEY
Take her.

Pat grabs Doc, she pulls away...

DOC
No! --

As Pat pulls a 32 cal. Browning from his belt, points it at her, Wesley explains:

WESLEY
Been too much pain lately. Lose somebody like my own son, then you the same day, it'd be too much to bear.
(as Pat drags her off)
Don't fly off the handle, boy!

PAT
(smiles, orders)
C'mon. Over there.

Gives Doc a shove to get her going. Leads her away as the other three stand waiting for Wesley.

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE

As Wesley stands for a second outside the doors to the place. Listens. Absolute silence. His eyes move this way and that, thinks for a second, then gives the three remaining henchmen a quick hand gesture.

They head into the place.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE

Ketchum enters first. He has only his feet planted in the place when Dalton steps out from behind the door.

Ketchum turns, lunges, but by then Dalton's on him, backhands him with the heel of his hand, smashes his nose -- Ketchum's down...

As O'Connor and Tinker are right behind him. Without turning to face them, Dalton picks up a pool cue from the table nearby.

Takes it by the rubber hilt, turns it around in his hand, holds it about two feet from the bottom... like a sword.

As O'Connor's right on him from behind. Dalton merely reaches back with the cue, swings... catches O'Connor full force right between the legs... O'Connor goes down in a howling mess of pain.

As Dalton takes the cue in the other hand as it continues on its arc back from his right hand to his left...

Smashes tinker on the side of the head.

Retrieves the cue, spins around, and knocks O'Connor unconscious. All three of them out. Lying there on the floor. Dalton drops the cue to the ground, stands for a moment. Calms his breathing. Makes no movement, makes no sound. Just listens. Waits.

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE - ON WESLEY

Stands directly outside the door. Has heard what's just gone on. Now hears the silence. Listens as if to hear Dalton's breathing.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - ON DALTON

Stands mid the bodies. Weaponless.

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE - ON WESLEY

Pauses. His expression much like Dalton's now. Cool. Matched in posture. Absolutely confident, he moves to the door of the Double Deuce, pushes through it.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE - ON WESLEY

Glances through the room. The place where Dalton stood just a second ago; now empty. Dalton gone, disappeared.

Wesley hardly looks at the bodies of his three henchmen that litter the floor. Stands there, his eyes cutting left and right. Lethal. Then, jovially... casually, he calls out to the empty place:

WESLEY
What can I do for you, my friend?!

Nothing. Wesley waits, gingerly steps across O'Connor's body, moves softly, quietly, across the room.

INT. FAR SIDE OF BAR - ON WESLEY

His eyes traveling over every inch of the room, looking for Dalton.

We hear a CREAK from somewhere up near the roof. Then silence. Wesley backtracks a few steps. As if gauging something. Turns around then -- his back to the center of the room...

WESLEY
(friendly)
Where are you, boy?!

CAMERA MOVES UP TO:

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE/CORNER OF STAIRCASE - ON DALTON

Crouching there, far up near the ceiling of the vast room -- He's got the Colt Gold Cup tucked under his arm.

Slowly lowers himself down to the floor of the balcony -- takes the gun, silently moves to aim it --

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE/BARROOM - ON WESLEY

Stops for a second, his back to Dalton. We expect for him to be hit any second.

Instead... as if reacting to some extraordinary sixth sense, Wesley suddenly wheels around, pulls a COLT PYTHON out from his belt... and FIRES directly at Dalton.

Hitting him in the arm, the Gold Cup falls from Dalton's hand, goes clattering to the floor below.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE/CORNER OF STAIRCASE - ON DALTON

Wounded, bleeds from the shoulder, cringing in pain, crouching down on the length of the balcony, starts to crawl along, back to the door leading to the staircase...

WESLEY (O.S.)
(laughs)
C'mon down, boy! Let's talk this thing out!

SHOTS RING OUT as Wesley aims, then BLASTS away at the line of railing posts. One by one, they're shattered as Dalton crawls past, dragging his hurt arm. He keeps low to the ground.

INT. DOUBLE DEUCE/BARROOM

Where Wesley, deliberately casual, approaches the Gold Cup, then takes his foot and merely swipes at it, kicks it across the floor a couple times... towards the door, as:

WESLEY
(calls)
You're not angry with me, son, are you?

Wesley gives the Gold Cup a good kick, sends it out the doors of the Double Deuce -- away from any possible usage in the upcoming action...

WESLEY
(pause)
What's this about anyway? One old man? That's what I call mercy killing!

Wesley looks around. No Dalton. Moves back to the center of the room... hums a little tune to himself, then:

WESLEY
I took him out of his suffering! You're not mad at me about that, are you, son? Hell, you took Reno and Reno was in better shape!

ON WESLEY

Stops for a second, then turns around where he stands, back to the walls, starts to back away from the center of the room -- seems to be gauging where Dalton may pop up next --

WESLEY
Hell, you can take one of my boys! How about it? --

When, from just behind him --

Dalton moves out from within the shadows of the entrance to the pool room -- wings out with the pool cue he now carries, catches Wesley directly on the arm, breaks his wrist... the Colt goes falling to the floor. Wesley screams in pain.

Dalton rockets forward with the pool cue, lunges at Wesley, but Wesley jerks away in time, grabs the pool cue from the floor left over from Dalton's fight with the henchmen. Rises as:

WESLEY
I hear that short men've got a lot of repressed hostility, son. That true in your case? I think you need some professional help!

ON DALTON AND WESLEY

as they face each other. Each wounded, each with a pool cue in hand... look directly at each other. Dalton's side covered in blood -- His expression seems empty, concentrates fully on Wesley, each movement determined as he comes at Wesley with the cue, taking broad strokes with it like a sword.

Wesley backing away each time.

WESLEY
I think I know what this is about. I think you lost you faith. That it? You losin' your faith, boy? --

Wesley fakes left, then cuts low to the ground, comes up, connects with Dalton's side... once, then again...

WESLEY
-- That what it is?

Dalton falls to the floor, and Wesley's on him with the pool cue, blasts Dalton's arm with it. Dalton's cue goes richocheting across the floor, Dalton falling after it, trying to protect his wounded arm as he goes.

Throws himself on the cue, turns there on the floor just as Wesley reaches him. And, with all his strength, takes the cue and whips it toward Wesley's right leg. The one he's standing on --

And connects. Wesley goes down, screams in pain, clutching at his knee, as Dalton, breathing hard now, crawls backward a few feet. Thinks that it's all over for Wesley. As we do. When --

Everybody's nightmare, Wesley merely rises as if from the grave, seemingly immortal.

Dalton goes white. Wesley seems to explode inside with anger. His face ashen. His eyes filled with madness. Approaches Dalton slowly, step by step...

When, from the side door --

Doc appears. Bruises run down the side of her face, probably gotten as she fought with Pat outside, gotten during her getaway from Pat --

She stands, with Dalton's Colt Gold Cup in her hand. Instantly fixes on Wesley. She sets and FIRES. Wesley takes the shot in the side, then collapses to the ground.

Doc walks slowly over to Wesley... the gun pointed steadily at his head. Stops right next to him. Looks down at him. When:

Wesley suddenly throws his left leg out at her, catching her with it full force, knocks her off balance, the gun falling from her hand to the ground. As...

Wesley springs up from the floor and, consumed by his madness, back-hands Doc with the flick of his wrist, sends her sprawling across the room...

ON DALTON

Still on the floor with the cue, covered with sweat, Doc's entrance having bought him a few seconds -- moving towards Wesley.

ON WESLEY

His voice a death-rattle. Hoarse with pain. Turns from his beloved Elizabeth:

WESLEY
Look what you made me do, Dalton. Y'know boy, when I put you in the ground, I'm gonna give you a proper burial. A faithful burial. I just want you to know that.

As Doc starts inching back towards them... little by little... across the floor:

Dalton attacks again, hits him in the side... the leg... the back, the blows never landing in the same place twice. Backing Wesley up across the room, until his back is slammed against the nearest pool table.

Tinker rises then, having just come to from across the room. Now lurches towards the boss as if to help -- Dalton whips around with the cue again, as Tinker lunges at him. Manages to slam the cue across Tinker's head, putting him out again.

When he turns back to face Wesley --

WESLEY
(breathing hard)
Dalton -- I thought it would be fun to fight you --

Doc, now ten feet or so behind Dalton, slows, looks up in horror to see:

HER POV - WESLEY

has reached into his boot, pulled out a smaller revolver, aims it directly at Dalton --

WESLEY
(sincerely)
I really did. But I just don't have the time...

ON DALTON

The cue still raised in his hand, stands there, stock-still as:

FROM FRONT DOOR OF DOUBLE DEUCE

Four men: Red Webster, Rancher Emmett, bartender Ernie, and the car dealer, Peter Stroudenmire, head inside the place all at once. Each has a SHOTGUN. Each moves like lightning, aims directly at Wesley on the pool table. Lets go with a BARRAGE OF FIRE.

The noise fills the room as if the entire place is exploding. Then, there is sudden silence.

Brad Wesley lies dead on the pool table, his body riddled with bullets.

There is a long moment where no one moves -- then, we hear the VOICES OF APPROACHING TOWNSPEOPLE moving quickly towards the Double Deuce.

Red Webster moves from man to man, takes each shotgun, gathers them in his arms, and merely heads out the back door of the Double Deuce with them. Disappears.

O'Connor rises from the floor, conscious finally from the noise, takes one look around -- looks from man to man in fear, then runs out the side door, leaving his friend Ketchum lying there.

Tinker appears from the side, moves sadly over to the table, looks down at the fallen body of the boss, starts to weep silently, shakes his head.

We hear the voice of Rancher Emmett, off behind him:

EMMETT (O.S.)
What happened here? I didn't see nothin' -- you see anything, Pete?

A pause, then, the voice of the car dealer:

PETE (O.S.)
Naw, I didn't. You see anything, Red?...

ON RED

Having just entered, back from having gotten rid of the guns, as other townsfolk enter the Double Deuce -- And Doc and Dalton move past them, outside...

RED
I didn't see nothin'. Not a thing.
(pause)
You see anything, Tinker?

And poor Tinker looks up, over at the men, then, as if to concur with them:

TINKER
I got hit over the head with a pool cue.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOUBLE DEUCE

Dalton and Doc move through the gathering crowd outside the bar -- he holds his arm close in to his body. Her eye is already swelling up. They head around the side of the bar -- to the back, over to Dalton's Mercedes parked there.

She looks at him, then at the car, then back at him.

DOC
(quietly)
You gonna go now?

Dalton leans against the car, thinks about this, then:

DALTON
I been movin' all my life.

He looks at her.

DALTON
I was thinkin' maybe I'd open up my own place.

He unlocks the door to the car, stands there, looks at her, waits. Hesitantly:

DOC
You're gonna need a cooler... aren't you?

He smiles at her. Doc moves over to him, as he puts his good arm around her, brings her in close. Then he reaches around, unlocks the passenger side door for her, welcomes her in.

FADE OUT.

THE END