

The Hitcher

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Based on the screenplay

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Unspecified Draft

FADE IN:

RAIN PUMMELS a tattered MISSING PERSON FLYER fluttering in the window of a highway rest stop. Whoever the boy is pictured in the faded flyer has clearly been missing a long time.

WE PULL BACK to reveal a DISTRAUGHT FATHER screeching his Volvo to a stop in front of the rest stop. Leaving the engine running, he rushes out of his car, and quickly tapes a home-made flyer of his missing teenage daughter in the same window.

He has the same desperate look all parents of newly-missing children do: if he can just put up enough flyers fast enough, it just might bring his beloved child home.

As he rushes back into his car, speeding off to the next rest stop, LIGHTNING rips across the ominous sky.

FLASH TO -- A COMPLETELY BLACK SCREEN.

Superimpose: **OVER 250,000 PEOPLE DISAPPEAR
ON AMERICAN INTERSTATES ANNUALLY.**

FLASH TO -- NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE of a tearful family offering a reward for any information leading to the return of their family member; police asking the public for help in another case; a flashing Amber Alert reports yet another.

FLASH TO -- A MONTAGE of dozens of milk cartons with MISSING CHILDREN pictures mixed with hundreds of HAVE YOU SEEN ME? mailers.

FLASH TO -- VOLUNTEERS showing photographs to truckers at gas stations, waitresses at roadside diners, and desk clerks in motels. The response is always the same: I wish I could help you, but I haven't seen anyone who looks like that.

FLASH TO -- A COMPLETELY BLACK SCREEN.

Superimpose: **LESS THAN ONE PERCENT ARE FOUND ALIVE.**

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS -- DAY

Evanston, Illinois. It's the last day of the school year. STUDENTS scramble through puddles as RAIN pounds down from a foreboding sky.

Some carry textbooks en route to final exams; others carry bottles of champagne heading for graduation parties; others pull suitcases on their way home for the summer.

INT. DORM ROOM

GRACE ANDREWS, 20, who is stunning even in a t-shirt and jeans, but pained, like something is troubling her, removes the last of her posters from the walls and stuffs them into an overflowing trashcan.

All her possessions are packed into TWO WEATHERED SUITCASES sitting by the door.

Her boyfriend, JIM HALSEY, 21, handsome, carefree, enters, shaking off the rain. LIGHTNING CRACKLES through the window.

JIM

Well, at least the weather's cooperating.

He cracks a smile. So does she. No matter what the circumstances, he can always make her smile.

JIM (CONT'D)

You ready?

GRACE

As I'll ever be...

She takes one last look around her dorm room, then slings a backpack over her shoulder. He picks up her suitcases, and carries them out the door.

EXT. NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS -- DAY

The RAIN continues as Jim quickly loads her suitcases into the back of his Jeep Cherokee. Grace opens the front passenger door.

GRACE

You really don't have to do this, you know? The forecast for the entire weekend sucks.

JIM

What are you talking about? This is perfect driving weather...

KABOOM! A massive THUNDERCLAP rattles the sky.

EXT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- DAY

Jim and Grace are visible through the rain-streaked windows of his Cherokee as he winds his way off campus.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM
It can't be raining everywhere.
Somewhere in this country, it is a
picture perfect day. The sun is
shining, a gentle breeze is blowing,
and we are going to find it...

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim looks up to the looming clouds through the THUMPING
windshield wipers.

JIM
...Or, not.

GRACE
(re: trip)
I hope you know this isn't going to
get you off the hook.

JIM
I never said it was.
(beat)
Might help a little, though.

He looks at her expectantly.

GRACE
Not a chance.

He looks him directly in the eyes. She's not kidding.

EXT. EVANSTON, ILLINOIS - AERIAL VIEW -- DAY

From high above the streets amid the ever-darkening clouds,
we follow Jim's Cherokee moving away from Lake Michigan
through HEAVY TRAFFIC. The storm shows no signs of abating.

JIM (V.O.)
Can I see the directions for a second?

GRACE (V.O.)
I thought you said you were bringing
them?

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- DAY

Jim squints to see the upcoming road signs through the rain-
drenched windshield.

JIM
No, you said you were.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM (CONT'D)

I was going to, but you said you had already MapQuested it.

GRACE

No, I said I was going to, but you said--

He smiles slyly as he reveals the MAPQUEST directions folded up in his pocket. She PUNCHES HIM in the shoulder.

GRACE (CONT'D)

(playfully)

You really are a jerk.

JIM

You know me. I don't play hard to get. I play hard to want.

GRACE

Well, consider yourself a success. Your strategy is working.

He glances at his shoulder.

JIM

(re: punch)

That wasn't actually supposed to hurt, was it?

WHAM! She punches him harder.

GRACE

No. But that was.

He nods, gritting his teeth. He glances out his window to hide the fact that the punch actually did hurt.

EXT. EDENS EXPRESSWAY -- DUSK

Thunder RUMBLES as rain continues pouring on the bumper-to-bumper traffic. Jim's Cherokee is just one of thousands of vehicles heading out of Chicago. Mechanical fish swimming in a crowded stream.

EXT. KENNEDY EXPRESSWAY -- NIGHT

The further the Cherokee gets away from Chicago, the more traffic starts to thin out. As do the surrounding signs of civilization. Fewer buildings, fewer billboards, fewer exits.

The Cherokee passes a sign: NEXT GAS - 27 MILES.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- NIGHT

Opposing HEADLIGHTS pass LESS FREQUENTLY. Rain rhythmically PELTS the roof as Grace sees the passing ROAD SIGN, then glances at the FUEL GAUGE, which reads a third of a tank.

JIM

Relax. We're fine on gas.

GRACE

Oh, I'm sure. This thing probably gets what, four miles to the gallon?

JIM

Five, easy.

GRACE

With all this rain, the last thing I want to deal with is running out of gas.

JIM

I've got oars in the back if we need them.

He flashes her an endearing look. He truly can always get her to her smile.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- NIGHT

It's PITCH BLACK. Desolate. The only lights of any kind come in infrequent pairs of HEADLIGHTS, which reveal the still POURING RAIN. The sound is a CONSTANT RUMBLE.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- NIGHT

Visibility is nominal. Jim cruises along at 55 mph. Grace looks around at the surrounding DARKNESS.

GRACE

You know what's weird? As much as I've grown to hate Chicago traffic, I already kind of miss it. The comfort of strangers, I guess...

JIM

You're right, that's weird.

(beat)

You're coming back to school, Grace.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

(resigned)

Not if I can't get more student aid,
I'm not.

JIM

You'll get it. I know you will.

GRACE

Easy for you to say.

JIM

Actually, it's not. It took me most
of the last three days.

GRACE

What are you talking about?

He removes a THICK FOLDER from beneath his seat, which he
hands to Grace.

JIM

There's a lot more out there. These
are only a start.

Flipping through the folder, which contains over 100
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS, Grace is absolutely stunned.

GRACE

When...did you have time to do all
this?

JIM

My last final was Tuesday.

She is clearly moved.

GRACE

(marvelling)

This is...I don't know what to say.

JIM

(sincerely)

I want you to come back for senior
year. For your sake, as well as
mine.

She reaches over to gently caress his cheek.

GRACE

You know every now and then, you are
absolutely the greatest guy in the
world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He grins from ear-to-ear.

JIM

Thank you for noticing.

They ride quietly, enjoying the moment, and each other's company. MUSIC gently plays. Accompanied by:

The RHYTHMIC HUM of tires on asphalt;

The LOW-PITCHED DRONE of the engine;

And the THP, WRR... THP, WRR... THP, WRR... of the wiper blades sliding back and forth across the windshield.

Jim notices something in Grace's face.

JIM (CONT'D)

What?

GRACE

(shaking her head)

Nothing.

He looks at her closely.

JIM

What's wrong?

GRACE

Nothing. Honest.

He rolls his eyes with frustration.

JIM

I know when something's bothering you.

GRACE

Jim, I swear--

JIM

--I never meant to hurt you.

GRACE

(beat)

I know.

JIM

You're the last person in the world I'd ever want to cause any pain.

She nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM (CONT'D)
I know I fucked up. And you need to
know it'll never--

Glancing through the windshield, something LOOMING AHEAD OF
THEM suddenly catches his attention.

JIM (CONT'D)
SHIT!!!

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

A SHADOWY FIGURE of a man stands ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

He stands next to a Nissan Pathfinder parked on the shoulder.
The man is directly in the path of the Cherokee. SCREECH!!!

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim quickly CRANKS the steering wheel hard to the left.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

Tires SQUEAL across the rain-slicked highway. The Cherokee
SKIDS WILDLY.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim fights the wheel, just barely maintaining control.

JIM
SON-OF-A-BITCH!

The TIRES SCREECH LOUDLY as he stops the Cherokee 50 yards
past the Pathfinder.

JIM (CONT'D)
You okay?

She nods, clearly shaken.

JIM (CONT'D)
WHO THE HELL STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF
THE GODDAMN ROAD?!

They both turn around to look--

THROUGH THE REAR WINDOW

The SHADOWY FIGURE walks toward them through the POURING
RAIN. His name is...

JOHN RYDER

Early 30s, average height, average build, dressed in a flannel shirt and jeans. He continues toward Jim and Grace.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE

Jim keeps his foot ON THE BRAKE as he presses the DOOR UNLOCK BUTTON. CLICK! All four doors simultaneously unlock.

GRACE

(urgently)

Uh, what the hell are you doing?

JIM

I'm going to see if he's okay.

As he attempts to move the gear shift into PARK, she grabs his hand. The transmission remains in DRIVE.

GRACE

Jim, please, let's just go.

JIM

It's pouring out there.

GRACE

Do not get out of this car.

JIM

If you had car trouble in the middle of nowhere, wouldn't you want somebody to stop and help you?

GRACE

I would understand why they wouldn't.

(beat)

Look, we'll call somebody for help, but let's go.

Jim picks up his CELL PHONE, which will NOT turn on.

JIM

My phone is dead. How are we supposed to make a call?

She takes out her phone, which reads: NO SERVICE.

GRACE

I don't know!

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder's face GLOWS RED in the Cherokee's BRAKE LIGHTS as he continues toward Jim and Grace.

From initial appearances, there is nothing particularly menacing about him.

We understand why Jim would consider helping him.

RYDER'S POV

Through the heavy rain, Jim and Grace are little more than TWO SILHOUETTES inside the Cherokee.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim looks down to where Grace holds him by the arm.

GRACE

We'll call for help at the next gas station.

JIM

Let go of my arm, Grace.

He tries to shake free of her arm, but she won't let go.

GRACE

(intensely)
You are not getting out of this car.

JIM

The hell I'm not!

He struggles against her as she glances repeatedly out the rear window.

GRACE

THE HELL YOU ARE!

She suddenly extends her left leg over the center console and STOMPS ON THE GAS!

EXT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

VROOM! The vehicle takes off SCREECHING on the slick pavement just as Ryder reaches for the left side rear passenger door.

BURNING RUBBER leaves SMOKE WAFTING by his GLOWING RED FACE.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim stares angrily at Grace as HER FOOT remains ON THE GAS PEDAL.

THE SPEEDOMETER RISES QUICKLY: 20 mph...30...40...

JIM

You can take your foot off the gas
any time now!

She finally does so. Livid, Jim glares at her.

JIM (CONT'D)

(sharply)

You happy?! He probably thinks we
were fucking with him!

She knows he's right. She DOES feel guilty about leaving a stranded motorist, but NOT enough to turn around.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- NIGHT

Ryder watches the Cherokee fade into the distance with a curious absence of malice. His expression is one of intrigue.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim glances IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR until Ryder is no longer visible. Jim turns to Grace.

She stares at him, about to say something, then turns to face forward. They ride IN SILENCE.

EXT. REST STOP -- NIGHT

Jim pulls into a rest stop with a modest convenience store. He stops next to the gas pumps, which are protected from the rain by a rusty metal roof.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim turns off the engine. They sit IN SILENCE for a tense beat.

GRACE

I'm sorry. I kind of freaked out
back there.

JIM

You think?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

It was just...I don't know...

He moves closer to her.

JIM

(reassuringly)

What's done is done. I can forget
about it if you can.

GRACE

(beat)

You sure?

Her eyes search his. He nods, then kisses her gently.

JIM

I'm sure.

He opens his car door.

JIM (CONT'D)

You hungry?

GRACE

Starving.

They both get out of the car.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- CONTINUOUS

An inbred-looking CLERK stands behind the counter, looking on as Jim and Grace enter and browse the food aisles. Jim holds up two different boxes.

JIM

Ding Dongs or Twinkies?

GRACE

Ding Dongs.

He puts the Ding Dongs under his arm, then holds up two chip bags.

JIM

Doritos or Cheetos?

GRACE

Cheetos.

He puts the Cheetos under his other arm, then holds up two types of jerky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM
Turkey jerky or beef?

GRACE
Yuck. Neither.

She turns toward the Clerk.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Excuse me, would you have a bathroom
I could use?

The Clerk points to a set of doors in the back.

CLERK
Through those double doors. Women's
is on the left.

GRACE
Thank you.

She exits through the doors. The Clerk turns to Jim.

CLERK
(with authority)
If there's one thing you learn from
working here, it's that women never
go for the jerky.

JIM
Hey, we passed a guy who was having
car trouble a few miles back. Could
I borrow your phone to--

Something THROUGH THE WINDOWS grabs his attention.

JIM'S POV

A PICK-UP TRUCK pulls into the rest stop. A SHADOWY FIGURE
is visible sitting in the back. JOHN RYDER. Who is soaked
to the bone.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim immediately turns his back to the windows, hoping not to
be seen by Ryder.

JIM
Uh, never mind. Looks like he already
got a ride.

EXT. REST STOP -- CONTINUOUS

As the pick-up stops next to a gas pump, Ryder surveys the area around him.

RYDER'S POV

He focuses on Jim's Jeep Cherokee parked next to a nearby gas pump.

RYDER

smiles slyly, then climbs out of the back of the pick-up. He turns to the DRIVER as he starts filling his tank.

RYDER

Thanks for the ride.

DRIVER

You sure we can't take you any further?

Ryder nods, moving toward the Cherokee. When he sees that the vehicle is empty, he moves toward the convenience store.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim busies himself in one of the aisles as Ryder enters, shaking off the rain. He SNEEZES loudly.

CLERK

Hell of a night out there.

Ryder nods. He glances toward Jim for a beat, then turns back to the Clerk.

RYDER

Would you know the number of the nearest tow truck company?

CLERK

Sure do. Want me to call them for you?

RYDER

I would appreciate it.

As the Clerk calls the towing company, Ryder casually browses the food aisles, gradually moving closer to Jim.

JIM

(awkwardly)

Hey, I'm...really sorry about--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RYDER

--Excuse me?

He acts as if he does NOT know what Jim is talking about.

JIM

I was in that car that stopped...but
didn't pick you up.

Ryder nods.

RYDER

Usually, people either stop, or drive
right by, but not--

JIM

--Like I said, I'm sorry.

Ryder nods his acceptance. Talking to the towing company,
the Clerk cups the phone with his hand.

CLERK

He says all their trucks are out on
multiple calls. Must be the weather.
It's going to take them until morning
to get somebody out here.

Ryder shakes his head. Just his luck. He SHIVERS from being
completely wet.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Tell you what -- I've got two hours
left on my shift. If you don't mind
waiting, I'll give you a lift to a
motel in Mechanicsville where you
can dry off and get some rest while
you wait.

RYDER

Thanks, that's decent of you.

He rubs his hands in front of a heating vent, trying to warm
himself. Jim approaches the Clerk.

JIM

Is Mechanicsville east or west of
here?

CLERK

Thirteen miles west, give or take.

Jim turns to Ryder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM
If you want, I'll give you a ride.

Ryder gives him a nod of thanks.

MOMENTS LATER

Grace comes out of the back doors, pausing when she sees Jim standing with a stranger (Ryder) THROUGH THE WINDOWS.

GRACE
What the hell?

EXT. REST STOP -- NIGHT

Grace approaches Jim, who stands with Ryder as he fills the gas tank.

GRACE
(concerned)
Uh, Jim, what's going on?

JIM
Grace, this is John Ryder. John, my girlfriend, Grace.

GRACE
(to Ryder)
Hi.

JIM
This is the guy we didn't pick-up.
A better Samaritan than us gave him
a lift. He needs a short ride down
the interstate.

GRACE
Is he calling a cab?

JIM
There are no cabs out here, Grace.
We're giving him a ride.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- NIGHT

VWOOSH! The Cherokee BUZZES right in front of us, revealing a ROAD SIGN, which reads: MECHANICSVILLE - 12 MILES.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- NIGHT

Ryder sits in the front passenger seat as Jim drives. Grace sits in the back seat, staring angrily at Jim IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR with her IPOD CRANKED through her ear buds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM

She listens to music so loud, I swear,
she's going to make herself deaf.

Unable to hear him, she turns on the OVERHEAD LIGHT, and starts to flip through the SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS contained inside the folder. Jim shakes his head.

JIM (CONT'D)

I don't know what her problem is.

RYDER

Why did she want to sit in the back?

JIM

To sit as far away from me as possible, I guess.

(shaking his head)
She'll get over it.

RYDER

Maybe she will, maybe she won't.
Women are like that...

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- NIGHT

The Cherokee BARRELS through the unrelenting rain.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

In the back seat, Grace flips through the applications inside in the folder Jim had given her. Her IPOD BLARING, she remains completely tuned out of the conversation in the front seat.

JIM

Where you from?

RYDER

All over. It seems like I'm always on the road.

JIM

You a salesman?

RYDER

Something like that.

JIM

(re: Grace)
I'm taking her home to Barstow.
We're students at Northwestern.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ryder nods as if interested. Jim glances at Ryder's WEDDING BAND.

JIM (CONT'D)
Mind if I ask you a personal question?

RYDER
Go ahead.

Jim glances up to THE REARVIEW MIRROR to see if Grace is paying any attention to him.

JIM'S POV

Grace is completely focused on reading one of the applications. Her Ipod remains CRANKED.

IN THE FRONT SEAT

Jim takes a deep breath, repeatedly glancing at Grace as he speaks.

JIM
If you kissed another woman, would you consider it cheating?

RYDER
Depends how I kissed her.

JIM
Let's say it was a good kiss.

RYDER
Yes, I would consider that cheating.

He studies Jim.

RYDER (CONT'D)
Is there something you want to confess?

JIM
I already did.

He motions to Grace.

RYDER
To her?

Jim nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RYDER (CONT'D)

You need to learn to keep your mouth shut.

JIM

She knew, anyway. I don't know how, but she did.

RYDER

If you're going to do something you shouldn't, you've got to be smart enough not to get caught. Unless, of course, that's the point.

He smiles deviously, as if remembering something. Jim glances at him.

JIM

Sounds like you have some experience.

RYDER

You could say that.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- NIGHT

The Cherokee passes a SIGN, which reads: MECHANICSVILLE - 6 MILES.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Grace continues reading through the scholarship applications. Ryder grins slyly as he glances IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR.

RYDER

(appreciatively)

She's a good-looking girl.

JIM

Yes, she is.

RYDER

How long you been fucking her?

Jim is taken aback.

JIM

Excuse me?

RYDER

You asked me a personal question. Now I'm asking you one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM

We've been together for two years.

(beat)

How long you been fucking your wife?

RYDER

I don't have one.

JIM

So why do you wear a wedding ring?

RYDER

It helps complete strangers think
you're trustworthy, and not some
kind of dangerous predator.

He smiles menacingly, making Jim uneasy.

RYDER (CONT'D)

It's amazing how little it takes to
make someone feel comfortable enough
to reveal all kinds of personal
details about themselves -- where
they go to school, where they're
going, even private transgressions
they wouldn't reveal to a close
friend.

Jim looks increasingly uncomfortable.

JIM

I'm starting to think giving you a
ride was a mistake.

Ryder picks up Grace's flip phone, which sit on the dash in
front of him.

RYDER

This yours?

JIM

It's my girlfriend's. Why?

Ryder opens the phone, bending it the wrong way. CRACK!
The phone SNAPS into pieces.

Fed up, Jim immediately slows down as he starts to pull over.
THE SPEEDOMETER reads: 60 mph...55...50...

RYDER

Unlatches his seatbelt so that he can remove something from
his right pocket. A SWITCH BLADE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FWICK! He extends the 8" BLADE, holding the knife near his chest so that Jim can see it clearly.

RYDER
Put your foot back on the gas, or I
will cut your eyes out.

Jim's EYES GO WIDE with fear.

IN THE BACK SEAT

Grace presses PAUSE on her IPOD as she looks up to Jim. She CANNOT see the SWITCHBLADE.

GRACE
Hey, why are we slowing down?

IN THE FRONT SEAT

Ryder puts his left index finger to his lips, motioning for Jim NOT to reveal the real reason. Shh.

Jim glances over to Ryder, then IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR to see Grace.

JIM
Uh...my foot slipped off the gas.

IN THE BACK SEAT

Grace shakes her head, still annoyed with him.

GRACE
You may not be in a hurry to get
home, but I am.

She hits PLAY on her IPOD as she returns to her reading.

IN THE FRONT SEAT

Jim STEPS ON THE GAS. THE SPEEDOMETER quickly rises: 50 mph...55...

JIM
My foot's on the gas, all right?!
Put the knife away.

Ryder laughs to himself.

RYDER
That's what the last guy said.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM
What last guy?

RYDER
The last guy I left on the side of
the road.

JIM
(horrified)
What did you...do to him?

RYDER
I cut off his legs. And his arms.
And his head. And I'm going to do
the same things to you.

Jim looks nauseous. His head spinning.

GRACE'S POV

Music BLARES. Focused on another application, she is
oblivious to what is happening...

IN THE FRONT SEAT

Gripping the steering wheel tightly, Jim starts to
hyperventilate.

He unintentionally keeps his foot ON THE GAS, continuing to
ACCELERATE.

THE SPEEDOMETER reads: 60 mph...65...

Jim glances nervously to Ryder.

JIM
(panicked)
Please don't do this!...Please!
Look, I'll give you my wallet...
Take all the money I have!

He struggles to remove his wallet from his back pocket and
hand it to Ryder.

RYDER
I don't want your money.

He tosses the wallet on the floor in front of him.

JIM
The car! Please, take-take the car!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RYDER
I don't want your car.

JIM
THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT?!

Ryder suddenly puts THE BLADE to JIM'S EYE. The razor sharp steel cuts into his skin.

RYDER
Do you know what happens to a human eyeball when it gets punctured?

IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR

Grace finally looks up and sees Ryder holding the KNIFE against Jim's face. HIS EYES BULGING with desperation.

GRACE

Hits PAUSE on her IPOD so she can hear what is said.

GRACE
JIM!

He tries to reassure her.

JIM
Everything is going to be fine.

RYDER
(humored)
Sure it is...

He digs the side of the blade further INTO HIS CHEEK.

JIM'S FOOT remains heavy on the ACCELERATOR.

THE SPEEDOMETER continues rising: 70 mph...75...

Grace stares at Jim with mixture of panic and anger.

JIM
(to Ryder)
You don't have to do this.

RYDER
Stop me.

JIM
(bewildered)
How? You're the one with the knife!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ryder smiles slightly, clearly enjoying this little game.

RYDER

All you have to do is say four little words...

(hushed)

Say, I want to die.

THE SPEEDOMETER climbs: 80 mph...85...

JIM

Say what?

RYDER

(stronger)

Say, I want to die.

GRACE

DON'T SAY IT!

Ryder turns back, smiling slyly.

RYDER

For your sake, he better.

JIM

(hesitantly)

I don't know if I--

Ryder moves the TIP OF THE BLADE INSIDE JIM'S NOSTRIL and JABS it slightly, CUTTING THE INSIDE OF JIM'S NOSE.

Blood drips from inside his nostril.

IN THE BACK SEAT

Grace react with horror.

GRACE

STOP IT!

IN THE FRONT SEAT

Ryder grabs Jim by the hair, putting the blade back to his eye.

RYDER

(sharply)

Do you love her?

JIM

Yes!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RYDER
Are willing to die for her?

Jim glances to Grace IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR.

JIM
YES!!!

Ryder smiles with grisly satisfaction.

RYDER
Then say it.

IN THE BACK SEAT

Grace trembles with fear. Tears stream down her face as she shakes her head no.

IN THE FRONT SEAT

Jim tenses HIS GRIP on the wheel. His hands are SHAKING.

RYDER (CONT'D)
I...

JIM
(reluctantly)
I...

Blood from his nose slowly drips into his mouth.

RYDER
Want...

JIM
Want...

RYDER
To...

JIM
To...

RYDER
Die...

JIM'S POV

He glances at the SPEEDOMETER, only now realizing how fast they are going;

Then at the SEATBELT UNFASTENED SYMBOL FLASHING over the passenger seat;

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR, where Grace's seatbelt remains tightly fastened across her chest.

IN THE FRONT SEAT

Ryder's seatbelt remains UNLATCHED.

JIM
(exploding)
I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

HE JAMS ON THE BRAKE PEDAL WITH BOTH FEET as hard as he can.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

The Cherokee SCREECHES WILDLY down the highway. It is the ONLY VEHICLE in view.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

The following happens very fast: all three PASSENGERS are thrown VIOLENTLY FORWARD.

WHAM! Ryder's body SMASHES into the dashboard.

CRACK! HIS HEAD hits the windshield, causing the glass to SPIDERWEB.

Ryder loses grasp of the KNIFE.

Grace SLAMS against her seatbelt, HER HEAD snapping forward. Painful, not serious.

Jim is THROWN against his shoulder harness, which saves him from impacting the steering wheel.

He cannot control of the vehicle.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

There is so much water on the highway, the car HYDROPLANES.

The car FISHTAILS WILDLY -- skidding one direction, then the other. Wheels SPINNING, leaving a ZIGZAGGING TRAIL OF SMOKE.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim FIGHTS THE WHEEL to regain control of the car. He CRANKS the wheel one way, then the other.

BLOOD FLOWS from a GASH in Ryder's head as he is thrown backward into his seat. He is clearly DAZED from the impact with the windshield.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Grace SCREAMS in terror.

JIM
(to Grace)
THE DOOR! OPEN HIS DOOR!

Grace struggles over the front seat, OPENING RYDER'S DOOR.

A GUST OF WIND fills the car as Jim FLOORS THE ACCELERATOR.

He SPINS THE WHEEL all the way to the right. Tires SCREECH as...

THE CHEROKEE

SKIDS SIDEWAYS, driver's side forward. The physics of the action force THE PASSENGER DOOR TO SWING WIDE OPEN.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim takes his foot off the gas pedal and swings both feet onto the front seat.

He KICKS Ryder with BOTH HEELS as hard as he can. WHAM!
Ryder somehow manages to hang on.

JIM
GET THE FUCK OUT OF MY CAR!

WHAM! He kicks Ryder again. This time, Ryder CANNOT hold onto the door frame...

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder TUMBLES OUT the door with a SICKENING THUD as the Cherokee continues to slide sideways.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim cranks the wheel back to the left, pulling the car out of its slide.

The physics of the action force the passenger door CLOSED.

Jim stops the car. They are now facing the wrong direction with a clear view of Ryder THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD.

Illuminated by the Cherokee's HEADLIGHTS, Ryder lays motionlessly in the middle of the highway.

JIM
FUCK YOU, ASSHOLE! YOU HEAR ME?!
FUCK YOU!

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder lays on the rubber-streaked pavement. EYES CLOSED.
Completely still. His blood mixing with the rain.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim slowly turns to Grace, who is clearly traumatized.

JIM

You okay?

She shakes her head no.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- NIGHT

Ryder still doesn't move. Until HIS EYES START TO BLINK
OPEN.

He slowly struggles to get to his knees.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

JIM'S EYES turn back to Ryder. Not blinking. Jim grips the
wheel tighter.

GRACE

Come on, let's just go.

He never takes his eyes off Ryder.

JIM'S POV

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, Ryder is visible IN THE HEADLIGHTS,
trying to get to his feet. He can barely stand.

GRACE

Pleads with Jim from the back seat.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Let's turn around and get the hell
out of here.

Jim doesn't respond.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Come on, Jim, we're facing the wrong
way.

He PUNCHES the gas. Heading directly for Ryder.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

The Cherokee ROARS toward Ryder, closing fast. 50 yards...
40 yards...

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim FLOORS the accelerator, never looking away from Ryder.

GRACE
(screaming)
What the hell are you doing?!

JIM
(coldly)
Somebody has to stop him.

GRACE
Jim, don't do this!

JIM
He was going to kill us!

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Ryder looks like a deer caught in the headlights. He does NOT even attempt to move.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

RYDER'S EXPRESSION is one of acceptance. He almost appears to welcome his fate. Finally, someone is going to stop him.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

JIM'S EYES remain locked on Ryder as the Cherokee is about to impact him head on. At the last possible moment...

GRACE

Unlatches her seatbelt and dives over the center console, GRABBING THE WHEEL just before they hit Ryder.

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

The Cherokee BUZZES so close to Ryder that the rearview mirror NICKS him. But he is NOT hit.

Ryder slowly turns around to watch the Cherokee speed INTO THE DARKNESS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He has the same expression that great prize fighters do after being knocked down by a surprisingly worthy opponent: the game is on.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE

Keeping his foot on the gas, Jim regains control of the wheel from Grace.

GRACE

I couldn't let you do it.

Jim JAMS on the brakes and CRANKS the wheel all the way to the left. SCREECH!

EXT. INTERSTATE 80 -- CONTINUOUS

The CHEROKEE SPINS A 180. Ryder is too far away to be seen in the headlights.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE

Jim PUNCHES THE GAS, throwing Grace back into her seat.

GRACE

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?!

He doesn't answer. Doesn't even look at her. He keeps his hands on the wheel, and the pedal to the floor.

GRACE (CONT'D)

JIM!

She is absolutely panicked.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Jim focuses on the road ahead, then to the sides, searching for Ryder. HE IS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

STILL ACCELERATING, Jim keeps looking for Ryder.

JIM

WHERE THE HELL IS HE?!

GRACE

Just keep going!

He keeps his foot on the gas and his eyes glued to the REARVIEW MIRRORS, still looking for Ryder. Who never reappears.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE (CONT'D)
(relieved)
He's gone. It's over.

As he finally lays off the accelerator, she climbs into the front passenger seat.

The gravity of all that just occurred finally starts to hit him.

JIM
Jesus Christ...

HIS HANDS SHAKES as he holds the wheel.

GRACE
Want me to drive?

He shakes his head no.

JIM
I'm...okay.

GRACE
(beat)
Do you think we should call the cops?

JIM
And say what, exactly? That I pushed a guy out of my car at 80 miles-an-hour?

GRACE
It was self-defense.

JIM
It would be my word against his.

GRACE
You've got me as a witness.

JIM
Do you really want be stuck out here while the cops figure out who to believe?

(beat)
I sure as hell don't. All I want to do is get as far away from here as possible.

She nods, not wanting to stop, either.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- NIGHT

The Jeep continues on through the rain. It's several hours later. There is NOT another car in sight.

RADIO DJ (V.O.)

As we come up on 4:00, I've got
something nice and mellow for all
you night owls out there...

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- NIGHT

Grace sleeps in the passenger seat. Jim continues to drive, fighting to stay awake.

His eyes slowly close. His head nods forward. He manages to pull himself awake, but his eyes soon begin to close again.

Realizing it's a losing battle, he pulls off to the side of the highway and parks on the shoulder.

He's asleep only moments after turning off the engine.

EXT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- NIGHT

The rain keeps POURING, dancing as it SPLASHES off the Cherokee's windshield.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- NIGHT

Jim awakens a while later as MELLOW ROCK plays over the radio. Grace remains asleep.

He takes a moment to admire how beautiful she is, even when she's asleep.

He does NOT see the SHADOW appearing outside his window. Ryder. SMASH!

He puts his fist THROUGH THE WINDOW, grabbing Jim by the hair.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- DAWN

Jim awakens with a STARTLING JOLT as a big rig ROARS by. Grace remains asleep.

It was only a dream.

THROUGH THE WINDOWS, the day's first light breaks. The rain has STOPPED.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Shaking out the cobwebs, Jim starts the engine and gets back on the highway.

Grace stretches as she slowly wakes up.

GRACE

Where are we?

JIM

Somewhere in Colorado, I think.

She turns to him.

GRACE

You okay?

JIM

I'm fine.

GRACE

You sure?

He nods.

GRACE'S POV

THROUGH HER WINDOW, she sees a passing ROAD SIGN, which reads: WELCOME TO UTAH.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- DAWN

A handful of other vehicles become visible. The sky is CLEAR BLUE.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Grace rolls down her window to let the crisp morning air fill the car.

GRACE

At least it stopped raining.

Jim nods. She glances at the FUEL GAUGE, which reads less than a quarter tank.

GRACE (CONT'D)

We're going to need gas pretty soon.

JIM

We're all right for a while.

She gives him a look: they won't be all right for quite a while.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 - MORNING

The Cherokee approaches ROAD CONSTRUCTION BARRIERS which gradually narrow four lanes of highway in each direction down to two.

With little traffic in either direction, the Cherokee continues on without slowing down.

A late-model STATION WAGON, loaded for a family vacation, passes them on the right. Kids' bicycles are strapped to the back; a canoe is tied to the luggage rack on top.

INT. STATION WAGON -- CONTINUOUS

IN THE FRONT SEAT, A YOUNG FATHER drives with his WIFE beside him. They give Jim and Grace a friendly smile.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Grace smiles back at the young parents. She can't help but wonder if that could be her and Jim in 10 years.

INT. STATION WAGON -- CONTINUOUS

IN THE BACK SEAT, a SMALL BOY and GIRL sit amid duffel bags stuffed animals. They stick their tongues out at Grace.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Grace responds in kind, sticking her tongue out at them.

INT. STATION WAGON -- CONTINUOUS

One of the stuffed animals, a TEDDY BEAR, waves at Grace. But it is clearly NOT being held by one of the children. It is being held by somebody else...

RYDER

Reveals himself behind the teddy bear, sitting next to the children, smiling benevolently.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

GRACE'S EYES go wide with the panic. She points to Ryder.

GRACE
THAT'S HIM! JIM, THAT'S HIM!

Jim now sees him, too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM
SON-OF-A-BITCH!

He starts HONKING REPEATEDLY.

GRACE
(yelling to couple)
PULL OVER! HE'S CRAZY!

INT. STATION WAGON -- CONTINUOUS

IN THE FRONT SEAT, the young couple CANNOT understand Grace as she continues YELLING. Even when the Young Father rolls down his window.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

Ahead, CONSTRUCTION BARRIERS narrow the roadway further, from two lanes down to one.

The Young Father SPEEDS AHEAD of Jim to merge into the one lane of traffic.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Remaining right behind the station wagon, Jim continues HONKING the horn.

JIM
(intensely)
We have to warn them.

Checking ahead that there is no approaching traffic in the opposite lane, he STEPS ON THE GAS...

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

The Cherokee swings out into the opposing lane. Jim pulls alongside the station wagon. Grace hangs out the window, pointing to Ryder.

GRACE
(screaming)
PULL OVER! THE GUY IN THE BACK OF
YOUR CAR! STOP YOUR CAR!

INT. STATION WAGON -- CONTINUOUS

Looking over at Grace, the Young Father still CANNOT hear her. As he turns to face forward, alarm spreads across his face...

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

As the Cherokee and station wagon approach the crest of a hill, an oversized TOW TRUCK suddenly becomes visible -- HEADING DIRECTLY FOR THE Cherokee.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE

Seeing the tow truck directly ahead of them, JIM'S EYES GO WIDE.

GRACE

LOOK OUT!

He SLAMS on the brakes, cranking the wheel to the right.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

Allowing the station wagon to move ahead, the Cherokee takes out a DOZEN ORANGE CONSTRUCTION CONES as it VEERS behind the station wagon...

...SCREECHING out of the way of the oncoming tow truck JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME.

But the Cherokee slides over several PIECES OF REBAR, causing one of TIRES TO BLOW!

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE

The vehicle immediately DROPS AT AN ANGLE. Jim has to fight the wheel to maintain control as he tries to steer with only three tires.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

Jim somehow manages NOT to slam the Cherokee into the construction barriers.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE

Jim rights the car and keeps going as best he can. But no vehicle can go fast on three tires, not even a Jeep.

JIM

SHIT!

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

The station wagon disappears into the distance.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

Jim slows the Cherokee, steering through a break in the construction barriers. He jumps out of the vehicle, waving his arms wildly as he looks behind them.

JIM'S POV

The tow truck is long gone as well.

GRACE

Gets out, checking out the blown tire.

GRACE

Now what?

JIM

Haven't you ever changed a tire before?

He rushes to the rear of the Cherokee and starts to remove the SPARE TIRE.

15 MINUTES LATER

The Cherokee sits on a hand-cranked jack, the blown tire is OFF, and the spare sits on the the axle as Jim screws on the LUG NUTS with a TIRE IRON as fast as he can.

Grace looks on.

GRACE

You sure you know what you're doing?

JIM

(re: spare tire)

If it falls off, I guess not.

Tightening the last of the lug nuts, he gives the Cherokee a shove, knocking it off the jack. THUMP! The vehicle drops to the ground. The wheel holds.

JIM (CONT'D)

Let's go.

She gets in as he quickly throws the jack and tire iron into the back.

THE TIRES

Kick gravel right at us as Jim punches the gas, taking off after the station wagon.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- MORNING

The Cherokee BLOWS RIGHT BY US on a WIDE OPEN stretch of highway, which is once again four lanes in each direction.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- MORNING

THE SPEEDOMETER reads: 90 mph. Jim and Grace keep their eyes on the road ahead of them. Searching for the station wagon.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, there is no sign of any other vehicles of any kind.

JIM
Where the hell are they?!

GRACE
Maybe they turned off somewhere.

Jim shakes his head.

JIM
I don't think so.

GRACE
(confused)
Why not?

JIM
Because he waved at us.

GRACE
(in disbelief)
So what if he waved at us?

JIM
Don't you get it? He wanted us to see him.

GRACE
What does this have to do with us?

JIM
I don't know! But I think he--

She suddenly points THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD: A SMALL DOT becomes visible in the distance.

GRACE
--That's them!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The closer they get, the more clear it becomes that the dot is the station wagon parked on the side of the road.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- MORNING

The Cherokee SKIDS to a stop 10 yards in front of the station wagon. Jim gets out of the Cherokee.

JIM
Stay in the car.

GRACE
What are you going to do?

JIM
Whatever I have to.

He moves to the rear of the Cherokee, where he removes the TIRE IRON. He advances toward the station wagon with caution.

JIM'S POV

Morning sun GLINTS off the station wagon windows, making it impossible to see inside.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

Jim raises the tire iron, preparing to defend himself, as he continues toward the passenger side of the station wagon.

Even standing right next to the car, he still CANNOT SEE inside the windows.

Jim moves around to the other side of the car. BLOODY HAND PRINTS become visible on the inside of the windows: several are ADULT-SIZED; several others are CHILDREN'S.

Jim approaches the driver's door cautiously, looking in through the window.

He moves right up against the glass when a BLOODY HAND SLAMS up against the window from inside the car.

Startled, Jim jumps back as the hand slides pitifully down the window, out of view.

Jim moves back to the door, quickly grabbing the door handle, and yanking it open.

The YOUNG FATHER tumbles helplessly out of the car. He is covered in blood. HIS EYES have been cut out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jim quickly moves to him as the Young Father struggles to gasp for air through the blood filling his lungs.

JIM

Oh, my God...

The Young Father clings to him, desperately trying to communicate something...anything...with his dying breaths.

But nothing comes out. He dies in Jim's arms. As the Young Father goes limp, Jim lays him gently on the ground.

He is covered in blood as a LATE-MODEL CAMARO roars by. A GUY wearing a BLACK BANDANNA driving the car stares out his window in horror.

Jim pays him little attention as he looks INSIDE THE STATION WAGON: the entire family has been brutally slaughtered.

Grace steps out of the Cherokee as Jim staggers back to the car.

GRACE

JIM!

JIM

Don't! Get back in the car!

GRACE

WHAT HAPPENED?!

As she grabs him, her hands become covered in blood. She starts to weep.

JIM

(under his breath)
I should have killed the son-of-a-bitch when I had the chance.

Realizing his shirt is soaked in the Young Father's blood, Jim rips it off, revealing a t-shirt beneath.

He uses his shirt to wipe off the blood on his hands, then throws the bloody shirt into the back of his car, and gets into the driver's seat.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- MORNING

Jim drives, numb. Grace cries quietly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

How could somebody do that?...I don't understand...You don't just kill people for no reason...Especially not an entire--

JIM

--Grace.

GRACE

What?

JIM

That isn't helping.

She starts CRYING HARDER.

GRACE

How could I have known what he was going to--

WHAM! They are both JOLTED FORWARD when they are REAR-ENDED by another vehicle.

JIM

WHAT THE HELL?!

IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR

Ryder becomes visible behind the wheel of a tricked-out CHEVROLET TAHOE directly behind them.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

The Tahoe RAMS the Cherokee again. And again. WHAM! WHAM!

The Cherokee bounces all over the road.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

THROUGH THE REAR WINDOW, Ryder stares at Jim and Grace.

GRACE

Jesus Christ!

JIM

Fuck this!

He FLOORS THE GAS. The SPEEDOMETER reads: 70 mph...80...90...

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

VWOOSH! VWOOSH! The two vehicles SCREAM right in front of us.

The Tahoe remains right behind the Cherokee, even as speeds approach 100 mph.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim still has the gas FLOORED.

GRACE
Can't you go any faster?!

JIM
It's already floored!

WHAM! They're RAMMED again.

Glancing IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR, Ryder remains right behind them. WHAM!

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

The Chevy pulls alongside the Jeep.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim looks out his window at Ryder, who stares back without expression. Then surprisingly, he SPEEDS AHEAD of the Jeep.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, the tricked-out Tahoe quickly ROARS into the distance.

Jim reduces their speed as they watch the Tahoe disappear from view. There is NOT another vehicle in sight.

GRACE
(confused)
Why is he doing this?!

JIM
I don't know.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER -- MORNING

The Cherokee SCREECHES to a stop in the mostly empty parking lot out front. There is no sign of the Tricked-Out Tahoe.

Jim and Grace jump out of the Cherokee and race toward the doors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He does NOT notice that his SEATBELT hangs slightly out the door, causing his door not to close completely.

As they pass beneath a sign, which reads: OMELETS ARE OUR SPECIALTY, we notice the late-model Camaro, which belongs to the guy wearing the bandanna, parked off to the side.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

The only other customer in the place, a TRUCKER, looks up from stirring his coffee as Jim and Grace STORM through the doors.

They intercept a heavysset WAITRESS who balances a food tray with one hand.

JIM
WE NEED TO USE YOUR PHONE!

The Waitress looks at them curiously, noticing the blood on Grace's hands.

WAITRESS
It's around the corner.

She points. They run.

The Waitress moves on, delivering a breakfast order to her only customer.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
(well-rehearsed)
...Now if that ain't the best damn omelet you ever tasted, it's on the house. But I'll tell you this much --

AROUND THE CORNER

Grace looks on as Jim dials 9-1-1 at a pay phone.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
(through phone)
9-1-1. What's your emergency?

JIM
(frantically into phone)
There's a guy chasing us! He killed a family in a station wagon and he's trying to kill us!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OPERATOR (V.O.)
I'm having trouble understanding
you, sir. Please slow down. Did
you say a station wagon?

Jim does his best to calm himself, but he still talks rapidly.

JIM
Yes! There's a family inside it!
They're all dead!

POV - THROUGH SWINGING KITCHEN DOORS

From the end of the hall, somebody glances at Jim through
the crack between the doors. Jim CANNOT see him.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
We have already received a call.
Officers have been dispatched to the
scene.

BY THE PAY PHONE

Jim hangs up the phone, turning to Grace.

JIM
(to Grace)
Somebody already called them. Cops
are on their way.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

The COOK, who wears a BLACK BANDANNA, continues peeking out
through the crack in the swinging doors.

As he turns away, we realize he is the guy who was driving
the late-model Camaro.

He moves quickly to a house phone, hitting REDIAL.

COOK
(hushed into phone)
It's Hank again...No, I can't talk
any louder. The guy I called you
about is here in the diner...Yes,
that's what I said. He looks about
20. Brown hair, about 5-10, maybe
160 give or take...A t-shirt and
jeans. He's gotta girl with him,
too...Hurry up!

He hangs up the phone, turning SMACK INTO JOHN RYDER.

INT. BATHROOM -- MORNING

Grace enters, locking the door behind her. Finally alone, she takes a deep breath. Trying to collect herself.

Looking at her blood-stained hands, she moves to the sink to wash them off.

Watching the bloody water disappear down the drain, she can't help but think about the dead family. And starts to cry.

For them. For herself. Just wishing somehow that this entire trip could be erased. That it never happened.

But it did. It is happening. As Grace slowly looks at herself in the mirror, she knows she will never be the same again.

She turns quickly to the door as somebody tries to OPEN IT. The door remains LOCKED.

GRACE

Be out in a minute.

Beneath the door, a SHADOW is visible standing outside it. Whoever it is does NOT move.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- MORNING

Jim sits in a booth by the front windows, nervously looking out for any sign of the police.

The Waitress arrives, holding a tray with a breakfast plate.

WAITRESS

You okay, sugar?

JIM

(beat)

I'm fine.

WAITRESS

Well, I got just the thing to brighten your morning...

She puts the breakfast plate down in front of him.

JIM

I didn't order anything.

WAITRESS

I realize that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

(beat)

I hope you don't mind, but frankly,
you look like a nice meal would do
you some good. Denver omelets are
the cook's specialty...

She glances back to the grill, but the Cook is nowhere to be seen.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

(well-rehearsed)

...Now if that ain't the best damn
omelet you ever tasted, it's on the
house. But I'll tell you this much --
we ain't ever had to pay for one,
yet.

Jim stares the plate, which does, indeed, look appetizing.

JIM

Well, it smells good.

WAITRESS

Wait until you taste it...

With a confident smile, she carries off the empty tray.
Taking a small bite of his omelet, he looks surprised.

JIM

(amazed)

Wow.

He takes another bite, which is clearly just as tasty. He
tries to take another bite, but HIS FORK hits something dense
inside the omelet. He uses his fork to look inside it.

INT. JIM'S POV

Inside the omelet, a FINGER wearing a WEDDING RING is
revealed. It is the SAME RING Ryder had been wearing
earlier.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

JIM'S EYES GO WIDE. He immediately starts to heave. Putting
his hand over his mouth, he bolts out of the booth, knocking
over his plate. CRASH!

The plate SHATTERS on the floor. The food scatters, including
the FINGER, which tumbles unnoticed under a chair as...

Jim races out of the diner.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER -- MORNING

TWO SQUAD CARS SCREECH into the parking lot as Jim staggers out, throwing up.

Two local POLICE OFFICERS jump out of their vehicles, GUNS DRAWN. EACH WEARS A NAME PLATE pinned to his uniform.

The Officers advance swiftly toward Jim:

OFFICER ADAMS

FREEZE!

OFFICER BRICKMAN

PUT YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR!

Jim does so.

JIM

YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG GUY! HE'S IN THERE!

He motions inside the diner.

OFFICER BRICKMAN

LAY DOWN FACE FRONT WITH YOUR HANDS
OUT TO YOUR SIDES -- NOW!

Jim does as instructed.

INT. BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Grace hears the commotion going on outside. BENEATH THE DOOR, the shadow standing outside it appears to move away.

Deciding now is the time to act, Grace quickly unlocks the door and rushes out, RUNNING SMACK into a man dressed a flannel shirt and jeans, the trucker seen earlier, walking down the hallway.

GRACE

Pardon me.

POV - THROUGH SWINGING KITCHEN DOORS

Somebody watches Grace continue around the corner...

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

Grace charges through the diner, passing the Waitress who stares out the front window. Clearly, nothing this exciting ever happens here.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

Grace BURSTS out the front door as Officer Adams puts his knees on Jim's back.

GRACE

STOP! HE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!

She is immediately grabbed and held back by Officer Brickman.

OFFICER BRICKMAN

That's close enough!

She fights against him to free herself.

GRACE

GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!

OFFICER BRICKMAN

I said, that's enough!

GRACE

JIM, WHAT'S GOING ON?!

OFFICER BRICKMAN

Just won't listen, will you?

He pins her arms behind her back and starts to cuff her.

GRACE

GET OFF ME!

JIM

LEAVE HER ALONE!

OFFICER ADAMS

SHUT IT!

He cuffs Jim's hands behind his back. Tight.

JIM

(grimacing)

You've got to believe me. He's
inside!

As her hands are cuffed, GRACE'S EYES go wide with fear.

OFFICER ADAMS

(to Brickman)

She ain't going anywhere. See if
there's anything to it.

Brickman charges inside.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

With his weapon drawn, Brickman methodically searches the dining area; then the hallway; then the bathrooms.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

As Grace looks on, Adams pulls Jim to his feet, and searches his pockets.

OFFICER ADAMS
Where's your identification?

JIM
In my wallet. It's in my car --

He motions to his Cherokee. Adams moves to the driver's side door. THE SEATBELT no longer sticks out. The door is CLOSED, but UNLOCKED.

INT. JEEP CHEROKEE -- CONTINUOUS

Adams searches the car, starting with the front seat; the floor; then under the seat.

OFFICER ADAMS
Well, what do we have here?

He glances THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD at Jim, who looks on with interest.

Adams removes a handkerchief from his pocket to carefully pick up RYDER'S BLOODY SWITCH BLADE.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

Continuing his search, Brickman arrives inside the kitchen. Where he comes upon the body of the COOK lying in a pool of blood.

He is missing ONE OF HIS FINGERS, as well as his BANDANNA.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

Adams holds the bloody switchblade in front of Jim's face.

OFFICER ADAMS
Care to explain this?

JIM
That's not mine. I swear to God.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER ADAMS

I suppose you're going to tell me
that shirt in the back isn't yours,
either.

Before Jim can answer, Brickman bursts out of the doors.

OFFICER BRICKMAN

(breathless)
We've got a body.

Jim and Grace both now realize they are completely fucked.

EXT. POLICE STATION -- DAY

A squad car pulls up to the simple, cinderblock structure.
Officer Adams gets out of the driver's seat and pulls Jim
out of the back.

OFFICER ADAMS

You don't look like much of a killer.
But I guess Bundy and Dahmer didn't,
either.

JIM

I didn't kill anyone. The family
was already dead by the time I got
there.

Adams escorts Jim toward the entrance. The Officer eyes Jim
like he is the biggest prize he is ever going to catch in
his life.

OFFICER ADAMS

We have a witness who says the guy
was still alive.

JIM

He died in my arms.

OFFICER ADAMS

So then he wasn't already dead by
the time you got there...

They go inside the building as a SECOND SQUAD CAR, driven by
Officer Brickman, pulls up. Grace sits in back.

He opens her door and leads Grace toward the entrance.

OFFICER BRICKMAN

Let me ask you something -- what
made you pull over in the first place?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

We were trying to warn them.

OFFICER BRICKMAN

About what?

GRACE

We saw the killer in their car!

OFFICER BRICKMAN

(dubiously)

Uh-huh.

She shakes her head in frustration as they arrive at the station's front doors.

GRACE

He's still out there!

OFFICER BRICKMAN

Is that right?

GRACE

That is right.

He pulls her inside.

INT. POLICE STATION - HOLDING CELL -- DAY

Adams leads Jim, whose hands are still cuffed, inside the cell, which contains a bed, a toilet, and nothing else.

OFFICER ADAMS

This guy you say you picked up, he give you a name?

JIM

(exasperated)

I already told you. He said his name is John Ryder.

OFFICER ADAMS

Ryder -- would that be with an i or a y?

JIM

How the hell would I know?!

OFFICER ADAMS

What about a description? Can you at least give me that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM

He's in his early 30s. About six feet tall, and 175 pounds. Short hair. Blue eyes. His skin is light brown.

He closes and locks the door.

OFFICER ADAMS

Put your hands through the opening.

Jim does so. Adams removes his cuffs.

OFFICER ADAMS (CONT'D)

If there's anything else you can remember about him, let me know. Because if it isn't perfectly clear to you, you and your girlfriend are in a world of shit.

Jim just stares out from behind the bars as Adams puts the KEY RING back on his belt, then answers a RINGING phone.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

Grace sits at a table across from Brickman, who takes notes on a pad. A WALL CLOCK reads -- 12:37.

OFFICER BRICKMAN

Why didn't you pick up this stranded motorist the first time?

GRACE

Do you give rides to complete and total strangers?

OFFICER BRICKMAN

Apparently your boyfriend does.

THROUGH ONE-WAY MIRROR

We look on with another officer, DAVIS, who operates a VIDEO CAMERA from inside an Observation Room.

Brickman checks his notes as he continues interrogating Grace:

GRACE

I guess Jim felt guilty because somebody else gave him a ride to the rest stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER BRICKMAN

If your boyfriend was feeling so guilty, why did he push the guy out of his car?

GRACE

It wasn't just Jim. We both pushed him. He was threatening us with a knife. It was self defense.

He puts down his pen.

OFFICER BRICKMAN

I thought you said you were in the back seat?

GRACE

I was.

The video camera ZOOMS IN on Grace's face.

OFFICER BRICKMAN

So how could you have pushed out somebody who was sitting in the front seat?

GRACE

Because I did. I helped Jim push him out.

OFFICER ADAMS

Quietly enters the Observation Room, joining Davis looking through the one-way mirror.

OFFICER ADAMS

We only get to keep them for another hour. Salt Lake's sending out a couple squads to pick them up.

OFFICER DAVIS

You don't really think either of these kids had anything to do with that family being slaughtered, do you?

OFFICER ADAMS

I don't know what to think. But somebody's been on a highway killing spree all the way from here to Nebraska.

There is a KNOCK at the door. He moves to open it...

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 -- CONTINUOUS

Brickman stares at Grace from across the table.

OFFICER BRICKMAN
You're covering for Jim, aren't you?

GRACE
No.

OFFICER BRICKMAN
Why don't I believe you?

A BUZZER sounds, which is triggered from the Observation Room. He glances toward the MIRROR, acknowledging the signal.

OFFICER BRICKMAN (CONT'D)
I'll give you a few minutes to think about whether you really want to throw away your life for something you didn't do.

He exits. Grace stands, moving toward the mirror.

GRACE
Instead of wasting time asking me the same goddamn questions over and over, you should be out there trying to stop him! DON'T YOU GET THAT?!

She puts her hands on the glass. Her face is only inches from it.

THROUGH ONE-WAY MIRROR

There is nobody operating the video camera, which remains aimed at the empty chair. STILL RECORDING.

Grace stares directly at us.

GRACE (CONT'D)
SOMEBODY'S GOT TO STOP HIM!!!

A SILHOUETTE moves in front of us, directly in front of Grace, on the OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE GLASS.

Of average height, and average build, it can only be one person. JOHN RYDER.

He is only THREE INCHES FROM HER, but Grace CANNOT see him.

Or HIS BREATH as it rhythmically STEAMS the glass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Or the BLOODY FINGERPRINTS he leaves on the glass as he puts his hands where hers are.

As if an artist at an easel, he carefully paints her face with his BLOOD-STAINED FINGERS.

If it wasn't so horrific, it would be beautiful.

INT. HOLDING CELL -- DAY

Alone, Jim paces back and forth across the cell, growing increasingly frustrated. He YELLS through the bars to no one in particular.

JIM
I WANT TO TALK TO A LAWYER!

He rattles the cell bars, checking the door to see that it remains LOCKED.

JIM (CONT'D)
HEY, CAN'T ANY OF YOU ASSHOLES HEAR ME?!

There is no response.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

Grace sits at the table with her head in her hands. The WALL CLOCK reads -- 1:29.

GRACE
(toward the mirror)
You can't just leave me in here all day, you know?!

She finally gets up, moving toward the door. She BANGS on it, but still doesn't get any answer.

She tries the DOOR HANDLE, surprised to find it UNLOCKED. She turns defiantly toward the mirror, then walks out the door.

INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY

Grace exits the Interrogation Room, surprised that no one is trying to stop her.

The station is oddly QUIET. The only sounds come from a POLICE RADIO and a RINGING PHONE, which goes unanswered, in the Reception Area of the building.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPT. ESTERIDGE (V.O.)
(from police radio)
Fullerton Station, this is Capt.
Esteridge with the Salt Lake City
Police Department, do you copy, over?
...We are ten minutes from your
location. Do you copy?

Something moves behind her. Grace spins around to see a
GERMAN SHEPHERD POLICE DOG moving slowly toward her.

The dog pauses to look at her, then moves right past her --
toward the door next to the interrogation room, labelled:
OBSERVATION.

The door is SLIGHTLY AJAR. The dog slips through the narrow
opening. Grace follows, trying to peek her head inside.

But something heavy on the other side of the door keeps her
from opening it.

GRACE
Hello?

Using all her strength, she finally manages to shove open
the door...

GRACE'S POV

First, she sees what was blocking the door: the body of
Officer Brickman lying in a pool of blood. His throat was
slit before he could make a sound.

ON THE ONE-WAY MIRROR, her face is painted IN BLOOD exactly
where she had previously been standing.

Above it, we read: DESTINY.

Below the mirror, Officers Adams and Davis lie covered in
blood. The dog licks at their WOUNDS.

INT. POLICE STATION -- CONTINUOUS

Grace staggers backward out of the Observation Room, SCREAMING
in horror and disbelief.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOLDING CELL -- CONTINUOUS

Jim hears Grace's screams. He rushes to his cell door, which
remains LOCKED. He CANNOT see her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM
(panicked)
GRACE! CAN YOU HEAR ME?! GRACE!!!

Banging against the cell bars, he starts to become unhinged.

Grace, however, is steeling her resolve as she makes her way through the station toward the sound of Jim's voice.

GRACE
Where are you?

JIM
IN A HOLDING CELL! WHAT THE HELL IS
GOING ON?!

Continuing toward his voice, she opens a door to the Reception Area to find TWO MORE BODIES (RECEPTIONIST and OFFICER) with their THROATS SLIT.

The entire five person department was wiped out before any of them could make a sound.

GRACE
My God...

The phone RINGS and RINGS as CHATTER from the POLICE RADIO radio continues with increasing urgency:

CAPT. ESTERIDGE (V.O.)
Fullerton Station, come in!...Somebody
answer, dammit!

JIM
GRACE, TALK TO ME!

As she arrives outside his cell, he is clearly starting to lose it. She tries to open the door, which remains locked.

GRACE
We've got to get out of here.

JIM
How did you get out?

GRACE
I walked out.
(looking around)
Did you see where they put the key
to your cell?

JIM
They're all dead, aren't they? .

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE
Where is the key?!

JIM
The cop who drove me here. It's on
his belt. Adams. His name is Adams.

Making her way back through the Reception Area to the
Observation Room, she sees a TRAIL of BLOODY DOG FOOTPRINTS
leading out of the room. The dog left.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM -- DAY

Officer Adams' NAME PLATE is stained red, but clearly visible,
as he lies beneath the mirror.

Mustering her courage, Grace moves his arm to reveal the KEY
RING attached to his belt.

She takes the keys, noticing that HIS HOLSTER IS EMPTY. So
is Davis's. But Brickman's gun rests IN HIS HAND.

Grace pries the weapon from his fingers, then tucks it beneath
her shirt.

INT. HOLDING CELL -- DAY

Grace races back and immediately starts trying to fit each
key on the ring into the lock. SIRENS can be heard
approaching in the distance.

JIM
Come on...come on...come on...

GRACE
Jim.

JIM
What?

GRACE
That isn't helping.

EXT. POLICE STATION -- CONTINUOUS

In the distance, several squad cars SPEED toward the station.
They will arrive in a matter of moments.

INT. HOLDING CELL -- CONTINUOUS

Grace finally finds the right key. CLICK-CLICK. The cell
door unlocks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

Follow me.

She takes Jim by the hand, and pulls him into the Reception Area. He pauses, staring dumbstruck at the bodies.

Grace and Jim quickly duck down as squad cars can be seen SCREECHING to a stop THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOWS.

EXT. POLICE STATION -- CONTINUOUS

The Salt Lake City OFFICERS immediately jump out of the cars, advancing toward the entrance with their weapons drawn.

INT. POLICE STATION -- CONTINUOUS

Grace pulls Jim out a back door, just as...

EXT. POLICE STATION -- CONTINUOUS

The Salt Lake Officers BURST IN through the front.

EXT. BEHIND THE POLICE STATION -- CONTINUOUS

Grace and Jim scramble up a slope into the wooded hills behind the station as more squad cars can be seen arriving in front of the station.

EXT. WOODED HILLS -- CONTINUOUS

Breathing hard, pumping their arms, they make their way up the dense terrain as fast as they can.

Tree branches FWACK against their faces and arms, but they keep right on going.

Navigating through several large boulders, Grace stumbles, falling hard to the ground. Jim helps her up.

JIM

You okay?

GRACE

(gritting her teeth)

I'm fine. We've got to keep going.

She keeps going, limping slightly.

Gasping for breath, they stumble out of the trees into an area which has been levelled out.

They find themselves facing a jagged 30 FOOT HIGH WALL OF ROCK...

EXT. GRAVEL QUARRY -- DAY

...which juts out of the greenery like a gaping wound. Rusty, old processing equipment lies dormant in front of them.

GRACE
(breathlessly)
Which way?

He looks up the rock face.

JIM
We'll never...make it.

GRACE
No...shit.

She looks around them, motioning to the right.

GRACE (CONT'D)
That way.

Walking to the right along the face of the rock wall, they slow their pace to catch their breath.

JIM
I'm sorry. I kind of freaked out
back there.

GRACE
You think?

She pauses, turning toward the sound of a SMALL PEBBLE tumbling down the rock wall, then continues on.

GRACE (CONT'D)
My Dad used to work in a place like
this.

JIM
Before he got sick?

She nods, noticing ANOTHER PEBBLE bouncing down the rocky slope behind them.

JIM (CONT'D)
I'm looking forward to meeting him.

GRACE
I know you're going to--

She never finishes the sentence because without any warning...

THE TRICKED-OUT TAHOE

Having been launched from 30 feet above them, SLAMS INTO THE GROUND RIGHT IN FRONT OF THEM. WHAM!!!

THE FORCE OF THE IMPACT IS UTTERLY BREATHTAKING.

Instinctively ducking, Grace comes face-to-face with the DEAD OWNER of the vehicle, who is pressed against the shattered windshield. His throat is slit.

Grace immediately scans the ridge of the 30 foot high wall of rock. There is no sign of Ryder.

Dazed, Jim needs a moment to recover. His expression quickly changes from shock, to disbelief, to rage.

JIM
(exploding)
FUCK YOU, RYDER! YOU HEAR ME?!
FUCK YOU!

GRACE
Let's go.

She pulls him away, leading Jim out of the Quarry. They head back into the trees.

EXT. FIRE ROAD -- DAY

Grace and Jim scramble out of the woods, running along a narrow dirt road cut through the dense foliage, which winds down the wooded slope back toward the highway.

JIM
You want to tell me why we're heading back to town? We can't go to the cops, you know?

GRACE
I'd rather deal with cops than with him.

JIM
(beat)
So what's your plan?

GRACE
I'll let you know when I have one.

They continue running down the dirt road.

EXT. ACCESS ROAD -- DAY

Perspired and exhausted, Jim and Grace see a small gas station in the distance.

TWO SIGNS become visible: DIESEL SOLD HERE and PUBLIC PHONE.

They pick up the pace.

EXT. GAS STATION -- DAY

Grace and Jim finally reach the station. A HANDWRITTEN SIGN hanging in the window reads: BACK AT 4:00.

They make their way around the garage to the side where the PUBLIC PHONE is located.

Jim picks up the receiver, only to find NO DIAL TONE. He can't believe it.

JIM

Of course! It's dead!

HIS EYES GO WIDE as a VEHICLE can be heard SCREECHING into the station. Grace carefully peers AROUND THE CORNER.

GRACE'S POV

A Salt Lake City Police car stops next to the gas pumps. OFFICER EDWARDS gets out quickly, sliding a credit card into the reader, then filling his tank.

AROUND THE CORNER

Grace reveals the REVOLVER which has been tucked under her shirt.

JIM (CONT'D)

Where the hell did you get that?

GRACE

(hushed)

Where do you think?

She steps around the corner...

EXT. GAS STATION -- CONTINUOUS

...aiming the revolver at Officer Edwards' head as he tops off his gas tank, then puts the nozzle back in the pump.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

Put your hands in the air, or I blow
your head off!

Edwards does as instructed.

OFFICER EDWARDS

(nervously)

Please, don't shoot.

GRACE

Jim, get his gun.

Jim appears from around the corner, giving her a look: this
is your plan?!

GRACE (CONT'D)

Do it.

Jim quickly moves to Edwards, relieving him of his weapon.

OFFICER EDWARDS

You're the two we're looking for,
aren't you?

JIM

We're innocent. We didn't do any of
the things they think we did.

OFFICER EDWARDS

I believe you.

JIM

(not buying it)
Bullshit.

GRACE

(assuaging)

I probably wouldn't believe us,
either.

JIM

So what do we do with him?

GRACE

He's going to drive us out of here.

(to Edwards)

Get in.

She motions to the driver's seat. Edwards gets in as Grace
sits next to him. Jim gets into the back.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- DAY

Grace and Jim both keeps their weapons trained on Edwards as he drives out of the station.

GRACE

Step on it.

Edwards accelerates onto the Access Road.

OFFICER EDWARDS

Where do you want me to go?

GRACE

Get back to the main highway. We want a police escort to Salt Lake City, where we will turn ourselves in.

OFFICER EDWARDS

I'll have to call in the request.

GRACE

Do it. Then I want to talk to somebody in charge.

Officer Edwards picks up the radio as he continues driving.

OFFICER EDWARDS

(into radio)

Dispatch, this is unit five-niner, over.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Unit five-niner, this is dispatch, go ahead.

OFFICER EDWARDS

I have been taken hostage by the two armed suspects who fled the local station. They are requesting a police escort to Salt Lake, over.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Copy that, five-niner. Continue in your present direction.

OFFICER EDWARDS

One of the suspects would like to speak with the commanding officer.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Hold for Captain Esteridge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Edwards hands Grace the radio.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE (V.O.)
(authoritative)
This is Captain Esteridge. Who am I
speaking with?

We recognize his voice as the one heard over the POLICE RADIO
inside the station.

GRACE
My name is Grace Andrews. You need
to know we didn't do any of things
you think we did.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE (V.O.)
I'm here at the local police station,
Grace. I have seen the videotape of
your interrogation. I know you
couldn't have had anything to do
with these killings. But the only
way I can help either one of you is
if you come here and turn yourselves
in.

GRACE
We're going to, but not here. It
isn't safe.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE (V.O.)
Look, I'll come to you. Grace, I
realize you've both been through a
lot, but you've got to listen to me--

GRACE
--No, you listen to me! He is still
out there! Right now, he's looking
for us!

CAPT. ESTERIDGE (V.O.)
Trust me, you don't want to make
this any worse than it already is.

GRACE
HOW CAN IT POSSIBLY GET ANY WORSE?!

Edwards looks surprised as he glances IN HIS REARVIEW MIRROR.

EXT. ACCESS ROAD -- DAY

As the Salt Lake City squad car SPEEDS toward the interstate,
ANOTHER POLICE CAR quickly catches up, and pulls alongside
it.

RYDER

Is visible behind the wheel. Aiming a HANDGUN out the open passenger side window. BOOM!

INT. SQUAD CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Officer Edwards never has a chance. Grace is covered in his blood as HE IS BLOWN APART.

As the car reaches a bend in the road, Grace quickly reaches over, trying to steer from the passenger seat.

But NOT in time...

EXT. ACCESS ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder steers around the bend. The other squad car veers down a steep embankment, FLIPPING UPSIDE DOWN as it SLAMS into a gully. WHAM!

Dirt SPRAYS as the squad car stops abruptly on its roof.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- DAY

Upside down, Grace and Jim are thrown hard into the windshield and wire mesh.

Both are dazed, cut, and bruised, but not seriously injured.

EXT. GULLY -- CONTINUOUS

Grace and Jim struggle to crawl out of the open rear windows on their hands and knees.

Jim aims his gun all around them, looking for any sign of Ryder. There is none.

JIM
Son-of-a-bitch!

He falls to his knees, starting to lose it.

JIM (CONT'D)
Why doesn't he just kill us?!

Resolve hardens in her face.

GRACE
Because we didn't kill him. He's
doing to us what we did to him.
(correcting herself)
What I did to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM
Would you stop with that?!

GRACE
You were right. I should have let
you kill him.

He shakes his head.

JIM
Hey, if this is anybody's fault,
it's mine. I'm the one who insisted
on giving him a ride, remember?

GRACE
This isn't anybody's fault!
(with growing determination)
Right now, all I care about is getting
the fuck out of here.

She pulls him to his feet. After a beat, he tucks his gun
into his waistband.

Together, they walk up the embankment to the Access Road.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- DAY

Grace and Jim enter, clearly exhausted. They approach an
elderly MANAGER standing behind the counter, tallying up the
day's receipts.

JIM
Where's your bathroom?

MANAGER
Right over there.

Without looking up, he motions to a door, labelled MEN'S
ROOM.

JIM
(to Grace)
I'll be right back.

The Manager only now looks up as Jim goes inside the men's
room. The Manager studies Grace.

MANAGER
Pardon me for saying, but you look
like you been put through the ringer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

(beat)

You have any coffee?

MANAGER

Just started brewing a fresh pot.

GRACE

We'll take two.

MANAGER

Coming right up.

He retreats to the kitchen. Grace collapses in a booth by the front.

INT. MEN'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Jim stares at himself in the mirror, trying to hold it together.

He SPLASHES cold water on his face to see if it will help. It doesn't.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- CONTINUOUS

Grace rests her elbows on the table. Putting her face in her hands, she gives herself a moment's peace.

Somebody slides swiftly into the seat across from her...

RYDER

Stares across the table.

RYDER

Is this seat taken?

Startled, she shakes with a combination of fear, rage, and determination.

Reaching beneath the table, WE HEAR the unmistakable sound of a GUN HAMMER being clicked back: CLICK-CLICK!

GRACE

Don't move, or I swear to God, I'll pull the trigger.

Ryder leans down to look at the gun beneath the table. He smiles slyly.

RYDER

Go ahead. The gun is empty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

Bullshit.

RYDER

You never checked it, did you?

GRACE

So help me, I will kill you.

RYDER

Do it. Squeeze the trigger.

GRACE

You don't think I will?!

RYDER

You better. Because I'm going to squeeze mine...

He reaches beneath the table and points HIS FINGER into the barrel of her gun.

RYDER (CONT'D)

Bang.

He SLAMS his hand hard down on the table, causing Grace to flinch.

She reflexively pulls the trigger. CLICK-CLICK-CLICK-CLICK!

GRACE

(exploding)

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME?!

Tears stream down her face. He leans across the table.

RYDER

You took away the one thing anyone could ever do for me. Now I am going to take everything away from you.

He places a BLACK BANDANNA on the table.

RYDER (CONT'D)

Put this over your eyes.

GRACE

Fuck you.

RYDER

Put it over your eyes or I go into that men's room and disembowel your boyfriend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Trembling, she picks up the bandanna and places it over her eyes, tying it behind her head.

RYDER (CONT'D)

Count to 30.

GRACE

One...two...three...

Ryder gets up, leaving a folded-up napkin on the table.

RYDER

You can't possibly appreciate the gift I am giving you.

Grace continues counting.

GRACE

Nine...ten...eleven...

Ryder exits as a FOOD SERVICES DELIVERY TRUCK parks in front of the diner.

THROUGH THE WINDOWS, the DRIVER gets out and starts loading a hand dolly with supplies.

JIM

exits the Men's Room as Grace continues counting.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Twenty-two...twenty-three...

JIM

What the hell are you doing?

She removes the bandanna as he sits across from her.

GRACE

He was here. Ryder. He was sitting right there...

He looks nervously around them.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Don't worry, he's gone.

She cautiously opens the folded up napkin. SIX BULLETS are revealed. She loads the bullets into her gun.

JIM

This isn't over, is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She looks at him like the answer should be obvious.

THE DRIVER

Of the delivery truck enters, pushing his hand dolly into the kitchen.

GRACE

watches him, then turns to Jim.

JIM (CONT'D)

You thinking what I'm thinking?

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER -- DAY

The delivery truck pulls out of the parking lot.

INT. DELIVERY TRUCK - REAR -- DAY

Grace and Jim stand together amid the racks of food goods and cooking supplies.

GRACE

(shivering)

I'm...cold.

He wraps his arms around her as the truck engine accelerates.

EXT. ACCESS ROAD -- DAY

The delivery truck winds along the open road.

INT. DELIVERY TRUCK - REAR

Grace and Jim continue holding each other close, trying to stay warm. She looks into his eyes.

GRACE

(teeth chattering)

Remember last night...when you said
...you were willing to die for me?

JIM

Yeah?

GRACE

I just want you to know...that meant
a lot to me.

She continues looking into his eyes. They ride quietly, enjoying the moment. The only sounds are:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The RHYTHMIC HUM of tires on asphalt;

And the LOW-PITCHED DRONE OF THE ENGINE.

Which suddenly changes pitch as the truck makes a turn, then pulls to a stop.

JIM

Now what?

The engine stops. WE HEAR the driver's door open.

GRACE

Time to go.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- DAY

Jim and Grace quickly jump out of the delivery truck's rear door.

They move to the passenger side of the vehicle as the Driver moves to the rear and takes out his dolly.

They quickly look around them, deciding their next move. There is only one other vehicle in view: an OLD PICK-UP TRUCK parked right in front of the store.

It's engine is running.

THROUGH THE STORE WINDOWS

The DRIVER can be seen buying cigarettes.

GRACE AND JIM

Turn to each other. Without a word, they BOLT toward the pick-up truck.

INT. PICK-UP -- CONTINUOUS

Jim gets in the driver's seat. Grace in the passenger's. He puts the transmission in REVERSE and FLOORS IT. SCREECH!

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- CONTINUOUS

Jim backs the pick-up fast, then cranks a 90 degree turn, and stops to put the truck in drive.

The Driver CHARGES out of the store to give chase.

INT. PICK-UP -- CONTINUOUS

Jim PUNCHES the gas, ROARING out of the parking lot as the Driver comes after them, but only briefly.

IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR, the Driver soon gives up.

GRACE

Let's get back on the interstate.
Drive as fast as this thing will go.

EXT. ACCESS ROAD -- DAY

The pick-up ROARS by us, turning onto an ON-RAMP.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- DAY

The pick-up BARRELS ALONG at 90 mph. There is NOT another vehicle in sight.

INT. PICK-UP -- DAY

Jim's got the ACCELERATOR FLOORED as Grace keeps watch behind them.

JIM

This is all she's got.

GRACE

It'll do.

(beat)

How are we on gas?

He glances at the FUEL GAUGE, which reads three-quarters full.

JIM

Good.

Jim glances IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR: two SQUAD CARS appear in the distance. Then two more.

JIM (CONT'D)

We've got company.

GRACE

It's about time.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- DAY

Traveling well over 110 mph, the four squad cars quickly catch up to the the pick-up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The lead squad car pulls alongside Jim and Grace.

INT. PICK-UP -- CONTINUOUS

THROUGH JIM'S WINDOW, the officer in the passenger seat, FRANKLIN, leans out his window.

OFFICER FRANKLIN
PULL OVER!

JIM
I CAN'T DO THAT!

GRACE
WE WILL SURRENDER IN SALT LAKE!

Franklin confers with the other OFFICER, who is driving.

Franklin then talks on his POLICE RADIO, but we CANNOT hear what is said.

After a beat, he puts down the handset, then rolls up his window.

Grace looks surprised.

GRACE (CONT'D)
Well, I'll be damned.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

VWOOSH-VWOOSH! The pick-up and four squad cars SPEED right past us in a tight pack.

IN THE DISTANCE

A POLICE HELICOPTER appears over the horizon. It ROCKETS toward them at 190 mph.

The copter SOARS above the highway, gaining quickly on the convoy.

As it reaches the squad cars, it slows down, flying directly above the lead squad car alongside the pick-up.

INT. PICK-UP -- CONTINUOUS

Jim looks up at the police helicopter flying above them.

JIM
Now this is what I call a police escort.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

FAR AHEAD OF THEM, another SQUAD CAR becomes visible, waiting along the side of the road.

INT. PICK UP -- CONTINUOUS

Neither Jim nor Grace gives notice to the vehicle. THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, it is too far away to see why they should...

RYDER

sits quietly in the upcoming squad car, lining up the police helicopter IN HIS SHOTGUN SIGHT. He squeezes the trigger. BOOM!

THE HELICOPTER

takes a direct hit. The COCKPIT is riddled. THE PILOT slumps forward against the controls...

Which immediately sends the craft INTO A DIVE. WHAM!!!

The helicopter SLAMS into the lead squad car, EXPLODING ON IMPACT.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Jim somehow manages to steer around the FLAMING WRECKAGE right next to him...

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- CONTINUOUS

...but BOTH TIRES on the driver's side of the pick-up BLOW INSTANTLY.

The RIMS throw TRAILS OF SPARKS at the THREE TRAILING SQUAD CARS, which aren't as lucky. WHAM-WHAM-WHAM!

In quick succession, they CRASH into the careening BALL OF FLAMES in front of them.

Grace and Jim's pick-up, riding on two SQUEALING RIMS, is the only vehicle to escape the rolling disaster.

INT. PICK-UP -- CONTINUOUS

Passing the squad car on the side of the road, Grace and Jim now see Ryder sitting inside the squad car.

THEIR POV

Ryder does NOT take aim at them. He only looks at them. Studying them. Plotting his next move.

INT. PICK-UP -- CONTINUOUS

Grace does NOT take her eyes off Ryder.

GRACE

Is this as fast as we can go?

JIM

We're on two rims! This is it!

GRACE

Shit!

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- DAY

The pick-up continues on, throwing off TRAILS OF SPARKS as the two BARE RIMS grind against the asphalt.

Vehicles were not meant to be driven like this. One of the two remaining TIRES SHREDS OFF.

Then the FINAL TIRE. The pick-up now rides on FOUR RIMS. The sound is PIERCING.

INT. PICK-UP -- CONTINUOUS

Grace looks all around them. There is no sign of Ryder.

JIM

We're not going to make it much further.

GRACE

Get ready to run.

EXT. INTERSTATE 76 -- DAY

The FRONT AXLE finally SHEERS OFF, throwing the front end of the pick-up to the asphalt. The car stops dead.

Grace and Jim quickly scramble out the doors and race off into a field.

EXT. FARM -- DUSK

Running as fast as they can through planted rows, Jim stays right behind Grace.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIM
(breathlessly)
Where...are we going?

GRACE
No idea...But if he hasn't found
us...by the time it's dark...we may
have a chance.

They keep right on running as the SUN starts to set. SHADOWS
grow longer as the day comes to an end.

EXT. FARM -- NIGHT

Utterly exhausted, Jim and Grace finally pause next to a
barn to catch their breath. Both are hurting.

JIM
...I don't know...how much further...I
can--

GRACE
--Shh...You hear that?

A TRUCK HORN is heard in the distance. Then another.

JIM
Trucks.

GRACE
A lot of them.

They make their way around the barn.

THEIR POV

The LIGHTS of a TRUCK STOP are visible about half-a-mile
away.

GRACE

Turns to Jim with a glimmer of hope.

JIM
They've got to be heading in every
direction.

GRACE
Exactly.
(beat)
Even Ryder won't know which way we'll
be going.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They move on.

EXT. TRUCK STOP -- NIGHT

Jim and Grace carefully make their way THROUGH THE SHADOWS into the truck stop.

No one pays them any attention. Not the passing truckers. Not the passing cops.

They slip into the back part of the rest area, resting against a cinderblock wall.

GRACE
So far so good.

JIM
Which truck?

THEIR POV

Surveying the DOZENS OF TRUCKS all around them, a SHADOW suddenly BLOCKS THEIR VIEW.

RYDER

Steps right in front them. He grabs Grace's face and SLAMS the back of her head into the cinderblock wall. WHAM!

She crumples to the ground.

HER POV

She struggles to maintain focus as Ryder does the same thing to Jim. WHAM!

Ryder throws Jim over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes, then carries him off...

EVERYTHING FADES TO BLACK.

DISSOLVE TO:

15 MINUTES LATER

GRACE'S EYES blink open as smelling salts are CRACKED beneath her nose. She lies on her back surrounded by several POLICE OFFICERS.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE, 50s, continues waving the salts beneath Grace's nose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
Grace, do you know where you are?

GRACE
Jim...where's Jim?

Wincing in pain, she tries to sit up. Esteridge helps to steady her.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
My name is Capt. Esteridge. I'm the one you spoke with earlier.

GRACE
Where is he?!

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
I'm going to take you to him. First we need to make sure you're okay.

Grace struggles to her feet.

GRACE
I'M FINE! WHERE IS HE?!

Esteridge glances to the other officers.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
Let's go.

GRACE
WHAT'S GOING ON?!

EXT. TRUCK STOP -- NIGHT

JIM'S EYES bulge in absolute terror. WE PULL BACK to reveal that his mouth has been DUCT TAPED shut.

WE PULL BACK FURTHER to see that he lies suspended off the ground -- BETWEEN A BIG RIG TRAILER and a FREIGHTLINER TRACTOR.

JIM'S HANDS

Are DUCT TAPED and BOUND to the TRACTOR. His hands are BLUE from being so tightly constricted.

His fingers bleed as he struggles to claw through his restraints.

But there is no way he is going to free himself. Not if he had all night. Which he doesn't.

JIM'S FEET

Are similarly bound to the TRAILER. He strains to find some kind of leverage, but there simply isn't any.

JIM'S BODY

Rises slightly as the POWERFUL ENGINE is REVVED, and the MASSIVE WHEELS inch forward.

He SCREAMS in incredibly pain as every joint in his body is stretched to the breaking point.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Leads Grace through a DOZEN COPS circling the big rig -- all with their weapons trained on...

RYDER

Who sits behind the wheel of the Freightliner tractor, menacingly REVVING the 400 horsepower diesel engine.

His expression is stone cold.

RYDER'S POV

He stares through the windshield at Grace as she arrives on scene.

GRACE

Tries to move to Jim, but police hold her back.

GRACE
DO SOMETHING!!!

Ryder continues REVVING the powerful engine.

JIM

SCREAMS through the duct tape gag. His face TURNING CRIMSON RED from his excruciating effort.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Gets right in Grace's face.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
(re: Ryder)
If we shoot him, his foot is going to come off that clutch and that truck is going to roll!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE
YOU CAN'T JUST LET HIM DIE!

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
(re: Ryder)
He said the only way to end this is
if we let you talk to him.

She stops struggling against him.

GRACE
Then let me!

He lets go of her.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
(beat)
You sure you want to do this?

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRACTOR -- NIGHT

Grace slowly gets into the passenger seat next to Ryder.

GRACE
What do you want?!

RYDER
You know what I want.

He REVS the engine, listening to Jim's MUTED SCREAMS.

JIM

Grimaces from the unimaginable pain. He glances toward something by his feet.

JIM'S POV

An OFFICER creeps along the trailer, carrying WHEEL BLOCKS toward the tractor's massive wheels.

RYDER

Glances IN HIS REARVIEW MIRROR, but sees nothing.

He adjusts his position to look IN GRACE'S REARVIEW MIRROR. He now sees the Officer moving toward him with the wheel blocks.

Ryder takes out A REVOLVER and points it at Grace's head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RYDER
(loudly to Esteridge)
If the officer does not move away
from the truck, she dies.

CLICK-CLICK. He pulls the GUN HAMMER back into firing position.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Motions to the Officer kneeling by the trailer to back away. He does so. Esteridge turns back to...

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRACTOR -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder lowers the gun, placing it on the seat between him and Grace.

RYDER
This one is loaded.

She just stares at the gun.

RYDER (CONT'D)
Go ahead, pick it up.

She does so, hesitantly.

RYDER (CONT'D)
Now point it in my face. Right here.

He leans toward her, pointing to his forehead.

RYDER (CONT'D)
Do it.

GRACE
If I shoot you, Jim will die.

RYDER
Your boyfriend dies no matter how
this turns out. But this way, at
least you'll get some satisfaction.

He REVS the engine, enjoying Jim's SCREAMS.

JIM

Flails against his restraints with every ounce of strength he has remaining. It's brutal.

INT. FREIGHTLINER TRACTOR -- CONTINUOUS

Shaking, Grace grips the revolver, putting the barrel to Ryder's forehead.

RYDER
Go ahead. Squeeze the trigger. You
know you want to.

She hesitates.

RYDER (CONT'D)
Do it!

GRACE
I can't!

Tears stream down her face. Clearly disappointed, Ryder removes the gun from her hand, and puts the hammer forward.

RYDER
(disappointed)
So close, and yet, so far.

He REVS the engine LOUDLY.

THE MASSIVE WHEELS

inch further forward.

JIM

SCREAMS in pain as his body is stretched beyond its structural limit.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

And the other Officers look on. Wishing there was something they could do.

RYDER

Stares at Grace with an absence of expression. Like he cannot stop himself. As if this wasn't his fault.

GRACE
NOOO!!!

RYDER'S LEFT FOOT

Moves decisively off the clutch as his RIGHT FOOT PRESSES ON THE GAS.

THE MASSIVE WHEELS

Lurch forward.

JIM

SCREAMS through the duct tape as HIS TORSO IS RIPPED IN HALF.

His lower half hangs from the trailer 10 feet from his top half, which hangs from the Freightliner tractor.

He finally stops screaming. No longer in pain. It's finally over.

EVERYTHING FADES TO BLACK.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STATE TROOPER STATION - OFFICE -- NIGHT

Grace sits quietly in a chair as a PARAMEDIC shines a flashlight into her GLAZED EYES later that night.

Capt. Esteridge enters, looking on with concern.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

(to Paramedic)

How's she doing?

PARAMEDIC

About like you'd think.

(to Grace)

Can you hear me? Grace?

She does not respond. Doesn't even blink.

PARAMEDIC (CONT'D)

(to Capt. Esteridge)

I don't think she'll be saying much for a while, Captain. She's in deep shock.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

(beat)

Can you give her anything?

PARAMEDIC

Just about to --

He holds up a SYRINGE. He is about to jab the needle into Grace's arm, when Grace suddenly grabs the syringe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

Don't.

The Paramedic relents. Esteridge moves to Grace.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

I can't tell you how sorry I am.

She gives no reaction.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE (CONT'D)

We all know there was nothing you
could do.

She hears A COMMOTION out the window. She gets up, peeking
through the blinds.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

There is a frenzied MEDIA CIRCUS out front. Several news
vans, a dozen of reporters, and even more photographers all
jockey for position.

INT. STATE TROOPER STATION - OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Grace turns to Esteridge.

GRACE

That all for him?

Esteridge nods.

GRACE (CONT'D)

I want to see him.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

That's not possible.

She glances at his CAPTAIN'S BADGE.

GRACE

You're a Captain, aren't you?

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

We've got him locked up where he's
never going to get out, if that's
what you're worried about.

GRACE

I need to see it for myself.

After a beat, he leads her out the door.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM -- NIGHT

Grace and Esteridge watch a set of SURVEILLANCE MONITORS as Ryder is led out of a cell by two POLICE OFFICERS.

His wrists and ankles are cuffed.

GRACE

Who is he?

Esteridge shakes his head.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

We don't know, yet. He's got no identification. We've run his fingerprints and mug shot through every law enforcement database we've got, but still haven't come up with anything.

ON THE MONITORS

Ryder is led into an interrogation room, which is also visible...

THROUGH A ONE-WAY MIRROR

Ryder sits down at a table across from a tough-looking DETECTIVE.

The two armed Officers are joined by two more. All four remain at the ready.

DETECTIVE

Is your name John Ryder?

RYDER

I have many names.

DETECTIVE

I don't like having to repeat myself.
(exploding)

WHAT'S YOUR FUCKING NAME?!

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder remains perfectly calm.

RYDER

Call me John.

DETECTIVE

Where do you live?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RYDER

All over. It seems like I'm always
on the road.

This is the same answer he gave Jim. He glances menacingly
toward the ONE-WAY MIRROR, as if sensing Grace's presence.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Grace stares at Ryder through the mirror.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Don't worry, he can't see you.

She moves closer to the glass, standing only inches from it.

THROUGH ONE-WAY MIRROR

The Detective studies Ryder.

DETECTIVE

Why did you kill that young man?

RYDER

Why not?

DETECTIVE

We had you surrounded. You knew
you'd be caught. Didn't that matter
to you?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder shakes his head, as if the answer should be obvious.

RYDER

That was the point.

DETECTIVE

What point?

Ryder smiles, but does not answer.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Is this fun for you, asshole?

Ryder just smiles. The Detective leans over the table, going
nose-to-nose with Ryder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

(intensely)

You know what's going to be fun for me? Watching you be executed.

(to the Officers)

Get him out of here.

The four Officers lift Ryder out of his chair.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Grace stands so close to the mirror her breath rhythmically STEAMS the glass.

As Ryder is escorted out of the interrogation room, Grace turns to Capt. Esteridge. She remains in shock:

GRACE

(re: Ryder)

Where will he go from here?

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

To the maximum-security wing of the Utah State Prison in Draper where he will be lucky to ever see the light of day again.

GRACE

Where's Draper?

He studies her.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Why? You're not planning on visiting him, are you?

GRACE

Just curious.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Come on, let's get you home.

She nods.

EXT. STATE TROOPER'S STATION - REAR -- DAWN

Light just starts to appear over the horizon as Capt. Esteridge and Grace exit the building.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Your mother is going to meet you in Salt Lake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE
You talked to her?

He nods.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
This morning.

GRACE
She say anything about my Dad?

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
Didn't mention anything.

They get into an unmarked Crown Victoria.

INT. STATE TROOPER'S STATION - HALLWAY -- DAWN

The four armed officers walk Ryder toward the exit. Because of his leg shackles, he can only take short steps.

They are met by two more officers, who strap an ORANGE BULLETPROOF VEST on Ryder's chest.

He shakes his head in disbelief.

Surrounding him, the six officers lead Ryder out the doors.

EXT. STATE TROOPER'S STATION -- CONTINUOUS

As Ryder is led out of the doors, the reporters clamor against the barricades holding them back. SHOUTING overlapping questions.

Ryder just stares at them without saying a word as he is led toward a waiting PRISON TRANSPORT.

He glances at Capt. Esteridge's Crown Vic passing in the distance.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace never takes her eyes off Ryder as Esteridge drives away from the station.

GRACE
Kind of ironic, don't you think?

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
What?

GRACE
The bulletproof vest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
We're a nation of laws.

GRACE
Didn't stop him.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
After he's proven guilty, it will.

GRACE
That will be in what, ten years?
Fifteen?

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
Eventually, this will be made right.
I promise you.

She stares at him with stone cold eyes.

GRACE
This will never be right.

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT -- DAWN

REPORTERS continue shouting questions in the b.g. as the rear doors are opened.

Ryder steps up into the back, where he sits on one of two METAL BENCHES.

A HALF-INCH THICK STEEL BAR runs parallel to each of the benches. Each bar is BRACKETED to the vehicle's side walls.

RYDER'S HANDCUFFS are looped around the metal bar, which will prevent him from standing up during transport.

His legs remain chained. Both they and his handcuffs are double-checked.

The doors are SLAMMED SHUT and locked from the outside. The transport begins to move.

The ONLY LIGHT comes from SMALL WINDOWS in the rear doors which are covered in WIRE MESH, and an equally small opening in the front.

This opening, which allows Ryder to see the TWO OFFICERS in front, is also covered in WIRE MESH.

WE HEAR cross-talk over the POLICE RADIO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Copy that, transport, I have you at
mile marker 2-7...

None of the openings in the prisoner compartment is large
enough for a man to fit through. Not even close. By design.

Still wearing the orange bulletproof vest, Ryder studies his
temporary cage.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- MORNING

Capt. Esteridge's Crown Victoria cruises by at 65 mph. They
pass a MILE MARKER, which reads: 43.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace sits quietly in the passenger seat. Esteridge looks
over to her. He turns down the volume of his POLICE RADIO.

GRACE

You'll never hold him, you know?

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Excuse me?

GRACE

He's going to escape.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

And just how can you be so sure of
that?

GRACE

He said so.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

When was that?

GRACE

He said he didn't care about being
surrounded by police when he killed
Jim because he knew you'd never be
able to hold him.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

That's not what I heard. But if
that's what he thinks, he's dead
wrong.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- MORNING

The prison transport RUMBLES ALONG.

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT -- MORNING

Ryder WHISTLES SOFTLY, as he slides to the end of the bench at the rear of the vehicle.

The CHAIN of his handcuffs CLINK against one of the brackets which holds the half-inch steel bar in place.

Still whistling, Ryder strains with incredible effort against the metal bar.

Half-inch thick steel, of course, does NOT give. Not even a little. But THE BRACKET holding it does.

Ryder pulls his handcuffs up against the bar, then down. Up, then down.

THE BRACKET at the end of the bench BEGINS TO LOOSEN.

Ryder continues whistling softly, never showing any emotion as he pulls so hard against his restraints that HIS WRISTS BEGIN TO BLEED.

He pulls up, then down. Blood drips from his wrists onto the floor.

Up, then down. More blood drips. He never even winces.

Up, then POP. THE BRACKET is pulled out of the wall.

The officer in the front passenger seat glances back through wire mesh in the small opening to check on the sound.

Ryder slides his boot in front of the blood on the floor as he continues whistling softly without ever missing a beat.

The Officer sees nothing out of the ordinary and returns to his seat.

With the bracket no longer attached to the wall, Ryder is able to slide his cuffs off the the bar.

His hands are still handcuffed, but now he is free to stand.

He grabs the end of the steel bar, and begins to work on loosening one of the two remaining brackets.

Using his weight for leverage, he lifts up, then down. Up, then down.

The steel bar is not going to give. Which means something else has to...POP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The SECOND BRACKET is pulled from the wall. Only one to go, which is the easiest of the three.

By the time the officer in the passenger seat looks back through the wire mesh to investigate the sound...

RYDER

Holds the half-inch steel bar like a weapon. Specifically, A SPEAR.

He rears back and SLAMS the end of the steel bar into the wire mesh opening. WHAM!

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT - FRONT -- CONTINUOUS

The Officer in the passenger seat instinctively reels back, grabbing his gun.

THE WIRE MESH

Holds. But not for long. WHAM! WHAM!

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT - REAR -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder POUNDS the bar into the mesh again. And again!

With one final strike, THE WIRE MESH IS RIPPED FROM THE OPENING.

THE OFFICER

Struggles to aim his revolver at Ryder through the narrow opening.

RYDER

still wears the orange bulletproof vest.

RYDER
(mockingly)
What are you going to do, shoot me?

He lunges forward at incredible speed, SLAMMING THE STEEL BAR THROUGH THE NARROW OPENING.

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT - FRONT

The end of the steel bar impacts the back of the head of the Officer in the driver's seat.

Skull vs. steel is no contest. The BAR PENETRATES the back of his head and exits through his left eye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He is dead before he ever knew what happened.

The steering wheel SPINS WILDLY OUT OF CONTROL. Like most SUV's, prison transports are top-heavy...

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

...which means they are prone to roll-overs when traveling at high rates of speed. WHAM!

THE PRISON TRANSPORT rolls onto its right side with a MASSIVE THUD.

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT - REAR -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder is thrown hard against the wall as it hits the highway.

The force of the impact causes the rear door BOW OUT SLIGHTLY.

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT - FRONT -- CONTINUOUS

The officer in the passenger seat is thrown head-first into his window.

His head and the glass make the same sound. CRACK!

The officer in the driver's seat barely moves because of the pole through his head.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Skidding on its side, the prison transport finally comes to rest after several hundred yards.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
(from police radio)
Transport, this is dispatch, do you
copy, over?

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT - REAR -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder withdraws the steel bar from the head of the officer, then uses it to go to work on the rear doors.

There is just enough of a gap for him to work with. It's only a matter of time.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- MORNING

Grace stares vacantly out the windows as Esteridge drives. A call comes in OVER THE POLICE RADIO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Capt. Esteridge, this is dispatch,
do you copy?

He picks up the handset:

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

This is Esteridge, go ahead.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Captain, we have lost contact with
the prison transport, over.

Grace barely reacts. Esteridge tries to hide his concern.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Do you have them on GPS?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Copy that. He was approximately 16
miles behind you when we lost the
signal. Officers have been dispatched
to that location.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

Keep me posted as soon as you hear
anything. Over.

He puts down the handset, and turns to Grace.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE (CONT'D)

Just because they lost contact doesn't
mean anything. Happens all the time.

She just nods. Then without warning:

GRACE

LOOK OUT!

She frantically points out Esteridge's side window.

As he turns to look left, she immediately grabs the REVOLVER
from his holster on his right.

She points the weapon at his head.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE

What the hell do you think you're
doing?

GRACE

Stop the car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
You're not going to use that thing.

CLICK-CLICK. She brings the gun hammer back into firing position.

GRACE
Stop the car and don't do anything stupid.

She isn't blinking. Or wavering in any way.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Esteridge reluctantly pulls to the side of the road and brings the vehicle to a stop.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace keeps the gun on Esteridge.

GRACE
Get out.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
Grace, you really ought to--

GRACE
GET OUT!

He takes a deep breath. His concern for her genuine.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
You're going to get yourself killed.
And if you don't, you're going to be
in a whole lot of trouble.

GRACE
As long as he's alive, I'll never be
able to live my life.

CAPT. ESTERIDGE
You don't know what you're doing.

She says the following like she's never been more sure of anything in her life:

GRACE
Yes, I do.

After a beat, Esteridge opens his door, and gets out.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Esteridge stands and watches Grace slide into the driver's seat and CRANK A U-TURN.

She hauls ass in the direction they came from.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- MORNING

Grace grips the wheel tightly. The accelerator is pinned to the floor. The speedometer reads: 105 mph.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

VROOM! Esteridge's Crown Vic FLIES right by us.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace focuses on the road ahead, searching for Ryder.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

A SMALL DOT becomes visible in the distance.

GRACE

Never takes HER EYES off the object in the distance.

The closer she gets, the more clear it becomes that the dot is the PRISON TRANSPORT, which lays on its side.

She keeps the accelerator floored.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- MORNING

Grace is only a quarter mile away from the prison transport. And closing fast.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace sees something move in the distance.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

A SHADOWY FIGURE of a man staggers away from the transport. He stands in the middle of the road.

GRACE

Does NOT hesitate. She knows what she has to do. She heads directly for the SHADOWY FIGURE standing in the road.

He does NOT even attempt to move.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

The Crown Vic ROARS toward the man, closing fast. 50 yards... 40 yards...

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace doesn't blink. She grips the wheel as tightly as she can.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Bearing down on the SHADOWY FIGURE, it suddenly becomes clear that he is NOT Ryder.

He is the Officer who was sitting in the passenger seat, who is covered in blood. He can barely stand.

GRACE

SLAMS on the brakes at the last possible moment.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Tires SQUEAL across the asphalt. The Crown Victoria SKIDS WILDLY.

The car finally comes to a stop dangerously close to the Officer. But it does NOT hit him.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace breathes a momentary sigh of relief. When a gunshot rings out. BOOM!

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

The Officer takes a bullet in the back, which EXPLODES out of his chest.

He drops dead to the asphalt.

RYDER

Steps out from behind the prison transport. His ankles and wrists are NO LONGER CUFFED.

He is NOT wearing the bulletproof vest as he takes aim at Grace.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace CRANKS THE WHEEL and PUNCHES THE GAS. Heading right for him.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Grace bears down on Ryder, who steps behind the prison transport for cover. WHAM!

The Crown Vic SLAMS into the transport.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace is THROWN against her shoulder harness, which saves her from impacting the steering wheel.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Ryder dives onto the hood of the car. He aims his weapon at her head.

GRACE

quickly SLAMS the transmission into REVERSE and PUNCHES THE GAS...

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

...just as Ryder pulls the trigger. BOOM!

HIS BULLET

PUNCTURES the windshield, and the seat back right next to her, but it does NOT hit Grace.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder clings to the hood of the Crown Victoria as Grace SPEEDS IN REVERSE.

EXT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder struggles to hold on with one hand as he takes aim at Grace with the other.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace keeps the PEDAL FLOORED, looking back and forth between the rear window and Ryder.

GRACE
GET THE FUCK OFF MY CAR!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHE JAMS ON THE BRAKE PEDAL WITH BOTH FEET.

Then immediately SPINS THE WHEEL all the way to the right.

THE CROWN VICTORIA

RIPS A 180 as it comes to a stop. The physics of the action
THROWS RYDER OFF THE HOOD.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder lands on the asphalt with a SICKENING THUD and tumbles
briefly.

He looks up to see Grace staring at him THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD
from 15 yards away.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace stares at him with deadly intent.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder smirks, confident that she still won't be able to stop
him.

He looks for his weapon. It is 10 feet away. He struggles
to his feet and moves toward it.

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Without expression, Grace FLOORS THE ACCELERATOR. Heading
directly for Ryder.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder reaches his weapon. As he stands and tries to aim his
weapon, HE IS SMASHED AGAINST THE GRILL of the Crown Victoria.
WHAM!!!

INT. CROWN VICTORIA -- CONTINUOUS

Grace never looks away as she impacts Ryder.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

The collision is literally bone-crushing. Ryder is thrown
at least 20 feet.

GRACE

SLAMS on the brakes. Still without expression.

EXT. HIGHWAY 19 -- CONTINUOUS

Ryder lays motionlessly in the middle of the highway. His one hand lies beneath him.

Grace gets out of the Crown Vic, holding Esteridge's revolver. She approaches Ryder cautiously.

She stands over him, aiming the gun.

GRACE

Get up.

He doesn't move. BOOM! She fires a warning shot, just missing him. He still doesn't move.

As she turns to walk back to the car, HIS EYES START TO BLINK OPEN.

He slowly struggles to his feet. Gun in hand.

RYDER

Felt good, didn't it?

Grace spins around.

GRACE

I'm not you.

Without emotion, she FIRES a bullet into the center of his chest. BOOM!

His expression is one of absolute disbelief. Not because of what she did. Because of what she said.

Because she should have enjoyed it! That was the whole point! He tries to say more, but nothing comes out.

She looks at him without any hint of rage or guilt as he struggles to raise his weapon.

BOOM! Grace fires another round into his chest, putting him down for good.

She stares at him lying dead on the highway. Still without emotion.

This was just something she needed to do.

She drops the gun as several SQUAD CARS SCREECH ALL AROUND HER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WE SLOWLY PULL BACK as OFFICERS surround her with their weapons drawn.

Grace remains perfectly calm as she follows the officers' instructions to raise her hands! Get down on the ground!

As she is handcuffed, and placed into the back of a squad car, her expression is clear:

No matter what else happens, at least now she can get on with her life...

ROLL CREDITS.

THE END
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