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THE ROCKFORD FILES

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Story by
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THE ROCKFORD FILESCAST

JIM ROCKFORD
 JOSEPH ROCKFORD
 SARA BUTLER
 HARRY BUTLER
 NICK BUTLER
 JERRY GRIMES
 MILDRED ELIAS
 DETECTIVE DENNIS BECKER
 CAPTAIN HARRY DELL
 AL "ANGEL" MARTIN

DR. RUBEN SEELMAN
 MORRIE TALBOT
 ARNOLD DEMURA
 DANFORD BAKER
 NORM MITCHELL
 DOORMAN
 OFFICER
 BLACK MAN
 MAN (MEN'S ROOM)
 WAITER
 BUS DRIVER
 TAPED CASSETTE VOICE (FRENCH)
 MAN'S VOICE (SC. 46-A)

SETSEXTERIORS:

CITY STREETS
 DESERTED STREET
 BEACH
 OCEAN BLVD.
 POLICE STATION
 VACANT LOT WITH ROCKFORD'S
 OFFICE TRAILER
 SUNSET BLVD. COFFEE PATIO
 DOWNTOWN LAS VEGAS
 MUNICIPAL BUILDING
 BIKINI SHOP
 GAS STATION
 ELIAS ESTATE/POOL AREA
 TACO STAND
 SMALL BAR
 OUTRIGGER BAR
 RESTAURANT
 JERRY GRIMES' APARTMENT
 NEWSPAPER OFFICE
 DESERTED HIGHWAY
 SMALL WEDDING CHAPEL
 LAS VEGAS HOTEL STRIP
 COMMERCIAL STREET
 DIRT ROAD
 SMALL LANDING STRIP
 PIPER APACHE
 LAS VEGAS POLICE STATION
 RESIDENTIAL STREET
 LAS VEGAS AIRPORT
 SARA'S SMALL LAUREL CANYON
 HILLSIDE HOUSE

INTERIORS:

BUS
 WATCH COMMANDER'S OFFICE
 PANELED OFFICE (ROCKFORD'S
 OFFICE TRAILER)
 ANGEL MARTIN'S OFFICE
 HOMICIDE DIVISION
 RESTAURANT
 ELIAS' LIVING ROOM
 BIKINI SHOP
 APARTMENT CORRIDOR
 JERRY GRIMES' APART./BEDROOM
 HALLWAY
 NEWSPAPER MORGUE (X)
 MUNICIPAL BLDG./FILE ROOM
 PIPER APACHE
 POLICE SQUAD ROOM
 BAR
 MEN'S ROOM
 SARA'S LIVING ROOM
 WEDDING CHAPEL
 KARATE STUDIO
 DRUGSTORE/STOCK ROOM
 CORONER'S OFFICE (LAS VEGAS)
 MOUNTAIN CABIN
 PANELED OFFICE (LAS VEGAS) (X)

THE ROCKFORD FILES

FADE IN

1 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY - RUNBY 1

This is a street in the heart of the small beach city of Venice. It has the garish patchwork look of a street which has gone to ruin. Too many neon signs. A yellow city transit bus rumbles past. A half a block back it is followed by a dark blue Jensen with a lone man driving.

1-A INT. BUS - DAY 1-A

There are only four or five people on the bus. We center on a man seated just behind the rear exit door. He is old, about sixty, and can only be described as a wino. He is characteristic of this breed in every way -- unshaven, dirty, his overcoat in tatters. His name is Harry Butler. He is leaning forward, trying to see what is going on, as the bus comes to a stop and takes on a passenger -- an old woman. He looks disappointed and leans across the aisle and taps a black man, who is asleep. The black man looks over at Harry without changing his slumped down position. (X)

BLACK MAN

Whatta you want now?

HARRY

(a little drunk)

What time is it?

BLACK MAN

Ten past two and ten minutes from now it'll be twenty past two and ten minutes after that it'll be half past, so now you don't hafta ask me for twenty minutes and by then I'll be off the bus.

Harry turns back and looks out the window of the bus, which is moving again.

CUT TO

1-B EXT. CITY STREET - DAY - RUNBY 1-B

The yellow transit bus clatters along, the blue Jensen still a short distance behind.

2
and
3

OMITTED

2
and
3

4 INT. BLUE JENSEN - DAY

4

The man behind the wheel is heavily muscled and could be considered handsome. He is about thirty with wavy blonde hair and a classic profile. His muscles flex under a polo shirt. His name is Jerry Grimes. There is a voice speaking in French inside the car.

4-A ANGLE - TAPE CASSETTE - DAY

4-A

It is custom mounted in the dash of the car, and is turning slowly. This is a Berlitz-type tape and the voice speaking in French pauses from time to time for the listener to answer the question. Jerry drives, keeping the bus in view, and practices his French.

VOICE

Est ce que Jean est un mauvais
garcon?

JERRY

Non, Jean n'est pas un mauvais
garcon.

VOICE

Comment est-il Jean?

JERRY

Jean est un bon garcon.

Jerry never takes his eyes off the bus.

CUT TO

4-B INT. BUS - DAY

4-B

The bus is now empty, except for Harry, and the driver pulls over to the side of the street, parks the bus, and turns around.

DRIVER

(to Harry)

Hey, you!

(X)

HARRY

Huh?

DRIVER

Gotta get off or pay for the
return trip. We're at the beach.

Harry gets up and staggers up the aisle toward the driver.

CONTINUED

4-B CONTINUED

4-B

HARRY

I'm supposed to meet somebody.
Gotta stay here till he gets here.

DRIVER

Don't make me throw you off.

Harry looks at him for a moment, then gets off the bus.

CUT TO

4-C
and
4-D

OMITTED

4-C
and
4-D

4-E ANGLE - THE BEACH - DAY

4-E

Harry walks across the sand and moves toward his spot under the Santa Monica pier. He sits down and looks at the surf rolling in. We move in on him to a tight closeup. He takes a swig on a bottle and then looks again out to the sea.

4-F NEW ANGLE - HARRY - DAY

4-F

A garish necktie slips around his neck and is drawn tight.

4-G TIGHT - HARRY

4-G

The bottle drops from his hand and he claws for the tie around his neck. We can now see that it is Jerry holding the tie. Jerry talks softly to him, almost like someone who is soothing a pet. In strange contrast to the scene is the almost pathetic tone to it, almost a love tone.

JERRY

(softly)

Easy, Mr. Butler...Just relax...
That's right...Easy now...You're
doing fine....

When he finishes, he releases the tie and Harry Butler slumps over on the sand, dead.

4-H FULL SHOT - SCENE OF MURDER - DAY

4-H

Jerry is still talking in a soft inaudible voice to the body as he goes through the pockets of Butler's old coat, turning them(X) inside out. He goes through the rest of the body, turning the pockets inside out and ripping one open. He goes to the foot of the body and unlaces Butler's shoes, takes them off, and then moves slowly away from the body. Hold on the bug-eyed corpse of Harry Butler as the sound of the surf continues and we

CUT TO

5 OMITTED
thru
17

5
thru
17

18 EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

18

This is the University Division Police Station. University Division is old and the second busiest division in Los Angeles; the only area with a larger crime problem is 77th Division (Watts).

19 INT. WATCH COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

19

This is a small corner office. It is neat and orderly and there is a sign on a battered wooden desk. It reads: Captain Harry Dell -- Homicide. We are on the sign as we hear an argument in progress.

DETECTIVE BECKER'S VOICE

Some of these cases are still possibilities. I don't get enough time to even talk to all the people listed on the A.R. reports.

CAPTAIN DELL

Look, I don't like it any more than you do, but we can't screw around on dead-enders.

As this is going on, we pull back and show Captain Harry Dell. He is a big man in his mid-thirties, who is physically impressive. Despite a rather rough-hewn quality, he is dressed in an immaculately pressed dark suit. The man opposite him is Detective Dennis Becker. He's in his shirtsleeves and there is a service revolver riding high on his hip. Becker is balding, in his late forties, and a little overweight. He looks more like an accountant than a cop. Right now he's angry.

CAPTAIN DELL

(softer)

Dennis, you gotta pull with me. I got an efficiency graph that looks like the rear end of a VW, and we got a city full of crazies out there who act like every night is Halloween.

DETECTIVE BECKER

Okay, okay.

Dell is looking at a sheaf of papers that are in a manila file on his desk.

CONTINUED

19 CONTINUED

19

CAPTAIN DELL

How 'bout this prosti, Janet
Nicolas...

(a beat)

You got anything good on that one?

DETECTIVE BECKER

We thought the pimp looked good
for it but he's got an alibi that
won't quit.

(a beat)

Probably a john.

CAPTAIN DELL

Okay, dump it.

(a beat)

How 'bout this wino they found
under the pier -- Butler? What's
with him?

DETECTIVE BECKER

It looks like a mugging, except
for one thing...

(a beat)

Left a pretty good bauble on his
finger -- a wedding ring with a
half-karat stone. We had it
appraised at two hundred bucks.

CAPTAIN DELL

Some diamond...Probably wouldn't
scratch glass.

DETECTIVE BECKER

Still, I got a hunch there's more
behind it than just a mugging.

(a beat)

I'd like to hold onto it for a
couple more days.

CAPTAIN DELL

You got anything solid?

DETECTIVE BECKER

Just a feeling...I think ---

CAPTAIN DELL (OVERLAPPING)

Dump it!

SMASH CUT TO

20 TIGHT SHOT - DAY - OPEN FILE DRAWER

20

as we watch, a manila folder is shoved into the drawer. In
close to:

21 TIGHT SHOT - THE FOLDER

21

Typed on the tab, it says: Homicide -- Harry Butler.

The drawer is slammed shut, and we pan down to the card taped to the front of the drawer. It reads: Unsolved - Inactive and a date. Hold on this for a long beat and begin the Main Titles for

"THE ROCKFORD FILES"

Credits continue over the following sequence.

CUT TO

22 INT. SARA'S BIKINI SHOP - DAY - TIGHT SHOT - TELEPHONE BOOK - 22
YELLOW PAGES

Angle favors a small blocked ad. It shows a picture of a man's face, which appears to be handsome and friendly, but the ink is on too thick and it's hard to be sure. The copy under the small ad reads: The Rockford Agency -- Specializing in Closed Cases Since 1964. Underneath, it says: Criminal Only. 24-hour Service. Licensed and Bonded. Below that, there is an address: 2354 Ocean Blvd., Los Angeles. Pull back slightly to show that the Rockford ad is by far the smallest ad on the page; it is surrounded by half-page ads from large detective agencies.

23 NEW ANGLE - DAY - PAD OF PAPER

23

as a woman's hand scribbles the address on the pad. We pan up and find:

24 SARA BUTLER

24

She is about twenty-five and blonde. Her hair hangs simply down to her shoulders. She is pretty but not striking, the kind of girl whose beauty requires a second look to fully appreciate. She closes the phone book and as it thumps shut, we

CUT TO

25 EXT. OCEAN BOULEVARD - DAY - RUNBY

25

as a six-year old VW cruises down the street. Behind the wheel is Sara Butler. She is looking for the address.

(X)

26
and
27

OMITTED

26
and
27

27-A EXT. BEACH - DAY

27-A

Two figures are walking along the beach. One of them is very big and in his mid to late thirties. His name is Jim Rockford. He has the looks that go with a professional athlete, and moves with an athlete's grace. Moving along beside him, talking with animated movements, is his father, Joseph Rockford. ("Rocky") He is sixty-eight, grey hair, and in very good shape. They move along the beach, both carrying fishing rods.

JOSEPH

I set it up with Mort... He got the cabin all stocked with Scotch. Geez, son, we could really have us a hoot.

(a beat)

Whatta ya got that's so important ya can't go fishing with your old man? I ain't been a good father or something?

ROCKFORD

Come on, Rocky, don't get pesonal.

JOSEPH

You're broke, right? You shoulda took over my rig, Jimmy. You woulda made a hell of a good trucker. But no. You gotta be Sam Spade or something.

Rockford has a beach towel in his hand. He slings it at his father, who ducks.

ROCKFORD

You're a vicious old coot.

CUT TO

28 OMITTED

28

29 EXT. VACANT LOT - SMALL HOUSE TRAILER

29

as Sara Butler, now coming from the other direction, slows and then, after a beat, hesitantly pulls her car into a vacant lot and parks beside a small house trailer. She re-checks the address on the pad.

30 HER POINT OF VIEW - THE TRAILER 30
There is a number stuck on the side of the trailer which corresponds to the address on the pad.

31 RESUME - SARA BUTLER 31
After a moment, she gets out of the car and approaches the trailer, tries the door, it's locked.

31-A EXT. BEACH - NEAR TRAILER - ROCKFORD AND JOSEPH 31-A
They look up and see Sara by the trailer.

JOSEPH
Ten bucks says it's a bill collector.

ROCKFORD
Make it twenty plus welching privileges. (X)

They move toward Sara.

SARA
(hesitantly)
Are you James Rockford?

ROCKFORD
Yes.

SARA
My name is Sara Butler. (X)

ROCKFORD
Come in. (X)

He shakes her hand and unlocks the door, glances at her old VW. (X)

JOSEPH
I'll bet you're the Miss Butler from the bank, right?

SARA
I beg your pardon.

Rockford opens the door and they enter.

31-B INT. PANELED OFFICE - DAY

31-B

This is a small office which has been magnificently furnished in antiques: an ivory-white carpet, leather sofas with an antique coffee table, and there are several abstract paintings. There are no windows in the office. At the end of the room is an antique desk accompanied by a red leather swivel chair. Although quite small, it is a very plush setting. There is a bank of phones on a built-in console beside the desk, also a short-wave radio setup. All have been custom built into the console. Rockford turns to his father, who has followed them in.

ROCKFORD

This is my father, Joseph Rockford.

SARA

How do you do.

Joseph shakes hands with her. She looks around the trailer and the plushness of it seems to relax her.

SARA

Is this your office?

(X)

ROCKFORD

It's cheap, tax deductible, earthquake proof, and when I get a case out of town, I take it with me.

(X)

SARA

I want to hire you.

(X)

(X)

Joseph Rockford gives an audible sigh. He crosses to the door.

JOSEPH

I'll be at Mort's cabin. You got the number.

Rockford snaps his fingers and Joseph Rockford stops, then resignedly takes out his wallet and fishes out a bill and hands it to Rockford.

JOSEPH

Don't forget the welching privileges.

ROCKFORD

I won't.

Joseph Rockford exits the trailer and Sara turns to Jim. She looks puzzled.

ROCKFORD

(explaining)

He lost a bet but I gave him the right to renegotiate the loss.

(a beat)

He'll get me drunk and settle for five bucks.

CONTINUED

31-B CONTINUED

31-B

Rockford crosses to the desk and sits down, motioning Sara to a chair. She looks at him for a long moment. She looks shy, almost frightened.

ROCKFORD

I hope you can afford me.

Sara looks at Rockford as if she can't quite understand the question. Finally she looks at him with a little bit of anger.

SARA

I'm sorry...What?

ROCKFORD

I like to get the business out of the way up front.

(a beat)

I don't want to shock you, Miss Butler, but I'm not in this business for adventure.

(a beat)

I'm in it to make a living.

SARA

But you haven't even heard what I want?

Rockford looks at her for a long moment, then nods his head.

(X)

ROCKFORD

(a beat)

I cost two hundred dollars a day, plus expenses.

(X)

Sara looks shocked.

SARA

Two hundred dollars?!

ROCKFORD

Plus expenses.

(a beat)

And I only handle criminal cases that are closed.

(a beat)

I get myself messed up in a L.A.P.D. active file and I get my can shot off.

Sara looks at Rockford for a moment and we can almost see her drop the shy little girl act.

CONTINUED

31-B CONTINUED - 2

31-B

SARA

(stiff)

Where did you get this wonderful finishing school approach, Mr. Rockford?

ROCKFORD

People come to me all the time...
All of them with problems...

(a beat)

I used to be a softie and listen,
but they couldn't pay the freight,
so they left and I'd be all de-
pressed. It was turning me off
on my business, so now I do it
this way.

Sara is now a little tight-lipped. She looks at Rockford as if she is about to get up and leave. Instead, she opens her purse and pulls out her checkbook.

CONTINUED

31-B CONTINUED - 3

31-B

SARA
Two hundred dollars. That's the price, is it? Well, that's fine.
(a beat)
Money doesn't happen to be my problem. I have enough money to hire a platoon of little people like you.

As she is saying this, she is scribbling out the check. She misspells his name. Rockford is looking across the desk at her work.

ROCKFORD
It's Rockford with a k.

She doesn't make the correction. She rips the check off and flips it across the desk at him.

SARA
May I assume I have your attention now?

ROCKFORD
What is it I can do for you, Miss Butler?

She looks at him and shakes her head in mild disbelief, as Rockford picks up the check, examines it, and puts it back down on the desk.

SARA
My father was murdered. The police don't think it was very important. Just a skid row killing,

ROCKFORD
Skid Row?

There is a long moment, then Sara speaks the next sentence almost as a challenge.

SARA
My father was a wino.

She looks at Rockford but he says nothing, so she goes on:

CONTINUED

31-B CONTINUED - 4

31-

SARA

Two years ago my mother died...
After she died, it seemed to be
over for him...

(a beat)

I tried to make him forget, but he
started drinking and ended up a
bum...

(a beat)

Two months ago somebody killed him.
Nobody seems to care who did it
but me.

There is a long moment and Rockford looks at Sara closely.

ROCKFORD

The cops aren't on it?

SARA

Not anymore. Detective Becker was
working on it, but they closed the
case. He recommended I come to you.

ROCKFORD

If the homicide dicks can't solve
it, there's a pretty good chance I
can't either.

SARA

I just learned something that I
think changes that.

(X)

ROCKFORD

Did you tell the police?

SARA

Yes. They still don't think there's
anything they can do.

ROCKFORD

What is it?

SARA

I want you to meet my brother.
He'll tell you.

(X)

Rockford looks at Sara for a long moment.

CONTINUED

31-B CONTINUED - 5

31-B

ROCKFORD

Will you wait for me outside...I have to make a phone call.

SARA

Then you'll take the case?

ROCKFORD

Let's talk to your brother, then I'll let you know. I'll be right out.

Sara is on her feet. She moves out of the trailer and closes the door. Rockford picks up the phone and dials a number, then he picks up the check on his desk.

ROCKFORD

(into phone)

I'd like to run a credit check on a Miss Sara Butler.

CUT TO

32 and 33 OMITTED

32 and 33

34 INT. DRUG STORE - DAY - TIGHT SHOT - NICK BUTLER

34 (X)

He is nineteen years old and is as unattractive as nineteen-year-old boys come. His hair is already receding; he has pimples and wears horn-rimmed glasses; his expression is an almost constant scowl. He has just finished putting some items on the shelf. He is glaring at someone.

(X)

NICK

That's dumb, Sara, really dumb. I don't wanta talk to you, Mister, so you and my sister can just take a hike.

Nick Butler is dressed in a white coat of a drugstore employee. Sara and Jim Rockford are standing opposite him.

(X)

NICK

Listen, Mister, I'm not talking to anybody about my father.

(to Sara)

He was just a drunk. The hell with him.

(X)

CONTINUED

34

CONTINUED

34

Sara steps forward and slaps Nick across the face. He makes a move toward her but Rockford starts to intervene, which cools Nick's anger a little. Nick backs off, putting his anger into words:

(X)

(X)

NICK

He treated you like a Queen...
bought you presents...told you how
pretty you were...I got to carry
his golf bag on Saturday and empty
out the garbage.

(a beat)

You go ahead and have sympathy,
Sara, but sympathy is an emotion
that's counterproductive.

SARA

Would you rather I took Mr. Rockford
up to talk to your Mrs. Elias?

This stops Nick for a minute.

NICK

(weighing it)

You wouldn't.

SARA

Come on, Mr. Rockford. I want you
to meet someone.

She starts to take Rockford out of the stock room when Nick
stops them by moving to block their exit.

NICK

Sara...you can't do this.

SARA

Watch me.

She starts to leave and Nick grabs her and spins her around.
Rockford grabs Nick.

(X)

NICK

(surly)

You're a cop, huh?

ROCKFORD

What I am, Sonny, is about fifty
pounds heavier than you and one
hell of a lot meaner. So you
better soften up your approach.
I don't think I like you.

(X)

CONTINUED

Nick looks at Rockford a long moment. He's intimidated.

NICK

Okay, okay.

(to Sara)

But you better not bother Mrs. Elias.

Nick looks around as if someone might be listening, then turns to Rockford.

NICK

It's not all that important. Sara thinks it's a big deal but it's not important.

ROCKFORD

Tell me about it anyway.

NICK

This lady, who I make deliveries to, got kind of interested in me. She learned about my mother dying and my father getting killed and she found out that I wanted to be a doctor...That's all.

SARA

That's not all, Nick. Tell him everything.

NICK

She offered to send me to Medical School.

Rockford looks over at Sara who is mildly triumphant, having forced this from her obnoxious brother.

ROCKFORD

That's all?

NICK

I told you it wasn't much.

SARA

Tell the rest of it.

(X)

NICK

She orders her pharmaceuticals from this drug store and she has them delivered to her house in Bel Air.

CONTINUED

34 CONTINUED - 3

34

SARA
(to Rockford)
You see?

ROCKFORD
No.

SARA
Why would she deal with this drug
store? There are fifteen or
twenty that are closer.

NICK
She just does. Look, Sara, don't
ruin this for me. How many times
does a guy get a chance to be put
through medical school? Don't
mess it up.

CONTINUED

34 CONTINUED - 4

34

ROCKFORD

The medical profession could use
more sweet guys like you.

Hold on this for a beat, then

CUT TO

35 EXT. COFFEE PATIO - SUNSET BOULEVARD - DAY

35

Sara is sitting under a colorful awning drinking coffee.
Rockford is at a phone by the hostess stand. He hangs up and
moves over to Sara and sits down. He looks at her for a long
moment, then picks up his coffee and sips it. He says
nothing.

SARA

What's wrong?

ROCKFORD

I was just beginning to like you....

SARA

(bright)

I like you, too.

ROCKFORD

While we were out slapping your
brother around, I had some people
run a credit check on you....You
know what I found out?

SARA

(fearing the worst)

What?

He looks up at her, then drops her check down on the table in
front of her.

ROCKFORD

You laid some bad paper on me.
People who like one another almost
never do that sort of thing....

Sara reaches for her purse, opens it, and takes out her check-
book, looks at it, and then shakes her head in self-disgust.

SARA

Oh...How stupid of me! That's my
household account. I wrote it on
the wrong bank. I'm sorry....

CONTINUED

ROCKFORD

Knock it off, Sara. According to these guys, you're the only person in town with worse credit than me.

Sara hesitates, then changes her approach.

SARA

I had to do it.

(a beat)

This is important to me. He was my father. Somebody killed him. They choked him with a necktie, they took off his shoes and left him on the beach. They're not gonna get away with it. Not if I have anything to say about it.

(X)

She looks at Jim Rockford for a long moment. He is sipping his coffee. She relaxes a little bit, some of the tension going out of her.

SARA

I'm sorry about the check but nobody would listen to me.

(a beat)

Will you take the case, Mr. Rockford? Please.

(a beat)

Don't you see how strange it is? Why would she buy from that pharmacy...? It doesn't make sense.

ROCKFORD

Okay, but what's it got to do with your father's death?

(X)

SARA

I don't know, but it's strange, isn't it? Admit it.

(X)

ROCKFORD

Okay, it's strange, but not that strange.

(X)

SARA

Now that you've met Nick, how many women do you think would be interested in sending him to Medical School?

CONTINUED

35 CONTINUED - 2

35

This also stops Rockford. He thinks about it for a long moment.

ROCKFORD

Well, we haven't seen Mrs. Elias. She may look like she got dredged up out of the L.A. river.

SARA

Nick says Mrs Elias is very attractive.

ROCKFORD

Okay, Miss Butler. Let's say that doesn't track either, but it's still pretty thin. I wouldn't know how to help you.

SARA

Will you take the case?

Rockford looks at her for a long moment.

ROCKFORD

I don't think so.

SARA

What is it with you? Are you independently wealthy, or on some kind of big case or something?

ROCKFORD

What do you do for a living when you're not writing bad checks?

SARA

I have a small bikini shop. I make everything myself.

ROCKFORD

How much do you make?

SARA

About two hundred a week after expenses.

ROCKFORD

So you can't really afford me.

SARA

No.

ROCKFORD

If I don't think there's much chance of solving this case and I still go ahead and take everything you make in one week for one day of my time, what does that make me?

CONTINUED

SARA

I don't think that's your problem.

ROCKFORD

Well, I think it makes me an unprincipled jerk and since I haven't got any real close friends, I have to get along with myself, so I don't take cases where I think I'm wasting my time or your money ...That is, if you had any.

Sara looks at Rockford for a long moment.

SARA

What are you doing for dinner tonight?

ROCKFORD

Huh?

SARA

I know a place out in the valley ... If you're free, I could make a reservation for us...It's lovely there...You can ---

(X)

ROCKFORD

Sara.

SARA

What?

ROCKFORD

Knock it off, will you?

She looks at him for a long moment, then:

ROCKFORD

I'll spend a few hours on it, just for fun. No charge. Then if it looks like it's gonna develop, I'll take it on.

SARA

Good.

Rockford picks up the check from the table and hands it to her.

ROCKFORD

Don't drop it. It'll bounce up and hit you under the chin.

SARA

Funny. Very funny.

CONTINUED

35 CONTINUED - 4

35

She's smiling when she says it.

CUT TO

36 EXT. CITY NEWSPAPER BUILDING - DAY - N.P.S.

36

37 INT. AL "ANGEL" MARTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

37

"Angel" is a monicker hung on Al Martin. When we see Al Martin, we can guess why. He looks about as sinister as a man can look. He is seated behind a large battered desk looking at Jim Rockford, who is seated across from him. There is a sign on the desk which has Al Martin printed in white letters.

ANGEL

I don't know, Jim...How do ya figure it? If I didn't have to keep this crummy job, I'd quit.

ROCKFORD

So quit.

ANGEL

You don't know what it's like being on parole.

(a beat)

You got sprung by the Governor. But me? I gotta check in once a week with some fish called Norman Carter and I got to tell him how it's going.

(a beat)

If my brother-in-law didn't own this paper, I probably wouldn't ever get out of prison.

(a beat)

No, I'm stuck, baby. Stuck.

ROCKFORD

Sorry to hear it, Angel.

ANGEL

It's okay. I guess I got it coming.

(a beat)

I did that bank.

ROCKFORD

Yeah. When we were in, you musta told me a hundred times you were innocent.

ANGEL

Yeah. Well, I wasn't.

(a beat)

How 'bout you? You really do it?

CONTINUED

37 CONTINUED

37

ROCKFORD

No, I was bad-rapped.

ANGEL

Sure, sure...

(a beat)

Look, I told you. Come on, give it to me straight. You were in that robbery, right?

ROCKFORD

Wrong.

Angel looks at Rockford for a long moment.

ANGEL

I don't believe you.

ROCKFORD

Nobody ever did.

(a grin)

Look, did you get what I wanted?

ANGEL

Yeah. I went back through the old society columns and I pulled up something on this Elias twitch...

(a beat)

Take a look.

He hands Rockford a news clipping and Rockford scans it for a long moment.

ANGEL

Kinda strange, huh?

ROCKFORD

Yeah...Sure is....

There is a long beat.

ROCKFORD

When did her husband die? What was the date?

ANGEL

It was in June of last year. It's there on the second page.

Rockford flips the clipping to the second page and then looks back at Angel.

ROCKFORD

Thanks, Angel.

(a beat)

I'll see you later. We'll have dinner.

CONTINUED

37 CONTINUED - 2

37

ANGEL

I can't...It's a condition of parole. I can't hang out with anybody I did time with.

Rockford nods.

ROCKFORD

Well, when you get off then.

He heads to the door. At the door, Angel puts his hand on Rockford's arm.

ANGEL

Hey, Jimmy...

(a beat)

Come on, just between us. You were dirty, right? You did it?

ROCKFORD

No.

ANGEL

I won't tell. What the hell, I just wanta know.

ROCKFORD

No. I never pulled the job.

ANGEL

(a long beat)

Okay, you wanta be that way, I never did the bank either.

ROCKFORD

I never thought you did.

ANGEL

Well, I didn't.

ROCKFORD

I'll see ya, Angel.

He grins at the ugly little man who finally returns the grin and, if anything, it makes him even uglier.

38

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY - N.P.S.

38

The same establishing shot as before.

39 INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - ANGLE ON DET. BECKER AND ROCKFORD 39

They are moving through the squad room.

BECKER

Yeah, it's closed. I thought it was a mistake but we're getting a homicide a night down here and I just have to center my time on the ones that look solvable.

ROCKFORD

Let me have a look at the file, will ya?

BECKER

I can't, Jim. You know that.

(a beat)

I can't even tell you about it. Let's face it, every time you get lucky and solve a dead case, you make us look stupid. My captain hates you.

ROCKFORD

But if you were going to tell me, what would you say?

BECKER

I'd probably tell you there was a two hundred dollar diamond on his finger and for my money it doesn't shake out as a robbery.

ROCKFORD

I see...

(a beat)

Okay, Dennis, I'm gonna poke around, I think.

BECKER

You get anything solid, I want to hear about it.

ROCKFORD

Right.

(a beat)

Thanks.

CUT TO

40

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

40

Rockford and Sara are standing in the entryway. She is dressed in a simple black dress, with a string of pearls. Sara looks at Rockford, who is in a sport coat with no tie. After a moment, the Maitre d' comes up to him and shows him a selection of three or four ties. Rockford finally selects one and starts putting it on. (X)

ROCKFORD

(putting on tie)

I thought this place was informal.

Sara smiles.

ROCKFORD

What's so funny?

SARA

Nothing.

The Maitre d' motions the way and Rockford and Sara follow. They are no sooner seated when Sara starts up. (X)

SARA

I thought maybe we could work out a deal.

ROCKFORD

I'm sorry, but I don't have specials anymore.

(a beat)

It's gotta be two hundred a day, plus expenses.

SARA

Why is it so expensive?

ROCKFORD

It's not expensive. It's just a little less than a good plumber will make if he doesn't work on weekends.

(a beat)

Besides, it's dangerous. There's a strange thing about unsolved cases... There is usually somebody in the shadows who doesn't want them re-opened. You'd be surprised how nasty they can get.

SARA

What if I paid you on the installment plan?

CONTINUED

ROCKFORD

I did that once and got stiffed.
Ended up in Small Claims Court.

A waiter comes up to them.

WAITER

Would you care for cocktails?

SARA

I'll have a Scotch and water.

ROCKFORD

Make it two.

The waiter leaves.

SARA

I'm trying to hire you but I guess
you just don't want to work for me.

ROCKFORD

You're not trying to hire me, you're
trying to chisel me.

(a beat)

How big an installment?

SARA

(quick)

Twenty-five dollars a week.

ROCKFORD

Is that all?

SARA

I'll pay you, Mr. Rockford. I
promise.

ROCKFORD

That means if I work for one day,
you owe me twenty-five dollars a
week for eight weeks.

(a beat)

You sure that's what you want to do?

She nods.

CONTINUED

ROCKFORD

(a long beat)

Okay, I'll take it.

She smiles and reaches across the table and shakes his hand.

SARA

Tell me what mae you decide?

ROCKFORD

I looked into Mrs. Elias's background and came up with something strange...

(X)

(a beat)

Three years ago, she was a dancer here in L.A., did a lot of TV variety shows....

SARA

What's strange about that?

ROCKFORD

She married a guy named William Elias...Elias was sixty-eight years old and looked like he'd been emptied out of a vacuum cleaner. But he had ten million dollars. She married him in Las Vegas and, on their wedding night, he croaked....

(X)

Sara does indeed think that's strange, but after a moment it is also merely puzzling. (X)

SARA

But how does that tie in with my father's death?

ROCKFORD

I don't know. It didn't even happen within ten months of when your father was killed...But Nick's Medical School offer is also kind of strange and I don't believe in coincidences, so I'll look into it for a day or so.

(X)

Sara looks at him for a long moment.

CONTINUED

40 CONTINUED - 3

40

SARA
Thank you, Mr. Rockford.

ROCKFORD

Jim.

SARA

Jim.

There is a long beat, then Sara looks at him with a critical eye.

ROCKFORD

What is it?

SARA

I like you in a tie.

ROCKFORD

That makes you and my mother.

(X)

SARA

And nobody else?

ROCKFORD

I don't think anybody else really gives a damn.

Sara smiles and we

CUT TO

41 EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY - LAS VEGAS

41

This is a shot of the strip. Magnificent hotels lined up on both sides of the highway in the middle of the desert.

42 EXT. DOWNTOWN LAS VEGAS - DAY

42

Seedy, downbeat, a sharp contrast to the glitter of the strip.

43 EXT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING - DAY

43

An old brick building, four stories high. Rockford's car is parked in front.

CUT TO

44 INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - DAY - TIGHT SHOT - DR. RUBEN SEELMAN 44

He is balding, pudgy, and looks like he's constantly in a sweat. Pull back to show Rockford.

DR. SEELMAN

I don't mind telling you his widow, Mrs. Elias, was really treated rather badly by the authorities...They felt she killed him because of the amount of money involved and because she was thirty years younger...The fact that he died on their wedding night.

ROCKFORD

That all sounds pretty reasonable.

DR. SEELMAN

Well, maybe, but you should have seen his respiratory system...

(a beat)

His arteries were hard enough to pound through two inches of concrete....

ROCKFORD

There's no way it could have been induced by electric shock or drugs or something?

DR. SEELMAN

No. As I said, Mr. Rockford, Mr. Elias had a cousin who was trying to cut himself into the will...He had four different doctors examine the body after I did...They all came up with the same answer: Mr. Elias died of a very natural and inevitable heart attack.

ROCKFORD

Okay, thank you.

DR. SEELMAN

Are you trying to re-open the case, Mr. Rockford?

(a beat)

Because if you are and you're interested in a medical opinion, I think you're wasting your time.

CONTINUED

44 CONTINUED

44

Hold on Rockford for a moment, then:

ROCKFORD

Thank you for seeing me, Doctor.

Rockford turns and exits the office. As soon as he does, Dr. Seelman opens a phone directory on his desk, then dials a 213 area code and a number. There is a long beat, and then:

DR. SEELMAN

(into phone)

Mrs. Elias?

(a beat)

I don't know whether you remember me but this is Dr. Seelman....

45 OMITTED

45

46 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY - CLOSE SHOT - MILDRED ELIAS

46

She is a woman of extremely generous proportions. She is not pretty, but there is a sultriness and sexiness that carries the feeling of great beauty where it really doesn't exist. She has the lithe look of a dancer; she is dressed conservatively as she stands in a magnificent living room, the telephone to her ear. Intercut:

MILDRED

Yes, I remember, Doctor. You did the autopsy on William.

DR. SEELMAN

I didn't want to bother you, but there is a man up here who seems very interested in the coroner's report that I filed.

MILDRED

How strange....

DR. SEELMAN

(an awkward pause)

I felt so badly about the way you were treated when he died...There was no question he died a natural death.

MILDRED

Thank you, Doctor.

(a beat)

You wouldn't happen to have his name?

CONTINUED

46 CONTINUED

46

DR. SEELMAN

(embarrassed)

Of course...I have his card.

(reads card)

Jim Rockford. It says he's a private investigator who specializes in closed cases...There's no address on the card.

MILDRED

Thank you, Doctor.

DR. SEELMAN

(he hesitates for a moment)

Ah...Mrs. Elias, if you ever get up to Las Vegas, I hope we might see each other...I....

MILDRED

Of course, Doctor Seelman. I still have your number...Let's make a date and plan on it...

(a beat)

Could I call you back later?

DR. SEELMAN

Of course. Sure, I'm here all the time.

MILDRED

(a beat)

Thank you, Doctor.

She hangs up and Dr. Seelman hangs up. He is obviously carrying one hell of a torch for Mildred Elias. He grins for a moment, and we

CUT TO

46-A INT. KARATE STUDIO - DAY - TIGHT ON PIECE OF WOOD

46-1

A foot comes up and breaks the board. There is the sound of heavy breathing. Pull back to show Jerry Grimes working out. He is very good and has a black belt tied around his karate outfit.

MAN'S VOICE

Jerry? Telephone.

He stops his workout, moves over to the phone, and takes it. Intercut with:

46-AA INT. MILDRED ELIAS' LIVING ROOM

46-1

MILDRED

(into phone)

Jerry? It's Milly.

46-B ANGLE - JERRY GRIMES

46-B

JERRY

I was about to call you. Where's this week's check?

Intercut:

MILDRED

Forget the check. It'll be there. I've got to see you.
(a beat)

(X)

I think we're in trouble.

Hold on Jerry for a beat, and

CUT TO

47
and
48

OMITTED

47
and
48

49 INT. BIKINI SHOP - DAY - TIGHT SHOT - SARA

49
(X)

This is a small one-room shop. There are racks with bikinis and beach shifts. Sara is behind a counter sewing on something. We can see a back room behind her with one sewing machine and a cutting table.

50 ANGLE - ON ROCKFORD

50

He is standing by the door. Rockford doesn't say anything for a beat.

SARA

Don't tell me you're off the case again?

Rockford nods.

SARA

Buy why?

ROCKFORD

I just got back from Vegas... According to the coroner who did the autopsy, Mr. Elias died of a heart attack. He said it was legit...no possibility it was induced.

(X)

SARA

If there was some kind of connection between Mr. Elias and my father, maybe he's lying....

ROCKFORD

Why?

SARA

Maybe she paid him....

CONTINUED

ROCKFORD

There were four other doctors involved. You want my opinion: It's a deadend.

Rockford takes a slip of paper out of his pocket and slides it over to Sara.

ROCKFORD

I didn't charge you for the time... ten hours driving to Vegas and back... I just put in seven cents a mile and gas and the time I spent working on it up there and the two phone calls here...

(a beat)

It comes to seventy-five dollars. I'll give you a receipt. It's tax deductible.

Sara looks at the slip of paper and makes no move to pick it up.

SARA

Just what kind of jerk are you?

ROCKFORD

My own kind.

(a beat)

Look, Sara, I'm sorry... I know you want to find out who killed your father but if you want the advice of a friend, forget it.

(a beat)

Even if you find out who did it, your father will still be dead and you won't feel any better about it.

(a beat)

Believe me....

SARA

(exploding)

You don't know anything about it! You stand there with your seven cents a mile and two phone calls and try and tell me about my father. I'm going to find out who killed him.

ROCKFORD

It was nice knowing you, Sara.

(a beat)

I think you should bury your father before he buries you.

CONTINUED

- 50 CONTINUED - 2 50
- He gets up and walks out of the shop, as we move in and hold on Sara for a long beat.
- 51 EXT. BIKINI SHOP - DAY 51
- Rockford gets in his car, which is parked in front of the shop. He drives off. Hold for a beat and then we see that a very elaborate sports car pulls out and follows him. It is the blue Jensen.
- 52 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - DAY 52
- He is driving slowly. He glances in the rear view mirror.
- 53 HIS POINT OF VIEW - REAR VIEW MIRROR - THE BLUE JENSEN 53
- 54 RESUME - ROCKFORD 54
- He doesn't seem to pay it much attention. He is deep in thought.
- 55 EXT. STREET - DAY - RUNBY 55
- First, Rockford's car, then half a block back is the Jensen.
- 56 INT. JENSEN CAR - DAY 56
- Jerry Grimes is driving. He has a pair of dark glasses on; his wavy blonde hair is neatly in place.
- 57 EXT. GAS STATION - DAY 57
- as Rockford's car pulls past and then turns into a gas station and parks in front of the phone booth.
- 58 EXT. GAS STATION - DAY 58
- Rockford goes into the phone booth, opens the telephone book, finds a number and dials it.
- (X)
- 58-A INT. BIKINI SHOP - DAY - ANGLE ON SARA 58-A
- Intercut Rockford during this scene. He opens the yellow pages to his own ad.
- (X)

59 HIS POINT OF VIEW - THE YELLOW PAGES - CLOSE ON HIS AD 59
On the picture of him somebody has put a mustache.

59-A RESUME - ROCKFORD 59-A
He takes a pencil with an eraser out of his pocket and starts to erase the mustache, as we intercut:

SARA
Yes?

ROCKFORD
It's Jim Rockford. I been thinking there's still one other thing I could check out....

SARA
What's wrong, Jim? Did you just figure out you're overdrawn at the bank?

ROCKFORD
You don't have to get smart.
(a beat)
I might take a look at Mrs. Elias. (X)
If she's sending eight other guys through medical school, then maybe you'll give up on all this.
(a beat)
How 'bout it? If that's the case will you let it drop?
(a beat)
You there?

SARA (X)
Yes.

ROCKFORD (X)
Tell you what. I'll make this half-price.

SARA (X)
Thank, Jim.
(a beat)
Don't hurt Nick's chances for medical school.

60 OMITTED 60

61 TIGHT SHOT - THE PICTURE 61
He erased it too hard and the paper tears.

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36-A

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61-A ANGLE - ROCKFORD

61-1

ROCKFORD

Dammit!

Intercut:

SARA

What's wrong?

ROCKFORD

I tore my picture. I'll call you
back.

He hangs up, as we:

CUT TO

62 EXT. ELIAS ESTATE - DAY

62

A magnificent wrought-iron gate protects the carefully manicured grounds and white Spanish architecture of the home. We can see Rockford's car parked in front of the house.

63 EXT. POOL AREA - ANGLE - MILDRED ELIAS

63

She is in a brief bikini, stretched out on a pool chair, taking in the sun. She has a pair of sun guards over her eyes. Rockford is seated on a chair next to her. He is in a coat and tie. He has some brochures in front of him, along with a printed form. He also has on a pair of rimless glasses.

Mrs. Elias takes the sun guards off her nose and sits up for a moment. She is truly breathtaking in a bathing suit, especially this one. She looks at Rockford.

MILDRED

You don't look much like a Dean of Admissions....

ROCKFORD

(slightly interested)

Really? What do I look like?

MILDRED

You look like a truck driver in a suit.

63-A ANGLE - ROCKFORD

63-A

He hesitates for a moment, then takes off his glasses and looks a little disappointed.

ROCKFORD

Oh...

(a beat)

Well, I'm not.

(a beat)

Actually, being a Dean of Admissions is really quite a challenge. Do you know that at Mollar we have over twelve hundred applicants for every opening?

MILDRED

Twelve hundred? What a job that must be screening them out. I had no idea....

ROCKFORD

Well, of course, many of those are multiple applications.

She looks at him with a questioning look and Rockford picks it up

ROCKFORD

That means they're applications from people who are also applying to other Medical Schools.

63-B INT. MILDRED ELIAS'S LIVING ROOM - PAST JERRY GRIMES THROUGH WINDOW 63-E

The angle is over Grimes' shoulder as he looks down at the pool area.

- 63-C HIS POINT OF VIEW - ROCKFORD AND MILDRED 63-C
They are talking. Rockford is showing her one of the forms.
- 63-D RESUME - JERRY GRIMES 63-I
He looks like he is having trouble containing himself. He would like to go out and kick the crap out of Rockford, but instead he waits, the anger cutting deep lines in his face.
- 63-E RESUME - ROCKFORD, MILDRED - AT POOL - DAY 63-I
MILDRED
I see...And what is it you want of me, Dean...?
ROCKFORD
Simpson...Carter Simpson.
Rockford takes off his coat as Mildred picks up one of the brochures and looks at it.
- 63-F INSERT SHOT - THE BROCHURE 63-I
It is for Mollar Medical School. We move in on the name of the Assistant Dean -- Carter Simpson.
- 63-G RESUME - MILDRED, ROCKFORD - DAY 63-C
ROCKFORD
It says that you are the one who is going to pay for Nicholas's education at Mollar. Since you are not related to Nicholas Butler, we just wanted to make sure that you are willing to pay for the whole four years...
(a beat)
What we're really trying to determine is how serious your interest in him really is....
Mildred cocks an eyebrow at the remark.
ROCKFORD
That didn't come out the way I wanted.
(a beat)
You know what I mean....

CONTINUED

63-G CONTINUED

63-G

MILDRED

Nick Butler is a bright young man whose father and mother are both dead...I'm very wealthy, so I've decided to do this boy a favor.

(a beat)

Does that answer your question?

ROCKFORD

Well...almost. There's one other thing...

(a beat)

The school was wondering if you could set up some kind of trust to guarantee his education for four years...

(a beat)

Believe me, it's not that we don't trust your word, it's just that we must have certain guarantees...

(a beat)

After all, it will probably come to fifteen thousand dollars a year.

Mildred reaches out and takes a pencil off the table and writes something on the letterhead, then hands it back to Rockford.

MILDRED

That's my attorney's number...Call him and he'll make the arrangements.

ROCKFORD

Wonderful. Thank you.

(a beat)

Y'know, as long as you're interested, we have quite a few needy applicants...Maybe you'd be interested in helping some of them....

(X)

MILDRED

No, Nick is my only charity case.

(a beat)

Good-bye.

(X)

Rockford looks at her for a long moment, then clears his throat.

ROCKFORD

Boy, that pool looks nice....

MILDRED

It is.

ROCKFORD

It's sure a hot day....

MILDRED

Good-bye, Dean Simpson. Call my attorney.

CONTINUED

63-G CONTINUED - 2

63-G

ROCKFORD

Good-bye.

He turns and gathers up his things and moves away from the pool area. Hold on Mildred Elias as she watches him go. After he has left, we hear a door close up by the house. Mildred looks in that direction, apparently surprised and puzzled to see:

63-H HER POINT OF VIEW - THE HOUSE

63-H

as Jerry Grimes moves down toward the pool. She starts to get out of the chair as he approaches.

JERRY

What was he doing here?

(X)

MILDRED

(angrily)

What are you doing here?

(X)

Grimes grabs her and pulls her upright.

JERRY

You don't know who he was, do you?

MILDRED

His name is Simpson. He's ---

JERRY

His name is Rockford! He's the guy you asked me to follow!

Mildred is too stunned to reply, and on her look of shock and apprehension we

CUT TO

64 TIGHT SHOT - A PAD OF PAPER - NIGHT

64

A pencil is tallying up a column of figures on a pad of paper.

64-A EXT. TACO STAND - NIGHT

64-A

On this, we pull back and find that Rockford and Sara are standing under neon lights at a taco stand, waiting for their order. Rockford has been scribbling figures on a note pad, tears off the slip of paper and hands it over to Sara, who looks at it carefully.

CONTINUED

64-A CONTINUED

64-7

SARA

What's this? The eight dollars
and sixty-two cents?

ROCKFORD

Tax.

SARA

Tax? There's no sales tax on a
personal service.

ROCKFORD

Not sales tax -- federal tax. It's
part of the fee, but I break it
down separately for my own records.

SARA

Oh....

She looks at the paper for a long moment, then looks up as
the counterman slides their order through the window slot.

SARA

Who's paying for the tacos?

ROCKFORD

Me.

SARA

(sarcastic)

Whoopee!

Rockford pays the counterman, picks up their order, then they
move to a table and sit down. Sara picks up her taco and bites
into it.

SARA

Well, I've got to tell you one
thing: you've certainly been a
new experience for me.

ROCKFORD

Look, Sara, if Mrs. Elias had said
anything I could get my teeth into,
I woulda kept on. I called her
attorney and he's setting up the
trust....

SARA

But you said if Nick was the only
one it would mean something....

(X)

CONTINUED

64-A CONTINUED - 2

64-i

ROCKFORD

No. What I said was if there were others, it would help explain Nick and help you forget all this.

(a beat)

I don't know why she's interested in Nick, but I'm at a dead end.

(a beat)

I even tried to get friendly with her but she wasn't buying.

CONTINUED

64-A CONTINUED - 2

64-A

SARA

Maybe your rates were too high?

ROCKFORD

Okay, if you want to be nasty....

(X)

64-B ROCKFORD'S POINT OF VIEW - UP THE STREET - THE BLUE JENSEN parked in the shadows.

64-B

64-C RESUME - TWO SHOT

64-C

SARA

I'm not even sure you're really off the case...

(a beat)

This is the second time you've quit and I'm still getting these little slips of paper from you.

(X)

ROCKFORD

I'm not sure either. I'll call you later.

He gets up and leaves. She looks after him with a puzzled expression.

CUT TO

65 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - RUNBY

65

Rockford's car pulls past camera. It is followed a little ways back by the blue Jensen.

66 INT. JENSEN - NIGHT

66

Jerry Grimes is following Rockford.

67 ANGLE THROUGH WINDOW - TOWARD ROCKFORD'S SEDAN - NIGHT

67

Jerry keeps several car lengths behind.

- 68 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR 68
He slows down and makes an abrupt lane change, then looks in his rearview mirror, then:
- 69 HIS POINT OF VIEW - THE BLUE JENSEN - MIRROR SHOT - NIGHT 69
It is visible behind another car, a half-block back.
- 70 RESUME - ROCKFORD 70
He now looks puzzled, then accelerates.
- 71 EXT. CITY STREET - RUNBY - NIGHT 71
First, Rockford pulls past camera, then makes a right-hand turn, followed several moments later by the blue Jensen.
- 71-A INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - NIGHT 71-A
Still driving, he reaches over and opens the glove compartment and takes out a packaged roll of nickels and drops them in his jacket pocket.
- 71-B EXT. SMALL BAR - NIGHT 71-B
Rockford pulls into the parking lot, gets out, and strolls leisurely into the bar. There is a large sign out front that says "Entertainment, Drinks, Acrobatic Dancing." After a moment, Jerry Grimes pulls the blue Jensen into the parking lot and gets out. He moves quickly to the door.
- 71-C INT. BAR - NIGHT 71-C
It is crowded and smokey and a red spotlight is playing over a girl who is obviously an acrobatic dancer. She is moving to the rhythm of the music, which is both exotic and contortive at the same time. Quite a combination.
- 71-D FOLLOWING JERRY - NIGHT 71-D
He looks around and finally spots:
- 71-DD ANGLE - ROCKFORD 71-DD
Rockford at the end of the bar. Rockford is laughing and talking to the bartender. After a moment, he turns and heads toward the back of the night club.

71-E RESUME - JERRY 71-E

He watches as Rockford goes into the men's room.

71-F INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT 71-F

Rockford looks around the room which is empty except for one man who is standing in front of the mirror carefully combing his hair. He gets it combed, looks dissatisfied, and repeats, starting to comb it again. Rockford looks at him impatiently.

71-G INT. BAR - JERRY GRIMES 71-G

He moves to a spot in the bar where he has a good look at the door to the men's room, then sits down and waits.

71-H INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT 71-H

Rockford can't wait any longer, so he moves over to the man and taps him on the shoulder.

ROCKFORD

(a little
slurred)

Excuse me, but I got me a real
problem...I'd like to borrow
twenty bucks...See, I'm with this
girl....

The man quickly starts to finish combing his hair, then moves toward the door over the following:

ROCKFORD

(continuing)

...from the office...I figured I
put enough booze in her and let
her watch the acrobatic dancers,
I'd make a score but I'm running
outta dough...She's had ten scotch
and sodas and she's drinking me
under the table...You gimme your
address and I promise to mail it
to you....

As this is going on, the man splits out of the rest room.

CUT TO

71-J INT. BAR - JERRY GRIMES - NIGHT 71-J

He sees the man exit the men's room, looks at his watch.

71-K INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT 71-K

Rockford quickly moves to the wash basin and begins to unscrew one of the liquid soap containers. He takes it off and then moves to the middle of the men's room and begins to pour the liquid soap out on the tile floor. (Intercut with Jerry in bar.)

71-L RESUME - JERRY 71-L

He looks at his watch again. The acrobatic dancer is just finishing her number and the audience applauds. Jerry gets up from the table and moves uncertainly toward the men's room, finally deciding to check it out. He opens the men's room door and enters.

71-M INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT 71-M

Jerry steps through the door and sees Rockford leaning up against the far end of the wash room wall in a very relaxed position, his arms crossed. Jerry steps into the room and pretends to go to the wash basin.

ROCKFORD

You gotta be one of the dumbest-looking apes I ever saw.

Grimes looks at him but says nothing.

ROCKFORD

I take guys like you apart just for fun.

Jerry is not used to being insulted. He reddens but continues to fiddle at the wash basin.

ROCKFORD

'Course, most of the time, big muscle-bound guys are compensating for feelings of inadequacy....

Jerry turns toward Rockford with an ugly snarl on his face.

JERRY

(tight)
Meaning...?

CONTINUED

71-M CONTINUED

71-M

ROCKFORD

(smiling)

Queer.

(X)

There is a long moment, then Jerry seems to change. His voice gets husky.

JERRY

(whispering)

That's fine...That's just fine...

Take it easy....

Rockford continues to stand there with his arms crossed, seemingly relaxed. Jerry makes a sudden move forward and tries a kick, but he hits the soaped-up part of the floor. He loses his balance and misses Rockford, kicking the towel dispenser in half, demolishing it. As he struggles to regain his balance, Rockford steps forward and nails him with a classic right-cross. Jerry goes to his knees like a bag of cement. Rockford opens his fist and we see that in his right hand he is holding the roll of nickels. He drops the roll in his pocket, strips off his belt. Jerry is beginning to come to. He groans once.

71-N NEW ANGLE - ROCKFORD AND JERRY

71-N

Rockford ties up Jerry's feet with the belt, drags him over to the stalls by the toilet, and hoists him up, so he is half hanging by his feet, half on his back, then Rockford kneels down and goes through his wallet, takes out his license and reads it.

71-P CLOSE SHOT - LICENSE - NIGHT

71-P

It says that this is Jerold Grimes, six-three, 230.

71-Q RESUME - ROCKFORD

71-Q

He slaps Jerry twice across the face with the wallet and his eyes come open. He is now fully conscious. He starts to move and realizes that he is immobile.

ROCKFORD

You know what's wrong with karate, Jerry? It's based on the ridiculous assumption that the other guy will fight fair.

JERRY

You're making a big mistake.

CONTINUED

71-Q CONTINUED

71-Q

ROCKFORD

You better tell me what you're up to, Jerry, or I'm gonna leave you here for the weirdos that hang out in this joint.

JERRY

I come to the toilet and you sucker-punch me. You gotta big problem, Mister....

ROCKFORD

(overlapping)

I saw you behind me yesterday, but I put it out of my mind because I absolutely refused to believe that anybody would try and tail me in a red Cadillac.

(a beat)

Then tonight there you are again... chrome hubcaps, gold hood ornament and all...

(a beat)

So let's get that much straight. I know you been following me...What I don't know is why.

JERRY

Okay, so I been following you...I thought you were a guy who's been messing around with this chick I know. She asked me to scare him off. I can see now you're the wrong guy.

ROCKFORD

You're full a crap.

JERRY

Fine...You think I'm full of crap... Let me up.

ROCKFORD

Whatta you do for a living, Jerry?

JERRY

Nothing.

ROCKFORD

There are all kinds of nothing... What's your flavor?

(X)

CONTINUED

71-Q CONTINUED - 2

71-Q

JERRY

I play the ponies.

ROCKFORD

(a beat)

Okay, Jerry, this is your last chance, then I'm gonna have to mark you up...Why are you following me?

JERRY

Help yourself, then you better get outta the country, 'cause I'm gonna find you and when I do ---

Just then, the door to the men's room opens and a balding man, about forty, enters. He looks at Rockford and at Jerry, who is hanging by his feet from the toilet stall.

MAN

Oh...I'm sorry. I didn't know the room was being used....

Rockford looks over at him and smiles.

ROCKFORD

It's okay, we're almost through.

MAN

Well, I'll wait outside....

ROCKFORD

It's okay. You can stay.

The man looks too frightened to move, so he stays there during the following:

ROCKFORD

Oh, yeah, one other thing, Jerry...

(a beat)

You might hear back from some people that there's a guy going through your background...Y'know, bank account and business associates...

(a beat)

If you hear that, don't worry too much about it, it'll just be me.

(a beat)

Have fun....

Rockford exits, as we

CUT TO

71-R EXT. SMALL BAR - NIGHT

71-R

As we watch, Jerry Grimes exits the bar. He is mad as he moves to his car. He is carrying Rockford's belt in his right hand, then he slings it away, and gets into his car and pulls out of the parking lot. We pan it past and come to rest on Rockford's car parked up the street in the shadows with the lights out. He starts the engine and pulls out after Jerry Grimes.

CUT TO

72
thru
83

OMITTED

72
thru
83

84 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - RUNBY

84

As the blue Jensen pulls past camera, it is followed a long way back by Rockford's car...the lights out.

CUT TO

85 EXT. OUTRIGGER BAR - NIGHT

85

Jerry Grimes pulls up in front of the bar and the doorman takes his car. Jerry enters. Across the street we can see Rockford's car pull up. He watches as Grimes enters the bar, then he drives quickly away.

(X)
(X)

CUT TO

85-A EXT. SMALL LAUREL CANYON HILLSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT

85-A

This is one of those offbeat houses that are only two or three room shacks and cling to the side of the hill with a spectacular view of the city. Rockford goes to the door and rings the bell, then knocks hard with his knuckles. After a moment, the door opens and Sara looks out at Rockford with sleep-ridden eyes, her expression questioning.

85-B EXT./INT. SARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

85-B

ROCKFORD

I'm back on the case at my regular rates.

(X)

Sara stares at him for a long beat.

SARA

What took you so long?

CONTINUED

85-B CONTINUED

85-B

Sara then steps back and he enters. The interior of the house is wild. The walls are covered with paintings in vivid hues, but alive, and there is almost no furniture. (X)

ROCKFORD

We got somebody interested in us. ...That means I turned over at least one of the right rocks.

(a beat)

Get dressed in something sexy... I'm gonna offer you a chance to get some of your money back.

SARA

I don't know that I....

Rockford hustles her toward the bedroom.

ROCKFORD

I don't have time to argue about it...Get moving! Something slinky.

He shoves her toward the bedroom, as we:

CUT TO

86
thru
87

OMITTED

86
thru
87

88 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - NIGHT

88

Rockford is driving. Sara is in a black silk evening gown and is putting her lipstick on by the mirror over the visor. He is driving fast.

SARA

Slow down, or I'll end up looking like the Bride of Frankenstein.

ROCKFORD

Just a few more blocks...I'll let you off on the corner. Remember, if he's still there, he's the big muscle-bound ape in the green shirt. He's probably got a nice bruise on the left side of his jaw.

CONTINUED

88

CONTINUED

88

SARA

You hit him?

ROCKFORD

Yeah.

SARA

How brave! I hope that doesn't cost extra.

ROCKFORD

You keep up this chicken-hearted routine of yours and it sure as hell will.

SARA

Okay, where's the poison?

ROCKFORD

It's not poison. What you take me for? It's just knock-out-drops.
(a beat)

Here.

He hands her a vial and she looks at it, then puts it in her handbag.

SARA

How much of my own money am I gonna earn back?

ROCKFORD

I usually pay my operatives twenty bucks an hour for this kind of thing.

SARA

Twenty bucks an hour to pick up some guy who's probably an emotional cripple and will try and rape me!?

ROCKFORD

He won't try and rape you.

SARA

I won't do it for less than fifty.

Rockford looks at her for a long moment.

ROCKFORD

Who sicked you onto me?

(X)

CONTINUED

88 CONTINUED - 2

88

SARA

The cops.

ROCKFORD

(dry)

Well, at least that much figures...

(a beat)

Okay -- fifty.

Sara looks over at him and smiles. Rockford pulls the car over to the curb and stops.

ROCKFORD

Just come on trampy...Don't talk too much.

SARA

I can handle it.

She gets out of the car and starts to walk away as Rockford says: (X)

ROCKFORD

Yeah...I think you can. (X)

She smiles and goes on. (X)

89 EXT. OUTRIGGER BAR - NIGHT - ANGLE - ROCKFORD'S CAR 89

He is seated in the front seat, waiting. He looks at his watch.

89-A INSERT - WATCH 89-A

It reads: ten o'clock.

90 NEW ANGLE - ROCKFORD - NIGHT 90

It is much later. He looks at his watch.

90-A INSERT - WATCH 90-A

It now reads eleven thirty.

90-B BACK TO ROCKFORD 90-B

We can see that he is getting worried.

90-C ROCKFORD'S POINT OF VIEW

90-C

After a long moment, the door of the bar opens and Sara and Jerry Grimes exit the bar. Sara is holding onto Jerry's arm and is laughing. Jerry reaches down and slaps her on the ass, and laughs.

91 ANGLE - ROCKFORD

91

He looks at this with an expression of absolute disgust, then turns the ignition of his car and waits. After a long moment, the doorman returns with the blue Jensen. Grimes and Sara get in the car and pull off. Rockford follows.

92 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - RUNBY

92

as the blue Jensen flashes past camera, Rockford's car is a careful distance behind.

93 INT. JENSEN - NIGHT

93

Grimes is driving. He does indeed have a nice raspberry on the side of his chin. Sara is still holding his arm, which makes it a little awkward to shift the car. Sara reaches up and fingers the bruise on the side of Jerry Grimes' face.

SARA

(a little
drunkenly)

What does the other guy look like,
lover?

GRIMES

(lots of
balls)

He's trashed up good. I musta
busted half his ribs.

SARA

I like a man who can handle him-
self.

GRIMES

That's good, baby, 'cause you're
in for a real treat.

He leers over at her.

94 EXT. JERRY GRIMES' APARTMENT - NIGHT

94

The blue Jensen is parked out in front. Across the street is Rockford's car. Rockford looks at his watch, then gets out of the car and heads across the street. This is a very expensive high rise apartment building, complete with a doorman.

CUT TO

95 INT. JERRY GRIMES' APARTMENT - NIGHT

95

Jerry and Sara are sitting on the sofa. Jerry takes a sip from his drink. The apartment is professionally decorated with expensive antiques. A real pad twenty floors up.

JERRY

Okay, baby, the social hour is over.

SARA

(cooing)

Don't rush me, Jerry, I have to get in the mood....

JERRY

Mood? What mood? We ain't in high school, for God's sake.

Sara hands him his drink.

SARA

Let's just finish these first....

JERRY

What's with you, anyway? You're the squirreliest chick I been with in....

He looks at her.

JERRY

Wait a minute...?

SARA

(hopefully)

Something wrong?

JERRY

I know where I seen you...You used to go with Frankie Bader.

SARA

(disheartened)

No, I never knew Frankie.

95-A INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

95-A

Rockford is standing outside the door with his ear to the door, listening, but all he can hear is some mumbling coming from inside. He looks at his watch.

96 OMITTED

96

- 97 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT 97
Jerry starts to paw Sara.
- 98 JERRY'S POINT OF VIEW - SARA 98
His vision gets blurry. She begins to go in and out of focus.
- 99 RESUME - JERRY AND SARA 99
Jerry gets to his feet and stumbles toward the door. Half-way there, he stops, turns, and looks back at Sara, then falls like cut timber, face forward on the floor.
- 100 ANGLE - SARA 100
She looks at Jerry Grimes for a beat, then gets off the sofa and hurries to the door and opens it. Rockford steps into the apartment, closes and locks the door. He looks at Jerry Grimes, who is out on the floor, then he looks at Sara whose shoulder strap on her gown is down.

ROCKFORD

Did you have to let him paw you like that?

SARA

Paw me? What are you talking about?

ROCKFORD

I saw you outside the bar, playing slap and tickle...I was right across the street.

SARA

What is this?

ROCKFORD

Forget it.

(a beat)

Let's go through this place....

He moves through the living room of the small apartment.

SARA

I mean, what was I supposed to do?
I was trying to pick him up....

CONTINUED

100 CONTINUED

100

ROCKFORD

I said forget it. Let's move quick. I don't want him to wake up and catch us.

SARA

You aren't afraid of him, are you?

ROCKFORD

You're damn right I am.

Rockford moves across the room and begins to frisk the apartment. He opens a drawer in a console and we see that there are a lot of body building apparatus. Rockford takes out one of the squeeze grip things and tries to squeeze it closed; he doesn't get very far. He looks over at Sara, who's watching, and throws the gripper back into the cabinet and slams the door shut. He moves into the bedroom.

101 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

101

There is a large bowl on top of the dresser, which is full of two dollar win tickets. Rockford takes them out, looks at them as Sara follows him into the room.

SARA

What's that?

ROCKFORD

Losing tickets from the track...
(a beat)
Some big-time gambler we got here...he saves his old tickets.

Rockford kneels down and starts going through the drawers, working down to the bottom drawer of the dresser. Sara goes over to the closet and opens it, begins checking the shelves. Rockford finds a photo album in a drawer, takes it out, and goes to the bed and starts looking through the album, flipping the pages, one by one, looking at them.

- 101-A HIS POINT OF VIEW - THE ALBUM 101-A
 Every one seems to be a night club photo, all of Jerry with his arm around beautiful girls in low-cut dresses.
- 101-B RESUME - SARA AND ROCKFORD 101-B
 She looks at him.
- SARA
 Did you find something?
- ROCKFORD
 Yeah, his trophy case.
- 102 thru 103 OMITTED 102 thru 103
- 104 CLOSE SHOT - PHOTO - NIGHT 104
 It is a shot of Jerry Grimes. He has his arm around Mildred Elias. They are at a posh restaurant.
- 105 RESUME - ROCKFORD 105
 He looks at the photograph for a long moment.
- ROCKFORD
 Well, we made one nice connection...
 (holds out book)
 Take a look at this.
- She looks at the picture.
- SARA
 Who is it?
- ROCKFORD
 That's Mrs. Mildred Elias.
- Sara looks at Rockford for a long moment. He is now lost in thought.
- SARA
 But I still don't see how that helps us?
- ROCKFORD
 Neither do I, but it is interesting...
 (a beat)
 Sara, do you have a picture of your father?

CONTINUED

105 CONTINUED

105

SARA

Yeah. In my wallet.

She digs into her purse and takes out a photograph and shows it to Rockford. He grabs her by the arm and leads her out of the apartment.

CUT TO

106 EXT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - NIGHT

106

It is lit up and the presses are running.

CUT TO

107 INT. NEWSPAPER MORGUE

107

Angel Martin has his back to Rockford and Sara as he is going through a large file.

ANGEL

Elias...William, come to Angel...
Let's see...No, not here.

He slams the drawer and moves over to another cabinet, pulls it open, and begins to dig around inside.

ANGEL

E...l...i...Here it is, yes....

He pulls out a folder and hands it over to Rockford.

ANGEL

Boy, this stuff is dusty...They wanted to put me down here at first to refile, but I told 'em takes me a half-hour to look up a name in the phone book....

As he is talking, Rockford is going through the folder. He finally pulls out a clipping with a photograph on it, then lays the photograph of Harry Butler down next to it.

108 CLOSE SHOT - THE TWO PICTURES

108

The two men bear absolutely no resemblance to one another. Elias is round-faced and bald. Butler is hawk-faced with lots of gray hair.

109 RESUME - THREE SHOT

109

Angel is looking over their shoulders.

ANGEL

You think these two guys got mixed up with one another? That maybe the cops buried the wrong guy?

CONTINUED

109 CONTINUED

109

ROCKFORD

No, they died ten months apart
and Elias had an open casket funeral
with all his friends there.

(X)

ANGEL

(after a moment)

Is that all you want, Jimmy?

ROCKFORD

Yeah...Look, can I keep this?

ANGEL

Sure.

He shuts off the lights and heads out of the file room. As
he is closing the door, he looks at Sara.

ANGEL

Jim and me go way back...We was
in the pen together.

(a beat)

We was both framed.

110 ANGLE - SARA

110

Her head snaps around and she looks at Rockford with a startled
look as the door to the filing room closes, cutting the rest of
the scene from sight.

CUT TO

111 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - NIGHT

111

They are parked in front of the newspaper office. Rockford
is looking at the news clipping. Sara is looking at him and
is strangely quiet.

ROCKFORD

What did your father look like after
he hit the skids?

SARA

What?

ROCKFORD

Well, you said he was a bum for
about a year...That must've changed
him quite a lot.

Sara thinks about this for a moment, then nods her head.

ROCKFORD

What'd he look like?

CONTINUED

111 CONTINUED

111

SARA

Old and frail...But he didn't even faintly resemble Mr. Elias there....

Rockford taps the photograph on the steering wheel for a moment, then nods his head.

ROCKFORD

Yeah...I'll drive you home.

He starts the car and pulls out.

ROCKFORD

Sara, I want you to tell me about your father...during the last year or so...There's some kind of connection between your dad and the late Mr. Elias...We have to find it.

(X)

SARA

There's not much to tell really... He used to be an advertising account executive...Then after Mother died, he just went down hill....

(X)

ROCKFORD

Is there anything else besides your mother's death that could have caused him to give up like that? Is it possible there was another reason he started drinking?

SARA

(stiff)

He didn't give up...I mean he shouldn't have.

Sara now seems to lose herself in her memories. As she talks, her face becomes sad, close to tears.

SARA

I used to go to Skid Row and try and bring him home.

(a beat)

I even caught him selling his blood under three different names to get money for more wine.

(X)

111 CONTINUED - 2

111

SARA (Cont'd)

(a beat)

He was bleeding himself to death...

(X)

(a beat)

Then once I couldn't find him for several weeks...I was afraid he'd died and was buried some place I'd never know where...I took time off from my work to look but I couldn't find him.

Sara is now totally lost in the recollection. Rockford watches her with an expression of sorrow and respect.

SARA

Then one day I was down at the St. Anne Mission and there he was... drunk. I took him out and fed him and asked him where he'd been....

(X)

ROCKFORD

What'd he say?

SARA

(a beat)

He said he's been visiting the Elysian fields...or he'd gone to the desert for his health.

(X)

ROCKFORD

When was this? What date?

SARA

I don't know...Sometime last year ...I can't remember.

ROCKFORD

You said you took time off to try to find him...When was that?

Sara thinks about it for a moment, then reaches into her purse and pulls out her wallet. She removes a pocket-calendar and studies it for a moment.

SARA

It was in June of last year -- the first two weeks in June.

ROCKFORD

Just about the time Elias died.

(X)

Sara reacts to the connection. Rockford stares out the front window of the car, lost in his own thoughts. After a moment, Sara speaks.

CONTINUED

111 CONTINUED - 3

111

SARA

What does it mean?

ROCKFORD

I don't know...May be nothing, but it's another coincidence.

(X)

CUT TO

111-A INT. SARA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

111-A

Rockford is prowling the living room.

(X)

(X)

(X)

Rockford moves to a fireplace. On the mantel is a framed photo of Harry Butler in his advertising days in conservative suit and tie. Rockford studies it. During this, we hear:

SARA'S VOICE

Were you really in prison, Jim?

ROCKFORD

Does it matter?

SARA'S VOICE

Of course it matters.

On this, Sara reappears. She has changed out of the slinky black dress into something more casual.

ROCKFORD

I did five years in the state pen.

CONTINUED

111-A CONTINUED

111-A

SARA

For what?

ROCKFORD

Armed robbery.

(X)

SARA

Did you do it?

ROCKFORD

Would you believe me if I said no?

SARA

Probably not.

ROCKFORD

Then let's don't mess with it....

He turns and moves over to the candelabra and begins to study the two photographs. One is the news clipping, the other is the one from Jerry's album.

ROCKFORD

Did you check the hospitals during the time your father was missing?

Sara moves over toward him. She puts a hand on his shoulder and turns him around.

SARA

I'm sorry...That was mean. If you told me you were innocent, I'd believe you. I really would.

ROCKFORD

It's not important to me any more.
(a beat)

It used to be...I wanted people to know I was innocent...I had a pardon from the governor saying it never happened...For a while, I had it framed hanging in my office...

(a beat)

One day I looked at it and it wasn't important any more so I took it down.

SARA

And you think I ought to take my father's picture down?

ROCKFORD

I won't tell you what to do, Sara. I gave up that habit in prison. One of the few constructive things I learned there.

111-B ANGLE - SARA

111-B

She turns away from him and moves halfway across the room, then spins back on him.

SARA

But somebody did kill him and whoever it is should be caught.

ROCKFORD

The trick is to keep from getting caught yourself.

(a long
beat)

You're talking to an expert. I spent five years of my life in that trap. It's hard to climb out.

A long moment follows, then Sara moves back to him, looks at him for a long beat, then reaches out and takes his hand.

SARA

(softly)

You're a sentimentalist. How strange....

ROCKFORD

Not really.

There is a long silence, then Rockford pulls her near and kisses her. We hold for a long moment, then

CUT TO

111-C INT. PANELED OFFICE - NIGHT

111-C

A tough-looking man in his mid-thirties is on the phone. There are two slot machines on the wall behind him. His name is Morrie Talbot.

TALBOT

Okay, Jerry, I suppose I can do that...When can you get here?

112 OMITTED

112

113 INT. MILDRED ELIAS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

113

Jerry Grimes is on the phone. Mildred Elias is sitting on the sofa nearby, with a worried look on her face. Intercut:

JERRY

I'll catch a flight to Vegas in the morning and call you then.

TALBOT

It's gonna cost you, Sweets. I don't do this kinda thing for favors.

JERRY

I know it's gonna cost.
(a beat)
Just get the plane.

TALBOT

It's gonna be ten grand. That includes everything. The plane's armed. We use it to run in junk from Mexico. Goes like hell.

JERRY

Okay, stay handy.
(a beat)
And Morrie, I'm buying you. Don't bring in some outta work bouncer.

TALBOT

Just call me. I'll be in the casino.

Jerry hangs up the phone and turns toward Mildred. She looks slightly alarmed.

MILDRED

Whatta you going to do? You're gonna kill somebody else.

JERRY

Shut up.

CONTINUED

113 CONTINUED

113

Mildred gets to her feet and moves toward him. She is getting mad now.

MILDRED

No, I won't shut up. I don't want any killing. I never knew about that old man, Butler. I don't want to be a part of any more killings.

Jerry grabs her and whacks her twice across the mouth, then jerks her forward.

JERRY

Listen, you silly bitch. We're in trouble. You got us in trouble and if I could get away with it, I'd pull your chain right now.

MILDRED

Stop it! Let go of me!

JERRY

I need twenty grand. Let's have it.

MILDRED

No! You're going to hire a killer! I won't.

He hits her again, then shoves her against the couch. She slams her head against the side of the sofa. Jerry grabs her throat and jams it back against the couch. Her eyes go wide with fright. Jerry starts talking in the soft, almost cooing voice he used when he killed Harry Butler. We get the feeling he's lost control.

JERRY

You're doing fine, honey...Just fine...Just relax now and Jerry will make it better....

Mildred begins to choke, her face gets red -- Jerry is about to strangle her.

MILDRED

(a croak)

The money...My money...No more money.

She seems to get through to him and he relaxes his grip. His manner seems to shift slightly.

CONTINUED

113 CONTINUED - 2

113

JERRY

How 'bout that...I almost killed
the Golden Goose. I kill you, I'm
outta business, right?

Mildred sits up and looks at him, this time with absolute
horror in her eyes. She rubs her neck.

JERRY

I need twenty grand.

MILDRED

I won't pay you to have someone
killed. Please, Jerry....

JERRY

I'm not gonna kill anyone. I'm
gonna rough him up and then buy
him.

(a beat)

Get the money.

MILDRED

I don't have twenty thousand
dollars here. I'll have to get
it in the morning.

Jerry looks at her for a long moment.

JERRY

Okay, I'm spending the night.

(a beat)

Won't that be fun?

Mildred gives him a look that would kill and he slaps her
across the face again, this time playfully.

CUT TO

113-A INT. SARA'S APARTMENT - LATER

113-A

The angle features the fireplace. The lights are out and
Sara and Rockford are lying in front of the fireplace, the
light from the flames playing over them. Sara is curled up
in Rockford's arms. She nuzzles against him, but we can see
that Rockford's mind is on something else.

ROCKFORD

Sara?

(X)

(X)

(X)

CONTINUED

113-A CONTINUED

113-A

SARA

Ummmm....

ROCKFORD

I want you to tell me about your father during that last year or so. There's got to be some connection between your dad and the late Mr. Elias....

Sara props herself up on one elbow and looks at Rockford for a long moment.

SARA

There's not much to tell really... He was an advertising account executive and then after my mother died he just went downhill...

(a beat)

I used to go to Skid Row and try and bring him home.

(a beat)

Then once I couldn't find him for several weeks...I was afraid he'd died and was buried some place I'd never know where...I took time off from my work to look but I couldn't find him.

Sara is now totally lost in the recollection. Rockford watches her with an expression of sorrow and respect.

SARA

Then one day I was down at the St. Anne Mission and there he was... drunk. I took him out and fed him and asked him where he'd been....

ROCKFORD

What'd he say?

SARA

(a beat)

He said he'd been visiting the Elysian fields...or he'd gone to the desert for his health.

ROCKFORD

When was this? What date?

CONTINUED

113-A CONTINUED - 2

113-A

SARA

I don't know...Sometime last year
...I can't remember.

ROCKFORD

I think I know when it was....

She looks at him with a puzzled expression.

ROCKFORD

It was the first two weeks in June.

Sara thinks about it for a moment, then nods her head.

SARA

That's right. That's when it was.
(a beat)
How did you know?

ROCKFORD

(gets up)
Come on, let's get going.

SARA

Where we going?

ROCKFORD

I gotta pick up something and
make a call, then we're going to
Vegas.

SARA

But ---

ROCKFORD

Come on. I'll explain it later.

He hurries her toward the door, as we

CUT TO

113-B EXT. MOUNTAIN LAKE - NIGHT - STOCK

113-B

114
thru OMITTED
116

114
thru
116

117 INT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

117

This is a rustic fishing cabin. After a moment, Joseph
Rockford answers the phone. He looks like he has been
asleep. Intercut with Jim Rockford in the trailer.

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED

117

ROCKFORD

Hi, Rocky. It's me.

JOSEPH

(pleased)

Hey, Jimmy, you gonna come up after all?

ROCKFORD

No. I need some help.

JOSEPH

I'll help you bait a hook if you can get up here. They're really biting, Jimmy.

ROCKFORD

You still buddies with that guy in the City Administrator's office in Las Vegas?

JOSEPH

Yeah. I guess I ain't seen him since two years ago.

ROCKFORD

I need to get into the Las Vegas City Hall tonight.

JOSEPH

Can't do it, Jimmy.

ROCKFORD

Why not?

JOSEPH

'Cause he lives in a trailer park and he don't have no phone.

CONTINUED

ROCKFORD

A City Administrator who lives in a trailer park...Whatta you talking about?

JOSEPH

Well, he ain't exactly a City Administrator, Jimmy....

ROCKFORD

But you said ---

JOSEPH

Yeah, I know what I said...But I was exaggerating a little.

ROCKFORD

(hopefully)

He's an Assistant City Administrator?

JOSEPH

No.

ROCKFORD

What is he, Dad?

JOSEPH

He's a janitor in the City Administrator's office.

Rockford makes a face.

ROCKFORD

Boy, you're sure one hell of a liar.

JOSEPH

I wasn't lying, Jimmy. I wouldn't lie. Think about it...I told you he was cleaning up in the City Administrator's office. That's what I said.

ROCKFORD

Aww, Rocky, that's a bad joke from vaudeville.

(a beat)

Does he have a set of keys? Can he get me into City Hall?

JOSEPH

I don't know. It's Saturday.

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED - 2

117

ROCKFORD

I need help. Drive to Vegas and get him up. Tell him I'll meet him at City Hall in four hours.

JOSEPH

That's a two-hour drive from here, Jim. It's gonna cost ya.

ROCKFORD

I'll pay ya fifty bucks, plus welching privileges.

JOSEPH

(a long beat)

Jim, you're not in any trouble, are you?

ROCKFORD

No, Dad, I'm okay.

JOSEPH

Okay, I'll see ya in four hours.

117-A RESUME - ROCKFORD AND SARA

117-1

Rockford hangs up and looks at Sara, who is smiling.

SARA

You aren't having much of a day for profits...You already gave me fifty and now your father gets fifty....

ROCKFORD

You're paying his fifty. That's expenses.

SARA

(dry)

You're really something....

ROCKFORD

Whatta you getting so up-tight about? I got you welching privileges. I didn't have to do that, y'know.

Rockford crosses to his desk on this and unlocks the bottom drawer. He takes out a tin box and places it on his desk. He also takes out a camera, then he starts to unlock the tin box. (X)

CONTINUED

117-A CONTINUED

117-A

Rockford opens the tin box.

(X)

SARA
(indicating box)
What's that?

ROCKFORD
That's my gat.

SARA
What?

ROCKFORD
My gun.

He opens the box and takes out a Smith & Wesson thirty-eight, six inch, and drops it in the side pocket of his coat.

SARA
You mean you didn't have a gun on you when I picked up Jerry?

ROCKFORD
No, why?

SARA
(mad)
Well, what if he'd tried to rape me?

(X)

ROCKFORD
I haven't got a permit to carry a gun.

(X)

SARA
But you're a private investigator.

ROCKFORD
You oughta see what you gotta go through downtown to get a permit to carry a concealed weapon. It's impossible. Nobody's got permits.

(X)

Rockford closes the tin box, puts it back in his desk drawer and slams it shut. On the slam:

CUT TO

118 EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT 118
as Rockford's car flashes past camera.

119 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - NIGHT 119
Rockford is driving. Sara is sleeping. Rockford looks over at Sara for a long moment. Play this for all it's worth, then we hear the sound of a truck's horn, and Rockford looks back at the road and swerves the wheel as a truck roars past.

CUT TO

120 thru 122 120 thru 122

123 EXT. LAS VEGAS HOTEL STRIP - DAY 123
as we watch Rockford's car pull past camera.

CUT TO

124 EXT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING - DAY 124
There are two cars parked in front of the building. One of them is Rockford's.

125 INT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING - SECOND FLOOR - DAY 125
Joseph Rockford is with another man. The other man is Arnold Demura. He is about Joseph's age and is wearing a workman's outfit. Sara and Rockford are with them.

ROCKFORD

What I need is to find out who performed the marriage ceremony for Mr. and Mrs. William Elias. It was in June of last year.

ARNOLD

It must be pretty important, huh, to pull us all out of bed at six a.m.?

ROCKFORD

It is.

CONTINUED

125 CONTINUED

125

ARNOLD

(crafty)

How important?

Rockford looks over at his father.

JOSEPH

I didn't say anything to him....

ROCKFORD

It'll come outta your end,
Rocky.

Joseph looks at Arnold.

JOSEPH

Forget the shakedown, Arnie.
He ain't going for it.

Arnold nods his head, then leads them up the hall. He takes out a set of keys and opens a frosted glass door that has the words Civil Records printed on it in gold letter.

125-A EXT. LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - DAY

125-A

A car pulls away from the terminal. Seated in the front seat are Morrie Talbot and Jerry Grimes. Grimes is looking at his watch as Morrie drives.

JERRY

Come on, move it.

TALBOT

Relax. It ain't far from here.
Just over on Main.

CUT TO

126 INT. OFFICE - DAY

126

This is really a filing room. Arnold turns on the lights and moves over toward one end of the room. He moves down the aisle of filing cabinets and finally pauses in front of one, then pulls open the drawer.

127 TIGHT SHOT - THE DRAWER

127

As Arnold rummages through it, finally pulls out a folder and opens it up, then takes out a sheaf of papers.

128 NEW ANGLE - FULL 128

Arnold hands the papers to Rockford, who looks at them.

129 TIGHT SHOT - THE PAPERS 129

Zoom in to the name: Danford Baker - Minister.

130 RESUME - ROCKFORD 130

He hands the papers back and grabs Sara's arm and pulls her out of the office. Joseph looks over at Arnold.

JOSEPH

Nice kids.

Arnold grunts, as we:

CUT TO

131 EXT. CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S BUILDING - DAY 131

Rockford and Sara exit the building and jump into his car. It squeals away from the building.

132 INT. CAR - DAY 132

Rockford is driving fast.

SARA

What do you think is happening?

ROCKFORD

I'm not sure...I got a wild idea... if it's right, it might explain everything.

SARA

Why won't you tell me?

ROCKFORD

I'm superstitious.

She looks over at him and doesn't have anything to say to that. Finally, she comes up with a reason.

CONTINUED

- 132 CONTINUED 132
- SARA
You're afraid if you're wrong,
you'll look stupid.
- ROCKFORD
That, too.
- Hold for a beat, and:
- CUT TO
- 133 EXT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY 133
- The angle favors the street and we can see a car approaching from the distance. It slows down and turns into the driveway.
- 133-A CLOSER - WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY 133-A
- It is one of those cheesy little buildings with a cockroach-ridden motel behind it. Get hitched and laid in ten minutes. Talbot's car pulls up, both men get out, and enter the chapel. A sign out front reads: Danford Baker, Minister -- Weddings, Free Room with TV.
- 133-B INT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY 133-B
- Jerry and Talbot move forward. As they do, a wedding service is in progress. Danford Baker, a man in his mid-fifties, is marrying a couple who look like they are better off single. The motel maid and the janitor are the witnesses. His voice drones on as Jerry and Talbot come to a stop in the doorway of the chapel. The camera pans in on them as they watch, then they move back out of sight as the wedding continues.
- BAKER
Do you, Carolyn Neal, take this man
as your lawfully wedded husband to
love and to cherish....
- CUT TO
- 134 OMITTED 134
- 135 EXT. COMMERCIAL STREET - DAY 135
- Rockford's car is moving at about twenty miles an hour.
- 136 INT. CAR - DAY 136
- Sara is looking at house numbers.

CONTINUED

136 CONTINUED

136

SARA

Slow down, I can't read them.

Rockford slows down.

CUT TO

136-A INT. WEDDING CHAPEL - CLOSE ON A RECORD PLAYER

136-A

as the arm goes down on the spinning forty-five record and we hear the wedding march.

BAKER'S VOICE

You may kiss the bride.

136-B PULL BACK TO FULL SHOT

136-B

The wedding is over and the newly married couple move off as Baker closes his Bible and places it on a small podium. The maid and janitor leave. As this is happening, Jerry and Talbot move into the room and approach him.

JERRY

Mr. Baker?

Baker spins around and looks at them.

JERRY

Come on outside.

BAKER

I'm sorry, I don't understand...
Where's the bride?

JERRY

(to Talbot)

Come on, let's go.

Jerry whips out a gun and takes Baker by the arm. They hustle him out of the wedding chapel.

136-C EXT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY

136-C

They move the startled minister to Jerry's car and start to shove him in. Talbot moves around to the driver's side. Just before he is stuffed into the back seat of the car the minister breaks away from Grimes and runs back across the street. A passing car slams on its brakes and then powers past, but it slows Grimes up. Grimes follows but slips and falls in the street as Danford Baker almost reaches the wedding chapel. Grimes scrambles to his feet and pulls his weapon and starts to aim at Baker.

136-D INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - THROUGH WINDSHIELD - DAY

136-

He can see what's happening.

ROCKFORD

(to Sara)

Get down!

She does and Rockford begins honking his horn. Grimes sees him, then jumps out of the way and fires at Baker, with a quick burst from a Mauser machine pistol. Baker goes down in the door of the chapel.

136-E OMITTED

136-

136-F FULL SHOT - STREET - DAY

136-

Rockford aims his car at Grimes, who fires twice at him. The windshield is scarred by one of the bullets, while the other bullet thumps into the body of the car. Rockford's car roars past as Grimes jumps into his car.

137
thru
142 OMITTED137
thru
142

143 INT. JERRY GRIMES' CAR - DAY

143

He yells at Talbot.

JERRY

Let's go!

Talbot floors it.

TALBOT

You're nuts!

JERRY

Move it!

Talbot executes a one-eighty degree turn and roars off up the street.

144 OMITTED

144

144-A ANGLE - ROCKFORD'S CAR - DAY

144-

It executes a similar one-eighty degree power turn and heads off after Grimes.

144-B INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - THROUGH WINDSHIELD - DAY

144-

As they roar past the chapel, a woman is coming out. She looks at Danford Baker and screams. Rockford's car powers past.

144-C SERIES OF SHOTS - THE CHASE

144-C

as the two cars roar out of town.

145 SERIES OF SHOTS - RUNBYS - DAY

145

As Grimes' car heads out of Las Vegas and squeals out onto a lightly trafficked two-lane highway, it seems to be pulling away from Rockford's.

146 SERIES OF SHOTS - THE HIGHWAY - DAY

146

Play this for as long as time will allow. Both cars moving at a high rate of speed but with each set of runbys, Rockford seems to be falling a little further behind.

147 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - DAY

147

Sara is straining to see the car ahead.

147-A INT. JERRY GRIMES' CAR - DAY

147-A

Jerry is turned around, looking at Rockford's car through the rear window.

JERRY

(cooing)

Come on, baby, keep coming...
You're doing just fine....

Talbot looks over at him.

TALBOT

What the hell's wrong with you?

JERRY

Shut up! Don't lose him.

TALBOT

He saw it.

JERRY

I owe him....

He looks back at the pursuing car.

JERRY

(cooing)

Don't I, Sweetheart...? I owe
you...Come to Jerry....

Talbot is driving like hell, but he glances over in terror at Grimes, who is holding the gun and smiling, his gaze pinned on the car behind.

- 147-B EXT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - RUNBY - DAY 147
- 147-C INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - DAY 147
- Rockford is driving for all he's worth.
- SARA
We're not losing them.
- ROCKFORD
We're not catching them either.
This crate needs a tune up.
- 148 THEIR POINT OF VIEW - THE HIGHWAY AHEAD 148
- Grimes' car appears to make a right-hand turn and heads, at a high rate of speed, out a dirt road, leaving a trail of dust behind.
- 149 EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY 149
- After a moment, Rockford's car slows to make the turn, then skids and heads up the dirt road, leaving a cloud of dust behind it.
- CUT TO
- 150 EXT. SMALL LANDING STRIP - DAY 150
- As we watch, Grimes skids his car to a stop next to a Red Piper Apache, which is standing at the end of the strip. Grimes and Talbot scramble out of the car and run toward the plane. (X)
- 151 EXT. DIRT ROAD - RUNBY - DAY 151
- As Rockford's car screeches past camera, leaving a trail of dust in its wake.
- 152 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - ANGLE THROUGH WINDSHIELD - DAY 152
- as he comes up on the landing strip with the Piper Apache. It starts down the runway as Rockford turns onto the landing strip and attempts to head it off. (X)
- 153 EXT. LANDING STRIP - DAY 153
- as the Piper Apache roars down the strip and running along beside it, attempting to get in front, is Rockford's car.

154 NEW ANGLE - RUNWAY - DAY

154

as Rockford attempts to head the plane off, but it is already airborne, lifting off over his car and into the sky.

155 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - DAY

155

He screeches on the brakes and skids to a stop, then leans forward and looks up through the windshield at the plane, which is fast climbing out of sight. Sara looks at Rockford for a long moment.

SARA

What now?

ROCKFORD

We go back into town and I give all of this to the Las Vegas cops. Let them worry about picking Grimes and his buddy up.

SARA

Will you explain it to me...What's going on?

ROCKFORD

I'll tell you on the way back.

He starts the car, turns it around, and heads back up the dirt road.

CUT TO

155-A EXT. WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY

155-A

An ambulance is just getting ready to pull away from the chapel. The housekeeper is talking to one of the attendants who is hurrying to get in.

AMBULANCE ATTENDANT

(impatient)

I told you, ma'am, he looks like he's gonna make it, but we gotta get him to Emergency.

He jumps into the back of the ambulance with the stretcher containing Danford Baker, and the ambulance roars off, with red light and siren on.

CUT TO

156 OMITTED

156

157 INT. PIPER APACHE - DAY

157

Talbot is flying; the engine of the plane drones. Jerry Grimes is looking down at the terrain below.

TALBOT

You're crazy. What's wrong with you, man?

JERRY

You do like I say, Morrie, or I'll take you down some.

Talbot looks over at Grimes as we

CUT TO

158 EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY 158

Rockford's car moves along the dirt road.

ROCKFORD'S VOICE

Mildred and her ten-million-dollar
bridegroom leave the wedding party
in L.A., fly to Vegas, check into
their motel ---

159 INT. THE CAR 159

Rockford glances at Sara for effect.

ROCKFORD

-- and Old Man Elias dies.

SARA

(mouth ajar)

Before the wedding?

Rockford nods sagely and Sara stares out the window at the
desert road. Finally:

SARA

You got the rest of it worked out?

ROCKFORD

Sure. She calls Jerry Grimes
and tells him she just lost ten
million bucks. Jerry says, 'You
got all the papers signed? --
license, all that?' and Mildred
says 'Yeah, but he's dead!'

160 EXT. THE CAR 160

Still moving along that dirt road.

ROCKFORD'S VOICE

And Jerry says, 'Sit tight, baby.
Throw an electric blanket on him
and keep him warm. I'll be there
soon as I can with a substitute.
You're gonna get married first,
and then call for a doctor!'

161 INT. THE CAR 161

Sara gets it all now.

CONTINUED

161

CONTINUED

161

SARA

And he picked up my father because
the age was right?

ROCKFORD

(nods)

Your father decided to stay in
Vegas a while.

(pauses)

When he got back to L.A. he must've
sobered up just long enough to
find out Mildred Elias had inherited
ten million bucks.

SARA

He wouldn't do that. Try to black-
mail them? He wouldn't.

ROCKFORD

(shrugs)

Maybe he didn't. But they killed
him.

There is a long moment of silence.

SARA

I wish we'd caught them.

ROCKFORD

We'll turn it back to the cops and
eventually they will...

(a beat)

At least, we'll get it out of the
inactive file.

Sara looks over at Rockford and nods. Her expression shows
that she is feeling a mixture of emotions. Hold for a beat,
and:

CUT TO

162

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

162

as Rockford's car continues along the unpaved road toward the
highway. It flashes past and the camera tilts up and in the
blue morning sun we can see a speck of red begin to drop out
of the sun. As it gets nearer, we can hear the single engine
drone of the Piper Apache.

163

INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - DAY

163

as they continue along, unaware of the impending danger.

164 EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY 164

as the Piper Apache banks and makes a low pass at Rockford's car.

165 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - DAY 165

Rockford sees it first and pulls Sara down onto the floor, then jerks the wheel and skids the car around. As he does, there is the sound of rapid machine pistol fire. Several slugs pound into the car with deadening thunks.

166 NEW ANGLE - DAY - CAR 166

Rockford screams the car around and heads for a low hill off to one side of the road. The car bounces over the rough desert ground; the engine is beginning to miss badly; two of the slugs have been fired into the hood. The Piper Apache is now at the end of its pass and is banking around for another run at Rockford's car.

167 NEW ANGLE - SECOND PASS 167

The red airplane comes back toward Rockford's car. It is now flying only a few feet above the desert floor. As it heads at the car, we again hear the sound of machine pistol fire. Slugs pound into the car, which now shudders to a stop. The plane flashes past and climbs into the sky, banking around for another pass.

168 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - DAY 168

He is fumbling in his glove compartment for his pistol. He yells at Sara to get in the back seat. She scrambles into the back seat as, through the front windshield, we see the Piper Apache bank and head back toward the car. Rockford leans his hand on the door-jam and as the plane screams toward him, the machine pistol ripping holes in the metal, Rockford discharges three or four rounds at the plane. It swoops overhead and banks for another pass.

ROCKFORD

I missed him! This thing pulls to the right. I didn't correct for it.

CONTINUED

- 168 CONTINUED 168
- SARA
- He's coming back.
- The plane makes another pass and as Sara ducks, Rockford empties the rest of the revolver at the plane.
- 169 EXT. CAR - DAY 169
- It has caught fire and is beginning to smoulder.
- 170 INT. CAR 170
- Sara smells the fire.
- SARA
- I think we're on fire.
- Rockford is struggling with the revolver, trying to load it. He drops several slugs. He finally gets it loaded as the plane makes another pass, the machine pistol ripping slugs into the doors and through the top. As soon as it has passed and makes its banking turn, Rockford throws the door open and Sara and he jump out and start running away from the burning car. The plane now makes another climbing turn and then starts toward them with another pass.
- 171 ANGLE - ROCKFORD - SARA 171
- as they run toward camera, the plane closing the ground behind them. After a few beats, we can hear the chattering of the machine pistol as the slugs tear up the ground around them. Rockford spins around and, aiming with both hands, fires the gun at the plane, which swoops overhead, about fifteen feet off the ground. Both he and Sara dive out of the way as the plane screams past.
- 172 THEIR POINT OF VIEW - THE AIRPLANE 172
- It climbs into the sky and starts to make a banking turn. It stays in the turn and makes another pass at them, only this time it doesn't head directly at them but is off about five degrees.
- 172-A FULL SHOT - DAY - THE AREA 172-
- They are on their stomachs watching, then they scramble to their feet and start running. The plane seems to have trouble flying and makes an uneven descending path toward

CONTINUED

172-A CONTINUED

172-A

a dirt road, attempting to land, its engine missing. Rockford and Sara watch as Talbot struggles to put the plane down. He flares it out and, for a moment, the wheels touch down and it taxis for about a half mile and comes to a stop. It is on fire. Talbot and Jerry pile out just in time, then the plane explodes.

173
and
174

OMITTED

173
and
174

175 ANOTHER ANGLE - SARA, ROCKFORD

175

They stand silently watching from half a mile away.

176 THEIR POINT OF VIEW - THE AIRPLANE

176

It is burning. Grimes and Talbot start running off in the opposite direction.

177 RESUME - ROCKFORD AND SARA

177

looking at the burning wreckage, then Rockford looks at Sara.

ROCKFORD

Come on. Let's go.

He grabs her hand and they move off.

CUT TO

178 OMITTED

178

178-A EXT. TWO LANE HIGHWAY - DAY

178-A

Jerry and Talbot are walking along the highway. A car goes past and Jerry sticks out his thumb, but the car keeps going.

178-B NEW ANGLE - GRIMES, TALBOT

178-B

They keep walking. We can see that they are both tired and might have been walking for some time. Another engine sounds and they turn to look.

178-C THEIR POINT OF VIEW - DAY - A CEMENT TRUCK

178-C

It rolls along the highway about forty. Grimes sticks out his thumb and the truck passes them, then throws on its brakes and comes to a stop about an eighth of a mile up the highway.

hb #31331

86-A
(X)

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178-D RESUME - GRIMES, TALBOT

178-D

They turn and run toward the truck.

178-E ANGLE - TRUCK - DAY

178-E

as they approach. Jerry reaches it first and throws open the passenger door.

178-F HIS POINT OF VIEW - ROCKFORD, SARA

178-F

Sara is behind the wheel. Rockford has his thirty-eight aimed right at Jerry's chin. Jerry stops cold and behind him Talbot freezes. Rockford has the drop on them both.

ROCKFORD

You fellas need a lift?

Jerry looks over at Talbot, then back at Rockford, as we freeze frame.

FADE OUT

EPILOGUE

FADE IN

179 EXT. LAS VEGAS POLICE STATION - DAY 179

An old brick building which has been baked by the sun.

180 INT. POLICE SQUAD ROOM - DAY 180

This is bustling with activity; there are hookers, drunks and every kind of humanity. Amidst it all, officers in blue-striped pants seem to act as if there is an efficiency about it all. At one end of the room is a bank of three slot machines. Seated at the other end of the room is Jim Rockford. He is talking to a detective named Norm Mitchell. Mitchell is heavy-set and looks like he's perpetually angry. Sara is nearby, listening.

MITCHELL

Well, where did you get it?

ROCKFORD

What?

MITCHELL

The gun. You ain't got no permit to carry a gun.

ROCKFORD

Look, you're missing the point. Those guys tried to kill a Minister named Danford Baker. We witnessed it. Did you call Detective Becker and give him the information I gave you?

(X)

MITCHELL

Yeah.

ROCKFORD

And?

MITCHELL

He said he'd call back after he'd checked it.

ROCKFORD

What about the signature cards on the record book of the Minister? Have you checked 'em against the marriage license?

CONTINUED

180 CONTINUED

180

MITCHELL

We're doing all that.

(a beat)

Meanwhile, I want to know where you got that gun. You may not know it, Buster, but you can't go around shooting down light aircraft with hand guns.

The phone rings and Mitchell snatches it up.

MITCHELL

Mitchell.

(a beat)

Yeah...

(a beat)

Yeah...Okay...Sure.

(a beat)

You know this Rockford guy?

(a beat)

Fine, but I ain't through with him yet. I got a real omelet cooking here. I got two guys on suspicion of murder. I'm gonna have an F.A.A. investigation on this crash, and I got a minister in the hospital.

(a beat)

I don't know, but I'm holding everybody until I can get it all straightened out.

(X)

Rockford looks over at Sara, who looks really sad. He grins at her and shrugs.

MITCHELL

Okay, I'll tell him.

Mitchell hangs up the phone and looks at Rockford.

MITCHELL

That was Becker in L.A....He said to tell you he picked up Mrs. Elias.

SARA

Are you really going to hold him?

MITCHELL

You better believe it!

As this is happening, there is a commotion on the far side of the room. We can see that it is Joseph Rockford. He is arguing with a uniformed officer.

JOSEPH

No, I gotta see him. He's my son.

OFFICER

Relax, pop, He's in custody.

CONTINUED

180 CONTINUED - 2

180

JOSEPH

For what?

OFFICER

Shooting down a light aircraft with
a hand gun.

Joseph looks startled by this and then looks off across the
room at Sara and Rockford.

181 RESUME - ROCKFORD, SARA, MITCHELL

181

Mitchell finally shrugs.

MITCHELL

Okay, Rockford...

(a beat)

I'm gonna take you back and book
you now.

He stands up and Rockford looks at him for a moment.

ROCKFORD

What's the charge?

Mitchell can't think of one.

(X)

ROCKFORD

(disgusted)

How 'bout vitamin deficiency?

(X)

MITCHELL

How 'bout material witness in a
murder?

(X)

Mitchell turns to Sara, who stands up.

(X)

MITCHELL

You can go, Miss.

She looks at Rockford for a long moment, then turns to
Mitchell.

SARA

Could I have a moment with him?

Mitchell hesitates for a beat, then nods and takes a step
away.

CONTINUED

181 CONTINUED

181

SARA

Thanks, Jim...I'm sorry about all this...I feel responsible....

ROCKFORD

Well, they won't hold me long and I'll only charge you half-price for the time I spend in jail.

SARA

You're kidding?

ROCKFORD

(a grin)

Yeah.

Mitchell moves back to Rockford and Sara but before he can put his hand on Rockford's arm, Sara throws herself into Rockford's arms and gives him a giant hug, then they part and Mitchell leads Rockford away. Sara watches him go for a moment and then turns and moves over to where Joseph Rockford is standing. Together, they watch Rockford being led across the room toward the jail complex. Joseph is disgusted and turns to Sara.

JOSEPH

Look at that. He's back in the pokey. Last time, it took me five years to get him out...I had to hock my truck and everything to pay for the lawyers.

Sara looks over at him and says nothing.

JOSEPH

I ain't got nothing to hock anymore... Who's gonna pay for his lawyers this time...?

(X)

Sara seems to understand.

SARA

Maybe I can....

182 NEW ANGLE - ROCKFORD, MITCHELL - DAY

182

Next to the door to the jail is a sandwich stand with magazines

CONTINUED

182 CONTINUED

182

and a bank of three slot machines. Rockford looks at the slots for a long moment, then over at Mitchell. Rockford reaches into his pocket and takes out a coin and puts it in the slot, pulls the handle and watches the lemons drop. He looks at Mitchell, who grins at him evilly.

ROCKFORD

I'll bet you don't get many winners
in here.

MITCHELL

Ain't that the truth!

He takes Rockford by the arm and starts to lead him through the barred doors, as we freeze frame and

FADE OUT

THE END