

# THE ROVER

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**EXT. HILL - DAY**

A STILL IMAGE/PHOTOGRAPH of a man, ERIC, 44 years old, sitting on a country hill under a lone tree beside a brown dog.

They both look happy.

ERIC (V.O.)

I can't say I even know what the world is anymore. I don't know what happened to it. I don't even know where it is now, I don't know where its centre is, if it even has a centre... All I know is that its dirty people have crawled out here somehow. I don't know why. I don't really care anymore anyway. And that's all I'm gonna say about it.

CUT TO BLACK:

CARD ON BLACK: "Australia. Some time in the future."

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Eric sits at the wheel of his parked car. He's not happy like the photo. Some kind of ennui. He stares ahead, lost in thought, lost in something. Outside the car is all searing light and blank brown Australian landscape.

He stares ahead listlessly a while, then opens the car door and climbs out.

**EXT. KHMER DINER - DAY**

Eric heads over to a scrappy roadside diner. The diner has a big dirty sign out front in Khmer/Cambodian script.

The walk is blinding. The surrounding area is desolate. The diner stands alone, a dirty nowhere stop on a stretch of traffic-less road.

Eric wears an old button-down shirt with sleeves rolled over knee-length shorts and dirty trainers. He is wiry thin. He has short-cropped hair and a goatee ruling over a three day growth.

**INT. KHMER DINER - DAY**

Eric steps into the dark and musty diner. A Cambodian pop song plays on the stereo. It's really unnecessarily loud.

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The place is empty except for three Cambodian guys sitting on a bench in a back corner. One is asleep. The other two watch Eric close as he enters. One has a shotgun resting across his lap.

Eric crosses to a rear bathroom.

**INT. KHMER DINER / BATHROOM - DAY**

Eric cups his hands into a bucket of water beside a dirty sink that has long ago had its faucets removed. He drenches his face. He brushes his teeth roughly with his finger and rinses his mouth with one cupped handful from the bucket. He spits the water into the sink.

He dries his face with his shirt sleeve and looks at himself in the mirror. His self-examination is strangely detached. Something broken. Something dark and hard.

**INT. KHMER DINER - DAY**

Eric walks back through the diner. The Cambodians watch him, wary but calm. Eric meets their eyes. The air is inhospitable but lethargic.

Eric takes a seat at the counter. He reaches over and helps himself to a tall glass of green tea from a big chrome thermos.

He sits here, in the din of pop music, sipping his tea.

He sits with his back to a big picture window behind him looking out onto the desert and empty road out front of the diner.

And then, barely audible over the stereo, a CAR comes cart-wheeling across frame, outside, across the window behind him.

It's a huge and ferocious CRASH.

One of the Cambodian guys stands. The sleeping guy stays sleeping on the bench. The standing guy moves towards the door, not sure what he saw. The other one follows, they exchange a few words in Khmer.

Eric turns slowly to look out the window, not concerned enough to move, not really knowing what he heard, if he heard anything at all.

Eric stays put, dust still settling through the window behind him. He reaches over the bar and turns the stereo off. The room drops to silence.

Eric doesn't register concern until he hears the sound of his Falcon's engine starting.

**EXT. KHMER DINER - DAY**

Eric rushes out the front door. Dust hangs in the air.

Someone is already behind the wheel of his car - another two guys stagger from the wreck of the rolled car and head for the Falcon.

Eric runs for his car, reaching it just as the passenger door slams shut. He slaps on the windows as the Falcon screeches away.

Eric is left standing, breathing dust. He starts running down the road after them.

**EXT. SMALL TOWN STREET - DAY**

REYNOLDS, late 20s, lies bleeding in the middle of a small, desolate town street. He tries to catch his breath. His mid-section is blood-soaked. He clutches a handgun.

Ten metres away, also in the road, a uniformed cop lies in a pool of blood, gasping last breaths through his gun-blasted throat. His gun lies a few feet away beside his cop car.

No one else is in the street. A face pokes through blinds to see the battered men outside.

Reynolds, lying in the street, turns his head to see the dying cop through bitumen heat haze.

The cop is groaning sickeningly.

Reynolds heaves himself over onto his back to look over at the cop, who now lies in a serious pool of blood and gore.

Reynolds starts dragging himself, still clutching his gun, along the road towards the cop and his car. It's a major, painful struggle. The bitumen is brutally hot.

The cop, groaning himself into death, lies between Reynolds and the cop car. As Reynolds pulls himself closer, the cop looks over to him with imploring, traumatised eyes.

DYING COP

(gurgles)

Help me.

Reynolds' progress is slow and pained. The cop is paralyzed. He gurgles and wheezes as Reynolds crawls past.

From the windows of nearby buildings, people peer at the scene in the street, too frightened of the armed carnage to offer any assistance.

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Reynolds continues his slow crawl past a building directly beside the scene. Its door is open. Inside lie two shotgun-blasted bodies, their eyes open, victims of whatever it is that has just happened here.

Reynolds finally reaches the cop car.

He heaves himself up into the driver's seat. The radio crackles the odd indiscernible word.

Reynolds wipes sweat from his eyes and reaches down to the key still hanging from the ignition. He starts the engine, pulls the door shut and shoves the car into gear.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Three men in a roaring Commodore. They're frantic.

They're American with Southern accents.

HENRY

(in passenger seat)

Turn the fuckin car around.

CALEB

(driving)

We can't turn around.

ARCHIE

(in backseat)

He's gone, cuz.

HENRY, late-30s, is twisted in the front seat, looking out through the back windshield.

HENRY

He was still moving, goddamit. I could see him still moving.

ARCHIE

He's gone, cuz. He's gone.

CALEB

What is it we're s'posed to do? We can't go back. What are we s'posed to do?

HENRY

This money ain't fuckin worth it to me to leave him there.

ARCHIE

It ain't just about you.

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CONTINUED:

HENRY

Turn the fuckin car around.

ARCHIE

It ain't just about what's worth it to you.

HENRY

(to Caleb)

What if it was you lying there? What if we done it to you?

CALEB

I'd have to accept it.

HENRY

God damn it. Don't lie. Don't fuckin lie.

CALEB

I'd have to accept my fate. I'd have to.  
I'd have to accept my fate like a man.

ARCHIE

And there's the thing, right there. I told you this would happen. You can't go anywhere without your brother and I very almost got my head blown off because of him because he can't handle himself.

Archie in the backseat, sweating and agitated.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)

If he could handle himself, we wouldn't be in this situation. But so then now look what happens to him. And I can't be feeling responsible for that. If he was a man who could look after himself, he'd be accepting his fate right now.

Henry is suddenly enraged. He twists, swinging and grabbing into the backseat.

HENRY

Say that again.

Archie squirms out of Henry's reach in the backseat. Henry bumps Caleb behind the wheel. The car swerves on the road.

CALEB

(struggling with the wheel)

Fuckin sit down.

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ARCHIE

You heard me. And you know it too. If he was a man, he wouldn't be crying about it and you wouldn't be crying about it coz he'd be accepting his fate right now.

Henry drills Archie angrily.

HENRY

Say that again.

ARCHIE

I just did, cuz. I said it twice.

HENRY

Say it again!

ARCHIE

If I said it again, I'd say it the exact same way and that'd be three times I said it. Stop your fuckin crying.

Henry makes a big lunge at Archie who has squirmed into the farthest corner of the backseat. Henry's knee goes straight into Caleb's kidneys. Caleb recoils in pain. He loses control of the car.

**EXT. COMMODORE - DAY**

The car fishtails dangerously, then goes into a wild cacophonous roll right out front of a Khmer diner in the middle of nowhere.

The car comes to a dusty, creaking rest on its side - only a few yards from a black Falcon.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

The men in the wreck orient themselves, heave for breath, cough and check for injuries. The car is on its side - they hang in awkward, strained positions.

CALEB

Is anyone dead?

Henry and Archie cough negative. Henry starts crawling out his window that points to the sky.

**EXT. KHMER DINER - DAY**

Henry pulls himself up out of the car, balancing precariously on its doors.

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He reaches a hand down to lift Caleb out from the driver's seat. Caleb squirms free and then reaches back in. He emerges again with a shotgun, then jumps down onto to the dirt beside the Commodore.

He makes an immediate limping move for the black Falcon nearby.

Henry shuffles over on the car to the back door and reaches in for Archie.

HENRY  
Pass me the bag.

A dirty blue bag appears through the window hole. Henry slings it over his shoulder, then jumps down off the car, leaving Archie to heave himself out of the wreck.

They jump down onto the dirt as Caleb fires the Falcon's ignition. It roars to life.

Henry and Archie hobble over to it.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Archie climbs in the back seat.

Henry jumps in the passenger seat and pulls the door shut - just as Eric appears beside it.

Eric bangs on the window, hollering.

**EXT. KHMER DINER - DAY**

The Falcon tears away, leaving Eric stumbling and showered with dust.

Eric runs after it, out onto the road, and chases on foot for a few futile metres.

He stops in the middle of the road, frantic. He looks around him, back towards the diner.

The Cambodian onlookers stand useless in the sun.

Eric runs back towards the diner.

He runs round behind the rolled Commodore, still on its side, and heaves against its roof, rocking it, until it lurches back down, right way up.

Its roof is half caved in at the back. Eric wrenches the driver's door open and climbs behind the wheel.

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CONTINUED:

He fires the ignition. He reverses it crazily out of the diner parking lot and roars out onto the road.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

MOMENTS LATER, Eric behind the wheel is hammering the Commodore down a scorching hot desert road. Despite its bang-up, the car is still mean. Its engine growls.

The road ahead is hazy and empty.

Eric's face and body are full concentration. He pushes the car hard.

And then, in the distance, he can make out the distinct shape of his Falcon up ahead.

Eric pushes the Commodore even harder. It now sounds like it's struggling, over-revving.

The gap narrows. Eric concentrates on nothing else.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Henry, Caleb and Archie ride oblivious to Eric's fast approach.

They don't talk. They are shaken and exhausted. The radio is on. Its reception is crackly bad. Broken unintelligible CB radio chatter.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric is now only a hundred metres from the Falcon and gaining fast.

He's almost there.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Caleb looks up into the rearview mirror. He can see Eric behind him, approaching hard.

CALEB

What's he doing?

Archie turns in his seat to look out through the back windshield.

Henry sits dark and stoney-faced, staring ahead.

ARCHIE

That's the Commodore.

CALEB

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARCHIE  
It's the Commodore.

CALEB  
What do you mean it's the Commodore?

ARCHIE  
It's our Commodore. It's the one we were  
in.

Archie squints through the back windshield.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)  
It is, cuz. It's the Commodore. It's bashed  
in like when we left it back there.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric pushes the gas even harder.

He is now right on top of them. He's pushing it, only metres away  
from the Falcon, tailgating it hard.

He can see Archie's face peering at him through the back windshield.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Caleb is seriously concerned. The Commodore is dangerously close  
behind them.

CALEB  
Who's in it?

Archie strains to see through the filthy windshield and heat haze.

ARCHIE  
It's the guy. It's the guy who was all  
slapping on the window when we took off in  
this.

Henry glances in his side mirror.

HENRY  
We're in his car.

CALEB  
What? And he wants it back now?

HENRY  
That's what it looks like.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric pushes it even harder, giving the gas another hard squirt. The engine squeals.

The Commodore surges, closing the last gap between it and the Falcon.

Eric is now tailgating the Falcon tight and dangerous.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Caleb and Archie are frantic as the Commodore comes within centimetres of brushing the Falcon's back bumper.

Archie jumps as the Commodore surges.

ARCHIE

Jesus.

Caleb is struggling with the wheel, glancing back and forth between the rearview and the road ahead.

CALEB

What the fuck is this guy's situation?  
What's going on?

Henry is strangely calm, eyes fixed on the road ahead.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric lets off the gas a touch, dropping back a couple of feet, then floors it again, pulling around the side of the Falcon.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Eric brings the Commodore up level with Caleb at the wheel and yells through the open passenger window.

ERIC

Pull over!

Caleb can't believe the temerity of this guy. He yells back through his open window.

CALEB

You fuckin nut!

Caleb pulls a handgun from the front of his pants and points it straight across at Eric.

Eric hits the brake and slips back a few feet.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric holds the Commodore in the Falcon's blind spot, a few feet behind Caleb's window.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

In the backseat, Archie checks his handgun and then leans out his window with it.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric sees Archie and the gun pointed straight at him.

Eric swerves the car. Archie fires. The bullet ricochets off the roof of the Commodore.

The Falcon swerves too, Caleb flinching at the blast.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Caleb resettles the wheel.

CALEB

Let me know you're gonna do that before you do that.

Archie fires again.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Archie's bullet ricochets off the hood of the Commodore.

Eric hits the brakes hard, dropping the Commodore back a hundred metres behind the Falcon.

He then hits the gas again, holding the distance.

Archie shoots again. The Commodore is too far behind.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Archie fires again. Caleb is searching his rearview, observing the Commodore's retreat.

CALEB

Is he giving up?

ARCHIE

He ain't givin' up. He's holding it there.

Through the back windshield they can see the Commodore holding steady, keeping pace a hundred metres behind them.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric holds it steady. He checks the Commodore's fuel gauge. It's half-full. He can afford to be patient.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Caleb continues checking the rearview. The radio's still playing, the reception's getting worse.

Henry switches it off.

CALEB  
What's he doing?

HENRY  
He wants his car back.

Henry is calm, almost admiring of Eric's tenacity.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY**

The two cars continue their high speed stand-off. The distance between them doesn't shift an inch.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric keeps his eyes glued on his Falcon on the road ahead.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY**

The cars take a long subtle bend in the road. Their engines roar. Their drivers push them hard. They're going dangerously fast.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Caleb's looking in his rearview. Henry sits contemplative, looking straight ahead. He seems mournful.

Archie's still craning his neck around, looking out the back windshield.

ARCHIE  
He's not goin' nowhere. He's just gonna  
keep following us.

Caleb looks down at the fuel gauge. It's not far from empty.

CALEB  
He's got more fuel than we do. He knows it.

Caleb checks the rearview again, then looks straight ahead, thinking.

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A few moments pass.

HENRY  
Stop the car.

CALEB  
What?

HENRY  
I wanna see him.

CALEB  
What do you mean you wanna see him?

HENRY  
Stop the car.

Caleb presses the brakes.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric can see the Falcon's brake lights snap red and the car slow.

He hits the Commodore's brakes hard. Its tires squeal on the bitumen.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY**

Both cars come to a halt on the barren road. They're about fifty metres apart.

They sit, engines humming in otherwise relative silence broken only by the screech of an eagle.

The dust settles, blowing in a light wind off the road.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Caleb and Archie both crane around to look out the back windshield.

Henry adjusts the stationary Falcon's rearview mirror. He watches the Commodore idle, dusty in the distance.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY**

The cars sit on the road. Engines growling. No movement.

Then the Commodore's brake lights ease off as it begins a slow move towards the Falcon.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Caleb and Archie watch through the back windshield, Henry in the rearview.

ARCHIE  
He's movin'.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY**

The Commodore moves real slow, inching its way towards the Falcon, narrowing the gap between them.

**INT. ERIC'S FALCON - DAY**

Henry watches the rearview. The Commodore moves closer.

ARCHIE  
This guy doesn't wanna be alive no more.

CALEB  
Doesn't seem like he does.

Archie checks his handgun. They watch the Commodore's slow approach until it's only a rock throw behind them.

And then Henry, his eyes having not left the rearview mirror, reaches for the door's handle and opens it.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY**

Henry climbs out of the Falcon and stands beside it, watching Eric inch closer.

A few moments later, Archie climbs out too. Caleb stays inside, watching through the windshield.

The Commodore stops about twenty metres away.

Henry can barely see Eric inside through its filthy windshield, but they are staring each other down nonetheless.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric sits behind the wheel and watches the two men standing beside his car.

Henry reaches back in the car and pulls out his shotgun.

Eric opens the Commodore's door.

**EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY**

Eric climbs out of the Commodore and stands beside it a moment. The men watch each other. Henry lets the shotgun hang loose by his side.

Eric walks slow towards them.

HENRY  
What's going on with you, brother?

Eric doesn't respond. He keeps walking until he's only a few metres away.

ERIC  
I want my car back.

HENRY  
I can see that.

They stand staring each other down for a moment.

HENRY (CONT'D)  
You ain't gettin' it back.

Eric takes a few steps closer.

ERIC  
I want it back.

HENRY  
Yeah, I heard you. And I'm bettin' you heard me too.

ERIC  
I don't care who you are. I want my car back. If you don't give it to me now, I'm gonna get back in that Commodore and I'm gonna stay on you til you do.

HENRY  
What makes you think I won't kill you here?

ERIC  
Nothing makes me think that. I'd welcome it.

Eric watches Henry a moment. It's a strange, long moment. It makes Henry uncomfortable.

Eric takes steps closer again.

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ARCHIE

You must really love this Falcon, cuz.

Eric ignores Archie, moving towards Henry, their eyes locked on each other. Henry is deeply unsettled. Eric carries a dangerous nothing-to-lose air.

Archie points his handgun at the back panel of the Falcon.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)

How'd it be if I put holes in it?

Eric wheels around and grabs Archie by the throat with one hand, his gun hand with the other, slamming him against the car.

Henry flips the shotgun around and clubs Eric over the back of the head with its butt.

Eric's forehead smacks straight into Archie's face. Eric falls to the road, out cold.

Archie buckles over, moaning, clutching his face and catching his breath. Caleb stands at the driver's door.

Henry steps over to Eric and pokes him with the shotgun's barrel, then flips him over onto his back with his boot.

**EXT. DESERT - DAY**

The sun is high and hot. Glare and rippling air.

From a distance we see a tree. And from the tree a figure hangs by its feet.

Eric wakes. He has been tied round the ankles and hung from a branch of the dying tree.

He struggles groggy, disoriented. He looks filthy and sun-damaged.

After a moment, collecting himself, he looks up at his rope shackles. He heaves himself up to inspect them. He manages to grab the branch and hang, bent hard at the waist. It's awkward and exhausting. He lets the branch go and jerks back upside down, swaying.

Big black birds loiter coldly. Some stare. Others preen, disinterested.

They can wait.

Eric heaves himself up again, hanging by one hand, picking at the rope with the other. But the rope is tight and heavy. He won't have the strength to loosen it.

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He quits picking and breathes hard and confused.

As he hangs, one of the big black birds lands right beside his feet, staring down at him. Eric stares back, quietly desperate. They hold the stare until the bird looks away.

And as it does, Eric lunges. His hand strikes like a snake. He has the bird by the feet. It panics and flaps.

Eric flops back down again, hanging by his feet as the bird squawks and squirms. He grabs its body and looks at it a moment before snapping its neck swiftly.

He hangs there a moment longer, the now dead bird dangling. He then lifts himself up again and goes to work on the rope, hacking at it with bird's big brutal beak.

Again from a distance, we watch Eric work. He strains and hacks until finally the rope gives and he falls heavy to the dirt.

Eric sits, catching his breath, gathering himself. He looks out across the desert to the horizon, then drops his face into his now bloody hands.

He's exhausted.

He lifts himself up and limps towards the Commodore which sits idle a distance away. He climbs behind the wheel, starts the engine, shifts it into gear and turns it around back onto the highway.

#### **EXT. CARNY TOWN / STREET - DAY**

Reynolds cruises into town in the stolen cop car. The town is little more than a bunch of busted buildings in the middle of nothing.

The street is empty of people, but there are a number of trucks and vans parked behind buildings on one side of it.

#### **INT. REYNOLDS CAR - DAY**

Reynolds is struggling and bleeding badly. There's blood all over the dash and all over the steering wheel. Blood pools in the driver's seat around him.

He wipes his forehead, smearing blood all over his face. It gets in his eyes, stinging them.

He reaches over to the passenger seat and grabs a little yellow dress piled with other women's clothes. He wipes his face with it, getting the blood out of his eyes.

When he opens them, he spots a gas station a little further down the street.

**EXT. CARNY TOWN / GAS STATION - DAY**

Reynolds pulls the cop car round the side of the gas station building, obscured from main-street sight. He opens the car door and practically spills out onto the gravel beside it.

He leaves the door open and staggers over to the toilet attached to the gas station.

It's hellishly hot and deathly quiet.

**INT. CARNY TOWN / GAS STATION TOILET - DAY**

Reynolds heaves open the door. Blinding light screams into the dark and foul toilet. Flies buzz.

Reynolds staggers in. The door swings and slams closed. It's suddenly pitch black inside.

We can hear Reynolds' hand slapping the tiled wall, looking for a light switch.

The room flickers alight under a nasty fluorescent tube.

Reynolds eases himself over to the sink. In the mirror, under this light, he looks like bloody death.

He lifts his shirt off, almost too delirious to wince with pain. Under the shirt he is a scary, bloody mess.

He cups his hands into the water bucket beside the sink. He splashes it over his torso, trying to clear the gore and isolate his wounds.

After a few splashes the bullet wound is clear, on the side of his abdomen. It dribbles more blood.

He presses his bloody shirt against it. His legs begin to give way. He sits heavily on the dank bathroom floor, leaning back against the wall, holding the shirt to his gut.

His eyes close.

**EXT. CARNY TOWN / GAS STATION - DAY**

Eric's Commodore limps into the same gas station and pulls up only metres away from Reynolds' cop car.

Eric notes it warily.

He gets out, looking again to the cop car with its driver's door ajar. He sees the blood pooled in the driver's seat. He heads for the gas station door.

**INT. CARNY TOWN / GAS STATION - DAY**

Eric steps inside. A little bell rings as the door opens. The gas station is dusty and dark. Store shelves are mainly empty. The few bits and pieces on them are faded and filthy.

Eric walks the length of one of the shelves. He rounds the corner to find an OLD GUY with tattoos on his knuckles standing behind the counter pointing a pump-action shotgun straight at him.

Eric stops.

OLD GUY  
(listless)  
Raise your hands up.

Eric raises his hands slowly.

OLD GUY (CONT'D)  
OK, now lift your shirt. Slow.

Eric lifts his shirt up over his belt, exposing his bare stomach.

OLD GUY (CONT'D)  
Now turn. Full all the way round. Slow.

Eric turns a full circle, holding his shirt up.

OLD GUY (CONT'D)  
Thank you. What can I do for you?

The old guy keeps the gun trained on Eric.

ERIC  
I'm looking for a black Falcon. With three people in it.

OLD GUY  
It hasn't stopped here.

ERIC  
They needed gas.

OLD GUY  
I haven't got any gas. There's a sign out front.

ERIC  
Did you see it?

OLD GUY  
Did I see the sign? I put it there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERIC

The Falcon. Did it drive past here?

OLD GUY

I haven't seen a Falcon. Do you want to buy something?

Eric doesn't answer. The old man stands, still pointing the shotgun, waist-high, at Eric. There's a strange neediness in his eyes.

OLD GUY (CONT'D)

I've got sandwiches and cold drinks and auto accessories and some other things.

Eric turns and heads for the door.

**EXT. CARNY TOWN / GAS STATION - DAY**

Eric steps out into the heat. He looks up and down the street. It's deserted.

A hundred metres down he can see the two-storey Hanging Garden Hotel. An old 19th century building with an iron balcony.

The ground floor door to its public bar is open. A shirtless, tattooed man stands outside on the pavement, pissing into the street.

Eric starts walking towards him.

The pissing man concentrates on his stream of piss, then looks up to see Eric approaching from across the street.

Eric walks, the man pisses. They watch each other.

The guy zips his pants. He spits in the gutter where he pissed and then casually heads back inside the hotel.

**INT. HANGING GARDEN HOTEL - DAY**

Eric walks through the door to the public bar.

Inside, about ten guys mill around at the bar, at tables, a couple sleep against a wall. Most seem to have busted teeth and tattoos.

It's a weird crowd. A couple of lithe Chinese teenagers dressed in T-shirts and tracksuit pants with their hair in Imperial Chinese plaits play backgammon with a midget.

Every now and then the Chinese boys let out a squealing, cackling laugh. It breaks the lethargic silence in the hotel, strange and chilling.

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Despite the crowd, there isn't much noise. A radio hisses tinny in the corner, barely audible. It's not playing music or talkback - more scrambled intercepted radio communication.

Only a couple of people bother to look up at Eric as he enters. But that couple look up darkly.

Eric crosses to the bar.

The bartender is a wiry, shirtless twelve-year-old BOY with greasy hair and dirt on his face. There's something oddly, sexually androgenous about him.

ERIC

I'm looking for a black Falcon with three people in it.

The boy looks at Eric like he hasn't heard him speak.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Have you seen it?

The boy shakes his head 'no'. He does it slow, somewhere between timid and coquettish.

The boy watches Eric. Eric watches him right back.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Has anyone else seen it?

BOY

I don't know.

ERIC

Who would know?

BOY

Maybe grandma.

Eric's growing impatient with the half-answers and general weirdness.

ERIC

Where's grandma?

BOY

She's upstairs. She sees everything up there.

The boy continues staring at Eric. Eric looks away, around the bar. He spots the stairs and heads for them. He looks back at the boy behind the bar. The boy is still watching him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As he heads for the stairs, he sees the midget playing backgammon against the two Chinese teenagers.

Eric climbs the stairs. They're dark. As he nears the top landing he hear the muffled sounds of multiple couples fucking. It's a sickly sound. Unnatural. Pained.

At the top of the stairs, Eric sees the upstairs area consists of one long dark musty hall with doors on either side. Most doors are shut. Hot light slivers in from the ones that are open.

At the end of the hall, a woman, GRANDMA, sits knitting in an armchair, under a window. The click of her needles chimes rhythmically down the hall as Eric approaches.

She doesn't look up at him.

ERIC

I'm looking for my car. It's a black Falcon with three men in it. Did it come through here?

The woman only glances up before returning to the click of her knitting needles.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Have you seen it?

She addresses Eric like she would a little kid lost in a shopping mall.

GRANDMA

What's your name?

ERIC

Have you seen it?

GRANDMA

What's your name, baby?

ERIC

Have you seen it?

The woman looks up at Eric.

GRANDMA

Do you want to sleep with a boy? There's a boy downstairs you can sleep with.

She turns her arm to show Eric the soft white skin on the inside of her forearm which she strokes with her finger. It's not a delicate stroke. It's perfunctory and cold.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

He's smooth like this part of your arm.

ERIC

I need to buy a gun.

GRANDMA

You carry yourself like a man who already has a gun.

ERIC

You're carrying yourself like you know I don't have one.

The woman examines him a moment. Her needles continue their gentle click.

GRANDMA

You have one, you don't have one, makes no difference to me, sweetheart. I don't know anything about guns.

She turns her attention back out the window, conversation for her is finished.

Eric takes the awkward cue to head back to the stairs. As he climbs down them to the public bar of the hotel, he can hear the strange squealing giggle of the lithe Chinese acrobats.

He heads to the boy behind the bar.

ERIC

Do you know where I can buy myself a gun?

GRANDMA

I think the midget with the Chinaboy's there has things. They sell things.

He moves straight over to the table where the acrobats play backgammon with the tattooed midget.

The boys share a chair, sitting squashed together. One whispers conspiratorially in the other's ear.

It's the midget's turn. He rolls the dice. The acrobat whispers in his brother's ear.

MIDGET

(yells at whispering acrobat)  
Stop it!

The acrobats smile.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (4)

Eric leans over the midget's shoulder and speaks soft, but firm.

ERIC

I need to speak to you.

The acrobat whispers again in his brother's ear.

MIDGET

(to acrobat)

If you don't fuckin cut it out now, I will kill you. You hear me right? I'm gonna cut your face off and I'm gonna eat it.

ERIC

I need a gun.

MIDGET

(to Eric)

Can you not hover around me?

The midget turns his attention back to the board. There is a moment's silence. He lines up his move.

The Chinese acrobat whispers again in his brother's ear. The midget shoves the board away from him on the table. The acrobats giggle and squeal.

MIDGET (CONT'D)

That's it. I'm finished. You've fucked it. You can't keep your tongues out of each other's ears. I'm finished. Fuck you.

The midget hops off his chair. He grabs Eric by the hand and drags him towards the back door.

**EXT. HANGING GARDEN HOTEL / REAR - DAY**

The midget leads Eric out the back door of the hotel. The rear area is full of broken stuff and dog shit.

Two angry dogs holler and choke themselves on their chains. The midget picks up a rock and pelts it at them.

The dogs bark more. The midget pelts another rock. Eric watches this.

Eric and the midget cross this yard and through a wire gate to the dry nothingness behind the hotel where a collection of busted trucks and caravans are parked. 'Jacobson Brothers Circus' is stencilled on the sides of some with Chinese-character translation underneath.

The midget sweats and mumbles to himself, barely intelligible spew.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIDGET

(to the air in front of him)  
It's so fuckin hot. It's so fuckin hot.

The midget muffles his last words, covering his nose and mouth with his free hand. Eric is suddenly overcome by the stench too. He sees a dead cow lying bloated on its side about 20 feet away.

The midget leads Eric winding between trucks to a little caravan at the far rear of the parked convoy. The midget has to practically climb the steps like a ladder to its little door and reach high over his head for its handle.

He swings the door open. Eric follows him inside.

**INT. MIDGET'S CARAVAN - DAY**

The midget shuts the caravan door behind Eric and speaks directly to him for the first time.

MIDGET

You make sure you got a grip on a person's company before you start talking his business in front of them.

The midget climbs up on his bed to be standing on it, about to reach up to a shelf above it.

ERIC

I need a gun.

The midget turns back to Eric.

MIDGET

I just said an important thing about how to behave in front of people. Don't you go just ignoring me with what it is you want.

ERIC

I don't want it. I need it.

MIDGET

What does it look like I'm doing up here? I heard you. I heard what you need. Pay me the courtesy of blinking or some such so I know you heard me. Do like this.

The midget blinks big and exaggerated.

ERIC

I heard you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIDGET

Fuck.

The midget turns back to the shelf and carefully pulls down a box. He lays it down on the bed. He stands over it and lifts its lid off. Inside are four handguns, resting on folded towels.

Eric looks at them and reaches in for one.

MIDGET (CONT'D)

Careful.

Standing on the bed, the midget stands almost eye to eye with Eric.

MIDGET (CONT'D)

They're three hundred each.

Eric feels the gun's weight. He examines it, obviously familiar with its operation. The midget points to each gun in the box individually.

MIDGET (CONT'D)

That one's three hundred. That one's three hundred. That one's three hundred... I only take US dollars.

Eric puts the gun back in the box and lifts out another. He feels its weight.

ERIC

I don't have three hundred US.

MIDGET

They're three hundred US.

ERIC

Can you do this one for less?

MIDGET

(irritated)

I told you how much they cost. They're three hundred. You don't have three hundred, then that's that. We can finish talking.

Eric looks again at the gun in his hand.

Then, cold and blank, he raises it and SHOTS the midget square in the forehead. The midget falls back against the blood-splattered caravan wall.

Eric shoves the gun down the front of his pants, looking around, wary of the noise he has just made.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He exits the caravan.

**EXT. HANGING GARDEN HOTEL / REAR - DAY**

Eric steps off the caravan steps, pulling the door closed behind him.

He winds his way back towards the hotel - between the trucks, past the dead cow, through the wire gate, past the angry dogs to the hotel's back door.

**INT. HANGING GARDEN HOTEL - DAY**

Eric walks back through the hotel straight for the stairs. He climbs them.

At the top, the woman is still sitting and knitting.

Eric moves straight to her. When he's standing over her, he pulls the gun from his belt and points it at her face.

She looks up.

ERIC

I'm looking for a black Falcon. Have you seen it?

The woman looks at him a long moment. She doesn't seem even remotely unsettled. She looks at him gently. She continues knitting. Her needles continue their click-click.

GRANDMA

What's your name? I want to know your name.

ERIC

Answer my question.

GRANDMA

Answer mine.

ERIC

Answer my question. I'm not gonna say it again.

GRANDMA

OK, I'll call you 'my baby'. My baby. I saw a Falcon and it had three men in it and it did what most cars do. It came in one direction and left in the other. I can't tell you any more than that. The only detail I can give you is the detail that pertains to this place. I can tell you what they drank.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

I can tell you what they smelled like. I can tell you how long they stayed. I can tell you what they said, if they said anything and if I heard what it is they said. But that's about all I can tell you.

ERIC

What did they say?

She pauses, matches his stare. Her eyes are gentle,

GRANDMA

They didn't say anything. They didn't stop here.

She holds Eric's eyes, as if the gun he holds is invisible. Eric struggles inside.

The woman speaks tender. Eric stands catatonic, gun pointed.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

You must really love that car, darling.

She holds out her knitting for her own inspection. It's a tiny baby-sized striped sweater. Eric holds the gun on her. He's lost.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

Of all the things in this day and age to get worked up about.

She looks him in the eye again.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

What is it about that car you love so much?

Eric doesn't answer. There's something about this woman he finds intimidating, hypnotic.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

Can you tell me?

Eric watches her, unmoving. She softens further.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

What's your name, sweetheart?

Eric takes a step closer, holding the gun on her, its barrel only inches from her face.

She casually, slowly palms it away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

Don't be silly. Now you're just being rude.

Eric slips the gun into his belt. He turns and heads back down the hall towards the stairs.

He walks down the stairs.

He walks back through the public bar to the front door, oblivious to the people watching him leave.

**EXT. CARNY TOWN STREET - DAY**

Eric steps back out onto the blinding street and makes the walk back to the gas station and his car.

**EXT. CARNY TOWN / GAS STATION - DAY**

Eric arrives back at his busted car. The cop car is still there, door still open.

Eric pulls his keys from his pocket. He drops them. He bends to pick them up.

CLICK. A gun is cocked at his head.

Reynolds stands bloody and hunched behind him. He's in pain and practically delirious.

REYNOLDS

What are you doing with this car?

ERIC

Why do you want to know?

REYNOLDS

My brother was in this car. Where is he?

ERIC

Who's your brother?

REYNOLDS

Where is he? Where's my brother?

Reynolds stumbles. Eric can see him fading.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Where is he?

Reynolds stumbles to one knee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In a flash, Eric pulls his own gun from his belt and holds it hard against Reynolds' head.

Reynolds drops his gun. Eric speaks angry.

ERIC  
Who's your brother? Where is he?

Reynolds coughs. He struggles for breath.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Where's your brother!?

REYNOLDS  
I lost him.

ERIC  
Where's he gone?

Reynolds struggles for breath.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Where's he gone? Tell me or I kill you now.

REYNOLDS  
I need help.

ERIC  
Tell me where he's gone.

REYNOLDS  
I know where he's gone.

ERIC  
Where!?

Reynolds spits.

REYNOLDS  
But you gotta help me.

Reynolds spits again.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
I ain't good.

**INT. CARNY TOWN / GAS STATION - DAY**

Eric bursts into the store holding his gun. He heads around the shelves to the counter.

Rounding the corner to the counter, a BLAST rips from the old guy's shotgun, smashing shelves, blowing shit everywhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eric recoils behind the shelves.

ERIC  
I need a doctor.

OLD GUY  
Put your gun on the ground where I can see it.

Eric puts the gun on the floor in the aisle.

OLD GUY (CONT'D)  
Now come out here where I can see you.

Eric emerges from the behind the shelves.

The old man is there, shotgun pointed straight at him.

Eric stands unafraid before the old guy.

ERIC  
I need a doctor. Is there a doctor around here?

OLD GUY  
No.

ERIC  
I need to find a doctor.

OLD GUY  
There's no one useful here. I'm about the most useful person in this town - if that gives you any idea how far from having a doctor this town is.

ERIC  
Is there a doctor somewhere else? Somewhere out of town?

OLD GUY  
Why should I tell you?

ERIC  
Help me, old man.

OLD GUY  
I've been helping you, son. That's all I've been doing.

The old guy watches Eric. Eric watches him back.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC

Please.

OLD GUY

Buy something.

ERIC

Please, old man.

OLD GUY

You buy something. I told you what I got. I got sandwiches and cold drinks and other stuff. I'm not doing this because I love it. I'm doing this because I need to make a living somehow. And you come in here like I'm the information kiosk. I'm a businessman trying to run a business and instead I gotta deal with this shit all day. You go to that counter there and you pick yourself out a sandwich or a cold drink or maybe both and then I'll treat you like a customer.

ERIC

I need a doctor.

OLD GUY

I'm not joking. I know you think I am, but I'm not joking. You've walked in here and our emotional lives have intersected and this is where I'm at in mine. And I won't accept that where you're at in yours takes precedence. And I've got a bigger gun than you, so that's all that matters anyway. Pick something off the shelf.

Eric and the old guy watch each other a moment before Eric steps over to the drinks shelf and lifts a bottle off without looking at it.

He then takes it to the counter warily. The old guy keeps his gun trained as Eric reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small wad of money.

ERIC

You take Australian dollars?

OLD GUY

I'd prefer not, but if that's what you've got, then that's what I'll take.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Eric peels a ten-dollar note from the wad and places it on the counter. The old guy reaches carefully into his pocket with his free hand and produces a single two-dollar coin, which he slides over to Eric.

OLD GUY (CONT'D)

There's a doctor in the hills. You head east and you'll see the hills. Take the first road you see that looks like it heads for those hills and head for them and eventually you'll see it. It's got an old letterbox, says 'Peeples' on it. It's a yellow letterbox, says 'Peeples' written on it.

Eric nods a small thanks.

He picks his gun from the debris on the floor as he heads for the door.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric drives, steady but urgent.

He looks over to Reynolds who is quietly clutching his guts, lost in his own private pain.

REYNOLDS

What's going on?

ERIC

Tell me where your brother is.

REYNOLDS

You gotta get me to help.

ERIC

Tell me where he is. There's a good chance you're gonna die soon so tell me now.

REYNOLDS

I can't do that.

Reynolds winces.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Just help me, please.

**INT. COMMODORE - NIGHT**

It's dark now. Eric steers the car slowly along a winding road heading up into the hills.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There's dense bush on either side of the road. The Commodore has only one functioning headlight.

Eric keeps a sharp eye on the roadside, looking for the yellow mailbox.

Reynolds is still beside him, now wrapped in a jacket. His eyes are closed, but he's shivering. The temperature has dropped.

Nocturnal animal hoots and squeals can be heard eerily through the car's busted windows.

Eric rounds a bend and there in the distance, by the side of the road, is a yellow mailbox, illuminated in the weak beam of the Commodore's light.

As the car nears, Eric strains to read 'PEEPLS' written on its side.

He swings the wheel and takes the Commodore up the dirt drive beside the mailbox.

The drive is long and narrow and boxed in either side by dense bush. Eric is forced to take it slower than he'd like, driving with only one headlight.

After something close to a kilometre, the drive opens out to a clearing at the back of which, two hundred metres away, sits an old wooden house on tropical stilts, surrounded by patches of lush jungle. Behind the house is more dense bush.

Eric pulls the Commodore up close to the house and switches off the engine.

He opens the door for a little overhead light and shoves his pistol down the front of his pants.

He climbs out of the car.

**EXT. PEEPLES HOUSE - NIGHT**

Eric stands beside the Commodore and pulls his T-shirt down firmly over his belt, properly concealing his pistol.

He walks away from the car, leaving the door open. In the light in the car, we can see Reynolds curled up in the jacket.

Eric walks warily towards the house, looking around him, closely inspecting the house as he approaches.

When he is only metres from the front steps, a security light switches on automatically.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eric stops dead in his tracks. He pauses a second, then continues on carefully.

He climbs the wooden steps to the house's front door. Old Tibetan prayer flags hang all along the front porch.

He looks around, then opens the fly screen and bangs loudly on the door.

He lets the fly screen close again and adjusts the gun in his belt. He looks back to the car, at Reynolds inside it.

He opens the fly screen and bangs again. He lets the fly screen close.

A FEMALE VOICE.

DOC

Pull the gun out of your pants and put it on the ground.

Eric turns.

A girl, DOC, maybe only 17 years old, is standing down the other end of the porch pointing a rifle at him. She's wearing shorts and a T-shirt. No shoes. She's been asleep.

Eric notices an older Aboriginal man, MICKEY, standing down off the porch beside him.

Eric pulls the pistol from his belt and carefully puts it down on the porch.

ERIC

This man needs help.

DOC

Kick the gun over here.

Eric kicks the gun. It skids across the porch landing close to the girl's feet.

DOC (CONT'D)

Lift your shirt and turn slow.

Eric lifts his shirt, turns slow.

DOC (CONT'D)

Turn your pockets out.

Eric turns his pockets out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOC (CONT'D)  
OK, roll your shorts up.

ERIC  
What?

DOC  
Roll the legs of your shorts up. High as they'll go. One at a time.

Eric bends and rolls his shorts, first one leg, then the other, exposing his thighs.

DOC (CONT'D)  
Now bend slow and take your shoes off.

Eric slips his sneakers off and drops them beside him.

DOC (CONT'D)  
Now your socks.

Eric peels his socks off, then stands straight.

ERIC  
He needs help.

DOC  
OK.

With her eyes trained on Eric's, she kicks his handgun back along the porch. It slides to a rest against his feet.

She looks at him a moment longer.

DOC (CONT'D)  
(to younger Aboriginal man)  
Mickey, can you help him get the guy inside?

**INT. PEEPLES HOUSE / SURGERY - NIGHT**

A small Buddhist shrine. Framed pictures of various Geshes and one of a young Tibetan boy in robes - the new Dalai Lama.

Surgical equipment. Anatomical diagrams and charts on the walls. Animals and people.

Reynolds is laid out on a big wooden dining table in a back room clearly not used for dining.

Doc is fishing around inside Reynolds' gut with surgical tools.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eric sits slouched in a chair against a wall. He's exhausted and unsettled.

Mickey sits in a chair in the corner of the room, keeping watch, the rifle across his lap.

ERIC  
You're a Buddhist.

DOC  
I'm not a Buddhist. I just like  
Buddhism.

ERIC  
That makes you a Buddhist.

DOC  
Just because I like something doesn't  
mean I am that thing.

ERIC  
That's exactly what it means. What's a  
Buddhist doing pointing a gun at me?

She looks at him. He's suddenly more interesting than she'd first thought.

DOC  
Nothing says I can't defend myself when I  
need to.

ERIC  
What makes you think you don't still  
need to? Why did you give me my gun  
back?

She ignores this for a moment, concentrating on the mess before her.

DOC  
I just needed to get a look in your eyes,  
get a look at your character.

Eric is forced to think momentarily about his 'character'. His eyes don't leave Doc.

ERIC  
You think you can know who I am by looking  
in my eyes?

DOC  
I can know what I need to know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC

And what is it you think you know?

DOC

That you came here for help and nothing else.

She wipes her nose with the back of her sleeve.

DOC (CONT'D)

It looks like the bullet went straight through him. But he's lost some blood, I reckon.

Eric doesn't respond. He looks at Mickey who is looking right back at him and has been all along.

DOC (CONT'D)

Is this man your friend?

ERIC

I met him in the street.

Silence.

ERIC (CONT'D)

How much do you want for this?

DOC

I don't want your money. Money's not what I think about when I can see someone's in a bad way.

She concentrates a moment.

DOC (CONT'D)

I've gotten pretty good at learning how to live without money.

ERIC

How do you know how to do this?

DOC

I know how to do a lot of things. I've taught myself how to do a lot of different things.

Eric watches her.

He stands. She watches him.

He leaves the room. She and Mickey watch him go.

**INT. PEEPLES HOUSE / BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Eric lifts his shirt off, standing in the bathroom beside a big tub of water. He takes a towel from the wall rack and dips it in the tub.

He is covered in road filth from the Commodore's missing windshield.

He soaks the towel in the tub and rubs it deep over his face. He then methodically sponges his torso.

He winces in pain. He has accrued cuts and bruises he hadn't noticed until now.

He wrings the soaking towel in the bathroom sink and drops it on the floor.

He takes another towel and dries himself.

He stops and takes a moment to look at himself in the mirror.

**INT. PEEPLES HOUSE / LOUNGE - NIGHT**

Eric emerges from the bathroom and walks the hall to the lounge. While Doc works on Reynolds, Eric roams her house. The lounge is relaxed. Dark. Old Asian furniture.

**INT. PEEPLES HOUSE / BACK ROOM - NIGHT**

Eric wanders into a dark room and flicks on the fluorescent light. The room is stacked floor to ceiling with cages. Dogs in the cages. Different breeds. They don't make sound. Where normal dogs would go crazy barking with the arrival of a stranger, these dogs sit silent, shut down.

Eric noticeably shifts, softens in their presence. He sits in a chair. He scans the cages. His eyes begin to well.

He drops his face into his hands.

DOC

I have to keep them locked up in here for the most part coz there's people out there who'll take them for food. There's hungry people around here. Have you got a television?

Eric turns, startled. Doc stands in the doorway. She has blood down the front of her apron.

He turns back to face the dogs, to hide his face from Doc. Emotion doesn't sit comfortably.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

ERIC

No.

DOC

I figure if I had a TV I'd know why these guys have come to me... I've stopped paying attention. I hear things. People have things to say about the world. But I don't feel like anybody has any idea what they're talking about.

She seems strangely resigned to some fate she can't foresee. She seems strangely accepting of the hardened man crying quietly in front of her. She stands in the doorway looking at the cages and their occupants.

DOC (CONT'D)

Nearly all of these guys have come to me in the last twelve months. People bring them and ask me to look after them while they go away - because they have to go somewhere or do something. And then none of them have ever come back... I guess they've gone looking for money. That's the only reason people move around. Money and love. But I don't suppose all these guys have come to me because their owners have gone looking for love.

She scratches her nose with her arm, her hands still wet from a post-op scrub.

DOC (CONT'D)

And when they get dropped off, I'd have this feeling like something wasn't right. Like their mums and dads'd have an off-kilter look on their face. You know what I mean? They looked like they knew they weren't coming back, even if they didn't know it properly themselves yet.

Eric makes close eye contact with the dog nearest to him, a sad black cocker spaniel staring straight back at him.

Eric's eyes are moist. He drops his face into his hands again.

ERIC

Things feel hard right now.

Doc watches him close.

DOC

Things always change.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Eric raises his head and tries to harden again. She looks at him like she acknowledges his sadness for the first time.

ERIC

When can we get out of here?

DOC

He's gonna sleep for a bit.

**INT. PEEPLES HOUSE / LOUNGE - NIGHT**

Doc and Eric stand in the lounge, looking at the lounge setting.

DOC

You might be too long for the couch. I dunno. All these chairs are comfy.

They stand in the room in awkward silence for a moment, like maybe something else needs to be said.

DOC (CONT'D)

I'll see you later.

Doc starts towards the hall.

ERIC

Why have you done this for him?

She stops.

DOC

I don't know. I don't like what it would mean if I didn't.

She continues out of the room, leaving Eric standing alone.

**EXT. PEEPLES HOUSE DAY**

Early morning. The sun has risen above the hills behind the house.

Cockatoos screech.

**INT. PEEPLES HOUSE / LOUNGE - DAY**

Eric is asleep in an armchair, wrapped in a too-small blanket.

Sun filters into the room. It feels dark and cool in the house.

REYNOLDS

Where are we?

Eric opens his eyes. Reynolds is standing before him, looking at him, clutching his side, wobbly on his feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eric looks around confused for a second, like he can't remember where they are.

He gathers his senses and sits up in the armchair, still groggy.

ERIC  
What are you doing?

REYNOLDS  
I feel good.

ERIC  
OK.

REYNOLDS  
Who doctored me?

Eric stands and looks around. He crosses the room to doors opening onto a back veranda. The doors are open. He steps outside.

**EXT. PEEPLES HOUSE - DAY**

The day outside is already bleached and hot. Eric goes to the veranda railing and looks out over paddocks to the densely bushed hills and valleys beyond.

Doc is at the nearest back fence, feeding a horse from a bucket, talking to Mickey.

Eric watches her. She strokes the horse's head, then leaves the bucket and heads back to the house.

As she approaches, she looks up to see Eric watching her.

**INT. PEEPLES HOUSE / LOUNGE - DAY**

Reynolds sits shirtless in a chair by the dining table while Doc inspects his bandages.

Eric stands nearby, looking out the window.

DOC  
(to Reynolds)  
Lift your arm for me. Can you lift it?

Reynolds lifts his arm, wincing only slightly with pain.

DOC (CONT'D)  
That looks OK. You'll need to keep it clean.

REYNOLDS  
OK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Doc stands.

DOC  
I can give you some fresh swabs and  
bandages.

REYNOLDS  
Thank you, mam.

Doc smiles and leaves the room.

ERIC  
We need to get going.

REYNOLDS  
We should ask the lady.

ERIC  
We're leaving.

REYNOLDS  
We should ask what the lady says.

A CHIME sounds. It's like an electric doorbell. Eric and Reynolds freeze, looking at each other, suddenly anxious.

Eric moves quickly to a window to see what he can see outside.

Doc enters, holding swabs and bandages. She looks concerned.

ERIC  
What's that sound mean?

DOC  
A car's coming up the drive.

ERIC  
What car?

DOC  
I don't know.

The sound CHIMES again.

DOC (CONT'D)  
That's two cars.

ERIC  
Who knows we're up here?

DOC  
I haven't told anyone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Beat.

ERIC  
We need to leave.

Eric hurriedly starts grabbing his things - jacket, shoes, gun.

DOC  
There's no way out of here other than the way they're coming in.

ERIC  
How long have we got?

Doc helps Reynolds put his T-shirt back on.

DOC  
A minute maybe. I should go talk to them.

ERIC  
If it's who I think it is, they won't be here to talk.

DOC  
Who is it?

Eric checks the mag of his handgun.

DOC (CONT'D)  
(more frantic)  
Who is it?

ERIC  
Circus freaks. Where's your rifle?

DOC  
Why? Tell me what's going on here.

Eric turns to her directly, sternly.

DOC (CONT'D)  
Get your rifle.

Doc leaves the room.

ERIC  
(to Reynolds)  
Where's your gun?

REYNOLDS  
I don't know. In the car, I'd be guessing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Eric moves to the window.

Reynolds tries to lift himself off his chair, struggles.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
You want I should go get it?

Eric peers through the window to the still empty drive.

ERIC  
No.

Through the window, Eric can see the first of the cars appear, heading up the drive. It's a white Hi-Ace minivan with two people inside, the Chinese acrobats.

It's followed soon after by a small white utility truck with lone driver.

And then Eric sees Mickey heading across the front grounds to greet the new arrivals.

Doc appears behind him with the rifle.

DOC  
Tell me what's going on here.

Eric reaches for the rifle. She passes it to him.

He checks it. He handles it expertly.

Doc moves to the window and looks out to see the vehicles coming to a stop.

And Mickey approaching to meet them.

DOC (CONT'D)  
Oh God.  
(to Eric)  
What's going on here?

Eric takes her by the arm and pulls her away.

ERIC  
Move away from the window.

Doc stumbles back into the centre of the room, shaken and confused.

Eric rests the rifle on the sill.

DOC  
Who are these people?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Before he can line up a shot, Mickey approaches the window of the now stationary van.

He leans in to the driver's window to talk. Two words are exchanged.

And then Mickey is SHOT in the head at close range, slumping to the ground beside the van.

DOC (CONT'D)

No.

The DOGS in cages start HOWLING from the back room.

DOC (CONT'D)

(distraught)

What's going on?!

Eric pulls the rifle trigger.

The single crack opens a spider web in the van's windscreen.

The rifle blast inside the room is loud. Reynolds covers his ears, frightened and confused.

Doc is now frantic, paralysed.

DOC (CONT'D)

What's going on?!

Quickly, expertly, Eric shifts his position slightly on the window sill. He fires again. Opens another jagged web on the passenger side of the windscreen.

The man in the utility is now out of his truck, confused, brandishing a handgun.

Eric shifts slightly again and fires.

The man drops.

Silence, bar one howling dog.

Eric breathes, waits for sign of movement.

None.

And then Doc charges across the room and attacks him. She jumps on his back, wailing and scratching.

Eric lifts her off the ground with one arm, the other still clutching the rifle. He carries her across the room and puts her down against the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

She crumples and cries.

Eric breathes, gathers his thoughts.

He props the rifle against the wall.

ERIC

Call the police. They'll deal with the bodies. Tell them whatever you need to tell them. Square your ledger. They won't bother with me, but it'll make you feel better.

Doc sits, wrecked, breathing shallow, looking at him with broken contempt.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I didn't mean for this happen. It just followed me here.

DOC

That's you.

He looks at her. He knows he has ruined this place.

DOC (CONT'D)

What follows you is what you are.

He doesn't know how to respond to this.

Reynolds is still sitting with his hands over his ears. Eric looks at him coldly.

ERIC

Get up.

**EXT. PEEPLES HOUSE - DAY**

Eric and Reynolds in the Commodore.

The now serene and menacing hills loom behind them as Eric takes the car back out onto the sealed road.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

It's dusk. The sun barely clings to the horizon. Eric looks weary behind his sunglasses. He's pressing on. They're back in dry country.

The wind tears through the broken passenger window.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Reynolds is asleep. The temperature has dropped. Reynolds has wrapped his arms in a plastic bag to keep warm. It rustles wildly and loudly in the gust.

Eric drops the Commodore down a gear, slowing behind a big, dirty truck on the outskirts of a dry and dirty town.

Reynolds wakes, dopey. He pulls the cacophonous plastic bag away and throws it into the back seat.

REYNOLDS  
Where are we?

ERIC  
I don't know.

They sit in silence.

REYNOLDS  
I'm hungry.

Eric stays unreachable behind his sunglasses, following the truck into town.

Reynolds looks out the window at an emaciated dog snouting the remains of a dead animal in the road.

**EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT**

The sun has just dropped, but the sky hums vaguely purple.

Eric cruises the Commodore past an old motel on a back street of the town.

**I/E. COMMODORE - NIGHT**

Eric scopes the motel as they pass.

He pulls into the motel car park. He takes the Commodore down past the last room and swings it around the back, out of sight from the street, and comes to a stop.

He shoves his pistol down the front of his pants and pulls the key from the ignition.

ERIC  
Wait here.

Eric gets out of the car and heads back around the front of the motel to the reception office. He looks around cautiously as he walks.

Reynolds watches him from inside the car.

**INT. MOTEL / RECEPTION OFFICE - NIGHT**

Eric enters the motel reception.

It's empty.

And then a little Aboriginal kid enters from a back room. He eyes Eric suspiciously.

The room is dank and dimly lit with a low-watt fluorescent tube.

ERIC  
I need a room.

KID  
OK.

The kid runs off behind the counter and through a door leading into a dark hall.

Eric looks around. The only sign of decoration is a big old map of Australia stuck to the wall, yellowed and frayed. Eric studies it from where he stands. He looks at it close - east coast cities, desert, tropical north. Everything on the map seems so far away, from another time.

The kid re-enters the reception area. Eric turns from the map.

KID (CONT'D)  
You gotta pay me.

ERIC  
How much?

KID  
USA eighty for one night.

ERIC  
You take Australian?

KID  
USA money.

Eric looks at the kid, contemplates arguing the price and currency, decides against.

He pulls his depleted roll from his pocket and peels off 80. He puts it on the counter.

The kid hands him a fat room key.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KID (CONT'D)

You got number seven. There's sheets and that in there.

ERIC

Where are we here?

Eric stuffs his money roll back in his pocket.

KID

Queen's Motel.

ERIC

What town are we in?

KID

We're in Belindemu.

ERIC

Where is it? Show me on the map.

Eric points to the map on the wall. The kid clambers up on an armchair underneath it.

KID

It's not written on this here, but it's somewhere like this place.

He points with a little grubby finger to a spot somewhere in the vast eastern half of the map.

Eric takes a look where the kid points.

He lifts the kid down from the armchair and heads for the door.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

The door unlocks. Eric opens it and holds it open. Reynolds enters the room.

Eric stands at the door, scouring the street outside.

Reynolds lowers himself onto one of the two single beds in the room, wincing slightly with pain, as Eric closes the door and latches it.

ERIC

You're gonna start talking to me.

REYNOLDS

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERIC

Don't fuckin 'what' me. You're gonna talk.  
Now.

REYNOLDS

But I told you I can't tell you nothing  
more than I already told you.

ERIC

I don't care what you think you already  
told me. You're gonna talk. And you're  
gonna do it now.

REYNOLDS

But I can't.

Eric steps fast across the room.

He heaves Reynolds off the bed and slams him against the wall,  
holding him by his shirt and throat.

ERIC

Where are we?

Reynolds' face contorts in pain.

REYNOLDS

Don't.

ERIC

Where are we?

REYNOLDS

What?

ERIC

Where are we?

REYNOLDS

I don't know.

ERIC

I don't know either. So how are we gonna  
find out how to get to where we're going if  
you don't know where you are and I don't  
know where where we're going is?

Eric holds Reynolds against the wall.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Can you answer that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Reynolds doesn't answer but the look of fear and confusion on his face is clear.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Do you even understand what I just said,  
half-wit?

Eric stares hard and close into Reynolds' eyes.

ERIC (CONT'D)

No. You don't.

Eric releases him. Reynolds crumples to the ground, holding his side. Eric stands over him, watching.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I need to eat. Then we're sleeping a few hours and we're going again. And somewhere between now and then, you're gonna start talking to me or I'm gonna slit your throat. Do you understand *that*?

Reynolds stares at the floor. Eric kicks his feet.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I asked you a fuckin question.

Reynolds nods, still staring at the floor.

REYNOLDS

Yes.

Eric leaves the room.

#### **I/E. EAT-HOUSE - NIGHT**

A grey, empty and fluorescent-lit shopfront eat-house behind a three-quarter-open roller door. Six plastic tables with short plastic seats.

The street outside is quiet, shut down for the night.

Eric stands at the counter, spooning rice and a dried-fish paste onto a plate from big bowls of same.

It's food that has been cooked on a dirty grill made of loose bricks and hot coals beside the counter.

When the bowl is full Eric pulls cash from his pocket and sits it on the counter, making cold and fleeting eye-contact with a young Chinese woman sitting on a short stool behind it. The woman seems interested in nothing but the cards she has laid out on the floor at her feet in Solitaire formation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eric steps away from the counter and takes a seat right beside Reynolds who is already well into his plate.

Eric mixes his rice and fish around with his spoon and takes a mouthful. He chews a moment before reaching into his mouth and removing a bone. He puts the bone into a faded plastic Coca-Cola ashtray.

They sit in silence.

Then Reynolds gets out of his seat and goes to the counter. Eric only glances up at him as he goes.

Eric eats alone, staring out into the dark and quiet street.

He hears voices behind him. He turns to see Reynolds in conversation with the woman behind the counter. Reynolds is speaking halting Chinese.

The conversation finishes. Reynolds returns to the table and resumes his eating.

REYNOLDS

We're going to Carloon.

Eric looks at him sideways, suspicious.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

I just went over and asked that lady how we'd go about getting to Carloon from here.

Pause. Eric says nothing.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

You said you wanted to know so bad.

Now that Reynolds is talking, Eric watches him, waiting for more to unveil.

Eric takes another mouthful of rice.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

And I might as well tell you coz what's to stop you going over there now and asking her the same question? Or not the same question but a question about my question, like a question about the question I just asked her about how we'd go about getting to Carloon and then you'd know anyway.

Beat. Eric watches Reynolds. Reynolds has been thinking about this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

But you don't know *where* in Carloon we're going, so I'm still in control here.

Eric watches Reynolds coldly.

ERIC

Who are you?

REYNOLDS

I'm Rey.

ERIC

Who are you? Why are you here?

REYNOLDS

Me and my brother came out for the mines. Like everybody else.

ERIC

Why's your brother in Carloon?

REYNOLDS

Coz that's where he was gonna go.

ERIC

Why are you here and your brother's in Carloon?

Reynolds appears like he hasn't thought to ask himself this question already. Or it's something he hasn't wanted to think about.

REYNOLDS

Coz he had to get going in a big hurry.

ERIC

Why was he in a big hurry?

REYNOLDS

Coz he had to get away from the police.

ERIC

Why did have to get away from the police?

Reynolds looks around the empty shop. Talking about his brother is making him anxious.

REYNOLDS

I don't know. I can't talk no more about it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ERIC

Why did he have to get away from the police?

REYNOLDS

I can't talk about it no more.

ERIC

Whatever it was he did, you got left behind to die while he was doing it.

Eric watches Reynolds. Reynolds can't meet his eyes.

REYNOLDS

It didn't happen like that.

ERIC

How did it happen then?

REYNOLDS

I said I can't talk to you no more about it, so stop asking me about everything.

Reynolds turns his head even further away. Eric takes another spoonful of food, almost bemused.

Reynolds is thinking. And it takes him a long moment of Eric mouthfuls and Reynolds silence for him to work out what it is he wants to say.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

I believe in God and I know Henry believes in God and so there's no harm Henry would want to see me come to. I believe in that.

Eric almost thinks this is funny.

ERIC

So take a look at the harm you've come to and where's Henry?

REYNOLDS

He's waitin' for me.

ERIC

You believe that.

REYNOLDS

Yes.

ERIC

He's not waiting for you.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (4)

REYNOLDS

Yes, he is.

Eric pauses, looks at Reynolds. Eric's face shifts to something approaching contempt.

ERIC

He's not waiting for you.

Eric stares cold and empty at Reynolds.

ERIC (CONT'D)

You need to learn how to live. God's not gonna teach you. Your mum and dad won't teach you. Your brother's not gonna teach you that. Just coz he and you came out of the same woman's hole doesn't mean anything. The only thing that means anything is that I'm here with you now and he's not.

(pause)

The sooner you learn that, the sooner you learn what it is about people that makes them tick - and that it's not you that makes them tick - the sooner you learn that about people, the better off you'll be. You understand that? You need to learn how to live... Otherwise you're gonna die real soon.

Reynolds has his head bowed.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Your brother left you to rot. That's what people do.

Reynolds offers no response. Eric watches intensely for one. Eric is surprised at his own feelings - what began as dismissive contempt here has started to boil.

Reynolds continues staring at his plate, giving nothing but defeat.

ERIC (CONT'D)

You don't realise that, your death is gonna come to you real soon.

Eric stands. He's angry. He steps over the bench they sit on, throws his spoon down on the table and exits.

Reynolds is left sitting in the dank eat-house, trying his best to feign stoicism.

He sits in this position a while. Then he resumes eating alone.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY**

Eric lies on his bed, in jeans and no shirt, asleep.

Sun streams into the room through half-open venetians.

His eyes open. And then he sits up, startled.

Reynolds is curled asleep in the next bed, under the covers.

ERIC

Wake up.

Eric gets off the bed and pulls his T-shirt on.

ERIC (CONT'D)

C'mon. Get up. We gotta go.

Eric goes to the water bucket in the bathroom. It's practically empty. He tips it over his face.

He re-enters the room. Reynolds stirs.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Get up.

Eric takes his gun from under his pillow and sticks it in the front of his pants.

He moves to the end of Reynolds' bed and pulls the covers away. Reynolds is fully clothed and curled up.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I'm gonna get us some water. When I get back you need to be ready to leave.

Reynolds rubs his eyes.

ERIC (CONT'D)

You hear me? We can't stay here.

Reynolds nods.

REYNOLDS

(meekly)

Yes.

Eric steps outside.

**EXT. MOTEL - DAY**

Eric steps into the scorching daylight, squinting. He lets his eyes adjust and then walks past other rooms that appear to be unoccupied - no cars parked outside them, no sign of life.

Eric heads round behind the motel to where the Commodore is parked.

He reaches in the car's broken back window and pulls out two old and empty plastic water bottles.

He looks around to see who might be watching, scouring the area. He sees a water pump out the back of building a hundred yards across a dusty and foul vacant lot.

He heads towards it.

**I/E. MOTEL ROOM - DAY**

Reynolds sits up and drops his legs over the side of the bed. He rubs his eyes. He looks sad.

He stands and goes to the window. He peers through the venetians out to the street.

In the street, he sees a POLICE CAR pull up and stop in the street outside the motel, across the car park.

Startled, Reynolds steps away from the window. He is suddenly panicked.

He goes to the bathroom. A small half open window sits above the sink. Reynolds contemplates it a moment then goes back into the room, looking around anxious.

He goes to his dirty plastic bag on the floor and pulls a handgun from inside it.

He then crouches between the beds, the gun pointed at the door.

A few tense and silent moments pass. And then there is a KNOCK at the door.

Reynolds is frozen with fear. He waits.

Then another KNOCK.

Followed closely by another.

Reynolds squeezes his eyes shut and fires the gun at the door. It BLASTS loud in the little room. A hole cracks through the thin wood of the door. Reynolds can hear the sound of someone hitting the cement outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He stands slowly, still clutching his gun, and creeps towards the door.

He takes the handle and turns it gently.

The latch gives. Reynolds pulls the door open.

Lying outside, dead and gored, is the little Aboriginal motel boy still clutching a stack of folded sheets.

Reynolds stands stunned and horrified looking at the mess he has made until, with a BLAST, the door beside him practically EXPLODES into splinters.

Reynolds hits the ground in the doorway and looks across the street.

The cop stands beside his car, across the motel car park, holding a pump-action shotgun.

Reynolds scurries on his hands and knees back inside the motel room.

**EXT. BUILDING - DAY**

Eric stands, eyes wired, ears pricked. The hand pump beside him trickles water over the upturned bottles.

He pulls the gun from his pants and makes his way cautiously towards the sound.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY**

Reynolds sits under the window, clutching his gun and breathing hard.

Another BLAST and the window above him shatters and showers glass.

Reynolds is frantic. He pops up and looks through the window and then pops straight back down again. He sees the cop fleetingly. He lifts his handgun and points it blind out the window. He pulls the trigger twice. Two REPORTS ring out.

Another shotgun BLAST takes a chunk out of the window frame.

Reynolds cowers.

**EXT. MOTEL - DAY**

Eric rounds the side of a building onto the road, a hundred yards from the motel. He looks down the street to see the cop, in profile, crouched beside his car, slotting shotgun cartridges into his pump-action.

The cop raises the shotgun and blasts in the direction of the motel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eric crosses the footpath onto the street and begins a slow creep towards the cop, concealing himself behind parked cars.

He has his gun drawn.

As he draws closer, the motel comes into proper view. He can see that it is their room that has been shot up and that has now become the site of a siege.

A handgun report pops from the motel room.

Eric creeps closer, approaching the cop from behind.

The cop raises his pump-action and fires again at the room.

Eric creeps closer.

The cop slides the chamber.

Eric steps up directly behind the cop now. He holds his gun at the back of the cop's head, point blank, and pulls the trigger.

Blood sprays from the cop's face as he slumps forward and the shotgun clatters to road at his side.

Eric stands over the body. He didn't want to have to do this. He looks around. Three Aboriginal boys watch from a long way down the street. Other than that, all is empty and quiet.

Eric steps over the cop's body and walks across the motel car park, squinting in the sun.

It feels like a long walk. Halfway across the car park, another handgun report cracks from the motel room.

Eric stops, half-ducks.

ERIC  
(yells)  
It's me!

REYNOLDS (O.S.)  
(yells)  
Is it you?

ERIC  
(yells)  
Stop shooting!

Eric continues his walk, picking up the pace.

He reaches the door to the room.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY**

Eric opens the door.

Reynolds is cowered under the window, in a mess of broken glass and splintered wood.

He is crying. He looks up at Eric like a scared and crazy little kid.

REYNOLDS  
(through sobs)  
I just wanted to fight. I just wanted to  
fight him.

Eric watches Reynolds for a moment. Then he looks around the room.

ERIC  
We gotta go.

Eric starts gathering his things together. He pulls blankets off the beds.

Reynolds watches him do it.

Eric drags him roughly up off the ground by his shirt.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
(impatient)  
Let's go. Get up.

**EXT. MOTEL - DAY**

Eric and Reynolds approach the Commodore - a distraught Reynolds a couple of feet behind Eric, carrying his stuff in his dirty plastic bag.

They wrench open the car's doors and climb inside.

Eric fires the engine and reverses hard back around the motel into its car park.

He then slams into gear and drives out onto the street, leaving the carnage behind in the heat.

**I/E. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric rounds a corner, taking the Commodore onto the town's bright and empty main street.

A hundred metres ahead, they see a little Aboriginal boy standing in the street, waving them down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Reynolds is anxious. Eric is impassive. They don't speak.

The kid continues waving as they approach and then points off to the side.

Then the WAIL of a train's horn.

To the car's left is a long and dirty freight train approaching a crossing in the street ahead of them. It's too close to outrun.

Eric slows the car to a stop as the train crosses the street before them.

The train is old and rusted - a long line of heavy industrial freight containers pulled by an old mean engine.

On the roof of every third container, guys in dirty civilian clothes - T-shirts, jeans, track pants - sit cross-legged, clutching machine guns like a low-paid militia guarding the train and its cargo. They look down listlessly at the Commodore as the train rolls past.

The Aboriginal boy, now with two friends, stands beside the car at Reynolds' window, his hand held out for money.

TRAIN BOY  
(to Reynolds)  
Money.

Reynolds looks to the kid.

Eric watches the train pass, watching the machine guns on its roof.

TRAIN BOY (CONT'D)  
You gotta give me money for telling you  
about the train's coming.

REYNOLDS  
I ain't got no money.

The train is inconceivably long and moves slow. It feels to Eric and Reynolds that they are sitting at this crossing for an uncomfortably long time.

The Aboriginal boy keeps up his demands for money. He moves round the front of the car to Eric's window.

TRAIN BOY  
(to Eric)  
You gotta give me money for telling you  
about the train's coming.

Eric ignores him, watching the train.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TRAIN BOY (CONT'D)

Friend. You gotta give me money.

Eric ignores the kid. He looks over his shoulder to survey the street behind them. Nothing. Emptiness and heat haze. He turns back.

TRAIN BOY (CONT'D)

Give me money for telling you about the train's coming.

The train's last carriages finally heave by.

With the little Aboriginal kid still wanting his money, Eric puts the Commodore in gear and rolls it slowly across the tracks.

Eric picks up the speed, pulling away, leaving the kid and his friends behind them in the heat and the nowhere.

**EXT. DESERT - DAY**

The Commodore growls over bitumen through the scrub plain. Lone birds in the sky scour the ground for food, squawking something that sounds like pain.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Hot. Dusty. Dry.

Wind races through the broken passenger window. Reynolds is buffeted by it.

Eric watches the road from behind his shades.

He stays looking straight ahead, unreadable, as they head towards the hills that loom heavy.

**EXT. OPEN-CUT MINE - DAY**

Eric stands on the rim of a long abandoned giant open-cut mine. It's a gigantic tiered pit of scorched ground and devastation hundreds of metres deep and stretching for miles, earth gouged and raped and left for dead.

Eric stares across it to the horizon, expressionless behind his sunglasses.

Reynolds heads back towards the car, zipping his fly and wiping his hands on his shirt.

Eric continues his gaze a few moments longer then turns back to the car.



**EXT. FUEL STATION - DAY**

The Commodore pulls into a roadside fuel station in a town of no more than three buildings. Hardly a town at all - more a couple of people huddled together for survival.

The station is two pumps and a concrete shack with barred and tinted windows.

Eric pulls the Commodore up beside one of the pumps.

He gets out.

Eric heads for the shack.

He leans in to the slot in the heavily fortified main window. He can barely see inside. It's dark and dirty.

ERIC  
Hello?

VOICE  
How much you want?

ERIC  
Fifty.

VOICE  
Fifty US?

ERIC  
Fifty Australian.

VOICE  
US dollars only.

ERIC  
I'm out of US.

VOICE  
Take it or leave it.

ERIC  
What's wrong with Australian money?

VOICE  
Take it or leave it.

ERIC  
It's paper. It's worthless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE

Nothing's worth anything, mate, so  
it's worth whatever I say it is.

Eric pulls a single US note from his pocket and slaps it up  
against the filthy window for the voice to see.

ERIC

It's a piece of fuckin paper.

VOICE

Yeah, and a diamond's a piece of fuckin  
rock. Take it or leave it.

Reynolds appears beside Eric at the window.

REYNOLDS

(through the window)  
How much do you need?

VOICE

Fifty US.

Reynolds pulls a healthy roll from his pocket, peels a fifty and  
slides it through the slot.

Eric watches him, surprised to see him with so much money, surprised  
he'd assumed he'd have none.

REYNOLDS

(through slot)  
Have you got any .38 in there?

VOICE

Maybe.

Reynolds slides another note through the slot.

REYNOLDS

I need a box.

Reynolds looks out at the desert, deliberately avoiding eye contact  
with Eric.

An awkward moment passes before the goods tray rattles and slides  
open. In it is a box of .38 ammunition and some change. Reynolds  
slips the change in his pocket, grabs his box and walks back to the  
car.

He gets in and shuts the door.

Eric walks to the pump. He unscrews the Commodore's fuel cap. It's  
rusty and stuck. It takes some twisting to remove.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He pulls the nozzle from the pump. This isn't regular petrol being pumped. It's something else. Eric has to screw the nozzle's plastic casing over the Commodore's fuel hole - like a garden hose over a tap.

The gas starts filling with a hissing sound.

Eric peers inside the car. Reynolds is in the passenger seat loading .38 into his handgun.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - EVENING**

Sunset. Peach and purple sky.

Eric sits, poking a new fire with a stick.

Reynolds sits by the fire. He picks his nose and flicks the snot into the scrub.

REYNOLDS

She said in the old days it would take us about eight hours to get there, but it might take longer now coz a bunch of those old roads ain't there no more or at least they're all bad now so you can't drive fast on 'em.

Eric stares at the fire.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

She said about eight hours. She said about eight to nine hours in the old days. She wasn't sure if it was eight or nine. She seemed a bit confused about it. And the roads are all bad now anyway.

ERIC

Why would he still be there?

REYNOLDS

He has to wait two weeks for someone. There's a man he's meeting there and it's gonna take two weeks.

ERIC

You know this? Or this is what he told you?

REYNOLDS

Huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERIC

You should be clear now your brother  
isn't someone you can trust.

Reynolds doesn't respond. Eric has re-kindled in him the pain he  
felt the night before. Reynolds sits in silence, staring into the  
fire.

ERIC (CONT'D)

So is it something you know or is it  
just something he said?

Pause. Reynolds in an attempt at defiance -

REYNOLDS

It's both those things.

Eric rips the lid from a small tin of food on the dirt beside him.  
He spoons its contents into his mouth with the blade from a pocket  
knife.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

You work in the mines?

Pause.

ERIC

No.

REYNOLDS

What do you do then?

Eric looks at him, contemplating whether he wants to engage in  
small-talk.

ERIC

I was a farmer.

He turns back to the fire.

ERIC (CONT'D)

And now I'm here.

REYNOLDS

How come you know how to shoot so  
good?

Silence.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Were you in the army?

More silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Eric tosses his empty food tin into the flames.

Reynolds seems used to the idea of people not engaging. He doesn't press. He stares into the fire a long while, wearing his thinking openly.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

I'm tryin' to stop thinking about that little boy who died, but I can't.

ERIC

You shouldn't.

REYNOLDS

But I can't.

ERIC

You shouldn't stop thinking about him... You should never stop thinking about a life you've taken. It's the price you pay for taking it.

Eric stares into the flames, then pulls his blanket over him and lies back.

He stares into the sky a moment, then closes his eyes, leaving Reynolds to think what he needs to think.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - MORNING**

Dawn. Reynolds sits up on the dirt beside the remains of the extinguished fire. He rubs his eyes. His hair's a mess.

Eric sleeps.

Reynolds stands. He looks down at Eric and then around into the bush. He lifts his blanket off the dirt, quietly, gently, then creeps off into the scrub.

Eric sleeps.

**EXT. SCRUB - MORNING**

Reynolds treads lightly through the scrubland. He wraps his blanket around his shoulders.

He glances back towards the campsite.

He keeps walking. He seems nervous, looking for something. He glances back again.

**EXT. CAMPSITE - MORNING**

Eric lies serene. Insect noise. A bird squawks somewhere in the far distance.

And then the barrel of a high-powered automatic rifle appears above his head.

His eyes open.

VOICE (O.S.)  
That's the way. Let's start with the eyelids.

We see two men standing over him. Cops in dirty paramilitary wear. One covers Eric with an M-4.

COP 1  
I want you to roll over on your front and put your hands behind your back. Do it slow.

Eric keeps watching him, not moving at all.

COP 1 (CONT'D)  
And do it now.

Eric rolls over onto his front.

The cop steps over to him, kicking empty food tins out of the way with his boot.

COP 1 (CONT'D)  
You shoulda given those Abo kids some money.

**EXT. SCRUB - MORNING**

Reynolds' ears prick. He is squatting under the tree, pants around his ankles, shitting.

Through the scrub he can see figures moving. He can make out Eric, hands flex-cuffed behind his back, being lifted off the ground and led from the campsite.

**INT. POLICE VEHICLE - DAY**

Eric is in the back of a police vehicle as it passes through the gates of a police complex.

One guard at the gate with a loose slung M-4 watches him as they pass, then follows the car to the compound.

**EXT. POLICE COMPOUND - DAY**

The vehicle enters a loosely fortified police compound - a squat, concrete building flimsily surrounded by a tall wire fence.

**INT. POLICE COMPOUND - DAY**

Eric stands before an eye-reading machine having his eyeballs scanned. The interior of this building, this office, feels worn around the edges. A once modern institutional police building now without maintenance, but which still has the functioning remnants of modern technology.

And it feels quiet. It would once have been moving with cops, administrative employees, people - but now it's being run by a tiny handful of stretched and anxious guys, only two or three. The last remaining fragments of governmental order.

The cop swabs the inside of Eric's mouth. He takes the mouth swab to the counter and plastic-bags it.

COP 1

Sit in that chair.

Eric sits in a chair against the wall. He cooperates with all instructions. He offers no resistance.

COP 1 (CONT'D)

When are you gonna say something, cunt?

ERIC

What do you want me to say?

COP 1

It's over. It's over for you.

ERIC

I know that.

COP 1

That's good that you know that.

ERIC

Do you know it too?

COP 1

I know it, champ. I told you it.

ERIC

Do you know it's over for you too?

The cop looks across coldly at Eric.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERIC (CONT'D)

Whatever you think is over for me was over a long time ago. I'm asking you about you. Do you know it's over for you too?

COP 1

Is that meant to be a threat? Are you threatening me?

ERIC

No. A threat means there's somewhere left to go.

Eric looks at him, expressionless.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I murdered my wife... I followed her to a man's house and I watched him put his fingers inside her and so I killed them both and no one ever came after me. Ten years ago.

Eric watches the cop for a reaction. He doesn't get one.

ERIC (CONT'D)

That hurt me. I never had to explain myself. I never had to lie to anyone. I never had to confess to anyone. I didn't need to run and hide. I buried them in a hole and I went home. Ten years ago. And no one came after me. And that hurt me more than having my heart broken - was knowing it didn't matter. Knowing you can do something like that and no one comes after you. You can do a thing like I did and it should really mean something, but it doesn't. It just doesn't matter anymore... That's what hurt me.

COP 1

Well, champ, back in Abo town you went and did the one thing that really matters to us. Now you can do all the lying and confessing you want.

ERIC

What are you going to do with me?

COP 1

You're going to Sydney.

ERIC

Why?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

COP 1

Because that's the way it works. You get sent to Sydney.

ERIC

Why don't you just shoot me?

COP 1

I'd find that enjoyable.

ERIC

Then why don't you do it? That's what everyone else is doing.

COP 1

Because us sending you to Sydney tells Sydney there's some reason to keep paying us what they pay us. If we just shot every idiot we wanted to shoot, then pretty soon they'd start wondering what the fuck we're doing out here. I personally don't care what happens to you. I don't care if you get to Sydney and get let off or bribe your way out or whatever happens there these days. I don't give a fuck. I'm doing this for me.

ERIC

You're doing what for you?

The cop ignores him. He's said too much already.

ERIC (CONT'D)

You're doing what for you? What is this job you do?

Silence. Eric watches the cop.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Do you think when cavemen were rubbing sticks together, or the Romans were building their monuments to themselves, they had a sense that everything was moving forward, everything was improving?... Because I remember having that feeling once. It's just a feeling of possibility, you know what I mean? It's a feeling of something like future... That's a powerful feeling. Do you know what I'm talking about?

Eric leaves a space for the cop to answer, but then doesn't seem to notice or care when he doesn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ERIC (CONT'D)  
This now doesn't feel like that. This  
doesn't feel anything like possibility  
anymore.

Eric sits wistfully on this.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
You don't feel that?

COP 1  
Mate, makes no difference to me. I don't  
care what direction things are moving. What  
the fuck are you even talking about? So  
long as I've got somewhere to be everyday  
is all I need to think about.

Eric thinks about this a moment, his eyes stay pinned and desolate  
on the cop.

ERIC  
I tried that.

He thinks some more. Then -

ERIC (CONT'D)  
Do you have kids?

The cop ignores him. His blood is beginning to quietly boil.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
I'm guessing you do.

The cop looks like he's ready hurt Eric.

And then they hear GUNSHOTS coming from somewhere else in the  
building. Their ears prick.

The cop goes for his gun which is on his utility belt, draped over a  
chair across the room.

Before he can remove it from its holster, Reynolds stumbles in and  
shoots the cop dead.

Reynolds looks around coursing with naive excitement.

REYNOLDS  
Is that it?

Reynolds stands, eyes wide, like a little kid just fallen off his  
bike and can't believe he's not hurt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
That was really easy.

He goes to the dead cop's belt and removes the keys to Eric's handcuffs.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
Is that it? Was there only three of them?

Eric nods, vaguely stunned.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
That was so easy. I thought it was gonna be way more harder.

Eric, watches Reynolds.

**INT. POLICE COMPOUND - DAY**

Eric and Reynolds walk through the front reception area of the compound.

Reynolds leads the way, still coursing with adrenaline, past the two blasted bodies of the other cops.

As they pass -

REYNOLDS  
(pointing, giddy)  
These two were just standing there.

**EXT. POLICE COMPOUND - DAY**

And then they step out into the light towards the Commodore, parked askew out front of the building with its drivers door hanging open.

The compound's front gate lies busted off its hinges behind the car on the dirt.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Driving. A truck tears past the Commodore, heading in the opposite direction on the flat and barren highway.

They drive, not speaking, strangely contemplative, lost in their individual thoughts.

Then Reynolds starts looking round, trying to get a fix on where they are, looking for familiar landmarks. It's difficult in this dry wasteland. It's farming land, horribly drought-stricken, dead trees and endless brown.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REYNOLDS

I'm pretty sure we need to turn somewhere  
up here on the left.

They drive further. Reynolds watches the roadside. Wind and dust  
tear in through the windshield.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

Here it is. Up here.

The Commodore approaches a small rusted sign.

It reads 'CARLOON'.

Eric takes the Commodore off the highway and onto a smaller sealed  
road heading away into the scrub.

**EXT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric and Reynolds stand beside the car, parked by the side of the  
road behind a small clump of trees.

It's late afternoon. The sun is low in the sky.

Reynolds points to a small house perched on a gentle hill slope in  
the distance.

REYNOLDS

You take the little dirt road that's about  
another mile up the way here and it leads  
straight up there.

ERIC

Are they alone up there?

REYNOLDS

For now they are. Until them other people  
arrive, but that ain't gonna be for another  
week, I guess. And there'll be Gordon up  
there too who's the guy whose house it is,  
but he's really old.

ERIC

You know all this.

Reynolds looks straight ahead. Defiant.

REYNOLDS

I know it.

Eric looks up at the house a little while longer, thinking. He wants  
to get up there right away, but knows this isn't wise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERIC

We're gonna find somewhere to pitch down.  
It's better we go up there at dawn.  
There'll be less trouble at dawn.

Eric climbs back behind the wheel of the Commodore.

Reynolds stays looking up at the house, at his brother, at his future - whatever it is.

Eric watches Reynolds, like he knows what he's thinking.

**INT. COMMODORE - NIGHT**

Reynolds sits behind the wheel of the stationary car, staring into the surrounding black.

He's thinking again.

The car radio is on quietly. The barely tuned, barely discernible crackle of a pop song (something like 'Don't Cha' by The Pussycat Dolls) from some distant, still functioning radio station.

He looks like his thinking is heavy, but then he sings along to the last chorus of the song, like there's been a shift, like he's settled on something.

He switches off the radio and gets out of the car.

**EXT. SCRUB LAND - NIGHT**

Eric is already lying on his side by a small dwindling fire, his back to Reynolds.

Reynolds sits at the fire. He looks around for a stick within reach, finds one, pokes the fire with it.

REYNOLDS

I'm gonna kill him.

Eric's eyes open.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

I'm gonna kill Henry.

Reynolds stays sitting, staring into the fire.

Eric lies still, eyes open.

A few moments pass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)

There's money up there too we could take  
if we wanted.

ERIC

Go to sleep.

Reynolds stares into the fire a while longer, thinking.

He then lies down and shuts his eyes.

Eric lies still, eyes open.

And then they shut.

**EXT. SCRUB LAND - PRE-DAWN**

The sky is pre-dawn purple.

Reynolds kicks dirt on the dead, smoking fire.

Eric ties his shoelaces.

They carry their meagre supplies to the Commodore and dump them in  
the back seat.

Neither speak.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAWN**

The sun begins to rise and the sky pinkens.

Eric drives.

Reynolds sits beside him, wearing his big specs.

Both watch the road ahead in silence.

**EXT. ROAD - DAWN**

The Commodore leaves the road and heads up a long dirt drive.

The drive is rocky and lined either side by wire fence. Few if any  
trees.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAWN**

Neither speak.

The ride is dusty and rough.

The house appears in the distance. All seems quiet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And Eric can now see his Falcon out front.

**EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAWN**

Eric pulls the Commodore to a stop a good hundred metres from the house.

He kills the engine.

**INT. COMMODORE - DAY**

Eric looks ahead to his Falcon and the house. A big beautiful black HORSE is tethered to its front porch.

Eric looks over at Reynolds beside him, fiddling with his gun. He seems nervous, lost in his own world.

Eric opens his door.

**EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAWN**

Eric and Reynolds climb out of the car.

Eric looks over to Reynolds across the Commodore's roof and motions 'shhh'. He quietly presses his door shut. Reynolds does the same.

Eric checks his handgun's safety and shoves it down the front of his pants.

He then starts towards the house.

Reynolds follows close behind, clutching his handgun.

They make the long walk towards the house, their feet crunching anxiously in the dirt.

Between them and the house sits Eric's Falcon, some fifty metres from the front porch.

They approach it. Eric runs his hand along its bonnet. He reaches the driver's door and looks inside.

The keys are hanging from the ignition.

Eric quietly opens the car door. He stops and looks over at Reynolds, a few yards behind him.

Reynolds watches him back, suddenly confused.

Eric walks back to meet him.

Reynolds is in a state of quiet panic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He speaks quietly, but not quietly enough.

REYNOLDS  
What are you doing?

Eric places his hand over Reynolds' mouth.

ERIC  
(whispering)  
I'm leaving.

Reynolds pulls Eric's hand away. He's quiet, but still not quiet enough.

REYNOLDS  
Ain't you gonna help me?

Eric backs away from Reynolds and his noise.

ERIC  
I got what I came for.

Eric turns and heads back to the Falcon.

He climbs behind the wheel.

**I/E. ERIC'S FALCON - DAWN**

Eric looks up again at Reynolds who hasn't moved from his spot on the dirt, clutching his guns.

Eric slips the car into neutral and, with one foot still on the ground, he gives it a push.

The Falcon begins to roll, gravel crackling underneath.

Eric pulls the door shut gently.

Reynolds watches him, seemingly terrified, as the car rolls past, back down the drive.

As Eric steers the rolling car away, he looks in his rearview.

Reynolds watches him, abandoned, and then turns and continues his walk towards the house.

Eric rolls a few feet further and then brakes the Falcon.

He sits for a brief moment, watching Reynolds' uncertain lope.

ERIC  
(to himself)  
Goddammit.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

He opens the Falcon's door.

**EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAWN**

Eric steps out of the car and walks quickly after Reynolds, breaking into a half-jog every few steps. He pulls his pistol from his pants.

He makes a hissing noise to catch Reynolds' attention.

Reynolds turns. He stops and smiles.

Eric holds his finger up - no talking.

They walk the last few feet towards the front porch together.

Reynolds is in front. As Eric passes the big horse tied to the veranda post, he looks into its black doleful eyes. Everything feels to be moving in slow motion.

Up on the front porch, Reynolds reaches for the handle to the front door.

Eric grabs his shoulder and pulls him back. He hand-motions for them both to head round the side of the house.

Eric leads the way, treading quickly but quietly.

They round the corner and come upon a venetian window.

Eric halts Reynolds and then darts his head for a look inside the room.

Eric motions to Reynolds that they must duck and proceed beneath the window's sill. They do so.

They round the next corner to the rear of the house.

Eric stops Reynolds at the back door, motions for him to wait.

Eric creeps over to a back window and glances inside. He pulls back. He glances again, double-checking, then retreats to the back door.

He hand-signals to Reynolds: two in the side room, two in the back room. He points to himself and then the back room, then to Reynolds and then the side room - 'I'll take the back, you take the side.'

He leans in close to Reynolds.

ERIC

(whispers)

No shooting. Bring them into the living room. Understand?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Reynolds nods.

Eric leads the way to the back door.

He lifts the latch to the fly-screen door and pulls it open delicately. The back door is open, inches ajar. Eric nudges it open gently.

**INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY**

They step inside the house softly. Eric lets Reynolds enter and then eases the door closed.

Eric and Reynolds look at each other. Reynolds seems nervous. They move off separate directions.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / BEDROOM 1 - DAY**

The door to the bedroom is nudged open by the barrel of Eric's handgun. It swings open silently. Eric steps inside.

Two men are asleep on single beds. It's Archie and Caleb.

Eric pulls his handgun from his pants, shotgun in his other hand.

He steps across the room to Caleb's bed and slowly brings the handgun's barrel to rest against his throat.

Caleb wakes with a start.

CALEB

Fuckin -

Archie wakes. Eric raises the handgun directly at him.

ERIC

(quietly)

Don't move and don't talk.

CALEB

Who the fuck -

Short and sharp, Eric clocks Caleb on the forehead with the butt of his gun.

ERIC

(to Caleb)

What'd I just say about not talking?

(to Archie)

You. Throw the blanket off.

Archie throws his bed covers down. He's wearing underpants.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ERIC (CONT'D)  
(to Caleb)  
Now you. Raise your head off the pillow.  
Slow.

Caleb lifts himself up slowly.

Eric reaches behind his head and pulls the pillow away. A handgun lies underneath it. Eric reaches down and sweeps the handgun off the bed.

It CLATTERS on the floor.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / BEDROOM 2 - DAY**

Reynolds is startled by the SOUND from the other bedroom.

He stands timidly in the room, his gun pointed at the sleeping figures of Henry in one bed and an old man, GORDON, in another.

REYNOLDS  
(meekly)  
Henry.

No response. Henry snores.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
(louder)  
Henry. Wake up.

Still no response.

REYNOLDS (CONT'D)  
(louder)  
Henry, wake up.

Henry stirs in his bed and looks up over the covers at his brother who is pointing a gun at him.

HENRY  
(groggy)  
Rey?

REYNOLDS  
You gotta get up.

HENRY  
What the fuck?

REYNOLDS  
You gotta get up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

What are you doing here?

Gordon grunts awake in his bed.

REYNOLDS

You too, Gordon. You gotta get up. You both gotta get up outta bed.

Henry sits up in bed, wondering if he's still dreaming.

HENRY

What are you doing? Stop pointing that thing at me.

REYNOLDS

Don't make me keep saying it that you gotta get up outta bed.

Gordon has swung himself up to be sitting on the edge of his bed, languidly rubbing his eyes. He's in pyjamas, searching the floor with his feet for his slippers. He's an old man. He doesn't seem to think it's strange that Reynolds is standing in the room brandishing a gun.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Eric leads Caleb and Archie into the living room at gunpoint. Caleb's in boxer shorts, Archie in underpants.

ERIC

Sit.

Both men know not to speak. They sit.

Eric wonders where the hell Reynolds is. He peers out towards the other bedroom.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Sit on your hands.

Caleb and Archie sit on their hands.

Eric takes a few steps back for a better view into Henry's bedroom. He can just make out the edge of Reynolds' back in the doorway.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(to Reynolds)

What's going on in there?

**INT. FARM HOUSE / BEDROOM 2 - DAY**

Reynolds gets anxious with Henry, who sits defiantly in bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REYNOLDS  
See, Henry? You gotta get up outta bed.

HENRY  
Who's in there?

Reynolds turns to yell out the door.

REYNOLDS  
(to Eric)  
He won't get up outta bed.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Eric strains to see into the bedroom while keeping an eye on Caleb and Archie.

ERIC  
Get him out here. Stick the gun in his face.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / BEDROOM 2 - DAY**

Reynolds turns back to Henry who is now holding a handgun of his own and pointing it at him.

Gordon is sitting on the edge of the bed, his slippers on, strangely detached and uninterested.

HENRY  
Put the gun down, Rey.

REYNOLDS  
You put yours down.

HENRY  
Put it down, Rey. I'm warning you. Why are you doing this?

ERIC (O.S.)  
What's going on?

REYNOLDS  
Why did you leave me there?

HENRY  
Leave you where?

REYNOLDS  
You know where. On the road when I got shot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

We thought you was dead.

REYNOLDS

But I wasn't dead and you left me there.

HENRY

I thought you was dead. Now put the gun down!

REYNOLDS

You put yours down!

Reynolds' voice shakes.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Eric's getting anxious. This isn't how this situation was supposed to play.

ERIC

(yells)

What's going on in there?

Archie shifts in his seat.

ARCHIE

I gotta piss real bad.

ERIC

Don't you fuckin move.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / BEDROOM 2 - DAY**

Reynolds is visibly upset now.

REYNOLDS

I thought you was my brother.

HENRY

I am your brother. Now put the fuckin gun down.

REYNOLDS

I thought you was my brother.

HENRY

Put the fuckin gun down, Rey!

REYNOLDS

I thought you was my brother.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY

If you don't put it down now, I'm gonna shoot you. I ain't lyin'.

REYNOLDS

(softer)

I thought you was my brother.

Reynolds is quietly distraught. He accidentally squeezes the trigger, scaring himself.

The bullet smacks into the wall beside Henry's head.

A split second - Reynolds looks frightened, apologetic.

Henry fires, hitting Reynolds square between the eyes. Reynolds drops hard to the ground.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY**

At the sound of the blast from the other room, Eric makes a snap decision.

He shoots Caleb and Archie quick-fire - CRACK CRACK - straight in their foreheads with his handgun. They die instantly.

Eric then moves quickly across the room and stands, back to the wall, outside Henry's bedroom.

Reynolds has fallen backwards, half out the doorway into the hall. He lies face-up, head trauma, dead near Eric's feet.

A GUN BLAST cracks, splintering wood from the door frame beside Eric's head.

Eric hits the floor, expecting a new barrage.

It doesn't come.

And then, Henry's handgun clatters onto the hall floor. Henry has thrown it out.

Eric stands. He proceeds warily to the bedroom door. He creeps around the corner, gun raised.

He enters the room.

**INT. FARM HOUSE / BEDROOM 2 - DAY**

Henry is still sitting on the bed, looking at the corpse of his brother. He's crying and angry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gordon is still sitting on the edge of his bed. The fact he still hasn't moved or even changed his expression indicates he's suffering dementia of some kind.

HENRY  
What did you do to my brother?

Eric flinches.

HENRY (CONT'D)  
What did you do to my brother?!

Eric doesn't know what to say.

Henry gets angrier.

HENRY (CONT'D)  
What did you do to my fuckin brother!?

Eric stands, speechless, gun raised. What did he do to this guy's brother? Did he do anything?

HENRY (CONT'D)  
Answer me. What did you do to him?!

ERIC  
I didn't do anything.

Henry is getting enraged.

HENRY  
Yeah, you did.

He lifts himself out of bed. He moves towards Eric.

HENRY (CONT'D)  
What did you do to him!?

Eric squeezes the trigger, shooting Henry in the chest.

Henry drops with a thud of old mattress springs back onto the bed - then silence.

Eric remains calm, but his head is swimming.

Henry lies with his head against the headboard - either dead or seconds from it - staring back at Eric.

Eric swings the gun over to Gordon, sitting on the edge of his bed, now looking straight at Eric. The two men watch each other for a moment. Gordon is somewhere else.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

Eric takes a breath and lowers his gun, taking stock of the mess all around him.

**EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY**

Eric walks down off the front veranda, gun by his side.

The big, black horse is still by the veranda - unmoved and unchanged. He runs his hand down its face.

He walks to his Falcon, reaches in the driver's side and opens the door.

He climbs behind the wheel.

**INT. FALCON - DAY**

He starts the engine. The car growls to life and purrs.

He sits a moment and then puts it in gear.

The car moves off.

Eric looks wounded at the battered wreck of the Commodore as he passes.

**EXT. ROAD - DAY**

Eric drives, alone and drained.

He drives a long way.

Landscapes change.

He passes through decrepit towns.

He passes a wrecked car lying on its roof in the desert by the road. A body lies decomposing beside it.

**EXT. HILL - DAY**

The sun is close to setting. Eric has been driving all day.

He takes the Falcon up a gentle grassy hill.

The hill is treeless bar one ancient eucalypt perched on its crest.

**INT. FALCON - DAY**

Eric steers the car up the hill.

This is the tree and the hill from the opening still image. The tree under which Eric once sat happy.

**EXT. HILL - DAY**

The Falcon follows the vague dirt track and comes to a stop only metres from the tree.

Its engine switches off.

It sits there a moment in eerie silence. A light breeze shakes the tree's leaves.

**I/E. FALCON - DAY**

Eric sits at the wheel, contemplative, looking out over the fields below.

These fields, the hill itself, are much drier and browner than the semi-verdant still photograph from the opening.

Eric climbs out of the car and goes to the trunk.

He opens it and looks inside.

He leans in and pulls out a shovel.

He carries the shovel over to the tree.

He tosses the shovel beneath the tree and moves back to the trunk of the car.

He reaches in and gently lifts out the lifeless body of a BROWN DOG.

He cradles it in his arms and walks it gently over to the tree.

Eric places the dog down softly beneath the tree and sits.

He sits beneath the tree, between dog and shovel, and looks out at the view. He looks like he's reached the end of a road. He looks like he has no idea where he might go after this place. He looks like he might cry.

He gently strokes the dead dog's scruff.

He stands.

He picks the shovel off the ground and drives it into the earth and digs.

**THE END.**