

U-Turn

(Stray Dogs)

Screenplay by
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and

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NOTE: THE HARD COPY OF THIS SCRIPT CONTAINED SCENE NUMBERS AND SOME "OMITTED" SLUGS. THEY HAVE BEEN REMOVED FOR THIS SOFT COPY.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE DESERT SOUTHWEST - DAY

BEGIN TITLES OVER:

It is early morning and already hot. INSECTS drone, crackle, and scurry for shade. PRAIRIE DOGS burrow to escape the sun. We can see the heat shimmering off the surface of the Earth.

On a dusty highway, a pair of VULTURES dine on a dead coyote. One of them snags an intestine and tugs a few feet of it out of the carcass.

In the distance, where a long, dusty road meets the horizon, a small shape appears -- a Sixty-four-and-a-half Mustang convertible, its top down. Its candy-apple red burns like a brilliant fireball under the sun. As the car drifts closer, we see steam escaping from under the hood. Sammi Smith's "Please Help Me Get Through The Night" plays on the car's radio.

INT. BOBBY COOPER'S MUSTANG - DAY

At the wheel, ignoring impending disaster, BOBBY COOPER, young, good-looking, fiddles with the RADIO dial, annoyed only to find country stations. He's been driving since noon yesterday and it shows -- along with a heavily-bandaged left hand resting on the steering wheel. He finds something by Pearl Jam or Smashing Pumpkins and he cranks it. He pops a Percodan with his good hand as, in the shimmering distance ahead, he sees black shapes in the road and lays on the horn.

BOBBY

Get off the goddamn road!

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

As the MUSTANG powers by, the VULTURES move off the shoulder, silently watching.

INT. MUSTANG - DAY

The RADIO blares as BOBBY fights to stay awake. His attention is caught by blue and red lights flashing in the oncoming lane. He sits up as the POLICE CAR (SHERIFF POTTER inside) closes quickly. The SIREN starts faintly, then SCREAMS as the cruiser roars past at speed.

BOBBY

Fuck you!

There is a loud pop from the front of the Mustang and a thick cloud of steam now pours from the hood. The temperature gauge now starts rising.

BOBBY

No!...Not now!...Shit!

A couple of SEMIS roar past in the opposite direction, buffetting the Mustang with their air waves.

EXT. FORK IN THE ROAD - DAY

The car rolls into a fork in the road, limping with the droop of an animal that won't make another hundred yards.

One sign on the larger road says "GLOBE" is 29 miles away. The other sign, on the lesser road, tells us "SUPERIOR" is only 2 miles. A third sign confirms his destiny with "Gas, Food, 1 Mile."

BOBBY seems to have no choice. He aims the car down the lesser road towards "Superior, Arizona."

EXT. OUTSKIRTS SUPERIOR - DAY

The car rattles on its last legs, as BOBBY mutters incantations, noticing a old, ghostlike MINING COMPANY at the base of the mountains overlooking the TOWN. It's deserted now, no one visible, the gates shut, but in its vast, dark bulk, we sense the ancient richness and power of this town. Bobby moves on.

EXT. HARLIN'S GARAGE - DAY

Down the road from the MINING COMPANY, BOBBY'S CAR pulls into a small GAS STATION, made of weather-beaten wood, its windows long since dusted over. The pumps themselves look to have been manufactured in the early fifties. Above the station is a sign so faded it's barely readable: HARLIN'S.

Bobby gets out of the car and with great care, favoring his bandaged left hand which seems to give him a great deal of pain, he opens the hood. A plume of steam hits him in the face.

BOBBY

Oh shit!

Bobby looks around for someone, anyone. After a few moments he reaches into the car and blows the horn. He waits, then blows it again. From out of the station walks DARRELL - a slow-looking man in coveralls caked with grease and dirty. He looks the part of a yokel.

BOBBY

You Harlin?

DARRELL

Nope. Darrell.

BOBBY

Harlin around?

DARRELL

He's up at the Look Out.

Darrell points a scraggly finger at a plateau in the distance.

BOBBY

Will he be back soon?

DARRELL

Doubt it. He's dead. The Look Out's a cemetery.

BOBBY

You own this place?

DARRELL

Yep.

BOBBY

Then why do you call it Harlin's?

DARRELL

'Cause Harlin used to own it.

BOBBY

But he's dead.

DARRELL

So?

Bobby is confused, but chooses to drop the matter.

BOBBY

You want to take a look at my car? I think the radiator hose is--

DARRELL

Damn. Gonna be another hot one today. Sometimes I don't even want to get out of bed. Course don't want to get out for the cold one's neither. Then of course the clouds come in...

Darrell mops his brow with a greasy rag. It doesn't so much wipe the sweat as it does streak his forehead with dirt.

BOBBY

Look, Harlin, I've got places to be.

DARRELL

Darrell--

BOBBY

OK. Darrell... Could you just take a look at my radiator hose. It's busted.

Darrell is clearly upset at being cut off. He leans into the car and looks at the engine.

BOBBY

So?

DARRELL

It's your radiator hose. It's busted.

BOBBY

I know it's busted. What did I just tell you?

DARRELL

Well, you know so much why don't you just fix it yourself?

BOBBY

If I could do you think I'd be standing here wasting my time. Can you fix it, or do I have to go somewhere else?

DARRELL

Somewhere else? Mister, somewhere else is fifty miles from here. Only other gas station down in town closed 3 years ago when the mine got shut...

BOBBY

Okay, I'm stuck. You happy? Now can you fix it, or not?

DARRELL

Yeah, I can fix it.

BOBBY

Great!

DARRELL

Gotta run over to the yard and see if I can find a hose like this one, or close enough. Gonna take time.

BOBBY

How much time?

DARRELL

Time.

BOBBY (rewinds his watch)

What time is it now?

DARRELL

Twenty-after-ten.

BOBBY

Jesus. Twenty-after-ten and it must be ninety already.

DARRELL

Ninety-two. Course half hour from now

might be seventy-two. These clouds move around a lot.

Bobby wipes the bandaged hand across his forehead.

DARRELL

What happened to your hand?

Self-consciously Bobby quickly drops his hand to his side.

BOBBY

Accident.

DARRELL

You got to be more careful. Hands is important. Let me show you something. When I was a kid, now I don't know if you can still see it, but I gashed my fingers in a lawnmower.

BOBBY

I'm very interested in this but is there someplace...

DARRELL

Diner up a piece. Not much, but us simple folk like it.

BOBBY

I'll be back in a couple of hours. And be careful with her, will you?

Darrell slams down the hood.

DARRELL

Just a car.

Bobby reaches into the car, pulls out a small ugly gym bag which he slings onto his shoulder and moves to the trunk, pops it open.

BOBBY

It's not just a car. It's a sixty-four and half Mustang convertible. That's the difference between you and me, and why you live here and I'm just passing through.

The trunk lid rises in the air, partially blocking Bobby from Darrell, acting as a partition between them.

BOBBY

Now do you mind? I got to get some stuff out of the trunk.

He throws the car key to Darrell who takes the hint, spits grotesquely into the dirt, scratches his nuts, and walks back to the shack.

Concealed by the trunk lid, Bobby pulls out a GUN (a .9mm black Baretta), wrapped in a t-shirt, from the top of the bag. Perhaps we see a flash of green money, lots of it. Sports pages and betting sheets are piled inside. With a look around, Bobby takes the gun and stashes it underneath the rubber mat in the trunk. Briefly we notice a towing ROPE under the mat. There is a small travel bag, from which he peels a fresh bottle of Percodan, quickly taking two, as well as the sports page.

INT. HARLIN'S GARAGE - DAY

DARRELL watches out of the darkened office through the front window, as BOBBY slams the trunk and starts walking down the road, with the bag on his shoulder.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - LATER

BOBBY walks along a dusty patch of road into town past a sign saying "SUPERIOR - HOME OF THE GOLDEN DOOR RETIREMENT COMMUNITY." As he walks on, a pair of MOTORCYCLERS roar past on their Harleys blanketing him in a cloud of DUST. He shouts after them, but his words are lost under the whine of the cycle engines.

EXT. SUPERIOR MAIN STREET - DAY

BOBBY hits town, such as it is: The Freeway left here a few years back. There are only a few little stores: A general store, a catalog outlet, a post office that doubles as a bus depot. All of them built for the desert heat. The busiest spot in town seems to be the truckstop/diner with a few 18 wheelers parked outside it.

At the corner of one street sits an old BLIND MAN dressed in raggedy clothes, perhaps an Indian. His SEEING-EYE DOG lies next to him. He's talking to TWO OLD MEN, veterans perhaps, Indian or Spanish. They both have missing limbs and slide off with furtive alcoholic looks as Bobby passes. The Blind Man yells out in an American Indian accent.

BLIND MAN

Hey! You there!

BOBBY

You want something, old man?

BLIND MAN

Don't call me old man. Ain't you got no respect, boy?

BOBBY

You want something?

BLIND MAN

Yeah I want something. I want you to run over to that machine and get me a pop.

BOBBY

You can't do that yourself?

BLIND MAN

Hell no, I can't do that myself. I'm blind. Can't you see that?

BOBBY

I'm sorry, I didn't--

BLIND MAN

What'd you think I was doing out here with these glasses on? Sunnin' myself?

BOBBY

I don't know. I thought you were keeping the sun out of your eyes.

BLIND MAN

I ain't got no eyes. You want to see?

BOBBY

Christ no!

BLIND MAN

Lost my eyes in Vye-et-nam. Lost them fighting the commies. Fought the war and lost my eyes fightin' the commies just so you can come around here and make fun of me.

BOBBY

I said I was sorry.

BLIND MAN

Don't be sorry. Just run over there and get me my pop before I die of thirst.

BOBBY

Yeah, sure. You got change?

BLIND MAN

Change? You want my change? I fought the war and lost my eyes just so I could give you my change?

BOBBY

All right, old man. Christ.

Bobby walks across the street to a very old soda machine; it has bottles instead of cans. The blind man shouts to Bobby.

BLIND MAN

Get me a Dr. Peppa! I don't want no Colas. Colas ain't nothing but flavored water.

Bobby puts change in the machine and pulls out a bottle of Dr. Pepper. He starts back to the blind man.

BLIND MAN

Don't forget to open it for me. I can't be opening my own bottle.

BOBBY

Christ!

Bobby goes back to the machine and opens the bottle, then walks back to the old man who pours a splash on the ground.

BLIND MAN

A little for Mother Earth. I'm about fifty percent Indian, you know. To all our relations.

He takes a hearty swig of the soda.

BLIND MAN

Ah! Just what I needed! Want some?

The blind man holds the bottle out to Bobby. A string of saliva runs from his lips to the bottle's neck.

BOBBY

I'll pass.

Bobby reaches down and pets the old man's dog. Flies buzz around both the dog and the Blind Man.

BOBBY

I think you'd better give your pooch a sip. He looks sick.

BLIND MAN

That's 'cause he's dead.

Bobby jumps back.

BOBBY

Oh, Jesus.

BLIND MAN

I hope you wasn't pettin' him none, was you?

BOBBY

What the hell are you keeping a dead dog around for?

BLIND MAN

He's only just dead. What was I supposed to do with him? I can't take him away anywhere. And nobody wants to take him for me. Do you?

BOBBY

Hell no!

BLIND MAN

See. Ain't nothing I can do but keep him here beside me. That's where he belongs anyways. Me and Jesse, that's my dog, not anymore, but me and Jesse we been pals since the war when I lost my eyes. He was just a pup then... a companion that's loyal, that'll keep coming back to you no matter how much you kick him...I miss him. (as Bobby moves away) I'll see ya later, unless I come across something worse.

Bobby noticing a beautiful woman down the street, GRACE MCKENNA, compulsively turns and catches up to her. She is dressed better than the usual t-shirts and tank tops of this town -- perhaps a mail-ordered dress or a mother's hand-me-down. With her raven hair and caramel skin, it is obvious she is Native American. Her arms are full with an awkward package she can barely manage.

BOBBY

Can I give you a hand, beautiful?

GRACE

I'm just going to my car?

BOBBY

That's right on my way.

GRACE

My mother told me never to accept offers from strangers.

BOBBY

My name is Bobby. Now I'm not a stranger anymore. See how easy it is for us to get to know each other, beautiful?

GRACE

Do you have to call me that?

BOBBY

I don't know your real name.

GRACE

Maybe I don't want you to.

Grace stops walking.

BOBBY

Maybe, but if you didn't I think you would have kept on walking.

GRACE

You're pretty full of yourself, aren't you?

BOBBY

I like that about me, beautiful.

GRACE

It's Grace.

BOBBY

May I carry your package, Grace?

Grace hesitates, then gives the package to Bobby. He has trouble with it himself.

BOBBY

Jesus.

GRACE

You sure you can manage?

BOBBY

I got it.

GRACE

Do you want me to carry your pack for you?

Bobby blurts out emphatically.

BOBBY

No!

He catches himself, and softens a bit.

BOBBY

No, I've got it.

GRACE

What happened to your hand?

BOBBY

Accident.

GRACE

You should be more careful.

They start walking towards Grace's car.

GRACE

It's very nice of you to help me. That package is kind of heavy, and it's so hot.

BOBBY

No trouble at all, really.

They get to a car and Bobby puts down the package.

BOBBY

Wasn't nothing.

GRACE

Oh, this isn't my car. It's down a ways. I should have parked closer. I just didn't think it would be so heavy. I could drive up.

BOBBY

That's all right. I got it.

Bobby takes up the package and they begin walking again. The package seems to have gained weight.

GRACE

It's just new drapes and curtain rods. If I had known it was going to be so heavy I would have had them delivered up to the house.

Bobby struggles with the package. Sweat starts to sheet his face.

BOBBY (panting)
That a fact?

GRACE
I just got tired of looking at the old drapes. My mother made them. Had them long as I can remember. You ever seen something and just knew you had to have it?

BOBBY (straining)
Yes, I have.

GRACE
'Course they cost a little more than I should really be spending. But, damn it, I don't hardly ever do anything nice for myself. I deserve nice things.

BOBBY (can hardly talk)
I ... can't ... argue ...

They arrive at a JEEP SAHARA.

GRACE
This is it.

Bobby practically drops the package. He is covered with sweat.

GRACE
Thank you, Bobby.

BOBBY
You're welcome, Grace.

GRACE
You're not from around here, are you?

BOBBY
Why you say that? Just because I help a lady with her package?

GRACE
You don't have that dead look in your eyes like the only thing you live for is to get through the day.

BOBBY
I just drove in this morning.

GRACE
Drove into Superior? What for?

BOBBY

Didn't have a choice. My car overheated up the road.

GRACE

You're lucky you didn't break down in the desert. Day like today, you'd be dead in no time. When you leaving?

BOBBY

Not until my car's fixed. I don't know how long that's going to take.

GRACE

And here I've made you all hot and sweaty.

Grace steps to Bobby and places her hand against his chest. She rubs away some of the sweat. They look at each other a beat. A POLICE CAR, seen earlier, pulls up beside them from behind and idles. SHERIFF VIRGIL POTTER is a weathered, handsome, middle-aged man with suspicious eyes, black haired in contrast to Bobby's sandiness.

SHERIFF

Morning Grace.

GRACE

Morning Sheriff. Got my drapes.

SHERIFF

Well it's about time. Looks like you found yourself a helper too.

Bobby wants to shrink behind the drapes.

GRACE

Well, he offered, and I just couldn't refuse. His car overheated.

SHERIFF

Oh?

Bobby turns to the Sheriff and forces a smile.

BOBBY

Morning, officer.

SHERIFF

Son.

(beat, to Grace)

Little excitement out at the reservation this morning. Wayne and Dale Elkhart were

up drinking all night and then Wayne starts chasing Dale around the desert with his shotgun. BIA handled it. I went by for backup.

GRACE

Anybody hurt?

SHERIFF

Hell, no. That Wayne can't shoot when he's sober, much less drunk. He's lucky he didn't kill his own danged self.

(beat)

Well, anyhow, you stay cool. Nice meeting you, son.

BOBBY

Same here, officer.

The Sheriff drives on. Pause. They look at each other.

GRACE

Well, I guess I could use some help getting this box into the house. Not far. You could shower, get something cool to drink.

Bobby considers the offer, but there's not much considering to do.

BOBBY

Well, I could use something cool.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

BOBBY rides along with GRACE in her JEEP.

GRACE

Where you coming from?

BOBBY

All over. Chicago, Houston, Detroit. Just lately Dallas.

GRACE

You've been around.

BOBBY

I guess I've got wander in my blood.

GRACE

Where you headed?

BOBBY

I don't know. I have to make a stop in Vegas. Business to finish. Then maybe I'll head to Santa Barbara. I might be able to pick up some action there.

GRACE

So, what is it you do, Mister...?

BOBBY

Cooper. Bobby Cooper. Oh you know, whatever pays best. Little bartending, used to teach tennis, played a little competition ... (drops it).

GRACE

I never played tennis. You just travel around Bobby-- no direction, no steady work. You must like taking chances.

BOBBY

If you're going to gamble, might as well play for high stakes.

GRACE

What happens when you lose?

BOBBY

I pack up and go somewhere else.

GRACE (wistfully)

Somewhere else. I've never been anywhere else. Just once. Years ago. Went to the State Fair. It was nice, but it wasn't nothing.

BOBBY

I couldn't stay in this place. I wouldn't. I'd just pick up, do whatever I had to do, and get out.

Grace looks to Bobby and smiles.

GRACE

Sometimes I feel the exact same way.

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM/BATHROOM - LATER - DAY

BOBBY, naked, steps into the shower and turns on the water. It shoots from the shower head and cascades over his body. As the water falls over him we hear a Russian accented voice:

VOICE(V.O.)

I want my money.

Bobby press his left hand against the white tile to steady himself. His hand is curled in such a way we cannot see his pinky or ring finger. Bobby leans back in the shower. Just as he does:

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

It is raining hard. Matching the backwards motion of the last scene BOBBY is thrown violently against a brick wall, facing out.

VOICE(V.O.)

I want my money.

BOBBY

Look, I'll get the money! You don't want to do this!

VOICE (V.O.)

Take two for now. One a week, punk...

Bobby is being pressed against the wall by two muscular GOONS. Another MAN stands partially hidden behind the goon's frame. With one hand one goon flattens Bobby's hand against the brick, with his other he clips two fingers off with a GARDEN SHEAR. We see Bobby's face in agonizing pain, then he slides screaming to the ground until he is framed between the legs of the men.

As Bobby clutches his left hand the rainwater runs in streaks down his ashen, blank face.

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM/BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

We see BOBBY's face reliving the experience as once again we hear the voice.

VOICE (V.O.)

Two weeks, asshole. Get the money or you gonna lose your nose and ears.

Bobby has slumped to the floor of the shower, looking to his left hand, almost crying, unable to tolerate it. As a streak of blood snakes down the white tile we see that the pinky and ring FINGERS have been cut off at the joints.

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM/BATHROOM - DAY

BOBBY, his hand rebandaged, is putting on his clothes.

BOBBY (to himself)
You're still lucky.

As he does he looks at himself in the mirror. He bends to pick up his shirt which is draped over the gym bag. As he lifts it we can see, perhaps more closely than at the garage, that the bag is 3/4 filled with money. He closes the bag and stands. In the MIRROR, hidden in the doorway, he sees GRACE watching him. Bobby slows perceptibly, but does not try to hide himself. After a moment Grace walks into the room carrying a glass of lemonade.

GRACE
Thought you might like a refill on your lemonade.

Bobby takes the lemonade and drinks it down. He rubs the glass against his forehead.

BOBBY
That's good. Cools you right off.
(tentatively) I saw you watching me.

GRACE
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to.

BOBBY
I didn't say it bothered me.

GRACE
Did you like it; me watching you?

BOBBY
I guess. I've got an ego same as any man.

GRACE
Good, 'cause I liked what I saw.

Bobby gives a smile as devilish as it is pleasant. Grace slides an ice cube from the glass between her lips. He notices a framed picture of GRACE and an OLDER MAN.

BOBBY
Nice place.

GRACE
Thank you.

Grace sits on the edge of the bed. Bobby indicates the picture, ironic.

BOBBY
Who's that, your father?

GRACE (without much thought)
Stepfather...

BOBBY (coy)
Got a boyfriend?

GRACE
No. Not really.

Bobby senses she's lying but plays along.

BOBBY
Must get kind of lonely for a woman living
by herself in a big house.

GRACE
I guess it must.

BOBBY
What do you do anyway?

GRACE
A little of this, a little of that. Mostly
I tell fortunes.

BOBBY
Where'd you learn to do that?

GRACE
From my father. He was the tribe's shaman.

BOBBY
A medicine man?

GRACE
Those are white words, not ours.

BOBBY
Nice house for a shaman's daughter. You
must be good.

GRACE
Come here.

Bobby goes to Grace and kneels before her. She takes his head
in her hands and looks deep into his eyes. Her voice goes
thick, but soft, like a morning fog.

GRACE
There's something in your past; something
you want to keep hidden. There's a pain.

Something ... someone you can't forget.
And there is something you want very badly.
It seems very far away to you, but you are
determined, and you will do what you must
to get it.

Bobby closes his hands on Grace's and takes them from his face.
He is more than slightly spooked by the accuracy of Grace's
reading.

BOBBY

My face tell you all that?

GRACE

It tells me what every face tells me.
Everybody has a past, they have a pain, and
they have something they want.
(seductively) What is it you want?

BOBBY

The same thing you do.

They silently stare into each other's eyes.

GRACE

Really? I want to hang drapes.

Grace walks from the room. For a moment Bobby stares after her.
He takes an ice cube from his glass and crunches it in his
teeth.

INT. GRACE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

GRACE is standing on a step ladder trying to hang the drapes.
BOBBY notices a photo of Grace with an older INDIAN WOMAN, her
mother?

GRACE

Hold me.

Bobby stands behind her, gently places his hands on Grace's
waist.

GRACE

Tighter. I won't break. You know girls are
a lot tougher than men think.

Bobby holds her tighter as she finished hanging the drapes. His
eyes are transfixed on her ass.

GRACE

There. All done. Lift me down.

BOBBY

What?

GRACE

Lift me down.

Bobby lifts Grace down from the ladder. He holds her, his hands around her waist.

GRACE

You can let go of me now. I'm safe.(with a wicked smile) How do they look?

BOBBY

Like you.

GRACE

Beautiful?

BOBBY (kidding)

Like they're made of polyester.

GRACE

I like them. I was sick of looking at this room. I think they add a little life.

BOBBY

Nothing like a little liveliness.

With a sexy pout Grace loads the next question.

GRACE

No more drapes to hang. Now what should we do?

BOBBY

I have an idea.

GRACE

And what would that be?

Bobby steps close to Grace and takes her by the shoulders. He pulls her to him and presses his lips hard to hers. Grace doesn't respond.

BOBBY

All right, Grace. No more games.

GRACE (innocently)

Games?

BOBBY

You flirt with me, then you run cold. You lead me on, then slap me down. I don't go for being jerked around.

GRACE

Really? And what game did you want to play? You carry my box for me, and I fall into bed with you?

Bobby grabs up his pack.

BOBBY

I think I can find my own way back to town.

GRACE

Maybe I like to find out about a man first. Maybe I like to know what he's made of.

BOBBY

I'm just flesh and blood, baby. That and a few memories of bad women; just like most guys. But you already know that. You read my mind, remember? Thanks for the lemonade.

Bobby turns to leave.

GRACE

You never did answer my question.

BOBBY

Still playing?

GRACE

That's not an answer. What is it you want?

BOBBY

You know what I want.

GRACE

Maybe I just want to hear you say it.

For a beat Bobby stands and stares hard at Grace. His pack slides from his shoulder and thuds on the floor. With great determination, like a beast closing for the kill, Bobby moves for her. Grace stands firm, ready for him; her head tilts back. Her breath comes deep and hard.

Just as Bobby is about to reach her, just as he is about to take her, he is stopped dead by the booming voice of JAKE MCKENNA.

JAKE (O.S.)

Grace!

Bobby turns to face Jake: An older man, still large and formidable for his age.

GRACE (nonplussed)

Jake. I thought you...

JAKE

Who the hell is this!?

BOBBY

Who the hell are you?

JAKE

I'm her husband.

BOBBY (shocked whisper)

Husband ...?

JAKE

Now who the hell are you, and it better be good, or God help me I'll break you in half.

BOBBY

Easy, chief. I... I was helping your wife. I met her in town. She needed a hand with her drapes. That's all.

JAKE

Didn't much look like you were hanging drapes.

BOBBY

I swear to you that's all that happened. I haven't so much as set foot in your bedroom.

JAKE

A lot that means.

BOBBY

Grace, tell him.

Grace says nothing. She picks up a glass of lemonade and sips at it coolly.

BOBBY

Damn it, Grace! Tell him.

GRACE (coyly)

If he says that's what happened, Jake, it must be true.

JAKE

Oh yeah, and I suppose you didn't have anything to do with it Grace, he just wandered up here by hisself. I got a mind to put you over my knee and paddle your ass raw!

BOBBY (to Grace)

You bitch! Is this what it's all about? You sucker me up here so you can watch the two of us beat the shit out of each other over you? You both... Forget it! (heads for the door)

JAKE

Where you going!

BOBBY (exiting)

'Scuse me, you want to take my head off, mister. I won't even try to stop you. I deserve it for being an idiot. But if you're not, I think I'll be on my way...
Ow!

Jake punches him in the nose.

JAKE

You can't just walk in here and walk out, you sonofabitch! I'm gonna tear you a new asshole!

BOBBY

You broke my nose!

JAKE

It ain't broke.

It probably isn't, but it bleeds. Bobby feels the blood and then sees it on his shirt.

BOBBY

Goddamn it! I'm... you're lucky I don't sue you.

JAKE (opens the door)

Get goin' Junior.

Bobby glares back at Grace who gives him a maddening little smile.

BOBBY

You people are crazy!

He storms out holding his nose.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - LATER - DAY

BOBBY, holding a handkerchief to his nose which has stopped bleeding, hauling his bag on his shoulder, walks back to town along the side of the road. Already he is caked with a mixture of sweat and dust, looking up at the relentless sun that beats down on him.

BOBBY

Fuckin' shithole!

A CADILLAC slows beside him, JAKE driving.

BOBBY

What the fuck do you want?

JAKE

I'll give you a lift, son. Too hot to be walking... People die out here, y'know.

Bobby continues walking.

JAKE

Aw, you're not still upset about that love tap, are you? If I meant you real trouble, I'd have given it to you by now. Get in, lad. Come on. Get in.

Bobby gets in.

JAKE

After you huffed off, Grace lied so bad, I got so pissed off, I pulled down her pants to paddle her ass raw and finger-fucked it instead. Sorry I lost my cool like that. It's a funny thing, women.

BOBBY

Yeah...

JAKE

Say, what happened to your hand?

BOBBY

Accident.

JAKE

You've got to be--

BOBBY

Yeah, I know. More careful.

JAKE

I guess we've never been introduced proper.
Jake McKenna.

BOBBY

That's a solid name.

JAKE

I'm a solid man.

BOBBY

Bobby Cooper.

JAKE

"Bobby Cooper." What brings you to
Superior, Coop?

BOBBY

An overheated car.

JAKE

Oh? Darrell taking good care of you?

BOBBY

Darrell's a moron.

JAKE (laughs)

Yeah, he sure is a character. You need any
help with that car now?... Where you
headed?

BOBBY

California...

JAKE

Live there?

BOBBY

Got work. I know a man who's got a boat.
Wants me to sail it for him.

JAKE

You a sailor man? That'd be the life.
Drive across the country, step on a boat
and just sail away. A man could pretty
well disappear like that. Just sail away

until all he was was a memory. I guess a little place like this would just be a dot on a map to you after awhile.

BOBBY

I hope so. (beat) Listen, McKenna about your wife: If I had known she was married--

JAKE

It wouldn't have made a difference to you, now would it? Not a wit. Do you know why? Because you're a man without scruples.

BOBBY

Wait a second--

JAKE

Ah, I can smell it on you.

Jake wipes his hand across the back of Bobby's neck and holds it to his nose.

BOBBY

Hey!

JAKE

That's the sweat of a man who hasn't an honest bone in his body. Don't be offended, lad. A man who's got no ethics is a free man. I envy that. Beside, how can I blame you? That Grace sure has a mind of her own, and a body to match, don't she? Eh?

Jake nudges Bobby who smiles a nervous smile.

JAKE

She does at that. I knew when I married her she was a free spirit. A woman with her looks and a man my age; what was I to expect? But you see a woman like that in a town like this and you don't think, you do. So, I married her. What are you to do, eh? Women.

BOBBY

Can't live with them, and you can't shoot 'em.

Jake looks at Bobby, his lips curled into a sly smile.

JAKE

"You can't shoot 'em!" I like that.
(laughs) I bet she led you on good, didn't she? Taking you up to the house to hang drapes. Oh that's a good one. Bet she had you hard as a rock wiggling her ass in your face. I bet you just wanted to pull down her pants and hog her out. Then me busting in like some wild bear. Ha! Bet you had a fire going under you.

BOBBY

Like you don't know.

JAKE

Mad like a dog in heat, I bet you were. I can tell you got a temper on you.

Bobby gives a little laugh.

JAKE

Bet you just wanted to snap her neck right then, didn't you? Bet you just wanted to kill her.

Bobby starts to laugh heartily. Jake joins in, then stops abruptly.

JAKE

Would you?

BOBBY

Would I what?

JAKE

Would you kill her?

Bobby starts to laugh. Bobby stops laughing.

JAKE

Because I'm sick and tired of her little games. Because you could do it and drift away on your boat and no one would ever see you again. Because I've got a fifty-thousand dollar life insurance policy on her, and I would be more than happy to give the man who does her in a good chunk of it.

For a moment Bobby sits in silence not sure of what to make of the offer.

BOBBY

I've done a few things but I'm not a murderer, Mr. McKenna.

JAKE

How do you know if you've never tried?

BOBBY

This is a joke, right? You just want to rattle me. Right?

They reach town and Jake stops the car near a small GROCERY STORE.

JAKE

That's right. Nothing but a joke. That's all.

Bobby gets out of the car. With a big smile Jake says:

JAKE

Enjoy your stay, lad.

Jake speeds away. Bobby looks after him.

BOBBY

Who are these people?

INT. SMALL GROCERY STORE - LATER

The store is small and dark and empty save for a tiny, older Mexican WOMAN who is behind the counter. BOBBY enters.

BOBBY

Got any cold soda?

WOMAN

Eh?

BOBBY

Soda. You got any soda?

WOMAN

Hablar slowly, por favor. My ingles no es bien.

BOBBY

Soda. You know.

Bobby cups his hand and brings it to his mouth pantomiming.

WOMAN

Oh. Something to eat. Si.

She holds up a pack of Twinkies.

BOBBY

Not eat. Drink. What the fuck is drink in Spanish ... uh, agua?

The old woman's eyes widen. She starts to scream, but quickly clamps her hands over her mouth. For a moment Bobby thinks the woman is screaming at what he has said. Then, as if he feels a presence behind him, Bobby turns slowly to face the TWO tough-looking, unshaven, tattoo-covered BIKERS. One holds a gun.

BIKER

That's right, lady. Keep it in you and nobody gets hurt. That goes for you too, stud. Gimmie the money. Now!

WOMAN

Eh?

SECOND BIKER

The dinero, Senora. Hand it over.

Bobby shifts his weight trying to hide his pack behind his back.

The woman goes to an old-fashioned cash register and rings it open. She hands the money to the biker.

BIKER

That's it? Lady, I got kids to put through school.

WOMAN

Es all I have.

The biker turns to Bobby.

BIKER

Okay, pal. Whatcha got? Give it, now.

Bobby pulls a thick wad of cash (\$1,000 plus) from his pant pocket, tosses it on the counter.

BIKER (thumbing through it, impressed)

Nice...Just who are you beautiful? What else you got for papa?

Bobby makes a show of pulling out his wallet, flings it to him.

BIKER

Better...you're getting tasty. Now toss the bag, sweetie.

BOBBY

It's just books.

BIKER

I'm a reader. Toss it.

BOBBY (an entreaty)

It's personal things...family things.

BIKER

How touching...I like family values. Give it to me.

Bobby takes an unsteady breath.

BOBBY

No.

BIKER

No?

SECOND BIKER

Hey man, forget it. Come on.

BIKER

No?

WOMAN

Senor, give him the bag.

BIKER

That's all right. He doesn't want to give me the bag...

SECOND BIKER

He's fucking with you man. Shoot him.

BIKER (cont'd)

...he doesn't have to give me the bag.

The biker grabs Bobby's bag. Bobby flinches in anticipation of a shot but refuses to let go of the bag. The biker swings the gun hard, clipping Bobby across the forehead. Bobby falls against the counter and to the floor. The woman starts to scream. The biker grabs up the pack, then, looking back at the woman, sees a ring on her finger. He grabs her hand and pulls at the ring. The woman screams wildly.

SECOND BIKER

Let's go, man.

BIKER

A little extra never hurt, Benji, would you just relax.

WOMAN

No! No! My wedding ring.

He pulls the ring from the woman's finger and pushes her back. With Bobby's bag slung over his shoulder he turns to leave.

BIKER

Now we go.

WOMAN

You go to El Diablo!

From beneath the counter the woman pulls a shotgun. The woman fires A SHOT that rips through the bag and into the back of the biker. He falls to the ground, very dead, amid a shower of blood and shredded money.

SECOND BIKER

Bugger! You bitch!

The Second Biker now sees the money floating all over the place out of the torn bag. His eyes go big with greed as he FIRES at the old woman, who ducks behind the counter.

The Biker grabs for the bag and what's left of the money, not expecting the feisty old lady to pop up and unload her SECOND BLAST into him and the bag.

Whatever was left of the money on the first round is now gone to shreds along with the bag and the Biker who is very dead.

Bobby is staggered, crawls towards the shreds.

WOMAN (cursing in Spanish)

Hijos de puta. Bayan a comer su propia mierda en el infierno. (TRANSLATION: Sons of bitches. Go eat your own shit in hell).

She comes around the counter to his side as he grabs his wallet and the \$1000 cash roll from the dead biker's pants.

WOMAN

I call the sheriff.

BOBBY

No! No police.

Bobby gives her a hundred dollars.

WOMAN

A hundred dollars? No police?

Bobby gives her some more cash. She looks at him. Finally he gives her the entire wad.

BOBBY

No police until I leave.

Bobby stumbles from the store as the screen burns a bright white.

FADE TO:

EXT. STREET - LATER

BOBBY, dazed and holding his head, sits on the ground next to a SPIGOT that is dripping water. He cups his hands under the water and splashes it against his face, lightly wiping the cut above his eye. The SHERIFF'S CAR goes wailing by on the main drag. Recoiling from being spotted, Bobby tries to take another drink. A SCORPION crawls out of the faucet. He jumps back.

EXT. HARLIN'S GARAGE - LATER

DARRELL is leaning under the hood of a car working on its engine as BOBBY walks up.

BOBBY

Hey.

DARRELL

Hey, your ... what the hell happened to you?

BOBBY

Nothing.

DARRELL

Don't look like nothing.

BOBBY

Just banged my head. It was an accident.

DARRELL

Another accident? You got to be more careful.

Bobby rolls his eyes. Then notices the front fenders have been

removed.

BOBBY

What the hell happened to my car?

DARRELL

Bottom hose was shot too. Rotted clear through. Had to put a new one in. Runs like a dream now.

BOBBY (suspicious)

How much?

DARRELL

Well ... you got your parts, you got your labour ... let's call it a hundred-fifty bucks.

BOBBY

How much!?

DARRELL

Hundred-fifty.

BOBBY

To replace a goddamn radiator hose!?

DARRELL

A goddamn radiator hose in a sixty-four-and-a-half Mustang. You know how long it took me to find that hose?

BOBBY

About an hour and a half, because that's all the longer I've been gone.

DARRELL

Actually, it's been about three hours. You're the one thinks that car's so damn fancy. What you expect but fancy damn prices?

BOBBY

That's a Ford, not a Ferrari. You going to tell me no one else in this shit hole drives a Ford?

DARRELL

"That's not just a Ford, that's a sixty-four-and-a-half Mustang."

BOBBY

What's that got to do with the radiator hose?

DARRELL

I don't know, but "it's the reason I'm living here and you're just passing through." Now you owe me a hundred-fifty dollars.

BOBBY

It might as well be fifteen-hundred dollars, because I don't have the money.

DARRELL

Then you ain't gonna have the car.

BOBBY

Listen, man. I got rolled half an hour ago for everything I had.

Bobby digs through his bloodied wallet, trying to hide it from Darrell. He fishes out a five dollar bill. Then digs out a bloody one dollar bill from his pocket.

BOBBY

I've got five...six dollars.

Darrell snatches the five from him and adds it to a thick wad of greasy bills he carries in his overalls.

DARRELL

Then you're only a hundred-forty-five in the hole. You can keep that dollar. Now why don't you just take your American Express Gold Card, and call that guy with the big schnooz on TV and have him send you the money lickity split.

BOBBY

I don't have a goddamn credit card.

DARRELL

Now that's too bad. I sure hope you know how to wash dishes or shovel shit 'cause you're gonna have to work this one off.

Bobby proffers his Movado watch.

BOBBY

Look, I got a Movado. It's worth at least seven, eight hundred. You could sell it for that.

DARRELL (studying it)

Who the hell to? Shit, can't see no numbers.

BOBBY

You don't need numbers. That's why it's expensive. Look at the gold.

Darrell doubts that, shake his head.

DARRELL

...got no day, got no date. Probably ain't worth a duck's fart (proffers his own watch). This one here cost me \$3.75 and it's got every doodad you can imagine. No sir I'll stick with this (walks away).

BOBBY

You son of a bitch! I'll have my lawyers shut you down.

DARRELL

You ain't got no credit card but you got a lawyer. Sweet talk me all you want. Didn't you read the sign? It says...

BOBBY

What sign? Fuck the sign. I want my car.

DARRELL

I want my hundred and forty-five dollars.

Bobby stands his ground for a moment as if deciding whether or not to fight for the car, then wheels and walks away.

Darrell looks at him, smirks.

INT. TRUCK STOP/DINER - LATER

It is a little worn diner-type stop one would find on most any open road: Counter with stools, laminated menus, a Wurlitzer in the corner belching out country TUNES. Business is slow but it's the only restaurant in town. There is a SHORT ORDER COOK in the kitchen, and FLO, a hard-looking waitress is behind the counter. A couple of regular drivers, ED and BOYD, are seated on the stools, Boyd is flipping a coin.

ED

One-hundred-thirteen degrees. That was back in July of forty-seven. That afternoon it dropped down to forty three! True story.

BOYD

One time last year I remember it went from
98 to 23 same day. Wind, black clouds come
out like...

BOBBY comes out of the men's room and sits at the end of the
counter. He has cleaned himself up a bit but still looks like a
mess. He buries his face in the menu.

BOBBY
You got a beer?

FLO
What kind?

BOBBY
Beck's.

FLO
No Beck's. A-1, Coors...

BOBBY
Heineken?

FLO
No, we ain't got no Heineken. We got
Miller.

BOBBY
Genuine Draft?

FLO
No. Just plain ol' Miller. Now you can
fuckin' take it or you can fuckin' leave
it.

BOBBY
I'll fuckin' take it. To go.

SHORT ORDER COOK
Flo, cheeseburger bleedin'.

FLO
I'll be right back with that beer.

Flo moves off.

BOBBY
...and a waitress named Flo. Christ.

As Bobby stares at the money on the counter in front of him, he
hears, from somewhere outside the diner, the sound of a POLICE
RADIO crackling. He now feels something against his foot. He

looks down and sees a CAT rubbing against his leg. He gives it a good kick sending it sliding across the floor with a screech.

BOBBY

Fucking cat.

In the background, two teenagers sit at a booth. TOBY looks the part of a local, wearing jeans and a white T-shirt. His hair is cropped close and he looks to be a senior in high school. His girl, JENNY, is nondescript, neither ugly nor beautiful. She is the kind of girl most guys would pass without a second look. Toby gets up from his booth and goes to the bathroom. After he is gone Jenny walks to Bobby.

JENNY

Hey, Mister. You gotta quarter for the juke?

BOBBY

What?

JENNY

I wanna play a song on the juke. You got a quarter?

Bobby looks at Jenny, then picks a quarter from his winnings and flips it to her. He can't resist putting a little charm into it.

JENNY

What happened to your hand?

BOBBY

I cut it shaving; I know, I gotta be more careful.

JENNY

Got any requests?

BOBBY

That country shit all sounds the same to me.

JENNY

How about I pick one out for you?

Bobby half smiles. Jenny plays a song. Patsy Cline's "Your Cheatin' Heart." Jenny takes up a stool next to Bobby's.

JENNY

You like Patsy Cline? I just love her. How come, I wonder, she don't put out no more new records.

BOBBY

Cause she's dead.

JENNY

Gee, that's sad. Don't that make you sad?

BOBBY

I've had time to get over it.

JENNY

You're not from around here, are you?
Where you from?

BOBBY

Oz.

JENNY

You ain't from Oz. Oz is in that movie.

BOBBY

You're too quick for me.

Toby walks back into the room. He looks at Jenny. He looks at Bobby. He looks at Jenny talking to Bobby. He loses it.

TOBY

No....No....No I'm seeing but I'm not
believin'...Stop the wedding. This can't
be. Hey! What are you doing with my girl?

Bobby says nothing, ignoring Toby.

TOBY

I axed you a question.

JENNY

Aw, Toby, we weren't doing nothing. We was
just talking.

TOBY

You shut your mouth, girl, and get back
over to our table. (to Bobby) Now, I'm not
going to axe you again, Mister. What were
you doing with my girl?

BOBBY

I wasn't doing anything.

TOBY

That's not the way it looked to me. Looked
to me like you was trying to make time with

her.

BOBBY

Make time? Is everybody in this town on drugs?

JENNY

Honest, Toby. I just axed him for a quarter for the jukebox.

TOBY

Stay out of this, Jenny. We got man's business to take care of. I ain't never taken no drugs, mister, and ...

BOBBY

Then maybe you should've. Look, pal, I wasn't making a play for your girl.

TOBY

You expect me to believe that?

BOBBY

I don't care what you believe as long as you leave me alone.

TOBY

Mister, I'm calling you out.

BOBBY

What? You want to fight? Over her?

Bobby looks Jenny over.

FLO

Toby, you go finish your soda and leave the man alone.

TOBY (to Bobby)

You know who I am? Toby N. Tucker. Everyone round here call me TNT. You know why?

BOBBY

Let's see...they're not very imaginative?

TOBY

'Cause I'm just like dynamite. And when I go off, somebody gets hurt.

BOBBY

Fine. I was making time with your girl.

Now I'm scared to death and I learned my lesson. Now can you go away?

TOBY

Not before I settle with you, chickenshit!

BOBBY

Christ, I don't believe this!

TOBY

Stand up.

BOBBY

I wasn't hitting on your girl!

TOBY

Stand up, Mister, or I'll beat you where you sit.

Bobby sits for a beat. he doesn't need a fight with Toby now with his damaged hand nor does he need to be noticed either. He sits there.

FLO

Toby, you stop it now! Can't you see he's got a hurt hand?

TOBY

Don't you never mind, Flo. This is gonna be over real quick.

Reluctantly Bobby rises, facing off against Toby, each clenching their fist and waiting for the other to make the first move. The tension builds. We see it on the faces of Jenny, Flo and the regulars. Just then the record on the juke ends and the needle scratches off. There is the crackle of a police radio as the door to the diner opens and SHERIFF VIRGIL POTTER walks in. The tension eases. Toby, mindful of the sheriff, steps closer to Bobby and whispers menacingly into his ear.

TOBY

You're lucky, Mister. Don't think it's over. I called you out and I'm gonna see this through. You hear me? (to Jenny)
Come on, girl. I got half a mind to make you walk home.

Toby takes Jenny by the arm and pulls her out of the diner.

FLO

My lord, that little baby of yours Virgil, has gotten cuter'n a bunny's nose.

SHERIFF

What was that all about?

FLO

You know how that Toby is. Thinks every man he sees is after his Jenny.

SHERIFF

More like Jenny is after every man she sees.

FLO (to Bobby)

You pay Toby no mind. He just likes to show off for his girl. Give him a couple of hours, he'll cool off. Still want that beer?

BOBBY (tense, seeing the Sheriff)

I'll take it to go.

Bobby holds his hand to his face to cover the cut on his forehead.

ED

How's it with you, Sheriff?

SHERIFF

Already started out bad. Couple of bikers from out of town tried to knock over Jamilla's grocery store this morning. It was a real shootout.

BOYD

What happened?

SHERIFF

The old witch killed 'em both.

ED

Holy shit!

FLO

Poor thing. Is she all right?

SHERIFF

Sure, when the sons of bitches tried to steal her wedding ring. That's when she started shooting. Can't blame her. The ring was all Carlos left her when he died. Store's a mess.

BOYD

It's the desert. That's what it is. The desert makes everybody crazy. Ain't that right, Sheriff? People go crazy out here.

ED

Come on, Boyd. I've got to make tracks. That yogurt's got to make Santa Fe before it spoils.

BOYD

Dr. Pepper don't have that problem.

Ed and Boyd toss a few bills on the counter and exit. Flo stands near the cash register with Bobby's beer.

FLO

I can't open off-sale for you, sugar.

Bobby pays for the beer (\$1.75). Flo opens the register.

FLO

Let me get your change.

SHERIFF

Flo, I'm just gonna help myself to a refill on the coffee.

The Sheriff reaches around the counter for the pot.

FLO

You be careful now, Virgil.

Just as the words leave Flo's mouth the Sheriff spills the pot. It shatters against the floor spilling hot coffee everywhere. Flo runs over to him.

SHERIFF

Son of a bitch!

FLO

Virgil! Now look at what you done! Are you all right?

SHERIFF

I think I burned my gun hand!

As Flo bends to wipe the counter, Virgil touches her intimately.

SHERIFF (Cont'd)

How 'bout we put something soft on it later? (a look)

FLO

(quietly) I could put some butter on it, hon'. (Her normal abrasive voice) It'd serve you right, you asshole. Put it under some cold water. Joe, run get a mop and clean this fuckin' mess up.

While everyone is distracted Bobby notices that the register drawer has been left open. He looks around to make sure he is not being watched. Slowly he eases his hand towards the drawer. It gets closer and closer. As he is about to grab the money there, the cat - the same one he kicked away earlier - hisses and claws at his hand. Bobby jumps back startled.

FLO

Shasta! Now why'd you go and scare the nice man like that? Sorry about that, mister. Let's see, you want \$3.25. (gives it to him) You try to have a nice day now, would you?

BOBBY

Sure, I'll try.

With the Sheriff occupied, and the Mexican Jose mopping the floor, Bobby exits.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - STREET - DAY

BOBBY begs on the phone.

BOBBY

Cici? Cici, it's Bobby...Bobby Cooper...Yeah, look, I know it's been a while, but I'm kind of in a jam...yeah...One-hundred-fifty dollars...That's a lie. I called you on your birthday..Two years ago...I can't help it if you didn't get the message. Cici, honey, I don't want to argue. I need you to wire me the money...Because they're fucking going to KILL ME! I didn't steal your CD's...Yeah, well where's my Mr. Coffee. Cici...Cici...

Bobby slams the phone.

BOBBY

Bitch. Cunt.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. SAME PHONE BOOTH - STREET - DAY

BOBBY is on another call, circling a local sports page betting line.

BOBBY

73-11, this is Pluto. What's the line on Dallas?

GAMBLER'S VOICE

Pluto. Fucking deadbeat. We head about you. You owe "the commie" 13 dimes, why you tryin' to get in my office? Lose this fuckin' number.

BOBBY

Mike...Mike...you asshole.

GAMBLER'S VOICE

Mike who?
(hangs up)

Bobby, frustrated, clicks off.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. MR. ARKADY'S OFFICE - DAY

It is the kind of cheesy, temporary office one would expect to find in a Las Vegas apartment building overlooking the DOWNTOWN STRIP. MR. ARKADY, dressed in a silk suit with conspicuous jewelry, sits behind his desk eating lunch and cleaning his nails. SERGEI, his goon in a shiny polyester shirt, hovers over his boss helping feed and manicure him. These are the TWO MEN from Bobby's earlier FLASHBACK. They are dangerous in an endearing way. Sergei answers the phone. In the background is a very voluptuous female, obviously from the Middle East. SOFIA.

SERGEI

Da?

MR. ARKADY

Sergei, what are you, a Neanderthal? How many times do I have to tell you? You answer a phone "hello," not "da."

SERGEI (nods yes)

Sorry, Mr. Arkady.(into phone)"Hello?"

OPERATOR(V.O.)

I have a collect call from Bobby Cooper.

Will you accept the charges?

SERGEI

Mr. Arkady, deadbeat Cooper's calling.

Mr. Arkady doesn't acknowledge him.

SERGEI

He's calling collect.

At this Mr. Arkady's head springs up. He snatches the phone from Sergei.

MR. ARKADY (overly sweet)

Bobby, what a surprise. I expected to be seeing you, not talking to you over the phone.

INTERCUTS TO:

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - STREET

BOBBY on the phone.

BOBBY

I know, Mr. Arkadin. I know. I was on my way to you, it's just ... what a day I've had. I know I'm coming up with a highly improbable story, and I know you're not going to believe this, but this ...is... what happened. I had the money, I swear I had it. I was on my way to Vegas when my car breaks down in the middle of nowhere.

Mr. Arkady cleans his nails completely disinterested in what Bobby is saying.

MR. ARKADY

That's a shame, Bobby. A real shame.

BOBBY

And that's not the half of it, Mr. Arkadin...

MR. ARKADY

"Arkady"

BOBBY

Right, Mr. Arkady. And that's not the half of it. I got your money, and I go into this little grocery store in this hicktown to get something to eat and then... well, it

gets robbed!

MR. ARKADY

...And let me guess. This robber -- he gets your money.

BOBBY

No. Two of them. Two robbers. And they both get nailed... get shot by the old lady.

MR. ARKADY

The old lady?

BOBBY

With a shotgun! She kills both of 'em, and... and the money in my bag gets all shredded to bloody pieces. Not one bill is left alive. I mean, what are the odds?

MR. ARKADY (beat, dry)

Pretty long, Bobby.

BOBBY

Mr. Arkady, honest, I ad to beat it outta there before the cops showed. So now I don't have a cent to my name. I can't even get my car out of the garage. I tell you, Mister... (pause) if it weren't for bad luck I wouldn't have nay fuckin' luck at all, you know? (beat, waits) So, I was wondering if you could wire me a hundred fifty-dollars so I could get my car out of this garage, see? The bus depot here has a Western Union thing. And of course I'll pay it back with the rest of the money.

MR. ARKADY(V.O.)

Which you don't have.

BOBBY

But which I can get. No problem. Look, I can sell my car in Vegas. Blue book it's worth 16 at least. I just need the 150, uh...

Sergei looks like he's ready to pound heads.

MR. ARKADY (pause)

Where are you?

BOBBY (hopeful)

Uh...a little shithole in Arizona called

Superior. About 200 miles east of Phoenix.

MR. ARKADY (pausing, V.O.)
Superior, hunh?

Bobby suddenly feeling suspicious.

BOBBY(V.O.)
Yeah, if you could send it care of...

MR. ARKADY
...Now, let me get this straight. Two years you give me problems with your fuckin' payoffs. Now you owe me thirteen-thousand dollars, you call me - collect - then ask me to wire you one-hundred-fifty dollars just so you can get your car fixed.

BOBBY(V.O.)
A hundred-forty-five would probably cover it.

MR. ARKADY
A hundred and ... Now you listen to me you deadbeat little punk: I don't care if you got hit by a truck and run over by a steamroller. You owe me thirteen-thousand dollars and I want it. I don't care how you get it, or where from, but I want it on my desk tomorrow, or I'll show you what real bad luck is.

Sergei snaps a pencil he's holding in his hand, which goes flying by Arkady's head, forcing him to duck.

MR. ARKADY
Do you understand me you little fuck?

BOBBY (snaps)
Oh, fuck you too!

MR. ARKADY
What'd you say to me!

BOBBY
Shit I'm sorry!...you can't believe the strain I'm under. I'm just under a lot of strain here.

There is a sharp silence at the other end. Bobby waits.

MR. ARKADY
Bobby, you owed me that 'bread' 4 weeks

ago. Now you tell me you want another week. That's 5 weeks, Bobby. That's also 5 fingers, cause you and I know it's a finger a week Bobby. So you got balls. Good--now you come here tomorrow and you talk to me real nice and maybe I don't take the other 3 fingers you owe me, you see? Tomorrow -- and Bobby, don't make me come look for you, okay...have nice day.

He hands the phone back to Sergei.

SERGEI (into phone)

You got that? -- have nice day (hangs up).

MR. ARKADY

The nerva that piece of shit! And look at you, you Neanderthal -- don't you fuckin' break pencils, you goombah!

SOFIA

Finger? What are you, a faggot? In my country a man don't pay we cut off his head.

Arkady motions Sergei to come close.

MR. ARKADY

Get your ass down to this Superior, Arizona. Bring me this Bobby Cooper. I don't think he got the lesson. This is your last chance, Sergei.

SERGEI

Da.

EXT. STREET - DAY

BOBBY, desperate, stares at the bandage of his wounded hand. It throbs, holding the hand to his ear.

We hear an OPERATOR'S VOICE:

OPERATOR(V.O.)

Hello?

BOBBY

Hello?

OPERATOR(V.O.)

Are you finished with your call?

BOBBY

Yeah.

OPERATOR(V.O.)

Please deposit an additional seventy-five cents.

Bobby slams the phone against the hook.

BOBBY

Goddamn rat's ass fuck! Shit! Damn! Damn!
Damn!

He marches from the phone booth, past an old HARDWARE STORE. The phone falls from the hook and we hear a recorded voice:

VOICE(V.O.)

Thank you for using AT&T.

In the store window, Bobby notices a set of garden shears for sale.

EXT. EMPTY STREET - LATER DAY

BOBBY walks a bit going nowhere in particular. Looking at his watch thinking of Mr. Arkady, he shields himself with one hand from the sun. At the side of an old building, in the bit of shade it throws, he twists at the beer cap which sticks and won't turn. Bobby tries again twisting harder -- too hard -- as the cap jerkily twists off, cutting into his hand as it rotates. Bobby yells in pain. At the same time the beer comes foaming from the bottle and spills onto his sleeve. The bottle slips from his wet fingers and crashes on the ground, emptying. He clutches his bleeding hand, pissed.

BOBBY

Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! I hate this fuckin' town!
I hate it! Do you hear me?

(no answer)

Get me outta here, please. I gotta get out
of this place.

As if in answer, a JEEP drives by on the main street. GRACE looks pretty hot up there in the driver's seat, her eyes, behind sunglasses, flicking over him but not acknowledging him as she keeps going.

Bobby's eyes throw back his own hostility at her, but unfortunately she misses it, as he now notices -- across the street -- a well-kept building with the most modern decor and signage, reading "McKenna's Realty Co."

He thinks about it, in a quandary.

EXT. HIGHWAY/CAR - DAY

In a rented convertible, we now see SERGEI racing across the desert. His jacket off, a man with a mission. He glances at his watch, eager to get to this "fucking hole in the wall" which is somewhere on this incomprehensible American map he holds in one hand.

INT. JAKE'S REALTY OFFICE - DAY

BOBBY squats, looking at a real estate model of a desert development. JAKE smiles.

JAKE

What can I do for you, lad?

BOBBY

I was hoping we could talk.

JAKE

Talk? About what?

BOBBY

About things. About your wife.

JAKE

Sweet Grace? What about her?

BOBBY

About what you said this morning.

Jake shakes his head as if he doesn't understand.

BOBBY

You said you had an insurance policy out on your wife. Fifty-thousand dollars.

JAKE

I do.

BOBBY

You said you'd cut that up with the man who did her in.

JAKE

I did?

BOBBY

Don't play simple with me, Jake. You're a betting man. You want me to spell it out

for you? I'll kill Grace if you cut me in on the money.

JAKE

Boy I think this heat's getting to you the way you're rambling on.

BOBBY

I'm not rambling.

JAKE

You're talking like a madman.

BOBBY

Well then, I guess that qualifies me for citizenship in this town. You're the one brought it up. This morning. In your car.

JAKE

Oh, that was just loose talk. Husband gettin' pissed off. I don't want anybody dead.

BOBBY

Bullshit. You wanted me to kill her.

JAKE

A man doesn't always mean the things he says.

BOBBY

You meant it.

JAKE

What makes you say that?

BOBBY

Because you're a slimy bastard who would have his wife killed just to get his hands on some money.

JAKE

And what does that make you?

BOBBY

The slimy bastard who's going to do it for you... (pause) You're a jealous man Jake. If you can't have Grace to yourself...well, you're not the sharing kind.

For a moment Jake stares quietly at Bobby.

JAKE

Well, I guess I have what you call a love-hate relationship with Grace.

BOBBY

You love her, but you hate her?

JAKE

No, I hate loving her. I hate the kind of person she is. I hate having to tolerate the little "games" she plays. Like fucking half of the town behind my back and laughing at me. The bitch. She loved to play. She wants me to hit her and when I hit her she likes it. She tortures me. But she's family. She's my little girl. My baby. I couldn't stand to watch her eyes roll back in her head as she sucks her last breath, or to see her pretty pink brains spill from her skull. No. Not me. But you? You got the killing in you, boy...How much you want?

A pause.

BOBBY

Make it twenty.

JAKE (stressed, paces)

Twenty-thousand? I don't have that kind of money. I won't get the insurance until months after she's dead. I don't imagine you'll want to be stickin' around after poor Grace's demise. Twenty-thousand; that's more money than I could ever get my hands on.

BOBBY

How much could you get?

JAKE

Maybe ... ten-thousand. And that's a maybe.

BOBBY

I need thirteen.

JAKE

That's a bit much.

BOBBY

We're not talking about buying a car Jake.

We're talking about killing your wife. It's thirteen, or it's nothing.

For a moment the two men stand silent. All we hear is the ticking of a grandfather CLOCK that stands in the corner.

JAKE

You drive a hard bargain, but I had a feeling you were my boy when I met you.

BOBBY

I'm not your boy. I don't like you. I got no choice but to do business with you. Let's just call this a nasty little marriage of convenience.

JAKE

Don't say that. I had a marriage of convenience with Grace, and look where that's lead... Well, looks like we got ourselves a contract.

BOBBY (sarcastic)

Do we shake hands?

JAKE

If you can't trust the man you've hired to kill your wife ...? The thing is it's got to look like an accident; that's the thing. If it doesn't, then it's no good. I won't get a dime, and it's my neck that'll be on the chopping block while you're living it up somewhere.

BOBBY

How do you want it?

JAKE

How the hell should I know? I've never had a wife killed before. Jesus Christ! You want this job, you don't know how to do this? I guess I should have hired a professional.

BOBBY

You want to do this yourself? I don't have to do this, you know.

JAKE

Be quiet, boy. I got to figure this thing. I'm thinking. It can't be done at the house. It should be...

Jake walks the office thinking.

BOBBY

Come to think of it, how 'bout some money upfront?

JAKE

Oh yeah sure. Why don't I buy you a plane ticket right out of here while I'm at it. I know you...

(then)

This is what you do: Go to the house to see her.

BOBBY

(beat)

And tell her what?

EXT. MCKENNA HOUSE - LATER DAY

BOBBY stands on the porch talking to GRACE through the screen of the front door. The look on his face is sincere. Hers is skeptical. We see the action take place as we hear Jake's V.O.:

JAKE(V.O.)

...I don't know. Tell her you had to see her. Tell her you don't care if she's married or not, you had to be with her. Sweet talk the woman. A young buck like you must be good at that. Then ... maybe shift the conversation. Get her thinking about that jeep of hers. She loves that thing. Maybe the only thing she does love. She'll want to take you for a ride.

BOBBY

I know you're not surprised I'm back here, cause you can read my mind and all.

She's not surprised.

GRACE (seeing his new cut)

That's some cut. I told you to be more careful.

BOBBY

Yeah, well I said I was an idiot. Whatta you say we get out of here, take a drive somewhere, talk...

GRACE

How do you know he's still not here?

BOBBY

Guys like me take those chances. Let's go.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

GRACE'S JEEP cuts hard across the desert. Grace has a wild, excited look on her face. BOBBY sits next to her looking somewhat nervous.

JAKE(V.O.)

She'll take you out somewhere in the desert. She loves it out there; ridin' through the red rock and the mesas. So do I. I guess we got that in common. She'll ride you out someplace quiet. Someplace deserted.

FADE TO:

EXT. DESERT - LATER DAY

GRACE has stopped the JEEP on a plateau. BOBBY sits beneath its shade while Grace walks in the sun seemingly unaffected by the heat. VULTURES swoop above.

JAKE(V.O.)

There won't be anyone for miles around. Just the two of you and some prairie dogs. That's all. You can sweet talk her a little if you like. Makes no difference to me. Just put her at ease, make her feel relaxed -- then do it.

JAKE'S V.O. ends. The scene is now synch with real time.

BOBBY

Are there snakes out here?

GRACE

They hear you comin'. They won't bother you. Just don't sneak up on 'em.

BOBBY

Doesn't the isolation bother you?

GRACE

Yeah, but I like the sun. I grew up on a reservation. The sun, the desert; they like a religion to us. Jake's the same way. He loves the desert. I guess we're

alike that way. That's about the only way.

BOBBY

You love him?

GRACE

No.

BOBBY

Did you ever?

GRACE

Depends on what you call love. I grew up on a reservation. A patch of desert in the middle of nowhere. That's where they stick Indians, Bobby. That's where they leave us to die. My brother killed himself when he was 19 cause he couldn't take it anymore. There's no hope there... Jake was my ticket out. Mom and me.

BOBBY

Is that why you're with him?

GRACE

I let him think he was courtin' me, but I reeled him in like a fish on a line. I wanted him. I wanted what he could give me, and I would've done anything to get him. Is that love?

BOBBY

I'm guessing no.

GRACE

Yeah, I guess you're right.

BOBBY

I take it things didn't much work out the way you planned.

GRACE

I'm still here, aren't I? See this?

Grace sweeps her hand before her across the expanse of the desert. The vultures are very much a part of this landscape.

GRACE(CONT)

All this nothing? It doesn't get to Jake like it gets to me. He says he don't mind being nothing but a big fish in a small pond. More like a little fish in a dried

up watering hole.

BOBBY

You could leave him.

GRACE

I don't know how.

BOBBY

Walk away.

GRACE

It's not that easy. Maybe you can take chances; maybe you can wander around like some stray wherever you please. I can't. I don't want to be alone. I need to know I'm going to be taken care of.

BOBBY

You need a meal ticket is what you mean. Some guy you can latch onto just long enough for him to get you out of here.

GRACE

Is that so bad? It's not like I wouldn't try to make him happy. For awhile, anyway. I mean, I would ... do things for him. I guess I'm no good that way. I guess I tried to sucker you along like that. Do you hate me for it? I wouldn't blame you if you did. But maybe it's like you said: You just got to do whatever it takes to get out.

BOBBY (soft echo)

Whatever it takes.

Grace steps to the edge of the plateau.

GRACE

I wish I was a bird. I know it's stupid. Every child says that. When I was growing up some of the old ones on the reservation believed people could actually change into animals. I wish I could.

We see Bobby behind Grace. He stares at her standing on the edge of the plateau. He rises and walks towards her slowly, but with deliberation.

GRACE(CONT)

If I was a bird I would fly to Florida; to

Disney World. I always wanted to go there. I'd fly to New York. Maybe. I guess New York isn't the best place to be a bird. I'd fly to St. Louis, then New Orleans, all over Texas. Then I'd fly to California. I guess by then I'd have seen it all and I could die.

Bobby now stands a few feet behind Grace. She kicks a rock and watches it sail over the lip of the cliff into the nothingness below.

GRACE(CONT)

They say you don't feel anything. The shock kills you before you hit the ground. I don't know how they would know that. But I heard it's just like flying; straight down into the ground. I guess if it doesn't hurt it's a beautiful thing.

Bobby tenses himself. Sweat forms on his brow as he stands directly behind Grace with his hands extended before him. They hover just below her shoulder blades ready to push forward. Suddenly Grace wheels. Startled by Bobby she almost falls over the edge. Bobby grabs her, her weight still going back. Grace's life is literally in his hands. She looks down at the ground far below, then up into Bobby's eyes. She shows no fear, but instead wears a curious smirk.

GRACE

Hate's a funny thing. Right now I bet you don't know if you want to kill me, or fuck me.

Bobby hesitates, then pulls Grace close and kisses her with great ardor on the lips.

EXT. APACHE LEAP - DAY

On a blanket on the ground, BOBBY and GRACE make love quickly, hotly, her dress pulled up, his pants down. But Grace is troubled and pulls out, further frustrating Bobby.

GRACE

No...Stop! I can't!

Her eyes withdraw into another dimension, as she hikes her dress back up. Bobby comes out of his own head, feels the distance between them.

BOBBY

What's the matter?...Grace?

GRACE

Nothing.

BOBBY

Don't feel like nothing.

He finishes relieving himself behind a tree, puts his pants back on.

GRACE

Get out of town, Bobby, as quick as you can.

BOBBY

Grace, I've been fucked over too many times, by too many women. You're becoming the queen of hot and cold.

GRACE

You'd never understand.

BOBBY

Try me.

GRACE

It's just such a mess. With Jake I mean...

BOBBY

Nothing I understand better than a mess.

GRACE (in great tension)

Jake was with my Mom after my real Dad died.

BOBBY

You mean the Shaman?

GRACE

He was a Shaman...in the mine. We had nothin' after he died. Jake took us in, gave us a little money. He used to call me his "little halfbreed"... He kept Mom on the side y'know, cause he was married someplace else. He had kids in Phoenix I think, no one knew him around here...but the thing was...you see...

(pause)

...he was raping me the whole time...for years. He loved to do things to me. Believe it or not, he used to say he was in love with my ass. Y'ever been in love with a

woman's ass?

The dominoes are tumbling for Bobby.

BOBBY

Yeah.

GRACE

You're sick too...he loved to do things to me. Control me. My Mom...it tore her up cause she couldn't do nothing about it. She become alcoholic...and the funny thing is-- I liked it. I liked being controlled by Jake. The truth was as far out and crazy as he got, I wanted more. I wanted to go all the way. Women say they don't want to be taken like, really taken -- that's bullshit -- they do. The first time he finished with me, he said I was a woman now. I was 14. Then he started crying like a baby...wanted me to hold him. It's a strange feeling to hate someone so much for so many years, but still want to hold him, comfort him... They found my Mom right down there (points) at the bottom of Apache Leap. She had cactus needles stuck all over her body and Virgil...Sheriff Potter said she was drunk and went insane. But I'll never believe she ran off that cliff by accident. She was born on this earth and she loved it. She was like me. She just wanted to fly away.

Bobby is quietly stunned. A whole world has opened up to him; and he isn't sure yet where the story ends. There is some force at work here, beyond his control.

GRACE

After he got his divorce, he forced me to marry him...but when I saw her body, I swore to her on my soul that some day I'd get Jake for what he did to her...

BOBBY

I'm sorry...

GRACE

Yeah. What do you want. Life, right? (shrugs, stoic) Have you ever been to California?

BOBBY

Yeah.

GRACE (as if in a dream)
Is it far from here?

BOBBY
Oh yeah. It's far, it's another world.

GRACE
Is it pretty?

BOBBY
Oh yeah. It's beautiful, beautiful beaches.
Blue water and clear skies as far as you
can see.

GRACE (like a little girl)
Would you take me with you?

BOBBY (pause)
I wish I could.

GRACE
Please. I won't hang on you. As soon as we
get there you can dump me. I don't care. I
just want to get out of here.

BOBBY
Honey, baby, I can't. I can't even get out
of here myself. Believe it or not, I need a
lousy hundred and fifty bucks to get my car
back from that crazy mechanic...

GRACE
Darrell? You know he and Jake are...

BOBBY
You don't have any money put away, do you?

GRACE
Jake never gives me more'n twenty bucks at
a time, like a bird in a cage, he don't
want me goin' anywhere...

BOBBY
...you could get me money. I'll get you
out of here.

She looks at him.

GRACE
There's money. A lot.

The words hang there, thick between them.

BOBBY

Where?

GRACE

Jake hides it. In a safe. In the floor. In the bedroom. He counts it. He loves to sit there and count it.

BOBBY

What do you mean?

GRACE

At night. He just sits there and laughs and talks to himself and counts it. I heard him. My Mom told me he had a hunnert thousand dollars down there. Maybe more.

Bobby's eyes widen in hope.

BOBBY

In cash?

GRACE

Oh yeah. There's nothing else with Jake. He don't trust banks. He keeps the money in the floor right under the bed. He loves it so much, he wouldn't think of spending any of it on me. I never seen it but I know he's got more than a hunnert thousand at least...

BOBBY

One-hundred-thousand!? That son-of-a-bitch.

GRACE (puzzled)

What do you mean?

BOBBY (ignoring her)

If it's in a safe we'd have to get the combination--

GRACE

It takes a key. He keeps it on himself all the time. I mean all the time. It scratches up against me when we do it.

BOBBY

If the key's on him, how do we get the key?

GRACE

Kill him.

Spoken almost innocently, it hangs there between them. A silence.

BOBBY

I can't kill, Grace. I can't kill anybody.

GRACE

It's not like he's a young man, Bobby. He's had time to live. It'd be quick. I mean, he wouldn't even have to feel it...

(seductively) I mean, sometime in the middle of the night, when it's quiet...when he's asleep, you could just come up behind him when he's pounding on me and...

Grace lays her hands on Bobby, starting to caress him. He bristles and freezes with fear and disgust.

BOBBY

Shit! Listen to you... Are you crazy, Grace?

He abruptly pulls away.

BOBBY

Jesus Christ! I think this place is making me crazy. I was crazy to come back here and see you. I'm crazy for listening to anyone in this town, and I'd sure as hell be crazy if I spent another minute with you.

Grace rises, covering her nakedness, shooting a hand to his face, like she did when she read his fortune.

GRACE

But it's in you, Bobby. I see it. I see Death. It's in your heart. Let it out for me. Let it out...

He's mesmerized. Then:

GRACE

Do it for me, Bobby, you'll never regret it. I promise you. I'll do anything for you. Anything.

Bobby pauses, terribly torn.

BOBBY

I...take me back to town...

He turns away, towards the jeep. Grace has a tone of desperation in her voice.

GRACE

You need the money, Bobby. It's a lot more than \$100,000. A lot more. How are you going to get out of here? You need the money. Whatever it takes, Bobby, remember?

Bobby walks past the jeep, on his way back to town alone.

GRACE

Where you going? I'll give you the ride...Come back! Bobby? It's three miles.

Bobby doesn't look back. Her eyes drift backwards into her solitude.

GRACE (to herself)

Bobby?...Whatever it takes.

EXT. DESERT/ALONG THE ROAD - LATER DAY

BOBBY walks through the desert parallel to the road, still in a rage. Desert insects produce a cacophony of drones, buzzes, and clicks. A rattlesnake darts off a rock into the brush. A VOICE whispers to him.

JAKE (V.O.)

You've got the killing in you, boy.

Bobby turns and looks around. Just desert. He continues.

JAKE (V.O.)

Next time you'll do just fine.

BOBBY

No!

The screen burns a bright white.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

In a news pot, further down the street from where he was first seen, the old, BLIND MAN sits with his dead DOG, speaking as if into camera, sipping on a Dr. Pepper.

BLIND MAN

It's the desert that makes you crazy. The loneliness out here. Nobody to talk to. People on the run. Trailer parks. White

trash. I seen some peculiar things on a hot day. I seen a scorpion sting itself to death. It just keeps driving its tail into its body again and again. A little killer killing itself. Seen a coyote kill itself too. Just kept on biting and tearing at its own legs. Near tore one clean off before it bled to death. And what a white man'll do when it's freezing one moment, hot as hell the next. A man could get hisself killed just for rubbing shoulders with another (smacking his lips) kiss kissy kiss. Nice pussy y'see, see it coming. I don't know what it is about the desert. I figger it's sort of like putting a kettle of water over a fire. People is mostly water. We boil when it's hot. 'Cept when we boil the water's got no place to go. It just churns inside of us until we can cool off. If it's not too late.

BOBBY is now revealed standing next to the blind man, and we realize the blind man has been talking to him all along. Bobby sips a Dr. Pepper as well.

BOBBY

You sure seen a lot for a blind man.

BLIND MAN

Just 'cause I ain't got eyes doesn't mean I can't see.

BOBBY

That a fact?

Bobby noticing now all the little NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS that the Blind Man keeps around him in a sort of inchoate stall.

BLIND MAN

I can see just fine. For example: You're a young man who thinks he's got someplace to be.

A POLICE RADIO crackles, Bobby tensing.

BOBBY

Maybe I do.

BLIND MAN

Or maybe you just think you do. Just another small town. One guy chasing you. You go big town. Just gonna have four guys

after you instead. Kiss kissy kiss. It gets down to one thing -- are you a human being or are you one of those hungry ghosts out there never satisfied with nothing? Cause you gotta remember you can run just as far as you can, but wherever you go, that's where you gonna be.

BOBBY

I think I've heard that before.

BLIND MAN

What do you want for free?

BOBBY

You sure got a lot of philosophy, old man.

BLIND MAN

Seems like I do but only cause end of the day we're all eyes in the same head. And everything is everything.

BOBBY

What?

BLIND MAN

...And everything is nothing too.

BOBBY (shakes his head)

Maybe one day I'll get to sit on a corner and spout wise.

BLIND MAN

Think you'll live that long?

Bobby is clearly unnerved by this. Suddenly the blind man stands, pissed and powerful, sniffing the air with the police radio in it.

As SHERIFF POTTER cruises by, glancing at Bobby shrinking. The car goes on up the street.

BLIND MAN

Cocksucker motherfucker! Cops. I hear you. Always sneaking around. Thinks I can't see him. Well he's right. Motherfucker. But that ain't mean I don't know what's going on around here. They're all cursed. Yes sir.

BOBBY

Who's cursed?

BLIND MAN

All them miners last century. Hungry ghosts, killed off all the Indians. Up at the mine. Earth ran red with blood, think I'm fooling around here. White sky was on fire. Grown men cried like babies. I saw a flash, then darkness descended upon me. They put me in the joint. Took my eyes. I cursed them. White people can't seem to stay away from Indians (grabs his bandaged hand, smelling the blood). You gotta watch where ya put your fingers. Pussy pussy pussy, Indian pussy.

It sounds demented. Bobby, checking him out to see if he's really blind, walks quietly around him during this monologue and peeks over his glasses trying to see the blind man's real eyes. Although he thinks the Blind Man thinks he's on the other side of him, the Blind Man fools him by suddenly swivelling around and cranking a gob of spit into Bobby's face as if Bobby were on the other side.

Bobby, pissed, wipes the spittle from his face.

BLIND MAN (finishing)

...but they gotta know you don't fuck around with Indians.

BOBBY

I thought you said you lost your eyes in the war?

BLIND MAN

So now you're going to tell me where I lost my eyes. You don't think I know where I lost my eyes? I was there when I lost them. I lost them in the war. The war in the joint. There's always wars in the joint. Cause I was a code talker in the joint and in the war too.(sniffs) Mmmm, nothing like the smell of a naked lady. Be careful, boy.

BOBBY

Musta been some bad ass nuclear tests here in the 50's. This town's all inbreeding.

BLIND MAN

Well, people gotta get by somehow. That's the curse. The mines done it. All that uranium, plutonium, fuffonium, fuckononium, assononium, all that "om"! Everybody's got

a mother. You don't rip up your mother. You don't rip up the Earth and take everything out. It's like the Cracker Jack box says, "the more you eat, the more you want...."...

BOBBY

I got things to do.

BLIND MAN (offended)

Oh well, go do 'em. You don't see me stopping you...

Bobby starts to walk away. The Blind Man rattles his tin cup.

BLIND MAN

...But ain't you got a little something for the infirm?

BOBBY

I'm a little short Pops. I'll catch you next time.

BLIND MAN

Your lies are old, but you tell 'em well.

EXT. STREET - DAY

BOBBY, depressed, is heading towards Harlin's gas station, passing JENNY sitting on a corner drinking a soda, almost as if waiting for him. She runs to him, and follows him, as somewhere a POLICE RADIO crackles and buzzes.

JENNY

Hey mister. Mister, I just... I just wanted to thank you.

BOBBY

For what?

JENNY

For defending my honor this afternoon.

BOBBY

I hate to bust your bubble honey, but I wasn't defending you.

JENNY

But you was going to fight for me.

BOBBY

I wasn't going to fight for you. I was

just going to beat the shit out of your boyfriend.

JENNY

He's not my boyfriend. I mean, I let him take me out and stuff, but I ain't spoken for. Not yet that is.

BOBBY

Get it through your head, little girl; I'm not going for you. If this Toby likes you, then if I were you I'd marry him. You're not going to get much better in this town.

JENNY

That's what I thought until you came riding in. I saw your car over at the gas station. It's a cool car. Want to take me for a ride? Desert's kind of lonely this time of day.

BOBBY

How old are you?

JENNY

(beat)

Eighteen... Well, I'm gonna be eighteen in two years, but that don't mean you can't take me for a ride if you want.

BOBBY

No, I don't want to take you for a ride. What I want is for ... Hey, you don't think you can get \$150 from your parents, could you?

From OFF CAMERA we hear TOBY.

TOBY(O.C.)

Mister!

BOBBY

Oh, shit!

Toby moves menacingly up the street towards Bobby.

TOBY

That's right, Mister. You better be afraid. I told you it wasn't over, but you didn't listen. Now I find you sneakin' around with my girl behind my back.

BOBBY

I wasn't sneaking around with your girl.
Would you please tell him?

JENNY

You're too late, Toby. We're going to get
in his fancy car and ride off and leave you
behind.

BOBBY

What the hell are you talking about?

JENNY

What's your name anyway?

TOBY

Oh, that tears it, Mister. I'm gonna bust
you up but good. I'm gonna bust you into a
million pieces and then ... and then bust
those pieces up, and then ... and then
spread them all around. That's what I'm
gonna do. You don't know what you're
dealing with, Mister. I'm crazy. I'm
psycho crazy.

BOBBY

Yeah, I know. You're TNT. Just like
dynamite. When you go off somebody gets
hurt. (at his wit's end) All right. Let's
do this.

JENNY

Toby Tucker, it don't matter to me if you
beat him all up and knock out all his teeth
and he's just drooling and bleeding all
over hisself, 'cause we love each other and
we gonna run off, and I'm gonna have his
love child.

BOBBY

Will you shut up!

TOBY

You gonna pay for that, Mister.

Toby and Bobby square off, sizing each other up and preparing
for a violent confrontation. Just as the two are about to clash
we hear the voice of SHERIFF POTTER from OFF CAMERA.

SHERIFF(O.C.)

Toby!

The two men freeze in their tracks, as Potter drives up fast.

TOBY

Hey, Sheriff Potter.

SHERIFF (tough)

Toby, I just came from your mother's place. She's worried sick about you. She says she ain't seen you since this morning.

TOBY

That ain't true, Sheriff. I was home for lunch.

SHERIFF

Boy, I'm not trying to hear nothing from you except that you're heading home. Now run along.

TOBY

Yes, sir. Come on, Jenny.

JENNY

I want to stay.

TOBY

I said come on!

Toby grabs Jenny by the wrist and literally pulls her along. As she goes she yells back to Bobby.

JENNY

Bye, Mister. Don't go nowhere without me. I wanna have your love child.

Toby points a vicious finger at Bobby.

TOBY

Next time, Mister. Next time.

Toby and Jenny exit leaving Bobby and the Sheriff alone. Bobby would also like to exit fast.

SHERIFF

Where ya goin'?

BOBBY

Harlin's.

SHERIFF

Get in.

Bobby has no choice. He gets in.

SHERIFF

Seen you popping up a little bit of everywhere today. You're not planning on staying are you?

BOBBY

No, sir. I'm not going to be around long if that's what you're worried about.

SHERIFF

That's a nasty cut you got there.

BOBBY

Yeah, fell down and hit a rock. Not as bad as it looks.

SHERIFF

There was a young fellow over at Jamilla's today when it got hit. Way she tells it he got whacked around good by one of the robbers.

BOBBY

Sounds like it. I wish I could help Sheriff, but I just want to get my car and get on up the road.

JAKE drives up in his GOLD CADDY. His windows whirr down.

JAKE

Everything all right, Virgil?

He eyes Bobby.

SHERIFF (a little nervous)

Just fine, Jake. Where you going?

JAKE

I was just up at Darrell's. How's the wife? That little eskimo baby walkin' yet?

SHERIFF

Oh just fine.

JAKE

You haven't seen Grace around, have you? I'm looking for her.

SHERIFF

No. But if I do, I'll tell her you're

looking for her, Jake.

JAKE (looking at Bobby)
Whatcha got there, some trash?

He drives off. The Sheriff drives on.

SHERIFF
Peculiar, how things happen. A man's car
breaks down. There's a hold up. People die
and all that money -- and now old Jake out
looking for his young wife. And then you
show up...

The Sheriff looks right through Bobby, who knows this is more
than a conversation. He pulls up to Harlin's garage. Bobby gets
out.

SHERIFF
Time's running out, son. I'll be seeing you
in the morning...

With this thinly veiled threat, the Sheriff drives on. As Bobby
watches, feeling the pressure to get out now while he can.

EXT. HARLIN'S GARAGE - LATER DAY

DARRELL is cleaning his tools. Bobby's MUSTANG sits prominently
in the car bay, washed and gleaming, as BOBBY walks up.

DARRELL
Hey there. I was beginnin' to think you
wasn't comin' back... You don't look so
good.

BOBBY
Yeah, well, I've been around the bend a
bit.

DARRELL
One of those days you feel like you been
runnin' in circles and you ain't no closer
to where you tryin' to get than when you
started?

BOBBY
You've been there?

DARRELL
Hell, I've had days I would gladly trade
with a whippin' dog. Ain't much you can do
when you feel like that 'cept tough it out.

BOBBY

You believe that?

DARRELL

You think bad, and bad is what you get.

BOBBY

That's a good piece of advice, Darrell.

DARRELL

No charge.

BOBBY

Listen, Darrell, about that hundred-fifty bucks for the car, as soon as I get where I'm going I swear I'll--

DARRELL

Two-hundred.

BOBBY

What?

DARRELL

It's going to cost you two-hundred dollars.

BOBBY

You said this morning the hose was going to run me one-fifty.

DARRELL

Yep. For the hose. But while you was gone I replaced a gasket. That's going to run you another fifty.

BOBBY

I didn't tell you to replace any gasket.

DARRELL

Yeah, but it was shot.

BOBBY

I don't give a fuck! I didn't tell you to do it! You can't just do unauthorized work.

DARRELL

Well, now, you just know all there is about bein' a mechanic, don't you? Didn't you read the sign.

BOBBY

What sign?

DARRELL

The goddamn sign on the wall. I can't do unauthorized work? What am I suppose to do? Just let you ride out of here with a bad gasket. Then you get in an accident and get killed. Or worse. Who they gonna blame then? They gonna blame me, and there goes my reputation.

BOBBY

What reputation? You're nothing but an ignorant, inbred, tumbleweed hick.

DARRELL

Is that an insult? Are you insulting me.

BOBBY

Listen you stupid fuck, I want my car.

DARRELL

Listen to me you sorry sonufabitch. You owe me money, and this car ain't going nowhere until I get it. And if you take another five hours I'll find another fifty dollars worth of work to do on it. Is that clear? Now get out of here 'fore I call the Sheriff, who knows me.

Bobby is in a rage. He turns to leave and walks a few paces. He sees a WRENCH lying on a table. For a second his mind reels, then he snatches up the wrench and turns ready to smash it down on Darrell's head. He stops cold. Because ol' Darrell holds a CROWBAR in a batter's stance ready to smash it onto the Mustang.

DARRELL

You want to play, Mister? I'll play with you. You want to smash something? So do I.

Darrell pulls back the crowbar, ready to swing.

BOBBY

No! Okay! Okay!

DARRELL

What's the matter? The fight gone out of you? I'm just gonna smash a headlight. Maybe two.

BOBBY (pleading, almost crying)
Please, just leave the car alone!

DARRELL
Mister, you already pissed me off but good.

Darrell lays the tip of the crowbar on the hood of the car, and drags the tip of the bar across the hood leaving a long scratch.

BOBBY (about to lose it)
Goddamn you! You son of a bitch!

DARRELL
There you go, sweet talking me again.

Darrell begins to laugh. Bobby, desperate, looks to the trunk, thinking of his gun in there.

His POV -- the trunk. A FLASHBACK of the GUN goes through his mind.

BOBBY
Look, Harlin.

DARRELL
Darrell.

BOBBY
Darrell. I'll get you your money. I just have to get something out of the trunk.

Using his TRUNK KEY, he tries to open it but realizes the lock has been changed.

BOBBY
What the fuck did you do to my trunk?

DARRELL
Well, that key's not gonna work. I had to pop the lock. You didn't leave me the trunk key.

BOBBY
And you had to go into the trunk, didn't you?

DARRELL
When I work on a car, I work on a car.

BOBBY (snaps)
You motherfucker! (etc.)

DARRELL

You can't help yourself, can you mister?
You're out of control.

Darrell starts to laugh. It is a repetitive, almost demonic laugh that grows louder as the camera slowly dollies in on Bobby's anguished face.

EXT. STREET - DAY

As BOBBY steps out into the glaring sun, he notices down at the other end of the town, GRACE'S JEEP parked right outside the SHERIFF'S OFFICE, empty.

Presently, GRACE and the SHERIFF walk out TALKING, and she gets in, says a few last words and drives away.

Bobby backs around a corner into a sidestreet. Is she selling him out? He's very confused, turbulent.

INT. BUS DEPOT - LATER DAY

BOBBY enters the BUS DEPOT. The interior is poorly lit. There are a few benches for people to wait on, but they sit empty. Old, faded travel posters hang on the wall. A bored FEMALE CLERK is behind the counter.

BOBBY

I need a ticket.

CLERK

Where to?

BOBBY

Out of here.

CLERK

But, in particular?

BOBBY

I ... Mexico. You got a bus that goes to Mexico? That's where I have to go.

CLERK

Mexico is a large country. Where in Mexico would you like--

BOBBY

I don't care, just get me there.

The clerk is a little put off by Bobby. He seems delirious. She goes through her schedule looking for a bus.

CLERK

How about Ciudad Juarez? You could take a local, arrives in two hours, and transfer in Albuquerque. It'll get you across the border.

BOBBY

How much?

CLERK

One way, or round trip?

BOBBY

One way.

CLERK

30.55. Twenty more will get you back.

Bobby counts his money.

BOBBY

Twenty-seven, fifty. That's all I got.

CLERK

The ticket is 30.55.

BOBBY (rifling his pockets)

I bought a beer. That was a dollar something. Then I gave that girl 25 cents for the juke box. And the blind man...the soda...I..I'd have 30 if...if...

CLERK

I'm sorry, sir. It's \$30.55 for the ticket.

BOBBY (to himself)

Yeah. Just a little short. Figures. I just wanted to get out, that's all.

Bobby starts to walk away. Suddenly he turns, runs back at the clerk, proffers his money, half-crazed, near tears.

BOBBY

Please, ma'am, you don't understand! I have to get out of here. They're going to come looking for me. They're going to kill me. If I can't get this ticket then I'm going to have to do things to get out of here. You know what I mean! I don't want to hurt anybody, I just want to leave. Please. I

can't...I can't.

He's so desperate and in her frightened but neutral expression, Bobby experiences the only compassion he ever finds in this whole town.

CLERK

Okay, I'll give you the ticket, sir,
but...just...just, please calm down,
please!

her sane tone reminds Bobby of how far down he's come. He shrinks, suddenly ashamed of himself. She takes the cash on the counter, hands him a ticket.

CLERK

Keep your change. Bus three-twenty-three.
Leaves at seven fifty two, tonight.

BOBBY

I'm sorry. It's just ... you know ...

She nods, puts a "closed" sign in the ticket window, disappears.

EXT. BUS DEPOT - LATE DAY

We hear the crackle of the same POLICE RADIO again, OFF CAMERA, as BOBBY walks out of the depot. ticket preciousely held in his hand, and suddenly reels as he sees SERGEI, about a 100 yards down the main stretch, slowly rolling into town in his convertible, looking for guess who.

BOBBY

Holy shit!

INT. SERGEI'S CAR - SIMULTANEOUS

BOBBY turns away, but not fast enough. SERGEI spots him, hits the pedal.

SERGEI

Got you, shitface! Bobby Cooper. Bobby
Cooper...

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIMULTANEOUS

BOBBY, ducking around a corner, hears the brief "Whoop" of the sheriff's POLICE SIREN. He glances back.

His POV - sure enough, the SHERIFF'S having a field day. He's just pulled SERGEI over. At this distance, we catch snippets of conversation as the Sheriff ambles from his car, checking

Sergei's out-of-state plates.

SHERIFF

Where's the fire sweetheart? Don't know how they work things in Nevada, but we got speed limits in this state.

SERGEI

Vat? I am going 5 miles an hour! I am looking town. I not even moving.

We pop in closer to their conversation -- Bobby relishing this in his mind's eye. Sergei is constantly looking off to where he last saw Bobby. But the Sheriff, strangely, pays no attention to these looks.

SHERIFF

Whoa, what kind of accent you got there? You one of them Russians?

SERGEI

I am Russian, da! I am also rich Russian, da? Maybe we work something out, my friend Sheriff?

SHERIFF

What? You trying to bribe me, mister? Just cause you Russians ain't commies anymore, don't think money can buy everything...

Down the street, Sheriff Potter is holding up a concealed GUN.

SHERIFF

What's that? (He grabs the gun)
..."concealed" is a definite no no in this town, Ivan. You know anything about Jamilla's grocery store?

SERGEI

What fuckin grocery store, you fucking shithead idiot! You call yourself a police...

Sergei looking Bobby's direction.

SHERIFF

Get out of the car, spread them. You can jawbone all you want or you have the right to shut the fuck up! You commie motherfucker. Either way you're goin' to the can.

SERGEI

I want my lawyer!

Sheriff cuffs Sergei and sticks him in the police car.

Bobby can't help smiling as he turns away to the SODA MACHINE seen in an earlier scene.

He comes up with the change the bus clerk left him and, dying for a drink in this heat, inserts the coin. Though still under considerable pressure from all sides, this lucky break with Sergei seems like it might be the beginning of something new today -- some luck.

The icy cold soda bottle shoots out. Bobby raises it to his lips, about to taste it, about to relax for once. Violently it explodes out of his hands as he doubles over in blinding pain from a KIDNEY PUNCH. He stumbles forward into the soda machine, gasping. The legs of his assailant are close to him, but the face is unseen.

Bobby doubles his agony as his bandaged left stump takes the brunt of the blow into the machine, re-opening the wound. Blood starts to seep through the bandage.

BOBBY

Ow!

Bobby crumples to the ground as TOBY now towers over him with his fists curled and a snarl on his lips.

TOBY

Get up, Mister! Don't ever let it be said Toby Tucker beat the living shit out of someone without giving them a fair chance.

BOBBY (gasping)

What the hell are you doing? You fucking psycho!

TOBY

I'm doing what any man would do if he'd been offended. I'm stompin' your ass.

BOBBY

You idiot! You don't even know what you're fighting over!

TOBY

My honor, that's what I'm fighting over. Now get up off the ground, or do I have to whoop you where you lie?

JENNY comes running up the street.

JENNY

Toby! Toby Tucker, leave him alone!

TOBY

You stay away, Jenny. I aim to mess him up, and that ain't a thing for a woman to see.

Jenny runs to Bobby and cuddles him where he lays.

JENNY

Don't be afraid of him none. I don't care what he does to you, we can still be together.

BOBBY

Get away from me!

Bobby sees his bus ticket on the ground. He grabs for it, but Toby beats him to it.

TOBY

Now, what's this?

BOBBY

Give it to me!

TOBY

Mexico? You going to Mexico?

BOBBY

I'm leaving. You never have to see me again. Just please, give me the ticket!

TOBY

This means something to you? Jenny means something to me.

Toby sticks the ticket in his mouth and chews it up whole.

BOBBY

Nooo!

TOBY (between bites)

I'm gonna beat you so bad you gonna be eatin' nothing but soup the erst of your days. Rain dogs is gonna be prettier than you when I'm done. I'm gonna mess you up so bad you gonna make your own momma sick.

I'm gonna ...

Toby's words drift to Bobby from a million miles away. The world around him is like a dream, or a nightmare. A primal rage wells inside of Bobby that rises up in a howl as he swings the soda bottle up out of nowhere across Toby's head, smashing him backwards. Then he lands blow after blow with his right hand on the boy's face and head.

Jenny screams:

JENNY

Stop it! You're killing him!

Jenny grabs Bobby's arm, literally hanging all her weight on it, stopping him from striking Toby again.

JENNY

You're killing him! Toby!? Toby!?

Jenny sinks to the ground and cuddles Toby. Bobby stands. He looks at Toby, then at his bloodied knuckles in disbelief. His bandage is soaked with his own blood, but his adrenaline numbs the pain.

JENNY

You killed him! You killed him!

She wails in the background as he backs away, around the corner, into Main Street, crossing to where the PHONE BOOTH is.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - LATE DAY

BOBBY is on the phone.

BOBBY

Hello, Grace? It's Bobby.

INTERCUTS TO:

INT. MCKENNA HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

GRACE, in the kitchen, is also on the phone.

GRACE (coolly)

I thought you'd be on your way to Vegas by now. Is there something you wanted?

BOBBY

I wanted to talk.

GRACE(V.O.)

I don't think we have anything to talk about.

BOBBY
What about us?

GRACE
There is no us, remember?

BOBBY
Except I can't get you out of my head, Grace.
(beat)

GRACE
Stop it.

BOBBY (V.O.)
Why? Am I making you hot, or does the truth scare you?

GRACE
Because I know you're full of shit.

BOBBY
I mean it, Grace. I'm getting out of here, and I want to take you with me.

GRACE (V.O.)
I thought you couldn't get your car.

BOBBY
I could if I had Jake's money.

GRACE (V.O.)
Is that what changed your mind? The money?

BOBBY
I don't give a damn about the money. I want you, and I want to get us out of this shithole. There's only one way to do that.

Pause.

GRACE
Are you sure?... About me, I mean?

BOBBY
I came back for you; this morning I came back. Before I even knew about the money. You're what I want.
(then)

The only reason I stormed off is because you spooked me talking about Jake. But I've had nothing but time to think about it. It keeps coming back to you and me and us getting the hell out of here. But we've got to get the money, baby. We get the money, I get the car, then we get the hell out.

GRACE

You said you couldn't kill anybody.

BOBBY

We don't have to kill him. Just knock him out and tie him up 'till we get away.

(beat)

It was your idea, remember? I'm doing this for you. I'm doing this so you can fly...fly like a bird.

Grace bites at a nail and fidgets, but says nothing.

BOBBY (V.O.)

Grace ... Grace?

GRACE

After dark. I'll leave the back door unlocked.

She quickly hangs up the phone.

Bobby also hangs up the phone, an unreadable expression on his face.

INT. MCKENNA LIVING ROOM - LATE DAY

JAKE sits in an easy chair reading a paper. Puffs of smoke from his pipe rise from behind the paper and hang like a cloud over his head. GRACE stands in the doorway, body stiff and arms crossed, staring at him.

JAKE

Who was that on the phone?

GRACE

Wrong number.

JAKE

You spent a long time talking for a wrong number. But then you make friends so easily. Don't you, Grace?

Grace has no answer for that, so she says nothing. A long moment passes, then:

GRACE

I put up new drapes, Jake.

JAKE

I know. I was here when your apprentice was helping you. Remember?

GRACE

You never said anything. About the drapes.

JAKE

They look nice.

GRACE

You haven't even looked at them once.

Jake lowers the paper, looks at the drapes.

JAKE

They look nice.

GRACE

I picked them out for you, Jake. I thought you would like the colors.

JAKE (softly, admiring)

You look just like your mama when you move like that against the light.

Grace stares at the CHAIN now visible around Jake's neck that disappears under his shirt. She knows that hidden there is a key, and she fixes on it intently.

JAKE

What the hell you looking at, girl?

GRACE

Nothing, Jake. Absolutely nothing.

EXT. DESERT - EVENING

The SUN is setting. It strikes the horizon sending a ripple of golden light through the sky.

EXT. PORCH OF HOUSE - EVENING

A MAN dances in the evening light with a small child in his arms.

EXT. CORNER OF HOUSE - EVENING

A DOG and CAT huddle together in sleep.

EXT. POLICE STATION - EVENING

SHERIFF VIRGIL POTTER is tossing horseshoes with his DEPUTIES.

EXT. MCKENNA HOUSE - EVENING

GRACE watches the sun going down outside her house, cradling herself in her arms. A desert wind gently caresses her.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

The BLIND MAN, along with his dead DOG, sits on the side of the street.

BLIND MAN

Well, that's it. Sun's going down. People go home, trade stories over dinner. They'll talk about the day, about the heat, laugh about something crazy it made them do. They'll kiss, sleep a few hours, then do it all over again.

BOBBY now appears next to the blind man holding two Dr. Peppers. He hands one to the blind man, takes a sip of the other one, and offers him his own change.

BOBBY

The day wasn't so bad. We all got through it all right.

BLIND MAN (giving back the change)

Keep it.

There's a suggestion of cockiness in Bobby, feeling his luck coming back with the night. His humour is enhanced by his POV down the street:

As DARRELL, with his dilapidated truck, readies SERGEI'S convertible for towing.

BLIND MAN (OVER)

Ain't over yet. Night is part of day; separate, but equal. Night is when you let your guard down; when you see things in the shadows and hear things in the dark.

BOBBY

Difference between you and me, old man, is

I see the glass half full, you see it half empty.

BLIND MAN

Night is when you want to sleep, but the dry heat keeps you tossin' and turnin'. It's when you wish the sun was bakin' high in the sky so you could see what it is you're afraid of.

BOBBY

You afraid of the dark?

BLIND MAN

Afraid of it? Boy, I live in the dark. All cause of a woman who made me this way. People are afraid of what they can't see. I can't see nuthin', so it's all the same to me. Kiss from a beautiful woman, kissy kissy kiss, a lick from a dog, slurp, slurp, the kiss of death (he makes a strange sound). It's all the same to me.

BOBBY

So, we're all just floating along like twigs in a stream, so enjoy the ride. Is that it?

BLIND MAN

More or less.

BOBBY

Not this twig, friend. I got plans.

BLIND MAN

Nothing makes the Great Spirit laugh harder than a man's plans. We all got plans. I planned on seeing all my life. I know you didn't plan on straying into town.

BOBBY

No and I don't plan on sticking around either.

BLIND MAN

Well, don't say I didn't warn you when things go your way.

BOBBY

You got a lotta philosophy in you, old timer but you don't fool me for one second with all this blind man crap. One minute

you lost your eyes in Vietnam, next it's the joint. Now it's a woman? I'm hep to you.

The Blind Man slowly lifts his glasses, showing his EYES at last. Where his eyes should be are scars and dead flesh. An ugly sight that even takes Bobby back a step.

BLIND MAN

Used to be a young smartass like you. Then I got smart with the wrong man's daughter. Got some acid poured on my peepers for my trouble. You know human beings ain't always just human -- they got animals living inside 'em too...People give spare change to war heroes not fools. All fools get is pity. May not have eyes, but I see. And you, boy?

The Blind Man puts his glasses back on.

BLIND MAN

You got my pity.

BOBBY (doesn't believe him)

Hope she was worth it.

BLIND MAN

Oh, she was worth it. She was worth every black minute since.

Bobby looks at his watch, gets ready to go, drops a coin into the Blind Man's cup.

BOBBY

Time's up. Any last words of wisdom?

BLIND MAN

Things ain't always the way they seem. You got to ask yourself: is it worth it? Day comes Earthmaker is going to look in your fucking heart! Then you better know what it is you're doing. Are you a human being -- or just one of them hungry ghosts out there floatin' around?

Bobby walks away, smiling.

BOBBY

You are crazy, you know. Be seeing you, old man.

BLIND MAN

You know I won't be seeing you.

The Blind Man lifts his sunglasses and peers into the cup as if he sees. We don't really know. He reaches into the cup and pulls out the coin Bobby tossed in.

BLIND MAN

Cheap bastard. Gives me back my own money... Well, Jesse, time's up, let's go for a walk.

The Blind Man now stands up and pulls the seeing-eye dog's harness. The DOG struggles to its feet and they walk off down the street together.

INT. MCKENNA HOUSE - NIGHT

GRACE stands by the back door staring at the bolt lock. JAKE yells to her from another room.

JAKE(O.C.)

What the hell you doin', Grace? Are you coming to bed, or aren't you?

For a moment Grace's hand wavers above the lock. Suddenly, like a snake striking, her hand shoots out and unlocks the bolt. Just as quickly she turns from the door and heads to the bedroom.

EXT. YARD - MCKENNA HOUSE - NIGHT

A LIGHT is on in the bedroom window. After a moment it dims and the house is dark, silhouetted against the horizon by moonlight. BOBBY steps into frame, carrying an iron pipe.

INT. MCKENNA HOUSE/BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

We start close on GRACE -- a KEY slapping against her buttocks as bedsprings groan. We reveal Grace copulating on all fours with JAKE from behind.

JAKE

Ya little bitch, you like it don't you! You like it this way -- rough and hard. Gotta go fuck around on me, like your Mama, but you always gotta come home to Daddy, don't you, cause you know Daddy's the best.

GRACE

Yes, yes, hit me...beat me, please.

JAKE

You been a bad girl, Grace. You took my heart from your Mama, didn't ya? You betrayed her! Like you did me. There ain't no forgivin' ya, girl!

GRACE

Oh no! Oh please forgive me, Papa!

JAKE

You broke her heart! You broke your Mama's heart. You stole me! That's right. Fuck it away. But it ain't ever goin' away, cause your Mama -- she's like a hungry ghost baby, she won't go away, she won't leave ya alone.

GRACE

No! No! Please!

He hits her. Harder.

In a strange flashback of his mind, he now sees Grace's MAMA beneath him, receiving his punishment.

He stops, abruptly. He can't go on. Fear coming into his eyes. He starts to whimper, begging for his punishment and/or forgiveness.

JAKE

Oh baby, I'm so sorry... I'm so sorry...
(he starts to cry)
I didn't mean to hurt you so bad. It just...got away...

He drops down, burying his face between Grace's legs.

JAKE

Forgive me, baby, forgive me!

He hides there from the world that he has created, crying to himself.

Grace has an unreadable expression, but that's certainly not a new occurrence in their strange relationship.

INT. MCKENNA HOUSE/BACKDOOR - NIGHT

The knob of the backdoor twists and the door opens. BOBBY slips quickly through the space and into the house quietly closing the door behind him. It is nearly pitch dark, and he has no bearings. He steps gingerly through the hall, but in the

darkness he bumps into a table nearly knocking over a lamp only to catch it just before it crashes into the floor.

INT. MCKENNA HOUSE/BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

JAKE hears the noise. He raises his head and cocks an ear to the air. She knows who it is, and is concerned; he's too early.

GRACE

What's the matter?

JAKE

You didn't hear something?

GRACE

Yeah, I heard a key slapping against my ass.

JAKE

There's someone in the house.

GRACE (nervous)

Maybe...maybe the wind blew something over (encouraging him to continue). Come on baby, keep going.

Jake climbs out of bed, throwing on some pants, reaching into a drawer in the chest of clothes, pulling out a small dark metallic OBJECT.

GRACE (realizing)

What's that? Jake -- where's you get that?

JAKE

Relax baby. Stay here.

He goes to the door. She follows, tries to block the door.

GRACE

Jake, don't go out there. Call the sheriff.

JAKE

Shhhh! Just like your Mama, always scared of things...

He maneuvers her aside and slips out the door into the corridor.

INT. LIVING ROOM/MCKENNA HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

Crowbar in one hand, BOBBY makes his way slowly through the living room, banging against the edge of a table. He hops silently in pain, then waits at the door to the next room and

listens. Hearing nothing he slowly pokes his head into the darkness. A moment later Bobby backs from the door and we see the barrel of his own black .9mm BARETTA pressed against his forehead. JAKE appears now, backing him into the living room. He switches on a LAMP.

JAKE

Well, well. As I live and breathe. I didn't expect to be seeing the like of you again. Thought you'd be long on your way by now.

Jake continues to press the gun to Bobby's head.

BOBBY

That's my gun...(then) That fucking Darrell!

JAKE

I like Darrell. He may be an idiot, but he's my half brother. We own Harlin's together, yeah, that little redneck manages to get paid no matter how things work out.

BOBBY (realizing)

You been workin' me the whole time.

JAKE

I guess this is what they call "ironee"? Hunh?

BOBBY

It's not what you think, Jake.

JAKE

No, but it don't matter anyway when you're lying there with your brains all over my carpet and I'm telling Sheriff Potter about this drifter, didn't have enough money to fix his car. And Darrell happened to find his gun, and through maybe this drifter heard old Jake got some money stashed away, and figgered he might try to break in and steal it!

BOBBY

Wait a minute. Just listen to me...

JAKE

...And he thought he'd clock old Jake McKenna and turn his brains into wall paper...and then maybe borrow \$200 or

\$20,000, or \$200,000...

BOBBY (very serious)
That's not the reason I'm here, Jake.

JAKE
There's another reason? It better be good.

INT. HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

GRACE makes her way down the hall in a nightgown, and now hides in shadow, listening.

BOBBY (V.O.)
I came for Grace.

JAKE (V.O.)
You came to take my wife from me?

INT. LIVING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

BOBBY (sincere)
No. I came to kill her.

INT. HALLWAY

GRACE'S eyes get real narrow and angry.

JAKE (V.O.)
Shhh! Liar.

BOBBY (V.O.)
It's the truth, Jake.

INT. LIVING ROOM

JAKE
That's a thick change of heart from this afternoon.

BOBBY
Maybe I don't like being played, like she played us today. Maybe I don't like that at all, Jake. I'm just pissed enough, maybe I'll rip the neck off my own grandmother.

JAKE
You have a lot of talk in you, whole lot of talk.

BOBBY
Damn it, Jake. There is a guy coming to

kill me, and if it comes down to me or Grace, then I pick Grace. You were going to give me thirteen-thousand. Give me two-hundred. I'll kill her and dump the body where no one will ever find it. She showed me the perfect place. There won't be enough left for an autopsy. But I need the the money. I've got to have the money.

Jake is silent. He takes his time thinking. Finally:

JAKE
She's in the bedroom.

INT. HALLWAY

GRACE, distressed, starts backing off towards the bedroom.

INT. LIVING ROOM

BOBBY stares at the automatic in JAKE's hand.

BOBBY
Wanna give me my gun?

Jake laughs, a "don't even think about it" look.

JAKE
A strangling'll do just fine. Go to work.

Bobby holds up his eight fingers with a "you try" look. Jake shrugs. Bobby points to the crowbar on the carpet.

BOBBY
How 'bout the pipe?

JAKE (sarcastic)
She's got a slender neck.

Bobby turns and walks towards the bedroom. Jake follows into an adjoining room.

JAKE
Hold on a second! Come here!

Bobby turns to Jake, who is suddenly extremely upset.

JAKE
How the hell did you know where the bedroom's at?

BOBBY

What are you talking about!

JAKE (getting closer)
This morning when I came in on you and Grace, you swore you hadn't been near the bedroom. Now you make straight for it.

INT. HALLWAY

GRACE returns to listen. This thing is like a seesaw battle of wills.

BOBBY (V.O.)
Come on, Jake --

JAKE (V.O.)
Don't Jake me boy! It's a big house. You probably didn't even make it out to the desert this afternoon...

INT. LIVING ROOM

JAKE has come right up on BOBBY in a rage.

JAKE
...Or did you just ply the afternoon away between my sheets putting your lips all over her, you little horndog...

BOBBY (changing tactics)
What difference does it make if I slept with her? We're gonna kill her.

JAKE
You're right! I don't give a damn about her. But killing her's one thing. Fucking her behind my back, that's another!

Suddenly Jake swings his arm, clipping Bobby across the side of the head with the pistol and opening another bloody gash.

Bobby crumbles to his knees, crying out.

Jake suddenly grabs Bobby by the hair, forcing his face back and smearing his lips with his own in a vengeful kiss. The blood from Bobby's wound runs down to his lips and mixes with Jake's lips.

JAKE
Now you've tasted both of us!

He pulls back the hammer on the gun and levels it at Bobby's

head. Bobby sees it coming, plays his last card on his knees.

BOBBY

O.K.! I admit it! I fucked her! But it's her you have to worry about, not me! She wants you dead, Jake. She wants you dead and she wants your money.

JAKE (hesitates)

What are you babbling about?

BOBBY (talking fast)

Think about it! How do you think I got in here? Did you hear any glass break? Did you hear a door splinter?

INT. HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

GRACE listening.

BOBBY (V.O.)

How did the evening end? After you went to bed did she linger a bit? Maybe just long enough to leave the door unlocked? Is that what happened?

INT. LIVING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Like an old rag, JAKE gradually soaks all this up becoming heavier with the weight of the knowledge.

JAKE

You'd tell me anything to save your pathetic life.

BOBBY

You know what kind of woman Grace is, Jake. You know how badly she wants to get the fuck out of Superior. What's she to you, Jake; a woman who wants you dead? Let me kill her. All I want is two-hundred dollars to get out of here with.

JAKE

Two-hundred dollars?

BOBBY

Two-hundred dollars...I'll do it! I'll kill her!

A beat. Jake stares down at Bobby on the floor.

JAKE

Sweet Christ, I'd be doing the world a favor, ridding it of the likes of you. Get your miserable ass off the floor. You're positively pathetic... Go on, go kill Grace.

Bobby slowly stands.

JAKE

I'm not letting you walk for nothing. Two hundred dollars. Do it, boy. Kill her.

Bobby goes.

INT. HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

GRACE bolts back to the bedroom, the camera following her as she flies.

INT. BEDROOM HALLWAY - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

BOBBY walks it. His POV -- the door. Every step seems freighted.

INT. BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

GRACE is in a quandary. How many seconds before Bobby walks in to kill her? Or can he really kill her? She's not sure.

She looks around the room frantically. Picks up a lamp, puts it down. She looks quickly through her closet, rummages below in the boxes. Suddenly she finds it.

A dangerous looking Indian HATCHET with a feather hanging off its bindings. It's a formidable piece of iron, quite capable of splitting a skull or impaling flesh.

Grace hears the footsteps just outside the door. She runs behind the door.

A moment later, the bedroom door creaks open and BOBBY quietly enters, approaching the bed. We sense the doubt in his eyes as to whether he can kill her.

In a reverse POV, Bobby sees the outline of Grace in the bed as victim...closer, closer. He now lifts the edge of the bedcover but sees a blanket bunched up to resemble a human figure.

He suddenly hears a foot fall behind him, then he feels her presence. He spins.

She's directly behind him, hatchet raised. His life is in her

hands.

His eyes, locked in an eternal moment.

Her eyes, the hatchet.

SNAP CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

As JAKE, anxiously torn, waits, there is a LOUD CRASH, followed by SOUNDS of struggle, of murder, of death. Then...

GRACE

Jake!

It is a desperate cry for help. Jake can't help himself. He breaks into a roaring run down the hall to save his beloved.

JAKE

Grace!!

INT. BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

JAKE bulls into the bedroom. It's a mess, furniture overturned, sheets and blankets all over the floor. The lights broken. Waiting for him, face down on the floor, is BOBBY'S BODY in a pool of liquid. A broken bottle lies nearby. Bobby's body heaves in its final death throes, and then shudders quiet... Over there, by the bed, is GRACE, who still clutches the HATCHET. The look on her face is pure shock.

JAKE

Well...looks like you got him, Grace.
That's good...that's real good. He must of slipped past me, but you got him. Looks like that drifter from this morning. Got to be careful who you make friends with, sweetheart.

Jake eyes the weapon in Grace's hand.

JAKE

Why don't you put that down? It's all over now. Put it down.

Grace eyes the gun in Jake's hand.

JAKE

Go on, girl. Put it down.

What choice does Grace have? She lets the hatchet clank to the

floor.

JAKE

Aww, that's my Grace: Not about to let someone get the best of her. That's what I love about you. As dangerous as you are unpredictable.

behind Jake, the lifeless BOBBY rises up from the floor, very much alive, and clobbers Jake with a golf club. Jake is staggered, but he's one tough old customer as he manages to spin slowly, gun still in one hand, as if to fire.

Before he can, Grace grabs up the hatchet from the floor and drives it straight into his back.

He gurgles, stunned from both sides, but it's like trying to kill Rasputin. He still has the gun as Bobby jumps him from the rear, trying to get his neck in a chokehold. The gun FIRES once, discharging into the wall. The hatchet is ripped from his back.

Grace watches as the two men bang into the walls in a rugged rodeo-type fight, Jake seeking to dislodge Bobby off his back. An expression of fear and excitement in her eyes.

Finally the two men go crashing to the ground, rolling around, Bobby maintaining his stranglehold, but calling to her, his hands full.

BOBBY

Grace, goddamit, do something!

Jake's eyes rolls up at her like a beaching whale, pleading for help.

JAKE

Grace...?

She commits. Jumping into the fray, it's not clear whose side she's really on as the three of them roll across the floor, strangling, biting, hitting, spitting, scratching, gasping. It's a Guignol, but the pressure from Bobby's forearm is taking its toll on Jake. Trying to bite Jake, Grace bites Bobby instead, but then she scratches Jake's face. Jake is grabbing her hard as Bobby chokes him, trying to use her to leverage himself away. But she manages to rip herself from his grip and scrambles on her knees across the floor.

She grabs the hatchet. And stands, moving back towards the two men locked on the floor. Bobby looks up at her, hatchet in hand, no longer sure which way she'll go.

Jake, however, gasping for air, eyes bulging, spittle dripping from his mouth, looks at Grace with some inner certainty that she will help him. He gasps the words.

JAKE

Help me, Grace, help...

GRACE

Like you helped her, Jake?

Grace stands there, deciding, the power of the hatchet in her hands. She raises it suddenly over the two men.

It flashes downwards. Deep into the gut of her husband Jake, almost transfixing him to the floor.

In the silence that follows, Jake's eyes roll up to meet hers. But all she has for him is a cold, distant stare.

Jake's head drops as the life rushes out of him. Bobby falls back from the body puffing and dripping with sweat.

BOBBY

What the hell'd you wait for?

She doesn't answer, turbulence in her face. He rolls Jake's body off, upset. She may have made it a murder, but he was part of it, and he feels the shift in himself. They're both in new territory, feeling an apartness between them.

Suddenly JAKE gasps, still alive! It is too much for Bobby. He grabs the hatchet and plunges it down on Jake, silencing him one last time.

Grace is pushing the bed away from the wall, slipping down on her knees and prying open several floorboards.

GRACE

The money's right here! Get the key!

BOBBY

No! You get it!

He doesn't want to get close to Jake. Grace coldly runs over to his corpse, ripping the chain, key and all, from the neck. The action pulls Jake's head up, then she lets it thump back on the floor. She runs back to the floorboards.

The top of a thick steel floor safe is revealed.

Bobby watches -- his whole life, it seems, hanging on the outcome.

With the key, she opens the safe. Inside are rolled-up bundles of cash -- in hundred dollar denominations. She looks up at him, offering it as she reaches in for more. Bobby also gets down on his hands and knees and grabs more and more, sucked into the fever of freedom, far more money than he lost at the grocery store, overcome now with emotions of fear and freedom.

They see each other.

GRACE

Didn't I tell you?

BOBBY (plunging into the cash)

There must be 150, 200 thousand here!
Goddamnit Grace, you were right!

GRACE

We done it, Bobby. Oh my God!

They laugh excitedly and start kissing, rolling in the stacks of cash, some of which sticks to Bobby's sweating back. The day didn't turn out so bad after all for Bobby.

GRACE

Fuck me baby!

BOBBY (looking at Jake)

What about him?

GRACE

Let him watch. I want him to know what he's missing.

As they consummate their violent relationship for the first time, Jake's lifeless eyes watch them.

EXT. MCKENNA HOUSE - LATER NIGHT

The LIGHT in the bedroom window is low candlelight, but we sense something watching them. GRACE's silhouette moves across a window.

BOBBY now comes out of the house, cautious, walking down the driveway.

He stops, thinks, and walks back to open the hood of GRACE'S JEEP.

He reaches into the ENGINE and disconnects something, then closes the hood and walks on.

EXT. HARLIN'S GARAGE - NIGHT

BOBBY walks up to the SHACK near the garage and bangs on the door. A light goes on in the window. DARRELL shouts out.

DARRELL (O.C.)

What you want?

BOBBY

Open up!

DARRELL (O.C.)

We're closed. Come back when the sun comes up.

Bobby, in a hurry to get back should Grace pull any tricks, bangs and kicks against the door. Darrell yanks the door wide.

DARRELL

What the hell ... oh, it's you. Might've figgered. Listen I got a waitress coming over. What do you want?

BOBBY

I want my car.

DARRELL

You got the money?

Bobby pulls the money from his hip pocket and hands it to Darrell. The mechanic fingers it suspiciously.

DARRELL

Two-hundred dollars in hundred-dollar bills. And this morning you was broke.

BOBBY

That's none of your business. Get the keys.

DARRELL

I don't want no dirty money. I run an honest business.

BOBBY

Yeah, like Al Capone on tax day. Get the keys?

DARRELL (pause)

Well, there's a \$50 overnight storage charge we got to talk about.

Bobby is ready at first to explode, but then just laughs out loud. You got to give it to a guy like Darrell. He holds up a \$100 bill.

BOBBY

All I got's a hundred, Darrell. You got change?

DARRELL

No.

BOBBY

Figgers. There's a scratch on the hood and how much you make selling my gun? Deduct it.

Bobby pulls the hundred back from Darrell's grasp.

DARRELL (going to get the keys)

Don't know nothing about no gun.

BOBBY

Course you don't. Tell me something Darrell. Forty thousand people die every day! How come none of them are you?

DARRELL (throws him the keys)

I think you know where to find her.

BOBBY

And the trunk key.

DARRELL (pulls out the trunk key)

Topped off the tank for you. No charge. Just my way of doing business.

BOBBY (jovial, confident now)

Listen up good, Darrell. I'm getting outta this shithole. You're staying! And one little peep outta you -- remember that gun makes you part of the food chain. Your prints are all over it. I'd be awful careful whose rectum I was pointing my finger in, Darrell.

Bobby hops in the car, a free man. As Darrell glares at him, bewildered and frightened at the same time.

EXT. MCKENNA HOUSE - NIGHT

BOBBY turns the MUSTANG up the drive. THE HEADLIGHTS cut the darkness and land on an empty patch where Grace's jeep had been parked. Bobby jumps from the Mustang and runs around frantically. His look is devastated. He falls to his knees, about to sob when:

GRACE opens the front door and pokes her head out, putting out

several suitcases.

GRACE

Bobby? What the hell's the matter with you?

BOBBY

I ... nothing. I just stubbed my toe on a rock. Hurt like hell.

GRACE

I got the money all packed. I put the jeep and his caddy in the garage. People'll think maybe me and Jake went away. Buy us some time...I know a back road we can take.

BOBBY

Good thinking. (looking at her four bags) What's all this?

GRACE

I'm not coming back.

BOBBY (accepting)

Awright, let's go. I want to be fifty miles from here before the sun comes up.

GRACE

Funny thing; the jeep wouldn't start. I had to push it.

BOBBY (dryly)

Funny thing... I'll get the bags.

EXT. MCKENNA HOUSE - LATER NIGHT

Bobby's MUSTANG is backed towards the front of the house. We see a silhouette of BOBBY and GRACE carrying something wrapped in a BLANKET and dumping it in the trunk.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A lone pair of HEADLIGHTS illuminate the night as the Mustang cruises through the dark. As the lights brighten the screen we:

FADE TO:

INT./EXT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

GRACE sits next to BOBBY peering out the windshield, clutching the money in a backpack. She's humming an Indian song.

BOBBY

I can't see it.

GRACE

It should be just up ahead. Hold on ...
there! There it is!

A SIGN illuminated by the HEADLIGHTS. It reads: YOU ARE
LEAVING SUPERIOR. THANKS FOR VISITING.

Grace lets out a scream of joy, leans over and hugs him.

GRACE

Oh, God! I can't believe it. I'm out.
I'm finally out!

The MUSTANG begins to swerve along the road.

BOBBY

Hey! Take it easy. Want to get us killed?

GRACE

You don't know what it feels like to be
free of that place.

BOBBY

I don't know about that?

GRACE

You spent a day in Superior. I wasted my
entire life there. I feel like someone just
took a million pounds off my shoulders.

BOBBY

We've still got some dead weight to get rid of.

GRACE

Can't we just dump him fast someplace?

BOBBY

I want a place where only the vultures will
find him...(then) It'll be over soon,
Grace.

GRACE

Then will you take me on your friends' boat
with you?

BOBBY

I'm not sailing his boat.

GRACE

But I thought --

BOBBY

We're going to buy a boat of our own baby,
and sail it wherever we want to go.

GRACE

Anywhere?

BOBBY

What the hell? Why not? Where should we go?

GRACE

Hawaii. I've read all about it. I've
dreamed of going there and just lying on
the beach while the water licked up against
my feet. Oh, God. I'd kill to go there.

BOBBY

You already have.

She gives him a funny look.

BOBBY

You know I thought you'd left me back
there.

GRACE

What are you talking about?

BOBBY (emotional)

When I got back from the garage, and your
jeep wasn't there, I thought you'd gone and
left me and taken the money.

(off her look)

...Cause I never had any luck with women,
Grace. You don't know what I been through.
The shit I've taken. I thought you were
like the rest of 'em... but when you came
out of the house... well you're here Grace
and we might be starting in the shit but
we're starting where I never been --
together with someone -- together with you
Grace.

She responds with a luminous smile.

GRACE

I love you Bobby.

He looks back at her with trust and love in his eyes.

BOBBY

We're gonna pull this off, Grace.

Just then a HEADLIGHT rakes them from the rear as we hear, again, the ominous crackle of a POLICE RADIO and the short brutal "Whoop" of the siren, as Sheriff Potter's VEHICLE rolls up quickly behind them. Grace's face is caught like a surprised deer in the headlamps.

GRACE

Oh, my God!
(then)
Don't stop!

Bobby is in a bind. The siren whoops again. The lights flash to highbeam.

BOBBY

He must've seen us swerving on the road,
that's all, just gonna give us a ticket for
swerving...

But even Bobby has trouble believing that as the POLICE VEHICLE pulls out sharply alongside his and SHERIFF POTTER motions to him aggressively to pull over on the shoulder.

SHERIFF (into loudspeaker)

Pull over, goddamnit, pull over!

GRACE

Keep going!

She seems to be panicking. Bobby pulls over.

BOBBY

Fuck this!...Just shut up, Grace. We done
nothing! Be cool. Let me do the talking. He
doesn't know anything.

His vehicle pulled up on the shoulder in front of them, the Sheriff gets out, shining his power flashlight into their faces.

BOBBY (starts)

'Evening Sheriff, sorry bout that but this
jackrabbit...

Bobby has no time to react as the Sheriff is suddenly there at his window, jerking his door open, angry. A GUN in his hand, pointed at them, his eyes on Grace.

SHERIFF

You had to fuck him, didn't you!

GRACE (nervous cool)
I would never do that to you, baby... He
killed Jake -- said he'd kill me if I
didn't come with him. All he wants is the
money.

Bobby looks at her. He cannot believe what he just heard.

BOBBY
What!

SHERIFF (flipping, yelling)
Don't lie to me!

Grace knows the jam is up.

GRACE
OK...but he never made me cum! Really
Virgil, I was only doing what I had to do
so we could be free. Just like we talked
about. It meant nothing.

A pause. Virgil wants to kill her, but he also wants her back
badly.

BOBBY
You fucking him too Grace? Is everybody
fucking everybody in this town?

She ignores him. Her attention on the backpack with the money
between her legs -- the gun is there, inside an outer flap of
the bag.

SHERIFF
You fuck this guy -- get him to do your
dirty work and you think you can take the
money and dump me?

GRACE
No baby, you got it wrong.

SHERIFF
This road don't go to Globe, Grace -- where
were you going to meet me?

His flashlight on the four suitcases in the backseat. She
doesn't have an answer to that one.

GRACE
It's not like that it... Look, Virgil, I
got the money here.

She gets out of the car on her side, comes around to him, the pack of money slung on her shoulder, hard to see in the dark.

SHERIFF (hurt)

Oh Grace, you can say what you want...but, I watched you fuck that pervert for years while you're telling me you loved me? What happened to going to Milwaukee together? You and me -- gonna open up the finest sporting goods store that city ever did see? Get us a place on the north shore, by the lake? Season Brewer tickets! Just you and me, Grace. What happened?

GRACE

All talk, that's all you did was talk, and all I did was sit around getting older waiting for you to free me! You never did nothin' Virgil, you're weak! (pointing to Bobby) He did!

The Sheriff, deeply wounded, casts a hot vicious gaze on Bobby.

SHERIFF

This is some girl you and me got here Bobby, yessir, an excellent cocksuck too, wouldn't you say? (back at Grace)... Course you had a lotta practice haven't you darling, going way back to your crazy mama!

GRACE (deadly)

Shut up, Virgil! Take your share of the money. It's not so bad.

SHERIFF

I don't want the fuckin' money! I'm not gonna give up everything I got for a lousy 50,000 dollars. It's you. You Grace or nothing. The whole thing... I want you to be my wife...(hopeful). What do you way Grace?

GRACE

You sound just like Jake... I did see into the future, Virgil, but you weren't in it. Go back to your family. They love you.

Bobby gets out of the car, misunderstanding the situation.

BOBBY (misunderstanding)

Look, we got more. We got \$200,000 at

least. Split it three ways, we all walk away...

The Sheriff snaps and smashes Bobby with his flashlight, knocking him to the ground, kicking him again and again, gathering the psychic force to murder him. Grace tries to approach.

SHERIFF

Shut up, boy! You don't know shit round here! (to Grace) Get back. Did she tell you that story about the bird flying away?

BOBBY (rolling on the ground)

Ow! Look, I ... ow!

GRACE

Stop! Stop it!

SHERIFF (kicking again and again)

Were you going to help her fly away, asshole? What'd you think, you were the first boy to drift through this town she came on to? She tell you the story about old Jake forcing her to marry him? That's a good story... How he killed her crazy Mama?

Bobby in bloody agony. Grace stunned that Virgil would reveal this now publicly.

GRACE

Goddamnit Virgil, stop! Don't!

SHERIFF

...But I bet the story she didn't tell you was the best story of all. How old crazy Jake was really her Papa. And she liked fucking Papa! And now she's killed the sonofabitch! Just like she's gonna kill you!

Grace plunges into the pack, pulls the gun and shoots Virgil across the car in the gut.

GRACE

No...you! You!

The Sheriff flies back onto the road, stunned, not realizing what's happened.

Bobby watches unbelieving as Grace quietly steps up over the Sheriff.

She puts the next round in his nuts, a modern fury enacting ancient wrath.

BOBBY

Grace. No!

The Sheriff is wide-eyed, dying in shock. Grace then fires right at his head in a coup de grace that blows his brains out the back of his head.

Grace and Bobby both stare, then Grace jumps into action, dragging the body. She snaps to Bobby.

GRACE

Help me get him off the road. Into the car!
We'll ditch his car... Get the fuck up!

Bobby stares at her.

EXT./INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

They're driving. GRACE and BOBBY, wordless, each thinking in separate worlds. Grace wipes her hands. The bag with the money between her legs. The Baretta is back in the bag.

BOBBY (finally)

Jesus, did you have to kill him?

GRACE

Get real Bobby. He was gonna kill you and me.

BOBBY

He was in love with you Grace. He would've done what you wanted, you could've made a deal and ...

GRACE

The only deal he had in mind was killing you for Jake's murder and blackmailing me into sucking his dick for the rest of my life... no thanks.

BOBBY

He was a cop, Grace, they never stop looking for you when you kill a cop...

GRACE

He was a scumbag!... He wanted me, Bobby. These guys don't let go! Even when they're dead... (softer) You don't know what it was

like, Bobby. Those two, they were the same.

A silence. The oncoming road.

GRACE

So, aren't you going to ask me?

BOBBY

Ask you what? You mean what kind of horrifying sick shit is coming next?

GRACE

Don't you want to know...? I bet it's burning a hole in your brain just now?

BOBBY

Let it go, baby. It's the past. I got a past...

GRACE

Don't you really want to know? Was Jake my Daddy? Was I fucking my own Daddy? Don't you want to know that?

BOBBY (shouting)

What do you want me to say!

She's yelling, emotionally out of control.

GRACE

Yes! I was! I was fucking Daddy! And I married him!... I married him...okay?

She looks at Bobby, forces him to look at her. Finally:

BOBBY

Why?

GRACE

I don't know why!

She drops back in her seat. Tears come.

GRACE

All I wanted was to be a kid... He took that from me... They all did... (very quietly, dangerously) They treated me like meat. A piece of meat. Fuck me. Blow me. Bend over. Stick their fingers up my ass... Fuck them! Fuck the whole town! They deserved to die!

A pause.

BOBBY

And us Grace? What do we deserve?

GRACE (crying quietly to herself)

"Nin chonk, nin chonk," my Mama used to say in Apache. "Your worst is doing this to you," she said, "your worst has killed you." And "Be go tsee" -- "you will find out the result of what you have done..." Just when you think it's over, when you've gotten away, it begins. Cause you never get away.

Bobby stares straight ahead at the oncoming road. Can he still love her? She seems to be reading his thoughts, like she said she could.

GRACE

It's easy to judge someone else when you don't know nothing about it... I'm Apache, Bobby. You don't eat what I eat. You don't see what I see. Don't judge me.

A silence. Two former lovers in the dark of a car moving through the strangeness of an Arizona desert at night.

BOBBY

I don't want to think anymore.

GRACE (quietly)

Then drive...

The lights of the car fade until there is nothing but darkness.

THE SUN COMES UP:

EXT. CANYON - END SPOT - DAWN

In the vast reaches of a deserted canyon, where VULTURES circle in a hot white sky, we find the MUSTANG parked at the edge of a drop. We hear the SOUND of a body being dragged.

D.J. (V.O.)

...Nobody's sure where it was heading so fast but the way it hit the semi, it won't be getting home now! Hey area weather is gonna be hot! Hot! Hot! Then cold! Cold! Cold! Just like yesterday. Just like every day. Some surprise, huh? So if you're planning on anything, don't. You don't like

the weather, just wait one minute. Got any brains, get up to Alaska and get yourself some trailer park where you don't see no desert for miles and miles...

BOBBY (over)

Right there... Drop it there. I got it.

BOBBY is giving GRACE instructions as they drop SHERIFF VIRGIL POTTER'S corpse over a drop onto some rocks 30 yards below.

GRACE

See ya, Virgil. God bless.

Bobby pushes him over, his hand hurting. The body crashes below. It's hard work. They head back for the Mustang, to retrieve JAKE'S body in the popped trunk. But Grace notices Bobby glancing at the Baretta now tucked in her waist.

The silence is tense between them, the rocks and gravel crunching under their shoes as they walk.

GRACE (indicates the gun)

Is this what's bothering you Bobby?

BOBBY

No Grace, my hand's bothering me.

GRACE

You think now that Jake's dead, there's all that money there and I don't need you anymore, and I might just sneak up behind you sometime and...pop!

She pulls an imaginary trigger on Bobby, mimicking the recoil of a gun. Bobby is nervous.

GRACE

Don't you think I would've done it if I wanted to? What can I do to make you relax, baby?

BOBBY

You could give me my gun back.

Grace smiles.

GRACE

Why don't we just finish what we started.

She stares down at Jake. She can't help feeling some old feelings. As Bobby walks back to the front of the car, turns off the annoying radio. He watches as she softly prays over Jake,

whose face is concealed by the blanket in which he is rolled.

GRACE (after a moment with Jake)
What do you think happens to someone's
spirit when they die?

BOBBY
I think nothing happens. You're dead meat.
That's it.

GRACE
You don't believe in anything do you,
Bobby?

BOBBY
I believe in this moment, that's all. There
is nothing else.
(lifting Jake by the shoulder)
Come on. He must weigh 300 pounds.

Grace leans into the trunk to take his boots when he makes his
move, quickly, closing on her when she's off guard. He slams her
hard in the face, coldly sending her sprawling to the ground,
dazed.

He steps over her and grabs the gun in her waist, checks it.

She puts her hand to her mouth, feels the blood on her finger
tips. She looks at him and laughs a wild crazed laugh that cuts
into Bobby like a knife.

GRACE
You hit me, Bobby? You hit a woman, you
motherfucker! Didn't your Momma ever teach
you anything...?

Her eyes go to the gun in his hand and she stops laughing. Her
calm is extraordinary, as if expecting to die.

GRACE
Well?

For a moment, Bobby does nothing, then he slips the gun through
his belt.

BOBBY
Well, nothing. We dump Jake, we split the
money, then you're on your own.

GRACE
Don't leave me. I want to say with you,
Bobby.

BOBBY

Why? So when the cops catch up with us you can sell me out again?

GRACE

I was just baiting him! Bobby, I had to tell him that to get his guard down. Just like you told Jake you was going to kill me!

BOBBY

You lied to me all along! Lies, all lies. Your mother, your father, what story are you on now? How come the town didn't know you was his daughter?

GRACE (in pain)

Cause my Mom slept around. A lotta men! Anybody could've been my father. But we knew.

BOBBY (not listening)

Well you got what you wanted all along by fucking me. I wish you had told me the goddamn truth in the first place!

GRACE (screws out)

I didn't want you to know! Don't you... unnerstand?

Bobby's got a headache now. It's too much to understand, too much talk. Too much history has taught him to doubt.

BOBBY

When you're finished with me, I'm next! I been there, baby. I been there with other cunts...sorry, not anymore. I'll take you as far as California. If we can make that. After that you're on your own. Try Mexico. With all this bread, you can live like a queen.

GRACE

I don't want to go to Mexico, Bobby! Please, I really want to be with you. Don't blow this. Don't you think I care about you?

BOBBY

I think you're a lying, back-stabbing psycho bitch, and one day you'll kill me.

But it's nice to know you cared...

The expression on Grace's face changes as rapidly as the desert weather, a coldness passing over and through her.

GRACE

You don't know your own mind. It blocks your heart.

Keeping a wary eye on Grace, Bobby starts hauling Jake out of the trunk.

BOBBY

Give me a hand.

He wrestles Jake up to a sitting position. He grabs a can of beer from a warm six-pack in the trunk and shoves it into a pocket of Jake's coat.

BOBBY

Poor old Jake, a few drinks, a fight with the sheriff over his wife. And both of 'em ended up dead.

Grace takes his boots.

BOBBY

Time to go for a walk, Jake.

GRACE

My mother died in this canyon.

BOBBY

Save the Mom routine, will ya Grace. It doesn't work with me. One, two, three...

They lift the corpse, and with great effort, haul it towards the edge of the drop. As they pause on the way, Bobby, wary of Grace's strange coldness, tries to soften the blow of separation.

BOBBY

Look, it's not so bad we split up. It might be months before they find these guys. If at all. I mean with the mountain lions around here. Remember, if they can't find no bodies, there's no crime... (She doesn't respond.) We'll be in Phoenix by noon. Lose this car, get another one. Texas, Mexico are big countries, all that money Grace, you'll meet someone else, you know, there's a lot of hope with a \$100,000...

They lift Jake again, and move to the edge.

GRACE

Hope is a four-letter word.

BOBBY

But we all need that too. Hold him.

He props Jake at the edge, standing, and transfers the weight onto Grace. Jake's head is on her shoulder.

BOBBY

You make a pretty couple.

It seems he might push them both over but instead takes the gun, wipes it of his prints, and slips it through Jake's belt.

BOBBY

Won this in a poker game in Reno. God knows who it's registered to. You shoulda been more careful, Jake. See you later.

As he takes Jake's weight off Grace and pushes it over the drop.

Grace watches him go, her eyes shifting to Bobby, his back momentarily to her, also watching. She moves towards him.

Bobby turns, slips on the edge.

BOBBY

Now all we got to do is try and--

He feels a blur of motion, almost like a bird, and he is falling...falling, his life coming to an end.

Grace is standing somewhere up above, briefly seen. Did she push him? He doesn't know.

He's stunned as he falls on the rocks next to the bodies of Jake and Virgil. He screams out in sharp pain. His leg feels broken. But he is alive.

Grace walks away, cutting it all off, deeply shaken. She must get away from the past and all these hollow men. She closes the trunk of the Mustang, gets in the driver's seat, reaches for the ignition key. Her hand fumbles for it a moment. It isn't there.

GRACE

Shit!

She sits there. Bobby is calling from below.

BOBBY

Grace! Help me, Grace...! We been through too much together. We've only had one day, but you and me have been through more than most people ever will. I know you were angry at me, and, you know, you were right! I'm sorry I hit you. I was wrong about leaving you. You don't belong in Mexico.

She finally gets out and walks back to the edge of the cliff, looks down.

BOBBY

Thank you. Thank you. I...I knew you wouldn't leave me, Grace.

GRACE

Bobby? Are you all right?

BOBBY

I busted my leg!

GRACE

Can you make it back up?

BOBBY

Grace -- in the trunk of my car is a tow rope. It should reach down here. Go get it, throw it down.

She looks. Of course the trunk is closed. She closed it.

GRACE

Bobby, the trunk...it's locked. Throw the keys up to me. I'll get the rope.

Bobby's eyes pass over Jake a few feet away, his eyes staring upwards in death. They take in the gun still attached to his waist. He knows the trunk wasn't locked when they took Jake out.

BOBBY

I can't throw that far. You got to climb down here and get the keys. You can make it. It's the only way Grace.

Grace looks down at the drop. It's a tough descent but she knows she could make it and get back up as well.

BOBBY

Grace!...Please, Grace! You have to help me.

Grace takes a look around.

GRACE

Okay. I'm coming. Calm down!

She starts down the cliff face. As she descends, he talks deliriously.

BOBBY (off)

I knew you'd help me. I knew you wouldn't leave me baby, cause we're tied together too close. We belong together always.

Grace makes it to the bottom of the drop, and walks cautiously towards Bobby.

GRACE (yelling back, echoing)

Bobby! Don't flip out on me. I can't do this alone. I know you don't trust me, but you gotta pull yourself together, I'm not gonna leave you...I never wanted it to go down like this. It was different with you Bobby. You had dreams like me. You listened... I would've gone anywhere with you, Bobby. We can make this work. I'm sorry...I really am. I didn't wanna hurt you.

Can he believe her? She sounds so sincere this time.

She's heading for the body of Jake. And the gun. Bobby knows that and is already crawling there.

BOBBY (as he crawls)

They're right here, Grace. The keys. Come get me out of here... Know why else I could never leave you?

GRACE

Why's that?

BOBBY

'Cause I love you.

Inching closer.

Closer. They meet at the apex of Jake's corpse.

GRACE

And I love you too.

BOBBY

And love's a funny thing. Sometimes I don't know if I want to love you...

Grace leans close to Bobby. He dangles the keys out in front of her, but she doesn't reach for them. Her eyes go to Bobby. She reaches for him. At that instant Bobby's hands shoot out and clamp hard around her. A sharp gurgle is all that escapes Grace as Bobby twists the life from her, as Jake leers up at them.

BOBBY

...or kill you.

Grace twists and flails in Bobby's hands, but in spite of his bleeding stump, he holds her like a bear trap holds a grizzly.

BOBBY

I love you Grace, but I just can't trust you!

She looks at him, trying to protest, shaking her head. Grace's flailing goes into overdrive. Somewhere in his semi-delirious state, Bobby's eyes might notice the gun at Jake's waist is no longer there.

Grace manages one word:

GRACE

Jake...

BOBBY

He can't help you now, honey!

Bobby is in agony as he kills her, part beast, part lover, he kills that which he loves.

Suddenly, a SHOT is heard. Bobby buckles with the blast, hit in the side. He kills her with one last wrenching thrust of his hands, breaking her neck.

Bobby looks down at Jake's gun, which she clutches in her hand, and sees the hole in his side and the river of blood that flows from it. He manages to stand, looks at Jake; their bodies lying side by side.

Bobby, with great difficulty, claws his way back up the rocks to the car, his fast-flowing wound staining the white rocks with blood.

He makes it to the top and, losing more blood, climbs into the driver's seat. He checks the money in the bag. All there. All his.

As he pulls a huge clot of blood from his side, the vultures circle. Perhaps one, smarter than the others, lands close by. It spooks Bobby but he's okay. He looks in the mirror.

BOBBY

You're still lucky.

He puts the key in the ignition, the engine comes to life.

BOBBY (waves back)

Adios --

Suddenly, the RADIATOR HOSE Darrell installed blows apart loudly. Bobby knows exactly and immediately what it is as a cloud of steam now rolls from under his hood. He shakes his head, frustrated.

BOBBY (sighs)

Oh shit!...(then) Arizona.

He can't help but laugh at his bad luck. As we rise off the desert floor and take flight with the vultures, eventually leaving them all as specks of earth in the vast empty canyons of Arizona.

THE END