

"BUZZARD'S LUCK"

FADE IN

EXT. DAWN - BUZZARD'S LUCK - A SPRAWLING RUSTIC TAVERN

Along an old fashioned hitching rail stand FIVE MEN.

The center man, WOODY, evokes the old west. Boots and denim, lean and rugged. There's a prominent SCAR by his right eye. A toothpick rests comfortably in his mouth.

Disparately, the other FOUR MEN are clean cut and casually dressed. And sporting holstered handguns.

In the dirt lot facing them are SEVEN MOUNTAIN MEN. Despite variations in shape, size, clothing, and hair, they are of a piece. All seven men are armed.

The center man, PAW PAW, is the biggest, with a beard to match. He also appears to be a generation older than the SIX MEN flanking him.

On the ground between them is a WOODEN CRATE containing SIX VINTAGE TOMMY GUNS in mint condition, as well as an abundance of magazine loads for the guns.

A few yards to the left is a NEW SUV with the back open.

To the right is a VINTAGE CADILLAC with the trunk open.

Paw Paw looks in the crate, then looks up.

PAW PAW

We want more.

WOODY

The deal's set.

PAW PAW

Why are you here?

WOODY

Chaperone.

Paw Paw looks at the SUV, where another CRATE is visible in the back, then puts a hard glare on Woody.

PAW PAW

We want more.

Woody smiles sardonically. The four men tense.

The Mountain Men also have their hackles up.

A man in a Green Shirt, standing beside Woody, speaks.

GREEN SHIRT

We have other clients.

Paw Paw scoffs and speaks menacingly.

PAW PAW

You Barneys look comical outta uniform.

The tension is thick. The Mountain Men appear ready to make a move. And Paw Paw appears ready to set them off.

Woody quickly produces and speaks into a cell phone.

WOODY

Billy Joe. Caddie. Right rear tire.

Immediately, the right rear tire of the Cadillac pops, followed by the CRACK of a gunshot.

The Mountain Men, except for Paw Paw, have all pulled their guns and are frantically searching for the shooter.

The four plain clothed men have also pulled their guns.

Woody raises his arms, calling for calm.

PAW PAW

Relax, boys. That shooter is far and away.

All the men calm down, but their weapons remain pulled. No one has taken aim, but all are prepared.

Woody and Paw Paw lock eyes. Woody's eyes narrow.

WOODY

Like I said. The deal's set.

Paw Paw holds his glare, then allows a nasty grin.

PAW PAW

Tit Lip, get the money. Frenchy, you
and Shit Boy change that tire.

TIT LIP grabs one of two bags from the Caddie's trunk.

FRENCHY, who's wearing a Beret, goes for the spare tire.

SHIT BOY, skulking behind Frenchy, glares at Paw Paw.

SHIT BOY

Why can't we have handsome code names.

PAW PAW

Look in the mirror.

Paw Paw has kept his eyes on an unruffled Woody.

PAW PAW

Shaky, you and One Nut check them Tommies.

SHAKY and ONE NUT approach the crate.

SHAKY

You find that nut yet?

ONE NUT

Blow on my shit whistle, won't ya?

The one Mountain Man left, PISS ANT, is small and gangly.

PISS ANT

What am I doing, Paw Paw?

OLD MAN

Keep an eye, Piss Ant.

Piss Ant, all nervous energy, complies.

A disdainful Tit Lip, evincing a slight limp, drops a bag
of cash near the rail. Green Shirt checks it out.

The Tommy Guns pass muster. The tire change goes quickly.

All the while, Woody and Paw Paw keep their stare on.
Both sets of eyes emanate hate, strong and pure.

The spell breaks when the Caddie's trunk is slammed shut.

Woody and his men watch the Mountain Men straggle to the Cadillac. A second car is visible in front of the first.

The second Caddy has what appears to be an automatic weapon mounted in the center of the back seat, judging by the shape of the tarp covering.

The seven men pile into the two cars. From the passenger seat of the second Caddie, Paw Paw looks at the lone empty seat behind him, where a smiley face is painted.

Paw Paw aims a final glare at Woody as the two cars take off. Frenchy, leaning on the tarped weapon, smiles at Woody and his men and waves toward the unseen shooter.

FRENCHY

Big ruckus... averted.

The five men watch the two cars kick up dust as they move on up the road, until there is only dust.

TITLES ROLL - THE TWO CADILLACS TRAVERSE THE LANDSCAPE

EXT. DAY - A REST STOP

A RED PICKUP TRUCK pulls in and parks at the far end, away from a handful of other vehicles.

The Driver gets out. He is tall and lean and wears distinctive round rimmed GLASSES.

The Passenger gets out. He is somewhat stocky and wears a distinctive pork pie HAT.

They move in concert, giving the impression they've done this many times. They drop the tailgate on the truck.

Glasses picks up a cooler while Hat grabs a small table. They set the items on the grass, then each grab a folding chair, which they set up on either side of the table.

Hat opens the cooler and puts two drinks on the table while Glasses gets a book and magazine from the truck. They each take a seat and commence reading.

Glasses book is a trade size paperback titled 'TOIL NOT IN ANGER' by Jack Skowron, who is pictured on the back. As the lettering is large, there is no front cover art.

Hat's choice is a well worn magazine sized comic titled 'HIS NAME IS SAVAGE!' The painted cover has a Lee Marvin lookalike holding a smoking gun. Hat looks at Glasses.

HAT

How's yours?

GLASSES

For a working class polemic, not bad.

Hat blinks. Glasses looks up from his book.

GLASSES

It's about a janitor who loves his job.

HAT

Sounds like a real barn burner.

GLASSES

That's chapter four. Yours?

HAT

Not as good as the cover.

GLASSES

Well, how could it be?

HAT

Point.

Hat reaches in the cooler, producing a Twinkie two pack.

Glasses produces a knife, which Hat uses to split the pack. They each remove a cake, then bite and chew in tandem, three times. Hat's Twinkie is gone.

Glasses has a small bite left. Hat shakes his head.

GLASSES

Don't start.

He takes the last bite and looks at his ringing cell.

GLASSES

It's the boss.

Glasses takes the call as Hat commences packing up.

EXT. DUSK - AN OFFICE BUILDING ON A CONSTRUCTION SITE

The Red Pickup pulls up next to a Camaro. Hat and Glasses look into the building that's lit by the headlights.

A solid looking man, RICHIE, is leaning on a desk that's covered with plastic. He raises his hands in recognition.

Glasses turns off the lights and the engine and gets out. He takes off his jacket and tosses it in the truck.

INT. THE OFFICE - PLASTIC COVERS THE FLOOR AND FURNITURE

Richie has a GUN tucked in the back of his pants. He watches Glasses approach and ENTER. Glasses turns and shuts the door, allowing Richie to see he's not armed.

GLASSES

Richie.

RICHIE nods at Glasses and looks at Hat in the truck.

RICHIE

What's this about?

GLASSES

Joey's sending you to Buffalo.

The tension relieved, Richie relaxes a bit and scoffs.

Glasses lifts the plastic on a desk and opens a drawer, producing a bottle and two glasses.

GLASSES

You're a bourbon man, right?

RICHIE
That's convenient.

GLASSES unseals the bottle and pours out two drinks.

GLASSES
I was here earlier. Wiring contractors.

Glasses picks up the glasses and hands one to Richie.

GLASSES
Sorry. No ice.

They both take a drink. Richie grunts in approval.

GLASSES
You can take the bottle with you.

RICHIE
Parting gifts?

GLASSES
You'll get a bump in pay.

Richie snorts and drinks. As Glasses pours another round, Richie studies his face, trying to get a read.

RICHIE
I never even slept with her.

GLASSES
That's why you get to go to Buffalo.

Richie looks like he wants to smash something.

RICHIE
Joey. That friggin' pipsqueak.

GLASSES
You'll be working for that friggin' pipsqueak's cousin, so you might wanna be circumspect.

RICHIE
You and your words.

GLASSES

It means keep your yap shut.

RICHIE

Yeah, yeah. I figured. How can you work for that weasel, smart guy?

GLASSES

Same way you can.

Richie scoffs again, shaking his head.

RICHIE

Yeah. Well, Darcy's too good for him.

He defensively looks to Glasses for assent.

GLASSES

And you're just what she needs.

Richie turns and slams his drink on the desk.

RICHIE

Damn it!

Richie, still facing the wall, speaks softly.

RICHIE

I ain't going to no Buffalo.

GLASSES

There's no choice here, Richie.

Richie's shoulders slump, as though resigned. Suddenly he YELLS and SLAMS both fists on the desk. The glass jumps.

Something behind the desk THUMPS loudly.

Hat, watching from the truck, straightens.

Glasses looks his way and holds up a hand.

Richie's head turns toward the THUMP, which repeats in softening intervals. He starts to lean over the desk.

GLASSES

Richie.

It sounds part appeal, part warning. The THUMPS wane.

As Richie looks behind the desk, Glasses reaches under a flap of plastic for a hunting knife taped to a beam.

GLASSES

Richie!

Richie SNARLS and reaches for his gun.

Glasses moves quickly across the room and plunges the knife deep into Richie's back, right through the heart.

Richie's snarl becomes a high wheeze. His eyes widen.

Glasses, still holding the glass, wraps his left arm around Richie's neck, as though offering a last drink.

Richie convulses, almost appearing to take that drink.

Glasses, eyes closed, head resting on Richie's shoulder, holds tight through Richie's death throes. As they've bumped into the desk, the THUMPS are back.

Richie stills. Glasses opens his eyes and whispers.

GLASSES

At least you ain't going to no Buffalo.

The thumps wane. A hand taps Glasses on the shoulder.

HAT

Mind if I cut in?

Glasses sighs and eases Richie's body to the floor. He looks at Hat and shakes his head. Hat shrugs.

Glasses swigs the drink he still holds, then gets the no longer thumping holstered gun from behind the desk.

HAT

Guess we better call the boss.

GLASSES

No. This is a face to face.

Glasses sighs and pulls the knife from Richie's back.

EXT. NIGHT - THE DOOR OF A HOUSE - THE DOOR OPENS

A woman, DARCY, stands in the doorway. She has a drink in hand, and is a bit glassy eyed.

Even inebriated, Darcy commands respect. Her no nonsense air may be somewhat muted, but it's there.

Glasses faces her, Hat just behind him.

GLASSES

Darcy.

DARCY

Mutt and Jeff. You here to see me?

Darcy's tone is mostly sarcastic, but her face hints at something more. Perhaps a longing for a connection lost. Glasses glances at the drink and considers a response.

DARCY

No smart remark?

GLASSES

Guess I've exhausted my daily quota.

Darcy stares a moment, then turns and speaks loudly.

DARCY

Joey!

She gives a final look at Glasses, who nods. Darcy walks away as Glasses and Hat enter and shut the door.

INT. THE HOUSE

JOEY STEFANO enters. Joey wishes he looked tougher and was a bit taller. He compensates with a perpetual scowl. He adds a frown when he sees the two men. Joey whispers.

JOEY
I figured you'd call.

A LARGE MAN, MIKEY, THE BODYGUARD, ENTERS.

JOEY
You're supposed to get the door.

MIKEY
I was in the john.

Joey shakes his head and looks toward the living room, where Darcy is watching television. He waves Mikey off and ushers Hat and Glasses into the study.

Joey closes the door and sits on the edge of his desk facing the two men. Assuming something went wrong, Joey is a bit nervous. He masks it by trying to be clever.

JOEY
So, Richie. Did he... shuffle off?

GLASSES
This mortal coil.

JOEY
What?

GLASSES
He's dead, Joey. I had to kill him.

JOEY
Jesus.

Joey looks nervously at the door, then back at Glasses.

JOEY
Christ.

Joey goes to the cabinet and pours himself a drink. He gestures toward Hat and Glasses. They decline.

JOEY
So...what? He refused to go?

GLASSES

He expressed it as a double negative,
but his intent was clear, and his stance
appeared intractable.

Hat blinks.

JOEY

Fer Chrissake! Can you stop with the
Funken Wagnalls crap and just tell me
what the hell happened?

GLASSES

Yeah. Sorry.

Glasses sighs and takes a seat. Hat remains standing.

GLASSES

He said he didn't want to go. I was
gonna try to talk him into it. Then
he found the gun I'd planted.

Glasses spreads his hands as if to say 'what could I do?'

Joey cocks his head and furrows his brow.

GLASSES

He didn't find the knife.

After a moment Joey nods, then looks toward Hat.

JOEY

Where were you?

HAT

In the truck. We didn't wanna spook him.

Joey nods again, then makes a gesture of acceptance.

JOEY

I didn't figure it would escalate to
this. Hell, maybe it's just as well.

Glasses cocks an eye. Hat is stoic.

JOEY

He was supposed to be her driver, not some kinda...Beau Brummel. The cosmetics weren't good.

Joey, a bit defensive, looks at Glasses, who shrugs.

GLASSES

People are gonna think what they're gonna think.

Joey quickly angers.

JOEY

I can't have people thinking! I'm under a microscope here!

Glasses and Hat remain calm. Joey cools down.

JOEY

Any erosion of my standing? I can't have it.

GLASSES

I'm not disagreeing.

Glasses attitude says something different. Hat, wary of a confrontation, nudges things along.

HAT

It's done. What's the cover?

JOEY

Well, nobody needs to know he didn't go to Buffalo.

Glasses is noticeably dismayed by the comment. He is also noticeably relieved when Hat counters.

HAT

Someone might look for him.

Glasses interjects before Joey can dwell on that.

GLASSES

He disappeared. End of story.

JOEY

People will ask questions.

GLASSES

And we won't have answers.

Joey nods and is about to speak when there's a loud KNOCK on the door, slightly startling the three men. The door swings open revealing Darcy, drink in hand.

DARCY

Joey.

There's an oddly melodramatic moment of silence.

DARCY

Your show's on.

The banality of the remark is belied by Darcy's look. Cutting through the glassy eyes is a gaze of steel.

EXT. DARCY'S PLACE - DAY - A RESTAURANT/BAR

A man with a PONYTAIL approaches the entrance.

INT. DARCY'S PLACE - NOT BUSY

Woody, seated at the bar, watches Ponytail take a seat.

In a nearby booth sits EDDIE CHARLES, a handsome young man with rakish hair and beard. He exudes charm. His companion in the booth is a hard shell guitar case.

An amused Woody watches the waitress, KATIE, flirt.

KATIE

How is everything?

Eddie smiles a devastating smile and eyes her name tag.

EDDIE

Couldn't be better, Katie.

KATIE

Can I top you off?

EDDIE

That sounds kinda naughty.

Katie giggles as she takes Eddie's glass to the bar.

WOODY

If it makes it easier, you can leave
your skirt behind the bar.

KATIE

Stop it, Woody.

Woody grins around his toothpick and nods at Ponytail.
Katie makes a face at Woody as she brings the refill.

KATIE

Are you playing in town?

EDDIE

I wish. Studio gig in Syracuse.

KATIE

Oh. That's a drive.

EDDIE

Yeah. I guess I should take the check.

Eddie looks regretful. Katie looks disappointed.

KATIE

No dessert?

EDDIE

Maybe next time.

They exchange longing smiles before Katie goes to the
bar. A grinning Woody is about to speak.

KATIE

Shut up, Woody.

Katie brings Eddie the tab. Eddie smiles and reaches into
a pocket. His smile falters. He tries another pocket. The
smile disappears. He searches futilely, showing panic.

EDDIE

Oh no.

Katie looks concerned. Woody looks interested.

EDDIE

My wallet.

KATIE

Maybe you dropped it?

She takes a cursory look at the floor while Eddie checks the booth. Woody appears to be enjoying the mini drama.

EDDIE

It's gotta be in my car.

KATIE

Oh.

EDDIE

I can leave my guitar.

Katie brightens and looks hopefully to Woody, who shrugs.

KATIE

Okay.

Eddie gets up and kisses Katie on the cheek.

EDDIE

You're a dream. I'll be right back.
I'm just parked a couple blocks away.

Katie is smiling as he leaves. She turns to Woody, who spears an olive and nods toward Eddie's table.

WOODY

Check the case.

Katie looks distressed. Ponytail looks interested.

KATIE

You don't think...

WOODY

Nah. I'm guessing that case is worth
as much as the meal.

PONYTAIL

Easy. Hardshell case like that? At
least fifty bucks.

Woody gives Ponytail an appraising look.

PONYTAIL

I worked in a music store.

As Katie wrestles open the guitar case, Ponytail gets up
for a closer look. Seeing the guitar, Katie smiles.

PONYTAIL

Jesus. That's a Les Paul. May I?

Katie looks to Woody, who nods. Katie moves aside.

Ponytail lifts the guitar with reverence. He inspects it,
actually moans, then gently lays it back in the case.

PONYTAIL

I will give you twelve hundred dollars
for this. Right now.

Katie is wide eyed. Woody sports a wry grin.

PONYTAIL

I mean, if he doesn't come back.

Ponytail looks at his watch.

PONYTAIL

Damn. I gotta run.

Ponytail hands a card, adorned with a guitar, to Katie.
It reads SKIP HARTIGAN GUITAR GUY REPAIRS AND LESSONS.

PONYTAIL

When your friend comes back, tell him
I'll give him twelve...hell, fifteen
hundred bucks for it.

Ponytail covers his tab and with a wave, hurries out.

Katie watches him exit, then turns to an amused Woody.

KATIE

He's coming back, right?

WOODY

I'd bet on it, kiddo.

On cue, a smiling Eddie bursts through the doorway.

EDDIE

Got it!

KATIE

Yay.

Eddie counts out some bills to a grinning, about to burst, Katie. Eddie can't help but notice.

EDDIE

What?

KATIE

That guy with the ponytail? He said
he'd give you fifteen hundred dollars
for your guitar!

A thrilled Katie hands the card to an apparently shocked Eddie. Woody looks like he's enjoying his favorite show.

EDDIE

Wow... Wow.

KATIE

He was all excited about it.

EDDIE

That's kinda tempting. Especially now.

Eddie looks troubled. Katie frowns. Eddie shrugs it off.

EDDIE

My gig got postponed. No biggie.

KATIE

Awww.

EDDIE

That's the life.

KATIE

That mean you'll be hanging around?

Katie acts coyly. Eddie appears a bit uncomfortable.

EDDIE

This is kind of embarrassing, but I'm running on fumes. I was counting on that gig. I can't even afford a room.

KATIE

Oh no. What are you gonna do?

EDDIE

Head home to Ithaca. I can't sell my guitar, but I'm gonna have to pawn it.

KATIE

We have pawn shops. Right Woody?

WOODY

A bunch.

Eddie is uncomfortably aware of Woody's presence, and has been subtly trying to steer Katie out of earshot.

EDDIE

I got a guy gives me twice the going rate.

Katie looks disappointed, then brightens.

KATIE

I can do it.

EDDIE

What?

KATIE

Give you the money. I can do it.

EDDIE

Katie. You're so sweet. But I couldn't.

KATIE

Yes you can.

Katie hooks her arm around Eddie's and marches him toward the bar. Eddie's nerves start to show. He whispers.

EDDIE

Why don't we talk when you get off?

Katie is undeterred. Eddie manages a smile for Woody.

KATIE

I've got savings. Tell him, Woody.

Woody rolls his toothpick as Eddie's smile wanes.

WOODY

The girl don't lie. She's kind of special that way.

Eddie is noticeably wilting under Woody's hard gaze.

EDDIE

Listen, I'm not trying to take advantage.

WOODY

Oh, no. Katie likes you, obviously. And Katie? Well, she's like family.

Katie is beaming. To her, everything is going swimmingly.

WOODY

So, if Katie wants to help you...

A party of four has just entered. Woody nods that way.

WOODY

Looks like you got customers. Why don't you let me take care of...

Woody waits on Eddie, who's trying to maintain his cool.

EDDIE
Uh, Max. Max Frost.

WOODY
Well, that's a cool name.

Katie laughs and kisses Eddie on the cheek.

KATIE
This is so great!

Katie bops off to her customers. Woody stares at Eddie.

WOODY
Name.

EDDIE
Um... Eddie...Eddie Charles.

WOODY
So, Eddie Charles. What's that gitbox
really worth?

EDDIE
Uh, two, maybe three hundred.

WOODY
Grab it. We're gonna take a ride.

EDDIE
Listen. I can leave and never come back.

WOODY
That's the general idea, Slick. I'm just
gonna put an exclamation point on it.

A pale Eddie scans the room as he picks up his guitar.
Near the exit, TWO IMPOSING MEN watch from a table.
Katie smiles from the bar. Eddie tries to gain balance.

EDDIE
So, Woody. Is that short for Woodrow?

WOODY
No.

Woody is steering Eddie toward the back exit when the office door opens to reveal Joey Stefano.

Joey, seeing something's up, gestures a 'what' to Woody. Woody hesitates. He seems to resent the interruption.

WOODY
I'm putting this joker on a rail.

EDDIE
J-Joey Stefano.

Woody gently cuffs Eddie on the back of the head.

WOODY
Only his friends call him J-Joey.

Joey, pleased at being recognized, has puffed up a bit.

JOEY
What's his story?

WOODY
Some kind of gigolo, con man. Him and some schmo with a ponytail were running a half assed version of the fiddle game on Katie.

Joey frowns. Woody takes the card from Eddie and rubs it.

JOEY
Our Katie? I'm like an Uncle to her.

EDDIE
I...I thought this was independent.

WOODY
Was, Ace. You gotta keep current.

JOEY
What do you mean, gigolo?

WOODY
Hell. He had Katie all bolloxed up. She was raising the white flag before pretty boy here finished his appetizer.

EDDIE

Listen, I really liked her.

WOODY

It's charming you'd say that, but you're supposed to make the mark hate you. That way they don't mind screwing you for the 'valuable' fiddle.

EDDIE

I'm better being nice to people.

WOODY

Well, he had it going. Katie was about to bust open her piggy bank. And then some.

Joey is studying Eddie with great interest.

JOEY

Katie's gonna be upset. Unsavory types distressing my staff? I can't have it.

EDDIE

Listen. I can play here. No charge.

WOODY

You actually play that thing? A regular jack off of all trades.

Woody nods toward the back door. Eddie looks desperate.

EDDIE

Please. Mr. Stefano.

WOODY

Let's go, Slick.

JOEY

Hang on.

They hang on. Eddie looks hopeful. Woody looks annoyed.

JOEY

I might have a job for him.

Joey nods for Woody to leave. A resentful Woody complies. Eddie's relieved smile starts to wane under Joey's gaze.

EXT. DAY - - A POST HOLE DIGGER PLUNGES INTO A HOLE

Hat, dressed as usual, sleeves rolled up, works the tool. Glasses, in casual work clothes, shovels out dirt.

HAT

Deep enough?

GLASSES

Today the good earth has yielded to us, rather than for us.

Hat blinks.

HAT

I'll take that as a yes.

Hat drops a mailbox post in the hole. Glasses drops in shims and shovels in dirt. Hat tamps the dirt down.

From the shady porch of a SMALL HOUSE, a DOG watches. The dog wags its tail as Hat and Glasses approach.

They each grab a drink from a cooler and take a seat. They relax, sip their drinks, and admire the mailbox.

GLASSES

Too bad about Richie.

HAT

Yeah. I hated having to cube that Camaro.

Glasses gives Hat a look. Hat sips his beer.

HAT

It ain't bad having the weekend off.

GLASSES

And Sunday barbecue. Life of Riley.

Hat finishes his beer, puts down the bottle and rises.

HAT

Well.

GLASSES

Okay.

They exchange nods. Hat touches the dog's head and walks to his car. Glasses and dog watch him drive off right.

From the other direction a car pulls up by the mailbox.

GLASSES

Hmmm.

A MAN and WOMAN exit the front. ANOTHER MAN the back.

Glasses looks into the kitchen of his sparsely furnished home. A holstered gun and sheathed knife hang on a chair.

The Man and Woman approach. The dog GROWLS.

GLASSES

No.

The dog tones down its growl. The approaching Man smiles hugely. Despite his pale complexion, ruffled suit and bad haircut, he exudes swagger. And menace.

MAN

Hi. I'm Mark Adams. My wife Sheila.

Sheila doesn't smile. Glasses nods and glances at the car, where the OTHER MAN is leaning.

MARK

My brother Duane. He ain't social.

Mark gives Sheila a pointed look.

MARK

Generally.

Glasses looks at Sheila, who has drifted left on her approach, leaving the couple several feet apart.

GLASSES

What can I do for the Adams family?

Mark nods and smiles at the remark. Sheila does not.

MARK

Actually, we're friends of your partner. Old friends.

Glasses, considering, takes a sip of his soda.

GLASSES

You just missed him.

Mark looks confused. He turns toward the road, making vague hand gestures, then turns back to Glasses.

MARK

So, he wasn't heading home? I know he's renting a place right down the road. And you two are thick as thieves, so to speak.

Glasses takes a moment, and another sip of soda.

GLASSES

I suspect he has errands to fulfill.

MARK

Errands to fulfill.

Mark smiles ruefully and looks around the yard.

MARK

I guess we all got those.

Eventually Mark's gaze settles back on Glasses.

GLASSES

Your acquaintance. How far back?

MARK

Way back. Cop days.

GLASSES

That is back.

Mark nods. Glasses casually slides his right hand near his pocket. Mark notices, smiling as though in approval.

MARK

Maybe you could, ah, give him a call?

GLASSES

You don't have his number?

MARK

Well, I have his home phone.

Glasses calmly studies Mark a moment.

GLASSES

He doesn't carry a cell. It's anathema.

Mark's grin is getting a bit twitchy.

MARK

Anathema.

GLASSES

He don't like it.

Mark lets a laugh slip past his labored grin as Glasses pointedly slips his hand in his pocket. Mark nods again. He looks around the yard, then at the dog.

MARK

That looks like a nice dog.

GLASSES

He can be.

SHEILA

Let's just go, Mark.

A wild eyed Mark spins toward Sheila.

MARK

Shut your frigging mouth!

Mark checks himself and manages a phony smile.

MARK

Dear.

Duane, still standing by the car, has straightened. MARK, trying to control his smile, turns back to Glasses.

MARK

Sorry. So, you got no way to reach him.

GLASSES

Not until he gets home.

The dog has resumed growling, which Glasses allows. Mark bites his lip and nods, his smile barely hanging on.

MARK

Well, maybe we'll just wait there.
Since... you got no way to reach him.

Glasses calm and the dog's growl is getting Mark edgier.

GLASSES

It'll be a nice surprise.

Mark laughs crazily and points both hands at Glasses.

MARK

Right! A nice surprise. Now, I don't
wanna take up any more of your time.
So, thank you. Thank you very much!

Elvis-like, Mark swings his pointing toward Sheila.

MARK

Sheila. Let's go!

Mark offers Glasses a crazy smile and follows Sheila.

Glasses watches them get in the car. Mark points, makes a U turn and pulls away. Glasses takes out his cell phone.

Hat, driving and eating Milk Duds, picks up his cell.

HAT

Hello.

GLASSES

There's a three person aggregate of undesirables heading to your house.

HAT

You trying to get outta that steak dinner?

Glasses gathers his weapons as he speaks.

GLASSES

Two men and a woman.

Hat frowns and pops some Milk Duds.

HAT

What are they aggravated about?

Glasses climbs into his truck, much to the dog's dismay. The dog whines as Glasses backs around and pulls forward.

GLASSES

The honcho looked fresh out of the joint. Like, fresh today. Rumpled suit and all.

HAT

Don't suppose he gave you a name.

GLASSES

Mark Adams. Wife Sheila. Brother Duane. Says he knew you from your cop days.

HAT

Yeah. I remember.

GLASSES

Well, he's been keeping tabs on you. And that's some sack, using his real moniker.

Hat spills more Milk Duds into his mouth.

HAT

He was one a them nothing to lose guys. Kinda nutty.

Glasses stops at the end of the driveway.

GLASSES

Kinda? He was on the verge of going cowboy on my front lawn. You eating?

HAT

I went for Milk Duds.

GLASSES

The big box?

HAT

The pretty big box. I don't wanna spoil my dinner.

Hat drives past. Glasses pulls out and follows.

GLASSES

Right behind you.

HAT

If you're after my Duds, there ain't many left.

The ADAMS' CAR is soon visible. Duane is leaning on it.

GLASSES

What are you thinking?

HAT

I ain't.

Hat GUNS his car, SCREECHING in behind the car parked in front of his house. He overlaps, cop style, which allows Glasses to angle in, imprisoning Duane in a triangle.

Glasses points his gun at Duane's head for emphasis.

Hat is already out of his car, moving quickly toward Mark and Sheila, who have gotten up off the front porch.

MARK

Officer!

Mark, crazy grin, appears genuinely thrilled to see Hat. He even does a little dance as the trio converge.

Sheila sees Duane is covered, and Mark is on the verge.

SHEILA

Mark! Don't!

MARK

Shut your whore mouth!

Glasses, gun trained on Duane, keeps an eye on the fray.

SHEILA

Duane's covered!

MARK

Covered in shit, for all I care!

Mark hasn't taken his eyes off Hat. His grin morphs into an almost affectionate smile. They're both ready to draw.

MARK

Officer.

Sheila quickly pulls her gun and shoots Mark. He spins toward Sheila. Mark's eyes widen, but he's still smiling.

MARK

Sheila.

As Mark draws, Sheila shoots him again. He looks down.

MARK

I need new shoes.

Sheila walks toward Mark, who raises his gun. Sheila fires four more times, then drops her gun. Mark falls.

Hat's gun is trained on Sheila. She raises her hands. Hat and Glasses exchange looks, as do Sheila and Duane.

EXT. THE WOODS - DUSK

Hat and Glasses, both with shovels, stand in a grave.

HAT

Deep enough?

GLASSES

Yep.

HAT

You ain't doing that yielding earth thing?

GLASSES

Twice in one day would be ostentatious.

HAT

We don't want that.

Hat and Glasses toss Mark Adams' body into the hole.

Sitting on the tailgate, they drink and admire the grave.

GLASSES

Duane and Sheila looked pretty happy.

HAT

Ain't love grand.

GLASSES

You ready for that ribeye?

HAT

Does Yogi Bear crap in the woods?

They both get up and climb into the truck.

GLASSES

You got any Milk Duds left?

HAT

I think there's one. We can split it.

GLASSES

Better fare hard with good men than
feast it with bad. Thomas Paine.

HAT

That Tommy from the steak joint?

GLASSES

Gotta be.

EXT. JOEY'S YARD - DAY - A TWO GRILL BARBECUE GOING

A finger FLICKS a bug off a grill. The finger belongs to Joey. SEVERAL PEOPLE mill about. Joey frowns at a group of NOISY CHILDREN PLAYING in and about the GAZEBO.

Darcy, drink in hand, is talking to ONE of the WIVES.

MIKEY approaches the second grill to great acclaim, owing to the strings of sausage draped around his neck.

VOICE

Hey, Mikey! I like it!

An ACCOUNTANT TYPE approaches Joey with an open ledger. Joey signals a FRIEND to take over the grill as Hat and Glasses, enjoying appetizers, observe.

HAT

Exciting times.

GLASSES

Mikey brought sausage.

HAT

Pretty soon we'll be packing pencils instead of heat.

GLASSES

The pen is mightier than the sword.

HAT

Sez you.

GLASSES

Mute your pork loader.

Hat turns a frown on Glasses, then sees what Glasses sees. Joey, exuding aggravation, is quickly approaching.

JOEY

I got something for you two tonight.
And tomorrow we're going to Albany.

Before they can respond, Joey returns to the grill.

HAT

We?

GLASSES

So much for the weekend off.

HAT

Whad'ya think's in Albany?

GLASSES

Albanians.

HAT

Heh. I'm thinking something good.

Meanwhile, Darcy glowers at Joey as she engages the Wife.

WIFE

So, where's your new driver?

DARCY

Where's my old driver?

WIFE

You gotta forget about Richie, sweetheart.

DARCY

He disappeared? Nothing wrong there.

WIFE

Honey.

DARCY

There wasn't anything going on.

WIFE

It didn't look that way, Darcy.

Darcy gives the wife a look, sighs, and dials it down.

DARCY

I just wanna know he's okay.

WIFE

I'm sure Richie will reach out.

DARCY

And let's not address how absurd it is
that I even have a driver.

WIFE

Joey's just watching out for you.

DARCY

Yeah.

She looks toward Joey, who's serving Hat and Glasses.
The accountant, tie loosened, waits behind them. Hat
plates two burgers and a dog. Glasses goes one each.

GLASSES

You gonna have room for sausage?

HAT

I'll have room. I saved up.

Darcy approaches the grill as the accountant leaves. Joey
sets and offers her a plate with a somewhat forced smile.

JOEY

Burger. Medium. No bun.

Darcy looks at the plate.

DARCY

And no cheese, Joey. No cheese.

Joey loses his smile and retrieves the plate.

JOEY

Guess I can't get nothing right.

As all the grilled patties have cheese, Joey adds one.

JOEY

It'll be a few minutes.

DARCY

I'll have salad.

Everyone within earshot studiously ignores the incident.

Joey casts suspicious glances as Darcy approaches Hat and Glasses. She wryly notes their enthusiastic consumption.

DARCY

Who's winning?

GLASSES

It's not as close as it looks. Hat spotted me a burger.

HAT

I'm going for sausage. You need some sausage, Mrs. S?

Glasses winces. Darcy, hearing no intent, smiles.

DARCY

I'm good. Thanks.

Hat nods and walks off. The passing Wife whispers to Darcy before going to the grill. Darcy laughs.

GLASSES

So, you're one of the wives now.

DARCY

And you're one of the goons.

GLASSES

Touche.

After a pregnant pause, Darcy speaks matter of factly.

DARCY

So, what happened to Richie?

Glasses stops eating. The question hangs. Hat appears.

HAT

What I miss?

DARCY

Not a damn thing.

Darcy gives Glasses a look and walks off.

HAT

Jeez. Wud'ja say?

GLASSES

Nothing.

HAT

Why's she so pissed?

GLASSES

Cos I said nothing.

HAT

What are we, Abbott and Costello?

Glasses looks at Hat devouring sausage.

GLASSES

Kinda.

Joey, seeing Darcy crossing the yard, intercepts her.

JOEY

I gotta go to Albany a few days.

DARCY

I told you Albany was an issue.

JOEY

I don't need you telling me how to run my business.

DARCY

That's a two way street, Joey.

It seems a battle is about to ensue when a car pulls up. All heads turn as the car door opens. Eddie Charles, clean shaven, hair styled, dramatically exits the car.

A resplendent Eddie unselfconsciously walks the drive. Joey gives Darcy a look and walks past her toward Eddie. The Wife, eyes glued on Eddie, sidles up to Darcy.

WIFE

Richie who?

Darcy doesn't smile. She looks at Joey, then Eddie.
Hat, still eating, watches Eddie's smooth approach.

HAT
Who the hell's this?

Glasses, watching the scene unfold, speaks softly.

GLASSES
Beau Brummel.

HAT
Huh?

GLASSES
Darcy's new driver.

HAT
Is he even packing?

GLASSES
Left side. Holster above the belt.

HAT
Huh. Lee Van Cleef.

Joey and Eddie shake hands, then walk toward Darcy.

JOEY
Eddie Charles. My wife, Darcy.

Despite Eddie's devastating smile, Darcy glowers.

Glasses observes. Hat, in his own world, keeps eating.

HAT
Heh. Pork loader.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY - NIGHT - THE RED TRUCK CRUISES ALONG

Directional on, the truck takes an exit near Albany.

The truck pulls into a strip mall and parks facing a dark beauty shop and a dimly lit check cashing establishment.

INT. THE TRUCK

Hat reaches into a pocket and produces an OH HENRY! Candy Bar. Glasses produces a knife, which Hat uses to slice the wrapper in half. He hands one of the bars to Glasses.

In near unison, they chew, swallow, and swig water.

The light goes off in the check cashing joint.

HAT

Here we go.

Hat and Glasses exit the truck and approach the joint. Hat drifts to the shadows. Glasses stands in plain view.

TWO MEN exit the joint, one of them holding a BANK BAG.

They stop cold when they see Glasses. The man without the bag slips his right hand into his pocket.

Glasses extends open hands, signifying 'nothing here.'

There's MOVEMENT behind the two men, then a FLASH of METAL and the hollow RING of lead pipe striking skull.

The man with his hand in his pocket goes down. The other Man drops the bag and reaches for his gun.

Hat, moving like a dancer, spins and taps the Man on the forehead with the pipe. The dazed Man drops to his knees as Glasses quickly leans in and relieves him of his gun.

Hat and Glasses' teamwork has been smooth and effortless.

The Man vigorously rubs his forehead.

MAN

Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow.

Hat SLAPS the Man in the face.

MAN

Ow.

The Man continues rubbing his forehead.

MAN

Just take the money and lemme be.

GLASSES

We don't want the money.

HAT

And we ain't gonna let you be.

The Man stops rubbing his forehead.

MAN

You ain't robbing me?

HAT

You're getting a new drop site.

MAN

Six a one.

GLASSES

Ah, a philosophical bent.

The Man gives Glasses a confused look.

HAT

You can keep your job, you want.

GLASSES

Look at today as an anomaly.

The Man looks to Hat for help as Glasses relieves the downed man of his weapon.

HAT

Same gig, new boss.

The frowning Man ruefully rubs his forehead.

HAT

Or you can maybe collect disability.

Hat palm slaps the pipe. The Man looks at his comrade.

GLASSES

He too, can remain gainfully employed.

MAN

He even alive?

GLASSES

Fear not. For him the pipes are not calling, save the lone exclamation.

The distressed Man looks at Hat.

MAN

He ain't gonna be my boss, is he?

Hat grins and hands the Man a slip of paper.

HAT

Here's where you're going.

The Man looks at the paper, then the bag. It's almost comical how transparently shifty he looks. Hat sighs.

HAT

Your folks enjoying the new condo?

Glasses unloads both guns and hands them to the Man, who appears a bit shaken by Hat's question.

GLASSES

I would think. North end, I trust?

HAT

You bet. Nice view of the lake.

GLASSES

Ah, the lake. Amenable for business or pleasure.

Glasses picks up the bag and hands it to the Man.

GLASSES

Your new boss? He can count.

The Man nods resignedly as Hat and Glasses walk away.

HAT

Put an ice pack to him.

MAN

Oh, yeah. I got one handy.

Hat drops the pipe in the truck as Glasses gets an ice pack from the cooler and tosses it to the Man.

GLASSES

While I'm thinking about it.

From a toolbox Glasses produces a pair of pliers.

GLASSES

Don't crush that dwarf.

HAT

Hand me the pliers.

Glasses does, and the grinning duo get in the truck.

The Man, ice pack to forehead, watches them drive off.

MAN

Sons a bitches and then some.

INT. THE TRUCK

GLASSES

Kudos on your pipework.

HAT

Like tolling a bell.

GLASSES

Chuck Berry and Hemingway. I stand humbled.

Hat grunts in acknowledgment.

HAT

It takes finesse, the lead pipe facial.

GLASSES

Do tell.

HAT

You can't just wade in like a bull
in a candy store.

GLASSES

Or a kid in a china shop.

HAT

You gotta administrate just so.
You can tell by the sound.

GLASSES

The ringing endorsement.

Hat grunts again.

GLASSES

You know, Hemingway purloined 'For
Whom The Bell Tolls' from John Donne.

HAT

Johnny D.

They drive in silence for a bit.

HAT

You wanna talk food?

EXT. THE RED TRUCK ROLLS DOWN THE ROAD

GLASSES (V.O.)

With a deep and abiding relish.

INT. THE STEFANO RESIDENCE - DAY

Joey drops a travel bag near Hat and Glasses as Darcy,
casually dressed, comes from the study holding a drink.

The doorbell RINGS. Joey looks at his watch, then Darcy.

JOEY

Ten A.M. Eddie's right on time.

DARCY

On time? He's been outside a half hour.

GLASSES

Avid.

Joey gives Glasses a look, then nods at Hat, who opens the door. Eddie, fiddling with his holster, enters.

DARCY

Can he even use that thing?

Eddie adjusts and straightens. He looks impeccable.

GLASSES

I'd like to meet his tailor.

HAT

He's got a hair out of place.

GLASSES

No, I think he wants it there.

Joey glares at the two men as he approaches Darcy.

JOEY

We'll be back Friday. You sure you don't want Mikey here?

The look on Darcy's face is her answer.

JOEY

Well, him and Eddie will be in the guest house.

Joey looks at Darcy a moment, nods and heads to the door.

JOEY

Come on. Let's take your Laurel and Hardy act on the road.

Glasses grins sardonically. He drops the grin and nods at Darcy as Hat picks up Joey's bag. The three men exit.

A sullen Darcy studies Eddie, who stands at attention.

DARCY

Where'd Joey find you, GQ?

EDDIE

No, Ma'am.

DARCY

You want a drink?

EDDIE

Orange juice?

Darcy sighs and heads to the kitchen. Eddie looks at his watch. It denotes the day as Monday.

Darcy comes out of the kitchen with a glass of orange juice. Her clothes and make up are a bit more alluring.

DARCY

It's Tuesday. I meet a friend for
brunch at eleven.

Eddie, different clothes, checks his watch. Tuesday.

DARCY

How about I make you an egg sandwich.

EDDIE

That sounds swell, Mrs...

DARCY

Darcy. Swell?

Eddie smiles and finishes his juice. Darcy takes the empty glass, gives Eddie a look and heads to the kitchen.

Eddie, different clothes, checks his watch. Wednesday.

Darcy comes out of the kitchen with a glass of orange juice. Her outfit and makeup are even more alluring.

DARCY

I want to go to the stables today.

Up close, she hands Eddie the juice.

EDDIE

You ride?

DARCY

I do.

EDDIE

You're not gonna ride in that outfit.

DARCY

Well, that would depend on what I'm riding, wouldn't it?

She pats Eddie on the cheek and heads for the door. Eddie takes a breath, chugs his juice, and follows. They exit the front door and close it behind them.

The front door opens. Darcy and Eddie, wearing different outfits, enter. They KISS.

DARCY

I can't believe I'm doing this.

EDDIE

You're not.

DARCY

What?

EDDIE

Not here. Not now. I want you to be sure.

DARCY

I'm pretty damn sure.

Darcy makes a move, but Eddie holds her off. A confused Darcy pulls back. Eddie puts his hands on her shoulders.

EDDIE

Tomorrow. I want you to be sure.

Darcy holds Eddie's gaze for a long moment.

DARCY

You're not just a pretty face,
are you, Eddie Charles?

When Eddie smiles, a hint of regret is evident.

INT. A DINGY BAR

THE GAGGED FACE OF A LESS HANDSOME MAN - SCREAMING

The Man is seated in the middle of the room. Both legs and his left arm are tied to the chair. The man BLUBBERS.

Hat applies the pliers to the middle finger of the Man's right hand. Two other fingers are bent and bloodied. The Man resumes SCREAMING as the middle finger CRACKS.

A few feet away, Joey and Glasses are seated at the bar. They each nurse a drink. Another drink waits for Hat.

A SWEATY BARTENDER nervously hovers. On the wall behind him are pictures of a bowling team.

JOEY

The thing with Richie? I figure, this guy's all in. I guess I figured wrong.

Joey looks at Glasses, who is staring straight ahead.

JOEY

So I'm letting you know what's what. The mantle of leadership ain't always popular.

Glasses sighs. The Man SCREAMS as another finger gets it.

JOEY

Brazen appearances. Public strife?
It reflects poorly. And not just on me.

GLASSES

You're creating the thing you're decrying.

JOEY

I ain't crying about nothing. I
need to know where loyalties lie.

Glasses sighs again. He continues to stare ahead, face set in stone. He takes a swig of his drink.

GLASSES

My honor is my loyalty.

JOEY

The hell's that supposed to mean?

GLASSES

It's a quote.

JOEY

One a your fancy ass poets?

GLASSES

Heinrich Himmler, actually.

Joey's about to take umbrage when a COMMOTION, followed by agonized HOWLS from the Man, distracts him.

JOEY

The hell?

GLASSES

Thumb.

Joey watches Hat, task done, rise. The Man falls silent.

JOEY

Don't let him pass out.

Hat slaps the Man's face, coaxing him conscious. Joey gets up and joins Hat. Glasses reluctantly follows.

JOEY

Eyes on me.

The Man looks up, tears and snot running down his face.

JOEY

You lose your South Side book.

The Man, blinking tears, nods.

JOEY

And your bowling team needs a new captain.

The Man slightly lifts his hand, almost as an offering.

Hat, standing at Joey's right, grins.

JOEY

I could have gone the extreme. But I figure, why upset the whole tea cart.

Glasses, standing at Joey's left, frowns.

JOEY

Don't make me regret it. All week I've seen what a loose ship you're running.

Joey glares down on the Man, anger rising.

JOEY

You, and your bagmen, taking from my end? Eh. It shows a lack of respect.

The Man, snuffling snot, whimpers in response.

JOEY

Maybe you can help me out here.

The Man nods slightly, hopefully.

JOEY

Maybe you can tell me why you think I don't deserve respect.

The Man in the chair no longer looks hopeful.

JOEY

Help me out, and tell me why you think I don't deserve respect.

Joey nods at Hat. Hat removes the Man's gag.

JOEY

Tell me why.

Joey's voice has raised a bit. The Man can only sob.

JOEY

Tell me why!

Joey's eyes crazy up. He STOMPS the Man's hand. The Man SCREAMS. Joey repeats the phrase, stomping in concert.

The chair tips over. Joey continues. Hat appears okay with this. Glasses, not so much. The SCREAMS ECHO.

The Bartender, looking sickly, wipes down the bar. Behind him is a photo of the smiling Man with his bowling team.

EXT. DAY - A MOTEL PARKING LOT

Glasses sits in his truck, dog beside him, watching Darcy walk along the sidewalk. He gets out, startling her.

DARCY

Jesus.

GLASSES

I was hoping you wouldn't show.

DARCY

What are you doing here?

GLASSES

We got back last night. (pause)
Joey stayed at the club. And
that's not the question, is it?

Darcy looks around uneasily.

GLASSES

Joey's paranoia is unbridled.
He's... testing loyalties.

Darcy frowns, still processing. Glasses gives her a moment, then furthers his case.

GLASSES

It's not Eddie in that room. It's Hat.

Darcy considers. She scoffs.

DARCY

A set up? So, Eddie...?

GLASSES

Is one charming son of a bitch.
And totally under Joey's thumb.

Darcy scoffs again.

DARCY

So Eddie wasn't just a pretty face
to help me forget about Richie.

GLASSES

It's a bit more nefarious than that.

DARCY

Right. Right. While you, Moe and Curly are
futzing around Albany, I'm being seduced
by some beautiful male bimbo. To test my
loyalty. No. This is nuts. Even for Joey.

GLASSES

Is it? Richie's gone because Joey
didn't want to be embarrassed.

DARCY

So, what? Now I'm gonna disappear?

GLASSES

I don't know where Joey's line is.
(pause) Wait a minute. I'm Larry?

DARCY

Joey's concerned about appearances, and
he brings in Eddie? I call bullshit.

GLASSES

I, admittedly, had similar thoughts.

DARCY

Buzzard's Luck was the last straw for
me and Joey. This is a business move.

GLASSES

He does find your acumen threatening.

DARCY

And Hat's going along with this?

GLASSES

Hat's not like us.

Darcy sighs, then allows a slight frown.

DARCY

So, where does this leave you?

After a moment Glasses nods at his truck. It's packed with his belongings. Darcy appears rattled, and hurt.

GLASSES

I've grown weary of staring into the abyss.

DARCY

I love it so much when you hide behind your fancy words.

GLASSES

It's a big front seat.

Darcy scoffs. She pauses, anger simmering.

DARCY

When you say Richie's gone...

Glasses looks away. Darcy looks disgusted.

DARCY

Jesus. (pause) Hat?

After a moment, Glasses shakes his head. Darcy goes pale.

DARCY

My God...You fucking hypocrite.

GLASSES

It...It took a turn.

DARCY

Took a turn? I don't even know you.

GLASSES

I feel the same. It's terrifying.

Darcy's look softens slightly. She scoffs.

DARCY

So your solution is to cut and run?

GLASSES

All things considered? Yes.

Darcy's look hardens. She turns and starts to walk away.

DARCY

Send me a postcard.

GLASSES

Let me go in with you.

Darcy stops, fire in her eyes.

DARCY

You're not my big brother.

GLASSES

That's all I ever wanted to be.

DARCY

Epic fail! You chose your partner.

GLASSES

As did you.

They face each other, showing hurt, anger and love. Glasses sighs in resignation and takes out a gun.

GLASSES

Hat doesn't hesitate. With you, he might.

Glasses hands Darcy the gun. She checks the load, then looks at the truck. The dog is watching them hopefully. Darcy gives Glasses a last look and walks away.

Glasses watches her walk down the sidewalk. After she turns a corner, he forlornly gets in his truck. He scratches the dog's neck, then starts the vehicle.

Glasses face hardens. He curses, pulls around the corner and parks. While keeping an eye on Darcy, Glasses digs out a hidden gun and gets out of the truck.

Darcy, hand on the gun in her purse, KNOCKS on the door. The door opens to reveal Eddie Charles. Darcy sighs in relief. Eddie smiles and moves aside. Darcy enters.

Darcy doesn't notice how forced Eddie's smile is.

Glasses remains by his truck, cautiously relieved.

Eddie steps outside and closes the door behind him.

GLASSES

Son of a bitch!

INT. THE HOTEL ROOM

DARCY

Talk to me, Eddie Charles...Eddie?

At the mini-bar, Darcy turns, nonplussed to find she's alone. She becomes aware that she's standing on plastic.

Behind her, a figure wearing a familiar HAT appears.

Plastic SQUEAKS. Darcy, reaching into her purse, turns.

EXT. THE HOTEL

Glasses, gun in hand, hurries past a surprised Eddie.

They both flinch at the sound of a GUNSHOT.

An anguished looking Glasses is at the door when it opens to reveal Darcy. After a moment, Glasses fiercely HUGS her. After some initial hesitance, Darcy hugs back.

INT. A DARK APARTMENT

Woody stands at his bedroom closet. He kneels and opens a military locker, revealing a cache of guns and knives.

He chooses a handgun and tucks it in his trousers, then chooses a combat knife and secures it at his hip.

He stands before his bureau, where a colorful bandana is draped. He gently takes it. One end is stained.

Woody stares at the bandana. His hard eyes glisten. He gently folds the bandana and tucks it in his back pocket.

EXT. THE STEFANO RESIDENCE

In the gazebo, Eddie strums plaintive chords. Glasses offers a nod as he walks past him to the guest house. He ignores Joey, who's watching from the kitchen window.

INT. THE GUEST HOUSE

Hat lies on a cot. There's a bandage on his left shoulder. He is shirtless, but is wearing his hat. He sets down a tattered copy of CREEPY MAGAZINE.

HAT

You bring Milk Duds?

Glasses shrugs an apology. Hat frowns.

HAT

Joey says your house was cleaned out.

GLASSES

The abyss was gazing back.

HAT

That's that thing you don't like lookin' at, right?

GLASSES

And not something you can run from.

HAT

You're a dope to come here.

GLASSES

Speaking of, you had the drop. Darcy's not convinced you were there to kill her.

HAT

Despite the plastic on the floor. I think we're all bozos on this bus.

Glasses allows a slight grin. It quickly fades.

HAT

I guess I don't have no abyss.

GLASSES

Maybe you do. Or you've lost a step.

HAT

I didn't figure her to be packing.
Always leaves her gun at the range.
Must be where she learned that fancy
spin and fire move.

Hat coughs and grimaces. He reaches for the water on the nightstand, but Glasses beats him to the punch. Beside the water is a handgun. Hat nods thanks and drinks.

HAT

At first I figured Eddie slipped her his.
But Eddie carries a 9 mil. The slug the
Doc pulled out was a .38.

Hat sets the water beside the gun and looks at Glasses.

GLASSES

Absent the ability to talk her out of it,
I figured I'd afford her some leverage.

HAT

I guess I should be glad you didn't
leverage her your .45.

They exchange looks that suggest some reconciliation.

GLASSES

Well, Ollie. Now what are we going to do?

HAT

All's I ever known is following orders.

GLASSES

That didn't even work when you were a cop.

HAT

I guess I figure there's something to
be said for loyalty.

GLASSES

What about who you're loyal to?

Hat nods, showing an uncharacteristic hint of emotion.

HAT

The Doc says I'd probably bled out if you guys hadn't got me to him.

GLASSES

She just wants her restaurant.

HAT

Joey's not gonna wanna take the loss.

GLASSES

There's talk of a meeting. But, yeah. It's probably gonna go OK Corral.

There's a moment of grim silence.

GLASSES

Listen. Watch your back. Joey doesn't trust me. And once I walk out of here...

Hat frowns, then grins wryly and nods.

HAT

Guess you're not as dumb as I look.

Glasses allows a slight grin as he heads for the door.

HAT

And next time bring Milk Duds.

INT. THE KITCHEN

Glasses exits the grounds after exchanging nods with Eddie, who becomes the target of a glaring Joey's ire.

JOEY

What is this, Woodstock?

He gestures impatiently at Mikey, who goes to the stove and scoops a grilled cheese sandwich onto a plate.

Joey sits at the table with his phone as Mikey cuts the sandwich in half and sets it before Joey.

JOEY

Get hold a Pink Floyd. I'll call the bar.

Mikey nods and goes to his phone as Joey takes a bite.

JOEY

Where's the tomato?

MIKEY

It's in there. I cut it thin.

Joey shakes his head and goes to speed dial.

INT. DARCY'S PLACE

Katie answers the phone. Woody's place at the bar is empty. Katie hails the Two Imposing Men.

INT. A SMALL APARTMENT

A MAN sits at a table eating a steak sub. He wipes his mouth and answers his phone. He signs off, then retrieves a rifle and a knitted cap from the closet.

He leans the rifle on a chair and hangs the cap on it. The cap is labeled FLOYD. The man picks up his phone.

EXT. OUTSIDE A PIZZA JOINT

A WOMAN folds and bites into a slice of pizza. She shifts the bag she's holding to answer her phone.

The Woman is wearing a knitted cap labeled PINK.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - A CHURCH BELL TOLLS

The landscape is sparse around the skeletal five story structure. Stacks of girders, mounds of sand, yawning excavations, heavy equipment. No people. It's Sunday.

A VEHICLE slowly enters the site. Darcy drives alone. Her double cup holder has a glass with ice. And a gun.

On the road before her is a parked vehicle. She looks up at the structure and stops a bit off the main road beside a foreman's shack, well short of the other vehicle.

She pours liquid into an ice filled glass and takes a drink. The liquid is water. She tucks the gun away and exits the vehicle. A nervous Eddie exits the other.

DARCY

Where the hell's Joey?

EDDIE

He wants me to take you to him. He was worried you were gonna set him up.

Darcy looks up. She's shielded from the high floors of the construction site, but if she moves toward the car, she'll be exposed. She turns a hard look on Eddie.

DARCY

Who's setting up who, Eddie?

Eddie frowns, obviously clueless. Darcy shakes her head.

EXT. FOURTH FLOOR OF THE SITE

A rifle follows a confused Eddie as he approaches Darcy.

Only Darcy's shadow is visible. The rifle belongs to Glasses. Glasses shifts his aim, scanning the floors below him. He catches movement on the third floor.

It's FLOYD. He undulates his body, settling in like a dog on a new bed. He has Eddie in his sights as he waits on Darcy. Her leg is in view. Floyd is steady and ready.

Glasses shifts position, seeking a better angle on Floyd. From elsewhere on the fourth floor, PINK sights Glasses. As Glasses takes aim on Floyd, Pink takes aim on Glasses.

EXT. THE STEFANO RESIDENCE

Joey approaches the guest house. Inside, Mikey lies dead on the floor, a blackened and bloody pillow partially covering his head. The cot where Hat had lain is empty.

EXT. THE CONSTRUCTION SITE

A SHADOW, topped by a familiar hat, falls across Pink. Pink starts to turn as Hat FIRES twice.

Another SHOT rings out as Glasses takes out Floyd, who's rifle also FIRES, PINGING a bullet off Eddie's car. Eddie SCREAMS, and falls back onto Darcy's car.

Floyd lies dead, draped over his rifle.

Pink lies dead, her rifle aimed to the sky.

Glasses rises and looks across the site toward Hat, who has collapsed to a sitting position.

Eddie rights himself as a glaring Darcy comes at him. She HITS him in the jaw and he bounces off the car again.

Darcy, still glaring at Eddie, shakes her hand.

Eddie's eyes widen and he takes out his gun, catching Darcy off guard. She reaches for her gun, too late.

Eddie FIRES twice.

Darcy, surprised at not being hit, takes a bead on him, then realizes a panicked Eddie is aiming behind her.

Darcy turns. The Two Imposing Men are down. One is dead. The other, who's wounded, is taking a bead on Darcy.

Darcy FIRES. Simultaneously, a SHOT rings out from above. Both bullets hit the Man dead center.

Darcy looks up. Glasses, rifle in hand, is looking down. He nods. Darcy nods back, then turns to Eddie.

DARCY

I guess you can use that thing.

Eddie smiles, then throws up behind the car.

Glasses shakes his head and turns away. He makes his way toward Hat, who's still seated and bathed in sweat.

HAT

Help me up, will ya.' I'm poolin'
ass sweat here.

Hat, bandage bloodied, looks up as Glasses helps him.

HAT

Well, Stanley. This is another fine
mess you've gotten us into.

Glasses grins as they trundle toward the stairwell.

HAT

I figured Joey woulda had guys
on the fifth floor.

GLASSES

Yeah. Woody's up there.

On the fifth floor, Woody, knife on hip, dumps a body on
top of two others in the service elevator.

INT. DARCY'S PLACE

Joey, carrying a duffel, enters. He cautiously scans the
busy, noisy room as he makes his way toward the office.

Katie smiles at him from the bar.

KATIE

Hi, Mr. Stefano.

JOEY

You seen Darcy?

KATIE

No, Sir. Can I get you something?

Joey ignores her and uses his key to get in the office.

Katie shrugs and goes about her business.

Joey flips on the light and goes to the safe. He kneels
and works the combination, then transfers the money to
his bag. He hits speed dial on his phone. No reply.

JOEY

Shit!

DARCY (O.S.)

They're all dead, Joey.

A startled Joey looks toward the voice. The chair behind the desk turns, revealing Darcy holding a gun.

DARCY

I finally had a legit business.

Joey looks at the gun and scoffs. Darcy's face hardens.

JOEY

Don't pretend you didn't like it.

DARCY

If you weren't such a greedy prick,
you probably could have gotten away.

Joey's face screws up in anger as he reaches for his gun.

JOEY

You fu...

Darcy pulls the trigger.

The office door opens. A satisfied Woody nods at Darcy.

EXT. THE CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

Joey's body tumbles from Woody's shoulder into a pit.
Mikey's body tumbles from Glasses shoulder into the same.
Woody, Glasses and Darcy look down on the bodies.

GLASSES

Nine zip. Shutout.

WOODY

It a been more of a tussle if he'd
been running point for 'em.

They look at Hat, who's sitting on some concrete bags.
Woody climbs into a Caterpillar and starts it up.

GLASSES

There'll be a concrete spill first
thing in the morning.

Darcy watches the Caterpillar dump dirt into the pit.

DARCY

I just wanted my own restaurant.

Darcy walks away as Glasses gazes into the abyss.

EXT. THE STEFANO RESIDENCE - DAY

From the kitchen window, Darcy smiles at Eddie, who sits
in the gazebo with a coffee, noodling on his acoustic.

Woody, toothpick in mouth, strolls through the gate. He
casually salutes Darcy and enters the gazebo with a grin.

WOODY

The Hurdy Gurdy Man. Sometimes he plays
the guitar, sometimes he plays the odds.

Eddie stops playing as Woody takes a seat.

WOODY

Don't quit on my account.

Eddie does not continue. Woody rolls his toothpick.

WOODY

Relax. We're tilling the same soil now.

Eddie relaxes but doesn't play. He turns his attention to
Hat, who's exited the kitchen with coffee and a sandwich.

Glasses exits the guest house and Hat changes direction
to meet him. Woody watches Eddie watching them converse.

WOODY

Sides. They slip and they slide.

Woody grins at Eddie's unease as the two men approach.

Eddie, Woody and Glasses watch Hat devour his sandwich.

HAT

I gotta get another one. Eggs in
the kitchen. Plenty of bacon.

GLASSES

Poetically irresistible.

WOODY

I had my breakfast three hours ago.
Y'all have banker's hours.

Glasses looks at Eddie as Hat walks away.

GLASSES

Do your part, you'll have a clean exit.

EDDIE

Thank you.

WOODY

There you go, Guitarzan.

GLASSES

Well, bacon beckons.

Eddie watches Glasses follow Hat to the kitchen, then
focuses on a smiling Darcy, much to Woody's amusement.

WOODY

It might go easier if you quit falling
for your marks, kid.

Eddie looks at Woody and scoffs, but he doesn't disagree.

WOODY

Kinda feels like you jumped on a
moving roller coaster, huh?

EDDIE

Kinda.

WOODY

Sometimes things need settling.

Woody absently scratches at his scar.

WOODY

It wasn't always this rollicking.

Glasses, sandwich in hand, communes with Darcy.

WOODY

It used to be more about bread than bullets. Damn, I sound like Glasses.

FIVE YEARS EARLIER

INT. DARCY'S PLACE - FAIRLY BUSY

A LIGHTER, HAPPIER Darcy stands near the office door. Glasses, more hair, sandwich in hand, is beside her.

DARCY

This could work.

Woody, toothpick, NO SCAR, sits at the bar.

GLASSES

The roast beef is a tad chewy.

DARCY

It's meat.

GLASSES

I factored that in.

DARCY

Look into it, if you're serious.

GLASSES

About food? Always.

Darcy, mildly exasperated, shakes her head.

GLASSES

Can't decide if I'm a bane or blessing?

DARCY

Oh, I've decided. Just not in those words.

Darcy's smile is radiant as she retreats to the office.

A grinning Glasses sits at the bar beside Woody, who spears an olive from the condiment tray.

GLASSES

How are they shaping up?

WOODY

Bartenders. A fifty fifty proposition.
College boy occasionally slips a freebie.

GLASSES

Hormones?

WOODY

Probably. I'll keep an eye.

GLASSES

Under your baleful gaze, I trust the
wheat shall be separated from the chaff.

WOODY

Yeah. It don't take much to chap my ass.

GLASSES

So, the corner table.

WOODY

Weasels at the gate.

At the corner table, Joey, Richie and Hat are eating.

GLASSES

Thoughts?

WOODY

We don't have the breathing room.

GLASSES

Ideas?

WOODY

Shoot straight.

GLASSES

Figurative, I trust.

WOODY

Yeah. No need to mix the concrete yet.

GLASSES

We'll keep the bags cool and dry.

CHRISTINA, a waitress, sets a drink in front of Glasses.

GLASSES

You get a read?

WOODY

They're heeled.

GLASSES

They could just be here for a meal.

WOODY

It's charming you'd say that.

GLASSES

Mmmm. Chicago?

WOODY

Nah. This is small spuds. Like Joey.

GLASSES

Maybe that explains this.

WOODY

Maybe.

GLASSES

The fingerling strives to be a russet.

WOODY

Damn it. I was gonna say that.

Glasses grins. Woody spears an olive and pops it in his mouth, drawing a frown from Christina.

WOODY

Speaking of fingering, Joey can be a touchy little prick.

GLASSES

So, diplomacy is the watchword. I have faith in the boss.

WOODY

She's got my money.

GLASSES

Aptly put.

WOODY

Circle the wagons. They're about to storm the corral.

The three men are standing, and looking toward the bar.

GLASSES

Who's the tall one?

WOODY

That's Richie. Joey's right hand, slash errand boy.

GLASSES

Sounds like an awkward balance.

WOODY

And he ain't tall. Joey's short.

GLASSES

The pug?

WOODY

Hat. Joey's main muscle. Ex cop. Drummed out of the force for being excessive.

GLASSES

I'm guessing what made him bad at the one makes him good at the other.

WOODY

Yeah. He likes getting his hands dirty.

GLASSES

And he answers to Hat?

WOODY

You ain't gonna peg stones, are ya?

GLASSES

Mmm. Is Richie slouching?

The three men are making their way to the bar.

WOODY

Joey don't like being short.

GLASSES

He's gonna love us.

Woody and Glasses rise as the three men reach the bar. And Joey does appear annoyed at the height difference.

WOODY

Mr. Stefano.

JOEY

Woody.

They shake hands. Joey looks at Glasses suspiciously.

WOODY

That's Glasses.

Joey's annoyance increases. He looks at Hat.

JOEY

Hat and Glasses. Sounds like a damn comedy team.

Joey shakes hands with Glasses, who nods at Hat.

GLASSES

It's nice to have a fall back plan.

Joey's not liking Glasses. Hat appears neutral.

JOEY

I was hoping to speak with your boss.

On cue, Darcy comes out of the office. She pauses.

Joey's sour look sweetens a bit. He appears off balance, perhaps smitten. Richie is definitely smitten.

INT. THE POOL ROOM

Darcy is diplomatically ushering out TWO COUPLES.

DARCY

Whatever you want? On the house.
So eat, drink, and when we're done
here, play. And again, my apologies.

The delighted foursome murmur their thanks as Darcy closes the double doors. She turns and faces the room.

Joey can't take his eyes off her. He stands stiffly beside a pool table, hands clasped before him.

To his left stands Richie, looking like a nervous high school kid trying not to stare at the pretty girl.

To Joey's right is Hat, who appears more concerned with Woody and Glasses than he is with Darcy.

Woody casually leans on a pool table, bouncing a ball off the cushion. The three visitors are in his sight line.

Glasses casually leans against the wall beside Darcy.

DARCY

Mr. Stefano. I trust you're here to wish me well on my new business.

Joey is trying to balance tough guy with smitten suitor.

JOEY

Of course. Of course.

DARCY

Would you gentlemen care for a drink?

Hat is stoic, but Richie appears interested.

JOEY

Thank you. We're fine.

Darcy catches Richie's disappointment, but lets it go.

DARCY

I hope you all enjoyed your meal.

There are nods and murmurs of assent from the visitors.

DARCY

And please, be honest. At this point, criticism is helpful.

HAT

The roast beef was a little tough.

Joey shoots Hat an annoyed look. Darcy speaks while glancing at Glasses, who allows a slight grin.

DARCY

I apologize. We're looking into it. And next time, consider yourselves my guests.

JOEY

That's not necessary.

DARCY

I insist, Mr. Stefano.

JOEY

Please. Call me Joey.

Woody, bouncing the ball, grins around his toothpick.

DARCY

Is there anything else, gentlemen?

Joey, looking uncomfortable, clears his throat.

JOEY

Well, there are certain realities.

DARCY

What realities? Mr. Stefano.

Upon hearing his last name, Joey's body language changes.

Woody, no longer grinning, slows his bounce. Glasses looks less casual. Tommy straightens. Hat remains stoic.

JOEY

Your location. It's...encroaching.

DARCY

No. I was very careful about that.

Woody catches the ball on 'No.' The next few moments seem long. Tension simmers. Joey carefully breaks the silence.

JOEY

These things. They can be... fluid.

DARCY

I hope that includes this negotiation.

JOEY

Of course. The ideal scenario is that all sides benefit.

Darcy takes a breath. She glances at Glasses, who offers a barely discernible nod of encouragement.

DARCY

I owe you an apology, Mr. Stefano.

Woody resumes the bounce. Hat and Glasses exchange a look, knowing a potential bump is about to be smoothed.

Joey, off balance, is about to speak. Darcy stops him.

DARCY

Mr. Stefano. Joey. Please.

Joey makes a gesture of acceptance. Having heard Darcy utter his first name, he's all ears.

DARCY

I've done my homework. Painstakingly. That being said, as a courtesy, I should have reached out to express my intentions.

Again Joey attempts to speak, but Darcy raises a hand.

DARCY

I've heard you were a fair man, and a man with many responsibilities. I imagine it's difficult, keeping all parties satisfied?

JOEY

It can be a burden.

Joey is loving this. Glasses manages not to smile.

DARCY

Starting a new business, I'm sure you're aware, my margins are slight. But I have hopes we can reach an accord.

Joey nods. Darcy doesn't wait for him to catch up.

DARCY

Supplies? Perhaps liquor?

Joey can't acquiesce fast enough.

JOEY

That should satisfy all parties.

DARCY

You can make that happen?

JOEY

I can. And I'm certain I can even save you money, liquor wise.

Woody works the ball and toothpick. Hat and Glasses exchange looks. Richie looks like a kid in love.

Joey, the benevolent, extends his arms. Glasses nods at a slightly diminished Darcy, who manages to smile.

DARCY

Well. Looks like this is my lucky day.

INT. THE KITCHEN - THE PRESENT

DARCY

Bacon, egg and cheese. On a croissant.

A smiling Darcy hands Eddie a plate.

EDDIE

Thank you.

Hat shakes his head. Glasses, washing dishes, takes note.

GLASSES

While I agree the Kaiser rules, I would not outright condemn the flaky croissant.

WOODY

You're getting worse in your old age. I'm a biscuit man myself.

DARCY

Are you boys done?

GLASSES

I was about to vilify the bagel as a breakfast sandwich. However...

DARCY

You really can't help yourself, can you?

HAT

Some things don't change.

FOUR YEARS AGO

INT. DARCY'S PLACE

A smiling Joey and Darcy sit at a table enjoying a meal. At the next table Richie and Hat look up at Glasses.

HAT

Ciabatta?

GLASSES

You complained your sandwich was chewy. I'm curious about your choice of bread.

HAT

What kinda stupe do you take me for?

GLASSES

I'm not sure that's quantifiable.

HAT

You ever get tired hearing yourself talk?

GLASSES

Yes. But it's a rarity.

Hat gets up. Richie looks concerned. Joey takes note.

HAT

Not for me.

JOEY

Hey!

Hat and Glasses are face to face.

HAT

No problem here, Boss.

Christina brings a brownie covered in ice cream and chocolate syrup to the table. Hat's eyes shift.

HAT

What's this?

GLASSES

I've found a failed meal can be saved by a good dessert. The brownie's warm.

Hat remains face to face a moment, then sits.

Christina leans near Woody, who's watching from the bar. Behind the bar is a NEW, OLDER MALE BARTENDER.

CHRISTINA

What do you think?

WOODY

'Bout what?

CHRISTINA

The happy couple.

At one table, Joey and Darcy exchange smiles. At another, Hat is taking a bite of dessert and nodding at Glasses.

WOODY

Which one?

EXT. THE GAZEBO - PRESENT DAY

Darcy, Eddie and Glasses are seated. Hat stands, chewing on a strip of bacon. Woody leans against the frame.

EDDIE

Mountain Devils? Isn't that a band?

WOODY

A band of berserk sons a bitches.

Woody's mood is uncharacteristically dark.

DARCY

They supplied us with liquor.

GLASSES

And, the occasional odd job.

Darcy offers a stone faced Woody a sympathetic glance.

EDDIE

You can't just cut 'em loose?

GLASSES

Maybe. But they can be...volatile.

Woody snorts. Eddie frowns, a bit confused.

EDDIE

But you got Chicago's blessing.

HAT

Chicago got nothing to do with it.

Glasses addresses the reluctance Eddie is exhibiting.

GLASSES

It won't hurt to have leverage.

Eddie slowly nods in acquiescence.

EDDIE
So, this girl...

DARCY
Luana.

EDDIE
You, ah, want me to...kidnap her.

WOODY
You just get her to go for a ride.
I'll do the kidnapping.

EDDIE
This is...

DARCY
Not the worst thing you've done.

At Darcy's fire, Eddie nods meekly and rubs his jaw.

HAT
It'll be like an Andy of Mayberry.

GLASSES
Just do that thing you do, kid.

EDDIE
You, ah...figure she'll go for it?

DARCY
Oh, she'll go for it.

THREE YEARS AGO

EXT. THE PLATEAU - A TREE LINED PICNIC AREA

Richie, wearing a tuxedo, sits at a picnic table. A lovely lady, LUANA, dress hiked up, sits on Richie. Luana grunts as she rides a wide eyed Richie hard.

Past the line of trees a wedding ceremony is wrapping up. The bride and groom, Darcy and Joey, kiss to applause.

Hat and Glasses stand near a buffet table. Hat grabs a rolled up piece of roast beef and takes a bite.

HAT

Mmm. Tender.

GLASSES

See. It's the bread.

As they watch the newlyweds cut the cake, Woody drifts in and spears a baby gherkin with his toothpick.

HAT

Maybe this'll be good for Joey.

GLASSES

Maybe it'll be good for everyone.

WOODY

It's charming y'all say that.

Darcy's smile falters when she sees a disheveled Richie emerge from the woods, momentarily followed by Luana.

Meanwhile Hat and Glasses work the buffet table. Their progress is slowed by Paw Paw, spilling out of a dated suit, beard speckled with food.

Glasses watches him drop a handful of shrimp onto his plate, then attempt to suck one through the shell.

GLASSES

The cocktail sauce makes it work.

Paw Paw is considering a response when Luana appears.

LUANA

Those aren't crawdads, Paw Paw.

PAW PAW

Luana. Where you been?

LUANA

Stretchin' my legs.

PAW PAW
You feed the boys?

LUANA
You can see I did. Uh.

Luana looks over the three men, then sashays away. She offers a haughty look to a mildly contemptuous Darcy.

Paw Paw brushes the shrimp back onto the tray and grabs a fistful of meat and cheese. He considers the breads.

GLASSES
Try the ciabatta.

Paw Paw glares at Glasses, then chooses pumpernickel.

GLASSES
In that case, I recommend horseradish.

PAW PAW
Why're you buzzin' round?

GLASSES
Just being sociable. Pawpaw? Like the plant?

Paw Paw doesn't know what to make of the smiling Glasses.

PAW PAW
I'm a Mountain Devil.

GLASSES
Ah, like the flower.

Hat continues eating. Woody shakes his head.

GLASSES
Endemic to Australia, I believe.

PAW PAW
Shoo.

Glasses is about to respond when Woody swoops in.

WOODY

Mr. Stefano was asking about, you know.

GLASSES

The nebulosity of circumstance, no doubt.

WOODY

Yeah. He did mention that.

Paw Paw glares as Woody steers Glasses away.

WOODY

That ain't a bear you wanna poke.

Glasses bites into a sandwich as Hat, mouth full, speaks.

HAT

He can't help himself.

WOODY

Yer seeing that, huh?

GLASSES

Just taking a read.

HAT

Next time borrow my funny book.

Woody watches Glasses, who's watching Darcy and Joey.

WOODY

Yeah. It's a flummox. She's smart, though.
And got some hard bark on her.

GLASSES

She caved on the Mountain Devils.

WOODY

You figure it was worth the fight?

HAT

Mr. S. likes to show off.

GLASSES

I just hope it's not a harbinger.

Woody spears a big green olive and pops it in his mouth.

WOODY

Yeah. We don't want one a those.

Woody watches Paw Paw stride toward the tree line where seven armed Mountain Devils are evenly spaced along the ridge, most of them eating sandwiches.

The seventh one is SMILEY, who is anything but. He is large and grim. On his lapel is a SMILEY BUTTON.

EXT. THE GAZEBO - PRESENT DAY

Darcy and Woody sit facing each other. Glasses stands.

DARCY

Buffalo?

WOODY

If this becomes a shit grenade,
we're gonna need backup.

DARCY

I don't want a bloodbath. That's the
kinda crap I'm trying to get away from.

WOODY

Sometimes you gotta kill something
to get away from it.

Glasses appears impressed by the phrase, Darcy troubled.

DARCY

Snatching Luana. That's not enough?

WOODY

The blood simple bastards might not
give a steaming shit.

GLASSES

It could even set 'em off.

DARCY

Jesus. Do we know what we're doing here?

WOODY

Well, that's the nub, ain't it? What was that word? Volatile?

GLASSES

I hear they've got a shack full of dynamite on the plateau.

WOODY

That's a truth.

GLASSES

You could offer to keep buying their liquor, but again...

DARCY

No. I want done with them.

Eddie, casually impeccable, exits the main house. Hat, buttoning a clean shirt over a fresh bandage, exits the guest house. They converge on the gazebo.

DARCY

I'll offer Buffalo the liquor contract.

GLASSES

Good. Good.

DARCY

And the Devils a cash settlement.

Eddie and Hat have entered the gazebo. Darcy watches Hat straighten Eddie's collar and pat him on the cheek.

GLASSES

Let's hope they're amenable, and sweet reason prevails.

WOODY

It's damn charming you say that, but we all need to stay on our hind legs. If this breaks bloody, we can't lag.

Woody gives everyone a look before walking away.

WOODY

I gotta put an edge on my knife.

They all watch Woody walk toward the guest house.

EDDIE

Woody seems...

GLASSES

Like he's taking this personal? He is.

TWO YEARS AGO

EXT. AN EXPANSIVE FARMLAND - DUSK

Horses graze in a pasture. The near silence is hypnotic.

A ROAR sunders the idyllic setting. The horses scurry as Frenchy pulls up on a vintage INDIAN MOTORCYCLE. He parks off to the side and swings the gate open.

A vintage Cadillac manned by four Mountain Devils pulls through the gate. From the passenger seat Paw Paw looks back and nods at Smiley, who's seated behind the driver.

A second Caddy, with the tarp and three more Devils, pulls through and waits for Frenchy to close the gate.

Frenchy jumps in, and both cars RUMBLE down the road.

The horses slowly wander back as the dust settles.

INT. THE OFFICE OF DARCY'S PLACE

Joey sits behind the desk. Darcy is standing.

JOEY

Open insubordination? I can't have it.

DARCY

Karl didn't mean it as an insult, Joey.
Let it go.

JOEY

I can't do that.

DARCY

At least give it to Hat and Glasses.

JOEY

They're busy.

EXT. A PARK NEXT TO A PLAYGROUND

Hat and Glasses have their table and chairs set up. Glasses is reading BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL by Friedrich Nietzsche, while Hat is enjoying THE ORGAN GRINDER by Mickey King, a lurid illustrated trade paperback.

INT. THE OFFICE

DARCY

This won't make you look strong.

Darcy can't conceal her disdain. An angry Joey rises.

JOEY

Can't you take my side for once?

DARCY

I'm trying, Joey, but you won't let me.

Joey's anger somewhat subsides. Darcy speaks softly.

DARCY

Can you at least give it a day?

Joey sits down. His smile is close to a grimace.

JOEY

The call's been made.

Darcy shakes her head and storms out of the office.

JOEY

That's right! Have another drink!

Darcy sits beside Woody. She sighs and nods for a drink.

WOODY

Maybe I can talk him out of it.

DARCY

Too late.

Woody clucks and goes to speed dial on his cell.

WOODY

I'd best give Charise a call.

INT. BUZZARD'S LUCK - MODERATELY BUSY - LOUD MUSIC

At the bar stands a smiling CHARISE. She exudes a natural charm. Charise is wearing a suede vest over a casual shirt. A colorful BANDANA keeps her long hair in place.

She notes WOODY'S name on her cell. Her smile broadens.

As a HAIL OF GUNFIRE blunts the music, Charise looks up.

EXT. BUZZARD'S LUCK

The two Caddies face the entrance. Shit Boy mans the machine gun as the seven other Mountain Devils watch.

PAW PAW

Damn it, Shit Boy! Aim high!

Shit Boy swivels the weapon up, strafing near the roof.

A MAN WITH A SHOTGUN rolls out the door. His first SHOT ricochets off the weapon and hits Shit Boy, who SCREAMS. Shotgun swings toward the Devils. Seeing he's outnumbered he FIRES and backtracks, then gets RIDDLED with bullets.

SHIT BOY

Paw Paw! I'm shot!

PAW PAW

Good! See what you done started?

A window is broken. A gun pokes out and FIRES, hitting Tit Lip in the leg. The Devils PEPPER the window.

PAW PAW

Christ all ta shit!

Paw Paw looks over a staggering Shit Boy.

PAW PAW
You just nicked, baby shit.

SHIT BOY
It stings!

PAW PAW
Tend to Tit Lip. He's hit for real.

As a disgruntled Shit Boy lurches toward Tit Lip, Paw Paw nods at the other Devils and heads for the door.

PAW PAW
Come along, then.

The six Devils enter the tavern. There are YELLS, SCREAMS, and a BURST OF GUNFIRE. Then... SILENCE.

INT. BUZZARD'S LUCK

A large tote slides through a puddle of blood to rest beside Charise. Her lifeless eyes are open.

An eerie silence is slowly overtaken by SOBS and MOANS.

Items start flying into the tote; money, wallets, purses, cell phones. A register draw is emptied into it.

Then clothing; belts, shirts, caps. Charise's vest is yanked from her body and thrown in.

PAW PAW (O.S.)
Fit what booze you can in the Caddies.
We can sell it right on back to 'em.

Bottles start CLINKING. One BREAKS.

PAW PAW (O.S.)
Not bottles! Boxes, dub nut.

A large figure with wild hair looms over the tote. A hand reaches down and roughly removes Charise's bandana. A dead eyed Smiley ties the bandana into a headband.

EXT. THE GAZEBO - PRESENT DAY

Woody ties the same, now partly stained bandana, around his neck, then disappears inside the guest house.

EDDIE

What was the insult?

Darcy sighs and looks at Glasses, who shakes his head.

DARCY

Joey and I were with Karl, the owner.
Karl's wife and daughter dropped by.

INT. BUZZARD'S LUCK - FLASHBACK

A beaming man, KARL, arms spread, stands before Joey and Darcy. To the side stands KARL'S WIFE AND DAUGHTER.

KARL

Look, Joey. My little girl's as tall as you now.

Karl's smile fades as Joey's face goes dark.

INT. THE GAZEBO - THE PRESENT

A puzzled Eddie makes a questioning gesture.

GLASSES

Joey doesn't like being short.

DARCY

It was an innocent comment. Anyone else would have laughed it off.

Hat approaches, eating a sandwich. Glasses frowns.

HAT

BLT. I'm fortifying. Plus, I ain't wasting no bacon.

GLASSES

Bacon. A worthy precursor to battle.
If battle be our destiny.

DARCY

Let's hope it won't come to that.

A NOISE draws all eyes to the guest house. It's Woody, sporting an armful of automatic weapons.

ONE YEAR AGO

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN DEVIL'S FARM - DAY

Woody, toothpick in mouth, stands before an outhouse.

The outhouse door opens and Smiley exits. He's wearing Charise's bandana as a headband. Seeing Woody, he stops.

Smiley looks at his gun belt that's hanging on a peg, then at Woody, who has a pistol in his belt.

Woody drops his gun on the grass and pulls a knife.

After a beat, a dead eyed Smiley removes the bandana and ties it on his wrist, then produces his own knife.

Woody spits out his toothpick and moves toward Smiley.

INT. DARCY'S PLACE

A glassy eyed Darcy sits at a table. She looks defeated.

She drains her drink. Ice cubes CLACK as she gestures for another. Darcy can't help but notice Katie's warm smile.

DARCY

So, do you like it here...uh?

KATIE

It's Katie. I do. Everyone's so nice.

Darcy nods. Katie gets the drink, EXCLAIMS, and drops it.

Woody, right side of his face covered in blood, enters. Charise's bloodied bandana dangles from his back pocket.

DARCY

Jesus!

Darcy sobers quickly as she checks out the nasty knife wound. Seeing her concern, Woody manages a bloody smile.

WOODY

I won't say you oughta see the other guy. But, you oughta.

INT. THE STEFANO KITCHEN - THE PRESENT

Glasses, knife in hand, faces Hat across the table. A bag of money, and a Twinkie two pack, sit between them. Glasses slits open the Twinkies. They each take a cake.

In tandem, they bite and chew three times. Hat's Twinkie is gone, while Glasses has a small bite left. Hat glares.

GLASSES

I like biting at the cream holes.

HAT

You bite between 'em, it comes out even.

GLASSES

It doesn't feel natural.

Glasses pops the last bit as Darcy enters the kitchen.

DARCY

You two still arguing over how to eat a Twinkie?

GLASSES

Fighting clowns.

HAT

He don't do it right.

Darcy smiles as she throws some stacks of bills into the bag and zips it. Still smiling, she looks at the two men.

DARCY

Shall we?

GLASSES

You sure you don't wanna sit this out.

HAT

He's right.

DARCY

It's one of the few things I'm sure of.

Glasses smiles. He tosses his truck keys to Hat and grabs the bag of money. The trio exit the house.

INT. BUZZARD'S LUCK

Luana, wearing a suede vest, is sharing a laugh with the bartender when Eddie enters. Luana is thunderstruck.

LUANA

Lord won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz.

INT. EDDIE'S CAR - DAY

From the back seat, Woody watches the couple approach.

LUANA

What kinda name is Paxton Quigley?

Eddie smiles and opens the passenger door.

EDDIE

Kind of a funny one, ain't it?

LUANA

Why, thank you, sir.

Luana gets in. She is slightly startled to see Woody.

LUANA

Well, this is getting interesting.

Eddie gets behind the wheel and starts the car.

LUANA

I guess I'm at your mercy, fellas.

WOODY

Take off that vest.

LUANA

Oh my.

Luana smiles coyly. She looks at Woody and notices the bandana. And the scar. Her smile wanes. She goes pale.

LUANA

You're...you're him.

WOODY

If 'him' means the one diced up your
shitstain of a brother, yeah. I'm him.

A frightened Luana looks at Eddie, then back at Woody.

LUANA

I...I don't blame you for that.

WOODY

That so.

LUANA

I hated what happened at Buzzard's Luck.

WOODY

That why you're wearing my friend's vest?

Luana's face goes slack. She looks genuinely remorseful.

LUANA

I...I didn't know. I swear.

She quickly removes the vest and hands it to Woody.

LUANA

I am so sorry. Please let me go. I won't
tell the Devils. I swear I won't.

WOODY

Hush up and enjoy the ride.

Luana's fear rises. She turns to Eddie.

LUANA

Paxton. Please. You gotta...

Woody grabs her by the neck and pulls her in the back.

WOODY

I said hush.

INT. DARCY'S CAR - OVERLOOKING THE PLATEAU - DAY

From the front seat Darcy and Glasses look down on the plateau. A BLACK SUV is parked next to the red pickup.

Hat is handing out automatic weapons from the back of the truck to FIVE CAPABLE LOOKING MEN.

GLASSES

Frank's their best man. I'm guessing
Buffalo wasn't a problem.

Hat and one man, FRANK, appear to be discussing strategy.

DARCY

They liked the deal. And nobody much
liked Joey. Including his cousin.

Glasses rattles a box of Milk Duds. Darcy declines.

DARCY

So what the hell was I? The sad, little
orphan girl looking for a Daddy?

GLASSES

You were never the sad little orphan girl.

DARCY

Well, I had a big brother to look after me.

They exchange smiles. The smiles fade. Darcy sighs.

DARCY

Those nine bodies in the pit. That image
won't go away, will it?

GLASSES

No. But that's a good thing.

Darcy scoffs and shakes her head.

DARCY

What about killing Joey? Wanting to.
Was that a good thing?

GLASSES

That... that was a necessary thing.

DARCY

You know, he hated children. I mean, he
never said anything. But you could see it.

GLASSES

Well, they grow. And given the chance,
I'm sure he would have kicked my dog.

Darcy chuckles. After a moment, she speaks softly.

DARCY

Richie. I gotta know. Was that...
a necessary thing?

GLASSES

No. It wasn't. We were just gonna send
him to Buffalo. It weighs on me.

Darcy, seeing the pain and regret on Glasses' face, nods.
They watch Hat and Frank deploy the men along the road.

GLASSES

I think it set off a lightbulb for Joey.
I can just send my foes to the cornfield.

DARCY

How did that man come to power?

GLASSES

The human imperative is to follow
someone willing to lead, worthy or not.
Joey diminished us all.

DARCY

No kidding. I became the worst cliché.
The miserable, booze addled wife.

Hat pats Frank on the back and heads toward the truck.

GLASSES

Here's to alcohol, the rose colored
glasses of life. F. Scott Fitzgerald.

DARCY

Jesus. Do you ever stop?

GLASSES

He wrapped himself in quotations-as
a beggar would enfold himself in the
purple of Emperors. Kipling.

Darcy snorts. Glasses grins. They watch Hat retrieve a
shovel and post hole digger from the bed of the truck.

GLASSES

I should probably give him a hand.

A car pulls up. Eddie exits and circles to the back door.
He opens it and Woody gets out holding Luana's limp body.

DARCY

Jesus.

EXT. AN EXPANSIVE VIEW OF THE PLATEAU

Without the trappings of a wedding, the plateau is a
sparse panorama that hearkens to the Old West.

Darcy and Glasses exit the car and hurry down the path.

Woody props Luana against a tree. Darcy kneels by her and
shoots a glare at Woody, who retreats to the pickup.

Woody grabs a rope and a bottle of water while Glasses
retrieves an eight foot post, slats, and a tamper.

Darcy angrily grabs the water offered by Woody. Rope at
the ready, Woody waits patiently as Darcy tends to Luana.

Glasses joins Hat in a clearing by the road. Glasses
grabs the shovel as Hat works the post hole digger.

Darcy is comforting a now conscious Luana when Eddie
approaches. Luana rises and starts yelling at Eddie.

Darcy tries to calm Luana as a shaken Eddie backs off. Luana bolts past Darcy and belts Eddie in the jaw.

A grinning Woody grabs Luana before she can do further damage, and steers her back to the tree.

Hat and Glasses enjoy the drama as they work.

Woody manages to tie the agitated Luana to the tree as Darcy helps Eddie to his feet.

Darcy is speaking to Eddie, who is rubbing his jaw. She puts a hand on Eddie's shoulder. Eddie nods and smiles.

Eddie touches her hand, then walks away. As she turns back to Luana, Darcy sees Woody disappear into the woods.

Eddie approaches his car. Glasses, shovel in hand, offers a nod. Hat, holding the eight foot pole, grins at Eddie.

Hat drops the post in the hole. He holds it steady as Glasses drops in the shims and starts shoveling in dirt.

Luana watches Eddie's car disappear down the road. Darcy gently moves the hair from Luana's tear streaked face.

Hat tamps down the dirt and checks the post. Satisfied, he looks at Luana. She looks back, somewhat fearfully.

EXT. THE WOODS

Eddie drives carefully along the tree lined dirt road. He catches a flash of movement to his right, then his left. An uneasy Eddie scans the trees, then slams his brakes.

In the middle of the road stand two Mountain Devils, One Nut and Shaky. Their Tommy guns are aimed at Eddie, who is startled by a tapping on the driver's window.

It's Frenchy, sporting a big smile. With his Tommy Gun, he motions for Eddie to lower the window. Eddie complies.

FRENCHY

Don't you lean on that horn by mistake,
Mr. Paxton Squiggly. We in stealth mode.

Eddie, white knuckling the steering wheel, nods.

FRENCHY

Leave her running and step out.
Phone and gun. Cough 'em over.

Again Eddie complies. One Nut jumps in the car and pulls down a side path. Frenchy motions Eddie to follow.

FRENCHY

C'mon, or I'll powder you up and flick matches. Eh, kidding.

Eddie cautiously nods at a grinning Frenchy and complies.

FRENCHY

That's a good Squiggly Wiggly.

They reach an opening where the car has pulled over near a large man hunched over a campfire. The man turns.

The Man is Paw Paw. He offers Eddie a huge grin.

EXT. THE PLATEAU - DUSK

A large green tarp is stretched between two trees, blocking view of the eight foot pole. Just across the road, Darcy is leaning on her car.

Hat sits on the tailgate of the truck reading 'Toil Not In Anger.' Beside him, Glasses is perusing 'His Name Is Savage.' They are both frowning.

Darcy's cell phone RINGS. She looks at it quizzically.

DARCY

It's Eddie.

Hat and Glasses look up. They put down their reading material and rise as Darcy switches to speaker.

DARCY

Hey. You okay?

Paw Paw's distinctive voice comes through loud and clear.

PAW PAW

Nice of you to ask, Missy. I'm fine.

Glasses shakes his head. Darcy looks at the phone like it's a foreign object. She takes a breath.

PAW PAW

Cat got your tongue? That's alright.
We'll talk eyeball to eyeball.

Darcy frowns as the phone goes dark. Glasses and Hat arm themselves and aim toward a sound from the woods.

Woody, blood on his shirt, Tommy gun slung behind him, emerges. Behind him is Frank, holding a weapon.

WOODY

We got us a high class hiccup.

Glasses scoffs, now more annoyed than confused.

GLASSES

Why the hell didn't we hear 'em?

A sound from the further wood draws everyone's attention.

DARCY

Woody. The Devil's farm. Do they,
by any chance, have horses?

On cue, a smiling Paw Paw emerges from the woods on horseback, Tommy gun slung over his shoulder.

Woody, looking disgusted, expectorates.

EXT. THE WOODS - IN THE BACKGROUND IS AN OLD SHACK

Eddie is tied to a tree. Frenchy is rummaging through a saddle bag draped over one of a string of six horses.

FRENCHY

You like bacon?

EDDIE

With a 'c' or a 'k'?

Frenchy thinks for a moment, then smiles.

FRENCHY

Heh. Good one. You're okay, Squig.

Frenchy closes the saddlebag and moves to the next horse.

FRENCHY

Hey, you play the guitar? I seen the case.
Lessen it's a spray gun. Like Jimmy Cagney.

Frenchy rummages the saddlebag and comes up smiling.

FRENCHY

Bacon. With a 'c.' You want?

EDDIE

No. Thanks. And, yeah. I play.

FRENCHY

We got a piano. Ma played on it.

Eddie nods. Frenchy, chewing bacon, sits on a stump.

FRENCHY

Now it's all furballed from the cat.

Eddie nods again. Frenchy, chewing bacon, nods with him.

FRENCHY

I fear one day she'll pee in it.

EXT. THE PLATEAU

Paw Paw moves leisurely toward the group. Unlike at the wedding, he is in his element, and totally at ease.

PAW PAW

Ain't I brave, all on my lonesome.

Woody casually aims his handgun at Paw Paw, who scoffs.

PAW PAW

Still itchin,' young feller? Way I
figure it, we're even.

WOODY

You scum in a bunch ain't worth Charise.

PAW PAW

High marks... for a barfly.

Woody's face darkens. He takes a step toward Paw Paw.

DARCY

Woody.

WOODY manages to rein it in. Paw Paw looks at Darcy.

PAW PAW

I reckon you figured we'd stumble in,
engines roaring and guns a blazin.'
Maybe a couple of us pluckin' banjos.

Darcy sullenly watches the showboating Paw Paw.

PAW PAW

Your city slickers? My boys is with 'em.
Well, four anyways. We had to kill one.

Frank glares at Paw Paw, who looks toward Hat.

PAW PAW

You placed 'em well, Mr. Turncoat.
Good vantage points. Right, boys!

From the woods comes a JUMBLE OF EXCLAMATIONS. 'Good to Go, Paw Paw!' 'Big malarky coming!' 'Okey doke corral!'

PAW PAW

And don't worry, Missy. We haven't
mussed your male concubine. Yet.

Paw Paw produces a pair of earmuffs and places them on his horse. He turns a stern look on Darcy.

PAW PAW

Now, what you done to your husband.
That was Biblical. Old Testament.

Paw Paw slowly shifts his Tommy gun. Weapons raise.

PAW PAW

I get it, Missy. He was a small man.
In body and in mind. So, I get it.

Paw Paw's eyes narrow. The men shift, shielding Darcy.

PAW PAW

But I sure as shittin' don't like it.

Paw Paw suddenly swings his gun toward the roadside and squeezes off short bursts toward either end of the tarp. The tarp falls away, revealing a bound and gagged Luana.

PAW PAW

In pain you shall bring forth children!

For a moment, Paw Paw shows a hint of vulnerability.

PAW PAW

That burden was meant for woman.
But I feel it every day.

Paw Paw appears unbothered by the five guns aimed at him.

PAW PAW

Sorry to spoil your surprise. We been
watching ya, scurrying round like ants.

Darcy lowers her gun. The men relax, but are wary.

DARCY

Even trade, then.

PAW PAW

I hate to muck up your strategy, Missy.
But my daughter? You can keep her.

Darcy, a bit nonplussed, looks at Glasses, who offers a slight shrug. Paw Paw's swagger has returned.

PAW PAW

So, I guess we hold the cards.

WOODY

Not as many as you think.

Woody swings the Tommy gun around. Paw Paw sees the blood on Woody's shirt. He looks at Frank and frowns.

PAW PAW

Boys?

ONE NUT (O.S.)

I think they got Shaky, Pa.

Paw Paw glowers. His voice lowers.

PAW PAW

We still got you in a box.

WOODY

Same one you're in.

Woody goes to his cell. Paw Paw scoffs.

PAW PAW

Your long shooter? Fool me once.

A smirking Paw Paw nods toward the mountain.

PAW PAW

I sent Tit Lip to scout the likely areas.

Woody appears unfazed.

PAW PAW

A regular Dan'l Boone, that boy.

WOODY

Billy Joe. A little off the top.

Immediately, the top of the pole ERUPTS into fragments.

The sound of the SHOT and Luana's muffled SCREAM follows. Realizing she's okay, Luana shakes off some splinters.

There are exclamations from the surrounding Devils. Paw Paw waves them down. Woody enjoys Paw Paw's confusion.

WOODY

You have company, Billy Joe?

BILLY JOE

Had.

Paw Paw's face goes dark. His voice is a low rumble.

PAW PAW

We still got the drop.

WOODY

The ball starts, you'll be first.

PAW PAW

And you'll be second.

Darcy impatiently tries to move past the stalemate.

DARCY

Two hundred and fifty thousand.

Paw Paw grudgingly allows, perhaps welcomes, the option.

PAW PAW

Huh. You got it here?

DARCY

Of course not.

Paw Paw, noticing a slight hesitation, smiles.

PAW PAW

I think you do. You want a quick end.
Find us distasteful, do ya, Missy?

DARCY

That's more than you'd make in a year.

PAW PAW

In regards to liquor, that is true.
However, there are many tributaries...

DARCY

You're not going on the payroll.

Paw Paw appears stung by the forceful rebuke. He scoffs.

PAW PAW

You know what, Missy. Distasteful runs two ways. We'll take that offer. Yearly.

Darcy stares at him, shaking her head in disbelief.

DARCY

You don't want to settle.

WOODY

How 'bout I settle him? What say you, Old Man.

Paw Paw and Woody reprise their hate filled stare off.

PAW PAW

That scar does look a mite lonely.

Woody scoffs and sets his guns on the ground. Paw Paw hooks his Tommy gun on the saddle and dismounts.

DARCY

What's happening?

GLASSES

Leave it. Woody's riding the red ass. And this might prevent that bloodbath.

Darcy reluctantly accedes as Woody goes to his phone.

WOODY

Do not engage, Billy Joe.

PAW PAW

Let it ride, boys!

Woody unties the bandana and loops it around his left hand. He extends the other end toward Paw Paw, who does the same, leaving them barely a yard apart.

Paw Paw produces a hunting knife, Woody a combat knife. Both using the saber grip, they watch each other's eyes.

PAW PAW

Black train a comin,' young feller.

Woody spits his toothpick toward Paw Paw's right foot. Paw Paw's eyes narrow, but continue to hold stare.

Paw Paw suddenly yanks the bandana to the left. Woody is pulled slightly off balance. Paw Paw thrusts, trying to get under Woody's left arm and into his ribs.

Woody goes with the momentum, letting his left arm drop, taking minimal damage to his forearm.

Simultaneously, Woody quickly switches to the 'reverse edge in' knife grip. He stabs Paw Paw five times around the left shoulder and neck with breathtaking speed, then backs off, bloodied blade at the ready.

PISS ANT

Paw Paw!

Piss Ant charges out of the woods with his Tommy gun. He stops as four guns immediately train on him.

Paw Paw, left shoulder blossoming blood, appears dazed. He manages to shake it off and lunges fiercely at Woody. Woody easily parries and buries his knife in Paw Paw's chest. Up close, Woody holds Paw Paw's look of shock.

WOODY

All aboard, Old Man.

Piss Ant screams and is about to fire when he's BLOWN off his feet simultaneously by Frank, who's been locked in, and Billy Joe, leaving Darcy, Hat and Glasses moot.

Woody holds up his hands, seeking calm. Darcy, Frank, Hat and Glasses, guns at the ready, move toward Woody.

For a moment, peace reigns. Suddenly, Shit Boy SCREAMS and unleashes a BURST of his Tommy gun at Woody.

Bullets stitch Woody's right side. He drops to a knee as his comrades FIRE at a retreating Shit Boy.

In the woods, One Nut looks coldly at his bound hostage, then SHOOTs him and retreats into the brush.

Darcy swings her handgun, scanning the woods. Glasses is beside her. Hat heads to the truck, Frank to the woods.

Woody, right side bloodied, yanks his knife from Paw Paw's chest. He soaks the bandana in the wound of the prone body, then ties it around his neck and collapses.

Darcy is there. She cradles Woody's head in her lap. Glasses joins her, grimly looking at Woody's wounds.

Woody's phone rings. He tries to reach it, grimacing. Darcy gets it for him and sets it on speaker.

BILLY JOE

Woodman!

WOODY

I'm good, Billy Joe.

BILLY JOE

You don't look good, buddy.

Glasses kneels as Hat arrives with a first aid kit.

WOODY

Just a flesh wound. Go home.

Glasses applies a clotting sponge to a chest wound.

BILLY JOE

Why don't I hang for a while.

WOODY

No, man. Go. And give my love to Lorelei and the kids.

BILLY JOE

You need to do that yourself, buddy.

WOODY

I will. And Billy Joe?

BILLY JOE

Don't say it.

WOODY
Stay off that bridge.

BILLY JOE
Asshole.

Woody smiles and signals for Darcy to sign off.

Glasses, having applied a second sponge, looks up at Hat. Hat shrugs and hands him the first aid kit.

HAT
There's two in the bush. I'll help Frank.

DARCY
And there's probably one with Eddie.

Woody, watching Darcy look toward the trees, smiles.

WOODY
Go ahead, Annie Oakley.

Darcy smiles back. She puts her hand on Woody's forehead, then gets up and hands Glasses her keys.

DARCY
Do what you can and get him in my car.

Hat looks back to see Darcy mount Paw Paw's horse and gallop off. Hat offers Glasses a reassuring nod.

EXT. THE WOODS

Head cocked, an agitated Frenchy grips his Tommy gun.

FRENCHY
Sounded like the long shooter!

An angry Frenchy glares at a fearful Eddie.

EDDIE
I...I don't know. I'm just a gigolo.

Frenchy, hearing a sound from the woods, swings his Tommy gun. There is movement in the brush. A horse whinnies.

FRENCHY

Paw Paw?

Darcy bursts from the woods on horseback. Frenchy raises his weapon, but Darcy expertly sideswipes him, knocking the gun away and him to the ground.

Near the tethered horses, Shit Boy and One Nut converge.

ONE NUT

You make the call?

SHIT BOY

Whad'ya think I done.

ONE NUT

Who's to guessing. Not shooting
your city boy was lazy.

They watch Darcy, gun trained on Frenchy, untie Eddie.

SHIT BOY

I got Scar. So kiss my double nut.

ONE NUT

And maybe queered our payoff, jackhole.
Now we'll have to squeeze it outta her.

They creep into the clearing, weapons raised. Something crashes through the brush behind them. They turn to see Hat thundering toward them. Hat SHOOTs them each twice.

A surprised Darcy and Eddie look toward the sound and see a perspiring Hat wading toward them, gun in hand.

Frenchy uses the distraction to go for his Tommy, but Darcy cold cocks him with her gun. Hat aims a kill shot.

EDDIE

No! Wait.

Hat frowns, then picks up the coil of rope off the ground and flips it to Eddie. Hat frisks Frenchy, finding a handgun and knife. He also retrieves the Tommy gun, then sits on the stump to catch his breath.

HAT

You're a tender vittle, Ricky Nelson.

Darcy smiles at Hat, then removes the ear muffs from her horse and leads it toward the others. She looks back to see Eddie tie Frenchy to the tree and offer him water.

FRENCHY

Thanks, Squig.

Darcy starts removing the saddles from the horses.

EDDIE

Sorry about your family.

FRENCHY

Paw Paw ain't been right since Ma died.
I guess we all caught the affliction.

They watch Darcy send the seven horses galloping off. Frenchy smiles at the sight, then looks at Eddie.

FRENCHY

You know what I got, Squig?

EDDIE

Spurs that jingle jangle jingle?

FRENCHY

Heh. Good one.

As the sound of hooves recede, a deeper RUMBLE grows. Hat, gathering weapons, looks at Darcy, who frowns. Eddie looks up, then at Frenchy. The RUMBLE SWELLS.

FRENCHY

I got a passel a cousins, Squig.
Big ruckus a comin...

EXT. THE DEVIL'S FARM - DUSK

The gate is open. Parked inside is an old fruit truck.

Here, the RUMBLE is a ROAR as the two Cadillacs thunder down the road in a cloud of dust.

EXT. THE PLATEAU

Darcy watches Frank's men load their two dead comrades into the SUV. Her look of sympathy shifts to Luana.

Frank helps Hat transfer weapons into the pickup.

Eddie waits beside his car as Darcy and Glasses approach Luana, who is nervously rubbing her wrists.

DARCY

I am sorry we involved you.

LUANA

I loved my family. Once upon a time.

She looks at Paw Paw's body, then looks away.

DARCY

Eddie can take you where you need to go.

LUANA

I...I got nowhere to go.

DARCY

Do you wanna wait for your cousins?

LUANA

God, no.

Glasses clears his throat and speaks softly.

GLASSES

It would be beneficial if pressure were applied to Woody's chest wound.

LUANA

Yes, Sir. I can do that.

The distant RUMBLE is becoming more distinctive. Luana looks toward the sound. Darcy notes the obvious look of worry on Luana's face.

DARCY

Luana, how many cousins are there?

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN ROAD

THREE ARMED MOUNTAIN MEN ride Indian Bikes in formation. Behind them is a Cadillac with FIVE ARMED MOUNTAIN MEN.

Behind them is the second Cadillac carrying FOUR ARMED MOUNTAIN MEN. One of the men is riding the swivel on the machine gun, SCREAMING with glee.

Berserker Joy is evident throughout the Dirty Dozen.

EXT. THE PLATEAU

Eddie's car tears down the road. He's alone, hyper alert. Massaging his bruised jaw, he sings softly.

EDDIE

I got spurs that jingle jangle jingle,
As I go ridin' merrily along.

Darcy's car trails Eddie. Darcy is driving. Frank is in the passenger seat holding an automatic weapon.

In the back seat Woody wakes, surprised to see Luana. He grimaces. Luana eases up on the pressure.

LUANA

Well, that fella with glasses was
gonna set a big rock on your chest.

Luana smiles innocently. Darcy can't help but grin.

DARCY

You gonna make it, Woody?

WOODY

Fifty fifty proposition, I'd say.

Behind them is the SUV with the two boys from Buffalo.

Behind the SUV is the pickup truck. From behind the wheel, an impatient Glasses looks at a frowning Hat.

GLASSES

Well?

Hat stops frowning. He looks at Glasses.

HAT

I'm thinking grilled dogs.

GLASSES

Hmm. The diner, then. Beans or buns?

HAT

Both.

GLASSES

Boy.

INT. DARCY'S CAR

DARCY

How far do you think they'll follow?

LUANA

They won't go past Buzzard's Luck.

DARCY

We should be good, then.

LUANA

Less they take the shortcut.

Woody opens his eyes.

EXT. THE PLATEAU AND SURROUNDING AREA

The Four Vehicles traverse the road from the Plateau as the COUSINS traverse a side road approaching the Shack.

The lead Bike has forged well ahead of the others, and is quickly approaching the main road.

INT. DARCY'S CAR

The Bike bolts from the side road, just behind Eddie.

The Bike drops back alongside Darcy. Frank is trying to get an angle on the Biker from the passenger seat.

Woody is grappling for his gun, but his right hand isn't cooperating. The Biker grins and is pulling a handgun when a high caliber bullet WHISTLES through his neck.

The Passenger in the SUV is trying to get a bead when he sees the Bike and Driver SOMERSAULT off into the woods.

Woody has managed to engage his phone with his left hand.

WOODY

I thought I told you to get.

BILLY JOE

And have to explain to Lorelei and the kids why Uncle Woody ain't visiting? No thanks.

WOODY

How'd you reposition so quick.

BILLY JOE

Shucks. I'm about to lose you, Woodman.

WOODY

Say, you got eyes on an old shack about a click off the side road?

BILLY JOE

Negative. That whole road is behind the tree line from here. Why?

WOODY

It's full of dynamite.

BILLY JOE

Well. That's a tidbit.

INT. THE RED TRUCK

The Two Bikes are fast approaching on the side road.

GLASSES

We're gonna beat 'em.

HAT

We ain't gonna outrun 'em.

Glasses looks at Hat. Hat nods and picks up the automatic weapon lying on the seat. Glasses grins and downshifts.

INT. THE SUV

The Passenger, JACK, is watching the side view mirror.

JACK

Hat and Glasses just pinched off
that side road.

DRIVER

Should we double back?

JACK

No. They'll want us to hold the rear.

The Driver looks in the rear view and speaks softly.

DRIVER

Helluva move.

EXT. THE MOUTH OF THE SIDE ROAD

The Two Bikers slow as they approach a cloud of dust.
As the truck becomes visible, the Bikers separate.

The passenger door swings open revealing Hat.

The Biker on the right is a bit tardy, and Hat manages to
UNLOAD on him before he can dismount.

The Biker on the left, using his bike for cover, starts
FIRING on Hat, who uses the truck's door as a shield.

The driver's door of the truck is open. Glasses, pistol
in hand, is in the woods, flanking the Biker on the left.

The Biker PEPPERS the door, keeping Hat pinned.

When the Biker rises to take a bead on Hat's exposed
legs, Glasses SHOTS the Biker.

Meanwhile, the First Cadillac has rolled into view. As it
slows, the Four Passengers spill out and separate.

Hat SPRAYS the car, taking out the Driver, then noisily barrels over the side and into the bed of the pickup.

Two of the Cousins are FIRING on Glasses, who is pinned behind a tree. Hat pops up and starts FIRING.

HAT
I'll cover you!

Glasses retraces his steps and tumbles into the bed of the truck on the far side.

Hat gets one of the Cousins on the left, but not before taking multiple hits from the two Cousins on the right.

Glasses grabs an automatic and sprays the Cousins as Hat drops with a grunt.

From cover, the Three Cousins UNLOAD on the pickup.

Hat and Glasses hunker down. The truck is being NOISILY PELTED with bullets. Glasses taps the truck.

GLASSES
Reinforced! We're good!

When the FIRING STOPS and the smoke clears, literally, two tires are flat and the truck is riddled.

Hat nods at a scrape on Glasses' elbow.

HAT
You better take care of that.

Glasses looks at a profusely bleeding Hat. Though his breaths are short and labored, Hat is grinning.

GLASSES
I'll cover you?

HAT
I always wanted to say that.

Glasses opens the first aid kit. The remaining partial roll of bandage appears dramatically inadequate.

GLASSES

I thought I could flank 'em.

HAT

I thought you wuz the smart one.

Glasses applies the bandage to one of Hat's wounds.
Glasses shakes his head. Hat shrugs.

HAT

How many?

Glasses cautiously takes a peek. Two of the Cousins are futzing with the machine gun as the third holds guard and waves in the second Cadillac.

GLASSES

Looks like seven.

HAT

That ain't bad.

GLASSES

And a machine gun.

The truck rocks from a huge BLAST.

GLASSES

And dynamite.

Hat, spying something in Glasses' pocket, frowns.

HAT

You got Milk Duds?

EXT. BUZZARD'S LUCK

The Three Vehicles are parked in the lot. Eddie leans against his car while Frank talks to his two men.

Luana remains in the car with Woody as Darcy nervously paces, cell phone to her ear.

DARCY

We could have backed you up.

EXT. THE BED OF THE PICKUP

GLASSES

That would have vitiated the
perspicacity of our strategy.

Hat blinks. There's a hint of hysteria in Darcy's laugh.

GLASSES

Don't worry. We have a plan. But
I need you to do something.

Darcy's voice is hopeful.

DARCY

What? What is it?

GLASSES

Feed my dog. I gotta go.

DARCY

Jimmy!

Glasses pockets his cell. Hat nods toward the other
pocket. Glasses smiles, removes a box from his pocket,
and spills out a lone Milk Dud. They both laugh.

HAT

We have a plan? Jimmy?

Glasses shrugs and halves the Milk Dud with his knife.

HAT

Walt.

They shake hands and chew their Milk Dud with relish.

HAT

What was that line? Good guys eating?

A stick of lit dynamite lands between them.

GLASSES

Better fare hard with good men...

Glasses grabs the stick and flings it back.

GLASSES

...than feast it with bad.

Hat grins as the dynamite EXPLODES. He hands Glasses an automatic weapon and grabs two Tommy guns for himself.

HAT

Here we go, Jimmy.

GLASSES

Give 'em hell, Walt.

Hat and Glasses each take a breath and exchange nods.

EXT. THE WOODS

Through a sight we see Hat and Glasses rise and FIRE. The sight moves right, but the Cousins are blocked by trees.

BILLY JOE shifts his weapon, shaking his head.

BILLY JOE

Damn it! Sorry, boys.

Billy Joe is comfortably perched in a tall tree.

He swings right, sighting the Old Wooden Shack, then FIRES into the center of it.

The bullet whistles between the stacks of dynamite.

BILLY JOE

Hmmm. Ain't like Woody to tell tales.

Billy Joe checks on the pickup, where Hat and Glasses are taking heavy fire.

Billy Joe adjusts his aim on the Shack.

EXT. THE SIDE ROAD

The machine gun has noisily come into play. The other Six Cousins are fanned out and moving toward the truck.

A failing Hat is hunkered down, two Tommy guns smoking. He catches Glasses' concerned look. Hat nods.

HAT

I know. The diner's gonna close.

At that moment, the shack EXPLODES spectacularly.

The Cousins are BLOWN off their feet. The one manning the Machine Gun somersaults and SPLATS against the truck. The others, some in bits and pieces, fly through the air.

Chunks of trees, earth and Cadillacs follow suit.

The Red Pickup lifts, nearly tipping before it bangs back down, with Hat and Glasses still in the bed.

BILLY JOE

There you go, Woodman.

Hat and Glasses exchange grins. Glasses sees Hat's eyes slowly close just before a Cadillac hood drops on them.

A BALL OF FLAME envelopes the area, including the truck.

BILLY JOE

Damn. Sorry, boys. I salute you.

Billy Joe tips his cap and puts up his weapon.

INT. DARCY'S CAR

Luana looks back. Woody, head in her lap, eyes closed, smiles. Alone in front, Darcy's eyes glisten from the reflection of the fireball in her rear view mirror.

EXT. BUZZARD'S LUCK

The reflection from the ball of fire seems to make the letters shimmer as the three vehicles drive away.

EXT. DARCY'S PLACE - NIGHT

Eddie is asleep in his car. The sound of people talking awakens him. He quickly gets out of the car.

He watches as Katie separates from her coworkers in front of Darcy's Place. Eddie hurries after her.

EDDIE

Katie!

Katie turns in alarm, then smiles. Her smile quickly becomes a frown. Eddie's eyes widen as Katie launches a balled up fist at his already bruised jaw.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

An unconscious Woody lies in a bed hooked up to IV's.

Luana softly sings "Ode to Billie Joe" as she rinses Woody's bandana. The vest is draped over a chair.

Woody opens an eye, slightly grins, then closes the eye.

EXT. THE BLAST SITE - DAWN

The site is a taped off crime scene. There are FIRE TRUCKS, POLICE CARS and Unmarked Cars, with a commensurate amount of MEN and WOMEN.

Darcy's car pulls up and parks. She pats Glasses' sad eyed dog, then gets out and walks toward the scene.

Darcy sees Frenchy's charred beret lying on the ground near a blasted tree as she approaches the tape.

A Plain Clothes Officer turns. It's GREEN SHIRT from the TOMMY GUN SALE. Two other Men from the sale, now in uniform, are about. Green Shirt waves Darcy through.

Darcy asks Green Shirt a question. He answers, shaking his head. She asks another question. Green Shirt makes a comment and nods. She responds and nods back.

Green Shirt watches Darcy walk away, then resumes work.

Darcy draws an occasional glance as she slowly wanders, trying to make sense of the blasted landscape. Seeing body parts being tagged, she doesn't appear hopeful.

The Forensic Team is systematically working its way to the main road. Darcy moves ahead of them, toward a hint of chrome. She recognizes Glasses' mostly blackened red truck, blending in with the debris,

No one pays Darcy attention as she moves closer to the truck. The bed is nearly covered by a blackened tree limb, decorated with debris that includes body parts.

Darcy takes a breath and manages to slide the limb off of the truck to reveal the battered hood of a Cadillac.

Green Shirt and others look over at a SCREECHING sound to see the Cadillac hood THUD to the ground by the truck.

Darcy looks at the dirt covered body of Glasses. She gently removes his glasses. Glasses opens his eyes.

DARCY

God!

Glasses manages a smile, then squints.

GLASSES

Do you mind?

Darcy replaces the glasses. She's smiling, but concerned.

DARCY

You're bleeding.

GLASSES

It's not mine.

Darcy picks up the hat lying next to Glasses. She sees Hat's still face and lets out a breath, then gently places the hat on his head. She smiles sadly at Glasses.

DARCY

You need a doctor?

GLASSES

We need a diner.

FADE OUT

