

"HARD STUFF"

FADE IN

TIME-LAST CENTURY - B.C. (Before Cell phones)

INT. DINGY HALLWAY LINED WITH WIRE LAUNDRY BASKETS
VISUALLY, THE LOOK IS SOMEWHAT DARK AND GRAINY

A MAN, STITCH ARMSTRONG, is searching for something.

STITCH
(loud whisper)
Alonzo.

Stitch desperately roots through the baskets,
occasionally looking behind him, obviously terrified.

STITCH
(pleading)
Alonzo. Please, baby. Please.

Stitch continues to search, almost sobbing. The sound of
a door opening behind Stitch elicits a strangled cry.

A LARGE SHADOW appears in the hallway.

INT. A ROOM WITH A MONITOR SHOWING THE SAME SCENE.

There are THREE MEN in the room. The leader, ANDERSON,
sits in the good chair. To his left sits a TECH support
man. At the doorway a large COHORT stands stoically.

TECH
I hacked the prison footage and cobbled it
with ours to get a consistent through line.

Anderson eats from a bag of pistachios as he watches.

On the monitor, Stitch looks toward the Shadow, then
wails and bolts through the doorway.

The Shadow moves unhurriedly down the hallway.

ANDERSON
And Alonzo is Grogan's pet mouse?

TECH

Rat, actually. Stitch was supposed to be his keeper while Grogan was in the infirmary. Hemorrhoids. We wired him up, natch.

The Shadow opens the door at the end of the hall.

ANDERSON

The prison cameras didn't pick him up at all?

TECH

Nope. And the way he herded him to the laundry room? Right out of the manual.

ANDERSON

Mmmmm. I take it Stretch isn't really expecting to find Alonzo there.

TECH

Stitch? I'd say he's just bat crap scared shitless at this point. Okay. Here's where our footage cuts in.

As the view on the monitor shifts to the other side of the door, the quality of the picture improves dramatically. The scratchy audio disappears.

In the doorway stands GROGAN. It's almost absurd how menacing he looks. Six and a half feet tall. 300 lbs. Most frightening is his face. Boyishly bland and devoid of expression. He could be 20. He could be 50.

The smiling Tech sneaks a peek at Anderson, who rewards him by hesitating a moment before popping a pistachio. Grogan glides right, hugging the wall.

TECH

There's a blind spot in the prison cameras. At the doorway, and hard right.

Grogan reaches the corner. There's a line of huge laundry machines along the right wall.

Grogan NIMBLY SCALES the first machine, then creeps stealthily atop the line.

TECH

He's like a cat. A fucking 300 pound cat.

ANDERSON

He's still off the prison cameras?

TECH

Yeah. They cover the whole laundry room except that line of machines. He knows.

At the last machine, Grogan settles on his haunches.

TECH

Okay. Check the time signature here.

The time signature on the monitor speeds ahead fourteen minutes, but the scene doesn't change.

Anderson pauses on a pistachio.

ANDERSON

That's not a glitch?

TECH

Nope. He didn't move for nearly fifteen fucking minutes.

Anderson eats the pistachio.

On the monitor there is movement under the machine that Grogan is perched atop. The face of Stitch Armstrong cautiously pokes out. Stitch slowly emerges. He slides his right arm between two of the machines for leverage.

Grogan quickly reaches down and grabs the arm. Stitch flails and tries to squeeze under the machine. Grogan, now with both hands holding Stitch's arm, begins to rise. Stitch's mouth is contorted in a silent scream.

TECH

(somewhat subdued)

I got sound if you want it.

ANDERSON

Not necessary.

The Tech scratches his head to partially shield his eyes as Grogan stands, separating Stitch's arm from his body. Anderson sucks in a breath in surprise. And admiration.

Grogan pirouettes atop the machine, deftly orchestrating the maneuver so that he evades the spray of blood. He holds the severed arm at arm's length, then drops it onto Stitch's thrashing body. Grogan watches as the thrashing subsides, then retreats atop the machines.

The Tech freezes the frame as Grogan's face fills the monitor. The bland countenance hasn't changed.

TECH

And that's Grogan.

The Tech looks at Anderson, who eats another pistachio.

TECH

I know he doesn't exactly blend in.

Anderson stares at Grogan's image a moment.

ANDERSON

Well. I think he's precious.

We hear the CLICK of a camera. The monitor goes black.

The CAMERA CLICKS carry through the TITLES: a series of black and white stills showing FOUR MASKED MEN committing a robbery. The men are surprised by a SECURITY GUARD.

MAN #1 shoots the guard as MAN #2 reaches out futilely to stop him. An upset MAN #2 throws down the bag of loot. MAN #1 holds up his hands in a 'what could I do?' gesture. MAN #2 turns away. MAN #1 picks up the loot.

OUTSIDE, the four men are again surprised, this time by the POLICE. SHOTS are fired.

MAN #1 is wounded. MAN #4 is killed. MAN #2 and MAN #3 scale a wall. MAN #2 takes a last pained look at the captured MAN #1, at whose feet sits the bag of loot.

TITLES END

INT. PRISON VISITING AREA

MAN #1, (ESTABLISH WITH FLASHBACK) SAM, middle aged, hard looking, smiles warmly.

SAM

Johnny.

Facing him through a glass partition, MAN #2, (FLASHBACK) JOHNNY DESCHANEL, older, ruggedly handsome.

JOHNNY

Sam, I...

Johnny's eyes glisten. He looks down, shaking his head.

SAM

Hey, Johnny. It's all right.

Johnny looks up, still shaking his head.

SAM

I'm the one shot the guard.

JOHNNY

There shouldn't have been a guard. That's on me.

SAM

It's not a science, man. Shit happens.

Johnny allows a smile. They look at each other, their deep connection apparent. Sam's smile widens.

SAM

You're a stupid fuck, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Huh?

SAM

Trying to pull that job alone and unarmed?

JOHNNY

Well, like you say, it's not a science.
And you know how I am about guns.

SAM

You wanted to get caught. You were so guilty about me you fucking wanted to get caught.

Johnny is somewhat stunned by the statement. He tries to laugh it off, somewhat unconvincingly.

JOHNNY

That's... crazy.

SAM

Yeah.

Johnny is obviously shaken as the possibility sets in. Sam is grinning as he studies Johnny.

SAM

And this way, you didn't have to visit.

JOHNNY

Aw, now, that's not..

Sam cuts him off, shaking his head.

SAM

I don't give a shit about all that.

Johnny, struggling to understand, looks at Sam.

SAM

It's fucking good to see you, man.

JOHNNY

(confused but sincere)

It's good to see you, Sam.

SAM

It better be. You're my goddamn last request.

Johnny raises an eyebrow. Sam shrugs.

SAM

They couldn't get Raquel Welch.

Johnny smiles, then leans forward. He speaks softly.

JOHNNY

Sam. You have information.

SAM

What?

JOHNNY

You're gonna die, Sam.

SAM

So I should rat my friends? That's shit thinking, Johnny. We'd all be doing twenty plus. I can't do that. And you? You're crawling out of your skin as it is.

Johnny looks distressed, and maybe a little relieved.

SAM

We're both getting out this week.
It's all good, Johnny.

A GUARD taps Johnny on the shoulder with a nightstick.

GUARD

One minute, Deschanel.

Johnny nods. Sam watches Johnny, who's struggling to assimilate. Without speaking, they seem to reach an understanding, though for Johnny, an uneasy one. After a moment, Sam leans forward and speaks softly.

SAM

Ever wonder why those cops were waiting for us?

JOHNNY

The guard...

SAM

That guard was surprised as hell.

Johnny frowns. Sam looks at the camera in the corner of the room. He leans back, waving off the discussion.

SAM

Johnny, watch out for Maria.

Johnny's face goes guiltily blank. Sam grins.

SAM

Hey, better you than some asshole.

JOHNNY

It... It just happened.

SAM

Don't sweat it. And don't let her take advantage. You can't do everything based on guilt. It's a wasted emotion.

Johnny appears confused, searching for a response when the Guard rests his stick on Johnny's shoulder. ANOTHER GUARD looms behind Sam.

Sam gets up. Johnny follows suit. Sam winces slightly.

SAM

They never did get that slug out.

Johnny looks rueful. Sam smiles.

SAM

I got a date with some chicken fried steak.
(pause) I love you, man.

Sam smiles. Johnny opens his mouth to speak, but the Guard is already leading Sam away.

SAM'S GUARD

Come on, Sammy. No time for love.

SAM

Then I'm gonna need those naked pictures of your wife.

The Guard laughs. A smiling Sam gives a last look toward a forlorn Johnny, then disappears through the doorway.

INT. JAIL CELL

Johnny lies on his cot. He closes his eyes for a moment. When he opens them, the cell is half its original size.

Johnny, beading sweat, squeezes his eyes shut. When he opens them, the cell is barely large enough to contain him. With a strangled cry, he bolts upright.

As Johnny, breathing heavily, collects himself, he sees a RAT staring at him from a corner of the cell.

INT. PRISON LUNCHROOM

Grogan is seated alone at an end table, eating. Johnny, holding a brown paper bag, approaches him from behind.

As he nears, Johnny makes a wide circle, allowing Grogan to see him approach. Grogan stares at him blankly. Johnny carefully offers the bag, which is slightly rustling.

After a moment, Grogan accepts the bag. He looks inside and allows a smile. Grogan gently removes the rat. He nuzzles it, then lets it settle in his shirt pocket.

Grogan looks at Johnny and stops smiling. Johnny is beading sweat. Grogan nods three times, barely discernible. Johnny nods once and backs off.

Johnny walks away as Grogan shares his food with the rat.

INT. ROOM WITH MONITOR SHOWING THE SAME SCENE

Anderson, the Tech, and the Cohort are in their spots. Anderson nods toward the Cohort.

ANDERSON

Start the ball.

The Cohort nods and exits. The Tech shakes his head.

ANDERSON

Buyer's remorse?

TECH

I didn't figure we'd free range him.

ANDERSON

He was caught by a fluke on a B and E.
There's more to him. I wanna see it.

TECH

He's a ticking time bomb here. He refused parole because he didn't have his rat.

ANDERSON

I think it's sweet. And a bomb can be a good thing. It just has to go off in the right spot.

On the monitor, Grogan feeds his rat. Anderson smiles and eats a pistachio. The Tech looks concerned.

INT. PRISON CHAPEL 5:59 P.M.

Johnny and several other INMATES holding Bibles are seated in the pews under the watch of TWO GUARDS.

A PRIEST approaches the podium. He looks at Johnny with sympathy, as do a Couple Inmates. A clock behind the Priest reads one minute to six.

Johnny's eyes moisten as the minute hand hits six. He blinks. One of the SYMPATHETIC INMATES leans toward him.

INMATE

Sorry, Johnny.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM 10:33 A.M.

Johnny is working as TWO HARD LOOKING CONS drift near him. They're both grinning. The bigger one speaks.

CON

You gonna need a new boyfriend, Deschanel?

JOHNNY

Fuck you.

The grinning Con's face goes hard. Aware a Guard is watching, he moves on, continuing his task. The watching Guard ensures only looks are exchanged.

INT. LUNCH ROOM 11:17 A.M.

Johnny is eating when the two hard Cons sit down across from him. Johnny stops eating.

CON

Without Sam you got shit for leverage.

JOHNNY

I didn't know I needed any.

CON

There's a lot you don't know. Know this, your last night here's gonna be a memorable one.

Johnny realizes he may actually be in trouble. The two grinning Cons look like they mean business.

JOHNNY

Hang on, now...

The two Cons lose their grins. They lean back a bit, exchanging nervous smiles. A drastic change in demeanor.

CON

We're just playing with ya, Deschanel.

Johnny gains a little equilibrium.

CON #2

Yeah. Good luck on the outside.

JOHNNY

Thanks...?

CON #2

Sorry about Sam.

A confused Johnny watches the Cons rise and scurry off. Sensing something, Johnny slowly turns. Grogan stands a few feet away, blankly watching the retreating Cons.

When Grogan affords him a glance, Johnny allows a slight nod. An expressionless Grogan walks away. Johnny, looking thoughtful, turns back to his food, but doesn't eat.

INT. PRISON INFIRMARY

A DOCTOR hands some paperwork to Johnny, who nods and exits. In the hallway are TWO GUARDS, and Grogan.

The Four Men move down the hall. Johnny looks nervously at Grogan, who ignores him in favor of an approaching NURSE and PATIENT, who's taking a slow, painful walk.

Only Johnny hears Grogan whisper to the Patient.

GROGAN

Hello, little fly.

The Patient stops as the smirking Grogan keeps moving. As Johnny moves past the trembling Patient, he notices the man is missing an arm. It's Stitch Armstrong.

Johnny follows Grogan into the reception area. The two Guards quickly sign off on some paperwork. The four men move through the prison. Johnny remains nervously aware of Grogan, whose face is typically blank.

EXT. PRISON ENTRANCE

A GRINNING GUARD sidles up to Johnny and nods at Grogan.

GUARD

You two going steady?

JOHNNY

You're a riot, Alice.

GUARD

So, Johnny. When can we expect you back?

JOHNNY

How about never.

GUARD

Ah, Johnny. We hardly knew ya.

Johnny watches Grogan walk toward a bus. When he steps up, the bus groans and shifts. Grogan takes a seat as Johnny walks past. He looks at Johnny without expression.

Johnny gives a slight nod, then walks across the street toward a battered old car. Leaning on the car is MAN #3, (FLASHBACK) SIMON, finishing off a cigarette. Simon is a bit younger and tougher looking than Johnny. Simon grins.

SIMON

Jesus. You look ten years older.

JOHNNY

Good to see you too, Simon. You gained weight.

SIMON

Ah, couple inches.

Simon pats his stomach in emphasis. They shake hands.

SIMON

At least you're not walking funny.

Johnny tosses his meager belongings onto the back seat of the car. They both climb in.

JOHNNY

Let's get the hell out of here.

SIMON

Really? Cos I thought we might hang around. Maybe have a nice picnic? Wave to your friends?

Simon turns the key, getting only a click. Johnny gives him a look.

SIMON

No problem. Just needs a jump.

JOHNNY

Great.

As Johnny looks around, Simon bounces in his seat and turns the key. The engine stutters, but doesn't catch.

SIMON

Jump! Loose wire or something.

Johnny gives him a look, sighs, then joins in the bouncing. The car eventually starts. They drive off.

SIMON

I've been meaning to get that fixed.

Johnny watches the prison recede in the rear view mirror. He smiles at a RAGGEDY YOUNG GIRL on a bike in front of a string of tired looking houses. She doesn't smile back.

INT. MOVING CAR

Simon looks at Johnny, who's staring out the window.

SIMON

So? How does it feel?

JOHNNY

I... I can't explain.

Johnny rolls down the window and leans on the door. Simon looks as if to speak, but instead turns up his collar to the cool air. Tears well in Johnny's eyes, and the wind spreads the wetness across his face.

EXT. MINIATURE GOLF COURSE - DAY

Johnny, Simon and a COUPLE OTHER EARLY BIRDS at play. Simon, club balanced on his shoulder, watches Johnny.

SIMON

Three years, and this is it?

Johnny, after concentrating, takes a shot.

SIMON

You know what we look like, don't ya?

Johnny ignores him and moves to the next hole.

SIMON

Jesus, Johnny. Don't you wanna do something?

JOHNNY

We are doing something.

SIMON

Okay. Don't you wanna do something else?

Johnny, about to take a stroke, pauses thoughtfully.

JOHNNY

Yes.

Johnny fills in his score and moves to the next hole.

SIMON

What? We ain't gonna do all eighteen, are we?

Johnny ignores him and lines up a shot.

SIMON

We can do nine and double the score.

Johnny takes another shot. Simon shakes his head as he watches Johnny putt in and mark his scorecard.

SIMON

You're scaring me, Johnny.

Johnny, silhouetted against a majestic line of trees and a giant ball of sun, smiles, basking in the beauty.

INT. A SMALL ROOM

Johnny lies in bed, eyes open. There are footsteps followed by three raps on the door and a FEMALE VOICE.

VOICE

Johnny. It's Maria.

Johnny freezes. There are five more raps.

VOICE

Johnny?

After a moment the footsteps recede. Johnny doesn't move.

INT. CASUAL RESTAURANT - MODERATELY BUSY AND NOISY

A happy family of four is being seated at a table.

Nearby, Johnny and Simon are sitting across from each other in a booth. The waitress, LUCE, sets plates before them. Johnny looks at the gravy smothered chicken fried steak and mashed potatoes with reverence. Simon smiles.

SIMON

Now we're doing something.

Johnny looks at his watch.

JOHNNY

7:30. Do you know how long it's been since I've eaten anything other than peanut butter crackers after 5:00 o'clock?

SIMON

I'm guessing three years.

Johnny smiles and raises his glass. Simon does the same.

JOHNNY

To Sam.

SIMON

To Sam. Fuck, man. He's really gone.

They both take a long drink. Johnny starts to pick at his food. Simon shakes his head and cuts into his steak.

SIMON

This shit usually gets tied up in the courts for years. Not fucking Sam. He zips through the system like shit through a goose.

JOHNNY

I told him he had leverage.

SIMON

That was big of ya. Knowing Sam and his fucking code of honor, he told you to get bent, right?

JOHNNY

More or less. Yeah.

SIMON

The last of the fucking Mohegans.

They both take a drink. Johnny looks a bit troubled, but continues to eat, slowly gaining enthusiasm.

JOHNNY

Man, this is good.

LATER - Johnny uses a roll to sop up a bit of gravy from a well cleaned plate. He pops it into his mouth and leans back with a sigh. Simon's plate is also decimated.

JOHNNY

Man oh man.

Luce comes by, putting a hand on Johnny's shoulder.

LUCE

Pie, boys?

Johnny can't help but laugh. Simon grins.

SIMON

I think we're done, Luce.

LUCE

I've got a nice strawberry rhubarb.

JOHNNY

Can't do it, Luce. Maybe next time.

Simon sticks a cigarette in his mouth. Luce glares.

SIMON

I know. I ain't gonna light it.
One more round?

LUCE

You got it.

Simon toys with his cigarette as he studies Johnny.

SIMON

Sorry about the room.

JOHNNY

It's fine.

SIMON

I ain't exactly rolling in it.

JOHNNY

It's fine, Simon.

SIMON

I got some ideas, though.

JOHNNY

I don't wanna hear 'em.

SIMON

I'm thinking small banks in little dick towns.

JOHNNY

Simon.

SIMON

We give some goon a couple hundred to pick a fight with a cop on the other end of town. Every fucking cop in the city will be out there.

JOHNNY

You still gotta know the bank set up.

SIMON

Sure. That's where you excel.

JOHNNY

And the goon can't know who we are.

SIMON

You said we.

Johnny shakes his head at a grinning Simon.

JOHNNY

Anything else?

SIMON

Yeah. How about a joint like this? We pretend we're from the gas company and say there's a leak in the line and they gotta evacuate. In the ensuing confusion we clean out the register.

JOHNNY

And we could be wearing surgical masks.

SIMON

Yeah. Yeah.

JOHNNY

No. No.

SIMON

You know you wanna.

JOHNNY

No, Simon. I really don't. The little dick town? The cop would just pull his gun on the goon. The joint like this? The manager would take the money before he evacuated.

SIMON

So, we lambaste him one and grab it.

JOHNNY

Aren't you tired of it, Simon?

Simon considers, then speaks decisively.

SIMON

I'm a thief. And I dig it. Like you. Your eyes were lighting up just thinking about it.

Johnny smiles a moment, then looks grim.

JOHNNY

I...I can't go back inside.

SIMON

So you don't pull a numb ass job like the one you did. Where the fuck did that come from?

JOHNNY

Yeah, yeah. I heard from Sam how stupid it was.

SIMON

Well, he's right. And you're supposed to be the smart one. It's like you wanted to get caught.

Johnny looks nervous, but Simon breezes past the comment.

SIMON

And since when do you work solo?

JOHNNY

I just...

SIMON

You just what? Got stupid?

JOHNNY

Yeah. You don't wanna work with somebody stupid, do ya?

SIMON

I'm willing to chalk it up to temporary insanity.

JOHNNY

You don't need me. You've got ideas.

SIMON

I need you for the angles, Johnny boy. Besides, it's no fun alone. You're no prize, but you're better than those asshole Miller brothers.

JOHNNY

The Millers? What are you doing with them?

SIMON

Ah, little dick stuff. Unloading cigarettes and baseball cards from eighteen wheelers. Shit like that.

JOHNNY

(laughing)

You're hijacking bubblegum cards?

SIMON

Hey, fuck you, Johnny. I gotta do something. And they don't call 'em bubblegum cards anymore, ya' old fuck. They stopped putting gum in 'em years ago.

Johnny's laughter trails off to a look of concern.

JOHNNY

No bubblegum?

SIMON

The gum stains the cards. And kids don't put 'em on their bicycle spokes anymore. They try to sell 'em at a profit. Jesus, you been up for three years, not thirty. What the fuck.

JOHNNY

My son. He collects cards.

SIMON

Timmy?

JOHNNY

Tommy.

Simon shows a trace of sympathy. Johnny smiles slightly.

SIMON

So. What are you gonna do, John? Get a regular job?

JOHNNY

Why not?

SIMON

How many reasons you want?

JOHNNY

It couldn't be any worse than our last job.

SIMON

If one of us were holding the bag, it'd be a different story.

JOHNNY

Yeah. Maybe we'd be dead instead of Sam and Tully.

Johnny keeps glancing toward the bar, annoying Simon.

SIMON

What the fuck are you looking at?

JOHNNY
Isn't that...?

SIMON
Sandy.

JOHNNY
Wasn't she...?

SIMON
Tully's girl.

At the bar sits SANDY. She's mid-thirties, tough looking, attractive, wearing fur and excessive jewelry.

SIMON
That was then...

Luce drops off two beers. Simon nods toward the bar.

SIMON
This is now.

Johnny watches with surprise as a well dressed middle aged man, ANTHONY CAGLIOSTRO, sits next to Sandy.

JOHNNY
Tony C?

SIMON
That fuck puppet.

JOHNNY
What's she doing with him?

SIMON
You kidding? Broad like that loves to be where the action is. The danger gets her hot.

JOHNNY
That so, Sigmund?

SIMON
Tully was just a thief. With a wiseguy she must have to carry around spare panties.

JOHNNY

I didn't think Tony stepped out on his wife.

SIMON

He didn't. She died two years ago. Cancer.

JOHNNY

Jesus.

SIMON

Yeah. And Sandy wasted no time latching on.
Slack assed whore.

Johnny straightens and smiles unconvincingly toward the bar, then speaks without moving his lips.

JOHNNY

Here they come.

Simon turns as Tony and Sandy arrive at the table. Tony's right hand man, FLOYD, watches from the bar. Luce walks by, biting her tongue as she glares at Sandy's cigarette.

TONY

Deschanel. Good to see you on the outside.

JOHNNY

Thanks, Tony. Sorry to hear about your wife.

TONY

I appreciate that. And it's too bad about Sam.
I only hope he entered his house justified.

Simon snorts, drawing a look from Tony. Sandy appears disdainfully bored. Johnny looks a bit nervous.

TONY

If you worked with us, these kind of things
wouldn't happen.

SIMON

We're holding out for a better dental plan.

A grinning Simon ignores Johnny's 'what the fuck' look.
Tony, face hardening, ignores Simon.

JOHNNY

I'm retired now, Tony.

Tony, eyebrow raised, puts a hand on Johnny's shoulder.

TONY

In that case, allow me to give you my blessing on your new lease on life. I envy you.

JOHNNY

Uh, thanks, Tony.

Simon, smirking throughout the exchange, has focused on Sandy, who's jewelry clicks and clacks as she smokes.

SIMON

You must make a lot of noise when you fuck.

There is a frozen moment. Sandy glares with contempt at a grinning Simon. Johnny's look of disbelief shifts to a grimace as Tony, face hard, tightens his grip on Johnny's shoulder. At the bar, Floyd straightens, ready to act.

JOHNNY

Simon?

SIMON

(wise-assing)

Johnny?

Simon is still grinning as Johnny sinks in his seat due to the increased pressure from Tony's grip.

JOHNNY

Tony?

TONY

Sandy. Take a walk.

Sandy, appearing unbothered, blows smoke at Simon.

SANDY

You'll never know, needle dick.

As Sandy walks away, Simon calls after her.

SIMON

Boy, have you got the wrong guy.
Fur's dead, by the way.

Tony chooses to deal with this by ignoring a grinning Simon and speaking pointedly to a horrified Johnny.

TONY

Perhaps I've done something to earn this.

Johnny gently pries Tony's fingers from his shoulder.

JOHNNY

I'm sorry, Tony. I don't know what the hell...

Johnny's sincerity and fear somewhat appeases Tony, who is exercising his hand. He looks directly at Simon.

TONY

I think the wrong guy went to the joint.

Tony walks away. Simon grins. Johnny is dumbfounded.

JOHNNY

Are you out of your fucking mind? You're dead.
We gotta get you outta town. Outta the country.

SIMON

We don't gotta do dick.

Johnny takes a long look at Simon, then shakes his head.

JOHNNY

You've got something on him.

SIMON

We all got something on him.

Johnny waits a moment, then makes a questioning gesture.

SIMON

He's fucking born again.

Johnny frowns. He looks toward the bar, shaking his head.

JOHNNY

As in Christian? So he lets people insult him to his face? Sorry. That doesn't track.

SIMON

Last week Jack Miller gave him the finger. Nothing. He's turning the other cheek.

JOHNNY

(considering)

He was talking different.

SIMON

And did ya see how he wasn't even talking to me? Like he's above it. He can forgive the little bug and feel all important about it.

They watch the couple schmooze. Sandy aims a quick glare.

SIMON

He's probably telling her what a good fucking Samaritan he is right now. Then he'll take her home and bang her brains out.

JOHNNY

But he's not out of the business?

SIMON

Fuck no. He just doesn't get his hands dirty. It's a bunch a goddamn bullshit.

JOHNNY

What if he has a fall from grace?

SIMON

Ah, fuck 'im. I wanted to show you what's what, Johnny boy.

JOHNNY

Well, you could have just told me. Talk about a dumb ass move.

SIMON

Seeing's believing, my friend. And don't forget, I am a jackass.

Johnny nods in agreement. As Sandy offers them another hard look, Johnny furrows his brow.

SIMON

What?

JOHNNY
(musing)

Fur is dead.

INT. PLUSH OFFICE

DR. DANCER, somewhat typical, a bit self important, sits behind his desk facing a typically expressionless Grogan.

DANCER

Mr. Grogan. Are we comfortable?

Grogan doesn't react. Dancer waits a moment, miffed.

DANCER

I think I understand, Mr. Grogan. It's a brave new world. You're a free man.

Dr. Dancer smiles a reptilian smile.

DANCER

But freedom has its limitations. And for you and I, the only thing that's changed is the venue. Are we understood?

Grogan still doesn't react. Dancer, annoyed, resets.

DANCER

Mr. Grogan, a stipulation of your parole is that you continue to see me. A stipulation of mine is that you speak to me. Silence, in this case, is not golden. And I would hate to think that your cooperation was for the sole purpose of gaining parole, which, I must say, was surprisingly abrupt. Strings appear to have been pulled?

Grogan's countenance offers nothing. Dancer goes steely.

DANCER

Despite these strings, your position can reverse just as abruptly. Certain things are inviolable, as evinced by your presence here. Understood?

Grogan actually offers a slight nod. Dancer smiles.

DANCER

I'd like to think we were actually making headway at our sessions. Or perhaps you were conning me? Which is it, Mr. Grogan?

A moment of silence is reluctantly broken by Grogan.

GROGAN

Headway.

DANCER

Good.

Grogan remains expressionless. Dancer shuffles papers.

DANCER

Previously, you spoke of your friend, John. Can you define the nature of your relationship?

GROGAN

I watched out for him.

DANCER

I see. It's interesting you were released the same day. Have you been in contact?

GROGAN

Parole violation.

DANCER

Of course.

Dancer studies the blank face, then shuffles more papers.

DANCER

We've barely touched upon your relationship with your parents.

Grogan remains blank. After a moment, the Doctor sighs.

DANCER

What can you tell me about them?

Grogan shrugs. Dancer bucks up.

DANCER

For instance, were they.. demonstrative people?

Amazingly, Grogan shows a hint of a grin. Just barely.

GROGAN

Yeah, they were pretty ugly.

DANCER

No...

Dr. Dancer stops and smiles, surprised, even encouraged.

DANCER

Humor. Very good, Mr. Grogan. Very good. So, your parents. Did they show you affection?

GROGAN

My old man did. Once.

DANCER

Your father showed affection... Once?

GROGAN

That's when I did him.

DANCER

Did him?

GROGAN

Cut his throat. In his sleep.

Dr. Dancer is watching Grogan with his sternest face.

DANCER

You killed your father. For showing affection.

GROGAN

He tied me down and boned me.

DANCER

Boned you?

GROGAN

Butt fucked me.

Dancer is getting icier, in look and voice.

DANCER

I see. And your mother?

GROGAN

I don't know if he butt fucked her. She died when I was born.

Dr. Dancer stares at the expressionless Grogan for a long moment, then plucks a sheet of paper from his desk. As he speaks, his ire increases and his voice slightly rises.

DANCER

Well, that's quite a story, Mr. Grogan. But according to our files, both your parents are still alive.

Dr. Dancer stares, but Grogan doesn't react.

DANCER

Mr. Grogan?

GROGAN

Oh, yeah. I forgot.

DANCER

You forgot. So this story, about being molested by your father?

GROGAN

Maybe it was Uncle Ernie.

DANCER

And your mother, dying in childbirth?

GROGAN

There was a lot of blood. I guess I thought she died.

Dr. Dancer is staring at Grogan, whose face was blank and voice monotone throughout the exchange. The good Doctor marshals his thoughts and speaks deliberately.

DANCER

It's obvious you deem this a waste of time, Mr. Grogan. Today, I would have to concur. But another session like this will be our last, accompanied by the obvious ramifications.

Grogan stares blankly.

DANCER

You may go now.

Grogan remains long enough to make things uncomfortable, then rises, breaking into a smirk as he exits.

Dancer shuffles his papers until he finds a note on John Deschanel. He pencils in 'friend' with a question mark.

Hidden under the desk is an electronic device.

INT. MAKESHIFT OFFICE - AGENTS BUSTLE

Anderson puts a phone call on hold. He looks at the grinning Tech, who's holding headphones to his ear.

TECH

You gotta hear this. Grogan just mind fucked his shrink big time.

ANDERSON

I told you he wasn't just a pretty face.

Anderson goes back to his call as the Tech fiddles about.

INT. A MEDIUM SIZED BOOKSTORE

Johnny is kneeling, adding and straightening stock, when a voice makes him swivel and drop some books.

VOICE (O.S.)

Anything on coping with the execution of
a loved one?

JOHNNY

Maria.

MARIA is fiery, 40ish. Johnny picks up the books in a
manner that seems to require great concentration.

MARIA

You're a bastard, Johnny.

Johnny looks up at Maria and speaks directly.

JOHNNY

I have a half hour for lunch at 11:30.

Maria stares at him a moment, then exits. Johnny catches a
disapproving look from a co-worker, DONNA.

Johnny is nervously watching Dr. Dancer approach from the
used book section when Simon breezes in. Dancer stops.

SIMON

The glasses are a nice touch, Johnny.

JOHNNY

They're not a touch, Simon. And this isn't a
bar. You can't just come in and hang around.

SIMON

You're hurtin' me, Johnny.

Actually, Simon is unperturbed, but Johnny looks pained.

SIMON

I'm doing something with the asshole Miller
brothers tonight. You wanna come along?

JOHNNY

Gee, it sounds tempting. But I'll pass.

SIMON

Come on, you can get your feet wet.

JOHNNY

I don't want wet feet. (without pause)
Hey! You can't eat that in here.

A YOUNG BOY throws a cookie on the floor and runs off.

SIMON

Kid bastard.

MARCIA, mid 50's, pleasant, joins Donna at the desk. She smiles at Johnny, who kneels to pick up the cookie.

SIMON

I hate to see you like this, Johnny.
Come on. It's easy dough.

JOHNNY

Good bye, Simon.

A WOMAN and YOUNG GIRL are at the front desk. The woman speaks with Marcia. The young girl approaches Johnny.

JOHNNY

Hi. What can I do for you?

YOUNG GIRL

Do you have Goosebumps?

Johnny looks at his arm as the girl smiles shyly.

JOHNNY

By golly I do.

At the desk, Marcia and the woman, both smiling, look on.

JOHNNY

Straight ahead, last rack, third row from
the bottom. A whole bunch.

Simon's demeanor softens during the exchange. He wistfully watches the young girl. Johnny rises.

JOHNNY

Good bye, Simon.

SIMON

Yeah. I'll see you later, John.

Simon nods at Johnny, takes a last look at the young girl, and exits. Again, Dr. Dancer approaches.

DANCER

John Deschanel?

Johnny tries to rein in a 'now what?' look.

JOHNNY

Yes?

DANCER

Dr. Dancer. Penal behavioral analyst.

Dancer reaches out to shake hands. A now wary Johnny attempts to accommodate, but the books and cookie cause the gesture to awkwardly peter out.

DANCER

I'm sorry to trouble you at work. I can't seem to catch you at your apartment.

JOHNNY

Yeah, I...

Johnny looks toward the desk. Donna is still disapproving but Marcia looks amused.

DANCER

I'll be but a moment. And I am buying something.

Dancer holds up a book. Even though the Doctor's out of office demeanor is benign, Johnny is nervous.

JOHNNY

Okay. What's up?

DANCER

You're familiar with a Mr. Grogan?

JOHNNY

Grogan?

Johnny's nervousness increases.

DANCER

You do know him?

JOHNNY

No. Well, yeah. I know who he is.

DANCER

He speaks of you as a friend.

JOHNNY

Friend?

Johnny laughs nervously. He awkwardly reaches out to lean on the rack, smearing the forgotten cookie on a book.

JOHNNY

Ah, shit.

Johnny looks at the mess, then at the Doctor.

JOHNNY

Excuse me.

Johnny goes to the desk for a roll of paper towels. Donna is more disapproving and Marcia more amused.

MARCIA

You're a popular guy, John.

JOHNNY

I don't mean to be.

Marcia casually appraises Johnny's butt as he walks away. Dr. Dancer watches Johnny approach and begin cleaning.

DANCER

So, about Mr. Grogan?

JOHNNY

I never really even talked to him.

DANCER

So, you don't consider Mr. Grogan a friend.

JOHNNY

Barely an acquaintance, really.

DANCER

I see.

Johnny, putting a hell of a sheen on the rack, stops.

JOHNNY

You're not gonna tell him I'm not his friend.

DANCER

Please?

JOHNNY

I mean, he's not a guy you'd want as, uh, you know, not... a friend.

DANCER

Yes, I understand. I'll, ah, be delicate.

Johnny isn't completely comfortable with the response.

DANCER

Well. Thank you, Mr. Deschanel.

Johnny nods. He watches and listens as the Dr. approaches the desk. The two women smile at the well dressed man.

DANCER

I love your used section. I know I've read this, but what's good once is good twice.

MARCIA

That's very true. Ah, Matt Helm.

DANCER

It's an excellent series. Nothing like those atrocious Dean Martin movies.

Johnny, looking troubled, nods at Dancer as he exits.

LATER-Johnny, holding a paper bag, nods at Marcia as he breezes past the desk and exits. The clock reads 11:33.

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE THE BOOKSTORE - DAY

Johnny looks around, smiling when he sees Maria on a bench across the street. He jogs over, dodging traffic.

JOHNNY

We can share my lunch. Or go to the diner.

Johnny holds up his lunch bag hopefully. Maria sulks.

MARIA

Were you even gonna see me, Johnny?

Johnny drops his smile and sits on the bench.

JOHNNY

Of course. I'm sorry, Maria. I just...

MARIA

I still loved him. You and me didn't change that.

JOHNNY

I know.

MARIA

I need help, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Help?

MARIA

Sam left me with debts.

Johnny frowns. He digs his sandwich out of the bag.

JOHNNY

Sam never... You know we didn't get the money from that job. I'm flat broke.

MARIA

You can get money.

JOHNNY

I'm out of the life, Maria.

Johnny takes a bite from his sandwich. Maria pouts.

JOHNNY

I can give you some money from my paycheck.
I can maybe swing... forty a week?

Maria's face darkens. She stalks off, cursing. Johnny waits a moment, then packs his lunch and follows.

JOHNNY

Hey, Maria.

Johnny jogs to catch up. He's now a bit miffed.

JOHNNY

You know, Sam warned me...

Johnny bites it off and Maria stops dead, facing him.

MARIA

What?

JOHNNY

Nothing.

MARIA

No. You said Sam warned you. What is that?

JOHNNY

It's nothing, Maria.

Maria looks puzzled and hurt by the remark. Tears flow.

MARIA

What are you saying, Johnny? Sam didn't care about me? He told you to forget about Maria?

JOHNNY

No. Of course not.

MARIA

What did he say, Johnny? Tell me.

JOHNNY

No... Sam told me to watch out for you.

MARIA

But you said...

JOHNNY

No, I was just...

MARIA

He said watch out for me?

JOHNNY

Yes. Sam loved you. You know that.

Maria regains her composure. And attitude.

MARIA

So, you gonna watch out for me, Johnny?

JOHNNY

Well...

MARIA

With forty dollars.

JOHNNY

Come on, Maria.

Maria turns and stalks off, petulant in voice and stride.

MARIA

Sam told you, Johnny. Sam told you.

Johnny gestures helplessly as she walks away.

INT. BACK ROOM OF THE BOOKSTORE. THE CLOCK READS 11:50.

JOHNNY sits at a computer, finishing his sandwich.

MAX, Marcia's big, friendly dog, watches from his bed.

On the screen is a newspaper with the headline 'TWO KILLED IN ARMED ROBBERY.' The article heading reads SECURITY GUARD KILLED - ONE SUSPECT DEAD - ONE WOUNDED TWO ESCAPE

Johnny scrolls down, stopping at HALF MIL IN FURS STOLEN. Johnny, face reflected on the screen, reads quietly.

JOHNNY

The entire stock of the 'Furry Reasonable' was stolen this morning. The break-in occurred just after midnight while the police were occupied with an armed robbery on the other side of town.

JOHNNY

(after a pause)

Son of a bitch.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - NEAR DARK

Johnny is lying in bed, eyes open, hands behind his head.

JOHNNY

Son of a bitch.

INT. BOOKSTORE - BACKROOM - MORNING

Johnny, donut in his mouth and phone to his ear, signs off on a shipment. From his bed, Max eyes the donut. Johnny hands the pad back to the driver, MARTY.

JOHNNY

Thanks, Marty.

With a wave, Marty exits. Johnny speaks into the phone.

JOHNNY

Simon. What? It's almost ten o'clock. Sorry.

Johnny listens, shaking his head.

JOHNNY

Simon. Will you listen? I wanna do something.

Johnny waits, frowns at the phone, waits.

JOHNNY

Simon. Simon! The hell.

Johnny hangs up. Marcia enters.

MARCIA

John, you want to check these in, or open?

JOHNNY

I'll take the desk. I feel like a people person today.

Marcia smiles. Johnny breaks off a bit of donut for Max, then grabs his coffee and heads to the front.

Simon, sloppily dressed, hair askew, appears and begins yanking at the locked door. A frowning Johnny unlocks the door and flips the open sign. Simon bulls in.

JOHNNY

What did you do, teleport?

SIMON

Don't fuck with me, Johnny. You said you wanted to do something.

Johnny looks nervously toward the back.

JOHNNY

Not now. After work.

Simon takes Johnny's coffee and swigs it. Johnny steers Simon to the door. Simon stops and faces Johnny.

SIMON

Come on, Johnny. You can't get my dick hard like this and not get me off.

JOHNNY

Later.

Simon plants himself at the doorway.

SIMON

Gimme something. Throw me a crumb.

Johnny pauses a moment, then smiles.

JOHNNY

I'm a thief, and I dig it.

SIMON

Tell me more, Johnny boy.

JOHNNY

Later. Go back to bed.

SIMON

Crazy nine to five son of a bitch.

An exiting Simon faces off with an OLDER GENTLEMAN.

SIMON

What!

The man warily circles the wild-eyed Simon and backs into the store. Johnny smiles at the man and shakes his head.

JOHNNY

Darn bums.

Simon, swigging coffee, climbs into his carelessly parked car. Johnny raises his arms in mild distress.

JOHNNY

My coffee.

INT. SEEDY CONVENIENCE STORE

Grogan's huge hand grabs a filthy coffee pot and pours a styrofoam cup full. He downs the coffee in one long swig, then spits in the cup. He returns the cup to the stack.

The CLERK doesn't notice, as he's been concerned with another SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER that's been lurking.

Grogan grabs a large box of donuts, then reaches in the back of a cooler for a quart of chocolate milk. He looks down the aisle toward the register, where the Suspicious Character has taken out a gun. Grogan is indifferent.

CHARACTER

Gimme what you got.

INT. MAKESHIFT OFFICE

The Tech sits at a desk, dourly facing a blank monitor. Anderson enters. He nods at the Tech and takes the good chair. The Tech aims and clicks the remote.

MONITOR - POINT OF VIEW - SOMEWHAT GRAINY

The row of coolers in the store from above the register. The Character has a gun aimed at the aggravated clerk.

CHARACTER

Come on, man.

The Character is near the first cooler. He's facing the clerk and doesn't notice Grogan, gliding like a shark.

Grogan secures the donuts under his left arm, then shifts the milk from his right hand to his left.

When the Character becomes aware of Grogan, it's too late. Without breaking stride, Grogan uses his right hand to swiftly and brutally SMASH the Character's head into the cooler, destroying glass and skull.

ANDERSON

Ouch.

Still in stride, Grogan reaches the counter, puts down his wares and takes out some money, still expressionless.

The bug eyed clerk is a mixture of thrilled and horrified. He waves off the money.

CLERK

Jesus! You saved my ass! Forget it, man!

Grogan looks blankly at the clerk, then picks up his food and moves toward the exit.

CLERK

You're a fucking hero. There oughta be a reward.

Grogan pauses at the doorway. He turns, shifting his goods to his left hand as he walks to the Dead Character.

Grogan picks up the gun with his right hand, aims it at the clerk and pulls the trigger three times. Nothing.

CLERK

What the fuck, man?

The clerk grabs a bat, but Grogan is on him, using the gun

as a bludgeon, brutally SMASHING the clerk's head several times. Grogan then uses the gun to pop open the register. He pockets the bills and some beef jerky.

Grogan blankly looks at the camera. The monitor freezes.

TECH

He did get the tape. I tapped in on the feed.
The perp, and the clerk, are dead.

The Tech is looking at a silent Anderson, who sighs.

ANDERSON

Ka-boom.

INT. NIGHT - A LARGE ROOM - SPARSELY FURNISHED

CHARLES ARTHUR RIMBAUD, popularly known as RIMMY, in his 60's or 70's, putters in the kitchen area.

Johnny is seated at a table in the middle of the room, facing an empty chair. He's studying a sheet of paper.

There's a KNOCK at the door. Johnny looks up, removing his glasses. Rimmy moves quickly from the kitchen. He opens the door to a well dressed Simon. They both grin.

SIMON

Rimmy, ya old bastard. How they hanging?

RIMMY

Too low, Simon. Too low.

They shake hands. Simon nods at Johnny, who smiles and puts on his glasses. Rimmy retreats to the kitchen.

SIMON

You broke down and got a couch.

Rimmy nods and holds up a pot of coffee. Simon waves him off. He drifts behind Johnny and looks over his shoulder.

Simon frowns at the sheet Johnny is holding, then plucks it out of his hand. Johnny waits, looking straight ahead.

SIMON

Parker's out west. Jerry Schue's dead.

JOHNNY

I know. That's why I crossed them off.

SIMON

These guys are muscle, Johnny. What the fuck?

JOHNNY

Sam's gone. I want you with me.

Simon, slightly surprised, looks at Johnny. Rimmy smiles sadly from the kitchen.

SIMON

Yeah?

JOHNNY

Yeah.

Simon nods, liking it. He hands the sheet back to Johnny.

SIMON

Alright.

JOHNNY

I was thinking we wouldn't call 'em muscle.

SIMON

No?

JOHNNY

I was thinking expediency coordinator.

SIMON

Fancy. So, who's on tap?

JOHNNY

First up we got Reggie Blanc.

RIMMY

He's done a lot of stuff upstate with my cousin Alvy. Not a barrel of laughs, but good people.

SIMON

Well, he's late.

JOHNNY

No. I wanted to talk to you first.

Simon takes out a cigarette and sits in the chair.

SIMON

Okay. Talk.

JOHNNY

Tell me about the job with the Miller's.

SIMON

What about it?

JOHNNY

How'd it go?

Simon stares at Johnny a moment, grinning slightly.

SIMON

It didn't. But I'm guessing you already knew that.

Johnny leans back, waiting.

SIMON

Somebody cold cocked Jack and broke two of his fingers. His middle fingers. (pause) I guess Tony C. ran out of cheeks.

JOHNNY

Were you gonna tell me?

SIMON

Okay, Johnny. Bottom line it. If Tony C.'s after me I'm a liability. Why am I still in?

JOHNNY

I smoothed it.

SIMON

This oughta be good.

JOHNNY

I told him you had a thing for Sandy.
That you were jealous as hell.

SIMON

He bought that?

JOHNNY

It appealed to his ego.

Simon laughs and shakes his head.

SIMON

You can be one slick son of a bitch, Deschanel.

Johnny shrugs. Simon holds a hard look on Johnny.

SIMON

Like all this. You don't trust me as muscle.
That's the real story here. Right?

JOHNNY

I can't have someone over reacting. Look at
what happened with Sam.

SIMON

Sam did what he had to do. If he hadn't, I
would've.

JOHNNY

There. Even Sam said he screwed up shooting
that guard.

SIMON

Yeah, well, Sam did have a knack for telling
you what you wanted to hear.

JOHNNY

What the hell's that supposed to mean.

SIMON

That guard was reaching.

JOHNNY

For a walkie talkie!

SIMON

We didn't know that!

Johnny and Simon, both hot, glare at each other.

There's a KNOCK on the door. Johnny checks his watch.

Rimmy moves toward the door.

JOHNNY

Hang on, Rimmy. Simon. In or out?

Simon sighs and makes a reluctant gesture of acceptance.

SIMON

In.

Simon retreats to a wall. Johnny cools down. He removes his glasses and nods at Rimmy, who opens the door.

RIMMY

Reggie.

REGGIE BLANC, 40ish tough guy. He shakes Rimmy's hand and enters. Johnny gets up as Reggie, after exchanging nods with Simon, approaches the desk. They shake hands.

JOHNNY

John Deschanel. That's Simon. Have a seat, Reggie. You want coffee?

REGGIE

No. Thanks.

JOHNNY

Rimmy says you worked with Alvy. How is he?

REGGIE

Looking to retire. Arthritis.

JOHNNY

Ahhh.

REGGIE

Yeah.

JOHNNY

Well, what we're looking for, Reggie, is an expediency coordinator.

REGGIE

What's that?

Simon moves quickly from the wall.

SIMON

Muscle. What would you do if someone pulled a gun on us, Reggie?

REGGIE

(after a pause)

It would depend. But I'd probably shoot 'em.

SIMON

I don't know, Johnny. He sounds kind of wild ass to me.

Johnny gives Simon a dirty look. Rimmy shakes his head.

JOHNNY

We've, uh, been discussing the subject of excessive force. You got any thoughts on that, Reggie?

Reggie looks at Simon and Johnny, then rises and heads for the door, raising a hand as he goes.

REGGIE

Se ya, Rimmy.

RIMMY

Sorry, Reggie.

Reggie exits. There is an awkward silence.

RIMMY

You boys are embarrassing me. That was very unprofessional.

SIMON

Shut up, Rimmy.

JOHNNY

He's right.

SIMON

I know he's right.

Johnny and Simon look at each other. Their faces register an unspoken truce. There's another KNOCK. Johnny frowns.

SIMON

Who's next?

JOHNNY

Popgun Edison. He's early.

Rimmy moves toward the door.

SIMON

Popgun Edison? What the hell is that?

JOHNNY

He's good with electronics.

SIMON

Well, what about the Popgun?

Johnny frowns, joining Simon in confusion.

SIMON

I thought we were looking for muscle.

JOHNNY

We are. He can do both.

SIMON

Isn't Bobby doing tech?

JOHNNY

I haven't heard back yet.

Rimmy opens the door and a VERY OLD MAN enters. Simon looks at him unbelievably.

SIMON

That him?

Johnny gets up as the old man and Rimmy shake hands.

JOHNNY

No, that's Ira. He worked with me and Sam when we were coming up.

Johnny and Ira shake hands as a frowning Simon looks on.

JOHNNY

How you doing, Ira?

IRA

Good, Johnny. I heard you was looking for men. I figured you was calling but I don't have a phone, so I come down.

JOHNNY

I appreciate that, Ira. Coffee?

Rimmy seats Ira at the kitchen counter and pours a coffee. With trembling hands, Ira lifts the steaming cup.

Simon shakes his head as he watches Ira spill more coffee than he drinks. Rimmy gets paper towels.

IRA

You got something for me, Johnny?

JOHNNY

Sure, Ira. We got something.

SIMON

Hey, Johnny. What the fuck?

Johnny gives Simon a warning glance. Simon scoffs.

JOHNNY

We can use someone to man the telephone. A checkpoint. Right, Rimmy?

RIMMY

You bet, Ira.

IRA

I'd like to come along, Johnny.

JOHNNY

The thing is Ira, there could be running, fence climbing. Stuff like that.

Ira nods, his trembling hands spilling more coffee.

IRA

I'd like to come along.

SIMON

Hey, Pops. I'm sure you give a hell of a hand job, but we can't use you.

Johnny gives Simon a look. Simon shakes his head.

SIMON

What are you doing?

JOHNNY

He's a friend.

SIMON

Well, your 'friend' isn't usable. And I'm beginning to wonder about you.

Johnny glares at Simon, who looks to Rimmy for support. Not getting any, Simon returns to the wall in disgust.

Ira, drinking and spilling, appears oblivious. Johnny puts a hand on Ira's shoulder as Rimmy mops up.

JOHNNY

Let Rimmy know where we can reach you.

Rimmy leads the nodding and trembling Ira out the door.

SIMON

If that old goat gets anything..

RIMMY

It's my end, Simon. So shut the fuck up. And try and dick down a little, will ya'?

Outnumbered, Simon shrugs. Johnny shoots him a glare and heads for the bathroom. Rimmy goes back to the kitchen. There's a KNOCK at the door. Simon waves Rimmy off.

SIMON

I got it.

Simon opens the door. A thin, wiry 50ish hawk-like MAN enters. He seems intensely alert.

SIMON

Popgun Edison?

The hawk-like man nods and extends his hand.

MAN

Call me Earl.

Simon pauses a moment, then shakes Earl's hand.

SIMON

Have a seat... Earl.

Earl nods and approaches the seat in front of the desk.

SIMON

So, how'd you get the name Popgun?

Earl takes a seat. Simon waits for his reply.

SIMON

What is it, a secret?

Earl looks intently at Rimmy, then Simon. Rimmy, somewhat reluctantly, speaks before Simon does.

RIMMY

Earl's kinda deaf.

Simon, somewhat bemused, grins at Rimmy.

RIMMY

He's gotta be looking at ya when you talk.

SIMON

You're shittin' me, right?

Rimmy doesn't answer. Earl has been swiveling his neck from

Simon to Rimmy, trying to catch the conversation, but just missing. Simon moves behind Earl.

SIMON

Hey Earl, I wanna suck your dick.

Rimmy shakes his head. Simon reaches for his fly.

SIMON

Popgun! I'm gonna piss on your head.

Johnny comes out of the bathroom in time to catch this.

JOHNNY

Cut the crap, Simon.

SIMON

Sufferin' fuck, Johnny. What the Christ?

Earl is smiling at Johnny, who quickly SIGNS something. Earl rises and elbows Simon solidly in the chest, then turns to face him, dancing. Simon wades in swinging.

Earl easily parries the blows, then pops Simon on the side of the head. Simon, mildly stunned, backs off.

JOHNNY

More?

Simon, retreating to the wall, raises his hands in surrender as he tries to shake out the cobwebs.

Johnny crosses the room and shakes hands with Earl.

JOHNNY

How you doing, Earl?

EARL

Fine, Johnny. Good to see you out.

They both sit. Rimmy brings coffee. Simon glares.

SIMON

That was bullshit, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Would you have taken my word on it?

Simon appears to grudgingly accept the point, offering a weak smile when Earl turns and nods. Earl drinks some coffee and intently watches Johnny.

JOHNNY

We may have something for you Earl,
depending on how it's laid out.

EARL

Sure, Johnny. I understand I'm limited.

JOHNNY

Okay. Well. Thanks for coming, Earl.

They both rise and shake hands. Earl also shakes hands with Rimmy, who transfers Earl's coffee to a to-go cup. Earl nods to Simon as he leaves. Simon warily nods.

JOHNNY

I was gonna have him kick my ass til you
opened your yap.

SIMON

Real fucking funny, Johnny. And what's with
this interview bullshit, anyway? This ain't
fucking K-Mart.

JOHNNY

I wanna get the right guy. And I want us
all to have a say. (pause) Earl's good,
but like he says, he's limited.

SIMON

No shit. While I'm trying to remember sign
language for 'lookout-gun,' somebody's got
a slug in their ass.

Johnny grins. Rimmy allows a chuckle.

SIMON

Where'd you learn that sign language shit?

JOHNNY

My boy.

SIMON

Oh, yeah. Sorry.

Johnny puts on his glasses and makes a note on his list.

SIMON

How many more you got? Everyone and his mother's gonna know we're doing something.

JOHNNY

There's just one more. Stone.

There's a knock on the door. Simon goes to answer.

SIMON

What is he, a one armed blind guy?

Johnny checks his watch, frowning as Simon opens the door. Simon looks up and backs off a step.

SIMON

Stone?

VOICE (O.S.)

No.

Johnny removes his glasses and looks toward the doorway.

SIMON

Am I supposed to guess?

VOICE (O.S.)

Grogan.

Johnny lets out the breath he'd been holding. Simon lets the door creak open. Grogan impassively fills the frame.

SIMON

He ain't on the list. You want I get rid of him?

Johnny quickly gets up.

JOHNNY

No. He's okay. He was inside with me.

Simon, looking slight beside Grogan, grudgingly moves.

SIMON

Welcome to open house.

As Grogan glides in, tension simmers. Rimmy curses softly as he burns his hand on the coffee pot.

Simon lights a cigarette, drawing a look from Grogan. Johnny is smiling, but it's phony as hell.

JOHNNY

I guess the word's out. Uh, have a seat.

Johnny gestures to the chair in front of the desk. After a moment, Grogan approaches. The closer he gets to the chair, the more inadequate it looks. Almost comically so.

Everyone watches as Grogan sits lightly. There's a sense of relief in the room, but as Grogan settles in, the chair CREAKS in protest, then slowly starts to buckle.

JOHNNY

Uh, maybe you'd better...

Grogan effortlessly rises and moves to the couch, leaving the now cock-eyed chair barely standing.

JOHNNY

...take the couch.

Grogan settles on the couch, half shadowed, like Meet The Beatles, but scary, not fab. There's a moment of silence.

Johnny nervously clears his throat, then takes his seat.

JOHNNY

Uh, thanks for coming. I would've reached out. The thing is, you being on parole...

GROGAN

You're on parole.

JOHNNY

Well, yeah...

SIMON

We're not just looking for someone to flex their muscles here.

Simon looks like he wants to crack wise, but is wary.

JOHNNY

What Simon's trying to say is we're looking for someone who can broach a security system.

Grogan stares at Johnny, who's beginning to sweat.

JOHNNY

You see, our, uh, tech person hasn't come through and we're thinking we might have to, uh, double up. You know, a tech-muscle guy.

Simon tries not to roll his eyes. Rimmy keeps still. Johnny perspires noticeably through his stumbling explanation. There's a stretch of awkward silence.

GROGAN

Bullshit.

In the tense moment of silence that follows, Simon subtly positions to draw by switching his cigarette to his left hand. Johnny, and Grogan, notice the move.

JOHNNY

Uh, can you...

Johnny gives Simon a look, then holds up a finger to Grogan, a 'hang on a second gesture.'

JOHNNY

Could you just, uh, give us a minute?
We just need to... uh... Simon?

Johnny gets up and nods at Simon, who follows him to the bathroom. Johnny nods at Grogan before they enter.

When the door shuts, Grogan shifts his gaze to Rimmy.

INT. BATHROOM

Johnny throws Simon's cigarette in the toilet.

JOHNNY

What the hell are you doing?

SIMON

Either we hire this guy or we kill him.
We don't he's gonna come back on us like
bad Mexican food.

JOHNNY

Absolutely not. I'll handle it.

SIMON

Yeah? How's that gonna work, exactly?

JOHNNY

I'll smooth him.

SIMON

Oh yeah, that tech-muscle guy thing was real
fucking smooth.

JOHNNY

I wasn't ready. Now I am. I'll handle it.

Simon, hand resting on his gun, grudgingly accedes.

SIMON

Ok. But if you don't, I will.

JOHNNY

I said I got it.

Johnny takes a deep breath and exits the bathroom. Simon follows. Johnny looks toward the now empty couch.

In the kitchen, towering behind Rimmy, stands Grogan. He takes a swig of coffee and puts the mug down next to Rimmy's hand. Between the mug and Rimmy's hand is a gun.

Rimmy appears calm, but is beading sweat. Simon slowly moves to draw, but Rimmy shakes him off. Simon stops. The awkward tableaux holds. After a moment, Johnny clears

his throat and speaks in a calm, friendly voice.

JOHNNY

So, the parole thing. You're right. We're both on parole. That's the thing. It's double jeopardy. Two parole officers in the mix? Damn snitches would sell us out for lunch money.

Grogan doesn't react. Johnny moves casually toward the kitchen, partially blocking Grogan's view of Simon.

JOHNNY

Otherwise, you'd have been the first guy I looked to. Hell, I felt safer in the joint than I do out. Which I sure appreciated. I'm trying to watch out for the both of us here.

Johnny sells it with a look of concern around a smile.

Grogan stares at Johnny, who holds the smile. After a long moment, Grogan swigs the coffee and exits the kitchen. He moves silently toward the door.

JOHNNY

Maybe down the road...

Grogan exits. Johnny drops the smile and exhales.

JOHNNY

You think he bought it? I think he bought it.

SIMON

I think we'll find out.

There's a KNOCK on the door. Simon draws his gun and motions for Johnny to move. Simon sidles up to the door. Rimmy, gun in hand, takes cover as Simon opens the door.

Looking into an apparently empty room is STONE, mid 20's.

STONE

Trick or treat?

Stone grins as the men appear from cover. Rimmy smiles.

STONE

Hey, Rimmy.

JOHNNY

Stone?

STONE

That's me. Did you hire King Kong?

JOHNNY

Ah, no.

STONE

Then the job's still open.

SIMON

No offense, kid. But you look a little wet behind the ears.

Simon pockets his gun and takes out a cigarette. He lights up with a fancy flourish.

STONE

You do that good.

Simon blows a stream of smoke at the grinning Stone.

SIMON

We got room for one asshole here. And I'm it.

STONE

You got it.

Stone's grin widens. Simon laughs. Rimmy cackles. Johnny smiles. The tenor in the room has lightened considerably.

JOHNNY

Well, let's get to it. Coffee?

STONE

Coffee's good.

SIMON

You might wanna reserve judgement on that.

Simon hauls off the skewed chair as Johnny gets a new

one. Rimmy gives Stone a coffee and a pat on the back.

STONE

Thanks, Rimmy.

JOHNNY

First name?

STONE

Stone's good.

Johnny reaches out to shake hands.

JOHNNY

John Deschanel.

STONE

I know.

JOHNNY

So, Rimmy says you're related to Sam?

STONE

Sam was my uncle. He was showing me the ropes.

Johnny furrows his brow, then brightens.

JOHNNY

Clarence! The nephew.

Stone appears slightly embarrassed.

JOHNNY

Sam said you'd be good when you were ready.

STONE

I'm ready.

JOHNNY

You haven't gone out yet?

STONE

There's gotta be a first time.

JOHNNY

Well, yeah...

SIMON

C'mon, Johnny. I'm guessing this ain't a good one to pop someone's cherry on.

STONE

I'm ready.

JOHNNY

I don't know. Situations come up. It's different than talking about them.

STONE

I can handle it.

SIMON

Forget it, kid. We can't use you.

Simon has spoken gruffly, drawing an annoyed look from Johnny. Simon, moving toward Stone, puts his cigarette in an ashtray and winks at Johnny.

Johnny picks up the cue and leans back with a shrug.

JOHNNY

Sorry, kid.

STONE

I can do it, Johnny. Give me a chance.

Simon has moved in front of Stone.

SIMON

Get lost small change, before I spend ya'.

Stone, face set, stiffly rises, face to face with Simon.

STONE

This ain't right.

SIMON

Scoot, Clarence. Go filch some penny candy.

Johnny flinches. Stone grins.

STONE

You are an asshole.

SIMON

That's why they pay me the big money.

Stone and Simon continue their face to face stare off.

SIMON

You'd like to pop me, wouldn't you?

STONE

Sticks and stones.

SIMON

Or maybe you're afraid I'll kick your
skinny ass from here to eternity.

Stone gives a small laugh of disgust and turns to walk
away. Simon grabs his shoulder.

SIMON

What's the mat-

Stone explodes. He spins, grabbing Simon's right arm and
locking it against his back. He uses his other hand to
hold Simon's left arm up and at an angle, putting
pressure on Simon's throat. Simon has no leverage.

Johnny, trying not to grin, shrugs a 'your call' at
Simon. Voice squeezed thin, Simon manages to speak.

SIMON

Can you use a gun?

STONE

Yeah.

SIMON

Hire 'im.

JOHNNY

You sure?

Johnny enjoys the moment. Simon's voice gets higher.

SIMON

Hire 'im!

JOHNNY

Ok, kid. You're hired.

Simon raises his eyes to Stone expectantly. Stone lets him go. Simon gets himself together. Stone looks wary.

STONE

I'm hired?

JOHNNY

You're hired.

Stone, still wary, looks from Simon to Johnny.

JOHNNY

We needed to know you could keep your cool.
And if you could handle yourself.

Rimmy brings coffee to Simon and pats Stone on the back.

RIMMY

I'd say that's a big thumbs up on both counts.

JOHNNY

The job's yours if you want it.

Stone, not convinced, looks at Simon. Simon grins.

SIMON

C'mon, kid. I don't think I can survive
another interview.

Rimmy, back in the kitchen, cackles. Stone grins. Johnny sits back and smiles.

EXT. DAY - STREET

Johnny stands in front of a food cart. He nods as Simon approaches. The VENDOR waits.

JOHNNY

Chili dog. No onions. Coffee. Simon?

SIMON

Same. But gimme the onions.

Johnny pays and they take their wares to a bench. As they eat they watch a MAN push a YOUNG GIRL on a swing in the nearby park. Simon tosses his chili dog. He sighs.

SIMON

Onions. I know they bother me.

Johnny looks at Simon, who's still watching the girl.

JOHNNY

Have you spoken to Jennie at all?

SIMON

You know, I still picture her as a kid. It threw me when I got a wedding invitation.

JOHNNY

Wow. You should go.

SIMON

That was a year ago.

Simon allows a small laugh and looks at Johnny, who nods sympathetically. They sip their coffee and watch the man and girl walk away. Johnny tosses his napkin.

JOHNNY

We might have to go with Earl.

SIMON

That's problems, Johnny. We can't even talk behind his back.

JOHNNY

We'll just have to set it up right.

SIMON

What's with Bobby? Maybe Tully wasn't as smart, but at least he was there.

JOHNNY

I haven't heard back yet. We got time.

SIMON

Well, if we gotta, we go with the blind guy.

JOHNNY

Deaf.

SIMON

Oh, yeah. It's the wheel man that's blind.

Johnny laughs. Simon grins and swigs his coffee.

SIMON

So, that's what you needed to tell me?

JOHNNY

No. It's about the job.

SIMON

Yeah, what's the big secret.

JOHNNY

It's a home invasion.

SIMON

Johnny. You don't do home invasions.

JOHNNY

I'm making an exception.

SIMON

Sweet fuck on a ferris wheel. Don't tell me...

JOHNNY

Yeah. We're gonna hit Tony C.

INT. A NEAT MODEST APARTMENT - NIGHT

From the living room we see the mirror reflection of a 40ish MAN shaving in the bathroom.

A WOMAN, mid-thirties, casually dressed, enters. A Yankees cap hangs on a hook near the door. She drops a duffel bag and reads a note on the counter,

then goes to the bathroom and kisses the man on the ear.

MAN

You see the note?

WOMAN

I did.

MAN

He just got out of jail.

WOMAN

John's a good man.

MAN

Meaning.

WOMAN

Meaning we shouldn't dismiss it out of hand.

MAN

We?

The woman's face hardens. She walks back to the living room and takes out a cigarette. The man finishes shaving. He towels his face and gets an ashtray from a drawer.

MAN

An English teacher and an outlaw. How do these things happen?

WOMAN

You can call it off anytime.

MAN

I don't want to call it off.

WOMAN

You knew what it was.

MAN

I thought I did. It's two different worlds, Bobby. You've been gone a week, and now you're leaving again.

BOBBY

We have tonight.

BOBBY moves in close. The man smiles, a bit sadly.

BOBBY

I don't want to lose this world.

They kiss, with growing passion. The man pulls back.

MAN

First. Shower.

BOBBY

Asshole.

MAN

That's what I'm saying.

She playfully pushes him away and heads for the bathroom. The man smiles and turns off the living room light.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - DARK

Johnny enters and turns on the light. Something CRACKS.

JOHNNY

Jeez!

Anderson is sitting in the only chair, eating pistachios. He smiles as he watches Johnny consider his options.

ANDERSON

Relax. If I wanted you dead...

Johnny, still wary, looks at the strewn pistachio shells.

JOHNNY

What do you want?

ANDERSON

We want you to hire Grogan.

JOHNNY

I don't know what-

ANDERSON

Save it. We know about the little house party at Rimmy's. I hope he didn't have to earn that nickname.

JOHNNY

I don't get it.

ANDERSON

You don't need to.

JOHNNY

What if I say no.

ANDERSON

What do you think? You're back in the slammer. Tout de suite. You're getting a free pass. Take it.

JOHNNY

What are you? C.I.A.? N.S.A.?

Anderson grins and eats another pistachio.

ANDERSON

There aren't any initials for what we do.

Anderson watches Johnny, standing awkwardly, ponder.

ANDERSON

You're starting to aggravate me. You've got nowhere to go, here. Hire Grogan.

JOHNNY

It's not that simple.

ANDERSON

You're a smart guy. Figure it out.

JOHNNY

I don't even know how to reach him.

ANDERSON

You're his buddy. He'll turn up.

JOHNNY

You lost him, didn't you?

ANDERSON

Temporarily. We literally put a bug up his butt, but it's been compromised. A carrot, we think.

JOHNNY

I guess you guys can't think of everything.

Anderson gets up. Johnny backs up a step.

ANDERSON

Scratch my back, and I won't break yours.

Johnny considers.

JOHNNY

Let me guess. You want to see if this psycho plays well with others before you recruit him.

Anderson nods, grinning in mild appreciation.

ANDERSON

Don't get too smart, Johnny. It doesn't pay.

The toilet flushes. Johnny watches the Cohort exit the bathroom and join Anderson. Johnny grimaces.

JOHNNY

You couldn't light a match?

ANDERSON

The job. How long.

JOHNNY

A month.

ANDERSON

Two weeks. And don't think about calling it off. We're all counting on you, Johnny.

A smiling Anderson exits with the Cohort. Johnny notices a cluster of pistachio shells under a lamp.

INT. AN APARTMENT BUILDING

Simon enters and heads for the stairs. When he hears the elevator DOORS OPEN, followed by the sound of high heels, he pauses to admire the retreating FEMALE. When the Female exits, Simon recognizes her as Sandy. He frowns.

Simon stands at a door. He fingers a piece of tape that's been pulled from the jamb. There are light scratch marks around the lock. Simon tests the door, then unlocks it. He pushes the door open and looks into the empty room.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT

Johnny finds a bug in a light fixture above a small pile of pistachio shells. He looks at other shells strewn about, then sighs and tucks the bug back where it was.

The PHONE RINGS. Johnny picks up, listens, then hangs up.

EXT. THE STREET BELOW

From a phone booth, Johnny notices a car parked down the street. He looks up at his sun dappled window, frowning.

JOHNNY

She's in? Good. Ok. See you tonight.

Johnny hangs up, still looking at his window. One of the four panes glints differently than the other three.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT

Johnny, crouched at his window, uses a small screwdriver to poke at a corner of the suspect window pane. A thin piece of plastic curls up. It contains tiny electronics.

Johnny scoffs, and pokes it back into place. He glances outside at the parked car, then removes the initial bug from the light fixture and crushes it underfoot.

INT. RIMMY'S APARTMENT

On the table is a large bowl of green grapes, a plate of chocolate chip cookies, and bottles of liquor and soda. Bobby, blowing smoke out an open window, watches Johnny

casually touch a window pane across the room. She appraises Stone, who sits at the table. Simon roams, occasionally popping a grape.

JOHNNY

Code names?

SIMON

You can be Johnny Walker. For instance.

JOHNNY

You're using my actual name.

SIMON

Ok. I'll be Johnny Walker. You can be Jack Daniels. And Stone can be, say... Jim Beam.

Stone grins and takes a bite of a cookie.

SIMON

And Bobby..

Bobby turns a bored gaze to Simon, who's losing steam.

SIMON

I don't know. Brandy Alexander.

BOBBY

Adorable.

Rimmy cackles from the kitchen as he tops off Ira's coffee. Ira and a liquor bottle man the counter.

RIMMY

How 'bout Bloody Mary. And I can be Old Grand-Dad.

JOHNNY

What's that leave Ira?

SIMON

One foot in?

Johnny, who was smiling, frowns, though Ira is oblivious. Simon apologizes with a small wave. He drifts toward Ira,

who's wrestling with a cookie. Ira looks up. Simon nods.

SIMON

They're better if you dip 'em.

IRA

I'd like to come along.

SIMON

I know, buddy. I know.

Simon pats Ira on the shoulder. Johnny nods in thanks.

JOHNNY

Simon, why would we need code names?

SIMON

In case we need to talk in front of the bad guys? Phone communication?

RIMMY

I hear they got phones you can carry around.

SIMON

Yeah, and they're the size of a horse schlong. Artie Voss was casing a joint with one on his hip. His pants dropped and he got busted for indecent exposure. Not only that, they traced the phone back to his girlfriend, ah...

RIMMY

Dottie the Dink?

SIMON

Yeah, Dottie the Dink. They busted her sitting on a load of hot stereos. (sarcastically) So yeah, let's get some of those.

JOHNNY

Well, there is useful tech out there.

STONE

If we could afford it, we probably wouldn't need to be thieves.

SIMON

Bingo. Fuck that high tech shit.

BOBBY

Can we get to it? 'Cos this whole thing feels a bit out of our wheelhouse.

Simon lights up, annoyed but patient. Johnny nods.

JOHNNY

Go ahead.

BOBBY

First off, it's a home invasion.

JOHNNY

It's a business. He works out of his home.

BOBBY

It's mob business.

JOHNNY

Not connected. Strictly local.

SIMON

The guy's a wannabe. He jacks off to the Godfather trilogy.

STONE

Even part three?

There are bemused looks for the usually silent Stone.

RIMMY

I liked part three.

BOBBY

(impatiently)

These guys know you and Simon.

JOHNNY

The way it's set up, we don't engage.

BOBBY

And it's just the two of 'em?

SIMON

Floyd's been Tony's suck puppet for years. He's got guys, but Floyd's the only one he trusts.

JOHNNY

That's part of the beauty. These guys think they're bulletproof, so we're gonna have the element of surprise on our side.

BOBBY

Mmmm. Rimmy, lay out the alarm setup.

RIMMY

Ok, I leveraged the guy who installed them, so this is solid. Now, the first one is on the gate, so you'll need to get buzzed in.

BOBBY

And the second?

RIMMY

Here's where it gets tricky. The second is self contained in the two adjoining bedrooms.

JOHNNY

And that's second floor.

RIMMY

Correct. Now, Tony's got a balcony he likes to use for a smoke. He's actually quit, part of his new kick. But his girlfriend Sandy's a smoker. And she's there a lot.

BOBBY

So we might have to deal with a civilian.

SIMON

No. I'll see to it.

Johnny gives Simon a look. Simon appears stoic.

RIMMY

Now, when someone unlocks the balcony, Floyd has five seconds to disengage the alarm. And, no, you can't disable from Floyd's room.

BOBBY

And if it's tripped?

RIMMY

Cops. Tony's tight with the locals. And the precinct's only ten minutes away.

JOHNNY

And there might be a prowler car closer.

Bobby stubs out her cigarette and sighs. Johnny waits patiently. Simon, less so. Stone is happy to be there.

BOBBY

We're hinging this whole thing on a stunt.

JOHNNY

Yeah. But it's a good one.

BOBBY

It's original, I'll give you that. But it's no sure bet.

JOHNNY

Tony's a creature of habit. In bed by ten. Plus, he medicates. So, he should be a bit groggy. And Rimmy, you spoke to his priest.

RIMMY

Yeah. Since Tony's wife died, he's conflicted, to put it mildly. Why did God take her? Is there a God? Can I be saved? He's searching.

BOBBY

Aren't we all.

JOHNNY

And there is a plan B.

BOBBY

Right. Smash and grab wearing masks.

SIMON

And spike chains to slow down the cops. I gotta say, I like plan B.

JOHNNY

But if A works, we're in and out clean.

Johnny looks around, taking silence as assent.

BOBBY

And the cash? That's solid.

RIMMY

Rock. He always keeps a mil on hand.

SIMON

And it'll be clean. Ready to spend.

JOHNNY

So, Bobby. You okay with-

BOBBY

No. I hate it. But it makes sense. Rimmy, this is also solid?

RIMMY

Like clockwork. Every Wednesday and Saturday.

BOBBY

So Mr. Born Again doesn't mind Floyd consorting with hookers.

RIMMY

He don't love it, but he wants Floyd on site. Like I say, conflicted.

SIMON

And he is shacking up with Sandy.

JOHNNY

Ok. I'm liking Saturday. The cops will be busy with boozers, in case we have to go to plan B.

SIMON

Piece a cake, Johnny.

RIMMY

Speaking of which. We got grapes, cookies, and plenty to drink.

BOBBY

First class all the way, Rimmy.

RIMMY

I almost got Ring Dings.

Rimmy puts his arm around a smiling Bobby.

RIMMY

You still seeing that school teacher?

Bobby and Rimmy peel off. Johnny approaches Simon.

JOHNNY

Weird thing. When I talked to Tony, he didn't cop to Jack Miller? Almost seemed surprised.

SIMON

Mmm. Maybe Floyd took it on himself.

JOHNNY

Maybe. Just saying. Watch your back.

SIMON

Always do, buddy.

Johnny grabs a drink and studies a light fixture.

BOBBY

Hasn't Rimmy swept the place?

Bobby has appeared behind Johnny, surprising him.

JOHNNY

Oh, sure. Habit. You can't be too careful.

BOBBY

That was always your strong suit, John.

JOHNNY

Yeah. I'm a little rusty. But it, ah, means a lot to me that you're on board, Bobby.

BOBBY

Of course, John.

Johnny smiles, touches her shoulder and turns away.

Bobby studies Johnny as he addresses the room.

JOHNNY

So, everyone good? Comments? Questions?
Additions? Deletions? Protractions?

STONE

I got a question.

The room gets quiet. Everyone looks to Stone.

STONE

What's a suck puppet?

There is a small hole in the wall near the ceiling,
barely visible. A tiny wire glints. The wire and hole
extend to the outside of the building.

EXT. NIGHT - THE BUILDING

The wire is attached to a small dish. The dish is pointed
at an occupied car parked down the street.

INT. SIMON'S APARTMENT - DARK

Simon is seated, looking at a telephone. Beside the phone
is a worn, signed baseball. A soundless television
provides the only light in the room. Simon turns on a
table lamp with a hula girl shade, then dials the phone.
He prepares to speak, sighing when he gets a machine.

MACHINE

(female) It's Jennie. (male) And Dave.
(A dog barks) (Laughter) And Crocker!
(both) Leave us a message! Bye.

SIMON

Ah, Jennie? It's ah, it's your Dad. Listen,
I ah, I'm... sorry about the wedding. I...
(Simon takes a moment to gather himself)
I just... Well, I hope you're good. You ah,
you sound good. (small laugh) Okay... bye.

Simon sighs. The tv casts shifting shadows on his face.

INT. BOBBY'S APARTMENT

Her MAN stands in the kitchen, plating an impressive looking sandwich. When the phone rings, he sighs, then reluctantly walks away from the sandwich.

MAN

Hello?

VOICE

Hey, it's me.

MAN

What's wrong?

BOBBY

Nothing. I just wanted to hear you.

MAN

You never call from work. Tell me.

BOBBY

It's...nothing.

The man walks to the bedroom doorway.

MAN

You never could say no to him.

BOBBY

I did last time.

MAN

And it went bad. And you felt guilty.
You're not his keeper, Bobby. Walk away.

BOBBY

I owe him.

On the nightstand on Bobby's side of the bed is a picture of a younger Johnny with his arm around a young girl. They both have baseball caps and mitts and are smiling.

MAN

Do you?

BOBBY

I gotta go.

MAN

Bobby.

Bobby closes her eyes and gently hangs up the phone.

MAN

Roberta?

The Man, looking at the picture, sighs and hangs up.

INT. A HALLWAY

Maria opens her apartment door to a smiling Johnny.

MARIA

Well, look who remembered where I live.

JOHNNY

Can I come in?

Maria lets Johnny in. She closes the door and faces him.

MARIA

So, what Johnny. You got forty dollars from your paycheck for me?

JOHNNY

I'll be able to do better than that, Maria.

MARIA

Oh yeah? You get a raise?

JOHNNY

No. I'm gonna be doing something.

Maria shows some interest.

MARIA

Something big?

JOHNNY

Half my share should be a hundred grand.

Maria's eyes widen. She rushes to Johnny and hugs him.

MARIA

Oh, Johnny.

Johnny smiles. Maria pulls back, looking concerned.

MARIA

Is it something hard?

JOHNNY

Piece of pie.

They are both smiling, an easy familiarity evident.

MARIA

Easy as cake.

Maria hugs Johnny harder. She kisses his neck and moves toward his lips. Johnny pulls back. Maria is hurt, angry.

MARIA

Now you get a conscience attack?

Johnny awkwardly retreats.

MARIA

It was alright when Sam was alive?

JOHNNY

I just...

MARIA

You're like a kid, Johnny. Even your name. Go ahead, *Johnny*. Go hang around with the other kids, like your spoil brat friend Simon.

After an uncomfortable moment, Johnny turns to go.

MARIA

Just do what you gotta do, you and your spoil brat friend. I need that money, Johnny.

Johnny looks at Maria a moment, then nods and exits.

INT. SANDY'S MODERN SPACIOUS APARTMENT

The melancholy intro to the Walker Brothers THE SUN AIN'T GONNA SHINE ANYMORE plays LOUDLY on the radio.

Sandy is tied to a chair. Blood drips from a nostril. Behind her stands Simon, gun in hand, unlit cigarette in his mouth. With a flourish he lights up. Sandy cranes her neck toward the smell.

SANDY

Gimme a drag on that, will ya?

Simon turns down the radio and puts the cigarette in Sandy's mouth. After she takes a deep drag, Simon puts the butt back in his mouth. Sandy blows out the smoke.

SIMON

You broke Jack Miller's fingers. What was it gonna be for me?

SANDY

Take a wild guess, Jimmy Dick.

SIMON

You crazy cunt. Tony's got nothing to do with this, does he?

SANDY

Tony doesn't have much to do with anything.

SIMON

You're defending his honor. The way you think a wiseguy should be.

SANDY

You're showing half a brain.

SIMON

What's the other half? You telling me you're running things?

SANDY

You and I could make a lotta noise. And have a lotta fun.

SIMON

I don't like sleeping with one eye open.

SANDY

You don't know what you're missing. Unless Tully filled you in.

SIMON

Tully wasn't a kiss and tell kind of guy.

SANDY

You ignorant needle dick small time nothing.

SIMON

Now don't try and flatter your way out of this.

SANDY

I figured Tully was the dumbest of the lot.

FLASHBACK TO MAN #4 GETTING SHOT - Simon goes steely.

SIMON

Ok, you were working him. Why?

Sandy is silent. Simon gets a pillow from the bedroom.

SIMON

You and Tully never did sit square with me.

SANDY

Jealous?

SIMON

I'll ask one more time.

Sandy stays silent. Simon turns up the radio. Cigarette in mouth, he kneels and unties Sandy's right hand, then wraps the pillow around the hand and aims his gun.

Sandy scoffs. Simon FIRES.

INT. A CHURCH - A CONFESSIONAL.

STONE

Forgive me, Father. For I am about to sin.

PRIEST

I'm sorry son, I don't quite...

STONE

Please, Father. Forgive me, for I am about to sin.

PRIEST

I'm sorry, my son. But you must know I cannot grant dispensation for future sins.

STONE

I understand, Father.

PRIEST

But I must strongly urge you to refrain from committing them.

STONE

Thank you, Father. Will you pray for me?

PRIEST

Of course, my son. Of course.

In the dark of the confessional, Stone bows his head.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - MORNING

A CAR is parked off the road near a DEER CROSSING sign.

Anderson, eating pistachios, is in the passenger seat of CAR ONE. His Cohort is at the wheel. CAR TWO pulls up behind them. An AGENT gets out and climbs in the back.

AGENT

You were right. They switched it to Wednesday. Deschanel called Rimbaud.

ANDERSON

At home?

AGENT

Deschanel was home. He found three bugs and figured he was good. Rimbaud was in a booth.

ANDERSON

Ok. We'll set up here. Line up some ninjas.

AGENT

I thought we were just using him to flush out Grogan?

ANDERSON

He's not being cooperative. I'm gonna nail his ass to the wall. There'll be a little surprise when Johnny comes marching home.

AGENT

So, we let 'em pull the job?

ANDERSON

We do. Let's wire up Corleone's joint.

AGENT

Cagliostro.

ANDERSON

Right. Hopefully Grogan will show.

AGENT

I'd like to know how the hell someone that big and ugly can just disappear.

EXT. DAY - AN ISOLATED FARMHOUSE

Through the window we see an older couple puttering between the kitchen and dining room preparing supper. The old man sticks his head out the door.

OLD MAN

C'mon, Petey! Here boy!

Several yards from the house, past an old car and an OLD GREEN PICKUP TRUCK, is a decrepit wooden door.

INT. ROOT CELLAR

Grogan sits in the dirt eating pizza and flipping pieces of pepperoni to the large dog at his feet. Grogan's rat Alonzo is perched on his shoulder, feasting on cheese. Surrounding Grogan are pizza boxes, chicken containers,

burger bags, cupcakes, cookies, and soda bottles. The video and bloody gun from the store are also evident.

INT. AN APARTMENT OF MODERATE SIZE

A TEN YEAR OLD BOY sits on the couch, studiously writing in a notebook. He pauses after a KNOCK on the door.

A 30ish WOMAN walks from a bedroom to the peephole.

WOMAN

What do you want?

SIMON

Danielle? Floyd sent me.

After a moment, DANIELLE opens the door, but doesn't release the chain. Simon smiles.

SIMON

Something's come up. Tonight's off.

Simon brandishes some money, easing Danielle's suspicion. She unchains the door, takes the money and counts it.

DANIELLE

What came up?

SIMON

Something. Take the night off.

Simon gives Danielle an appraising look and walks away.

Danielle locks the door, then punches in a number on her phone. After two rings, a coarse male voice answers.

VOICE

Yeah?

DANIELLE

Floyd in?

VOICE

He's busy. Who wants to know?

DANIELLE

Danielle. I'm supposed to see him tonight.

VOICE

It's off. Ain't ya been told?

DANIELLE

Yeah, I been told.

VOICE

Well, ain't ya been paid?

DANIELLE

Yeah, I been paid.

INT. ELECTRICAL ROOM

Johnny, speaking into a phone, is the coarse male voice.

JOHNNY

So what's the fuckin' problem?

DANIELLE

Geez, I was just checking. Get some manners.

Hearing a hang up click, Bobby detaches the phone rig.

BOBBY

I love it when you talk dirty.

Johnny grins as Bobby dials. She mimics Danielle's cadence, disguising her voice by speaking hoarsely.

BOBBY

Floyd? It's Danielle. Yeah, I got a wicked cold, baby. I got a friend. You'll love her.

Simon looks in the doorway. Johnny gives him a thumbs up.

INT. DANIELLE'S APARTMENT

DANIELLE

You wanna go to the movies tonight, hun?

The young boy looks up from his notebook and smiles.

INT. THE BOOKSTORE BATHROOM

Johnny looks at his reflection. A smiling Sam ghosts in the mirror. Johnny rinses his face and takes a breath.

Johnny exits the bathroom. Marcia is sitting at the desk. They exchange smiles. Max rises from his bed.

MARCIA

All set, John?

JOHNNY

You bet. And Marcia, I appreciate you, you know, trusting me here alone.

Marcia waves off the comment and gathers her things.

MARCIA

Listen, John. I'm thinking of reorganizing the store. You seem to have a good eye. Mind if I bounce some ideas off you?

Johnny is pleasantly surprised. Marcia is a bit nervous.

JOHNNY

Sure.

MARCIA

Maybe tomorrow? Before we open? Sorry, that's short notice.

JOHNNY

No, tomorrow's good. How about I spring for breakfast. I'll bring muffins.

MARCIA

Great. I'll make the coffee. Say, nine?

JOHNNY

Sounds good.

MARCIA

Ok, John. Well, I'll see you tomorrow.

Marcia adds an Anne Tyler hardcover to her bag and rises.

MARCIA

I'll be home if you need to call.

Max gets a head scratch from Johnny, then follows Marcia.

JOHNNY

Thanks. I should be fine.

MARCIA

I'm sure you will. Good night, John.

JOHNNY

Night, Marcia.

They exchange warm smiles. Marcia and Max exit the back door. Johnny heads for the desk, manned by the ever disapproving Donna. The clock reads one minute to five.

DONNA

You ready?

Johnny acts comically humble as Donna gets her purse.

JOHNNY

Yes, Donna. Good night, Donna.

Donna offers a meager response before exiting.

INT. A BATHROOM

Grogan, humming tunelessly, is showering. The clean clothes laid out on the sink include a Hawaiian shirt. A set of keys lay on top of the shirt.

EXT. DUSK - THE ISOLATED FARMHOUSE

Through a bathroom window we see Grogan toweling off. Two windows away the old couple sit in front of the television. They are positioned somewhat awkwardly.

On the porch, Petey is barking. The couple don't move.

EXT. THE STREET - NIGHT

Simon sits smoking in his car, watching Johnny cash out. In the minimal light of the closed Book Nook, shadows

crisscross Johnny like skewed prison bars.

SIMON

Lock up, you crazy son of a bitch.

The store clock reads 9:15 as Johnny exits. He enters the car and looks at Simon's cigarette. Simon sighs, flicks it out the window, then nods at the deposit bag.

SIMON

How much?

JOHNNY

Forget it, Simon. I work there.

SIMON

Well, you're not going back.

JOHNNY

I actually like the job.

SIMON

You like the broad.

JOHNNY

Yeah. She actually asked me to help her reorganize the store. It kinda felt like a date. I was gonna bring muffins.

Johnny points and Simon pulls over in front of a bank.

SIMON

Classy broad like that, you gotta watch your P's and Q's. Dress up nice. Take her out for a cappuccino expresso. You know.

A grinning Johnny gets out with the deposit bag. Simon leans toward the open door and speaks loudly.

SIMON

And forget about banging her on the first date. I figure third or fourth.

Johnny, sans grin, gets back in the car. They drive off.

JOHNNY

Simon. Please shut up. And it's not an issue.
I'm thinking we should hit the road after.

SIMON

Just saying what's what, Johnny.

JOHNNY

Head for Florida.

SIMON

Sunny climes. I love it.

JOHNNY

Maybe take Stone.

SIMON

Sure. Stone's a good egg. I say we hit
it running.

JOHNNY

Speaking of running, have you fixed
this piece of junk yet?

SIMON

We'll buy a new one. No looking back.

JOHNNY

What about your lucky ball?

A grinning Simon pulls the worn baseball from his pocket.
The car takes a corner, passing an office complex. There
is a lone lit window on the third floor of one building.

INT. AN OFFICE

Dr. Dancer sits at his desk, peering over steepled
fingers at Grogan. Simon's car is visible driving by. It
passes the parked GREEN PICKUP and cruises out of sight.

DANCER

I must say, I'm concerned Mr. Grogan.

Grogan, wearing the absurd Hawaiian shirt, shifts his
gaze from the window to the Doctor.

DANCER

No proof of residence, nor employment.

Grogan is doing his silent, expressionless shtick.

DANCER

I agreed to this night session because
I assumed you had a day job.

Grogan remains silent, much to Dr. Dancer's dismay.

DANCER

I have to insist, Mr. Grogan. What, exactly,
are you doing for money?

GROGAN

Odd jobs.

DANCER

Odd jobs. Okay. Such as?

GROGAN

Cleaning up.

DANCER

Okay. Cleaning up where?

GROGAN

Different places.

DANCER

Different places. Well, I'm going to need
to see some pay vouchers, Mr. Grogan.

GROGAN

Under the table.

Dr. Dancer sighs, removes his glasses and rubs his face.

EXT. NIGHT - THE PARKING LOT OF A BASEBALL FIELD

INT. SIMON'S CAR PARKED BESIDE ANOTHER CAR

JOHNNY

There's something I gotta tell you.

SIMON

About this job being revenge on Tony C.?

Johnny looks at a grinning Simon.

SIMON

And a sweet fucking dish it'll be.

JOHNNY

You knew?

SIMON

This gig never sounded right. Not for you.

JOHNNY

And you're good with it?

SIMON

You kidding? I'm proud as hell. Sam and Tully are dead because of that cocksucker. Tony used us as fucking decoys while he knocked off his own tanking business. Got the insurance money and sold off the furs to boot. Slick fuck.

JOHNNY

Where'd you get all this?

SIMON

Sandy. The bitch was wearing the evidence. And you had it sussed. Good ol' Johnny boy, always a step ahead.

JOHNNY

So, Tully...?

SIMON

No. Tully was righteous. Poor dumb pussy whipped bastard. Sandy knew because it was the one night they couldn't be together.

JOHNNY

Mmm. We gotta worry about her tipping Tony?

SIMON

Not this time.

Johnny looks at a steely Simon. A car pulls up. Stone and

Bobby, who's tarted up, including a wig, get out.

SIMON

Hello, Irene.

JOHNNY

Cool it. Bobby's gonna be touchy about this.

SIMON

I'm cool. I'm cool.

Simon and Johnny get out. Nods are exchanged. The FOUR, DRAMATICALLY LIT by the street light, walk side by side to the clean car. Simon gets there first.

SIMON

Shotgun.

Simon takes the passenger seat and pulls out and checks a hidden shotgun. Stone takes the wheel. Johnny and Bobby get in back. Simon offers Bobby a cigarette.

SIMON

You look good, Bobby.

The compliment is offered in a businesslike manner, so Bobby accepts it and the cigarette. They both light up. Hemmed in by smokers, Johnny waits but a moment.

JOHNNY

Windows.

INT. DR. DANCER'S OFFICE

Grogan idly watches the clean car turn onto the road.

DANCER

Last ditch, Mr. Grogan. I hadn't intended to broach this subject until we'd achieved at least a modicum of rapport, but I'm at the end of my tether. So, some candor from you will be taken as a sign of good faith.

Grogan remains expressionless.

DANCER

My understanding, and I'm wading right in here, Mr. Grogan, is that you've engaged in homosexual liaisons while in prison. (pause) I would ask, was this a circumstantial aberration, or a declaration of lifestyle.

Dr. Dancer smiles his reptilian smile.

DANCER

It's basically a chicken or egg scenario. And Mr. Grogan, I really must insist on some kind of response. The alternative is termination of our relationship. Clear?

GROGAN

Yes.

DANCER

Good. I know it's a delicate subject, but this is my job. I have people to answer to. So, for the benefit of us both, I need you to share something regarding your carnal activities while incarcerated. Mr. Grogan?

The usual Grogan pause, and the barest hint of a smile.

GROGAN

It is better to give than receive.

Dr. Dancer is not amused.

EXT. NIGHT - HIGHWAY

Bobby and Simon flip their spent smokes onto the road and roll up the windows.

BOBBY

I'm still not nuts about the visibility I'm pulling.

JOHNNY

I know. I know. But you're not from the area, and you don't look anything like you.

SIMON

I wouldn't have know ya.

BOBBY

All this just to flip a goddamn switch.
Which anyone could have done.

JOHNNY

Anyone who could get in the room. And I'm not
sure Popgun Edison in a mini skirt cuts it.

BOBBY

Not funny, Johnny. Just make sure we're
good on the timing. I don't even wanna
see Floyd's wrinkled old dick.

Bobby is dead serious, but when she meets Johnny's look
she lets out a giggle, which makes everyone crack up.
As the laughter peters out, Simon turns to Bobby.

SIMON

So, what's your hooker name?

BOBBY

Kelly.

SIMON

You need something more erotic. Like Sasha.

JOHNNY

How about Crystal?

BOBBY

(mildly exasperated)

Stone? You wanna put your two cents in?

STONE

Uh, Trigger?

Again, the group cracks up. Various comments include
'What the fuck', 'We're not going to a barn dance', 'What
kind of girls have you been dating?' and 'Hi oh Silver!'

As they pass the DEER CROSSING sign, Simon points to a
cutoff. Stone pulls in and stops next to a red pickup.

EXT. THE GATE OUTSIDE TONY C.'S HOUSE

Johnny and Simon are parked out of sight in the pickup. Stone hunkers down in the car. Bobby buzzes the intercom.

BOBBY

Floyd? It's Kelly. Danielle sent me?

INT. TONY C.'s HOUSE

Floyd watches Bobby on a monitor. He buzzes the gate. As the gate opens, Bobby moves close to the camera. She does a teasing 360 degree dance. Floyd smiles.

EXT. TONY C.'s - THE GATE

BOBBY

Do I pass, baby?

As Bobby blocks the camera, the pickup slowly rolls in. In the back is a ladder, road spikes and other stuff.

INT. DR. DANCER'S OFFICE

DANCER

Well, you've made your bed, Mr. Grogan. I'm afraid my position is untenable. You're seldom responsive. And when you are, you're evasive, inane, or outright dishonest.

Grogan shows nothing. Dr. Dancer's ire increases.

DANCER

I spoke to your 'friend,' by the way.

Dr. Dancer shuffles papers, then taps his finger on one.

DANCER

John Deschanel? He said he barely knows you. Is there anything you've been forthright about?

Grogan finally shows something, a hardening of the eyes.

GROGAN

I watched out for him.

DANCER

Well, he categorized you as merely an acquaintance. Do you actually have friends, Mr. Grogan?

Grogan silently stares straight ahead.

DANCER

Mr. Grogan?

Grogan reaches into his pocket and takes out his rat. Dr. Dancer is taken aback, but quickly recovers.

DANCER

I was thinking in terms of a human being.

Grogan gets up and sets the rat on the chair. Grogan moves off screen as the rat watches.

DANCER(O.S.)

Please sit down, Mr. Grogan. Mr. Grogan, this is... You need to... Please. Sit down! No, let go. Mr. Grogan. Let go! Please!

Dr. Dancer starts SCREAMING. The rat looks on. The scream crescendos, echoes and fades as the screen is bathed in..

WHITE LIGHT - FOR SEVERAL MOMENTS

A FORM EMERGES. The quintessential JESUS CHRIST; long hair, beard, white robe. He smiles lovingly, arms open.

INT. TONY C.'S HOUSE

An awestruck Tony is sitting up in bed, bathed in the glow emanating from his Lord hovering outside his window.

A mesmerized Tony climbs out of bed, eyes on Jesus. He stumbles slightly and fumbles with the locked door.

INT. FLOYD'S ROOM

Floyd is lying face down on the bed in his underwear, hands tied behind his back. Bobby stands facing him.

FLOYD

I don't think this is gonna work for me.

BOBBY

Well, it works for me.

Bobby stuffs a sock in Floyd's mouth. An alarm starts beeping. Bobby flips it off and drops her skirt.

EXT. TONY'S BALCONY

Tony stands on his balcony, smiling beatifically as Jesus drifts to him. Tony gladly moves between the arms of his Lord. Jesus jerks slightly. A wire is visible.

Tony hesitates just as Jesus touches down and WALLOPS him with a resounding right. Tony staggers. Jesus follows up with a left and Tony goes down. Jesus' wig skews.

From the roof Johnny and Simon lower the lights and harness contraption. The top of a ladder is visible leaning on the roof. They drop a duffel and climb down.

Johnny and Simon remove their work gloves as Stone shucks the harness and Jesus get-up. Bobby, sans wig, wearing jeans, enters with a duffel. She shakes her head.

BOBBY

I gotta hand it to you, Johnny.

Johnny smiles. Simon grins at an uneasy Stone.

SIMON

Hallelujah, brother.

Stone crosses himself, then helps Simon carry Tony to the bed. They tie him up and blindfold him. Johnny and Bobby root through the closet. Johnny pulls out a shoebox.

JOHNNY

Hundreds, fifties and twenties. Nice.

SIMON

That's not a mil.

BOBBY

There's four more.

SIMON

Now we're talking.

Simon takes one of the boxes and checks the stacks.

SIMON

Yeah, I'd guess two hundred grand.

BOBBY

Hell, we won't even have to divvy it.

JOHNNY

Kismet. Nice job, everyone.

Johnny has the lid off a slightly larger white box and is riffling through the contents. He pulls out a baseball card in a protective holder.

JOHNNY

Hey, Simon. Stan Musial!

Simon drifts over and takes the card.

SIMON

Sixty-one. Maybe worth a hundred bucks.

Simon hands the card back to a still delighted Johnny as Bobby finishes packing the loot.

Stone is on the balcony packing gear. Simon drifts to the adjoining door, where he can watch Tony and Floyd.

JOHNNY

Stan the Man.

BOBBY

We set, or you wanna look for a teddy bear?

Johnny grins, pockets the card and grabs the white box.

JOHNNY

Let's go.

Bobby and Johnny go to the balcony and help Stone lower

the gear to the ground. Simon lags behind.

SIMON

I'll take the stairs. Trick knee.

Bobby, who's climbed onto the ladder, gives him a look.

SIMON

Besides, I gotta use the head.

Bobby looks at Johnny, then heads down. Stone follows.
Johnny, after a nod from Simon, follows Stone.

Simon takes out his gun and sits on the bed beside Tony.
After Simon removes the gag and blindfold, Tony cranes
his neck. When he sees Simon, he nods and relaxes.

TONY

I've changed.

SIMON

It don't change what you done.

Tony considers and seems to relax in acceptance.

TONY

Floyd. He won't bother you.

SIMON

You underestimate loyalty, Tony.

SIMON reaches for a pillow.

INT. DR. DANCER'S OFFICE

Dr. Dancer's hand clutching a piece of Grogan's Hawaiian
shirt. A hand plucks the piece and slips it in a pocket.
The pocket belongs to Anderson.

Dr. Dancer's arm sits in a pool of blood in front of the
desk. His body, face frozen in shock, is in the chair.

In the outer office, Anderson's cohort pockets the
appointment book and passes a device over the computer.
Anderson removes two hidden bugs. He pockets the

bugs, then frowns at the rat turds on the guest chair.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD

The red pickup, equipment in back, rattles down the road away from Tony's house, Bobby and Johnny inside. The car with Stone and Simon follows.

STONE

I think it went good.

SIMON

Good as gold. We're home free.

The two vehicles approach the Deer Crossing sign.

INT. DR. DANCER'S OFFICE

Anderson is looking at Dancer's body while his cohort brushes the rat turds into a tissue. He flushes them.

ANDERSON

Looks like his ribcage is crushed. Grogan must've used his foot for leverage.

Anderson eats a pistachio as an AGENT enters.

AGENT

We picked something up at Cagliostro's.

Anderson turns to the somewhat uneasy agent.

AGENT

Deschanel's crew. Possible shots fired.

Anderson pockets the pistachio shell and frowns.

ANDERSON

It's Saturday. He double switched.

The agent says nothing. Anderson shakes his head.

ANDERSON

The son of a bitch dry cleaned me.

EXT. THE ROAD

The two vehicles drive past the Deer Crossing sign.

INT. THE PICKUP TRUCK

Bobby rolls down her window and lights a cigarette.

BOBBY

It looked like Simon was mopping up.

Johnny looks at Bobby and takes a breath.

JOHNNY

Tony set us up. The fur job three years ago? That was him. He hung us out to dry.

BOBBY

You should have told me, John.

JOHNNY

You're right. I'm sorry. (pause) Would you have still done the job?

Bobby is looking through the baseball card box.

BOBBY

Fuck no. (pause) If there's a Mickey Mantle in here, I'm taking it.

EXT. THE STREET

The TWO VEHICLES enter the outskirts of the city and head toward the park. The old Green Pickup is gone.

Outside a pizza place Danielle eats a slice, smiling as her son happily mimics a scene from a movie.

INT. DR. DANCER'S OFFICE

A disgruntled Anderson and his men exit the office.

Through the window we see the Red Pickup and the clean car disappear down the side street along the park.

EXT. THE PARKING LOT

Simon's and Bobby's car, face to face, wait in the lot. The pickup parks on the far side of Simon's car. The clean car pulls in beside Bobby's, facing the pickup.

Johnny hides the truck keys, then he and Bobby remove the duffels and load them into Bobby's car. Johnny goes back and detaches the magnetic license plate.

Simon hides the car keys, then gets out and lights a cigarette. Stone gets out and nods at the vehicles.

STONE

We just leave 'em?

SIMON

Rimmy'll get 'em to a chop shop. By tomorrow morning they won't exist.

Simon reaches in the car and grabs the shotgun.

SIMON

And he'll have my balls for breakfast if I don't return this.

Bobby starts her car. Johnny, about to climb in, looks to Simon, who's approaching his car with Stone.

SIMON

Shit, the plates. We'll catch up.

Johnny nods and gets in the car. Bobby takes off.

STONE

I'll get 'em.

SIMON

Thanks.

Simon, shotgun on shoulder, cigarette in mouth, takes a moment to admire the slightly lit baseball field. He takes out his lucky ball, flips it once and pockets it.

Simon climbs in his car, setting the shotgun in the back.
INT. BOBBY'S CAR

JOHNNY

Hang on. Let's make sure his car starts.

Bobby stops. Johnny watches in the side view mirror. He catches movement. An old green pickup pulls up to the red one. Johnny leans forward, lasered in on the view.

Grogan exits the green pickup and approaches the red one. He moves something from his shirt to his pants pocket. Then, Grogan grabs the road spikes from the red pickup.

Johnny turns and looks through the rear window.

JOHNNY

Oh, shit.

Stone, approaching Simon's car, drops the plate and reaches for his gun. Grogan swings the chain of spikes. Stone goes down, gun skittering to rest at a speed bump.

Johnny scrambles for a gun in the glove compartment.

BOBBY

What the hell?

Johnny gets out of the car. Bobby follows.

From his car, Simon sees a flash of metal. Through his rear side window he sees the road spikes whiplash back to Grogan. His bloodied hands hold the spikes against his huge torso, further shredding the Hawaiian shirt.

Simon pulls his gun and FIRES through the glass. Grogan drops out of sight. Simon gets out of the car.

He looks over the roof and sees a large, dimly lit mass on the ground a few feet away. When the MASS MOVES, Simon EMPTIES HIS GUN into it.

Johnny and Bobby are running toward the fray.

BOBBY

Damn it, Johnny. My gun.
Stone's gun is no longer at the speed bump. The LARGE

MASS RISES. Stone's bullet riddled body is flung aside, revealing a bloody Grogan, road spikes draped around his neck like a bandolier. Grogan FIRES Stone's gun at Simon.

The bullet PINGS off the roof of the car.

Johnny aims his gun, but Grogan is shielded by Simon's car. Simon jumps back into the car and reaches for the shotgun. Grogan FIRES twice through the broken window, hitting Simon's arm. Simon SCREAMS and withdraws.

Grogan tries to reach in for the shotgun, but Johnny FIRES, causing Grogan to duck out of sight.

JOHNNY

Go, Simon! Go!

Simon, in pain, tries to start the car but gets nothing.

JOHNNY

Jump, Simon! Jump!

Simon jumps and the car sputters to life. He shifts into gear as Grogan rises at the broken window. Johnny FIRES through the opposite window, but Grogan still manages to SHOOT Simon three times. Simon BELLOWS like a berserker.

In his death throes, he hits the radio. The melodramatic intro to Dusty Springfield's YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY YOU LOVE ME blasts out. Before he dies, Simon manages to grab his baseball. The car rolls to a stop near Stone's body.

A horrified Johnny stares at the car and the two bodies. Bobby, running full speed, passes the frozen Johnny.

BOBBY

Shoot him!

Bobby leaps, planting both feet in Grogan's chest. Grogan staggers, but doesn't fall. Bobby regains her feet and keeps Grogan off balance with a series of kicks.

Grogan, shielding his crotch with the gun, uses his free hand to grab Bobby by the throat. Johnny finally reacts.

JOHNNY

Grogan!

Johnny is pointing the gun at Grogan. Grogan looks at Johnny and flings Bobby aside. He faces Johnny.

Grogan stands tall. Mythic; the road spike bandolier. Absurd; the shredded Hawaiian shirt. Horrific; bloodied from cuts and bullet holes. For the first time, he smiles fully; engaging, almost boyish.

GROGAN

I like pizza, Johnny. You?

Grogan stops smiling and slowly raises his gun.

BOBBY

(hoarsely)

Finish him!

Johnny hesitates, allowing Grogan to get off a SHOT.

Johnny flinches, then SHOOTS Grogan twice in the chest.

Grogan collapses awkwardly into a sitting position, gun in lap. Johnny holds his aim until Grogan slumps forward.

Johnny looks toward Simon's car, which is still running. Dusty Springfield is still singing. A pissed off Bobby approaches Johnny and yanks the gun from him.

BOBBY

What the fuck was that?

JOHNNY

From prison. I didn't think..

BOBBY

No?

Bobby approaches the car. She looks at Simon's bloody body a moment, then reaches in and turns off the car. Bobby looks at Stone's nearby body. His face is a red gash. Bobby retrieves the shotgun from the car and the license plate from the ground.

JOHNNY

Are they...?

BOBBY

Yeah.

As Bobby walks toward a still dazed Johnny, Grogan's body shifts. Bobby quickly kneels and pumps a SHOTGUN BLAST into it. She then spins, lays prone, SCREAMS angrily, and BLASTS the gas tank of Simon's car.

The EXPLOSION rocks Johnny awake. After picking up the license plate Bobby had dropped, he follows her to the car. They climb in. Johnny pathetically offers the plate.

JOHNNY

I... I got the plate.

Bobby looks at Johnny with a mix of anger and pathos. She peels off down the road and pulls up to a phone booth. Bobby surveys the carnage as she punches in a number.

BOBBY

Rimmy. It went bad. You gotta get those vehicles out, pronto.

At the scene, there is movement from Grogan's pants pocket. Alonzo crawls from the pocket, sniffs, and moves toward Grogan's face. Alonzo waits, and sniffs again.

Down the street, Bobby peels off as Alonzo abandons Grogan's body. The rat sniffs the glowing fire, then scurries off into the darkness.

INT. TONY C'S HOUSE.

Anderson lifts a pillow with a bullet hole to reveal Tony C. Anderson walks to the doorway to Floyd's room, where an Agent, blackened pillow in hand, stands at the bed.

AGENT

Same. Execution style. Go figure.

ANDERSON

He's gonna rabbit. Let's clean 'em up.

AGENT

We know the guys. They're local.
The woman's a mystery.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR

The car is parked on the street. Bobby and Johnny stare ahead silently. Bobby has bruises on her neck. Johnny looks somewhat sickly. Johnny looks at Bobby.

JOHNNY

There's some kinda shady black ops
group sniffing around.

BOBBY

Perfect.

JOHNNY

They wanted Grogan, but you probably should
hightail it. I... I didn't see any good options.

BOBBY

The truth, maybe?

JOHNNY

I'm sorry I got you into the life, Bobby.

EXT. FLASHBACK - A SUNNY DAY - A PARKING LOT

A YOUNGER JOHNNY approaches a car that a YOUNG GIRL
is trying to break into. The girl sees Johnny. She
hesitates, then relaxes a bit when Johnny smiles.

JOHNNY

Can I help you?

The young girl cautiously returns the smile.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR

Bobby looks at Johnny.

BOBBY

I'm not.

Johnny smiles, takes the smaller duffel, and gets out.

Bobby takes off. When she reaches the stop sign at the corner she notices blood on the passenger seat. She looks back for Johnny, but he's disappeared.

She attempts to back up, but approaching traffic, HORNS BLARING, foil her. She peels around the corner, CURSING.

INT. MARIA'S APARTMENT

Maria opens her door to Johnny, who's holding a shoe box. The duffel sits on the floor behind him.

MARIA

You got it?

JOHNNY

Yeah.

Johnny glances inside. A SLEAZY LOOKING MALE sits at a table containing questionable materials, including cash.

Johnny hands the box to Maria. She lifts the top. The box is filled with money. Her eyes widen. She covers the box.

MARIA

It went okay?

Johnny, pale and sweaty, manages a smile. Maria's face registers a hint of concern at Johnny's appearance. The sleaze is staring ugly at Johnny.

JOHNNY

Piece of pie.

MARIA

I gotta go, Johnny.

Maria slowly closes the door.

INT. RIMMY'S APARTMENT

Bobby's duffel is on the table next to the shotgun.

Bobby, face blank, hands a dazed Rimmy a shoebox. She

removes two more from the duffel and sets them on the table, one by one.

BOBBY

Stone. Simon.

Ira looks up from his drink at the kitchen counter.

RIMMY

Johnny?

Bobby takes a breath and looks at Rimmy.

INT. THE BOOKSTORE

Johnny, wearing his glasses, is seated at the desk in the back. He shovels the baseball cards and a note into a padded manila envelope addressed to Thomas Deschanel.

Johnny seals the envelope, then weighs and stamps it. He takes enough money from his pocket to cover the amount, then sits back and takes a deep breath. Covered in sweat, he picks up a pen and puts trembling hand to paper.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Dear Marcia,

The clock above the desk approaches midnight.

EXT. THE CITY - NIGHT

Bobby glances at the bookstore as she drives past.

Moments later Johnny exits, moving slowly.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I'm sorry, but something's come up.

Johnny makes his way to a mailbox, where he deposits the manila envelope. He leans on the mailbox a moment.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Thanks again for hiring me.

Johnny makes his way to the alley beside the bookstore.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

And for trusting me.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT

The door is jimmied open. Bobby flips on the light.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I'm sorry I let you down.

Bobby stands in the empty apartment. It's torn up from Johnny's bug search. Three devices are crushed on the floor. The window pane with electronics glints slightly.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I guess my past caught up to me.

Bobby flips off the light.

EXT. THE ALLEY

Johnny, losing steam, makes his way past a clothesline. He sits on the ground, back against a picket fence.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I can't explain it.

INT. SIMON'S ROOM - THE HULA GIRL LAMP IS ON

Bobby looks at the empty room.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Why people make the same mistakes...

Bobby looks at the blinking light on the answering machine. She presses the play button.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

When a better life is at hand.

VOICE

Hi, Dad. It's Jennie. I'm glad you called.

I have news. You're gonna be a grandfather.

Bobby's face is blank as she waits for the machine to

reset. When it does, she flips off the light and exits.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Sorry. I'm rambling.

INT. BACK ROOM OF THE BOOKSTORE

A nicely dressed Marcia enters the back room with Max. The clock reads 8:20. As she starts the coffee she notices the note and the money on the desk.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I was looking forward to breakfast.

Marcia picks up the note and begins reading.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Sorry I didn't leave muffins...

Max starts scratching at the back door. Marcia lets him out for a run as she continues reading.

EXT. THE CITY

Max bolts down the back alley and past some clotheslines.

Max finds a barely conscious Johnny leaning against a fence. He nudges Johnny awake.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

It was really nice meeting you. And Max.

Johnny's jacket is open. His shirt and lap are soaked with blood. A bullet hole is visible in his stomach.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Again, sorry I let you down.

Johnny winces as Max's nose pokes his stomach. Johnny covers his wound with his jacket. Max licks his face.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I'm sure you'll find a suitable replacement. Maybe even someone Donna likes. Ha ha.

Johnny, managing a smile, scratches Max behind the ears.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I was thinking, if you ran the front racks vertically, it might make the entrance, and the store, look roomier. Just a thought.

INT. THE BOOKSTORE

Marcia, note in hand, opens the back door.

MARCIA

Max!

Max bolts from Johnny toward the back door. Marcia closes the door behind him and resumes reading.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I wanted to leave you some money, but it was ill gotten, and would have only caused you problems. And that's the last thing I want. The money I left is my own, for stamps.

Marcia gives Max a treat and pulls out the chair.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

Again, Marcia. I'm sorry. Thanks for everything. John Deschanel

Marcia puts down the note and sees blood on the chair.

EXT. DAWN - THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY

Bobby stands at a phone booth in front of a cheap motel. She's near her car, upon which sits the duffel.

BOBBY

No. Maybe he didn't need the Doc. Hopefully he's holed up. Yeah, I'm pushing my luck as it is. Thanks, Rimmy. Okay. Let me know.

Bobby grabs the duffel and drops it on the floor on the passenger side. Her hooker get up is on the seat covering Johnny's blood. She heads toward the city.

EXT. THE CITY

Johnny, eyes closed, is still sitting against the fence, diagonal shadows, like prison bars, bisecting his frame. A large shadow falls across Johnny. His eyes open.

JOHNNY

Sam?

A boy straddles a bike, to which a bible is strapped.

BOY

What you doing, Mister?

JOHNNY

Resting.

BOY

Who's Sam?

JOHNNY

Go to school, kid.

BOY

It's Sunday.

The boy looks at Johnny a moment, then turns away.

JOHNNY

Hey, kid.

The boy turns back to Johnny, who winces as he reaches into a pocket and pulls out the Stan Musial card.

JOHNNY

You like baseball cards?

BOY

Sure.

JOHNNY

Did ya know they can make your bike go faster?

BOY

No.

Johnny, unable to work the card from the bloody

protective holder, settles for wiping it clean.

JOHNNY

You happy, Simon?

BOY

Huh?

JOHNNY

Grab a clothespin.

Johnny nods toward the clothesline. The boy hesitates, then gets off his bike and takes a clothespin. Johnny again winces as he hands the boy the card.

JOHNNY

Here. Now pin it to your bike, so the card's between the spokes.

The boy does so, then climbs on his bike.

JOHNNY

That's it. Now roll it, kid.

The boy pedals down the alley, smiling back at Johnny as the spokes snap the card. The plastic holder adds volume.

JOHNNY

Ride like the wind.

The boy loops out of the alley and onto the sidewalk, pedaling faster as he passes Johnny.

BOY

Thanks, Mister!

Johnny smiles as the sound fades. The sun shines through and the shadows on Johnny disappear. He admires the view.

A bird's eye view shows a diminishing Johnny close his eyes as the boy continues pedaling down the sidewalk.

The boy pedals past the closed Book Nook. Marcia, on the phone, sits at the front desk with a cup of coffee.

The boy approaches a church. At the entrance is Stone's

Pastor, heartily greeting his arriving flock.

INT. SANDY'S APARTMENT

The radio plays, the chair empty, blood on the floor. In the bedroom lies Sandy's body, a bullet hole in her right hand. A blackened, bloody pillow covers her head. Through the window, we see the boy glide by on his bike.

EXT. THE CITY

As the boy nears the church, TWO of his FRIENDS try to wave him down. He laughs and peels off up the street.

Bobby enters the city and drives toward the park, passing the boy on the bike. The boy starts to loop back.

INT. A CAR PARKED NEAR THE CRIME SCENE

The Cohort is at the wheel. Anderson, beside him, looks at Grogan's corpse. The Agent sits in the back seat.

ANDERSON

Close it. We got no dog in this hunt.

AGENT

Deschanel?

ANDERSON

Leave 'im to the locals. I'd recruit the son of a bitch if he wasn't so damn old.

Anderson tears Grogan's photo in half and drops it onto the floor, mingling with the black and white photos from the opening credits. A pistachio shell joins them.

EXT. THE CRIME SCENE

Behind Grogan's body we see the burnt husk of Simon's car as well as Stone's body, partially covered by a tarp. Attending are police and medical examiners.

Bobby approaches, noting that the work car and pickup truck are gone. The old green pickup sits like a relic. From his car, Anderson affords Bobby a glance as she

passes. Having a notion, Anderson allows a half grin.

Bobby tucks the wig deeper in the duffel as a lone cop motions her to keep moving past the crime scene. The cop casually looks in the car as Bobby passes.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR

Bobby nods at the cop. After she passes him she reaches into a pocket and takes out a 1961 Mickey Mantle card.

EXT. THE CITY

A bird's eye view, with the embattled parking lot at it's center. On the left, Bobby's car pulls onto the highway.

On the right, the boy pulls up to the church. His friends appear to harass him about his misuse of a baseball card.

The Pastor ushers in the stragglers, comforting an OLDER COUPLE who appear distressed. All the flock are inside.

The strains of 'Abide With Me' swell from the church. Johnny opens his eyes, still smiling, basking in the sun.

The morning sun's glow increases, filling the screen. A sound like a propeller slowly swells.

EXT. A SUNNY DAY IN THE PAST

We see several NEW 1961 baseball CARDS pinned on an older bike, SNAPPING against the spokes. Legs with rolled up jeans pedal furiously. We hear happy young voices.

A smiling YOUNG BOY pedals down a country road, trailed by THREE FRIENDS. The snapping cards get LOUDER.

The scene fades and the sound suddenly STOPS.

EXT. THE ALLEY

Johnny's eyes are closed. His smile remains.

FADE OUT - END CREDITS - "JAWBONE" by THE BAND

