

Snap

A screenplay

by

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*Based on a true story  
in an alternate dimension*

“Everyone has their breaking point”

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♦ OPENING SEQUENCE – ERNIE AND THE FACTORY WORKERS

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There is no fade.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE / GROUND LEVEL SHOT – COBBLESTONE STREET

We hear the clip-clop of boots down a cobblestone street. ERNIE CAESAR appears into view from the right side of the CAMERA, the only figure. He moves away from the CAMERA, and down the street. As he crosses under a streetlamp we see that he is dressed entirely in black, including a black hat, but that is as much detail as we can see in the low, orange glow of the streetlamps.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED APARTMENT

Around the corner, three, oldish men, probably in their late fifties or early sixties, are sitting on the steps of an old, abandoned stone apartment building. They are lit by the orange light of the streetlamp and are laughing and joking while passing a bottle around. They are dressed in blue collar work clothes and use matching language. The rest of the street is deserted. They're not quite homeless but this is a quiet, deserted place, late at night that they like to go to.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO SHOT – OLDISH MAN 1 and OLDISH MAN 2

OLDISH MAN 1

Naw! I just took it right off his desk! He's a fuckin' idiot!

OLDISH MAN 2 reaches over for the bottle that OLDISH MAN 1 is drinking from. OLDISH MAN 1 pushes him away.

OLDISH MAN 1

Get off! Anyway [turning back to OLDISH MAN 3] so he starts stomping around, yelling ...

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE-SHOT - STREET

We see the old men on the right. There are woods on the left. ERNIE appears from around the corner at the end of the street. Beyond him one of the streetlights is broken and flickering, long neglected. ERNIE starts towards the old men, intending to pass them quickly and not giving them a second thought.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT - OLDISH MAN 1

OLDISH MAN 1

[Impersonating his boss in a pompous, scoffing manner] “where’s my ball! I swear if I don’t get my ball back heads will roll” I thought he was going to ...

They are all laughing at the obvious, juvenile double-entendre of the meaning of the word “ball” and OLDISH MAN 1’s impersonation when ...

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: COWBOY SHOT – ERNIE

He suddenly stops and stares at the old men.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – OLDISH MAN 1

OLDISH MAN 1

...SHIT! It’s Stinky!

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: OVER THE SHOULDER – GROUP OF OLD MEN

They all turn towards the ERNIE.

OLDISH MAN 2

Stinky!

OLDISH MAN 3

How’s it going, Stinks?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

We see the top of his black fedora hat. Slowly he looks up and we see a whisper of his face from under the brim. He is old, haggard, weatherworn, and beaten but still handsome with a whisper of humour. He takes a deep breath through his nostrils and shows almost no expression.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE / GROUND LEVEL SHOT – COBBLESTONE STREET

We see the street that ERNIE came down in the first shot. It is, as it was before ERNIE came into the picture, completely deserted. Suddenly three shots ring out. There is an agonized scream, the clapping of boots for a couple of steps and then another shot. The street is silent again.

FADE OUT

The title fades in, small white lowercase letters (possibly that fuzzy typewriter or Dymo® label maker script) on a black background that reads, simply, “snap”. As before there is no fade into the next scene.

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♦ FIRST CRIME SCENE

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CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY MORNING: WIDE / HIGH ANGLE SHOT

We see the scene of the crime in early daylight. The street is cordoned off from the corner which ERNIE came around the night before to the corner beyond, which we assume is where he went afterwards. This time the woods are on the right and the building is on the left. In the background are the silhouettes of an aging and decrepit industrial area, dormant smokestacks, and high voltage electrical towers.

There are several emergency vehicles with lights flashing and three blankets laid out over pavement, concealing lumpy objects. Two are on the stairs, a third is a short way up the street. After a few moments to ESTABLISH the scene ...

CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY MORNING: TWO SHOT – PATROLMAN and DETECTIVE #1

We interrupt mid-conversation.

PATROLMAN

...one bullet to the head each. The third one up the road took two, one in the leg and one in the head. Probably tried to get away.

DETECTIVE #1

So, whoever did this took them by surprise.

PATROLMAN

They all had their wallets and money. They weren't robbed. Could be a mob hit.

DETECTIVE #1 stares at the PATROLMAN. Uncomfortable, the PATROLMAN skulks away (think Carl Levitt in *Barney Miller*). DETECTIVE #2 enters the shot. She's a female version of DETECTIVE #1. Like DETECTIVE #1 her personality is an enigma, possibly because she has no personality or, more to the point, we really don't care. She's not even particularly good looking, passable but hardly a movie star.

DETECTIVE #2

What do you think?

DETECTIVE #1

Who knows? This isn't the nicest area.

DETECTIVE #2

Wrong place at the wrong time?

DETECTIVE #1 shrugs. From back in the crime scene, we hear the CORONER call out.

CORONER

[V.O.] Detectives!

DETECTIVE #1 and DETECTIVE #2 turn.

CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY MORNING: FULL SHOT – CRIME SCENE

The CORONER gets up from a crouching position by the third body and walks towards the CAMERA to greet the detectives who walk in from off-screen. The CAMERA slowly zooms in to for a THREE SHOT.

CORONER

The first two are pretty easy. Whoever did this, knew where to put the bullet. .38 caliber. They were dead before their heads hit the pavement.

He turns towards the third body up the street. The CAMERA follows.

CORONER

It looks like this guy tried to get away. He took one in the leg and then one in the head, same spot. Very precise but not really necessary. The first bullet went through the femoral artery. He would have bled out in minutes, anyway, but he did manage to crawl...

He pauses while he calculates

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – TRAIL OF BLOOD

The camera follows a trail of blood running along the pavement.

CORONER

[V.O.] ...about ten feet before the killer finished him off.

CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY MORNING: THREE SHOT – DETECTIVES AND THE CORONER

DETECTIVE #1

What else?

CORONER

Been dead about five hours.

DETECTIVE #1

[Looks at his watch] That puts the time of death at around 1:30 this morning.

The CORONER nods, agreeing with the reckoning.

CORONER

We'll send the slugs to the FBI crime lab for ballistics and see what comes up.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: WIDE SHOT - PAULIE'S BAR

PAULIE'S BAR is a relic from prohibition. It has a big glass door, but the main façade is solid concrete, worn and graffitied in patches. The high windows are covered with neon beer signs. There is a large, neon sign (turned off because it's late afternoon) which reads PAULIE'S BAR in script, with a neon martini (although no one ever orders martinis).

CORONER

[V.O.] Apart from that, we've got nothing.

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE CONFRONTS JERRY

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INT. AFTERNOON: CU – TELEVISION

A local newscast is playing. A female reporter is on the scene at the abandoned apartment building. She is only moderately passable for television, this being a local broadcast from a smallish town. We see the crime scene and emergency vehicles in the background.

REPORTER

...and police are urging the public, if anyone has any information, to contact them on the number shown on your screen.

The television cuts to an equally moderately passable for television male talking head.

TALKING HEAD

Thank you, Sally. Well, we all put on the dog from time to time, but today is the day to make your dog put on you. January 14<sup>th</sup> is National Dress Up Your Pet Day ...

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: WIDE SHOT – PAULIE'S BAR

It's only vaguely discernable through the beer sign covered slit windows that it's late afternoon. ERNIE is at the bar drinking coffee. He is wearing clothes identical to the night before; completely in black. The following sequence is shot from the end of the bar. ERNIE is in the foreground and, on the left, is a BIKER TYPE DUDE, a beefy guy in jeans and a tank top, playing pool. At the end of the bar is his MOLL, a curly haired blonde in tight jeans and tight t-shirt with a squeaky voice. The BARTENDER is standing behind the bar watching on. The dust in the air filters the outside light as the late afternoon sunbeams fall across the bar.

TALKING HEAD [V.O.]

...and canines and felines all over the country have been ...

The bartender mutes the T.V.

MOLL

C'mon, Jerry. We said we'd be there an hour ago!



The BIKER TYPE DUDE named JERRY walks over to the bar and downs a shot that's waiting there for him. He's staggering a little and is slurring his words.

JERRY

[In a quietly threatening manner] We'll go when I'm ready. [To the bartender] Hey, Paulie-baby. Set me up with another one.

PAULIE picks up the shot glass, rinses it and puts it in the glass rack.

PAULIE the BARTENDER

[Like he's delivering extremely bad news] Yeeeeeah, Jerry, I'm going to have to cut you off.

JERRY

[Snaps] Hey Paul, I'm the customer and I want another drink.

PAULIE

Yeah, but it sounds like Mae wants to go to this party. I'm sure they'll have whiskey there, won't they Mae.

MAE the MOLL

Sure, they will.

JERRY

[In an outburst] But I want a drink now. This is America. This is a free country. I should be able to have a drink if I want to. What do you think, buddy? [addressing ERNIE]

ERNIE

[In a low voice] It's got nothing to do with me, Pal.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – ERNIE

He sips his coffee. He has his black fedora lowered over his eyes. We don't see his face, just the mouth and the coffee which, ironically, he takes white. This is the first time we hear ERNIE speak and we hear, from his accent, that he's a foreigner, with a colonial accent but showing signs of having been state-side for a long time.

JERRY

[Off CAMERA] Yeah, sure.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: WIDE SHOT - BAR

The CAMERA shows the bar, catty-corner from the furthest corner from the door. ERNIE gets up from his stool.

ERNIE

[Stretching] But, since you ask...

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM CLOSEUP – JERRY

JERRY stiffens. He is also weatherworn and haggard, with a porn-star handlebar moustache and the remnants of bad mullet. The CAMERA hangs on him for a moment as he shows interest in what ERNIE is going to say next.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: TWO SHOT – ERNIE and JERRY

ERNIE has come up threateningly close to JERRY. ESTABLISH their proximity to each other and then...

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

I think you're a complete douchebag.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – JERRY

JERRY

[Incredulous] What?!

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: FULL SHOT – PAULIE’S BAR

The CAMERA is looking on towards the bar. JERRY (on the left) and ERNIE (on the right) are on either side of PAULIE, who is behind the bar between them, leaning forward and looking back and forth between the two. MAE is still on the stool behind JERRY, her legs crossed, watching on. This shot establishes that JERRY outmatches ERNIE in stature, being at least six inches taller, twenty pounds beefier, and explains the source of JERRY’s incredulity.

It is also the first time that we see ERNIE in good light. He is, indeed, dressed entirely in black; black winklepicker toed, Cuban-heeled Chelsea boots, black boot-cut jeans, a black t-shirt and a black tasseled, leather jacket. Around his neck, possibly as a Covid mask, he wears a black bandana. His fedora, now starting to become iconic, is, of course, black.

CUT TO:

ERNIE

You have a gorgeous goddess here [MAE giggles at the compliment] who wants to do nothing but party with you [poking his finger into JERRY’s chest and then, as a *sotto voce* aside to PAULIE] for whatever reason I cannot fathom...

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – MAE

She smiles

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU –JERRY

He can’t understand why this weaselly little guy is talking to him like this.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

...and all you want to do is drink and play pool?

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – JERRY

We can see the wheels spinning as his mind tries to comprehend what has just transpired.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: WIDE SHOT – PAULIE’S BAR

There is a moment of tension.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – JERRY

He has started to formulate a coherent thought, a difficult task for him even when not in a state of inebriation, but before he can talk ERNIE continues.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU - ERNIE

ERNIE

And you play shitty pool.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: WIDE SHOT – PAULIE’S BAR

Another moment of tension.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – JERRY

JERRY

[After a pause] Yeah, I suppose you can do better.

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

A blind chipmunk could do better.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – JERRY

He takes a deep, nasal breath, either trying to control himself or building up the energy to send ERNIE packing in an ambulance.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: WIDE SHOT – PAULIE’S BAR

Throughout all of the WIDE BAR shots, the pool table has been ominous in the foreground, fully racked. JERRY finally breaks the battle of nerves and moves towards the end of the pool table.

JERRY

Well, let's play then.

ERNIE shrugs. The CAMERA follows ERNIE's movements as he follows JERRY's, around the table, finally resting opposite the balk end. They both take a cue and JERRY starts chalking.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: TWO SHOT – JERRY and ERNIE

JERRY chalks his cue.

JERRY

[Standing threateningly close to ERNIE as he chalks] Mind if I break?

ERNIE shrugs as he tilts his head to avoid JERRY's bad breath and takes a step back. His eyes bulge a little in a subtle gagging reflex. He gestures for JERRY to go ahead. ERNIE steps behind JERRY and we only barely notice him turn his cue upside down. JERRY puts down the chalk and leans over to break.

JERRY

[As he leans over] What's the bet?

ERNIE

Well, [raising the butt end of the cue like a baseball bat] I'm betting that you won't wake up for at least ten minutes.

JERRY has a momentary expression of "huh?" just before ERNIE brings the cue crashing down on his head. There is a puff of dust and a clanking of disorderly pool balls thrown into the CAMERA.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – MAE

Startled, she jumps and lets out a little shriek.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – PAULIE

PAULIE stiffens as though he's going to confront ERNIE,

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: CU – ERNIE'S CHEST

We see a gun visible under ERNIE's jacket.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – PAULIE

PAULIE notices the gun and thinks better of it. He relaxes a little but his eyes dart quickly to the other end of the bar and back to ERNIE.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM WIDE SHOT – PAULIE'S BAR

From ERNIE's original POV, we watch as ERNIE walks around the pool table with the unconscious JERRY lying on it. He throws the end of the broken cue next to him.

ERNIE

[Muttering] Sweet dreams, Jerry. [To MAE] He'll probably puke when he comes to.

CUT TO:

INT. LATE AFTERNOON: WIDE SHOT – PAULIE'S BAR

MAE throws her keys and cellphone into her purse and gets up.

MAE

Screw that. I'm leaving!

She storms out the door. A bell on the door tinkles.

CUT TO:

INT. LATE AFTERNOON: TWO SHOT – PAULIE and ERNIE

The late afternoon sun has crept up the wall through the dusty window and is shining brightly off of the mirror and bottles behind the bar. Again, PAULIE's eyes flash to the other end of the bar, near where ERNIE sat, originally.

ERNIE

[To PAULIE] How much do I owe you?

PAULIE

For coffee? Nothin'.

ERNIE

How about the cue and the [he pauses and waves an indicating finger over at the pool table] ... cleaning services?

PAULIE is incredulous, and a little afraid. JERRY was bigger than ERNIE and ERNIE is bigger (and scarier) than PAULIE. His eyes keep darting to the other end of the bar.

PAULIE

Forget it.

CUT TO:

INT. LATE AFTERNOON: CU – THE ACTUAL BAR

From ERNIE's P.O.V. we see a half-empty, beer glass, the golden beverage glistening in the sunlight – JERRY never finished the chaser. There is also a puddle of beer and a toothpick – JERRY was chewing on it earlier. Suddenly ERNIE's hand adds a twenty-dollar bill to the ensemble.

CUT TO:

INT. LATE AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

He is backlit by the golden, setting sun.

ERNIE

Well then, buy yourself a drink. You look like you could use one.

CUT TO:

INT. AFTERNOON: WIDE SHOT – PAULIE'S BAR

PAULIE watches as ERNIE walks out the door. The bell tinkles and there is a groan from the direction of the pool table. PAULIE looks over.

FADE OUT

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♦ FIRST THERAPY SESSION

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The next sequence is in darkness. We hear the voice of a female THERAPIST.

THERAPIST

[V.O.] Why didn't you just play pool?

ERNIE

[V.O.] I didn't like him. He was rude.

THERAPIST

[V.O. Factually] So you hit him with a pool cue.

ERNIE

[V.O.] It probably would have ended in a fight, anyway. The guy was drunk and belligerent.

FADE IN

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – THERAPIST'S OFFICE

We now see the office clearly. It's clinical. Muted grays and blues are the predominant colors. There is a window high on the far wall showing a clear, bright day outside. While clinical, the furnishings are comfortable. The THERAPIST is a woman in her mid-fifties, well dressed and slightly ornate, but in the same drab and muted tones as the rest of the room. Her make-up, while fulfilling its purpose of making her more attractive, also fails in concealing her age. ERNIE is sitting in a chair opposite. He is in handcuffs which have been shackled to the chair. His ankles, likewise, have been shackled. He is dressed in the bright orange of a prison inmate.



THERAPIST

What about the factory workers. Why them?

ERNIE

They called me "Stinky".

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – THERAPIST

THERAPIST

Why did that bother you?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

It's what they used to call me in high school. I hated it then and I hate it, now.

THERAPIST

[V.O.] You knew them?

ERNIE

Yes. I went to high school with them.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – THERAPIST

THERAPIST

[Contemplatively, while making a note] I see. So, you decided to hunt them down?

ERNIE

[V.O.] No. I was just passing through town. I turned a corner and there they were. I was as surprised to see them as they were to see me.

The THERAPIST looks up from her writing.

THERAPIST

[Musing and possibly skeptical] Strange coincidence.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

ERNIE

Very strange. This is all in the case file. Didn't you read that?

THERAPIST

[V.O.] I did but I wanted to hear it from you.

He shrugs

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – THERAPIST

THERAPIST

So, you ran into them. You surprised each other. They called you "Stinky" ...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

He raises a threatening finger, and we are reminded that he is in shackles.

ERNIE

[Threateningly] Don't use that word! [As an apologetic afterthought] Please ... don't.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – THERAPIST

THERAPIST

[Patiently] Okay [long on the “O”]. They called you ... that name. And then what happened?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

ERNIE

[Simply, as though it were the most obvious thing in the world] I snapped.

There is a beat before ...

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♦ SECOND CRIME SCENE – PAULIE’S BAR

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CUT TO:

EXT EARLY EVENING: OUTSIDE PAULIE’S BAR

A police car pulls up to the curb.

CUT TO:

EXT EARLY EVENING: WIDE SHOT – STREET OUTSIDE PAULIE’S BAR

We’re looking at PAULIE’S BAR and the police car from a short way down an alley on the other side of the road. On the right, leaning against the wall of an alleyway, smoking a cigarette, is the silhouette of ERNIE in shadow, recognizable from the hat. Two policemen get out and head toward the door of PAULIE’S. ERNIE, remaining in shadow, crosses the CAMERA, leaving a momentary shot of an empty street.

CUT TO:

INT EARLY EVENING: WIDE-SHOT PAULIE’S BAR

We are looking from the corner angle that overlooks the pool table on the left and the bar on the right with the door in the center. JERRY is hunched over the bar holding an ice pack to the back of his head. There is a bucket and cleaning supplies on the pool table and PAULIE is mopping the felt on the table. Apparently ERNIE’S prediction was correct. He turns to greet the police.

PAULIE

[Turns towards the door] About time you got here.

PATROLMAN #1

Busy day, Paulie. Triple homicide.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT - PAULIE

PAULIE

[Throws the sponge into the bucket] So I heard.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: TWO SHOT – PATROLMAN #2 and JERRY

JERRY is hunched over the bar with his back to the CAMERA. PATROLMAN #2 is leaning with his back to the bar.

PATROLMAN #2

[To JERRY] What happened to you?

PAULIE

Some guy hit him over the head with a pool cue.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PATROLMAN #1

PATROLMAN #1

What guy?

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT - PAULIE

PAULIE

I don't know. Some guy. He comes in, spends all afternoon sitting at the end of the bar, drinking coffee, calls Jerry a douchebag and then hits him over the head with a pool cue.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PATROLMAN #1

PATROLMAN #1

What did he look like?

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PAULIE

PAULIE

[Remembering] Tallish. Taller than me. Not as tall as Jerry.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: TWO SHOT – PATROLMAN #2 and JERRY

PATROLMAN #2

[Mumbling] No one's as tall as Jerry.

JERRY groans (or is it a grunt?).

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PAULIE

PAULIE

Fifty or sixty. Cold, grey-blue eyes. I think he was blonde. He wore a hat, you know, like one in those old gangster movies.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: TWO SHOT – PATROLMAN #2 and JERRY

JERRY

Fedora.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PAULIE

PAULIE

Yeah, right, Fedora. Black. All dressed in black. Tassels on his jacket.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PATROLMAN #1

PATROLMAN #1

Did he say anything?

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PAULIE

PAULIE

Not much. Just sat and drank coffee. Seemed interested in that shooting in the old neighborhood, though.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PATROLMAN #1

PATROLMAN #1

[To PATROLMAN #2] Sounds like a person of interest. [To PAULIE]  
Why'd you let him go?

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – PAULIE

We are looking from the doorway at PAULIE. The bar stretches out into the background on the right.

PAULIE

He had a piece. I saw it under his jacket.

PATROLMAN #1

[V.O.] Don't you keep one behind the bar?

PAULIE

Yeah, but it was up the other end.

He points behind him and we realize that just under the bar where ERNIE was drinking his coffee was a .45.

PAULIE

And I figured we didn't want a shoot-out. [As an afterthought] and after seeing him go after Jerry, I figured the guy was crazy.

INT. EARLY EVENING: TWO SHOT – PATROLMAN #2 and JERRY

PATROLMAN #2

Yeah, well, it sounds like you made the right decision. Thanks Paulie, that's a good description. We'll keep an eye out. [He slaps JERRY on the shoulder] How are you holding up?

JERRY

If I ever see that guy again, I'm gonna hit his face as a Brillo pad.

PATROLMAN #1

No, you're not Jerry, and we didn't hear you say that.

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE AT THE GAS STATION

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EXT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / WIDE SHOT – GAS STATION

A car pulls into an empty slot.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – GAS STATION CONVENIENCE STORE

A bell rings as the door opens. ERNIE enters.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – JERRY

JERRY is behind a rack of magazines, flicking through one when he looks up and notices ERNIE. His head sports a bandage.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – STORE COUNTER

We see ERNIE from JERRY's P.O.V. ERNIE says something inaudible and points to the cigarette rack. The CASHIER puts a pack on the counter.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

ERNIE digs through his wallet for the money to pay for his gas and cigarettes when JERRY comes up behind him.

JERRY

I think *you're* a douchebag!

ERNIE looks up ... too late. JERRY throws a downward punch that knocks ERNIE's lights out. To indicate this...

CUT TO:

Black

SLOW FADE IN



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♦ ERNIE AT THE POLICE STATION

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INT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

The CAMERA is looking down on ERNIE who is lying on a cot. His right temple sports a bruise from where JERRY hit him. There is a radio playing at low volume in the background. ERNIE's eyes flutter.

PATROLMAN #2

[V.O.] Yep, we got him here. Jerry saw him at a gas station.

There is a pause. ERNIE closes his eyes again. He's conscious, and he's listening. It's apparent that we're listening to one half of a phone conversation.

PATROLMAN #2

No, no point. You might as well go home. I'll hold things here.

Pause

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: POLICE STATION

It's mostly abandoned. It's a small town on a sleepy night. PATROLMAN #2 is the only one there apart from ERNIE. PATROLMAN #2 is sitting behind a desk with his feet up, on the right. ERNIE is on a cot in the cage on the left.

PATROLMAN #2

Ok. Good night.

He hangs up the phone. ERNIE sits up. This is the first time that we see him without his hat, and he doesn't wear it to cover up baldness. His hair is thick and youthful for his age; the gray hidden by the blonde.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – PATROLMAN #2

From inside the cell we see PATROLMAN #2 notice ERNIE is awake. He gets up from his desk and walks over to the cage.

PATROLMAN #2

Good morning. Or should I say, good evening.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: OVER THE SHOULDER – ERNIE

We are looking from PATROLMAN #2's P.O.V. ERNIE glares at him.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – PATROLMAN #2

PATROLMAN #2

Lawyer?

INT. NIGHT: OVER THE SHOULDER – ERNIE

ERNIE

Photographer.

PATROLMAN #2

I mean, did you want a lawyer? [ERNIE shrugs]

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – PATROLMAN #2

PATROLMAN #2

You have the right to one. You also have the right to remain silent which, I see, you're using diligently. If you can't afford a lawyer one will be provided, and I'm required by law to tell you all of this. So, I'll ask you again, do you want a lawyer?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: OVER THE SHOULDER – ERNIE

ERNIE continues to glare. The tension is broken by the sound of the door opening. PATROLMAN #2 turns.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – MAE at the DOOR

MAE enters the room.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – PATROLMAN #2

PATROLMAN #2

Evening Mae. What brings you here?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – MAE (from PATROLMAN #2's P.O.V.)

She walks towards the camera

MAE

Evening, Dan. I heard you got the guy who hit Jerry. [She notices ERNIE]  
Oh, there you are! [Back to DAN (formerly PATROLMAN #2)]

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU ERNIE

ERNIE stiffens, getting poised to take any opportunity, ready to pounce, but doing so as subtly and as naturally as possible.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – MAE

MAE

I'd like to bail him out.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – DAN

DAN

It's not like that, Mae.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU - ERNIE

He's looking up at DAN and MAE.

DAN

[V.O.] I was just in the middle of charging him.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – DAN and MAE

DAN

[He turns to ERNIE] Oh, by the way, you're charged with assault and, possible homicide. [Back to Mae] He needs to appear before the judge, tomorrow. You'll have to wait until then.

MAE

Well, what time should I be here, tomorrow, then?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU - ERNIE

He's looking up at DAN and MAE but then glances down as he notices something interesting around waist level.

DAN

[V.O.] You don't come here.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN'S WAIST

Now we know what ERNIE's looking at. He's calculating how to get DAN's gun which is tantalizingly close to the cage.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

He glances back up at DAN

DAN

[V.O.] You go to the county courthouse.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT - OVER THE SHOULDER (ERNIE'S P.O.V.) – DAN and MAE

The following sequence of shots happens very rapidly.

DAN

[To MAE] Do you know where that is?

Suddenly, ERNIE lunges forward. The music that was playing on the radio rises in volume and becomes a non-diegetic element as *I Shot the Sheriff* by Bob Marley and the Wailers takes over the soundtrack.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – MAE

Startled, she jumps back.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

ERNIE grabs DAN's tie, near the knot and pulls him against the bars.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN'S REVOLVER

ERNIE reaches for it with his left hand but isn't quick enough – DAN manages to unclip it and almost unholsters it when ERNIE's hand grabs DAN's hand.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: TWO SHOT – ERNIE and DAN

DAN grabs a fistful of ERNIE's hair with his free (left) hand and pulls his head against the bars, making a loud "clang".

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – MAE

She picks up a desktop phone from the nearby desk and makes as though she's going to hit someone over the head with it but hesitates.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN'S REVOLVER

ERNIE and DAN's hands are still struggling over the gun. Suddenly, it goes off with a loud "bang".

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN'S FOOT

Blood erupts from the wound.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

He recoils and screams in pain. The music returns to normal volume.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – POLICE STATION

DAN is on the ground with his head by one of the desks (there are two, forming an L shape, more or less around the jail cell). MAE is by the other one, still holding the phone over her head. ERNIE, in the cell, quickly takes advantage of the situation by dropping to his knee and grabbing the gun. He pulls back and holds the gun on DAN.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: OVER THE SHOULDER (ERNIE'S P.O.V.) – WIDE SHOT – DAN and MAE

ERNIE

[To DAN] Keys!

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / MEDIUM CU – DAN

He's unsure and in a lot of pain. He looks up at Mae, almost for help.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – POLICE STATION

ERNIE

KEYS! Or I get them myself [holding the gun, threateningly] if you know what I mean!

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / MEDIUM SHOT – DAN

He takes the keys off his belt and throws them over.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

ERNIE crouches to pick them up, never losing sight of DAN or MAE.

ERNIE

[Speaking to MAE but looking at DAN] Mae honey, would you please be a darling and put down the phone?

He looks at her with his eyes (not moving his head) and smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – MAE

She is still frozen, unsure of what to do with the phone poised over her head. She lowers it, uncertainly and puts it back on the desk.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

ERNIE

Thank you. You're a sweetheart. Now, if you wouldn't mind, please take Officer ...? [Looking at DAN for guidance].

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

DAN

[Clutching his foot and through the pain] Blum

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

ERNIE

...Blum's handcuffs.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT: DAN and MAE

She kneels down and grabs the cuffs from DAN's belt.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Now cuff him to that desk.

MAE takes one of DAN's hands and cuffs it to the desk. There is a cross-bracket that does the job nicely. While this is going on, we hear the clanking of the cell door opening.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – POLICE STATION

ERNIE sidles out of the cell keeping a wary eye and revolver poised on DAN and MAE. DAN is looking nervously between ERNIE and MAE. He's not sure who's side she is on.

ERNIE

You got a bathroom?

DAN is perplexed by the question but indicates a door to the left of the CAMERA (to the right of the front door). ERNIE sidles back and glances in. Without taking his eye off DAN and MAE he reaches in and grabs a towel. He then waves the gun, indicating that he would like MAE to move back. She complies and sits on the desk.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / FULL SHOT

ERNIE moves up towards DAN but stays a respectable distance. He crouches down.

CUT TO:



INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – MAE

MAE

What now? You gonna [posturing and smiling slyly] “finish this pig off.”

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU - ERNIE

He is genuinely perplexed.

ERNIE

What? No, I’ve got no beef with this guy. Those guys last night, they had it coming. He’s [indicating DAN] just doing his job. [To DAN] Unfortunately, I can’t let you do your job. I apologize. I hope you understand. But I can fix your foot. At least long enough for you to get to a hospital. Give it to me.

ERNIE holds out his hand. DAN looks up at MAE, still nursing his injured foot as best he can.

ERNIE

Your foot, or would you prefer to bleed to death?

ERNIE tucks the gun in the back of his pants. DAN reluctantly stretches out his leg, wincing in pain.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU - ERNIE

ERNIE

Do you have a knife?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU - DAN

DAN

What?

ERNIE

[V.O.] Got to cut the boot off. I could pull it off, but it'd probably hurt like hell.

DAN

[Pointing to the desk by the door] Desk drawer.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – POLICE STATION

ERNIE gets up, goes to the desk, opens the drawer, and pulls out a large bowie knife.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

We see ERNIE from the side, looking at the knife with approval. He whistles, quietly.

ERNIE

[Almost musing] Wow. That's a knife. Impressive.

He turns around, back to DAN, holds up the knife like a serial killer, pauses for a moment and kneels down.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / MEDIUM CU – DAN'S FOOT

ERNIE takes the knife and starts cutting at DAN's jack boot. The knife is razor sharp and slices through the boot like a Ginsu commercial. He pulls the boot off. It's a bloody mess. Quickly, he wraps the foot in the towel.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

Got a first aid kit?

DAN

[V.O.] Bathroom.

ERNIE

[To MAE] Mae, please be a darling ...?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – POLICE STATION

MAE gets up eagerly. This is more fun than she usually has on a Tuesday night. She crosses in front of the CAMERA to get the first aid kit.

DAN

You're doing the right thing. I'm sure the judge will take this into consideration.

ERNIE

Oh, I have no intention of going in front of a judge. [Musing] I plan on *seeing* one ...

DAN

You won't get very far.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

He's spaced out, looking towards the bathroom door, watching for MAE.

ERNIE

[To MAE off-camera] Did you find it?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – POLICE STATION

MAE enters from the left holding a box.

MAE

Yes, I have it right here.

She passes the box to ERNIE who opens it and takes stock of the contents.

ERNIE

Gauze, bandages – no painkillers stronger than Tylenol [To DAN] sorry about that. You'd think cops would have morphine.

He tosses the pills to MAE.

ERNIE

[To MAE] Give him half a dozen of these with some water. Lots of water. He's lost blood, he's going to need the liquid.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN'S FOOT

ERNIE unwraps the towel. Between that and DAN's sock, most of the blood has been absorbed. ERNIE removes the sock. Semi-congealed blood ebbs from the wound.

ERNIE

You're going to need stitches. Luckily the bullet went between the bones. I can slow the bleeding long enough to get an ambulance here after I'm gone. You should be fine.

ERNIE finds a bottle of alcohol in the first aid kit and washes the wound.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

DAN winces from the alcohol.

DAN

Are you a doctor?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN’S FOOT

ERNIE has packed the wound with gauze and has started bandaging.

ERNIE

[V.O.] I told you, I’m a photographer.

DAN

[V.O.] Oh, that’s right.

ERNIE

[V.O.] I took first aid in high school.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

He looks up at DAN and smiles.

ERNIE

Lucky for you, I paid attention.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – POLICE STATION

ERNIE, having finished patching up DAN, gets up and starts gathering his things which were sitting in a bin on one of the desks.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

Having watched him fix his foot, DAN now appears genuinely concerned for ERNIE.

DAN

You know you won't get away.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

Oh yes. I know that. You seem like a dedicated officer. I'm sure that foot won't hold you up much at all.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – POLICE STATION

ERNIE grabs the phone that MAE was holding up earlier.

ERNIE

I hope you don't mind but ...

He pulls the wall and receiver cords out of the body. He then points to a cell phone on the desk.

ERNIE

[To DAN] Is this your cell phone?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

He nods

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – CELLPHONE

ERNIE brings the butt of the revolver down, smashing it.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – POLICE STATION

ERNIE

Sorry about that but I'm sure you understand.

He picks up the bowie knife and wipes DAN's blood off with the towel. He holds it up.

ERNIE

If you don't mind I'm going to take this. It might come in handy.

DAN

And if I do mind?

ERNIE

[Tucking the knife into his belt] I'll take it anyway and pretend you don't mind. That's much friendlier.

DAN

You shot me in the foot. *That's* not very friendly.

ERNIE

You shot yourself in the foot. I fixed it. Remember?

He adds the signature touch to his look – his hat – and turns to leave.

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE AND MAE

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EXT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – POLICE STATION

ERNIE emerges, walking purposefully out of the station. He stops and looks around. The night is still, and the street is lit only by the police signage and a couple of streetlamps. MAE comes running after him.

MAE

[Calling out] Mister! MISTER!

MAE reaches him and grabs his arm.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – MAE

MAE

What the hell was that? Who are you?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

No one, lady. Just some guy.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – MAE

MAE

[Incredulous] You kill three guys, knock my boyfriend out, shoot a cop in the foot and then you *fix it*?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

Life's complicated. What's your deal? Why did you want to bail me out?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – MAE

MAE



[Coy] I don't know. I kind of liked the way you stood up to Jerry. He's always been kind of a bully and I've sort of been waiting for him to get what's coming to him.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Right.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

Well then, we're the same. I want to see people get what's coming to them. [Pointing] Officer Blum did not get what was coming to him. So I helped him. That's all.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT - POLICE STATION

ERNIE turns around quickly to examine the cars parked in the parking spaces on the right. He pushes the lock button on the key fob in his hand and an unmarked white sedan announces its location. ERNIE heads to the driver's side. MAE follows and starts to get into the passenger's side.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE, MAE, and the SEDAN

We are looking from the back of the car with ERNIE on the left and MAE on the right.

ERNIE

Whoa, whoa, whoa! What do you think you're doing?

MAE

I'm coming with you.

ERNIE

Uh, no. No, I'm in this alone.

MAE

Well, can you at least give me a ride into town?

ERNIE

Wait with Dan. I'll call an ambulance. You go with them. Okay?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU - MAE (over the top of the car)

MAE

I'm supposed to trust you?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE (over the top of the car)

ERNIE

If I lie then it's only half a mile to the nearest gas station. I just fixed the man's foot. Why would I lie about an ambulance? If I was who you think I am then I would have [quoting and impersonating her] "finished this pig off" [under his breath] Although I would never end a sentence with a preposition.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU - MAE

MAE nods, conceding logical defeat. ERNIE gets into the car. MAE closes the door and ERNIE fires up the engine.

FADE OUT

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♦ DAN'S FOOT – THE AFTERMATH

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DUTY NURSE

[V.O. and nasal] Dr Julian, please report to the ER

FADE IN

INT. NIGHT: HOSPITAL HALLWAY – MEDIUM CU – DR JULIAN

The CAMERA follows DR JULIAN as she walks down the hallway. She comes to the ER where there is a reception area on the right and a series of curtained areas on the left. The CAMERA swings around as she turns and pulls back the curtain.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM-FULL SHOT – DAN and COMPANY

DAN is sitting up in bed in a hospital gown with his foot raised on a pillow. PATROLMAN #1 is on one side with another, as yet UNIDENTIFIED MAN in a suit. On the other side of the bed is MAE. DR JULIAN steps up to the foot.

DR JULIAN

I'm Dr Julian. What happened here?

UNIDENTIFIED MAN

Someone shot one of my officers in the foot.

MAE

He shot himself in the foot. [As an afterthought] To be fair, the other guy was holding his gun hand.

UNIDENTIFIED MAN

Whatever. He was shot in the foot.

DR JULIAN

Okay.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN'S FOOT

DR JULIAN starts unwrapping the bandage.

DR JULIAN

[V.O.] Let's see what we've got, here.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – UNIDENTIFIED MAN

UNIDENTIFIED MAN

[To DAN] So, after he opened the cage, what did he do?

DAN

[V.O.] He fixed my foot.

UNIDENTIFIED MAN

[Incredulous] He fixed your foot?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

DAN

Yeah. He got Mae to get the first aid kit and he cleaned it up and he  
[pauses, realizing that it's starting to sound stupid] you know, bandaged  
it.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DR JULIAN

DR JULIAN

He did a good job. You'll only need a couple of stitches. He got both  
sides, too.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN'S FOOT

We see the hole in the top of DAN's foot. DR JULIAN's hand lifts his ankle, and we see the bottom where the bullet came out.

DR JULIAN

You're lucky. The bullet went between the bones.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

DAN

Yeah, that's what he said.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – UNIDENTIFIED MAN

UNIDENTIFIED MAN

Is he a doctor?

DAN

[V.O.] He said he's a photographer. He said he paid attention to his first aid classes in high school.

UNIDENTIFIED MAN

They taught him how to treat bullet wounds.

DAN

[V.O.] He didn't say.

MAE

[V.O.] He also called the ambulance.

UNIDENTIFIED MAN

[He looks up a MAE] What?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – MAE

MAE

The ambulance. He smashed our phones so we couldn't call out but said he'd call an ambulance when he got far enough away. [Trailing off] He said he would, and he did.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – UNIDENTIFIED MAN

Nods confused and almost uncomprehendingly.

UNIDENTIFIED MAN

So, we have a gentleman bandit. [To PATROLMAN #1] Marty, did you pick up the GPS on the car he stole?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – MARTY (formerly PATROLMAN #1)

MARTY

We sure did. In a ditch by a cattle grate on highway 67. No car. Just the GPS.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

DAN

He's pretty sharp, Chief.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – CHIEF (formerly UNIDENTIFIED MAN)

The CHIEF nods, contemplatively.

CHIEF

[To MARTY] 67? By the Johnson farm?

MARTY

[V.O.] Yeah. Near the gate.

CHIEF

Just across the border?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – MARTY

MARTY

[Realizing] Yeah! Well, right on the border. Or near it.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU –CHIEF

CHIEF

Or so close to it that he'd have to either come back or cross into the next state.

MARTY

[V.O.] Yeah.

CHIEF

[Sighs] I'll call the Feds. Anything else?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DAN

DAN

Yeah. He's got my gun. And my knife.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – MAE

MAE

He liked the knife.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – CHIEF

CHIEF

[He looks down from MAE to DAN] Well, I hope for your sake that he doesn't use them.

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE EN ROUTE TO CHARLIE'S CABIN

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INT. EARLY MORNING – MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE'S BEDROOM

The CAMERA is focused on a television set on which is playing *The New Dick Van Dyke Show* Episode "We Met at Mama Lombardi's" (Season 3, Episode 23). It is the scene in which Dick Van Dyke is posing as an obnoxious customer for his show *Push the People*. In the foreground is a silhouette of ERNIE packing a bag. As the scene on the television concludes, ERNIE throws a gun into the bag and closes it.

DICK VAN DYKE

[On the TV] "...proving once again that people can only be pushed just so far..."

The silhouette of ERNIE picks up a remote control and turns the TV off.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY – GARAGE

ERNIE enters carrying a suitcase and a cat-carrier. We hear the mews of a cat, which ERNIE puts into the passenger's seat.



CUT TO:

INT. CAR – CU DASHBOARD

The car springs to life.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY – WIDE SHOT – SUBURBAN GARAGE

The garage door opens. ERNIE's car pulls out – a black Chevrolet. He turns right onto the street.

CUT TO:

CU – ERNIE [through the windscreen]

He keeps his eyes on the road and then quickly glances down to the radio.

CUT TO:

CU – CAR RADIO

ERNIE turns on the radio. The car is filled with the sounds of PETE SHELLEY's *Homosapien* which plays in varying volumes over the next few sequences [at the DIRECTOR's discretion] of the black car driving on the highway.

The music fades.

CUT TO:

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♦ THE FBI GETS ON THE CASE

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CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – ESTABLISHING – FBI OFFICE

The office bustles with activity. A phone rings.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: FULL SHOT – CONFERENCE ROOM

Agent SMITH is sitting at the table opposite the SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE (SAC). Agent JONES is standing at the end of the conference table, by a large flatscreen monitor which shows a USIS photograph of ERNIE along with additional information.

SAC

So, what do we know about this guy?

SMITH

[Reading from the screen] "Ernest John Caesar" Born September 3rd, 1964, Sydney Australia. Grew up in an area they call the "North Shore". His parents moved to the US when he was fourteen. He's been here for forty-two years. Never became a citizen.

THERAPIST

[V.O.] Why not?

ERNIE

[V.O.] I consider myself a citizen of the Planet Earth.

SMITH

No idea.

SMITH scrolls down.

SMITH

Married, widowed, two kids, both out of the nest. A professional photographer and [he pauses] some of his stuff is very disturbing.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – MONITOR

As we see images flick by one by one, all in black and white and all with depressing subject matter. We see a wino sleeping by a dumpster, a dirty, homeless child naked from the waist down in a tin shanty town (we do not know the gender, the child is shot from behind), a road-kill dog with a cloud of flies hovering above it. Not gruesome but eerie and disturbed.

SMITH

[V.O.] All in black and white. According to the people we spoke to, he only shot in black and white. Digital photography but directly to black and white. No color. He insisted. Apparently he's never shot a color frame in his life.

The images continue: a man pinned to a police car, being arrested, rats in a sewer.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – JONES

JONES

Color blind?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – SMITH

SMITH

No. They say he said that color takes away from the reality of the shot.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – MONITOR

More images, more of the same, dumpsters, homeless, roadkill; anything sad and depressing is featured as the background music becomes more intense and the images flicker by faster and faster until, after a rising crescendo, the music shuts off.

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE AT CHARLIE'S CABIN

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EXT. MORNING: ESTABLISHING WIDE-SHOT - FOREST CABIN

There is a slightly dilapidated wooden house on a large plot dotted with trees, fresh with new spring growth and dripping water slightly from the melting snow. There are birds chirping in the background, greeting the new day and the new season.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: MEDIUM SHOT – FRONT DOOR

ERNIE walks up to the door and stands in front of it with his back to the CAMERA. He is wearing his signature tasseled jacket and black hat. He raises his hand, hesitates for a moment, and then knocks. He turns and looks to the right.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: CU – FLOWERBED

There is a lively flowerbed filled with fresh spring flowers and a sign that reads: “All visitors must be approved by cats.”

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: MEDIUM SHOT – FRONT DOOR

ERNIE raises his hand to knock again, but before he can, COURTNEY flings the door open. She is a tall, skinny girl in her early to mid-20s with straight long, dark hair and a dour disposition (or, perhaps, it’s just the situation). She is still in her nightshirt which reads “I was normal three cats ago,” is wearing fluffy cat slippers and is holding a cup of coffee.

COURTNEY

[Without ceremony] She doesn’t want to see you.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE AND CAT

ERNIE is cradling a middle-aged tabby.

ERNIE

That’s okay. I was just wondering if you could take The Cat.

CHARLIE

[V.O. from inside] And I don’t want his stupid cat, either!

ERNIE

[Calling out] Charlie, please. I’m in trouble and I need someone to take it.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: MEDIUM SHOT – COURTNEY

COURTNEY

It?

CHARLIE comes to the door and stands next to COURTNEY making it a TWO-SHOT. She is also a tall, skinny girl in her early to mid-20 but has short, curly, strawberry blonde hair. She is also in a cat-themed nightshirt and slippers.

CHARLIE

[To COURTNEY] He [sarcastically, using air quotes] “respects its privacy.”  
He got it from some stupid movie.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE and the CAT

ERNIE

[To COURTNEY] *Grosse Pointe Blank*, John Cusack, 1997 [to CHARLIE]  
and it’s not stupid.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: TWO-SHOT – COURTNEY AND CHARLIE

COURTNEY

I’ve seen it. It’s pretty stupid.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE and the CAT

ERNIE

[Glances at COURTNEY and then, to CHARLIE] Whatever. Please. I need  
you to take The Cat.

CHARLIE

[V.O.] Give him to Tony.

ERNIE

Tony lives in a tiny apartment. He can't take it. Not permanently.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: TWO-SHOT – COURTNEY AND CHARLIE

CHARLIE

I can't take him permanently, either.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

[Gently] Charlie, please. Please don't punish The Cat for something that I, supposedly did almost a decade ago.

CHARLIE

[V.O. Quietly] You're going away?

ERNIE

Yes.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: TWO-SHOT – COURTNEY AND CHARLIE

CHARLIE

And you won't be back?

ERNIE

[V.O.] Probably not.

CHARLIE

What kind of trouble are you in?

CUT TO:

EXT. MORNING: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE and the CAT

ERNIE

Please, Charlie, the less you know the better. Please [he cuddles The Cat briefly and holds it out] can you take him, please?

CUT TO:

TWO-SHOT – COURTNEY AND CHARLIE

CHARLIE looks over to COURTNEY who has been standing there with arms folded. She shrugs. CHARLIE looks back at ERNIE, shrugs and takes The Cat. She then goes inside followed by COURTNEY who examines ERNIE up and down, like taking a final look at a curiosity before leaving a freak exhibit during a tour. She closes the door.

ERNIE

[V.O. *sotto voce* to Charlie, behind the closed door as a tear starts to form] I love you.

FADE OUT

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♦ ERNIE ON THE PLANE

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INT. EARLY MORNING: WIDE-SHOT - AIRPLANE CABIN

ERNIE is sitting in a seat about halfway down the cabin, by the window. We hear the FLIGHT ATTENDANT over the loudspeaker.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

[V.O.] Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Houston. Please remain seated with your seatbelt firmly fastened until the aircraft has reached the terminal and has come to a complete stop. The local time is six twenty-two a.m. and it's at a comfortable 73 degrees.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY MORNING: SIDE SHOT – CU – ERNIE

ERNIE is looking out the window. We only see the back of his head. He continues to look out the window for a moment and then, as the plane stops, faces forward, leans his head back and closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY MORNING: WIDE-SHOT - AIRPLANE CABIN

The plane stops and PASSENGERS start to bustle, collecting their carry-on items.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

[V.O.] Luggage can be retrieved from carousel number four. For those of you continuing on to Miami ...

The announcement fades away as there is a series of CROSSFADE TIME LAPSES showing the aircraft getting emptier and emptier. Finally, the last of the passengers disembarks.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY MORNING: AIRCRAFT CABIN ENTRYWAY

The cockpit door is open, and the PILOT and two FLIGHT ATTENDANTS are saying goodbye to the last of the passengers. As the last one exits FLIGHT ATTENDANT #1 looks back into the cabin and sees ERNIE.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY MORNING: CU – ERNIE

His eyes pop open.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY MORNING: WIDE-SHOT - AIRCRAFT CABIN

We follow ERNIE as he shuffles his way down the cabin, his carry-on in tow.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: OUTSIDE THE TERMINAL

ERNIE hails a taxi.



CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE AND THE BOSS

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INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – OFFICE HALLWAY

There is a long office corridor lit by obnoxious fluorescent lights. There are several doors, some of which are open. BOB emerges from an open door at the very end of the corridor and walks directly towards the CAMERA. He is a short, stocky man in business casual. He walks purposefully and we are convinced that his is going to walk right into the CAMERA until, just before he gets there, about when his face is framed as a CU, ERNIE's fist emerges and, along with a sickeningly loud and dull "thud", punches him cleanly in the center of the face.

CUT TO:

Black

FADE IN

EXT. NIGHT: LOW ANGLE COWBOY SHOT – ERNIE

The CAMERA is in the trunk of a car looking out, from BOB's P.O.V. There is a blurry mass that soon comes into focus and when it does, we briefly see ERNIE looking directly at the CAMERA before he closes the trunk, sending the screen back into darkness. In the background we hear the opening strains of *Amos Moses* by JERRY REED.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY – HIGH ANGLE SHOT

The CAMERA follows a car, ERNIE's car, towing a trailer on which there is a small boat, packed with supplies under a tarpaulin. The music continues throughout the next sequences, varying in pitch, as directed.

CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY EVENING: SECONDARY FARMLAND ROAD

The car pulls over.

CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY EVENING: LOW ANGLE COWBOY SHOT – ERNIE

Black. The trunk opens and we see ERNIE holding a hypodermic needle.

CUT TO:

INT. EARLY EVENING: CAR TRUNK

BOB is lying in the trunk in what will become a signature binding. He is mummified with ropes from ankle to knee and elbow to shoulders with his hands bound behind his back. His mouth is duct-taped shut and, judging from his grunts, there is a rag stuffed in his mouth. ERNIE's hand, holding the needle, enters the shot and we see horror in BOB's eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: GAS STATION

The car pulls into to a fueling spot.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: ARIAL SHOT - LOUISIANA HIGHWAY

The CAMERA follows the car as it drives down a lonely single lane highway surrounded by swampland.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: RIVERBANK

Two alligators tussle on the bank of a broad river.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: ABANDONED MOORING

The car backs up near the ramp of an old, abandoned mooring. The music fades out and the sounds of nature take over.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU - BOB

BOB starts to come into consciousness. He is no longer gagged, but when he tries to get up he notices that he's still bound. Sunlight, filtered by the thick foliage dances across his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – LOUISIANA BAYOU

It is quiet except for the sounds of the abundant wildlife in the bayou. The other dominant sound is BOB struggling to get up. We see in the distance that he is inside a small dinghy. On the left of the screen is the silhouetted figure of ERNIE, standing in the crook between two trees, above the swamp water, casually leaning against the trunk of one. We know it's ERNIE because the silhouette has his distinctive hat.

ERNIE

[Yelling] You always liked alligators. I thought I'd show you some.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – LOUISIANA BAYOU

An alligator slinks into the water.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE DINGHY

BOB struggles but finally gets to his knees. He looks around.

BOB

[Screaming] Help! Help!

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE lets him scream. He lights up a cigarette and smokes. After a while BOB stops screaming.

ERNIE

Forget it. No one can hear you. It took Bear Grylls a day and a half to get out of here and he had a helicopter waiting. No one is going to save you.

CUT TO:

MEDIUM SHOT – BOB

He tries a different tactic.

BOB

Hey, ERNIE, well played! [Chuckles nervously] Good one. What do you want? Do you want those shares?

CUT TO:

MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

Thanks to your incompetence, those shares aren't worth crap. I've been watching. You bled the company dry. No, I don't want your shares.

CUT TO:

MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE DINGHY

BOB

What then? Money. How much?

ERNIE

[V.O.] I don't want your money either.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – LOUISIANA SWAMP – SILHOUETTE AND DINGHY

BOB

Well, what do you want?

ERNIE

I want to watch you die ...

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – BOB

We see terror overtake him as he realizes what ERNIE has in store.

BOB

[Yelling] Help! Help! Anyone! PLEASE!!!

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

[Mocking] Help! Help! I'm about to murder this man in cold blood!  
Anyone, help!

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – LOUISIANA SWAMP – SILHOUETTE AND DINGHY

Both men continue to scream. We now notice that ERNIE has a rifle because the silhouette throws the cigarette into the swamp, takes it from its shoulder where it is slung, aims, and fires.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU - DINGHY

The bullet hits the dinghy and blows a small piece out of the top. BOB is silenced by the sudden noise, staring at the hole in disbelief.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – LOUISIANA SWAMP – SILHOUETTE AND DINGHY

A flock of birds flies off at the sudden noise. There is a moment of stillness and then another shot cracks out.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – DINGHY

Another hole appears, a little lower and to the left of the previous one.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE DINGHY

BOB looks down. He's somewhat confused by what ERNIE is doing.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – DINGHY

The CAMERA now stays on the side of the dinghy that we can see where the bullets have landed more clearly. The CAMERA shows damage from the first bullet and then slowly PANS down and to the right to where the second bullet hit. We notice a chalk line. The CAMERA follows it and we see that it declines into the bottom of the dinghy. As we watch, a third shot rings out, almost precisely on the line, further into the water.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – BOB

He flinches.

BOB

Ernie! There has to be something.

Another shot rings out and BOB jumps.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – INSIDE OF THE DINGHY

The fourth bullet hole is at the waterline and water starts seeping in the hole.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT: ERNIE IN THE TREE

He lowers the gun, uncocks it and leans on it like a walking stick.

ERNIE

Well, that's a problem. You see, if I let you go then you'll turn me in. I'm pretty sure that any deal you make, you'll break. And that's even if you didn't shaft me, [he raises the rifle, loads another round, and takes aim] so...

BOB

[V.O.] No, no I won't I swear!

ERNIE

[Loud enough for BOB to hear but mainly to himself] You worthless, spineless sack of crap.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE DINGHY

Another shot rings out. This one isn't fired at the dinghy. Instead, there is a splash in the water nearby.

CUT TO

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

[Yelling to BOB] Fucking liar! [And then, more calmly] I really hate liars.  
You know why?

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE DINGHY

He shakes his head, no.

ERNIE

[V.O.] It's not just that they make you believe something that's wrong...

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

...which they do. It's not just that they demonstrate an arrogance; a belief that "I'm so smart I can make you think what I want you to", which they do. Both are despicable. Both are slimy. No, it's not that, Bob. Well, it is that but, you see, that's not the worst thing about a liar. Those two make a person a rancid mass of rotting garbage, yes, but the worst thing about a liar, is that they steal credibility. They make honest people look like liars. You know what I'm saying, Bob?

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM CU – BOB IN THE DINGHY

He nods nervously.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

Yeah, sure you do, Bob. You do it all the time, don't you? Say someone is lying when, in fact, you're the liar. I know you do. And that makes you a rancid mass of rotting garbage. And that, [looking around] is one reason why I chose this place. The bottom of this swamp is nothing but a rancid mass of rotting garbage, years of dead and rotting crap. And that's where people like you belong.

He picks up the gun and fires another shot.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – INSIDE OF THE DINGHY

A piece of the side suddenly disappears to the sound of the gunshot and water starts flooding in.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT: BOB IN THE DINGHY

He starts to crawl back on his knees to put his weight at the back of the boat so that the prow is above the water. Another shot rings out. Bob screams like a child and scoots further back.

ERNIE

[V.O.] You seem to be all tied up. Let me help you there.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

He takes aim.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – BOB'S SHOULDER

The bullet hits the rope right at BOB's shoulder and the upper loops go slack.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE DINGHY

He realizes that he may have a chance and starts struggling with the ropes, but even with ERNIE's help, they're still holding him. Perhaps if he had more time ...

BOB starts to shake convulsively to loosen the ropes, but his hands are still tied as are his legs. Just as he starts to think that ERNIE is just toying with him, another shot rings out.

BOB

[Crying] *No! I Can't swim!*

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT: ERNIE IN THE TREE



ERNIE

[He stops shooting and puts the gun down. To himself] Oh, I doubt you'll have a chance to swim.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – LOUISIANA BAYOU

Two alligators slink into the bayou and start heading towards BOB.

ERNIE

[V.O. Yelling to BOB] So that trophy in your office is a lie, too?

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT: BOB IN THE DINGHY

BOB

[Whimpering] My son won it.

CUT TO:

MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

[Incredulous] And you told everyone you won it. You really are a piece of shit, stealing an accolade from your own son. Using your own kid like that. [Sighs] Oh well, no matter. The water's only three feet deep. It's those guys you have to worry about.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – LOUISIANA BAYOU

We see the alligators edging in closer.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

And the snakes and the nutria. Those things are crazy ...

He starts shooting and the strains of *Amos Moses* pick up again as he shoots.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE DINGHY

Most shots are landing in the general vicinity of the dinghy but don't actually hit it. A rhythm develops as ERNIE shoots, reloads, aims, and shoots again. We now know that ERNIE is a crack shot, so we know that he's toying with BOB.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – INSIDE OF THE DINGHY

Another chunk of the hull is blasted away, and the water starts flooding in.

ERNIE

[V.O.] ... ugly-ass rats with big gnashy teeth!

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

He takes aim.

ERNIE

...Gnaw your face off, man! [He fires]

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE DINGHY

He has run out of crawl space and the ropes are barely loose. The last shot seals the deal, and the dinghy is going down. The dinghy is now almost completely submerged, and BOB is struggling to keep his head above water.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

[Yelling] Dance! [He fires]

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUMS SHOT – BOB IN THE WATER

He continues to struggle.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY – WIDE SHOT: LOUISIANA SWAMP

The alligators wade a little closer, wondering if it's safe to proceed, the gunshots being the only thing holding them at bay.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY – WIDE SHOT: LOUISIANA SWAMP

From a different angle we see another couple of alligators, suggesting that BOB is being surrounded.

CUT TO:

MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

*Riverdance!* [He fires and then bursts out in an insane, cackling laugh at his own lame joke]

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – BOB IN THE WATER

The bullet lands close, just enough to scare him (as though he weren't scared enough).

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

ERNIE

[To BOB but more to himself] Ah screw it, you no-talent hack! He turns and throws the gun down.

CUT TO

EXT. DAY: FULL SHOT – SWAMP BOAT

We now see that ERNIE won't be stranded in the swamp. The rifle lands on a tarp inside a larger boat – the one he was towing. As this happens the music gets louder.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE TREE

He gets into the boat.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY – FULL SHOT: BOB AND THE ALLIGATORS

BOB continues to struggle. The alligators, now realizing that the shots have stopped and that it's safe to proceed, descend on him. After a few frenzied moments of splashing the water foams red and finally goes still, just as Jerry Reed sings the following line in the song:

JERRY REED

[V.O.] *Well, you can sure get lost in the Louisiana bayou*

FADE OUT

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♦ SECOND THERAPY SESSION - CONFRONTATION WITH THE GUARD

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FADE IN

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT– ASYLUM

The GUARD escorts ERNIE into the office. The THERAPIST is already there. She's dressed a little more brightly. The GUARD shackles ERNIE to the chair and removes the handcuffs.

GUARD

I'll be back for Stinky in an hour.

ERNIE jumps up but is held back by the restraints.

GUARD

Hey, easy Stinks.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE keeps rattling the chains. He knows that he can't get out of the restraints, but he also knows that the sound of the rattling is threatening.

ERNIE

You asshole! If I weren't in these shackles I'd rip your fucking head off!

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: TWO-SHOT – ERNIE and the GUARD

GUARD

[Impersonating *George Costanza* from *Seinfeld*] But ya are! Ya are in the shackles!

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT– ASYLUM

The THERAPIST jumps up.

THERAPIST

[Chidingly to the GUARD] GUARD! [To ERNIE who is still rattling his chains] Ernest! Ernest! ERNEST!

He is finally brought back to Earth and looks at the THERAPIST after glaring at the GUARD. He sits back, quietly stewing.

THERAPIST

Ernest. It's alright. Calm down.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: TWO SHOT – THERAPIST and GUARD

We are now looking on from just outside the door. The walls are a light grey-blue while the door, itself, is a darker shade of the same color. On the right side of the doorway is a tall, Danish Modern lamp and on the left, a tall vase-and-stick arrangement, a white vase with black sticks.

The THERAPIST sidles the GUARD into the doorway, indicating a discreet conversation, even though ERNIE is still well within earshot.

THERAPIST

Guard, this man's name is Ernest, and I will ask you not to antagonize my patients. He likes to be called Ernest and you will call him Ernest.

ERNIE

[Clears his throat, making it clear that he can hear] (Ahem) Actually, it's "Ernie".

THERAPIST

[To the guard, correcting herself] Ernie.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – GUARD

He glares at her.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – THERAPIST

She glares back, indicating that she will not be intimidated.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: TWO SHOT – THERAPIST and GUARD

GUARD

[To ERNIE but staring at the THERAPIST] See you in [looks at his watch] fifty-six minutes [Sarcastically, turning to ERNIE] Ernie!

He walks out RIGHT OF CAMERA glaring back at the THERAPIST who simply stares back and closes the door on him and the CAMERA.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – THERAPIST'S OFFICE

The THERAPIST takes her seat and continues as though they were still in their previous session.

THERAPIST

Why did you have a gun?

ERNIE

I don't know. I bought one a couple of months ago and started carrying it. Everyone has a gun in this country.

THERAPIST

[Bobs her head, indicating neither agreement nor disagreement] Do you like guns?

ERNIE

Not at all. In fact, I was once involved in the anti-gun movement.

THERAPIST

Why?

ERNIE

Because they make people do what I did.

INT. DAY: CU – THERAPIST

She has an expression of surprise, followed by a facial shrug of recognition that it's a good point.

THERAPIST

[Changing the conversation] Tell me about the judge. Was he a coincidence? Did you just happen to run across him, too?

ERNIE

[V.O.] No, I went after him.

THERAPIST

Why?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

After those assholes from school, I knew I'd gotten into something that I couldn't get out of. I figured I might as well go all in.

The CAMERA hangs on ERNIE for a second and then...

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE AND THE JUDGE

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EXT. NIGHT: ARIAL SHOT – LAS VEGAS STRIP

The CAMERA rotates around the lights as the opening strains of *Banditos* by THE REFRESHMENTS start up. The music quickly FADES OUT during the musical riff just after the "uh-huh".

THE REFRESHMENTS

*So just how far down do you want to go*

*And we can talk it out over a cup of Joe*

*And you can look deep into my eyes*

*Like I was a supermodel. Uh-huh*

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE-SHOT – A HOUSE IN SUBURBAN LAS VEGAS

We hear a dog bark in the distance as a man, the JUDGE walks out of house carrying a bag of garbage. He is in a white shirt, grey pants with a tan cardigan, buttoned halfway. He is retired, has grey hair and his face is haggard from age and, possibly, guilt; those parts of his Dorian Grey picture that he couldn't keep hidden under a blanket in the attic.



WIFE

[V.O. from the house] Stanley! Don't forget the recyclables!

STANLEY [formerly the JUDGE]

[Muttering under his breath] Yes, dear.

He drops the bag into the wheely bin at the curb and heads to the side of the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – HANDS

We see a pair of hands in black gloves start to wrap a knotted, nylon stocking around each hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM-FULL SHOT - STANLEY

From behind, we see STANLEY bend down to pick up the bin of recyclables. Just as he does a body covers the CAMERA momentarily.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – STANLEY

The stocking flips around STANLEY's neck which suddenly tightens. STANLEY goes to grab at the stocking when ...

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – STANLEY and ERNIE

ERNIE drives his knee into STANLEY's back, forcing him forward into the recycle bin. There is a rattling of bottles.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – SIDE OF STANLEY'S HOUSE

The house is on the left with a picket fence lining a flower bed on the right. There is a fence at the back which has a gate in the center with an open door. This was where ERNIE was hiding.

There is a window in the house closer to the CAMERA, glowing yellow in strong contrast to the darkened outside. The corner between the window and the fence, where the JUDGE and his WIFE keep their recyclables is further back and not easily visible from the window, but the JUDGE's grunting can be slightly heard. A shadow flickers across the window for a second.

WIFE

[V.O. from inside the house – sighs deeply] Stanley! What did the doctor tell you about lifting heavy things? Don't try to take them all at once! [Fading away] Yeesh, you'd think three times in the hospital would be enough!

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – STANLEY and ERNIE

We see STANLEY from the front, with ERNIE lording over him in the background. The stocking tightens and STANLEY's eyes bulge out in surprise and terror. He struggles having been driven into the recyclable bin, which is only half full, and he gropes like a flipped turtle. ERNIE holds him in a state of near death, just long enough to monologue.

ERNIE

[V.O. Sweetly] Hello Stanley. Remember me?

If STANLEY could respond, he would have said "no".

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

He is struggling to tighten the stocking just the right amount. The following sequence alternates between ERNIE and the in-process-of-being-strangled STANLEY [the JUDGE], interspliced with a montage of flashbacks. As ERNIE speaks he jerks on the stocking to make his point, highlighted in *italics*.

ERNIE

Your wife makes you take out the garbage after three heart attacks?  
What a bitch! Anyway, allow me to refresh your memory. I'm the one  
whose life you ruined. Well, one of them. By your *own ... selfish ...  
greed!*

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – LAS VEGAS STRIP, HOTEL DRIVEWAY

*Viva Las Vegas* by ELVIS PRESLEY starts to play in the background. An airport shuttle bus pulls up and ERNIE and FRIEND get out. ERNIE is dressed more colorfully. He is wearing a forest green shirt and red jeans with a matching red hat, tilted back on his head. Same boots and jacket but there's something different about him. He's happy.

ERNIE

[V.O.] A couple of years back I came to Las Vegas for fun, as people do in your little town.

As he speaks the montage takes place with very quick clips.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – CASINO: CRAPS TABLE

ERNIE rolls the dice.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – DICE

They roll up seven.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – CASINO: CRAPS TABLE

ERNIE and FRIEND cheer.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Won big, too. Twenty thousand. They made a big deal of handing over the cheque.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – CASINO: CASHIER'S OFFICE

The CASHIER hands ERNIE a cheque.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – CASINO: CRAPS TABLE

ERNIE rolls the dice again and there is another cheer – it's the same sequence as before but, this time, in the background we notice two SHADOWY CHARACTERS, eyeing the goings on.

ERNIE

[V.O.] But there were a couple goons there. Friends of yours, I believe.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – CASINO: BATHROOM FOYER

The two SHADOWY CHARACTERS pull a gun on ERNIE and drag him into a janitor's closet just as two FEMALE WITNESSES exit the ladies' room

ERNIE

[V.O.] They made me sign over the cheque

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – CASINO: JANITOR'S CLOSET

ERNIE is pinned with a gun holding his head to the wall. He has clearly been worked over. His shirt is torn at the shoulder, top button popped and tails hanging out. His face is bruised and swollen, and he has lost his signature hat.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

One eye is so swollen that he can barely look out of it.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – CASINO: JANITOR'S CLOSET

SHADOWY CHARACTER #1 looks, watching ERNIE scrawl an endorsement on the cheque as SHADOWY CHARACTER #2 holds a gun to his head. When he finishes, SHADOWY CHARACTER #2 pistol whips ERNIE unconscious. The two make for the door. SHADOWY CHARACTER #1 stops for a moment and looks down.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – SURVEILLANCE CAMERA – CASINO: JANITOR'S CLOSET

A surveillance CAMERA has been recording the whole episode and we see its P.O.V. – grainy black and white with a tell-tale "recording" flashing in the corner. SHADOWY CHARACTER #1 reaches down and picks up ERNIE's hat.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – SHADOWY CHARACTER #1

He puts the red hat on.

ERNIE

[V.O.] I reported it to the cops.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM-WIDE / SIDE SHOT – POLICE STATION

ERNIE stands before the desk sergeant, beaten as before, telling the story.

ERNIE

[V.O.] They found the guys and arrested them.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL-SHOT – HOTEL ROOM

A police squad busts into the room. The two SHADOWY CHARACTERS, who were sitting on the bed, jump up and raise their hands. On this bed is a cache of guns, stolen wallets, and money.

ERNIE

And they were brought up for arraignment in ...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

*Your court!*

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT - SIDE OF THE HOUSE

STANLEY continues to struggle fruitlessly, his arms groping around like a crazed chicken. ERNIE has dropped all of his weight onto his knee and uses it as leverage to tighten or loosen the stocking, almost like a light dimmer—just enough to keep him alive but not enough to let him cry out. The music continues to play merrily in the background.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

[Rhetorically] What happened?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – COURTROOM

The SHADOWY CHARACTERS stand before STANLEY the JUDGE as he lowers the gavel.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Case dismissed. Insufficient evidence. *Insufficient evidence!*

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM WIDE SHOT – COURTROOM

The SHADOWY CHARACTERS smile and shake hands with their grinning LAWYERS.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Despite *all* the evidence. The surveillance tape ...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – SURVEILLANCE CAMERA – JANITOR’S CLOSET

The SURVEILLANCE CAMERA has a glowing red “recording” light.

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT — JANITOR’S CLOSET –SURVEILLANCE CAMERA P.O.V.

We see a clip showing the SHADOWY CHARACTERS working ERNIE over in the janitor’s closet.

ERNIE

[V.O.] The witnesses ...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE-SHOT – CASINO: BATHROOM FOYER – SURVEILLANCE CAMERA P.O.V

We see the same sequence that we saw earlier of the two FEMALE WITNESSES.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU - SURVEILLANCE CAMERA

Again, the red light.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM-WIDE SHOT – COURTROOM WITNESS STAND

FEMALE WITNESS #1 is on the stand offering testimony.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – COURTROOM GALLERY

FEMALE WITNESS #2 is listening and waiting to testify.

ERNIE

[V.O.] The handwriting expert who testified that it was *signed ... under ... duress!*

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM-WIDE SHOT – COURTROOM: WITNESS STAND

A HANDWRITING EXPERT is testifying, holding the cheque up with his left hand while pointing to the signature with a pen in his right hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

But you still let them go. And then, imagine my surprise when I wandered in for a drink a few days later and there you were.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE-SHOT – CASINO BAR

STANLEY is sitting at a table with the two SHADOWY CHARACTERS, each with a half full beer, joking and laughing.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Remember that?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – STANLEY: SIDE OF THE HOUSE

He seems to be shaking his head, “no” but it’s barely perceptible and we don’t know whether it is in response to ERNIE’s question or to the horror of what is happening to him.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE: CASINO BAR

The CAMERA zooms in slightly to show that he recognizes what has happened (or there is a shift in focal depth; DIRECTOR’s discretion). He is still dressed colorfully but more muted – darker colors. Of course,

he has his signature fedora but this one is dark olive green. This is to signify him going further down the rabbit hole, where it's darker.

ERNIE

[V.O.] So, I confronted you?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – ERNIE and STANLEY: CASINO BAR

ERNIE confronts the JUDGE who, almost on seeing him, waves over a couple of CASINO SECURITY GUARDS who grab him, one arm each, and drag him off-frame.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE: SIDE OF HOUSE

ERNIE

Remember that? And you had your buddies ...

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE-SHOT – STATE BORDER

A cop car is parked with lights flashing. ERNIE is thrown unceremoniously on to the ground, across the border into Arizona. We know this because the "Welcome to Arizona" sign features prominently.

ERNIE

[V.O.] ... in the Sheriff's department run me out of town.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE: SIDE OF HOUSE

There is a sudden whooshing sound, like an explosion to bring us back to the situation at hand and ELVIS PRESLEY stops singing. Instead, over the next few moments, almost imperceptible at first, a kettle drum starts slowly beating.

ERNIE

[Almost musing] I spent years fighting that. No one would take me seriously. Wouldn't have helped anyway. Double jeopardy.

CUT TO:



EXT. NIGHT: CU – STANLEY

He is clearly gasping for his final breath.

ERNIE

[V.O.] How much did you get? Five? Ten thousand? How much does a judge cost these days? [After a pause]

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

You're dirty. [Pause, and then, still quietly] You betrayed your office...

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – STANLEY

ERNIE leans in closer.

ERNIE

[Almost whispering in his ear] You betrayed your country. [Quieter] You betrayed civilization. [A loud whisper, hissing] You committed treason! [Louder] Maybe not a legal definition, but that's the moral reality.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

And the penalty for treason, as I'm sure you know... [pausing for effect]

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – STANLEY

If it's possible in the distorted face, we see a trace of absolute terror – he knows exactly what the penalty for treason is.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

*... is death!*

Having finished his piece and having played with his quarry like a cat playing with a half-dead cricket, he finally pulls the stocking for the final deathblow. Over the next couple of shots which alternate between STANLEY struggling for whatever hope he may have and ERNIE finally unleashing all of his anger, the kettle drums suddenly rise in volume and get slower and slower ...

... and slower. We become more acutely aware that they are there and begin to realize that they symbolize STANLEY's heartbeat. After a few seconds of cuts between ERNIE, STANLEY, and the SIDE OF HOUSE we finish with ...

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

He relaxes as STANLEY takes his final breath. It is completely silent except for ERNIE's light panting.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: EXTREME CLOSE UP – STANLEY

We see lifelessness in his eyes, staring vacantly in final horror. The panting continues.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: SIDE OF THE HOUSE

It is completely quiet except for ERNIE's panting which is now starting to subside as he rests. A cricket chirps.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – ERNIE and the dead JUDGE

ERNIE pats down the corpse hoping to find something, and he does.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE'S HANDS and the JUDGE'S CELLPHONE

ERNIE pushes the power button. The phone springs to life. The welcome screen reads:

*Use fingerprint scanner or enter passcode*

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – STANLEY'S COURTROOM

This is a flashback. STANLEY is sitting behind the bench. He picks up a cell phone and touches the back of it with his left middle finger which sports a big gaudy ring.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE stares off into the middle distance as he remembers the event.

WIFE

[V.O. Off camera] Stanley?

ERNIE is brought back to the present and suddenly looks towards the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM-WIDE SHOT – SIDE OF THE HOUSE

This is the opposite angle from the previous shots. We are at the gate looking towards the front of the house. We can see the window on the right. A little way further, the side door of the house glows with the same yellow glow as the window. We hear a CAT mew angrily and then hiss. A figure comes to the door.

WIFE

Stanley?

CUT TO:

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♦ LAS VEGAS CRIME SCENE

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EXT. NIGHT: WIDE-SHOT – STANLEY'S HOUSE

There are a couple of police cars, an ambulance, a paramedic, and whole lot of curious neighbors. The WIFE is sitting on the front stoop, being consoled by friends and neighbors. Police mill about. After a moment to ESTABLISH the scene,

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – VEGAS DETECTIVE and VEGAS UNIFORM

The VEGAS DETECTIVE is generic, in a plain suit, maybe a few years out of style.

VEGAS CORONER

... strangled with a stocking, like you'd find in any grocery store. He even left it behind.

The VEGAS CORONER holds up an evidence bag with a stocking.

VEGAS DETECTIVE

What else?

VEGAS UNIFORM

He's missing a finger. Whoever did this cut off his left middle finger, [Holds up an evidence bag containing gardening shears] with these gardening shears.

CUT TO:

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♦ FBI VISITS CHARLIE

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EXT. AFTERNOON: ESTABLISHING WIDE SHOT – FOREST CABIN

A black sedan pulls up to the cabin and the two FBI AGENTS, SMITH and JONES get out.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: SIDE SHOT – THE TWO AGENTS

One of the AGENTS raps loudly on the door. They both look around.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM CU – FRONT WINDOW

THE CAT is inside, sitting on the windowsill, looking out.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – THE TWO AGENTS

They continue to look around.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: CU – FLOWERBED

We see the sign that reads: “All visitors must be approved by cats.”

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – DOORWAY

The CAMERA is looking at the door with backs of the AGENTS on either side. The door springs open, and COURTNEY stands there in blue jeans with a red t-shirt. Her hair is tied up and she is covered in grease, as though she’d been cleaning the stove (which she had been).

COURTNEY

[Taken aback] Yes?

SMITH

Good afternoon, Ma’am. I’m Special Agent Smith and this is Special Agent Jones of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: TWO SHOT – THE TWO AGENTS

They both flip open identification wallets in perfect synchronicity.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – COURTNEY [BETWEEN THE TWO AGENTS]

She notices the irony immediately.

COURTNEY

[Skeptically] Smith and Jones?

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: CU – SMITH

SMITH

[Deadpan] We get that a lot, Ma’am. You wouldn’t happen to be Charlotte Caesar, would you?

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – COURTNEY [BETWEEN THE TWO AGENTS]

COURTNEY

[Yelling out to off CAMERA] Charlie! There's a couple of G-Men here to see you!

CHARLIE appears, similarly dressed in "Saturday clean-the-house" wear.

COURTNEY

[To CHARLIE] This! After the oven cleaner fumes. *Whew!* [Walking away]  
I need to lie down!

CHARLIE watches her go and turns back to the "G-MEN".

CHARLIE

I'm Charlotte Caesar. What's this about?

SMITH

Is your father Ernest John Caesar?

CHARLIE

[Warily] Yes ...?

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: TWO-SHOT: THE TWO G-MEN

JONES

Have you heard from him recently?

CHARLIE

[V.O.] I haven't spoken to my father in nine years.

JONES

I see. [He jots this down in a notebook]

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – THE CAT IN THE WINDOW

THE CAT looks up at CHARLIE through the window as though plaintively hoping she will not betray his master, just as COURTNEY's hands snatch him from the window.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – THE GIRLS' LIVING ROOM

There is a disarray of cleaning supplies on the coffee table and a plethora of cats to witness the goings on at the door and in the living room. The furnishings are ornate and would probably be well suited for a fortune teller named Madame Zelda. There is a tiffany lamp, and the coffee table has claw feet. Heavy fabrics lined with tiny pompom tassels drape the window and the couch. COURTNEY sits down on the couch which is in front of the window that THE CAT was looking through. She puts THE CAT down on her lap and covers his ears. As this happens we hear the following in the background:

CHARLIE

[V.O. slightly muffled] Yes. He was here about a week ago. He gave me his cat to take care of.

COURTNEY

[To THE CAT] You don't want to hear this.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT: CHARLIE BETWEEN THE G-MEN

She is standing with her arms folded, leaning against the door frame.

CHARLIE

He said he was in trouble.

SMITH

He is. A lot.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: SIDE SHOT: SMITH AND JONES

The agents are on the right. CHARLIE is in the doorway on the left.

JONES

Did he say where he was going?

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: MEDIUM SHOT – CHARLIE BETWEEN THE AGENTS

CHARLIE

No.

CUT TO:

EXT. AFTERNOON: CU - SMITH

SMITH takes a card from his breast pocket and passes it to CHARLIE.

SMITH

If you hear from him, please give us a call.

CUT TO:

MEDIUM SHOT – CHARLIE BETWEEN THE AGENTS

CHARLIE

[Taking the card] So you can arrest him?

SMITH

We just want to make sure he doesn't hurt himself ... or anyone else.



CHARLIE nods slightly, yet unconvinced. She looks down at the card, looks up at the agents and nods while looking at the card and closing the door. The agents look at each other for a second and walk off leaving the frame devoid of people and the closed door the most interesting part of the shot.

COURTNEY

[V.O. from inside] I knew that cat was troubled.

CHARLIE

[V.O. from inside] Oh, shut up, Courtney.

FADE OUT

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♦ ERNIE IN THE COFFEE SHOP

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EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – COFFEE SHOP

This is a typical, open 24-hours coffee shop, neon lit and patronized by anyone awake at odd hours.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – COFFEE SHOP

We are looking into the coffee shop along the aisle. There is a counter on the right with a short-order cook in the kitchen in the back. On the left is a row of booths. They are mostly empty, but halfway down we see ERNIE, looking at a phone in his left hand while drinking coffee with his right. The back wall is glass brick, and the room is brightly lit with white light as well as blue and pink neon.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – THE JUDGE'S CELL PHONE

ERNIE is looking through a cell phone. We see phone numbers of lawyers and politicians and quickly realize that it's THE JUDGE's cell phone. On the table is a menu and a severed finger on a blood-stained handkerchief. The finger dons the same gaudy ring that we saw the judge wear in the flashback. The handkerchief is silk and bears the monogram CSC.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE IN THE BOOTH

The WAITRESS comes up holding a pot of coffee. She is too smart and attractive to be working in this hash-house. She knows it and is exasperated by it.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – WAITRESS

WAITRESS

So, have you decided what you want to ... [she notices the finger] Oh my God!

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

[Still looking at the phone] It's just a prop. [He looks up at her and smiles] Looks real though, doesn't it?

He wraps it up in the handkerchief and puts it into a leather satchel on the seat next to him.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – WAITRESS

WAITRESS

Are you in the movie business?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – ERNIE AND THE WAITRESS

We are looking at ERNIE in the booth and the WAITRESS on the right side, looking towards the back of the restaurant.

ERNIE

I'm a photographer. It's for an ad.

WAITRESS

Really? [Flirting] Do you ever need models?

ERNIE smiles with a broad, close mouth smile and looks directly at her,

ERNIE

Not nearly as often as I'd like.

Without looking, he deftly grabs his cup and moves it closer to her, indicating a desire for a refill. The WAITRESS looks at him blankly, not sure of what to make of him and then fills the cup.

WAITRESS

Have you decided on what you'd like?

ERNIE

[Going back to the phone] I'm good with the coffee, thanks.

WAITRESS

Are you sure? We have some very good cherry pie.

ERNIE looks up at her with the wide smile.

ERNIE

Well, let's have some cherry pie, then.

The WAITRESS nods uncertainly and walks off (towards the camera).

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JUDGE'S PHONE

ERNIE resumes scrolling through the list until he finds what he was looking for. There is a listing for the two thugs who took him in Vegas – CARLOS (formerly SHADOWY CHARACTER #1) and JIMMY (formerly SHADOWY CHARACTER #2). ERNIE starts a group text.

ERNIE [as STANLEY]

*Got problems. Need to meet.*

There is a pause. A response comes back.

JIMMY

*Tonight?*

CARLOS

*You said we shouldn't meet.*

ERNIE [as STANLEY]

[Fingers flying] *Yes, tonight. That guy is back. East Tropical terminal at 10.*

JIMMY

*OK*

CARLOS

[Thumbs up]

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE in the booth

The ruse worked. He smiles as the WAITRESS approaches with his pie.

WAITRESS

[Putting down the plate] I hope you like it.

ERNIE resumes the big grin.

ERNIE

I'm sure I will. It looks delicious.

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE AND THE JUDGE'S GOONS

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EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – EAST TROPICAL CONTAINER TERMINAL

This is a large container terminal on the edge of town. There are stacks of containers creating a network of corridors. An old vintage low-rider pulls up. CARLOS and JIMMY get out of the car. We recognize one thing right away: CARLOS is wearing ERNIE's old red fedora – the one he lost in the janitor's closet. They congregate at the back of the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – CARLOS

CARLOS

I don't like this, man. Why would the Judge worry about that guy?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – JIMMY

JIMMY

I don't know. [Looking around] Where the hell is the Judge, anyway?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – CONTAINER TERMINAL

The CAMERA, nested between two stacks of containers, looks out towards CARLOS and JIMMY by the car.

ERNIE

[V.O. Impersonating the JUDGE] Over here!

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – CARLOS and JIMMY

They turn towards the containers.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: ARIAL SHOT – CARLOS and JIMMY.

They approach the containers with apprehension.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: LONG SHOT – CARLOS and JIMMY

The CAMERA is between two stacks of containers looking out. CARLOS and JIMMY are at the end.

ERNIE

[V.O as the JUDGE] Jimmy! Wait there.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – CARLOS and JIMMY

They look at each other and then down the long abyss, away from the CAMERA, down the dark container corridor. They look at each other again and CARLOS shrugs. He starts down the corridor. JIMMY leans back against one of the containers to wait.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: LONG SHOT – CARLOS BETWEEN THE CONTAINERS

CARLOS slowly walks down the corridor towards the CAMERA. At a certain point, when he moves close enough that it becomes a MEDIUM-CLOSE SHOT, the CAMERA pulls back with him as CARLOS proceeds. Finally, he stops.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: LONG SHOT – CONTAINER CORRIDOR

We are looking from JIMMY's P.O.V. and see that CARLOS has gone the length of two 40-foot containers before encountering a blockage – the containers are stacked the other way. CARLOS, barely visible in the distance, turns to the left.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – JIMMY

He is watching CARLOS and moves to follow him from a distance.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM FULL SHOT – JIMMY and the CONTAINERS

The CAMERA DOLLIES and follows as JIMMY moves to the left to see where CARLOS went in the labyrinth of containers, but his vision is blocked by another container laid across the path (we can imagine they have been laid out in a chevron pattern).

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – JIMMY

He looks down at the blockage and then back to where he came. He thinks for a moment, looks back at the containers and decides to resume his post where he left CARLOS.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – CARLOS

He slowly edges down a container corridor, looking around for the judge.

CARLOS

Judge!

He comes to a junction and looks both ways, wondering where to go.

CARLOS

[Looking around and getting nervous] Judge!

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – CARLOS from the SIDE

We are looking down a container corridor with CARLOS in the foreground. He decides to keep going forward and, as he moves to the left, we see a figure appear from beyond the edge of the next container and edge up to the intersection, sidling to the end of container that CARLOS just passed.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: LONG SHOT – CARLOS from BEHIND

CARLOS approaches the end of a container corridor. Beyond are the twinkling lights of Las Vegas, below.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – CARLOS

He has a perplexed look on his face. The JUDGE doesn't seem to be around. Suddenly, we see ERNIE's signature hat rise above CARLOS's right shoulder. In one smooth movement, his gloved left hand covers CARLOS's mouth while his right hand thrusts the bowie knife into the side of CARLOS's neck.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: LONG GROUND SHOT – CARLOS and ERNIE

Against a dark blue backdrop of the night sky we see the black silhouette of ERNIE and CARLOS from the back. ERNIE flicks his right arm out, essentially disemboweling CARLOS's throat. We see a splatter of blood, black against the dark blue background.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE and CARLOS

ERNIE is looking unfocused into the middle distance as CARLOS, wide-eyed in terror and disbelief, now frozen on his face in death, slinks down towards the ground. As he does, ERNIE casually takes CARLOS's (once his; and now his, again) red hat.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: GROUND LEVEL SHOT

We see ERNIE'S boots from behind. CARLOS's lifeless body tumbles to the ground. A moment later the bowie knife falls, making a loud, sharp clanking sound against the silent backdrop. A dog barks in the distance.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – JIMMY

He's taking a hit from a doobie when he hears the noise and looks up.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – JIMMY and the CONTAINER LABYRINTH

JIMMY drops the joint, stubs it out with his toe, pulls out a gun from under his jacket and starts into the container labyrinth.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

He is staring down the container corridor, the lights of Las Vegas twinkling behind him. His eyes are welling up, but his expression is one of anger and spite. Without losing focus, he takes off his black hat with his right hand and puts on the red one with his left.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – JIMMY

He has his gun held in front of him as he works his way through the container labyrinth.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: GROUND LEVEL SHOT – ERNIE'S BOOTS

He turns around and steps over CARLOS's lifeless body towards the lights of Las Vegas.

CUT TO:



EXT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – JIMMY

We see JIMMY from the back as he approaches the edge of the container labyrinth, his silhouette sharp against the dark blue sky and Las Vegas lights.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – ERNIE

We see the containers on the left. Hiding behind a container closer to the CAMERA, in the foreground, is ERNIE holding a pistol, poised. JIMMY's hand and face peek out of the container labyrinth in the background.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT – ERNIE

This time we see ERNIE from JIMMY's P.O.V. and in one swift move, he swings around the corner of the container and fires at the CAMERA.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU / SIDE SHOT – JIMMY

We just see JIMMY's hand with gun poised and curious face peeking out from the last container. A darkened warehouse is in the background. Suddenly, the shot rings out and an eruption of blood spurts from JIMMY's hand. He drops the gun and bends over to cradle his injured hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – JIMMY

He bends over to cradle his injured hand when he notices something even more terrifying. He recoils and screams.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – CARLOS

CARLOS's lifeless body, still staring into eternity, is lying there.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – JIMMY

JIMMY screams in terror again and turns to run back into the container labyrinth. We hear his screams echo and, as his figure clumsily disappears into the gloom, *Nowhere to Run* by MARTHA REEVES AND THE VANDELLAS starts playing in the background.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – CONTAINER TERMINAL

We see the containers in the back and the car in the front. JIMMY emerges screaming and whimpering, cradling his hand, running towards the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – CAR DOOR HANDLE

JIMMY struggles to open the car door with his left, and/or injured right hand. Being a vintage car, there is no auto-unlock and he needs to use a key, which he fumbles for.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM FULL SHOT – JIMMY and the CAR

JIMMY frantically looks back at the container terminal, knowing that he is unarmed and fleeing a homicidal maniac. Finally, the door pops open and he gets inside.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CAR IGNITION

The music suddenly turns tinny, as though it's being played on the vintage car radio. JIMMY is finding that he's having the same problem with trying to start the car. He fumbles, struggling to find the right key; it's not the same as the door key as is the case with some vintage cars.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – JIMMY

The CAMERA is in the passenger's seat. We see JIMMY in the foreground, on the left, and through the side window we see ERNIE emerge from the container labyrinth with gun poised walking mechanically.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – CAR IGNITION

The music volume rises and returns to normal. JIMMY finally gets the right key to fit and turns it.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – LOWRIDER CAR

Suddenly the music is replaced by a loud explosion, and the car erupts into a fireball.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE recoils as his body lights up orange with the glow of the explosion. He regains his composure.

WAITRESS

[V.O.] Did you think I wouldn't recognize the Judge's ring?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – ERNIE and the WAITRESS

They are both lit up by the glow of the now burning car. The WAITRESS is wrapped in a long coat, covering her work clothes. They watch the car burn.

WAITRESS

Everyone knows he wears that ring. And everyone knows he's crooked. I've been wanting to get those bastards for years. That asshole judge and his thugs are why I'm a waitress and not on the stage where I belong. He's ruined a lot of lives. To a lot of people, you're a hero.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU - WAITRESS

She turns to ERNIE

WAITRESS

Whatever you're in, we're in it, together.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

He turns to her.

ERNIE

No. I'm in this alone. But thanks for your help.

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE BITCHES OUT THE BITCH

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EXT. NIGHT: STREET SHOT

*Gonna Make You Sweat* by C+C Music Factory strikes up the scene as we see the CAMERA follows ERNIE from the front as he walks down a street busy with nightlife, lit with bright neon lights. He glances down an alleyway, across the street (on our right) as he passes. We briefly catch a glimpse of a HOMELESS GUY rummaging through some bags of trash.

As ERNIE continues, we see the end of a queue that has formed. ERNIE stops by a small group of smokers and lights a cigarette. The music gets softer and off CAMERA we hear a woman's voice.

WOMAN

... and then he just left! My life is ruined!

ERNIE chokes on a cigarette puff. He stubs out his cigarette (of which he's taken only a single puff) and turns to the woman.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: GROUP SHOT – WOMAN and FRIENDS

A WOMAN and her friends are next in line for what looks like a nightclub. They are all dressed in heels and cocktail dresses. The WOMAN whose life "was ruined" is a blonde with an elaborate hairdo. They're all in their early to mid-20s, biologically the most desirable female age and are all adorned with gold. A friend goes to console her, but ERNIE intervenes.

ERNIE

Excuse me. Let me show you something.

He points to the HOMELESS GUY down the alleyway.

ERNIE

See that guy?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – HOMELESS GUY.

The HOMELESS GUY is rooting through a dumpster. Suddenly he shows a hint of excitement as he discovers a half-eaten tin of pâté.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO SHOT – ERNIE and the WOMAN

ERNIE

He's looking for his next meal in that dumpster. He's going to eat someone else's garbage and not even his life is ruined. You're young, you're beautiful and, judging by those hoops and the way you dress, you're not short of cash, either.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU - WOMAN

The WOMAN is taken aback. He pulls a small, travel packet of tissues from his inside coat pocket and hands one to her.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU - ERNIE

ERNIE

Now, stop feeling sorry for yourself. You're just fine. If that guy gave you up, then he's an idiot and you're much better off without the asshole. Go in there, [pointing to the nightclub entrance] party your brains out and be thankful that you're not eating three-day old cat food from a dumpster.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: COWBOY SHOT – HOMELESS GUY

He flicks a couple of ants off of the tin he found and takes a big fingerful of the paste.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – WOMAN

She looks at ERNIE with bewilderment. A whisp of wind shuffles a lock of her immaculate, blonde hair. She glances over to the HOMELESS GUY.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – HOMELESS GUY

He's gotten as much from the can as he can with his finger and starts to lick the container out with his tongue. He has no idea, nor does he care that he is being watched.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – WOMAN

She looks back at ERNIE.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: TWO SHOT – ERNIE and the WOMAN.

There is a moment of silence, and the WOMAN suddenly hugs ERNIE.

WOMAN

Thank you, very strange man.

She turns to her friends who are all watching with amazement.

WOMAN

You know what? I'm young, I'm beautiful and I'm much better off without that asshole. Now let's go in there and party our brains out!

There is an eruption of cheering from her friends who lead the charge into the nightclub.

WOMAN

[To ERNIE] And be thankful we're not eating three-day old cat food from a dumpster.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE smiles. The CAMERA then zooms out to a COWBOY SHOT and continues to follow him from the front as he resumes walking, lighting another cigarette as he goes.

FADE OUT

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♦ THE FEDS TALK TO TONY

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FADE IN

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – URBAN STREET CORNER

It has been raining. The CAMERA is facing an intersection and the lights reflect brightly in the puddles on the street. There is a convenience store in the far corner, to the left. TONY walks out of the store, spryly. He is wearing a tuxedo, but it is clear that the evening is over because his bow tie is untied and loose around his neck and his top button is undone. He is wearing a long, blue overcoat and a red scarf and looks a lot like a younger version of ERNIE, which isn't surprising since he's ERNIE's son. He is carrying a brown paper bag, cradled in his arm.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – APARTMENT DOOR

TONY walks into frame holding a key with his spare hand. He pushes it into the lock.

SMITH

[V.O.] Mister Caesar?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: COWBOY SHOT – TONY, SMITH, and JONES

TONY looks up from the key. SMITH and JONES walk into the frame. The following takes place in a single shot.

SMITH

Mister Anthony Caesar?

TONY

[Unsure] Yes?

SMITH and JONES flip out their identification.

SMITH

I'm Special Agent Smith, this is Special Agent Jones. We're with the FBI.

TONY

Smith and Jones? Really?

He leans in and peers at the identification.

TONY

[Raises his eyebrows] I'll be. Smith and Jones. [He straightens back up]  
I'll bet you guys get that a lot.

SMITH

[Makes a gesture halfway between a shrug and a polite eyeroll] Have  
you heard from your father recently?

TONY

Dad? No, not for a couple of weeks. I tried to invite him to come along  
to this award ceremony, but I couldn't get a hold of him. Why? Is he in  
trouble.

SMITH

Yes. He's wanted for assault and possible homicide.

TONY's eyes bulge.

SMITH

If you hear from him, could you please give us a call?

SMITH hands him a business card. TONY takes it, looks at it and looks back up.

JONES

[Seeing the concern in TONY's face] It would be better if he gave himself  
up.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Maybe.



SMITH and JONES turn and leave. TONY opens the door to the apartment and walks in. The CAMERA follows. He goes into a small kitchenette and puts the bag on the table. There is a single yellow lamp glowing on top of the refrigerator. He reaches into the bag and pulls out a bottle of whisky. He opens a cupboard above his head, pulls out a glass and pours himself a drink which he downs in a single shot. He then pours another one, takes off his coat and throws it onto a nearby couch. TONY's tastes are stylish, in keeping with the tuxedo.

CUT TO:

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♦ TONY CALLS CHARLIE

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INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – BLACK LEATHER LOUNGE CHAIR

TONY may live in a tiny apartment, but the furnishings are lush. He plops down into the lounge chair. He has taken off his jacket and has turned up his sleeves a couple of rolls. There is a drink in one hand and his cellphone in the other. He presses buttons on the phone with his thumb and places the phone to his ear.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – CHARLIE'S CELLPHONE

It lights up showing TONY's name and picture. The ringtone is *Western Movies* by THE OLYMPICS. A hand enters the shot and picks it up. The ringtone cuts out.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – CHARLIE

She holds the phone to her ear.

CHARLIE

Hey Tony.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – TONY

TONY

Hey Sis. I had a lovely evening tonight. I went to the awards ceremony.

CHARLIE

[Through the phone] Did you win?

TONY

I wasn't nominated. I was presenting. Geez, Charlie, don't you listen to anything I say?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – CHARLIE

CHARLIE

I'm sorry, Tony. How did it go?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – TONY

TONY

Great! They invited me back to do it again, next year. I was going to go to the after-party, but I thought that was enough for one night and, besides, I had to come home to talk to the Feds who were waiting at my door. You wouldn't happen to know anything about that, would you, Sis?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – CHARLIE

CHARLIE

Yeah, they were here yesterday.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – TONY

TONY

Really?

CHARLIE

[Through the phone] Yes.

TONY

There?

CHARLIE

[Through the phone] Yes.

TONY

Two pretty-boy jocks named Smith and Jones?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – CHARLIE

CHARLIE

That's what they said their names were. They said were looking for Ernie.

TONY

[Through the phone] Dad, Charlie! We call him Dad!

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – TONY

TONY

He's not responsible for what happened to Mom and, goddamn it, he's my father, too. If he's in trouble, I think I have a right to know.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – CHARLIE

CHARLIE

Fine, he's in trouble. He came by last week and dropped off his mangey cat.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – TONY

TONY

[Shouting] Damn you, Charlie! You didn't think to tell me that, either? You and Dad spoke? That's big news.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – CHARLIE'S LIVING ROOM

She has started pacing the floor.

CHARLIE

Okay! I'm sorry! I didn't think it was such a big deal.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – TONY

TONY

Our father is accused of murder, and you didn't think it was a big deal.

CHARLIE

[Through the phone] Murder!

TONY

They didn't tell you that?

CHARLIE

[Through the phone] No.

TONY

Well, what did Smith and Jones want to know?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – CHARLIE

CHARLIE

Where Ernie was. When I saw him last.

TONY

[Through the phone] What did you tell them.

CHARLIE

Same thing I just told you. He came by, dropped off his cat and I haven't seen him since.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – TONY

TONY

Did he say where he was going?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – CHARLIE

CHARLIE

Away. Just ... away.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – TONY

TONY

[Sighs] Okay. Well, if you hear anything you *will* let me know, won't you?

CHARLIE

[Through the phone] Sure, and I'm sorry that I didn't call you.

TONY

Thanks. I appreciate that. I'll let you know if I hear anything.

He hangs up, drains his glass, and gets up, presumably for another drink.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – CHARLIE'S LIVING ROOM

CHARLIE hangs up the phone and holds it for a moment, thinking. In the background COURNEY enters the room holding a cat. She sits down on a chair and starts making the cat dance.

COURTNEY

What do you think of teaching the cats Tai Chi?

CHARLIE shakes her head and walks off frame

CHARLIE

[Under her breath as she leaves] Oh shut up, Courtney.

FADE OUT

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♦ ERNIE AND THE PSYCHIATRIST

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FADE IN

EXT. NIGHT: ESTABLISHING - WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED BARN

An old, dilapidated barn sits on an open field. It is leaning and looks like it could collapse at any moment. The timbers are old and extremely dry. There is the light from a lantern glowing inside.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU NATHAN

He is passed out. Suddenly a splash or what looks like water is thrown in his face. He comes to and looks around as much as his bleary eyes will allow. Then he starts sniffing.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: INSIDE THE BARN

The inside is pretty much empty except for a chair on which NATHAN is sitting, bound in the same multiple loops that bound BOB. ERNIE is pacing around NATHAN carrying a five-gallon gasoline can and is splashing gasoline around the room. The CAMERA follows him as he circles NATHAN.

ERNIE

Good morning!

NATHAN

Who are you? What are you doing?

ERNIE

You don't know me?

NATHAN

Should I?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

[He stops and thinks for a moment, somewhat incredulous]. Yeah, you should.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: INSIDE THE BARN

NATHAN

You were a patient?

ERNIE

No.

NATHAN

Someone you knew?

ERNIE

Yes.

NATHAN

Recently?

ERNIE

Compared to the age of the Universe, yes. It seems like a long time ago now, though.

ERNIE has come to a ladder that leads to the loft. He shakes the gas can, confirms that it's empty and puts it next to another one at the foot of the ladder. He takes the other one and starts climbing the ladder.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU NATHAN

We can see ERNIE climbing the ladder behind him. NATHAN tries to look back as he asks his next question.



NATHAN

In the last five years?

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT: BARN LOFT

ERNIE has reached the top is now starting to splash the gasoline around the upper loft.

ERNIE

More like ten, now.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE – WAITING ROOM

A younger and happier ERNIE, wearing his formerly signature red fedora, extends his hand to a younger NATHAN, who is dressed "business casual". For the first time we see LORRAINE CAESAR, ERNIE's late wife. She is in her mid-forties but looks much older.

ERNIE

[V.O.] My wife and I came to see you.

NATHAN

[V.O.] What was wrong?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – BARN LOFT

ERNIE stops splashing for a moment.

ERNIE

That's what you were supposed to tell us.

He pauses for a moment and then resumes splashing.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: NATHAN'S OFFICE

ERNIE and LORRAINE are sitting in two chairs across from NATHAN's desk. NATHAN is sitting, listening quietly with fingers steepled while ERNIE gesticulates, describing the problem. We cannot hear what he is saying, but the V.O. continues.

ERNIE

[V.O.] You listened very carefully to the symptoms, constantly tired, difficulty concentrating on simple things, forgetfulness and you diagnosed ...?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU NATHAN

NATHAN

[Contemplatively, with a flash of insight – he now remembers who ERNIE is] ADHD

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT - BARN FROM THE LOFT

The CAMERA is in the upper corner of the barn, and we can see ERNIE has worked his way halfway around the top. He is looking down at NATHAN who is looking back up at him. ERNIE puts down the gas can, takes out a cigarette and puts it between his lips.

ERNIE

And it was?

NATHAN is nervously looking at the cigarette and praying ERNIE doesn't light it. He has realized what is going on but remains calm, presumably thinking he can talk his way out of it.

NATHAN

You're Ernie Caesar. Your wife was Lorraine Caesar.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – BARN LOFT

ERNIE

[Genuinely impressed] Very good!

He resumes splashing the gasoline.

NATHAN

[V.O.] I'm so sorry for what happened. I was young ...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT - UNIVERSITY HALL

NATHAN is on stage, receiving his testimonial.

NATHAN

[V.O.] I'd only just graduated. I was eager...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: NATHAN'S OFFICE – FOYER

It is the foyer we saw earlier but it is devoid of decoration. A couple of MOVERS are carrying a couch into the room while NATHAN watches.

NATHAN

[V.O.] I only just started my practice...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – NATHAN

NATHAN

Your wife was one of my first patients.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – NATHAN and ERNIE

The CAMERA is looking up with NATHAN in the foreground and ERNIE visible in the loft in the background; he has only one more wall to do before he gets back to the ladder.

ERNIE

[Splashing and shaking his head] That's not what you told us. Do you remember what you told us?

NATHAN

That I'd been in business for over ten years.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: NATHAN'S OFFICE

Lorraine is lying on a fainting couch, talking. NATHAN is sitting in a chair, almost listening – his fingers are poised by his forehead, indicating concentration, but bordering on providing a resting place as he falls asleep.

ERNIE

[V.O.] You treated her for two years.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

[Quietly] But you never figured it out, did you? Not until it was too late.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – NATHAN

He shakes his head and goes to say "no", but no words come out.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

And then what happened?

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: HIGHRISE BALCONY

The CAMERA is looking upwards, slightly. Lorraine is sporting a long, black, silk cocktail dress with large orange orchids. She has gold jewelry with her hair styled up. There is a breeze blowing, causing her dress to billow and her hair to ruffle. The soft strains of *Only Time* by ENYA play in the background. She is standing on the railing of the balcony, which is a tricky feat in black stiletto heels, and steadying herself with one hand on a column support. In the background, through the glass door, we can see a cocktail party is in progress.

NATHAN

[V.O.] She took her own life.

In one casual step, LORRAINE walks off the railing and suddenly drops from the scene, a few flutters of her silken dress being the last thing to exit the shot.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

His eyes are red, and tears are welling up as he stares off into the middle distance.

ERNIE

[Confirming, almost mumbling] She took her own life.

He blinks and the tears roll down his cheeks.

ERNIE

I never did understand why she chose that night. We'd been to the Anderson's many times before and she seemed so happy earlier.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT - BARN FROM THE LOFT

The music fades out and ERNIE snaps out of it. He's back at the ladder, splashes the last bit of gasoline and throws the gas can down from the loft. The CAMERA follows as he nimbly scurries down the ladder.

ERNIE

It never was ADHD, was it?

NATHAN

No.

The CAMERA follows as ERNIE walks around to the front of NATHAN.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: TWO SHOT – ERNIE and NATHAN

ERNIE crouches down to be at eye level with NATHAN.

ERNIE

What was it?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – NATHAN

NATHAN

Clinical depression.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: STOCK FOOTAGE – PHARMACEUTICALS FACTORY

We see stock footage of a PHARMACEUTICAL WORKER separating pill dosages with a pill separator.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: STOCK FOOTAGE – PHARMACEUTICALS FACTORY

Bottles of pills roll past on a conveyor belt.

ERNIE

[V.O.] And there are medications for that, aren't there?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – NATHAN

Tears are starting to well up in his eyes, too. He nods.

ERNIE

[V.O.] And they're not the same, are they?

NATHAN shakes his head.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: TWO-SHOT – ERNIE AND NATHAN

ERNIE is staring directly into NATHAN's face, only inches from him, studying him.

ERNIE

I don't forgive you.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – NATHAN

NATHAN nods. He understands. He accepts. He blinks and the tears roll down his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: ABANDONED BARN DOORWAY

The CAMERA is outside, looking in. We can see ERNIE crouched. He gets up and moves to the side as he walks out the door so that the CAMERA can see NATHAN bound and sobbing in the chair.

ERNIE

[As though making an announcement as he walks] My daughter blames me. She hates me. She doesn't talk to me. I hadn't seen her since the funeral.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: OPEN FIELD – NATHAN'S P.O.V.

ERNIE is just outside the door, looking in.

ERNIE

I got burned, didn't I Nate?

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – NATHAN

He nods almost in a trance, his eyes wide and glistening with tears but he's beyond crying, now.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: OPEN FIELD – NATHAN'S P.O.V.

ERNIE

Your turn.

He raises his arm

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE’S HAND

With his thumb he flicks a strike-anywhere match.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: SIDE SHOT – CU – ERNIE

He lights the cigarette that’s been hanging from his lips through most of the dialogue. As he does so, the opening line of *Fire*, by the CRAZY WORLD OF ARTHUR BROWN starts playing.

ARTHUR BROWN

[V.O.] *I am the god of hellfire, and I bring you...*

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED BARN

This is the ESTABLISHING SHOT that began the scene. As the song continues, ERNIE drops the match. A trail of flame runs into the barn which erupts into flame.

ARTHUR BROWN

[V.O.] *Fire! I’ll take you to burn.*

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: SIDE SHOT – CU – ERNIE

We see his face is lit up with the orange glow of the flames, a cigarette dangling from his lips.

ARTHUR BROWN

[V.O.] *Fire! I’ll take you to learn.*

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED BARN

The roof collapses and the flames continue to consume the structure.

ARTHUR BROWN



[V.O.] *I'll see you burn!*

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – RURAL STREET

A small fire truck with lights flashing rolls down the road as the musical interlude starts and almost as suddenly as the cut, the music fades before ARTHUR BROWN can get his next line out..

CROSSFADE

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – THERAPIST

The crossfade ends in the THERAPIST'S OFFICE. The THERAPIST is sitting with finger poised by forehead, listening to ERNIE's story. The camera hangs on the shot for a moment and then.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

ERNIE is sitting shackled to the chair.

ERNIE

[Absently] He never made a sound.

FADE OUT

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♦ THIRD THERAPY SESSION

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CUT TO:

INT. DAY – THERAPIST'S DOORWAY

The door is open, and the THERAPIST is standing in the doorway, arms folded. She steps back to allow the GUARD to escort ERNIE into the THERAPIST'S OFFICE. The GUARD shackles ERNIE to the chair.

GUARD

There you go, Ernie. Here's your hat.

He hands him a hat that has been sitting in the therapist's office.

ERNIE

[To the GUARD] Thanks, Carl. Good luck with the ultrasound.

CARL (formerly the GUARD)

Thanks, Ernie.

He leaves. The THERAPIST closes the door

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE'S HAT

ERNIE flips the inside band down on the hat and pulls a thick nylon strand out that has been embedded into the stitching. He palms it and flips the band back.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT- THERAPIST'S OFFICE

The THERAPIST turns back after closing the door and sits down.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU - ERNIE

ERNIE tries to put his hat on but struggles because of the shackles.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT - THERAPIST'S OFFICE

The THERAPIST gets up, goes over to ERNIE and puts his hat on his head.

THERAPIST

How's that?

ERNIE

Thank you. And thank you for letting me wear my hat.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU – THERAPIST’S CHAIR

The THERAPIST sits down in it.

THERAPIST

I know your hats are important to you. May I ask why?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

I take Monty Python very seriously.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU – THERAPIST

She is unsure how to take that. Is he serious? Is he kidding? She’s not even sure she gets the reference.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

His expression offers no clues.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU – THERAPIST

THERAPIST

What was that about with the Guard?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

[Pointing toward the door] With Carl? His wife’s expecting and they’re going to find out the sex this afternoon. She’s hoping for a boy. He wants a girl.

THERAPIST

[V.O.] What about you?

ERNIE

I'm hoping for human. That's hard to come by these days.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU – THERAPIST

She chuckles.

THERAPIST

You seem to have improved your relationship with him.

ERNIE

[V.O.] He's not a bad guy when you get to know him...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM CU –ERNIE

ERNIE

...and I think he realizes that I'm not a bad person when you get to know me.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE'S HAND

ERNIE has the nylon strip in his hand. He has his hand tucked down under his thigh to conceal it from the THERAPIST as best as possible. He pokes the nylon strip into the keyhole of the shackles and very slowly and deliberately starts to pick at the lock.

THERAPIST

[V.O.] Tell me about Jennifer. Why her? It sounds a little juvenile to go after a thirty-year-old grudge with a college crush.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE

ERNIE

Bob was for anyone who ever got shafted by their boss. The Judge was for anyone who ever got stiffed by corruption. Nathan was for anyone who ever got fleeced by the medical profession. I didn't think about it at the time, but I suppose those high school assholes were for anyone who ever got bullied. Jennifer was for every poor pathetic guy out there who ever got humiliated by a girl. She was the first, so it made sense that she should be the last.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – YOUNG ERNIE

A young version of ERNIE is sitting in a lounge chair, speaking on an old landline telephone (the kind with the curly cord).

ERNIE

[V.O.] She called me and asked me out.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT - HOTEL BAR

ERNIE is sitting on a stool. He is dressed in a blue suit with a matching fedora. On the bar is a half-finished beer, his second judging by the empty glass sitting next to it. He pulls a pocket watch from his hip pocket, looks at it, sighs, and picks up his drink.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Of course she never showed up.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT - ICE CREAM PARLOUR

A YOUNG JENNIFER is sitting with a group of girls.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT - ERNIE

ERNIE walks in the door.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: GROUP SHOT – JENNIFER and FRIENDS

They see him and all burst out laughing.

ERNIE

[V.O.] I just left.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: FULL SHOT - ERNIE

He walks out.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – THERAPIST

THERAPIST

So, you were going to kill her for that?

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE'S HAND

The shackle pops open.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE

His eyes glaze over as his focal point drops to infinity.

ERNIE

No. I had something much worse planned for her. I was going to make her live with it.

CUT TO:

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♦ ERNIE AND JENNIFER

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EXT. EARLY EVENING: WIDE SHOT – NONDESCRIPT SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

This is an average, middle-class suburban house in an average, middle-class suburb. A hatchback pulls into the driveway.

CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – DRIVER’S SIDE

JENNIFER gets out of the car and heads towards the back.

CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY EVENING: MEDIUM SHOT – JENNIFER

JENNIFER pops open the hatch and reaches in to get her groceries. As she does, ERNIE creeps up from behind and grabs her with a sleeper hold with one arm and holds a rag over her nose and mouth with the other.

CUT TO:

EXT. EARLY EVENING: CU – JENNIFER

We only see her eyes because the rag and hand conceal the rest of the face. Between the second and third fingers of ERNIE’S hand (wearing the same black gloves as earlier) is a bottle of chloroform. We watch as consciousness is slowly forced from JENNIFER’S face. Her eyes roll up and she passes out.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – SUBURBAN DRIVEWAY

ERNIE lets JENNIFER’S unconscious body fall into the back of the car, on top of the groceries. He hauls her legs in and slams the hatch shut. The CAMERA pulls back and follows as he goes around to the driver’s side and gets in. The car engine starts up.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – SUBURBAN HOUSE

The car reverses out of the driveway and speeds OFF-CAMERA, up the street.

FADE OUT

ERNIE

[V.O.] Are we awake?

FADE IN

INT. NIGHT – WIDE SHOT: ABANDONED HOUSE

We are looking from JENNIFER's P.O.V. at a completely empty room: it is an abandoned house. A single, bare, incandescent bulb glows a dim orange. The paint on the walls is a light brown, either textured or weathered and peeling. Directly in the center is a door. Framed by two windows with blinds drawn.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JENNIFER

She is gagged and looking around the room terrified.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED HOUSE – LIVING ROOM

From the corner of the room, we see JENNIFER tightly bound by those same multiple loops to a chair in the middle of an empty room. The whole room is as previously described but, from this angle we see that there are two other doors besides the one that JENNIFER is facing. The one closest to center of CAMERA (on JENNIFER's left) is open but completely dark. The door behind her is closed and as rundown as the one she is facing. In a panic, JENNIFER starts to scream and struggle, but both efforts are fruitless.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JENNIFER

She struggles.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED LIVING ROOM

ERNIE

[V.O.] Remember me?

He walks into the room from the darkened doorway at the back and around the back of her chair, finally coming to rest in front of her. He leans down to look at her face. He has his bandana up and in a dramatic gesture, he pulls it down.

ERNIE

You and your friends thought it would be fun to set me up and then laugh at me.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JENNIFER



She is struggling to remember ... and does. She starts to well up.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE

He stares at her for a moment.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED LIVING ROOM

ERNIE stands up from his stooping position and starts to slowly pace around the room, and the chair, like the KGB interrogating a Cold War spy.

ERNIE

You are the first bad thing to happen to me. My life started to go downhill when I met you.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JENNIFER

Terrified, her eyes follow him as best she can as he paces around the room.

ERNIE

[V.O.] Since then I've killed [He stops and quickly counts on his fingers] eight people.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – ERNIE'S HAND

We see that he is casually holding a pistol.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JENNIFER

There is a flash of shock and horror in her eyes as she notices the gun.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED LIVING ROOM

ERNIE continues to pace.

ERNIE

... and it all started with you. And since it all started with you ...

He stops on the side furthest from the CAMERA and turns towards JENNIFER. He holds the gun to her head and presses it into her temple. She winces and tries to cower but the more she pulls back the harder he presses.

ERNIE

... it should end with you.

We hear a slight whimper as JENNIFER prepares for what she believes to be the inevitable.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: LOW ANGLE / CU – ERNIE

Shot from below, from JENNIFER's P.O.V., he snaps the gun back by his ear.

ERNIE

But I'm not going to kill you

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JENNIFER

She has a perplexed look as she wonders why she is not dead.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED LIVING ROOM

ERNIE drops his gun hand to his side and starts pacing around the chair, again.

ERNIE

You see, while you started me on a life of misery, it wasn't your fault. I let it get to me ...

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JENNIFER

She continues to look perplexed as ERNIE reveals his story. She can't speak or move, but her eyes tell everything. She is simultaneously afflicted by guilt and confusion with a very healthy dose of fear,

although that seems to be abating now that ERNIE has put the gun down, but she knows it could come back at any moment.

ERNIE

[V.O.] ... and that first sense of failure controlled my life. And now it has to end. And you have to see it end.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – JENNIFER’S P.O.V.

Through the blinds behind ERNIE, we notice flashing red and blue lights.

ERNIE

They knew where to find me because I told them. They had nothing. I could have gotten away with it. But that would be wrong. I did wrong and I have to face the consequences and so do you. You have to see the end of what you started.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: CU – JENNIFER

She stares at ERNIE with a combination of the aforementioned emotions but now with a dollop of confused respect.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – JENNIFER’S P.O.V.

ERNIE spins on his heel. Steps up the door and opens it. The CAMERA is blinded by the flashing police lights and there is the sound of the cocking of guns. He throws his gun out onto the lawn and thrusts his hands into the air.

ERNIE

[Yelling] I SURRENDER!

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED HOUSE

For the first time we see the outside of the abandoned house. It is as dilapidated as the interior. ERNIE is standing at the doorway with his hands as high in the air as they will go. The lights of the police vehicles

flash. Several officers are poised behind the cars with their guns trained on ERNIE. *Stupid Little Girl* by KID GULLIVER starts playing and accompanies the following sequence.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM CU – POLICE OFFICER

A POLICE OFFICER, with gun carefully trained on ERNIE starts shouting orders. We cannot hear what he is saying because of the music, however, we get the idea of what he’s saying from how ERNIE reacts.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – ERNIE

He puts his hands on his head and kneels down. Two POLICE OFFICERS rush up cautiously with guns pointed, one taking each arm and they slap him in handcuffs.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT: ABANDONED LIVING ROOM

Another TWO OFFICERS rush up to JENNIFER and remove the gag. Almost as soon as her mouth is free, she starts to talk. They untie her.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: HIGH ANGLE / WIDE SHOT – ABANDONED HOUSE

We look down on the house and yard from an angle and watch as ERNIE is escorted down the path and into an awaiting police car. The sound of a helicopter is barely perceptible under the music.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: MEDIUM SHOT – POLICE CAR

The OFFICERS push him into the back seat. One takes his hat before doing the customary “push-the-perp-into-the-car-by-the-top-of-the-head”.

CUT TO:

EXT. NIGHT: STREETSCAPE

There are one or two unoccupied houses but, for the most part, it is a fairly populous neighborhood. We see neighbors who have come into the street to see the action. A police car drives off.

FADE OUT

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♦ FINAL THERAPY SESSION

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FADE IN

INT. DAY: CU –THERAPIST

ERNIE

[V.O.] And that's all.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – THERAPIST'S DOOR

The THERAPIST closes the door. There are two men standing there along with the CARL the GUARD.

MAN #1

Well?

THERAPIST

He's a man who's been driven to his breaking point.

MAN #2

So, he's crazy?

THERAPIST

If you mean, does he have a good argument for an insanity plea, the answer is, maybe.

MAN #1

Whoa! Wait. He knows what he did. He knows that it was wrong. That's not insanity. He planned for each of these killings. That's premeditated murder.

MAN #2

Yeah, but the way he did it is insane. He refused council, pled guilty. He even argued for the death penalty. That's suicidal and that meets the requirement for insanity, [to the THERAPIST] doesn't it?

CUT TO:

CU – THERAPIST

Gives a non-committal, yet slightly conceding nod.

THERAPIST

He has absolutely no respect for the legal profession. As far as he's concerned, he was betrayed by it. Same with the medical profession, and just by life in general. And to be honest, he was. I will present this, along with the rest of my findings at the hearing.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – THERAPIST'S DOOR

She opens the door as the two men cross and leave to the left.

THERAPIST

Carl?

She waves the CARL the GUARD into the room to take ERNIE back to his cell.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – THERAPIST'S OFFICE

ERNIE is sitting in the chair, picking his teeth with the nylon strip. CARL sees that he is unshackled.

CARL

[V.O.] What the...!

Unthinking, he rushes into the shot to grab ERNIE.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – CARL'S CROTCH

ERNIE's hand grabs and squeezes. CARL screams and instinctively reaches down with both hands.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – CARL'S GUN

We see ERNIE's other hand reach in and adeptly unclip the restraining strap on CARL's holster and retrieve his gun in one swift motion; the same technique he tried with DAN but this time he is more successful.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: TWO-SHOT: CARL AND ERNIE

ERNIE holds the gun to CARL's head. CARL relaxes for a second but then ERNIE realizes that he could still make a move, so he shoves him across to the other side of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: FULL SHOT - ERNIE

He switches the gun to his right hand, but holds it with both, arms fully extended, carefully trained on CARL, who is a crumpled ball of the ground, cradling his genitals.

THERAPIST

*[V.O.] Ernie! What are you doing?*

ERNIE starts darting his aim from the door to the THERAPIST, to CARL and back again. The two MEN rush back into shot. ERNIE turns the gun to them.

ERNIE

*[To the two men] Freeze shysters!*

They comply. He motions with the gun.

ERNIE

In here! Next to them!

He motions towards the THERAPIST and CARL.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – THERAPIST AND CARL

The two MEN join the THERAPIST and CARL, who is partially recovered from the assault on his private parts, although he is still squirming a little and shows an expression of pain.

THERAPIST

[Pleading] Ernie, this isn't the way. You know this isn't the way.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU – ERNIE [Still holding the gun]

ERNIE

[To CARL] Sorry about that, Carl, but I need your gun. [To the THERAPIST] This is the only way. You see, Nancy, there's only one person left. I took care of everyone else...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – CARL, THE THERAPIST AND THE TWO MEN

They listen as ERNIE finishes his thought.

ERNIE

[V.O.] ... and there's only one person left who ruined my life. I have to take care of him, too.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: CU - THERAPIST

She suddenly realizes what he's saying, and a look of horror comes across her face, but before she can react ...

CUT TO:

INT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – ATRIUM

We are looking from outside the waiting area. Unbeknownst to us earlier, there is a glass paneled wall that separates the atrium from the waiting area, where the THERAPIST DOOR shots are taken. The glass panels are wood framed and there is a wooden door in the middle that has been left open by the two MEN as they rushed back into the room. We are looking catty-corner and through the glass panels in the



center of the screen we can see the vase-and-stick arrangement and the open door to the THERAPIST'S OFFICE, but we cannot see any people. Suddenly there is a flash of light from the doorway accompanied by the sound of a gunshot.

SLOW FADE OUT

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♦ EPILOGUE – FUNERAL SEQUENCE

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SLOW FADE IN

EXT. DAY: FULL SHOT – TOMBSTONE

It is a grey, drizzly day and we are looking at a tombstone on which is inscribed:

ERNEST JOHN CAESAR

October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1962 - March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

A silhouette crosses in front of the grave.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: MEDIUM SHOT – CHARLIE

She is cradling THE CAT in one arm and, in her hand, is holding two of ERNIE'S hats. Her eyes are red, and a tear rolls down one cheek. She puts THE CAT down and, while he curls around her ankles (as cats do), he looks up at her.

THE CAT

*Meow!*

She looks down.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: CU – CHARLIE'S HAND AND THE GROUND AND THE CAT: CHARLIE'S P.O.V.

THE CAT is looking up at her as she flips the inside band down on the red hat. She rubs her finger along the seam where the nylon strip was to assure herself that it isn't there anymore.

CUT TO

EXT. DAY: CU – CHARLIE

She smiles wanly, and then starts laughing.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAY: WIDE SHOT – CHARLIE AND THE GRAVE

CHARLIE takes one of the hats – it is the black one that we see him wear during most of the movie – and puts it on to the grave. She takes the other one – the red one that was stolen from him by the hoodlums in Vegas – and puts it on, picks up THE CAT, and then walks off.

SLOW ZOOM IN:

The CAMERA zooms in to the grave and as the CAMERA moves Bing Crosby's *Swinging on a Star* starts to play. We see the hat and the inscription. The CAMERA pans down slightly and we see the added script on the grave:

“Everyone has their breaking point.”

FADE TO BLACK

CREDITS

THE END

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Soundtrack:

*Fire* - Arthur Brown

*Amos Moses* - Jerry Reed

*Gonna Make You Sweat* - C+C Music Factory

*Homosapien* - Pete Shelley

*Banditos* - The Refreshments

*Stupid Little Girl* – Kid Gulliver

*Viva Las Vegas* –Elvis Presley

*Nowhere to Run* – Martha Reeves and the Vandellas

*Western Movies* – The Olympics

*Only Time* – Enya

*Swinging on a Star* – Bing Crosby