

GOODE

by

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EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

A quaint, cheerful little cabin in a dense forest.

THE GOODE FAMILY (O.S.)

... Give us this day our daily

bread, and forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive those
who trespass against us ...

INT. GOODE FAMILY CABIN - NIGHT

EPHRAM GOODE, 10, sits closest to the roaring fireplace, beneath the cross that hangs above the mantel, praying earnestly. In the background, Johnny Cash's "Get Rhythm" plays over a beat-up old radio.

THE GOODE FAMILY
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil, for
thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, forever and ever.

EPHRAM
Amen.

EPHRAM opens his eyes. His mother SALLY, 42, plain, weathered, and warm, flashes him a quick, nervous smile. She glances at his father.

JOHN GOODE, 51, a warm, burly tower of a man, catches the look, and smiles back at Sally. He turns to Ephram and winks reassuringly as he reaches for the mashed potatoes.

Ephram smiles, completely at ease. And then THE ROOM FILLS WITH LIGHT.

CAR HEADLIGHTS from outside, switched on in unison. Sally drops her fork. John stands up, his face hard and determined. He picks up a shotgun, cocks it, and turns to his family.

JOHN
Stay here.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

John bangs open the front door of the cabin, shotgun at the ready, into the blinding glare of the headlights. He winces, squints -- and a RIFLE BUTT slams hard into the side of his skull, dropping him to his knees. Inside, Sally screams, holding Ephram tight.

John, dazed and bleeding, reaches for his shotgun -- and a polished jackboot steps on it, pushing it out of his reach, even as the barrel of another 12-gauge shotgun is pressed against his skull.

SHERIFF DUANE COOLEY, 37, a muscular pit bull of a man, looks up from John toward the light, as if expecting a pat on the head.

COOLEY

Got 'im.

Out of the glare of the headlights step MAYOR WINDIBANKS, 41, a flinty politician with a crooked smile, and DAVIS HOWELL, 32, a wealthy young entrepreneur. Windibanks thrusts a pen and a crumpled wad of papers hastily toward John.

WINDIBANKS

For God's sake, we asked you nice.
Now quit being stubborn and sign.

John snatches the paper. It reads TRANSFER OF LAND RIGHTS. He seems about to hurl it back in Windibanks' face, but looks up to see Sally, clutching Ephram to her, within range of Cooley's shotgun.

John looks at the document, at his family, then at the Mayor.

JOHN

You go to Hell.

John grabs the barrel of Cooley's shotgun and shoves it aside, slamming a fist into Cooley's shin. John rises as Cooley stumbles back, and the two of them wrestle awkwardly for the shotgun.

COOLEY

Let go, dammit! Let go!

The shotgun FIRES, all but gutting John. He drops like a sack of old clothes as Sally screams. Cooley looks up at Windibanks, the whole of his shirtfront painted with John's blood.

COOLEY (CONT'D)

I didn't -- you saw it, I got
witnesses --

Sally hurls herself at Cooley, knocking him to the ground,
giving him all eight knuckles and then some. She turns to
EPHRAM as she and COOLEY struggle.

SALLY
Run, Ephram! RUN!

Ephram is frozen for a moment, then breaks and runs. Howell
makes a grab for him -- trips -- and Ephram escapes into
the forest. Sally continues to beat the tar out of COOLEY,
half-mad with grief and rage.

COOLEY
Get 'er off me! For God's sake--

Panicked, Windibanks steps up and thwacks Sally in the back
of the skull with the butt of JOHN's dropped shotgun. We
hear an ugly, audible CRACK, and Sally's eyes roll back in
her skull. She tumbles off Cooley, twitching. Windibanks
looks shaken.

COOLEY
Jesus. I think you killed her.

WINDIBANKS
(a desperate idea)
No. We'll say it was the boy.

Windibanks picks up the shotgun.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Ephram runs, stumbling over tree roots in the dark, gulping
huge frightened breaths in blind panic.

INTERCUT

Cooley lights a rag in a whiskey bottle and tosses it into
the Goode cabin, atop the dragged-in bodies of John and
Sally. Fire blossoms. Sally is still twitching feebly.

Windibanks and HOWELL crash through the woods.

Ephram tumbles into a stream and gets up, splashing, following the stream. We hear running water in the distance, getting louder.

The radio in the cabin still plays "Get Rhythm," surrounded by flame. The cabin burns, silhouetting Cooley standing watch.

EPHRAM follows the stream out of the trees and stops.

EXT. ANGEL FALLS PRECIPICE - NIGHT

He's at the top of Angel Falls, the wide, fast-moving stream leading into a torrent of water that plunges dozens of feet down a sheer rocky cliff into a wide lake below. Nearby are the ruins of an old waterwheel -- a burlap sack, some timbers, a coil of rope.

Windibanks and Howell appear out of the woods, Windibanks raising the shotgun. Nowhere to run. Ephram, pathetically, puts up his tiny fists.

Howell looks at the boy, then at Windibanks taking aim. His face seems to soften.

HOWELL

Christ, Mayor! He's just a kid!

Howell steps forward as Windibanks pauses. Ephram, frightened, climbs up the pile of old timbers until he's perched at the very top.

HOWELL

Hey. Hey. It's all right. Don't be afraid, son. I'm Mr. Howell.
Davis. I won't let him shoot you.
Just come on down.

Ephram, shaking with fear, slowly reaches out and takes Howell's hand. Howell helps him back down the pile, and kneels down to Ephram's eye level. With one thumb, Howell kindly smudges away a tear on Ephram's cheek. With the other hand, Howell slowly reaches for the burlap sack...

HOWELL (CONT'D)

There, now. Easy. Easy. It's all right.

Howell WHIPS THE BURLAP SACK over Ephram's head, PULLING IT TIGHT around the boy's neck! Ephram struggles and scratches, but Howell hangs on tight, turning back to a stunned Windibanks.

HOWELL (CONT'D)
Get that rope.

Windibanks hastily sets down the shotgun as Ephram screams and struggles, his frantic breaths fluttering the bag.

HOWELL (CONT'D)
Shhh... shh... easy now, son...

Windibanks ties heavy stones to either end of the rope as Howell holds Ephram. Howell winds the rope around the boy's wrists and neck, and he and Windibanks pick Ephram up.

HOWELL
Shhh. Shhh. It'll all be over soon.

THEY HURL EPHRAM OVER THE FALLS.

Ephram hits the water with a SPLASH and sinks, struggling. The weighted ropes pull him down into the dark waters, and eventually the bubbles stop rising...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ANGEL FALLS LAKESHORE - NIGHT

Time passes. A boxy beater of a car, early '80s vintage, is parked by the gently lapping shores of Angel Falls Lake, as the falls thunder in the distance. We can barely see a huge factory-like structure now built atop the falls. From within the car, '80s pop plays.

INT. THE CAR - NIGHT

DANNY BRICE, rough around the edges but innately sweet, takes a long drag off a joint, smiles, then passes it over to the passenger seat.

CRYSTAL WINDIBANKS, 17, has her bare feet and painted

toenails up on the dash, the better to show off her amazing legs. To Danny, she looks like a goddess. She takes a hit, holds it, exhales, and laughs.

CRYSTAL

(off radio)

Oh my God, what is this? Turn this shit off.

DANNY

Fuck you, Crystal. I like it.
Besides, it's my car.

Crystal sets the joint down in the ashtray and catches Danny staring at her. He's smiling like a dope.

CRYSTAL

What's that smile for?

DANNY

I just don't know why you're not out with my brother. Like everyone else.

CRYSTAL

Maybe I don't want to be like everyone else. Maybe I'm so done with meathead jocks.

DANNY

He's not so bad. Got a scholarship to State in the fall.

CRYSTAL

(laughs)

Jesus, listen to you.

DANNY

I just mean ... your dad's the fucking mayor, Crystal. My dad works the wells up top of the falls.

CRYSTAL

Ha. You know what I see when I look at my dad? A big fat fucking wallet. With skinny little legs.

Crystal breaks up laughing, and Danny laughs too, mostly from the pot. The radio hisses into static, and Danny thwacks the dash a couple times, frustrated. When the static clears, the radio is playing ... Johnny Cash. "Get Rhythm."

DANNY
Piece of shit.

CRYSTAL
No, no, I like this one! My mom
used to listen to it. Leave it,
leave it.

They get into a play-fight for control over the radio. Behind them, unseen, a shadow walks slowly past the rear windshield.

Danny grabs Crystal's hand as they fight over the radio, and holds it a second longer than would be casual. He lets go quickly. She smiles at him.

CRYSTAL
You're gonna get out of here,
Danny. I know it. Go do something
important. And I'm still gonna be
the fucking mayor's daughter of
Angel Falls.

DANNY
Not to me.

Their eyes meet. They lean in. They kiss. Gentle at first, then hungry, hormones filling the air. Their hands scramble all over each other. Crystal grabs the hem of her T-shirt, and just starts to slide it up her stomach--

CRASH! Something puts a huge dent in the roof and cracks the glass in the car windows. Crystal and Danny both shriek and jerk apart. Danny jabs at the radio to shut it off, and they sit there in absolute silence.

CRYSTAL
What the fuck was that?

DANNY
I... I don't know. Shit, my car!

And then the car... shifts. Something is still on the roof. Crystal and Danny look up.

CRYSTAL

Oh, shit, shit, shit, what is that?

DANNY

Shhh. Shhh. Don't move.

They wait in silence a long moment.

SMASH! A huge, burly arm, clad in rotted fabric, the hand and fingernails dead white under black grime, SHATTERS the passenger-side window, tosses the safety glass out, and REACHES IN to grab at Crystal!

She screams and claws at it, trying to get free, Danny reaching over to help her. It's trying to drag her out of the car!

CRYSTAL

DANNY!

Danny grabs her tightly by the arm with one hand, and punches the cigarette lighter into the dash with the other. He and Crystal both beat at the hand as it roughly jerks her against the windowframe.

The cigarette lighter POPS out of the dash, glowing hot, and Danny grabs it and STABS IT sizzling against the pale white flesh of the hand! The hand jerks and releases Crystal, and Danny quickly reaches over to yank the lever that drops her seat flat backward, out of the arm's reach.

DANNY

Go! Out the back! RUN!

Danny grabs the passenger-side seatbelt and wraps it around the arm, wrestling to trap whoever's up on the roof long enough for Crystal to escape. She crawls into the back seat, pops open the driver's side rear door, and stumbles out of the car.

Crystal takes off running up the beach, toward the treeline, sobbing, glancing behind her. Danny struggles to hold the arm, but it YANKS free and disappears out the

window. The car rocks again. Danny stops to catch his breath, then looks out the window. Crystal still running for the trees -- she's just made it --

Something ZIPS DOWN from the trees and snares her around the neck, YANKING HER with horrible swiftness up into the shadows!

DANNY

CRYSTAL!

He jerks at the lever to open his door, but it's stuck -- whatever landed on the roof bent the frame. He beats at the door in frustration, then slumps back. A long, awful silence.

WHAM. CRYSTAL'S BODY SLAMS DOWN on his windshield so hard it spiderwebs, her neck twisted all the way around, her eyes staring back at him. Her eyes are STILL MOVING. Her lips twitch as if she wants to say something... and then the last flicker of life leaves her.

Danny jerks back in horror, and his eyes catch something in the rearview mirror. A figure standing by the water, behind the car, something dangling from its hand.

In a sudden burst of rage, Danny starts the engine, slams the car into reverse, and stomps on the gas!

Crystal's body tumbles off the hood as the car roars backward, flattening the figure. Danny brakes, shifts into drive, and guns the engine, swerving to avoid Crystal's body, racing for the dirt road through the trees.

Trees race by in the glow of DANNY's headlights. He's sobbing, shaking, completely in shock. He rounds a curve --

EPHRAM GOODE stands in his headlights. A split-second glimpse of a hulking figure in rotting clothes, a burlap sack -- no holes for eyes or a mouth -- over its head, holding a thick length of rope with a heavy weighted rock at either end.

DANNY panics, jerks the wheel. The car lurches off the road, plows into a tree. DANNY's body jerks violently forward--

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAWN

Danny Brice, 36, bolts awake in bed in the blue light of the television, remembering where he is. He's wearing only blue jeans, his upper body lean, muscular, covered in scars and tattoos. The last 20 years have not been kind to him; he looks much older than he is.

Danny casts a quick glance over at a green duffel bag propped in an easy chair by the motel room window. Curtains drawn. The other bed hasn't been slept in.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - DAWN

Danny stumbles into the bathroom, limping noticeably on a bum left leg, rubbing his eyes. Runs the sink, splashes water on his face. Looks at himself in the mirror. Then behind him --

In the mirror, Ephram Goode sits in the tub.

Danny whirls -- but it's not Ephram. PATRICK BRICE, 39, has the big, flabby build of a football player gone to seed. He's slumped in the tub, his works on the ledge, a rubber cord still constricting one arm, a needle dangling limply in the fingers of his other hand.

DANNY

Jesus, Patrick!

Danny crouches down, undoing the rubber hose, slapping Patrick's cheeks. Patrick stirs. Danny's relieved -- and disgusted.

DANNY

Dammit, Patrick! You said last time was the last time!

PATRICK (GROGGY)

I just needed a little. Just a little, to hold me down.

A thought occurs to Danny. He grows urgent.

DANNY

Did you take it from our bag?

PATRICK

No... no... had a little left of my own. Saving it. I wouldn't take from us, Patrick. I know the deal..

Danny relaxes. Smiles sadly at his brother.

DANNY

That's right. The deal. Come on, come on. Up.

Danny helps a rubber-legged Patrick rise from the tub -- not easy, given Danny's own bad leg.

DANNY

Why the fuck couldn't you have played tennis? Jesus.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAWN

DANNY shuts off the TV and limps over to the previously unused bed, tucking the covers around a drowsing PATRICK.

PATRICK (HALF ASLEEP)

I'm so sorry... I fucked up, Danny.
I fucked up again.

DANNY

Shh, no, Pat. No. We're just fine. We do this job, we're fucking rich. Check you into one of those places out in Utah or North Dakota or somewhere, huh? Maybe meet a celebrity.

PATRICK

I'm supposed to look out for you. I'm the big brother...

DANNY

Shhh. Just sleep. We need you
rested up for tonight. For the big
game.

PATRICK

The big game...

Patrick nods off. Danny adjusts the blankets lovingly. When he's sure Patrick is asleep, he limps to the duffel bag in the chair, partly unzips it. It's full of tightly wrapped plastic bundles. Drugs.

Danny counts silently, seems satisfied, zips it shut. He looks back at Patrick, sleeping. Shoves the bag in the motel room safe in the bottom of the closet and locks the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL - DAWN

Danny, now dressed and wearing a jacket, shuts and locks the motel room door, shivering in the bluish first light of dawn. The FIT-RITE INN is a '60s-vintage motel just at the end of the main state road that leads through town. There's a greasy spoon in the parking lot, same '60s architecture, with a glowing sign: THE KOZY KITCHEN - OPEN 24 HOURS. Danny limps past a beat-up Chevy Suburban parked outside his room, across the parking lot toward the restaurant.

INT. KOZY KITCHEN - DAWN

A handful of patrons ignore the cheap, tacky Halloween decorations hanging up around the diner. The radio's playing country music. NICK CULLEN, 28, greasy and smug, slowly leans out of one of the booths, shamelessly ogling.

A young WAITRESS in a pink uniform is serving the table down at the end of the row. Nick watches her bend over to set down plates. The WAITRESS stands up and turns around ... and geez, she's young, braces and everything. Nick's only more enticed.

Opposite him in the booth, ANNA QUINN, 32, cool and no-nonsense, looks up from her laptop to see him leering,

makes a small noise of disgust, and resumes typing.

The Waitress peppily walks over, oblivious -- her nametag reads KIMMY -- with her notepad at the ready.

KIMMY

Hi, good morning! Do you guys know what you want?

NICK

(thinks he's smooth)

Think I can I get some fries with that shake, baby?

KIMMY

(completely oblivious)

Oh, I'm sorry, did someone else already take your order?

NICK

No, no, I mean--

KIMMY

'Cause we don't serve shakes till 11:30. Was it Doreen? She's kinda old, sometimes she forgets. I can get you some fries, though. You want steak or curly?

NICK

I -- uh -- steak fries.

KIMMY

Anything else? I could probably get you some ice cream out of the back if you really wanted --

NICK

No. No, that's fine. The fries.

KIMMY

All right. And you, Miss?

ANNA

Mushroom and swiss omelet, egg substitute, fresh fruit instead of the hash browns, and the whole

wheat toast.

KIMMY
And would you like any--

ANNA
Black coffee. Please.

KIMMY
Coming right up!

KIMMY bounces off happily to deliver their order. NICK
stares daggers after her.

NICK
(under his breath)
Fuckin' bitch.

ANNA snorts in contemptuous amusement.

NICK
Hey, shut up!

ANNA
I didn't say anything.

NICK
You think you're so fuckin' smart,
why don't you--

Danny stands over Nick. The alpha male.

DANNY
Why don't you scoot over, Nick, so
I can sit down?

A moment, then Nick scoots over, sullen. Danny sits.

ANNA
Morning, Danny.

DANNY
Morning, Anna.

NICK
Where the fuck is Patrick?

DANNY

Sleeping.

Nick snickers sarcastically -- until Danny glares at him.

DANNY

You got our insurance?

NICK

We're picking it up today. You don't have to worry about my end.

DANNY

Hope so.

NICK

Shit, man. We're dealing with the fuckin' Canadians. What, are they gonna apologize us to death?

DANNY

Mulvane? Nah. He'll probably just feed us to a grizzly, bit by bit.

Nick starts to laugh, then notices that Danny and Anna definitely aren't. His laugh dies abruptly.

DANNY

Anna, any word?

ANNA

I keep checking mail. Somebody's tense, huh?

Under the table, Anna slips one foot over to rub it against Danny's good leg. Danny jerks his leg away; his expression doesn't change. For just a moment, there's a flicker of hurt on Anna's face, then she's all business. Her laptop dings, and Danny notices.

DANNY

Is that it? Is that him?

ANNA

(reading)

"Best to enlarge your massive tool"... Relax, I'm shitting you. It's him. Meet's on. Tonight, 10.

DANNY

Where?

ANNA

Mapping it now...

She turns the laptop around, and Danny goes pale as he sees the screen.

ANNA

The beach. East side of the falls.
Danny? You all right?

Kimmy returns, setting down their plates. Nick looks away from her, out the window, still embarrassed.

KIMMY

Here we go! (to Danny) Good
morning, would you like anything?

Danny swallows hard, not looking at her.

DANNY

I'm not hungry.

The Radio plays in the background, as we

CUT TO:

EXT. ANGEL FALLS - EARLY MORNING

The RADIO keeps playing as JULIE RANDALL, 14, jogs past the Kozy Kitchen and the Fit-Rite Inn. She's a beanpole of a kid, eating up pavement in long, easy strides as she listens to the radio on her earbuds.

JULIE turns off the main road, heading uphill, reaching out her hand to gently tag a roadside sign: TEN MILE ROAD, with an arrow directing drivers ahead to ANGEL FALLS LAKE. Behind it, older and more faded, a wooden sign directs drivers to the HOWELL ENERGY GASWORKS. Over it, also weathered with time, someone has ominously spraypainted EPHRAM LIVES.

At last, JULIE turns up a long, winding driveway off Ten Mile Road, and reaches:

EXT. THE RANDALL HOUSE - MORNING

A lovably creaky three-story Victorian house in the middle of the woods. A large radio antenna is mounted on the roof. A station wagon and an old truck are parked out front, near a battered, rickety old wooden garage and an apple tree bearing fruit.

INT. RANDALL HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

Julie's father PETE RANDALL, 38, bookish and cheery, with glasses and a neatly trimmed beard, is cooking breakfast in his teacher clothes as the door bangs open and Julie walks in. She plops down at the table, cooling off, and grabs a glass of orange juice waiting for her.

PETE

Hey, Stinky. Good run?

JULIE

Just a warmup. Is Mom up yet?

PETE

I dunno. Radio said something about a wreck last night by the interstate. Long night for her.

RANDALL HOUSE ATTIC

A two-way radio console, blinking. Cheerful chatter from local cops, firefighters, and EMTs filters through. Morning pleasantries.

CHATTER from the radio continues as we see pictures on the walls. A petite, fit, Vietnamese-American woman, ELLEN NG RANDALL, embracing PETE on their wedding day. ELLEN as an EMT, leaning out the back of an ambulance. ELLEN grinning with her Army Reserve unit in Afghanistan, a bright white medic's band with a red crescent on the upper arm of her uniform. A framed front page of the ANGEL FALLS HERALD, of ELLEN in a hospital bed with PETE and a slightly younger JULIE beside her, all smiling at the camera. The headline: A HERO COMES HOME. A framed PURPLE HEART, of recent vintage.

And lastly, in front of a lovely bay window, the desk where Ellen, 39, works her dispatcher shifts for the local emergency services, cables snaking from the radio into the eaves of the roof. Ellen is slumped at the desk, fast asleep with her head next to the microphone, a metal cane resting within easy reach against the table. A laptop computer idles, screen saver on.

PUSH IN steadily on Ellen. Her sleep seems uneasy, troubled. Her face twitches, grimaces -- she whimpers --

PETE (O.S.)

Ellen.

Ellen jerks awake, one hand reflexively lashing out, knocking papers off the desk and tipping over the microphone.

Pete stands at the opposite end of the room, in the doorway leading from the stairs, a cup of coffee steaming in his hand. Keeping a careful distance.

PETE

Hey. It's me. It's OK.

ELLEN

(shaking it off)

Hey. Sorry. I just ...

PETE

It's OK. Bad night?

Ellen smiles, genuinely glad to see him, as he walks over to her and hands her the coffee. He cups a hand to the side of her face, and she leans into it gratefully.

ELLEN

Same as all the others. Jesus. How late did I sleep?

PETE

Julie's back from her run. Got breakfast ready, when you want to come down. She's still getting cleaned up.

ELLEN

Okay, good. Yeah. Yeah, I'll be down.

PETE

She's got that meet today...

ELLEN

I know. I know.

PETE

The doctor said --

ELLEN

I know what the doctor said.

Ellen instantly regrets saying it. Pete smiles at her, a little sadly, and she smiles back.

PETE

All right. Come on and eat before our little black hole sucks it all down.

Pete kisses her on the forehead and leaves. Ellen runs her hands over her face. Looks over at the cane by the desk.

SECOND FLOOR

Ellen makes her way down the stairs from the attic with the cane, limping visibly on her right leg, but still reasonably mobile. She passes the door to her and Pete's room, the covers on their bed rumped, but mostly on Pete's

side. The hall bathroom door is ajar, the bathroom empty, steam still wisping out from Julie's shower. Julie's door, decorated with a handpainted sign bearing her name, is shut, cheery music blasting from behind it, along with the steady blips of instant messages. Ellen smiles.

FIRST FLOOR

Down another set of stairs, Ellen reaches the ground floor, the front door down a narrow hallway behind her. She passes the dining room on the left and the family room on the right.

KITCHEN

Ellen enters the kitchen at the back of the house. Pete's just dishing up the eggs onto three plates, with wheat toast and juice. She gives Pete a kiss and leans her head against his shoulder.

Their cozy moment is interrupted by Julie banging down the stairs. She's dressed for school -- casual, tomboyish -- with her backpack over one shoulder.

ELLEN

(off the backpack)

Come on, honey, don't wear it like that. You'll crook your spine.

JULIE

(kisses her on the cheek)

Morning, Mom.

ELLEN

It's got two straps for a reason.

Julie begins to walk around in an exaggerated, hunchback-ish way, until Ellen can't keep a straight face. She swats Julie affectionately, and they sit down at the table.

ELLEN

(to JULIE)

So, this mysterious social studies project of yours -- how's it going?

JULIE

It's not mysterious. Just some local history.

PETE

It's not morbid, is it? Mrs. Carruthers gave me a "you're raising an axe murderer" look after you turned in that paper on the Native American massacre.

JULIE

(smart-aleck)

Morbid is cool. Terry said Justin Harris said he liked the massacre paper.

PETE

Justin Harris thinks the three kinds of rock are "hard, soft, and alternative." Seriously. He put that on an actual test.

JULIE

(changing the subject)

We're almost out of firewood.

PETE

One of these days I'm gonna teach you how to chop it yourself.

ELLEN

Not with that axe, you won't.

PETE

All right, fine. I'll cut some this weekend. (pretends to flex muscles) Maybe take off my shirt. Let your mom admire the view.

Julie could not be more repulsed.

ELLEN

Don't worry. I'm sure our "good samaritan" will take care of it before your dad.

PETE

He keeps taking our apples like that, he'd better. I think he made off with a couple of bushels last time. (beat) And he chops the wood all sloppy.

JULIE

(teasing)

Don't tell me you're jealous of some hobo living out in the woods.

PETE

(mock serious)

Vagrant, honey. Hoboes have bindles.

Ellen looks at the clock on the microwave.

ELLEN

Oh, shoot, you're gonna be late.
Go on, go on, Pete. I've got dishes.

The Randalls all scramble up from the table: Ellen gathering dishes, Julie collecting her bag, Pete picking up his satchel and taking the keys to the station wagon off a hook by the door.

PETE

I'm gonna leave you the truck, OK?
For this afternoon.

ELLEN

Sure. Fine.

JULIE

Are you coming, Mom?

Ellen stops putting dishes in the sink, just sort of freezes there.

ELLEN

I'll try. I really will.

Julie doesn't love this answer, but she seems to understand.

JULIE
I love you, Mom.

ELLEN
Love you too, kiddo. Have a good
day at school. Make sure your dad
doesn't forget his lunch money,
'kay?

PETE
(mock indignant)
It was just the one time...!

PETE and JULIE leave; ELLEN hears the car start and drive
off. She stands at the sink, leaning on the counter to
favor her bad leg, and sighs heavily.

INT. ATTIC

Ellen, showered and changed into fresh clothes, walks with
her cane back into the attic, takes a deep breath, and sits
back down at the radio. She taps keys on the laptop to
deactivate the screensaver, bringing up a list of incoming
calls and locations, and leans into the microphone.

ELLEN
Dispatch One here, back on shift.
Good morning, boys and girls.

FIRST VOICE (RADIO)
What, again? Didn't we just get
rid of you at midnight?

ELLEN
No rest for the wicked,
Randy. You should know.

SECOND VOICE (RADIO)
When are we gonna get you back
into a rig?

ELLEN
Maybe when you learn to drive,
Steve.

MO (RADIO)

Hey, Ellen, it's Mo.

ELLEN

(fondly)

Hey, Mo. How's crime in the big city?

INT. ANGEL FALLS SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MORNING

SHERIFF MAURICE "MO" TOWNE, 40s, burly, with a kind face, sits at a desk in a fairly subdued little station house, filling out paperwork from his deputies' work on last night's wreck. A portable chess set sits on one corner of his desk, halfway through a game.

MO

This fast-paced life, it's killing me. Shirleen said the regional meet's coming up this afternoon. You need a ride?

INTERCUT

ELLEN subconsciously starts to rub her bad leg.

ELLEN

I ... no, Mo, that's all right.

MO (RADIO)

... Well, you change your mind, just give a holler, all right?

ELLEN

Thanks, Mo. Dispatch out.

Ellen looks at her cane again, letting herself experience just one moment of abject misery.

Mo looks at his radio a little sadly, obviously concerned for his friend, and then gets back to his paperwork.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROSS-COUNTRY MEET - AFTERNOON

A regional high school cross-country meet. Dirt path course out in the woods. The Angel High Cherubs cross-country team stretches near their school bus. JULIE stands among her TEAMMATES, pinning on her number.

In the crowd of parents and spectators, Pete checks his watch.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ATTIC - AFTERNOON

Ellen takes off her headset and pushes back from her desk. She shuts off the radio, closes the computer. Takes a deep breath, psyching herself up.

Julie and her teammates with the other RUNNERS, poised at the starting line. The starter gun sounds. The race begins.

INT. BATHROOM

Ellen towels her face dry. Looks at herself in the mirror. She picks up a pill bottle; the label reads FOR ACUTE ANXIETY.

Julie rounds a curve on a wooded path, in the middle of the pack of runners.

From a great distance, somewhere in the woods, we see the runners passing through the trees.

Reverse angle. The runners pass by in foreground, and for just a moment, in the gap between runners, we think we might just have seen the figure of Ephram Goode way off in the forest, watching. Then he's gone.

INT. KITCHEN

Ellen grabs the remaining keys off the hook by the door. She looks out the window at the old pickup truck. Shuts her eyes.

She puts her hand on the doorknob. Slowly turns it.

Julie is closer to the front of the pack as they pass the spectator area. Pete cheers. Julie notices Ellen's absence; a flicker of hurt crosses her face. Then she gets her mind back in the race.

Ellen opens the door, and opens her eyes. The light shining on her is harsh, yellow. All wrong.

EXT. RANDALL HOUSE BACK PORCH / DESERT

This isn't the Randalls' yard. A rocky, sun-blasted dirt road yawns away into the distance. A Humvee lies on its side in the road, boiling black smoke, tires aflame.

CPL. HENRY RODRIGUEZ, 24, slumps next to the Humvee's undercarriage in full combat gear, his legs bloody and ruined. He reaches out to ELLEN with a blood-soaked arm, fingers pointing in all the wrong directions.

HENRY
Doc. Please, Doc.

Ellen shuts her eyes tight, wavering on the threshold of the door. She grips her cane until her knuckles turn white. Opens her eyes again. The horrible sight is still there.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Please, Doc. Stuh. Stay with the truck.

Ellen takes a step forward, out onto the porch. The yellow desert light seems to blast at her.

HENRY (CONT'D)
(screams)
STAY IN COVER!

Ellen tries to take another step. Her bad leg gives out, and she collapses on the porch, sobbing. She shuts her eyes and begins to crawl slowly, painfully, back inside the house.

HENRY (CONT'D)
(still screaming)
STAY PUT, DOC! DON'T! DON'T!
DON'T--!

Ellen hauls herself onto the kitchen floor and slams the door shut. The sound of Henry's screaming instantly dies. She puts her back against the door and lets out a huge sob that shakes her whole body. Disgusted and frustrated, Ellen picks up her cane and flings it across the kitchen floor.

JULIE, a towel around her neck, carries a trophy through the crowd of other Runners, PARENTS and COACHES. She glimpses Pete through the crowd, standing alone. He smiles at her, as if to say, "She tried." Walks over to JULIE and gives her a hug.

PETE
Hey, stinky.

INT. RANDALL HOUSE KITCHEN - DUSK

Ellen chops vegetables at the counter, not looking up as she hears the truck pull up. Pete and Julie enter to the sink full of dirty dishes -- Ellen's been busy.

ELLEN
(not looking at them)
Hey, I'm almost done with the
salad here. And I figured, special
treat, I'd make homemade pizza.
(beat) So that's in the oven.

Ellen stops, puts down the knife.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
(still turned away)
How'd you do?

Julie holds up the trophy. Smiles a little.

JULIE
Second place.

Ellen turns to face Julie at last, tremendous guilt and shame on her face.

Julie hesitates a moment. Then she puts the trophy down on the kitchen table and goes to give Ellen a huge hug. Julie's a good kid.

Ellen looks past Julie at Pete, tears in her eyes. Pete

smiles sadly. Ellen kisses the top of Julie's head.

CUT TO:

INT. DANNY'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

From a duffel bag, Nick spills a small pile of pistols and a pump-action shotgun onto the motel bedspread.

NICK

We are fuckin' insured.

Danny picks up one of the pistols, checks the clip familiarly.

ANNA

Do we really need this kind of firepower? I don't want Mulvane to get any wrong ideas.

DANNY

(nervous)

Fuck Mulvane. The guns aren't for him. (toward the bathroom) Pat!

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM

Patrick's hunched over, sitting on the edge of the bathtub, His satchel of works sits atop the closed toilet seat, along with a baggie of a small amount of brown powder.

DANNY (O.S.)

Patrick! Come on!

Patrick reaches for the baggie, face pale, hands shaky.

DANNY (O.S.)

Time for the big game!

The words reach Patrick. His face sets, resolved. He won't let Danny down. This time. He grabs the baggie in his fist, wavers just a moment, then stuffs it back in his left sock.

PATRICK
(to himself)
The big game.

RESUME - MOTEL ROOM

As the toilet flushes, Patrick comes out of the bathroom, tucking in the back of his shirt. (Hiding his works.)

PATRICK
Let's do this.

Danny puts a hand on his shoulder, sizing him up.

DANNY
Are you right?

PATRICK
I'm good. (beat) I'm good.

Danny smiles. Knows he's telling the truth. This time.

DANNY
All right, pack it up. Get it in
the car.

DANNY hands the bag of drugs to ANNA. She heads out of the room, followed by Nick stuffing the shotgun back in the bag of guns, and Patrick.

DANNY stands alone in the middle of the room, looks at himself in the mirror. His confidence bleeds into quiet terror.

CUT TO:

EXT. RANDALL HOUSE - NIGHT

The windows are lit with a cheery glow.

INT. RANDALL HOUSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Warm, cozy, with old-fashioned wallpaper and family photos hung on the walls. Ellen, Pete, and Julie sit at the dining room table around the half-eaten pizza, talking happily.

ELLEN

I'm not seeing how this is less morbid than "Native American massacre."

JULIE

Oh, come on, it's so cool. I mean, the original fire is totally suspicious. They started building the gasworks on the very same land, like, the next week. And supposedly some 10-year-old kid did it? A kid no one ever sees again? Right.

EXT. RANDALL HOUSE YARD - NIGHT

Heavy, lumbering feet, in rotting, mud-caked boots, drag through the fallen leaves toward the shadowy back of the Randalls' garage, where firewood is stacked in a small pile next to a wooden door.

INT. RANDALL GARAGE - NIGHT

The door swings open, throwing light on a double-bladed axe leaning against one wall. A shadow falls across it.

RESUME - RANDALL HOUSE DINING ROOM

JULIE

And then, like, exactly 20 years later, all those deaths in a couple of months. Crystal Windibanks, Lonnie Howell. Sheriff Cooley shooting the mayor. The Howells drowning out on the lake. No prints, no forensic evidence of any kind. No suspect. How is any of that not cool?

ELLEN

We've got to get you some better interests.

JULIE
Maybe if you let me watch R-rated
movies--

ELLEN
Nice try.

JULIE
Dad could teach me to shoot.

PETE
Bad enough your mom knows how. I
don't want you ganging up on me.

JULIE
(sudden idea)
Oh my God. What if our good
Samaritan is Ephram Goode? Come
on. Hobo --

PETE
Vagrant.

JULIE
-- living out in the woods? Who we
never see?

EXT. RANDALL HOUSE YARD

The huge feet cross the dead leaves in long, slow strides,
dragging the axe blade across the ground.

RESUME - RANDALL HOUSE DINING ROOM

ELLEN
And who ... chops firewood for us?
Julie. We get a lot of wanderers
coming through here. Mo's dealing
with them all the time.

PETE
Besides, if Ephram Goode really
wanted our apples, wouldn't he
just kill us all and take them?

A loud CREAK of wooden boards reaches their ears. The
Randalls go silent. Another CREAK.

JULIE
Did you hear that?

PETE
Maybe it's Ephram Goode!

Ellen throws her napkin at him, playfully.

ELLEN
Just for that, you get to go
check.

PETE
All right, all right.

Pete gets up from the table, completely unspooked.

INT. KITCHEN

PETE wanders into the brightly lit kitchen, trying to peer out the windows. He sees only his own reflection against the darkness.

ELLEN (O.S.)
Honey? Who is it?

PETE
I can't see anyone. Porch light's
burned out again.

The boards of the porch creak again, loud, close. Pete maybe starts to get just a little nervous. He approaches the door.

EXT. OUTSIDE - NIGHT

Against the darkness, huge, pale, grimy hands raise the axe high, ready to bring it down...

RESUME - KITCHEN

Pete opens the door and looks down --

The fattest, meanest-looking CAT the world has ever seen stares up at him. The porch planks creak beneath it. Pete

scowls and shoos it away.

PETE

Go on. Get! Get!

The Cat hisses at him and saunters off.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The axe falls -- and splits a log in half. Pale, cadaverous hands pick up both halves and toss them onto a good-sized pile.

The Randalls' lights are just visible through the trees. A huge, hulking figure stands in the dark clearing next to a tree stump. Leans on the axe, as if taking a breather.

EXT. RANDALL YARD

The hands set a stack of cut wood onto the pile near the Randalls' garage, leaving the axe on top. The Cat rounds a corner of the garage, sees the figure, hisses, and runs off.

Apples hang from the branches of the Randalls' tree. One hand rises, snatching the fruit. Stuffs them into rotted pockets -- with a curious squelching sound, like mud.

High up in the tree, a single fat, juicy apple dangles. THWAP! Something whizzes upward and SNAPS the apple off the branch, sending it flying into the air. It lands between the Randalls' cars, cushioned by the leaves.

Huge feet approach the apple. Pan up rotting, stained coveralls; one massive hand wraps a THICK ROPE, a heavy rock knotted at each end, around the other muscular forearm, the flesh dead white. The hand reaches down, picks up the apple, raises it -- to a head covered by a BURLAP SACK.

EPHRAM GOODE sticks the apple under the front of the sack; his hand emerges empty. We see chewing motions, hear crunching. He swallows the whole thing.

Through the windows, we see the Randalls in the kitchen, bringing in the dinner dishes. Ephram sees them. His head tilts slightly, curious.

INT. RANDALL KITCHEN

The family assembly line: Pete washes, Ellen dries, Julie puts the dishes away. A radio atop the fridge blares Bon Jovi's "Living on a Prayer." Pete is singing along, using a sudsy wire whisk as a microphone.

PETE
(sings, awfully)
WHOOOOOAA ... we're HALF-WAY THEY-
YERE! WHOOOA-OAH!

Ellen is trying not to crack up. Julie cannot believe she's related to these dorks.

The radio fizzles into static, to Pete's dismay. Weird interference crackles. And then ... Johnny Cash. "Get Rhythm."

JULIE
You see? Even the radio doesn't
want you to sing.

PETE
Huh. What do you think,
interference?

ELLEN
One of the country stations up in
the mountains, maybe. The signal
carries at night.

PETE smiles at her. ELLEN's pleasantly baffled.

ELLEN
What?

PETE
Remember our honeymoon? We got
lost on the way to that bed and
breakfast --

ELLEN
And we had to stop at that honky-
tonk bar at one in the morning.
And the jukebox was nothing but
Johnny Cash --

PETE
And one Duran Duran song.

ELLEN AND PETE
(in unison)
"For the tourists."

They both laugh.

JULIE
You guys are such nerds.

Pete snaps his dishtowel playfully at Julie and sweeps Ellen up in his arms. They begin to dance to the song. Julie groans, good-naturedly mortified.

EXT. YARD

Just beyond the periphery of the house's lights, EPHRAM watches the Randalls through the kitchen windows, the song faintly audible. One giant foot begins to tap to the beat. He leans slowly toward the house, like a plant toward sunlight.

The sound of a passing car snaps EPHRAM's reverie. The sack flutters as he SNIFFS THE AIR. Trouble. EPHRAM retreats into the shadows ... and he's gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. TEN MILE ROAD - NIGHT

The Suburban rumbles into the hills outside town. Headlights sweep across the tall, eerie trees.

INT. DANNY'S SUBURBAN - NIGHT

Anna drives, Danny shotgun, Patrick and Nick in the back seat. On the radio, some AM host fulminates at low volume. Patrick's sweating. Doesn't look great. Nick notices.

NICK
(completely insincere)
Hey, All-State. You all right? You

need a little something, maybe?

PATRICK

Shut the fuck up, Nick.

ANNA

Don't make me turn this car
around.

Nick flips her the bird -- but low, behind her seat, where she can't see in the mirror.

The car turns off the main road onto a side road. When he's not watching the passing shapes and shadows of the trees, Danny keeps looking back at the dial of the radio. Waiting for a song to start playing. ANNA looks at him, worried. DANNY's fingers drum nervously on his his bad leg.

EXT. ANGEL FALLS LAKESHORE - NIGHT

The Suburban rolls slowly to a stop just at the edge of the woods, where they peter out into the sandy shore of the beach. A pair of men, FRANCIS and ELLROY, step from the shadows carrying shotguns. Francis looks dressed for a hunting trip; Ellroy, for some reason, is wearing a three-piece business suit and an overcoat, none of which quite fit him right. They point flashlights and shotguns at the windows of the cab.

Slowly, Danny rolls down the window, squinting in the glare of Ellroy's flashlight. Cool as a cucumber.

Ellroy studies a Polaroid in his hand, compares it to Danny's face. Nods, lifts the shotgun just slightly, and motions them onward.

ELLROY

On you go. Slowly.

DANNY

Nice suit.

ELLROY

(genuinely pleased)

Thank you.

The Suburban rolls on. Ellroy turns to FRANCIS, proud of

himself.

ELLROY

Told you. A proper first
impression.

Francis spits on the asphalt, unimpressed.

The Suburban rolls into a small camp set up on the beach --
Jeeps and other off-roaders, minimal lights. An RV,
incongruous, sits by the lakeshore, next to a small wooden
rowboat.

Danny and the others climb out of the car, Danny carrying
the bag of drugs. A short, muscular woman is there waiting
for them.

MAGGIE has First Nations blood showing in her features,
swirling tattoos all up one bare arm. A hunting rifle's
crooked casually in one arm. She and Anna take a half
second to size each other up coolly, and then Maggie turns
to Danny.

MAGGIE

Brice.

DANNY

(hefts the bag)

That's me.

MAGGIE

You're early. (beat) Come with me.
These three stay.

Anna starts forward, but Danny stops her with a look, and
follows Maggie deeper into the camp.

Mulvane's camp has maybe 30 people, counting the ones we've
already seen. Suspicious eyes watch Danny as he passes:

A huge guy -- LUMBERING JACK -- glowers at Danny as he
easily hefts heavy plastic cases into the back of a truck.
A petite woman -- ELODIE -- works under the truck's hood.
(We'll see this truck later.)

A bespectacled, professorial, middle-aged man -- DOC
HATCHETT -- fixes Danny with a marksman's eye. He's seated
at a camp table, expertly cleaning pistol parts spread out

on an oilcloth.

A woman in a LEATHER JACKET and a man with a TATTOOED HEAD, chatting amiably, pause to deliberately bump into Danny as he passes, staring him down for a moment. Maggie doesn't break stride. Danny limps faster to catch up.

As they approach the RV, Danny sees two men, ODELL and EUSTACE, dragging two large bundles -- people-sized, wrapped in plastic tarps, each with a cinderblock tied at one end -- toward the rowboat. Danny tries not to look.

Maggie reaches the RV's side door, knocks in a prearranged pattern. Opens it, and nods to Danny. He steps inside.

INT. MULVANE'S RV - NIGHT

The blue-white glow of a TV screen casts a dim light on the well-appointed interior.

All 6'4" of RORY MULVANE sprawls out on a bench on one side of the RV, watching a wall-mounted TV. His thick mane of red hair and bushy red beard match oddly well with a coat made of grizzly bear hide, the collar fringed in claws. Mulvane tops up a mug on the table next to him from a bottle of Johnnie Walker. A ten-inch hunting knife is stuck vertically in the table.

Danny glances at the screen. Mulvane's watching "Degrassi." Mulvane smiles, unsettlingly.

MULVANE

Danny Brice. What do you think of the place?

DANNY

It's nice. You had it long?

MULVANE

Just took it off the market.

Mulvane holds up the mug, takes a genteel sip from it. The mug reads WORLD'S GREATEST GRANDPA. Danny looks more closely at the knife stuck in the table -- there's fresh blood smeared on the blade. And small spatters of blood across the glass of a row of framed photos behind Mulvane -- school portraits of young kids, a smiling elderly

couple. Danny tries not to look disturbed.

He begins to unzip the bag, but Mulvane stops him.

MULVANE

Look at you, all business! Relax,
Danny boy. Drink?

DANNY

Not on the job.

MULVANE

You look nervous.

DANNY

Show me a man who ain't nervous in
the presence of Rory Mulvane, sir,
and I'll show you a fuckin' liar.

MULVANE

Ha! Right you are. Very well.

MULVANE rises, stooping in the low ceiling of the RV, and
plucks the knife from the table

MULVANE (CONT'D)

Let's do business.

LAKESHORE CAMP - NIGHT

HANDS, fingers wrapped in band-aids, reach into Danny's
drug bag, moving the neat wrapped parcels to a folding card
table.

ANIL, Mulvane's chemist, is a chubby, frizzy-haired guy in
a thick wooly sweater, under a makeshift tent next to a
truck, with scales and chemical testing equipment set up on
the table. Mulvane and Danny watch him work.

DANNY

You're not worried someone's gonna
spot all this?

MULVANE

We came in from the mountains,
down past the falls. But we coulda
driven right up main street, far

as I can tell. This town's dead.
Hicksville. Had my tech guy check.
No shootings, no assaults,
nothing. Not in, what, twenty
years? Makes Saskatchewan look
like Antarctica.

Danny scans the camp again, nervously. Listening to car
radios playing softly in the distance.

DANNY
Sure. Nothing in twenty years.

Mulvane looks intrigued, but before he can ask, Maggie
arrives with Danny's crew in tow.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Ah. Mr. Mulvane, this is my
brother Pat. Patrick.

Mulvane's seen junkies before; he sizes PATRICK up
instantly and just nods.

DANNY (CONT'D)
You know Anna.

MULVANE
Charmed, as ever.

He takes Anna's hand and kisses it, gentlemanly. Maggie
sees this, glowers, and quickly stalks off. ANNA smiles
courteously at MULVANE -- then glances for Danny's
reaction.

DANNY
And this is Nick.

NICK
(failing to be cool)
Hey.

Mulvane gives Nick a long, menacing look -- has the
satisfaction of seeing Nick's cool waver for a second --
and then smirks and looks away. Nick's face darkens in
humiliation.

ANIL
Mr. Mulvane? You said 30, right?

MULVANE
(to DANNY)
We said 30, right?

DANNY
Yes, sir.

ANIL
I count 29.

Danny turns, slowly. Looks back at Patrick, who flashes him an innocent look of real panic, and at Anna, who's keeping her cool as ever. Looks at Mulvane, whose smile remains on his lips but has begun to drain from his eyes. This is bad.

ANIL (CONT'D)
Oh, wait.

Anil digs in the bag, finds one last packet way in the back.

ANIL (CONT'D)
My mistake. 30.

Danny looks very quietly relieved. Mulvane lets out a big, barking laugh.

TIME CUT:

Anil, satisfied by the product's quality, duct-tapes the slit he cut in the last bag of drugs, and puts it with the rest back in the bag. Mulvane is regaling his guests with the story of his coat.

MULVANE
... Now, I've tracked this shaggy
bastard on foot for thirty miles,
all up and down the same mountain.

Danny and Anna listen politely. Patrick's desperate for anything to take his mind off his growing discomfort. Nick's trying not to look impressed.

MULVANE (CONT'D)
I lift the rifle, and -- click.
Damn thing's frozen up on me. So I
figure, to hell with it --

Mulvane suddenly draws his knife with a flourish. Everyone else takes a small step back.

MULVANE (CONT'D)
I'll do it up old-fashioned.

Mulvane lifts his shirt briefly, revealing three ugly parallel scar tracks across a well-muscled abdomen.

MULVANE
He got his licks in. But I got a damn fine coat.

ANIL
All set here, Mr. Mulvane.

MULVANE sheathes the knife again.

MULVANE
Good, good. (to Danny) Let me get my tech guy about payment. Jean-Michel!

JEAN-MICHEL is the very picture of a backwoods rustic -- except for the iPhone in his fingerless-gloved hand. The sneer he levels at the gadget does not fade when he looks up at Danny.

JEAN-MICHEL
(French-Canadian accent)
Your coverage here, it is for *merde*. Here.

With his other hand, he contemptuously fishes a small plastic gadget out of his pocket and tosses it to Danny.

JEAN-MICHEL
(still iPhoning)
Everywhere, I get the shitty slow access. I cannot do work.

Jean-Michel skulks off, muttering curses in French. Danny looks at the gadget in his own hand -- a GPS locator -- and frowns.

DANNY
This doesn't look like money.

MULVANE

You'll find it buried up at the
gasworks. Coordinates are in
there. I like to avoid keeping the
money and the merchandise all in
one location.

Danny hands the GPS to Anna, who checks the screen and
nods. Looks all right.

DANNY

And what if the money's not where
you say it is?

MULVANE

I guess you'll just have to trust
my reputation.

EDGE OF THE LAKE

Out behind the RV, Jean-Michel shakes his iPhone, holds it
low, holds it high. Does not like the results.

JEAN-MICHEL

Network engineers, I fuck all of
your mothers.

He sees the rowboat approaching. Gets an idea.

JEAN-MICHEL (CONT'D)

Odell! Eustace! You finish with
the dump so soon?

No one answers. The rowboat drifts closer.

LAKESHORE CAMP

As Anil carries the bag of drugs out from under his tent,
Mulvane nods, satisfied.

MULVANE

Don't suppose you'd want to do
business again sometime?

Danny looks briefly at Patrick, then back at Mulvane.

DANNY

We might be laying low for a while. Enjoying the spoils. No offense.

MULVANE

Of course. You ever change your mind, though, that pretty lady of yours knows where to find me.

Mulvane puts a hand out for Danny to shake. Danny, after a moment, shakes. And freezes.

All around him, the various car radios in the camp have just gone squawking into STATIC.

INTERCUT

Jean-Michel peers out at the rowboat as it approaches.

JEAN-MICHEL

Odell? Eustace?

The rowboat draws closer. It's empty. *But still moving.*

Danny remains frozen, listening intently, even as a perturbed Mulvane pulls his hand away.

MULVANE

Is something--

Danny's not even looking at him.

DANNY

Shhhh.

Mulvane's men turn to look, baffled, as radios throughout the camp begin to play music. The same song, faint but unmistakable. Johnny Cash's "Get Rhythm."

As the empty rowboat approaches Jean-Michel, he sees little round objects floating to the surface one by one from around the underside of the boat.

The song grows louder, filling the camp. Danny draws his pistol, keeping it low by his waist. He's sweating, hands shaking. Anna takes a step toward him, but he emphatically

waves her away.

ANNA

Danny, what the hell?

Mulvane is offended. Not far away, Maggie sees Danny with the gun, and is similarly displeased.

MULVANE

What the fuck are you on, Danny
boy?

DANNY

I knew it. I knew he'd come back.

Maggie appears, ramming a shotgun barrel hard against Danny's lower back.

MAGGIE

You've got five seconds to drop
it. Four.

Jean-Michel reaches down into the water, picks up one of the objects that have bobbed up in advance of the approaching empty rowboat. It's an apple.

EPHRAM EXPLODES UP OUT OF THE LAKE, waist deep, lifting the boat high above his head. Jean-Michel looks up, dropping the apple. He takes a quick, stumbling step backward --

EPHRAM THROWS THE ENTIRE BOAT AT HIM.

The prow drives Jean-Michel back into the side of the RV -- and sticks there. The iPhone remains clutched in Jean-Michel's twitching hand.

Maggie whirls at the sound of the crash, the shotgun still at Danny's back. The camp erupts into chaos, men and women grabbing guns. Mulvane steps forward and wraps a hand around Danny's throat. Anna tries to move toward them, her hands up in conciliation, but a look from Maggie stops her cold. Nick and Patrick are freaking out, completely confused.

MULVANE

What did you bring here? Is this
the law?

DANNY
(beyond terrified)
This is twenty years ago.

And then Ephram strides into the camp, dripping wet, swinging a rock-weighted rope like a lasso above his head. And all hell breaks loose.

Three of Mulvane's men charge Ephram with guns. A single swipe of Ephram's rope scatters them like straw.

Mulvane drops Danny gasping to the sand, and turns with Maggie to stare in awe at Ephram. Mulvane holds out a hand, without even looking, and Maggie puts the shotgun in it. Mulvane cocks it and steps forward without hesitation to challenge Ephram, Maggie right behind him.

Ephram doesn't even look -- just snaps the rope out. The rock on the end punches Mulvane right in the torso -- we hear RIBS CRACK -- and piledrives him off his feet and into Maggie, sending them both into the sand.

The instant they see Mulvane out cold, Anna, Patrick, and Nick all draw guns. Only Anna holds hers like a professional, calm and low and double-handed. Danny can't take his eyes off Ephram. He waves them away from him.

DANNY
Stay low. Stay out of his line of
sight. Get to the truck.

ANNA
Danny, what is that--?

DANNY
I said RUN!

They don't need telling twice. Danny stands up shakily and limps on his bad leg toward Ephram, holding up his pistol. Danny takes aim and fires, hitting Ephram center mass. Ephram stops in his tracks, body jerking as the bullets splash into him. Danny fires until his gun clicks empty.

But Ephram's still standing. Instead of blood, the wounds on his chest ooze black, murky water and mud -- then slowly seal themselves over. Even the clothing he wears seems to reknit itself over the bullet holes.

Ephram's bag-covered head turns, until he's very clearly looking right at Danny. Ephram tilts his head, curious.

Danny takes one step back, stuffs the empty pistol in his waistband, and turns to flee. One step at a time, shrugging off bullet hits and smashing more of Mulvane's men out of his way, Ephram begins to follow...

Keeping low, Anna makes her way around the perimeter of the camp, gun ready. Nick and Patrick follow, Patrick hesitant, always turning back. Somewhere behind them, a fireball erupts, to the sound of screams.

PATRICK

You guys go on ahead.

ANNA

You heard what Danny said!

PATRICK

I can't leave him.

Anna looks at Patrick, her face softening. She just nods. Patrick takes off, threading back the way he came. Anna looks at Nick probingly.

NICK

I'm going to the fucking car. I
like that plan.

Anna nods and runs onward, crouched low. Nick follows, but the sand's slippery, and he loses his footing, stumbling into the gap between two parked trucks.

NICK

(to Anna ahead)

Hey, wait!

Nick gets to his feet -- and Anil flies screaming through the air from the center of the camp. Anil smacks hard off the sides of the two cars on his way down, landing in the gap mere feet from Nick.

Anil's banged up, clutching the bag of drugs to his chest. He tries frantically to claw his way cross the sand toward Nick -- but Ephram's rope is wrapped firmly around his ankle.

ANIL

Help me. Please. Please.

The rope goes taut. Anil clings to the tire of one of the cars with his free hand, pleading to Nick with his eyes. Nick reaches out...

Danny limps blindly through the camp, ducks behind a car. He peers back around the bumper to see Ephram yank hard on his end of his rope, dragging a screaming Anil back toward Ephram across the sand. Anil's screaming ends with a sudden loud crack of bone. Danny cringes, turns --

Maggie punches him in the face, bouncing Danny's skull off the side of the car. She's breathing hard, blood streaming from her nose, and one of her eyes is growing scarlet from burst vessels. As Danny lolls, dazed, she flicks open a wicked-looking knife.

MAGGIE

If I liked you, I'd be asking
which ear you were most partial
to. (beat) I don't like you.

Patrick HITS HER LIKE A FREIGHT TRAIN. Classic football tackle. Before she can move, Patrick's punching her in the face, vicious, wild, anything to protect his brother.

Danny regains his wits and pulls Patrick off a dazed Maggie.

DANNY

Enough! Enough, Pat! She's down.

PATRICK

You OK?

DANNY

... I'm so glad you didn't play
tennis.

Patrick and Danny run for the car. Behind them, Maggie stirs...

Anna unlocks the Suburban, opens the driver's side. Nick runs up and flings the passenger-side door open.

Danny and Patrick run across the sand, Danny limping.

Around them, the camp is burning. Ephram's been busy.

Maggie rolls over onto her stomach, bloodied and furious. Reaches for a fat, snub-nosed revolver in the her waistband.

Nick throws something in the back of the Suburban; Anna doesn't notice, since she's just spotted Patrick and Danny through the windshield. Nick straps himself into the front passenger seat, only to see Anna getting out of the car.

Danny and Patrick see the Suburban ahead, and pick up the pace.

Maggie stumbles toward the fleeing Danny and Patrick. Blood runs down into one of her eyes from a cut on her forehead. She takes shaky aim with the pistol and fires. The shot clips Danny's right arm as he runs, and he staggers, but he keeps going.

Maggie fires again. One of the rear windows in the Suburban explodes. Nick cringes and cowers in the passenger's seat; Anna drops behind the open driver's side door for cover. Maggie fires again, the blood in her eye throwing off her aim, and one of the Suburban's rear tires blows out.

Maggie smears the blood out of her eye, grips the butt of the pistol with her free hand to steady her aim, and draws a bead on Danny's back--

Ephram casually TOSSES MAGGIE THROUGH THE AIR; she bounces off a car hood. Ephram hardly seems to notice, so fixed is his attention on Danny.

Anna rises from behind the cover of the driver's side door and sees Ephram pursuing Danny and Patrick. She flings open one of the passenger doors; the bag of guns lies on the seat. Anna takes out the shotgun and cocks it. Her hands shake.

Danny glances back. Ephram's gaining on them, inevitable and surefooted against their slip-sliding strides across the sand. Ephram lifts the rope, whirling one blood-painted rock above his head.

A shotgun blast rips through Ephram, and he stumbles backward. Anna takes expert aim, pumps the spent cartridge

out, and prepares to fire again. She nods to Danny and Patrick.

ANNA

Come on!

Ephram lurches forward, and Anna hits him with another blast. Danny and Patrick rush past her, piling into the Suburban. Anna fires one more time, and Ephram goes down on his back. Anna turns, all but flings the shotgun into a squawking Nick's lap, and slides into the driver's seat.

The Suburban's doors slam. The engine roars. Anna guns it, fishtails around, and the Suburban zooms off the beach and out of the camp, sending a baffled Ellroy and Francis diving for cover.

INT. DANNY'S SUBURBAN - NIGHT

The SLAP SLAP SLAP of the Suburban's flat tire fills the cabin. Anna digs the GPS tracker out of her pocket and slaps it on the dashboard. On the steering wheel, her knuckles are white. Nick is still freaking out.

ANNA

We can't get far with the tire out.

DANNY

Keep driving.

ANNA

It'll screw up the rim, and then we'll--

DANNY

Keep. Driving.

PATRICK

(to Danny)

That was ... him, wasn't it?

NICK

What was that thing, man? What the fuck was that?

ANNA

It's dead. Three full rounds of
buckshot to center mass. It's
dead.

Danny, in the back seat, can't stop his hands from shaking.
He shuts his eyes, trying to hold it together. Patrick
looks at him, fearful and worried.

DANNY

No it's not.

Nick looks down at the floorboards beneath his feet --
where the bag he took from Anil sits, partly unzipped to
reveal the neat plastic bundles of drugs...

EXT. LAKESHORE CAMP - NIGHT

Ephram lies flat on his back in the sand. His whole chest
is a mess of mud and oozing, silty water. A FROG WRIGGLES
FREE FROM A WOUND ON HIS CHEST and hops away. Behind him,
in the distance, the camp burns as what's left of Mulvane's
people scramble and shout madly back and forth.

And then Ephram twitches. HIS WOUNDS BEGIN TO CLOSE.

EPHRAM SITS UP, looking in the direction the Suburban left.

CUT TO:

EXT. RANDALL HOUSE - NIGHT

Fewer lights than before glow in the windows, more softly.

INT. JULIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A cozy little second-floor room with a tall window looking
out into the woods. Posters of runners and athletes and
whatever terrible band teenage girls like at the moment
cover Julie's walls. Julie sits at her computer desk in
comfy sleepwear, great big headphones over her ears
(faintly playing music from said terrible band) as she
chats online with friends. Her second-place trophy from the
cross-country meet sits prominently on the desk.

Ellen appears in the doorway with her cane. Knocks gently on the door. JULIE cracks one earpiece to hear her.

ELLEN

Ten more minutes, and then bed,
OK?

JULIE

Twenty?

ELLEN

Fifteen. (beat) I wanted to be
there today. I really, really
wanted to be there.

JULIE says it matter-of-factly, without malice.
Understanding. Which, in a way, only makes it worse.

JULIE

But you weren't.

ELLEN can't say anything to that.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Small but comfortably furnished, with a pleasantly shabby couch and wooden bookcases well-stocked with books. As *The Searchers* plays muted on the TV, Pete, wielding his red pen with a flourish, is grading quizzes he's spread out on the coffee table.

PETE

(as he writes each
grade)

Gas jockey ... midlevel manager ...
(grimaces) men's room attendant ...
(impressed) astronaut?

Ellen walks in, leaning a little heavier than usual on her cane. She curls up on the couch against Pete.

PETE (CONT'D)

Hey, babe. The Red Pen of Doom and
I are almost done here.

Ellen pretends to write a letter on her forehead with her finger, and circles it.

ELLEN

"F."

PETE

Hey. Hey.

ELLEN

I opened the door, I -- I made it
out to the porch ...

PETE

We'll talk to the doctor, okay?
Maybe a different dosage,
different meds --

ELLEN

The meds do shit. Pardon my
French.

PETE

Then we'll do it together.
Tomorrow morning. Start with one
step out the door. Maybe -- and
this is pie in the sky, here --
maybe we'll do two steps.

ELLEN can't help smiling. She kisses him.

ELLEN

You're good to your crazy-ass
wife, you know that?

PETE

Well, I like the way you do that
one thing with your --

Headlights sweep across the room, and Ellen and Pete hear a
car engine approach and cut off outside the house.

PETE (CONT'D)

You expecting anyone?

ELLEN

Maybe it's Mo?

PETE

I'll go check. (hands the pen to
Ellen) Here. The Red Pen of Doom.

ELLEN

I'm drunk with power.

Pete kisses her quickly and hops up from the couch.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Pete opens the front door and looks out, quizzical.

PETE

Evening. Can I help you folks?

The Suburban is parked out in front of the house. Danny, Anna, Nick, and Patrick are getting out, their guns concealed. Nick carries the bag of drugs low by his side, hoping the others won't notice it. Danny catches the keys Anna tosses him, then smiles to Pete, turning on the charm. He's wearing his jacket to conceal the bullet wound on his arm.

DANNY

Hey, sorry to disturb you. We saw the lights from the road. I think we picked up a nail or something, and we don't have a spare.

PETE

Sure, sure. Come on in. We'll call for a tow for you.

Pete opens the door wider as Danny and his team scale the porch; he notes Danny's limp, but says nothing. Pete turns his back to them as they reach the door, heading back into the house.

PETE (CONT'D)

You lucked out. Another couple minutes, and we would've--

Danny places his pistol against the back of Pete's neck, and Pete freezes.

PETE (CONT'D)

Hey, hey, what is this?

DANNY

Shut up and keep moving.

Anna and Nick draw pistols. Patrick shuts the door quickly behind them, and Danny pushes Pete deeper into the house.

DANNY (CONT'D)

You said "we." Who else in the house?

Pete keeps silent, stalling for time. They move into the LIVING ROOM -- and the couch is empty.

Flattened behind the edge of the doorway, Ellen swings her cane double-handed at Danny's head. Danny looks up just in time, catches it, and tears it out of her hands. Anna barges in behind Danny and puts a gun on Ellen.

ANNA

Not bad. Don't try it again.

DANNY

(to Pete)

Who else is in the house?

JULIE (O.S.)

(on the stairs)

Mom? Dad? What's going --

Ellen and Pete are horrified as Julie appears, in her pajamas, at the foot of the stairs. Patrick and Nick put their guns on Julie. Nick looks her up and down, creepily. There's a long, awkward moment of silence.

NICK

(to Julie, trying and failing to be smooth)

... Hey.

DANNY

All right, sweetheart. Down the stairs. Let's all be a nice little family.

JULIE fearfully moves toward her mom and dad.

ANNA

(to Ellen)

Any others running around?

Neither Ellen nor Pete can take their eyes off Julie, more

frightened for her than they are for themselves.

ELLEN

No. No, it's just us.

PETE

(trying to be calm)

We don't have much cash, but you can take it if you want. Or, or there are car keys on the hooks in the kitchen. If you want cars. The cars are kind of crappy.

JULIE

(trying to help)

The back seat of the station wagon smells.

DANNY

We don't want your money.

NICK

We don't?

ANNA

Shut up. (to Danny) We can leave the Suburban. Take one of the cars, get down to the highway --

DANNY

We're not leaving without the money.

ANNA

And if Mulvane's there waiting for us?

DANNY

Mulvane's gonna want to get his ass out of town. If he's even alive. We wait here.

ANNA

Someone's gonna notice what happened at the lake. The longer we wait, the more likely we are to bring cops into this.

Danny glances nervously at the windows, his cool beginning to crack a little.

DANNY

We wait. Until morning. (beat)
Maybe he only comes out in the
dark.

Anna doesn't agree ... but she loves him. So she just nods.

Danny glances at the windows again. Anna sees a phone on the table beside the couch. Yanks its cord from the wall.

ANNA

All right. Phones. Landline,
cells, give 'em up. Don't even
think about pressing any buttons.

Ellen and Pete take out their cell phones carefully and hand them over. Anna turns to Julie.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Don't tell me you don't have one.

JULIE

It's -- it's in my room. On my
dresser.

NICK

(a little too eager)
I'll go.

Anna shoots him a disgusted look, and grabs Pete away from Danny, putting her own pistol against his neck.

ANNA

What's your name?

PETE

Pete.

ANNA

Pete and I are going to take a
quick tour. And the whole time,
Pete, you're gonna think about
your wife and your little girl
down here. With all these guns.
Visualize it.

PETE

I-- I'm visualizing.

Anna leads Pete into the kitchen. With his gun, Danny motions Ellen and Julie toward the couch.

DANNY

Sit. (to Nick) You go keep watch
on --

Danny finally notices the bag of drugs in Nick's hand. Nick, too late, tries to move it slightly behind him.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Oh, sweet Jesus.

NICK

I just -- It fell right into my
fucking lap. I figured --

Patrick hastily swings his gun to cover Ellen and Julie as Danny storms toward Nick, grabbing him by the shirtfront and slamming him against the wall. Startled, Nick drops the bag to the floor.

DANNY

I swear to God, Nick, if it wasn't
for your old man--

NICK

(sullen)

Aw, what the fuck! You used my
name! They heard my name now!

DANNY

(another slam) If Mulvane had the
goods, maybe he would've cut his
losses and gotten out. Maybe.
(another slam) Now we *stole* from
him. From *him*.

Danny lets Nick go, and Nick stumbles a bit. Nick glances at Julie, watching terrified from the couch, and feels humiliated. Danny's so disgusted, he can't even look at Nick.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I saw a top floor window on the way in. Get up there. Keep an eye out for anything that looks like trouble.

NICK

Look, I'm sorry. I--

DANNY

Get the fuck out of here!

Nick begins to reach down for the bag. A look from Danny stops him. With one last glance at Julie, he slinks up the stairs.

Danny looks down at the bag. Catches Patrick looking at it, too, something hollow and compulsive in his eyes.

DANNY

(to Patrick)

Hey. Hey.

PATRICK

(coming out of a trance)

... Yeah?

DANNY

The car's all shot up, tire's busted. If anyone sees it -- the cops, Mulvane's guys --

Patrick nods. Danny hands Patrick the keys.

DANNY

Get it out of sight, fix it up if you can. We're gonna need to ditch it later.

PATRICK

I can do that.

DANNY

I'm counting on it.

Patrick grins at his brother -- but for an instant before he heads into the foyer, his eyes flick to the bag of drugs. Danny looks down at the bag of drugs, and with his foot shoves it behind a chair, as if it might explode.

Ellen looks at Danny probingly.

ELLEN

(quiet)

How long's he been using?

Before Danny can answer, Anna comes down the stairs, holding her pistol to the small of Pete's back. She motions Pete to join Ellen and Julie on the couch, and tosses a pile of cellphone batteries, telephone cords, and a wireless router down onto the living room table. The cables have all been cut. The router is smashed, useless.

ANNA

(to Danny)

Some kinda radio up in the attic,
but I took out the wiring. You
really want Nick keeping watch?

DANNY

I want you keeping watch. I want
Nick out of my sight.

Anna glances out the window, sees and hears Patrick starting up the Suburban, and nods.

ANNA

We gonna talk at some point?

DANNY

About what?

Anna sighs and grabs Pete by the arm, lifting him up off the couch.

ANNA

Come on. Let's give G.I. Jane
there a reason not to play hero
again.

PETE

(off the quizzes)

Um. Can I bring the -- I've gotta
grade --

ANNA

Bring yourself. And shut up.

Anna leads him out of the room, toward the kitchen. Ellen and Julie are alone with Danny, who paces to the front windows and looks out again. He flexes his arm and grimaces; the sleeve of his jacket is wet, the wound bleeding through.

ELLEN

Can my daughter go upstairs? To her room?

DANNY

What?

ELLEN

I ... I don't want her down here. In the middle of this. Please. She's just a kid.

Danny's eyes go haunted and hollow for a moment. He was just a kid, too.

DANNY

... Yeah, all right.

JULIE

No, Mom, I'm not going to--

ELLEN

(conversation over)

Julie.

Julie rises slowly, her eyes riveted on the gun Danny keeps leveled on her. Ellen watches the gun, too.

DANNY

(to Julie)

Door stays open. And you stay put.

Julie nods, terrified.

ELLEN

(to Julie)

It's all right, sweetie. I love you.

Julie slips up the stairs, her eyes never leaving the gun until she's out of sight. Danny takes another look out the front windows, then peels off his jacket. Ellen notices the

wound on his arm. Danny sits down in an easy chair on the opposite side of the room, keeping the gun loosely on Ellen. Awkward silence ensues.

EXT. GARAGE

Patrick looks around nervously, then shuts the big double front doors of the garage on himself and the Suburban ... and the shadows.

INT. ATTIC

Nick sits at Ellen's desk, looking at the dead radio console. Bored.

LIVING ROOM

Ellen and Danny sit. She can't help looking at the wound on his arm. Her medical training fights her desire to kick Danny's ass. Hippocrates wins. She braces herself against the side of the couch and begins to stand.

DANNY

Hey, hey. Where the fuck are you going?

ELLEN

I've got a med kit in the closet there. And you're getting blood on my chair.

Danny nods, wary, and Ellen carefully limps over to the closet -- it's harder without her cane, but she can manage -- opens it up, and slowly takes out the med kit, showing it to Danny.

DANNY

(off her limp)
Huh. Coupla gimps. Small world.

Ellen limps over, staring daggers. Now that her daughter's not directly threatened, she's more pissed than scared.

ELLEN
Hilarious.

She starts to open the med kit, but Danny stops her with another motion of the gun. He rummages through the kit, and removes a small pair of very sharp scissors.

DANNY
I know you weren't thinking about these.

Danny pockets the scissors and hands her the med kit. She takes out latex gloves, cotton swabs, and hydrogen peroxide.

DANNY
So how'd you join the gimp society?

Ellen pauses as she pulls on the latex glove. She remembers...

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - EXT. AFGHANISTAN ROAD - DAY

Sunny. Dusty. Blisteringly hot. Ellen, in full combat gear, and with a red crescent armband denoting her medic status, scrambles out of the side door of a turned-on-its-side military truck. Two of her squadmates, beefy and intense CPL. LISA MOLANATI, and tall, lean SGT. DOUG DIXON, help her down into cover against the belly of the truck. Unlike Ellen, Lisa and Doug have M-16 machine guns out and at the ready. Doug's shouting into a radio.

DOUG
-- multiple IEDs! One Humvee down, the other's trying to suppress, but we can't get a fix on their position. We need air support and evac!

LISA
(to Ellen)
You OK, Doc?

ELLEN
Got my bell rung, but I'm OK.

A line of bullets stitches across the dust mere feet from them. Ellen's eyes go from the gunfire across the stretch of dusty road -- forty feet, maybe -- to where Henry lies wounded and bleeding against the belly of his smoldering Humvee, as he did in Ellen's hallucination.

ELLEN
(to Lisa)
Shit, he looks bad. Cover me?

Lisa nods and hoists the M1-6. She begins letting off bursts of cover fire in the general direction of the enemies' last salvo. Ellen begins to low-crawl into the open toward Henry.

HENRY
Doc. Please, Doc.

ELLEN
Hang on, Henry!

HENRY
Please, Doc. Stuh. Stay with the truck.

ELLEN
Gotta get a look at that handsome ass of yours first!

HENRY
(screams)
STAY IN COVER!

As he screams, another line of gunfire cuts across Ellen's position. Bullets shred her right leg and knee. Ellen screams in pain.

LISA
Shit! Doc!

Lisa and Doug both unleash another blast of covering fire.

Ellen looks down at her leg, grimacing, and her face sets in determination. Later, it'll hurt even worse, but now her system's full of adrenalin.

ELLEN

Well, fuck.

She just keeps crawling toward Henry. He's hysterical, terrified -- not for himself, but for her.

HENRY

(screaming)

STAY PUT, DOC! DON'T! DON'T!

DON'T--!

An RPG whistles down from somewhere above and OBLITERATES HENRY in a blast of fire. Ellen reflexively shields her face with her arms. In the aftermath of the blast, all sound cuts out -- she's deafened, dizzy. There's something wet on her face, all over her. She tries to wipe it off --

Oh, God. It's Henry.

Ellen screams soundlessly as the smoke from the blast rolls over her, clawing forward, trying to get to a Henry who's no longer there. And when Lisa and Doug dash forward to haul her back, she's still clawing, still screaming...

RESUME - LIVING ROOM

And back in the present, Ellen blinks, swallows, pushes it all back down again.

ELLEN

War wound.

She pulls on the gloves and begins to dress Danny's wound. He sees the pain on her face, and he softens a little.

DANNY

Military, huh?

ELLEN

Army reserve.

DANNY

I was gonna join the Air Force.

You know, for the college.

ELLEN

What stopped you?

Off Danny's face, we

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. ANGEL FALLS HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Sixteen-year-old Danny lies in a hospital bed in a dimly lit room, feverish and dehydrated, his face a mass of cuts and bruises. His head lolls delirious to one side, listening to muffled voices from outside the closed door.

DOCTOR (O.S.)

-- God's sake, the bones may never
heal right!

Through Danny's hazy vision, we see the back of Sheriff Cooley against the glass of Danny's hospital room door, blocking entry. Beyond him, we get glimpses of a nervous, cowed DOCTOR. Their words are muffled by the door.

COOLEY

Mayor says no.

DOCTOR

At least let me give him more
antibiotics. Some water?

Danny opens his mouth, tries to croak something out. A hand reaches into frame, cupping his jaw roughly, turning his face the opposite direction.

WINDIBANKS (O.S.)

You wanna say something --

Windibanks looks like hell. He's unshaven, clothes sweaty and rumpled. His eyes are red from crying, and full of hate.

WINDIBANKS (CONT'D)

-- say it to me. Tell me why you
killed her.

DANNY
(barely a whisper)
Dinnt -- kill her. I luh. Loved
her.

Windibanks releases Danny's chin only to grab Danny's injured leg -- blood-soaked dressings, unchanged for at least a day -- and squeezes hard. Danny thrashes, screaming in agony.

WINDIBANKS
(screaming)
Tell me why you killed my little
girl!

Windibanks lets go. Danny's eyes well with terrified tears. Outside, we hear Cooley saying something inaudible into a walkie-talkie.

DANNY
I dinnt. I swear. I swear.

WINDIBANKS
We're gonna sit here, you and I,
son. Another day, another night,
whatever you need. We're going
take all the time you need to tell
me the truth.

DANNY
Please. Water.

The door slams open. Windibanks looks up, furious.

WINDIBANKS
I said *no one* --

Cooley hovers in the doorway, his eyes wide and frightened.

COOLEY
It's -- it's Mr. Howell's boy.

Windibanks sits back, stunned. Looks down at Danny. And then without a word, collects his coat, stands up, and walks out with Cooley. Danny's eyes loll back in his head, and we hear the doctor rush into the room, see his white-coated arms as he checks Danny's pulse, barely hear him

shouting for nurses...

RESUME - LIVING ROOM

DANNY
(answering Ellen)
Busted up my car.

Danny winces as Ellen, none too gently, slaps sterile gauze on the wound, and tapes over it. She snaps off the gloves.

ELLEN
All patched up. Lucky you.

She stands up slowly, Danny keeping the gun on her.

ELLEN
The next time any of you points a
gun at my daughter, you're gonna
have to shoot me till it clicks,
reload, and keep on shooting.

She flings the rubber gloves in his face.

DANNY
Fair enough. (beat) Now sit.

Ellen sits. Danny keeps the gun on her. After eyeing each other tensely for a few moments, they both relent, and start watching John Wayne silently hate Indians on the TV.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

By the sliver of light filtering in through the garage's front doors, Patrick tries to make out the instructions on the can of fix-a-flat he's found. He rubs a shaking hand over his eyes. Digs his works out from the back of his pants, and puts a little baggie of brown powder beside it on one of the shelves on the walls. Stares at them for a moment, sorely tempted.

INT. ATTIC

Nick croons into the microphone. He's a horrible dork.

NICK
(Urge Overkill, badly)
Girl... you'll be a woman... soon...

An idea. He slowly looks back toward the attic door.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Danny gets up from the chair to stretch his bad leg.
Glances at Ellen, who's staring him down, and then out the window.

EPHRAM STANDS OUTSIDE, IN THE FRONT YARD.

Danny waits, blinks, makes sure he's really seeing it.
Turns white as a ghost. Ephram's still there.

DANNY
Anna!

Anna comes running, dragging Pete along, her gun poking in his ribs as Pete winces.

ANNA
Jesus, Danny? What?

Danny glances back at her, turns back to the window --
Ephram's gone. Danny stares again, presses up against the glass. Nothing.

DANNY
I saw him.

Anna can't decide whether to be worried or pissed. She shoves Pete down on the couch and fishes plastic zipties out of one pocket of her jeans.

ANNA
All right. You two, back to back.
Move.

Ellen and Pete grudgingly sit back to back on the couch; Anna uses a ziptie to bind each one's hand to the other's on each side.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Sit tight and behave.

Anna turns to talk to Danny, but he's already on the move, crossing the foyer into the dining room. Anna follows..

JULIE'S ROOM

Julie is still on her bed, curled up, listening intently to the conversation below. At a slight scuffling sound, she turns to see standing in her doorway, his pistol tucked stupidly into the front of his pants. Nick lifts a finger to his lips.

NICK
Shhh.

JULIE nods, fearful. After a moment...

NICK (CONT'D)
(whispering casually)
So what are you, like, a
sophomore?

DINING ROOM

Danny scans the windows as Anna approaches.

ANNA
It's him, isn't it?

DANNY
Him who?

ANNA
The asshole in the Halloween mask.
The one I killed.

DANNY
The one you think you killed.

ANNA
I slept next to you for eighteen
months. And once a week, minimum,
you'd wake up screaming.

DANNY

Just dreams. They don't mean anything.

ANNA

It's not the same guy.

DANNY

You don't know what you're talking about.

ANNA

Don't I? You think I've just been fucking around every time I'm on that computer? Going into a job with no planning, no research -- does that sound like me?

Through the open window behind Danny, neither of them sees Ephram's blurry form shambling past...

INT. GARAGE

Patrick fumbles with the can of Fix-a-Flat by the Suburban's flat tire. He's almost got it hooked up to the tire, groping in the dark...

The wind BANGS OPEN the door at the back of the garage. Startled, Patrick falls on his butt.

From outside the garage, we see Patrick shut the door. The woodpile's there, but the axe Ephram left atop it earlier in the evening is most definitely not.

In the dark of the garage, Patrick sags against the truck, teeth chattering. He's getting downright sick now. Can't fight the need for a fix anymore. He looks at the works and the little bag...

JULIE'S ROOM

Nick plucks a photo of a TEENAGED BOY out of the corner of the mirror atop Julie's dresser. In the mirror, she watches him, baffled, frightened, and a little grossed out.

NICK
(whispering)
This your boyfriend?

JULIE shakes her head no.

JULIE
(also whispering)
That's my friend Sam. He's in the
band. He plays oboe.

NICK
The fucking oboe? (snorts) Loser.

JULIE
I thought you had to stay in the
attic.

NICK
What?

JULIE
I thought the other guy said --

NICK
He's not the boss. We ... we pretend
he's the boss. To throw people
off. I'm the real boss.

JULIE
I thought the woman was the boss.

Nick's face darkens for a moment. Then he looks at the
picture, smirks, and flicks it at Julie. She flinches.

NICK
Well, you know shit about crime.

DINING ROOM

Anna pulls two chairs out from the table. Sits in one.
Waits for Danny to take the other.

ANNA
I read the police report. A long
time ago, actually.

DANNY

How come you never asked?

ANNA

I was waiting for you to tell me.
(beat) The handprints on her neck

--

DANNY

Don't. Don't. Please.

ANNA

Is that it? Is she the reason? I
always wondered.

DANNY

Wondered what?

ANNA

(hard for her to say)
Why we never worked out.

Danny can't answer. Just turns and limps out of the room.

LIVING ROOM

Ellen tests the zipties, but knows she can't break them.
She slowly looks up toward Julie's room. So does Pete.

PETE

She'll be OK.

ELLEN

I ... I found this little girl
outside of Pnajib, in the corner
of a hut --

PETE

(quickly)
She'll be OK.

JULIE'S ROOM

Nick thumbs through Julie's CDs, casually.

NICK

Lame ... lame ... *incredibly* lame ...
ass ... You know, I was in a band.
In high school.

He waits for her to be impressed. She's really not.

NICK (CONT'D)
All that stuff they say about, be
in a band, you'll score? Bullshit.

Nick slowly slides open one of the drawers of Julie's dresser. A tangle of her underwear greets him, innocent and candy-colored. He can't resist brushing his fingers over it; his eyes go a little glassy.

NICK
... You got a boyfriend?

KITCHEN

Danny stares out the window at the garage. Checks his watch anxiously.

INT. GARAGE

With shaking hands, Patrick unfolds the works on the hood of the Suburban. Takes out the big silver spoon, shakes the powder carefully into it. Digs out a lighter and places it under the spoon. Flicks the lighter -- once, twice, it won't light, and then the flame catches.

In the faint, flickering light of the lighter, EPHRAM LOOMS BEHIND HIM, holding the axe.

JULIE'S ROOM

Nick turns around from the dresser, dangling a pair of Julie's underwear on one finger.

NICK
Cute.

JULIE

What are you doing?

NICK

Don't look at me like that. I'm just -- I'm being complimentary here.

Julie shies away as Nick comes and sits down on the bed next to her. He toys with the pair of underwear with one hand.

JULIE

Stop it.

NICK

I knew a lotta girls like you, back in high school. Like -- I remember one time in art class, they said Michaelangelo could see the sculpture in the block of granite. Marble. Some kinda stone. Anyway. I'm like the Michaelangelo of girls. I can see the ... outlines of the finished product.

Nick tries to stroke Julie's face. She pushes him away, and he gets angry.

JULIE

I said stop. Your boss -- your boss said you weren't going to hurt us.

NICK

(harsher whisper)

I told you -- I'm the boss.

KITCHEN

Anna enters behind Danny.

ANNA

Go check on him.

DANNY

What?

Danny turns to face her. Behind him, through the window, unseen to him and Anna, we see THE ENTIRE SHED LURCH. As if some desperate fight is taking place inside.

ANNA

He's fixing more than a tire.

DANNY

He's clean. He quit.

ANNA

Just like the last ten times. So.
Go check on him.

Danny puts his hand on the knob. Stares out the window into the dark. (The shed's not moving anymore.) He just can't go. Anna comes up behind him. Gently turns his face toward her with one hand. Her face softens, sympathetic.

JULIE'S ROOM

Nick's whisper is now more of a hiss, sharp and angry.

NICK

Oh. Oh. Maybe you want to be the boss, huh? Order me around? Tell me when I'm fucking up? Maybe tell me what a nice guy I am, before you go off and fuck the quarterback?

JULIE

What are you talking about?

NICK

Shaking your little asses around like none of us notice. Like that gives you the right --

Julie BOLTS off the bed -- or tries to. Nick grabs her, throws her back onto the mattress. With one hand, he stuffs the pair of underwear into her mouth as she struggles. The struggles stop as soon as he pulls the gun with the other hand and points it at her face. Nick runs the pistol down her cheek, down her neck.

NICK (CONT'D)

Go on. Tell me who's in charge
now.

Julie's feet LASH OUT into Nick's crotch!

KITCHEN

Danny pulls away from Anna's touch, but she persists. Not coming on to him. Just trying to reach him.

ANNA
I'm right here, Danny. Same as
always. And I swear to you, I
swear. There's nothing to be
afraid of.

JULIE'S ROOM

Nick makes a little "guh," sound and stumbles. Julie makes a break for it, but Nick grabs her again, throwing her on the bed, jamming the gun against her forehead.

NICK
Stupid little--

JULIE'S WINDOW SHATTERS INWARD, bits of broken glass raining down on her, as she puts up her hands to cover her head.

LIVING ROOM / KITCHEN

Pete, Ellen, Anna, and Danny all hear the glass break, look upward. Each filled with their own sort of horror.

JULIE'S ROOM

Julie looks up, brushing glass away, still terrified.

Nick stands above her, looking down in amazement at the thick rope wrapped around his neck, a heavy, bloodstained rock tied at one end. He opens his mouth to say something
--

-- and he's YANKED OFF HIS FEET toward the window, flying

over a cringing Julie, as the rope DRAWS TAUT. Nick SMASHES through the window, and he's gone without another sound.

Julie sits up, slowly, spitting out the underwear, and turns around -- someone's pounding up the stairs --

EPHRAM STANDS AT HER WINDOW, outside on the roof. Nick's nowhere to be seen. Ephram raises one hand. Puts a single finger vertical against the sack over his head, about where his mouth would be. Shhhh.

JULIE SCREAMS.

Her door bangs open, and she whirls to see Danny with his gun drawn, Anna bringing up the rear.

JULIE

I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Please
don't--!

Danny stops short, lowers his gun. He wasn't aiming at her. From downstairs, we hear Ellen shouting Julie's name.

DANNY

Where the fuck is Nick?

LIVING ROOM

Relief washes over Ellen and Pete as Danny and Anna herd a dazed, shaking Julie downstairs.

ELLEN

Sweetie, what happened?

PETE

Are you OK?

JULIE

(near hysteria)

He -- the other guy, the skinny
one. He was talking to me. He
wanted -- he was trying to --

Ellen can guess. Absolute fury. She jerks hard against the restraints, yanking Pete's arms into an uncomfortable position, trying to lunge up off the couch.

PETE
Oww! Honey! Honey!

ANNA
(to Ellen)
If I'd known, I'd have shot the
son of a bitch myself. All right?

That placates Ellen, but only just. Danny's still freaking out.

DANNY
Where. The fuck. Is Nick?

JULIE
There was a man at the window...
with a bag on his head...

Danny reels. Even Anna looks shocked. And then the awful idea dawns on Danny...

DANNY
Patrick.

He pushes past Anna, bolts out of the room.

ANNA
Dammit, wait--!

Julie gets an idea, heads back upstairs.

ELLEN
Julie, don't--

EXT. BACK PORCH

Danny flies out of the kitchen door as fast as he can limp, shouting, scared beyond all reason -- not for himself, but for

DANNY
PATRICK!

He reaches the garage, flings the door open -- THE SUBURBAN IS A WRECK. An incredible fight took place here. No Ephram. No Patrick.

Danny hears shuffling outside. Draws his gun, chokes down his fear, and pivots around the corner of the garage--

Patrick is walking backward slowly toward Danny, his back to him, one hand out to brace himself against the wall. There's something off and awful about his gait.

DANNY (CONT'D)

... Patrick?

Patrick keeps moving backward, slowly. Danny limps toward him, puts a hand on Patrick's shoulder, spins him around --

THE AXE IS BURIED IN PATRICK'S CHEST. Blood runs all down Patrick's chin, and his breath comes in ugly, desperate gurgles. His eyes light up to see Danny -- and he crumples to the ground, trembling like a felled racehorse.

DANNY

PATRICK!

Anna appears at the doorway.

DANNY

Get her out here! The medic!

Anna races back inside.

LIVING ROOM

Anna flips open a knife. Cuts Ellen free.

ANNA

Come on.

BACK YARD

Danny kneels by Patrick, gripping his brother's hand.

DANNY

GET HER THE FUCK OUT HERE!

Ellen and Anna appear at the doorway, trailed by Pete. At the sight of the threshold, Ellen freezes.

PETE

(off Patrick)
Oh, Jesus.

ELLEN
I can't. I-- I'm sorry. I can't.

Danny stands up, Patrick's blood all over him, and aims his gun across the yard at Ellen in the doorway. Anna stands aside, not sure whether to back this play. Ellen's phobia crushes down on her.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
I can't!

Pete sees Danny's gun and swallows his own fear.

PETE
Come on. Let's -- let's do it
together.

PETE takes her hand, so kindly. Takes one little step across the threshold.

PETE (CONT'D)
Just one step.

Danny looks at them desperately. Patrick gurgles again, and Danny looks down, his heart breaking.

DANNY
Hang in there, Pat. Just stay in
the game.

Ellen takes one step, slow and cautious outside. Shaking. Terrified. Pete squeezes her hand.

PETE
See? Just like your P.T.

Ellen takes another step toward Pete. Anna sees this, and it gets under her skin. Makes her think of Danny.

The light's going out in Patrick's eyes. His chest heaves; blood bubbles on his lips. Danny panicking, goes to touch the axe, backs off. No idea what to do.

DANNY
Come on, Pat. Stay in the game.

Stay in the game! Stay in the --

Patrick's gone. Danny breaks down, sobbing. Picks up his gun, stands shakily. Hobbles toward Ellen, fast as he can, blaming her, hating her. Pete sees him coming, steps in front of Ellen, and Danny's ready to shoot through the both of them. Then Anna steps out of the kitchen and in front of his gun.

ANNA

Danny.

DANNY

If her gimp ass had gotten the
fuck out here--

ANNA

He'd still have an axe in his
lung.

Danny's face contorts with rage and grief. His hand trembles on the pistol. Anna slowly, slowly, takes the pistol and pushes it aside.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Let's just go, Danny. Forget the
money. Forget everything. Let's
get in a car and get out.

DANNY

And do what, Anna? What do I do?

Anna puts a hand to his cheek. Rests her forehead against his. Her love for him pours out like a burst dam.

ANNA

We take it one step at a time.

Danny looks at Anna like he's seeing her again for the first time.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Okay?

The word means everything. Same with Danny's reply.

DANNY

Okay.

Ellen and Pete exchange a look. Julie appears in the doorway from the living room, her sneakers on, holding the school notebook we saw her write in earlier. Anna straightens up. Back to business. She turns toward Pete in the doorway.

ANNA

We're gonna need those --

A RIFLE SHOT rings out. Anna's hair ruffles, and the side of her head closest to the house BLOWS OUT in a spray of red and pink. Julie shrieks. Anna's body sags as Danny catches her, in shock, shaking her a little.

MULVANE STRIDES OUT OF THE WOODS, bare-chested under his grizzly bear coat, bandages wrapped hastily around cracked ribs, a smoking hunting rifle in his hands. Behind him, through the trees, one set of headlights after another snaps on, until they flood the back of the house. Engines roar to life. Armed shadows move.

MULVANE

There. Now we've *both* taken
something that didn't belong to
us.

In shock, Danny stumbles back into the house, dragging dead Anna, and shuts the door behind them. Mulvane's men, including Maggie, step forward raising a variety of nasty-looking automatic rifles, but Mulvane raises a hand to still them. He works the bolt on the rifle, ejecting the spent shell and chambering a new one.

MULVANE

(shouting to Danny)
Difference is, you're gonna give
mine back.

INT. RANDALL HOUSE KITCHEN

Ellen, Pete, and Julie. Pete looks at Anna, then quickly at his wife. Ellen shakes her head quickly -- Anna's gone.

Danny peeks out the window, sees Mulvane's forces massing in the Randalls' back yard. He turns to Pete.

DANNY

Behind the chair in the living
room. The bag.

Pete hesitates, and Danny points the gun at him.

DANNY (CONT'D)

The fucking bag!

Pete glances at Ellen, who nods -- it's OK, go. Pete scrambles off in a crouch to the living room.

Danny looks at Anna, lets the grief and rage wash over him, then forces it back down. Survival mode now.

INTERCUT WITH:

BACK YARD

Mulvane calls out to the house again.

MULVANE

I count five of my people dead on
your Scooby-Doo bullshit. I don't
know what kind of fucked-up
mongoloid you dug up, but I have
to admit -- he gave me all *kinds*
of ideas about what we're going to
do to you.

Danny opens the door a crack, shouts out.

DANNY

He wasn't with us! Jesus, look
right in front of you! He did that
to my fucking brother!

Mulvane notes Patrick's body. He hands the hunting rifle to Maggie and strides over. After a few horrible-sounding tugs, he yanks the axe free. Impressed. Not bad work.

MULVANE

I suppose next you'll say he's the one took my merchandise?

DANNY
You remember Nick? From my crew?

MULVANE
(has to think a moment)
... the shithead?

DANNY
You think any of the rest of us would consider stealing from you?

MULVANE
Fair point. He still drawing breath?

DANNY
Second floor. See the broken window?

MULVANE
Shame. Did the merchandise go with him?

DANNY
Got it right here.

Pete slides the bag over to Danny. Danny looks at it. Looks at Anna, again, and it hurts to see her. Says, reluctantly:

DANNY (CONT'D)
So let's do business. You take the merchandise. Keep the money. And I
--

Danny looks around. Sees Ellen, Pete, and Julie.

DANNY (CONT'D)
-- and we *all* spend our days alive and well, spreading the gospel of Thou Shalt Not Fuck With Rory Mulvane.

MULVANE
Or...?

DANNY

Or we see how much of this shit I
can flush before you breach the
house. Enough to piss off your
customers, I'm thinking.

Mulvane mulls it over.

MULVANE

The bag. Please.

DANNY

So? Do we have a deal?

MULVANE

If the count is right.

Danny opens the door just wide enough and flings the bag
out to the center of the yard. At Mulvane's nod, Maggie
approaches it, unzips the bag, does a quick check, and
brings it back to him.

Mulvane smiles. Nods to his men. THEIR GUNS ROAR.

Danny and the others hug the floor, Julie screaming, as THE
KITCHEN SHATTERS under a hail of bullets.

The gunfire stops. Silence. Danny lifts his head just
enough to shout. No need to open the door now -- it's full
of holes.

DANNY

Jesus! Take it all and go! The
cops--

MULVANE

Will be busy up at the lake all
night. And as for spreading the
gospel --

Mulvane catches an automatic weapon tossed to him by one of
his men.

MULVANE (CONT'D)

I've always been more Old
Testament.

BULLETS CHEW THROUGH THE WALLS, as Danny and the Randalls

hit the deck again, Ellen covering Julie with her body.

Outside, a large dead branch falls into the midst of Mulvane's men, and Mulvane holds up a hand. The shooting stops. Mulvane and the others train their guns upward. The trees wave in the shadows, creaking.

The gunmen circle, peering up into the dark. Mulvane catches Maggie's eye and nods to her; she slips away from the group.

In the kitchen, in the sudden silence, Danny and the Randalls lift their heads. Danny sees Pete taking Anna's pistol from the back of her pants, checking it.

DANNY

What the fuck are you doing?

Pete looks at him, scared but resolute, and keeps checking the gun.

PETE

Been going to the range with my
cousins every week for five years.
Unless you wanna take them on
alone.

Danny thinks a moment, nods warily.

Julie clings to Ellen, who's not doing much better herself.

ELLEN

(to Julie)

It's OK, baby. Stay low. Come with
me. We're going to the other side
of the house, OK?

Julie nods. Pete stretches out a hand to Ellen. She grips it tight.

PETE

I love you.

ELLEN

You better.

They share a nervous smile.

Outside in the dark, Mulvane and his men keep watching the trees. Another branch falls, and a nervous henchman in a FUR HAT lets off a burst up into the dark. Mulvane shoots him a vicious glare.

MULVANE

(to the dark)

Come out and play, you son of a
bitch. (back into the woods) And
where the fuck are my Mollies?

EXT. THE WOODS

Ellroy, with the business suit, and Francis, the laconic one, are putting the last rags into the necks of a brace of molotov cocktails laid out in the bed of a pickup truck. Ellroy adjusts the rags so that they all drape more or less in the same direction.

ELLROY

(fussing a bit)

Proper ... presentation ... makes all
... the difference. There.

Francis is not impressed. In the trees, a branch snaps. They draw pistols, looking up. Something wet falls on Francis's face. A drop of thick, dark, coagulated BLOOD.

The trees rustle. Francis has just enough time to turn --

NICK'S BODY, covered in cuts from the window, neck broken, swings down, Ephram's rope wrapped around its neck. It SMASHES into Francis, knocking him off his feet and into the truck bed, bottles breaking from the impact.

ELLROY

Jesus! Did you see --

Nick's body swings down again and smacks Ellroy hard into a tree. He twitches a few times, and then drops, his skull crushed.

Francis, horrified, fires up into the dark from the truck bed. Shell casings drop with a sizzle into the mass of alcohol soaking the truck bed liner -- and Francis's

clothing. Francis looks down, a second too late, realizing his mistake --

RANDALL BACK YARD

Mulvane and his men turn as FIRE BLOOMS in the woods. A SCREAMING FIGURE, aflame, runs toward them. Mulvane's men START SHOOTING, and the burning man drops. Mulvane nudges the smoldering corpse with his shoe. It's Francis.

MULVANE

Craftier than that grizzly...

More branches snap. Nick's horrible body lands with a thud in the dry leaves at the Gunmen's feet. Fur Hat turns to look at it --

A BULLET RIPS through his chest, spinning him around, and he drops. Mulvane and the others turn -- a man in a FLANNEL SHIRT takes another bullet to the shoulder and drops, screaming.

INTERCUT WITH:

RANDALL KITCHEN

Danny and Pete huddle low by the windows, holding guns.

DANNY

You ain't half bad. You realize we
just pissed 'em off, right?

MORE GUNFIRE FROM MULVANE.

PETE

Kinda guessed.

LIVING ROOM

Ellen and Julie huddle on the far side of the couch as bullets rip through the kitchen. The TV still plays, muted. Ellen hugs Julie tight, trying to control her own fear.

ELLEN

It's OK, sweetie. It's gonna be

OK.

INT. RANDALL FRONT HALL

Slowly, silently, the Randalls' front door inches open. Maggie appears, stealthy.

Danny and Pete take turns popping up through the windows to snap off a shot.

Mulvane and his men take cover behind the Randalls' cars, squeezing off bursts of automatic fire.

In the living room, A FLOORBOARD CREAKS. Ellen and Julie look up to see Maggie in the doorway from the front hall. Maggie sees them both huddled there.

She DRAWS HER KNIFE, flicks it open, and grins horribly.

In the yard, one of Mulvane's men in OVERALLS draws a bead on the outline of Pete's head through the curtained window. Something comes whistling out of the dark above him -- Overalls looks up --

Ephram's rock-weighted rope SMASHES OVERALLS' NOSE, blood spurting. A jerk, and the line wraps neatly around Overalls' neck and whisks him up into the dark.

Pete, at the window, turns to Danny wide-eyed. Danny looks haunted.

PETE

What the holy hell was that?

Maggie stalks toward Ellen and Julie, a finger to her lips. Shhhh.

Ellen reaches out, grabs the coffee table by one leg, and HURLS IT sliding across the floor at Maggie's legs, knocking her over. Pete's papers scatter. Ellen scrambles, limping on her bad leg, trying to get past Maggie to the far corner of the room. Maggie shoots out a hand and drags her down, raises the knife--

Ellen comes up with her cane in her hand and JABS the END OF IT INTO MAGGIE'S THROAT! Maggie gags, reels back.

On the floor behind them, Julie sees a tangling of the thick cabling Anna tore from Ellen's radio peeking from beneath the couch...

Ellen pushes herself up off the floor with the cane's help. She goes to swing at Maggie with the cane -- Maggie kicks out at Ellen's bad leg, and Ellen SCREAMS, dropping to the floor. Rubbing her own throat, Maggie expertly flips the knife, ready to stab --

Mulvane motions with a hand, and as the rest of his men provide covering fire, the woman in the Leather Jacket and the man with the Tattooed Head charge forward, low, stalking toward the house.

Maggie raises the knife to plunge it into Ellen -- and JULIE JUMPS ON MAGGIE'S BACK, wrapping the thick radio cabling AROUND MAGGIE'S THROAT! Maggie flails, slashing wildly, Julie trying to dodge every swipe.

Leather Jacket and Tattooed Head approach the front porch. Leather Jacket unzips to reveal a bandolier of HAND GRENADES across her chest. She eyes the shattered windows, moves to grab a grenade--

EPHRAM'S ROPE zips down out of the dark and snares TATTOOED HEAD'S LEG! He's dragged backward across the ground, screaming. Mulvane's men stop firing as Leather Jacket rushes forward to grab him, even as he's lifted into the air. Leather Jacket digs in her heels, slowly being dragged back herself; Mulvane and his men fire up into the trees at the source of the rope, but it just keeps pulling.

Maggie staggers, then SLAMS Julie hard against the wall of the living room, again and again, until Julie lets go. Maggie raises her knife--

ELLEN'S CANE hits the back of Maggie's knee, and she stumbles backward. Ellen grabs her, drags her down to the floor, punching her in the face, slamming Maggie's hand on the floor until the knife falls out of it. Ellen and Maggie both grip the cane and begin to wrestle over it, Ellen on top, pushing it down to try to choke Maggie...

The rope around Tattooed Head's leg jerks -- his leg nearly dislocates from his socket. His hand is slipping from Leather Jacket's grasp. She calls out to Mulvane and his

men.

LEATHER JACKET

Help us!

Mulvane and his men stay put.

Tattooed Head claws at Leather Jacket, reaching for anything to hold onto. Then he's yanked out of her grip, screaming up into the dark. Leather Jacket looks down at her chest, shaken -- HE TOOK THE PINS TO HER GRENADES WITH HIM.

The GRENADES EXPLODE. The Randall House shakes, fire billowing in through the kitchen windows as Danny and Pete hit the deck.

Ellen punches Maggie again, the two of them struggling. Julie stirs, coming out of her daze. Ellen looks up at her desperately.

ELLEN

RUN, JULIE! GET OUT OF HERE! RUN!

Julie's still too dizzy and hurting to move. And Maggie uses Ellen's distraction to roll, gain the upper hand, push the cane down across Ellen's throat. Still, Ellen looks at Julie--

ELLEN (CONT'D)

RUN, JULIE!

In the trees high above the Randalls' back yard, Ephram Goode -- holding Tattooed Head and Overalls' broken, mangled bodies -- somehow seems to hear

ELLEN (O.S.)

RUN!

Ephram hucks the bodies aside. *Moves*, with urgency.

Pete and Danny, dazed, look up to see fire beginning to lick up the walls of the kitchen. Pete sets down his pistol, scrambles to the kitchen cabinets, finds a home fire extinguisher. As Danny continues to snap shots off out the window, Pete battles the spreading fire..

Maggie chokes the life out of Ellen, with grim

satisfaction. Julie lolls against the wall.

MAGGIE
(to Ellen, hoarse)
The only problem is ... if I kill
you now ...

Ellen's hand scrambles through the scattered mass of Pete's test papers on the floor. Finds -- THE RED PEN OF DOOM.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
... you don't get to see me carve up
your little girl.

Ellen RAMS THE PEN POINT INTO MAGGIE'S NECK!

Maggie releases Ellen, startled, and shakily gets to her feet. Looking insulted, Maggie clamps one hand over the blood beginning to spurt from her neck, and with the other, she draws the gun from her waistband. Ellen crawls to Julie, shields her, as Maggie cocks the gun--

The front door BANGS OPEN. FOOTSTEPS POUND. Maggie turns as EPHRAM STORMS INTO THE ROOM and PLOWS HER HEADFIRST THROUGH THE TELEVISION SCREEN! Her body jerks as the set shorts out. Julie and Ellen scream.

Slowly, Ephram turns to them. Ellen snatches up the cane, brandishes it. Ephram takes a step forward.

JULIE
Wait, Mom! Don't!

Ephram reaches slowly into one of his rotted pockets. Takes something out and holds it toward Ellen in one pale hand. AN APPLE.

Julie finds her notebook. Shows Ellen a Xerox of the newspaper sketch of Ephram.

JULIE (CONT'D)
I... I think this is Ephram Goode.

ELLEN
(knock her over with a
feather)
... No shit.

Ephram holds out a hand, tentatively. Ellen's surprised by the gentleness as he lifts her to her feet. They stand there for an awkward, oddly sweet moment. Ephram shuffles his feet.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
... Um. Thank you. Ephram.

Then more gunfire rings out from the kitchen, and Ellen knows what to do. She puts her hands on Julie's shoulders. Ephram watches them, curious, still as a stone.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
How fast can you make it up to the lake?

JULIE
What? Mom, I can't--

ELLEN
You can. Take the crawl space from the hall closet. Keep to the woods, where they can't see you. No matter what, don't stop. Mo'll be there. You'll be safe with him.

JULIE
But what about you?

ELLEN
(lying desperately)
We'll be fine. But we need you to go get help. Can you do that for us?

Julie nods, bravely. Her eyes and Ellen's fill with tears. Ellen crushes Julie in a hug, kisses her forehead.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
Figures. Another race I don't get to see.

JULIE
(trying to be brave)
Next time.

Ellen smiles, and for a moment she can't bring herself to

let go of Julie. Then she does, giving her a little push toward the foyer.

ELLEN

Don't stop for anything. And be
brave. I love you.

Julie nods, and with a wary glance at Ephram, follows Ellen into the hall. Ellen opens the closet door and yanks up a hatch in the floor. Julie lowers herself in, and gives Ellen one last look before Ellen shuts the door on her.

Ellen kneels there in the closet -- allows herself one single sob, which she chokes into silence. Behind her, Ephram watches. And then he turns, and moves toward the kitchen.

Pete blasts away at the fire as it licks toward the cabinets. The extinguisher's running low. Danny checks his magazine. Floorboards creak behind him.

DANNY

How's it looking? I count --

Danny looks up. Ephram looks down at him. Ellen stands in the doorway from the living room; Pete turns, and in his shock, begins distractedly spraying something that isn't on fire.

PETE

(eyes on Ephram)

Honey...?

ELLEN

He's our good samaritan.

Danny's face fills with fear, rage -- he can't move. And then Ephram calmly moves past him, opens the door, and steps out into the back yard. Danny just sits there, staring, shaking.

PETE

... I was right. No bindle.

INT. CRAWLSPACE

Julie crawls on hands and knees through the dark, toward

faint light at the perimeter of the house.

RANDALL BACK YARD

Mulvane and his remaining men -- Fur Hat, the punkish twins LEM and LUC KILKENNY, butch Elodie, Doc Hatchett, and Lumbering Jack -- stare in varying degrees of fear and awe.

Ephram STANDS SILHOUETTED against the flames smoldering on the Randalls' back porch. Ephram snaps one wrist, lets out slack in the rope coiled around it. Dangles the heavy rock at its end like a gunfighter waiting to draw.

Mulvane looks at his own coat. Looks up at Ephram. To hell with grizzly bears. Now *this* is a challenge.

MULVANE

LIGHT HIM UP!

Ephram charges. Mulvane and his men open fire. BULLETS TEAR INTO EPHRAM -- AND HE JUST KEEPS COMING. Bits of him fly off, spattering the ground with mud.

As Danny, Ellen, and Pete watch from the kitchen window, Ephram raises one arm, whirls the rock overhead, lets it fly. Fur Hat's face turns to red mush, and the others scatter.

MULVANE

Doc Hatchett?

DOC HATCHETT

He does present a substantialness.

Doc Hatchett casually raises a slim, elegant target-shooting pistol, and sights carefully down the long barrel. Ephram reels his rope back in -- and Doc fires.

Ephram's arm EXPLODES AT THE ELBOW. Dangles, useless. Ephram turns, and Doc puts ANOTHER SHOT through Ephram's other elbow. ANOTHER, and ANOTHER, through each of Ephram's kneecaps. Ephram tries to take a step forward, confused, on shaky puppet limbs, and drops to his knees, oozing out mud. A SMALL FISH flops out of one of his elbows and wriggles around on the ground, gasping.

Ephram looks up, head tilted, at Doc. Frustrated, helpless.

Doc empties shells from his gun, casually reloads, aims -- then stops, takes a few steps back to make it sporting, and fires again.

THE BULLET BLOWS OUT THE BACK OF EPHRAM'S HEAD. Ephram slowly pitches backward, his chest a wet mass of mud, a stain slowly spreading across the bag over his head. Still as the grave.

Ellen and Pete watch from the kitchen, hopes sinking. Danny doesn't know who to root for.

Julie crawls out from under a gap in the paneling around the underside of the house. Terrified. She freezes in the shadows, watching Mulvane and his men.

Doc walks over to Ephram, adjusts his glasses, peers down to admire his handiwork.

DOC HATCHETT
(disappointed)
Off-center. Well, crap.

He turns to walk away -- and is stopped with a jerk. Looks down.

The wound in Ephram's head is closing. And EPHRAM'S HAND HAS CLOSED AROUND DOC'S ANKLE.

Ephram sits up in one swift motion, yanks Doc off his feet, and BEATS HIM AGAINST THE GROUND LIKE AN OLD RUG. Like Bam-Bam tossing around Fred Flintstone -- but far more ghastly.

Lem, Luc, and Elodie raise their guns, but Lumbering Jack pushes past them. Jack cracks his knuckles.

Ephram, back on his feet, discards the still-gurgling mess that used to be Doc Hatchett, and looks up in time to see Jack's fist collide with the burlap over his face.

Jack -- big as Ephram -- works Ephram like a bare-knuckle boxer. Ephram's got brute force, but Jack has *technique*. He ducks Ephram's clumsy, childish swipes. Kicks at Ephram's knees to keep him off-balance. Keeps hammering Ephram with vicious punch after vicious punch. Enjoying his work.

Ephram reels. Jack winds up, delivers a hammerblow right to Ephram's muddy midsection -- and his hand STICKS THERE.

Sinking DEEPER INTO THE MUD THAT MAKES EPHRAM.

JACK

The hell?

And then Ephram grabs Jack's head. Shoves him ever closer toward the muddy mass of Ephram's midsection. Jack struggles, punches Ephram's face and sides. Ephram will not be moved.

JACK (CONT'D)

(to Mulvane)

Help me! I can't -- Aah! HELP ME!

His face is turned sideways, half into Ephram's chest, and he's still screaming -- and then his WHOLE HEAD is in the muck of Ephram's chest. Jack kicks, flails. Ephram stands stone still. And as Jack spasms one last time, Ephram looks right up at Mulvane. Your move.

Julie, around the corner of the house, sees her chance. Takes off running for the woods on the periphery of the yard. Luc and Lem turn simultaneously, see her flitting through the trees.

LEM AND LUC

Got a runner!

Ephram looks up at this. And Mulvane sees that Ephram notices.

MULVANE

Back to the woods! Get after her!

From the house, Ellen SCREAMS --

ELLEN

NO! JULIE, RUN!

Julie takes off into the woods. Mulvane, Luc, Lem, and Elodie back away from Ephram, and then follow Mulvane in a run back into the trees.

ELODIE

But Brice --

MULVANE

I know where to find Brice.

Mulvane glances back over his shoulder at the house. Grins wolfishly.

From the kitchen window, Ellen screams again, into the night.

ELLEN

RUN!

Ephram hears. Dislodges Jack's lifeless body with a wet, sucking POP from his midsection -- watches his rotting shirt reknit, the wounds close up.

He takes a step forward -- wobbles notably. Ephram seems to concentrate for a long moment, and takes another step. Better. And another, and another, into the woods, after Mulvane, and the distant roar of starting engines and glow of taillights through the trees...

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

JULIE RUNS.

Breathing fast. Slipping on wet leaves. She focuses. Finds a rhythm. Her strides stretch. Training takes over. She runs for her life.

She reaches a stream trickling downhill. Changes course to follow it uphill. Jumping fallen logs, just visible in the dark. Heading toward the lake.

In the distance, roaring engines, growing closer. Julie risks a look back. Headlights rake across the trees behind her. Not cars. Two motors, low, throaty, rough and rude.

Julie cuts into a gully. High dirt walls on either side. Sneakers splashing in the stream. She begins to breathe harder. Motors roar louder, coming up from behind. Now ON EITHER SIDE OF HER, ABOVE HER, ON THE WALLS OF THE GULLY. Dirt spilling down on her.

She runs up a muddy hill, clawing her way in the dark, and HEADLIGHTS PIN HER. Lem and Luc, the twins, roaring in on ATVs to flank her, laughing like demons.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. RANDALL KITCHEN

Pete puts down the extinguisher. Kitchen's scorched, ruined, but not ablaze. Ellen remains at the window, looking out into the dark, trying to hold herself together.

ELLEN

You have to go. You have to stop them. Have to keep her safe.

She hates herself for speaking in terms of "you," instead of "we." But the dark outside is so big...

Danny is slumped against the bullet-riddled door, looking at Anna's body. He reaches out to touch her sadly -- then stops. Something in her pocket. Mulvane's GPS. Still on, coordinates still good. Danny's eyes go cold and hard.

PETE

We'll take the wagon. We can cut up the road and --

A LOUD CLICK. Danny stands up, tucking Pete's discarded gun into his jacket pocket, aiming his gun at both of them.

DANNY

-- And go get my money.

RESUME - WOODS

Luc and Lem veer through the trees on ATVs, whooping, swiping at Julie with their arms as she runs. At last they pull away, to a safe distance, and Luc drops behind as Lem keeps pace. Julie's fear drops a notch --

-- Until Lem pulls out a fat revolver. And FIRES AT HER!

She's lucky. The bullets CHEW UP TREES and SCATTER DEAD LEAVES but miss their marks. Lem draws back, and Luc roars

up, his own pistol in hand, from the opposite side. MORE GUNFIRE! Julie screams, flinches, stumbles, nearly falls.

In the trees above, EPHRAM IS SWINGING TOWARD THEM, bounding through the treetops, using his rock-weighted ropes like Tarzan's vines or Spider-Man's webs.

RESUME - KITCHEN

Pete and Ellen stare at Danny, in shock. Danny keeps the gun on Pete.

ELLEN

Fine, take one of the cars. Get out of here.

DANNY

I will. But (indicates Pete) he comes with.

PETE

No.

DANNY

It wasn't a request.

ELLEN

It's him, isn't it? You're scared of Ephram. You fucking coward!

DANNY

Don't you talk to me about cowards.

Ellen, furious, charges Danny -- who cocks the gun and levels it at Pete. He means what he says.

DANNY

Don't. Don't make me shoot him.

PETE

Honey. Listen to the armed man.

ELLEN

Then take me. Please. Take me. I'll do whatever you want. Just let him go after Julie. Please.

Danny motions to Pete, who slowly steps toward him.

PETE
(to Ellen)
It's OK, baby. It's going to be
all right.

ELLEN
Pete, don't...

PETE
I know you can do this, Ellen.

At Danny's prodding with the gun, Pete takes the station wagon keys off the rack by the door.

ELLEN
(desperate)
What about Julie? What about my
daughter, you son of a bitch?

Danny nods at the remaining key to the truck.

DANNY
There's the keys. Nothing stopping
you.

He almost lets himself feel sorry for Ellen. Then his eyes drift to Anna's corpse, and he pushes the feeling back down.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Come on, family man. You're
driving.

ELLEN
You son of a bitch! *I hope he
tears your fucking head off!* You
hear me?

Danny pretends he doesn't hear, his eyes haunted, guilty. Ellen runs to the door as Danny leads Pete outside. Clings to it as if the next step went off a sheer cliff.

Danny shoves Pete into the car. Pete looks out the window at Ellen. Mouths, "I love you." Starts the engine sadly, and the car drives off bumping into the woods.

Ellen sags against the door, screaming in rage and despair.

RESUME - WOODS

Lem and Luc close in on Julie, using their shots to herd her this way and that, moving closer, close enough to grab her --

EPHRAM'S ROPE SLINGS DOWN FROM THE TREES and SNARES LUC AROUND THE NECK! As Luc struggles, still driving ahead on the ATV, EPHRAM LEAPS DOWN to land on the back of LEM'S ATV! Its shocks groan, but Ephram's carefully crouched for balance. He wraps the other end of the rope around Lem's neck and holds it tight, resisting LEM's efforts to claw free.

The rope stretches between the two ATVS -- draws taut -- Julie swerves around a HUGE TREE -- the rope and the ATVs whip toward the tree -- Ephram jumps off the back of Lem's ATV --

TWANNNNNNG. CRACK. CRACK. The taut rope hits the big tree. Both brothers are yanked backward off their ATVs, their necks snapping simultaneously. The ATVs putter on to a stop like headless chickens.

Julie looks back, half-hidden behind the tree -- sees Ephram standing, gathering his rope from the brothers' bodies and wrapping it around his forearms. A moment's relief turns to FEAR as harsh light from behind illuminates them both.

Ephram turns as a new motor roars up, head tilting curiously in the sudden glare of powerful headlights --

MULVANE'S TRUCK PLOWS INTO HIM!

RESUME - RANDALL HOUSE

Ellen limps into the living room, reaching for the landline phone -- only to find it smashed from the fight with Maggie. Pulls Maggie's body from the TV set, digs in her pockets for a cellphone. It's smoking, fried by the electric current.

Ellen shoves the couch aside, paws through the mess of

cables and network cards. Finds the cellphone batteries.

Second floor rooms. Ellen scatters books, ransacks dressers, looking for phones. Finds none. In desperation, tries the bathroom -- and her heart sinks. The family's phones rest at the bottom of the toilet, soaked and useless.

Attic. Ellen holds up the frayed ends of the cable running out of the back of the radio. Lets it drop in despair.

Back down to the kitchen, double-time. She tears through dead Anna's pockets. Finds a cellphone -- with a bullet pocked in it. A stray from all the gunfire. Ellen throws the phone across the room with a screech of rage.

Then turns. Looks out the open door, sobbing.

RESUME - WOODS

Ephram clings to the truck's front, fingers making dents in the hood. Behind the wheel, Elodie WHOOPS in delight. Ephram begins to claw his way up the hood, reaching for the glass --

The truck SMASHES INTO one of the twins' ATVs, Ephram's body taking the full impact. He slips -- almost goes under the wheels --

Julie, in the shadow of the large tree, watches the truck whiz past --

Ephram digs his fingers back into the hood. Climbs again. Then Mulvane appears over the top of the cab, standing up in the truck bed. Aims a shotgun at Ephram's face.

MULVANE

Won't make much of a trophy, but...

Ephram lets go. THE SHOTGUN ROARS, buckshot shredding the hood of the truck. The truck bumps, jostles, as Ephram bashes along underneath it, and spits him out tumbling like a ragdoll behind it. Mulvane bangs on the roof of the cab.

MULVANE (CONT'D)

BRAKES!

The truck rolls to a halt. Behind it, in a scatter of dead leaves, Ephram struggles to rise. Definitely hurting. Julie sees him, her face filling with pity. She looks over to Lem's dead body. His pistol glints among the leaves and mud.

Mulvane sets down the shotgun and kneels among various plastic crates in the truck bed. Unsnaps one, gets something out...

Ephram gets to his feet at last, confused, pained, and ready to do some damage. His fists clench--

A SPEAR GOES WHIZZING THROUGH HIS CHEST. The tip pops out through his back -- three prongs pop out. Like a grappling hook.

Mulvane reaches down in the back of the truck bed -- wraps the steel cable trailing from the gas-powered grapple gun he's just fired securely around the tow hitch on the back of the truck. Slaps the side of the truck bed, signalling Elodie. Grins up at Ephram.

The truck LURCHES FORWARD, YANKING EPHRAM WITH IT, DRAGGING HIM ACROSS THE GROUND!

Elodie rolls the wheel hard left, and Ephram tumbles in a painful arc, SMASHING against the trunk of a tree.

Elodie prepares to pull another turn -- and TWO GUNSHOTS star the glass of her windshield!

ELODIE

Shit!

She slams the brakes, the truck fishtailing to a stop in the leaves. Mulvane tumbles backward to land on his back amid the crates.

Through Elodie's broken windshield, Julie stands in the headlights, aiming the gun. Scared, but confident. A girl with a plan.

JULIE

Come and get me!

She turns and runs. Elodie sneers, shifts the truck into gear, and roars after.

Julie hits a stride, focuses. Weaves through the trees as if they were hardly there. Elodie plows the truck haphazardly after her, scraping past tree trunks, devouring the distance between them.

ELODIE

Skinny little bitch makes a mess
of my windshield..

In the truck bed, Mulvane gets his bearings, picks up the shotgun. Looks over the back of the truck to see Ephram gripping the steel cable. Starting to climb it, hand over hand, toward the truck.

Mulvane takes aim -- fires -- Ephram rolls to one side. Mulvane ejects the shell, fires again. Ephram dodges again..

Elodie's got the truck within a few feet of Julie now. Revs the motor, just to make Julie afraid. But Julie keeps running, pure focus. Adjusts her course slightly; Elodie swerves to follow.

Mulvane's shotgun clicks empty. He throws it down. Unlatches another case. A machete gleams inside.

MULVANE

Fine. I'll take the head intact.

The trees are thinning; they're getting closer to the beach. The open ground gives Elodie room to floor the gas. The truck begins to creep up on Julie -- closer -- closer --

Mulvane crouches by the back of the truck -- waiting for Ephram -- rises to strike --

Ephram's not there. He's still dangling behind the truck -- the rope wrapped around his forearm rapidly unspooling. Mulvane's eyes follow it back behind the truck, to where Ephram's snared it around a particularly large tree..

Julie's white-hot in the glow of Elodie's headlights. Elodie shifts the truck into a higher gear, stomps on the gas --

Julie drops vertically out of sight. Slides down the sheer muddy side of a steep ravine, tumbling toward the stream

rushing below, clinging to the pistol.

The slack in Ephram's rope runs out. The rear bumper
WRENCHES off Mulvane's truck, and it and Ephram go tumbling
away into the darkness.

Elodie can't stop. The truck roars into the ravine --
SMASHES FULL into the steep dirt wall on the other side.
Catapults Mulvane screaming out of the truck bed, into the
dark.

Julie throws herself out of the way as the truck comes
smashing down all but on top of her.

EXT. ANGEL FALLS LAKE BEACH - NIGHT

At the distant, echoing sound of the crash, Sheriff Mo
looks up from marveling at Jean-Michel's boat-impaled body
in the side of the RV. So do his fellow DEPUTIES, in the
midst of photographing and processing the crime scene.

RESUME - WOODS

Silence. Julie lies filthy, bleeding, exhausted in the
stream. The truck's engine still rumbles, wheels spinning,
one unsmashed headlight shining blindly onto the wall of
the ravine.

The windshield of the truck kicks out. Elodie wriggles out,
bleeding, bruised. Looks up at Julie, furious. Brandishes a
tire iron.

ELODIE

How about I send you the fucking
bill, huh?

Julie raises the pistol, pulls the trigger -- click. Click.
Click. Elodie raises the tire iron, takes one step forward.

Behind her, the truck groans. Elodie turns, looks up.

Ephram, standing atop the truck cab, swings the truck's
severed fender and SMASHES HER HEAD IN.

Julie sags, exhausted. Ephram casually drops the fender,
reaches around behind himself, and awkwardly tugs out the

grappling hook. Snaps off the tip with a shriek of metal. The broken lower half sucks muddily out of his chest.

Voices echo through the woods. Mo and his Deputies. Ephram stiffens.

JULIE

I'm OK. Go help my mom and dad.
Please.

Ephram turns, almost robotically, to go.

JULIE (CONT'D)

... Thank you.

Ephram freezes. Nods once. Lumbers off into the dark.

Mo and his flashlight reach the top of the crevice. The beam plays across the truck -- Elodie's ruined body -- and then Julie, slumped against the wall of the ravine, looking up at Mo.

MO

... Shouldn't you be in bed?

Nearby, Mulvane lies in a thick pile of fallen leaves, surrounded by broken tree branches. He stirs...

CUT TO:

EXT. RANDALL BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Ellen's hand slaps against the wood of the porch, the keys to the truck clutched in her palm. She pulls herself forward, eyes squeezed shut. Opens her eyes.

Henry sits bleeding in the middle of her yard, against the belly of the upturned Humvee. Reaching for her. A sob bursts from Ellen's lips.

HENRY

Doc. Please, doc.

ELLEN

No, no, no...

HENRY

Please, doc. Stay in cover.

ELLEN

God, please. Please don't do this!

HENRY

Stay in cover! Don't, Doc! Don't!
Don't--

Henry stops. Seems to reconsider. He frowns.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You know what? *Fuck* that.

ELLEN

... What?

HENRY

Ain't no snipers out here, Doc!
It's... actually, it's kind of a
nice night. Cool breeze.

ELLEN

I... I'm so sorry, Henry.

HENRY

For what? Not saving my busted-up
ass from an RPG? Last time I
checked, you weren't fuckin' Xena
the Warrior Princess. Now get your
ass out here. That *hijo de puta's*
got your man at gunpoint! I'm
sorry, but the dude teaches high
school. He ain't gonna save
himself.

Ellen grits her teeth. Crawls forward.

ELLEN

He shoots a hell of a lot better
than you did.

HENRY

Why you gotta be like that? I'm
tryin' to be all motivational.

Ellen's down the stairs. Leaves crunching as she crawls

toward Henry.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Come on, Doc!

She keeps crawling.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Come on! You know what? Changed my
mind. You are Xena the Warrior
Princess. Little more! That's it.
Come on!

Henry reaches out to Ellen, smiling beatifically.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I was scared outta my mind, all
fucked up, and there you were
comin' for me. Just like that. You
know what that makes you, Doc?

ELLEN
What?

HENRY
My goddamn hero. *Come on!*

Ellen makes one last lunge forward with a warrior scream --

Her fingers close around the door handle of the truck, and
she pulls herself against it, sobbing -- and grinning.

ELLEN
Thanks, Henry.

She opens the door, hauls herself inside. Takes a deep
breath. Puts in the keys, checks everything. It's been a
long time since she drove.

THE WHOLE CAR ROCKS ON ITS SUSPENSION. Ellen freezes. A
shadow falls across her through the glass behind the cab...

A HUGE HAND SMASHES THROUGH THE GLASS!

And ... pats her reassuringly on the shoulder.

ELLEN
... Ephram?

The burlap sack looms behind her through the broken window.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

My daughter -- Julie -- is she OK?
Did she get to Mo?

Ephram nods. Ellen sags in relief ... then looks at the hand, still on her shoulder.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

(slightly weirded out)

Um... thank you. Are you ... are you
here to help me?

Ephram nods again.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

He's got my husband. The man with
the gun. Do you know where he
went?

Ephram's head lifts. The bag flutters -- he's SNIFFING THE AIR again. Creepy. Then he nods. Lifts his hand. Points.

Ellen starts the truck, still half in shock, and drives off into the woods, Ephram in the truck bed.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANGEL FALLS GASWORKS GATE - NIGHT

Headlights splash across rusty chain-link fence gates, hanging open like a broken arm. A faded sign on the fence reads ANGEL FALLS GASWORKS - A HOWELL ENERGY FACILITY. NO TRESPASSING Over that, more graffiti: HE KNOWS YOUR SIN.

Ellen drives through the busted gates, following fresh tracks in the mud. In the truck bed, Ephram sits stone-still.

EXT. GASWORKS PERIMETER - NIGHT

The Randalls' station wagon sits by a small tool shed near the perimeter fence. The door to the toolshed is ajar, its lock busted. Tall grass grows all over the muddy ground as

Ellen gets out with a small flashlight in hand. She limps to the station wagon -- empty. She calls to Ephram.

ELLEN

I think they went into the plant!
(no answer) Ephram?

Ephram stands at the edge of a cabin-shaped patch of ground on which no grass has grown for years. His family died here.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Ephram, we have to go.

Ephram kneels down as Ellen approaches. He sinks one hand into the dirt.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Ephram, please, I -- I need your
help.

She reaches out to touch his shoulder. EPHRAM WHIRLS, the front of the bag fluttering in a sudden, sharp exhalation. He's not going anywhere. Ellen, frightened, backs away ... and Ephram goes back to his vigil.

Ellen yanks open the toolshed door. Takes the last shovel from a rack on the wall.

Outside, she takes one more look at Ephram. He's lain down in the dirt, like a child taking a nap. Fear and pity mingle on Ellen's face. And then she thinks of Pete.

EXT. GASWORKS PIPES - NIGHT

Above a tangle of gas distribution pipes, a huge building looms at the crest of the falls, water rushing out through a sluiceway into the lake below.

Voices begin to echo off the rusted pipes as Ellen limps through tall grass, deeper into the plant. She turns off her flashlight, stows it in a pocket, and peers around a corner.

Pete's shovel hurls dirt up onto Danny, who grimaces and backs away. One hand trains a gun on Pete; the other holds the GPS. A flashlight on the ground provides light.

DANNY
(knock it off)
I *will* shoot you.

Pete makes sure that his next shovelful of dirt lands on Danny's shoes. He rams the shovel back down again, and -- CLANG. It strikes metal. Danny gestures with the gun, looking more relieved than delighted.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Get it out. Careful.

Pete lets the shovel fall, drops to his knees, and begins pushing the dirt aside with his hands. A silver hard-shell briefcase appears. Pete lifts it to Danny -- then freezes.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Just give me the fucking case.

PETE
You should really look behind you.

DANNY
(oh, please)
Give me. The fucking. Ca--

A shovel CLONGS against the back of his skull. Danny goes down like a sack of bricks, revealing Ellen standing behind him.

ELLEN
(to Pete)
I leave you alone for ten
minutes--

She can't finish the sentence -- Pete sweeps her up off her feet and kisses her, then just looks at her in awe.

PETE
Holy crap. Holy crap. You're --
look at you. You're out of the
house!

ELLEN
I don't think I was missing much.

PETE
OK, I can't be as happy as I want

to be right now, because Julie --

ELLEN

She's fine. Ephram told me. Well.
Indicated.

PETE

Oh. (Kisses her again. Comes up
for air:) "Ephram?" We're on a
first-name basis now?

ELLEN

Well, *I* am. Dunno about you.

In the distance, A POLICE SIREN WAILS. Danny stirs, and Pete quickly scoops up the gun from Danny's hand (remember, Danny still has the other gun tucked in the back of his pants) and holds it on him. Ellen picks up the briefcase.

PETE

(off the briefcase)
Think they'll let us keep that?

ELLEN

Drug money, honey.

PETE

I'm just saying. New back porch?

A sheriff's car turns into the narrow lane between the pipes and drives up to them, pinning them in its headlights. Danny looks up, squinting along with the Randalls, as the driver's side door opens.

It's Mulvane, police shotgun in one hand, his machete in the other, banged-up but looking very pleased with himself. He tongues at something in his mouth, spits a bloody tooth across the hood of the cop car, and grins.

MULVANE

You would not believe what people
leave unlocked in this town.

Pete tries to turn the gun on Mulvane, but Mulvane raises the shotgun warningly. On Mulvane's belt, a police walkie-talkie hisses static.

ELLEN

They've got GPS trackers in those cars. Soon as they notice it's missing, they'll be up here.

MULVANE

I don't think this'll take that long. See, the trick to hunting is knowing what the prey wants. What's gonna flush him out. Get him off his guard.

Mulvane cocks the shotgun, and begins to walk slowly toward the Randalls, aiming it at them.

MULVANE (CONT'D)

So. Start screaming.

With vicious speed, Mulvane drives the butt of the shotgun into Ellen's stomach. Pete moves to stop him, and Mulvane smashes him across the face, the pistol flying from Pete's hand. Mulvane aims the shotgun at Pete.

And then the radio on his belt CRACKLES. Faint, but audible. "Get Rhythm."

Mulvane whirls. Nothing. Darkness. Slowly getting to his hands and knees, Danny listens, gripped by a cold, familiar fear. Reaches back for the gun in the back of his pants. On the ground, Ellen and Pete share a look.

The song on Mulvane's walkie-talkie gets louder. Unbearably loud, almost distorted; now we can hear it from the radio inside the cop car, too. Mulvane takes a deep breath.

EPHRAM'S ROPES WHIZ DOWN FROM THE DARK ABOVE -- AND SNARE ELLEN AND PETE! With a sudden jerk, they're hauled screaming up into the night!

Mulvane whirls -- fires his shotgun up after them, but too late -- and then DANNY HITS HIM in the midsection, slamming him against the hood of the police car!

High above on the pipes, Ephram hauls Ellen and Pete up onto a rickety catwalk. Pete stares awkwardly at Ephram; Ephram stares thickly back at him.

PETE

Uh... hi. I'm Pete. (beat) Say, we had kind of a bet going --

ELLEN
(exasperated)
He's *not* a hobo, honey.

Ephram turns, as if something is calling him. Ladders off along the catwalk toward the shadowed hulk of the facility's POWER PLANT -- the large building we saw earlier.

PETE
Wait, where are you--? Does he do that? Is that a thing he does?

ELLEN
I don't know. But until Mo gets here, we're safer with him.

Pete glances back down over the railing at Mulvane and Danny, before joining Ellen in carrying the briefcase of money toward the power plant.

PETE
That's ... not comforting.

Mulvane tries to swing the shotgun, but Danny doubles him over with a gut punch. Mulvane comes up -- and Danny's got his spare pistol pressed to Mulvane's face.

MULVANE
You better damn well pull that trigger.

Danny's furious, thinking of Anna. He jams the pistol right up against Mulvane's cheekbone and pulls the trigger. Click. Click. Empty. Filled with rage and disgust, Danny bashes Mulvane across the face with the pistol butt -- and then smashes him a couple more times for good measure. Mulvane slumps against the side of the cop car.

Danny looks back at the hole in the ground -- up to the pipes, where he can just make out Ellen and Pete fleeing, the silver case in Pete's hand.

DANNY

Stay in the game.

Danny picks up Mulvane's shotgun and follows the money.

INT. POWER PLANT - NIGHT

A maze of rusted, rickety catwalks, suspended by steel cables from the girders of the ceiling, hangs high above the floor of the power plant. Below, water gushes in a central concrete channel toward a massive set of spinning hydroelectric turbines. Even though they're not cranking out power anymore, the force of the water still spins them. Through the turbines, the water spills out over the falls; a huge industrial window, several of its panes cracked and shattered, looks out over the lake far below.

Ephram bangs open a creaking door -- plastered with HAZARDOUS - DO NOT ENTER signs -- and plods onto the ominously swaying catwalk, followed by Ellen and Pete.

PETE

There's gotta be a way down from here.

Pete glances at a nearby ladder descending from the catwalk -- its rungs are rusted out.

ELLEN

Not this way. Place went downhill in a hurry once the wells went dry.

They take another step forward, and the catwalk groans and shudders as one of the cables scrapes loose from the ceiling. Ellen and Pete grab each other -- even Ephram stops.

PETE (CONT'D)

OK, I think if we just ...

The CABLE SNAPS! The entire catwalk lurches and wobbles, the remaining cables shrieking. Ellen and Pete just barely keep their balance. Ephram starts toward them, concerned.

ELLEN

Ephram, no, don't--

A SHOTGUN BLAST hits Ephram square in the chest! Buckshot sparks and frays against one of the cables behind him. Ephram staggers -- and ANOTHER BLAST flips him over the railings and off the catwalk!

Ellen and Pete turn to see Danny standing behind them with the shotgun. He levels it at them.

DANNY

I believe you've got my money.

ELLEN

Are you insane? This whole thing could collapse at any moment!

DANNY

Yeah. 'Cause I've got so much left to lose. Slide it over. Slow.

Pete slides the case along the catwalk to Danny's feet. Danny kneels to pick it up, keeping the shotgun trained on Pete and Ellen.

Beneath the Randalls, the catwalk creaks and groans. They look down through the grating -- and see EPHRAM CRAWLING ALONG THE UNDERSIDE, eerily, toward Danny.

Danny looks at the case as if it were an alien thing.

ELLEN

What are you even going to do with it?

DANNY

I don't know. (beat) But it's mine.

Behind him, slipping over the railing, the shape of Ephram looms ominously. Danny sees the shadows move -- turns, fear growing on his face -- Ephram raises his arms --

And stops at a sudden, swift squelching sound. A line of mud bubbles forth from around the bag over his head.

AND THEN EPHRAM'S HEAD FALLS OFF, thudding to the catwalk. And when his body crumples, Mulvane stands behind him, face a bloody mess, holding the machete.

MULVANE

Think I'll put him up over the
fireplace. Maybe take down that
elk.

Danny snaps out of his shock and starts to raise the
shotgun, and Mulvane swings again, the machete battering
the gun from Danny's hands. He kicks Danny in the chest,
and Danny stumbles backward. Mulvane raises the machete
again, and Danny holds up the case to shield himself. The
machete strikes once -- twice -- and then the case flies
open, the contents scattering as it tumbles from Danny's
hands.

The air is full of blank, fluttering slips of worthless
paper. Danny looks gutpunched. Then he starts to laugh
bitterly -- this is the punchline to an awful joke.

DANNY

(to Mulvane)

You were gonna fuck us over the
whole time.

MULVANE

Never spend what you don't have
to, Danny boy.

DANNY

You weren't worried we'd ruin your
reputation?

MULVANE

Four fuckups like you? Please.

Behind him, Ephram's body twitches. Mulvane
looks up from Danny to Ellen and Pete.

MULVANE (CONT'D)

Gotta admit, I'm gonna feel just a
little bad about chopping up a
couple of cripples.

Danny reaches into his pocket -- takes out the SURGICAL
SCISSORS he took from Ellen when she treated his arm.

DANNY

If it'll make you feel better --

Danny STABS THE SCISSORS into the side of Mulvane's knee, into the joint of the bone. Mulvane HOWLS in agony.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Welcome to the club.

Danny scrambles backward as Mulvane lashes out with the machete.

DANNY (CONT'D)
(to the Randalls)
Don't fucking stare! RUN!

Danny scrambles to his feet and limps after them. Mulvane wrenches the scissors free and drags himself along the railing. The catwalk groans and sways, cables tearing away from the ceiling in showers of concrete dust.

Pete helps Ellen along, the two of them clinging together. Pete's eyes light up, and he points to an EMERGENCY LADDER on the far side of the room, across the maze of catwalks, near the huge window.

The Randalls cut across a juncture in the catwalk, heading for the ladder, Danny close behind them, Mulvane in pursuit.

Ephram's body twitches again. His hands begin to move -- crawling toward his head.

The Randalls and Danny follow their branch of the catwalk toward the large window and the ladder. Diagonal cables secure the catwalk to the wall above the apex of the window.

As they step, rust falls beneath their feet, and the bolts securing this section of catwalk to the one adjacent begin to groan.

ELLEN
(hears it)
Wait, wait, stop --!

Too late! The section of catwalk shears free, rusted bolts crumbling, and begins to wobble and sway back and forth. Now it's held up only by the cables -- and they're not looking too steady.

DANNY

We've gotta go back!

But he turns to find Mulvane at the opposite end of the catwalk. Mulvane raises the machete -- and SEVERES ONE OF THE CABLES closest to him! The catwalk pitches and sways wildly.

MULVANE

(his knee's in agony)

Danny boy ... you are officially
more trouble than you're worth.

He swings again -- the other cable near him SNAPS in a flash of sparks!

Ephram's hands slowly drag his head, trailing mud, back toward his neck. With a ghastly squelch, Ephram reattaches it -- and then ROTATES IT 180 DEGREES so it's facing the right way. Ephram staggers upright. He's a mess, oozing mud and silty water -- and not repairing. Across the room, he sees Mulvane holding Danny and the Randalls at bay. Ephram's fist tightens on the railing.

With the cables near him cut, Mulvane stands at the edge of the Randalls' catwalk and begins to kick at it viciously with his good leg. The two middle cables left connecting the platform to the roof begin to give. Danny starts to charge Mulvane, only to stop as Mulvane holds up the machete.

MULVANE (CONT'D)

Please do. I'll peel you like an
apple.

DANNY

Look at yourself! What the fuck do
you have left? What do any of us
have left?

Mulvane thinks for a long moment.

MULVANE

My reputation. And no shitbag
cripple's going to live to make a
laughingstock of me.

He gives the platform another vicious kick. On the catwalk, Pete and Ellen slowly try to edge toward the ladder.

Another kick from Mulvane, and ONE OF THE LAST CABLES SNAPS! The platform pitches sideways, dangling precariously, as Ellen, Pete, and Danny cling to the railings for dear life.

Mulvane raises his boot for one last kick -- and turns, hearing metal creak and cables groan.

EPHRAM LEAPS THROUGH THE AIR, JUMPING FROM CATWALK TO CATWALK, cables snapping and sections collapsing in his wake, and POUNCES ON MULVANE! Mulvane swings the machete -- buries it in Ephram's forearm. Ephram just looks at it. Looks back at Mulvane. Drives a MASSIVE FIST INTO MULVANE'S FACE!

Ephram hauls Mulvane up, kicking and struggling, with one hand -- pulls out the machete with the other -- PLUNGES IT INTO MULVANE'S GUTS! Then Ephram DROPS HIM OFF THE CATWALK!

Mulvane hits the water -- comes up gasping, coughing blood. The torrent carries him along toward the spinning turbines. Even with the machete in his stomach, he tries to swim -- fights the current -- paddles toward the edge of the canal, lays a hand on concrete, triumphant --

Mulvane feels a sickening tug. Looks back. His grizzly-fur coat is caught in the turbines. His hand sliiiiides across the concrete -- he flails desperately, the coat dragging him toward the turbines -- HE LETS OUT A HORRIBLE SCREAM --

Angel Falls runs red. But only for a moment ...

On the catwalk above, Ephram sees the last of the middle cables about to give way -- slings a rope toward a steel girder on the ceiling, wraps it around the railing, strains with every bit of failing strength to keep the catwalk level.

ELLEN
(to Pete)
Go! Go!

Pete crawls toward the ladder, Ellen behind, Danny trailing. The catwalk sways. Mud and water drip from

Ephram's wounds -- he seems to be diminishing -- and his ropes begin to crackle and fray, slowly dissolving into dust...

Pete lays a hand on the ladder platform, begins to haul himself over to it. Turns back to Ellen, grinning.

PETE

It's stable! Come on, just --

EPHRAM'S ROPE SNAPS.

The catwalk screeches and swings forward, shattering the window!

EXT. ABOVE ANGEL FALLS - NIGHT

The catwalk dangles out of the window over the falls. Below, water thunders down into the lake. Ellen clings to a railing -- Danny loses his footing, tumbles past her as she reaches for him -- clings to the catwalk grating by his fingers -- flattens himself as EPHRAM TUMBLES TOWARD HIM! Ephram falls past, grabs on to the ragged end of the catwalk, dangling high above the falls!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CATWALK

Pete, on the ladder platform, gapes in horror as what had been the far end of the catwalk dangles next to the ladder platform on which he kneels. He looks up -- the last two cables are shrieking under the weight, pulling loose from the ceiling. Looks down the slanting catwalk to where Ellen clings. Pete gets down on his belly, reaching through the gap in the window toward her.

PETE

Climb, Ellen! Take my hand!

Ellen grits her teeth, digs fingers into the catwalk grating, and slowly begins to haul herself up the shaking platform. Below her, Danny dangles, digs in, and begins to climb as well.

Ellen climbs. The cables groan and shudder. Pete reaches,

with all his might. Her fingers stretch out to his --

The cables give -- not entirely, but almost. The catwalk drops with a lurch, another few feet. Ellen's at the top of the catwalk, reaching for Pete -- but there's a foot remaining between her hand and his.

DANNY
(below Ellen)
Hang on!

ELLEN
What the hell are you doing?

DANNY
I figure I owe you.

Danny puts a hand under Ellen's boot. Supports her. Pushes, even as the catwalk shakes wildly, and she leans up and out into empty air -- and grabs Pete's hand!

Dangling below, Ephram sees all of this...

Pete hauls Ellen up to the catwalk, and they kiss for a long, intense moment -- and then break off and both reach for Danny.

PETE
Come on! You can make it!

Danny looks at them; bleak, hopeless. At the end of his rope. Smiles an awful, heartbreaking smile.

DANNY
No I can't.

ELLEN
Take our hands, dammit! You'll die!

DANNY
I've been dead for twenty years.

Danny looks down -- and there's Ephram, crawling up the catwalk toward him. Danny's face goes cold, twisted with hate and grief.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Come on, you son of a bitch! You
took everything from me!
Everything I ever loved!

Ephram reaches for Danny, and Danny kicks out at his
burlap-covered face.

DANNY (CONT'D)
You took Crystal! You took
Patrick! You took my whole damn
life!

The catwalk shrieks and sways wildly. The cables are
tearing loose. Ephram keeps crawling, clamps one huge hand
around Danny's shirtfront. Danny, unafraid at long last,
screams into Ephram's face.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Why didn't you take me?

Ephram looks at Danny -- looks up at the Randalls, reaching
for him -- and with one last, mighty effort, FLINGS DANNY
UP TOWARD THE RANDALLS! Danny smacks against the edge of
the ladder platform, dangles, and Pete and Ellen grab his
hands.

Danny looks down at Ephram, completely mystified, and
suddenly ashamed. Ephram looks back at him, face outlined
through the burlap.

ELLEN
Ephram! Come on!

Ephram tries, but he's dissolving away -- leaching into
mud. He looks up at Ellen. Shakes his head sadly.

The CATWALK PLUNGES, carrying Ephram down, down, down to
his watery grave. The metal splashes into the water,
sinking, and pins a burlap sack and a pile of rotted
clothes to the silty bottom of the lake...

And on the ladder platform, Ellen and Pete cling to one
another, and Danny, still dangling from the edge, looks
down...

EXT. GASWORKS - DAWN

Ellen, Pete, and Danny pass Mulvane's stolen car, just as a whole fleet of sheriff's vehicles barge into the gasworks. Mo gets out of the driver's side of the lead car, and Julie bolts from the passenger side, flinging off a blanket, and throws herself into her parents' arms.

Danny looks at them sadly, then turns to find Mo waiting, sizing him up. Resigned, Danny holds out his hands.

Cut to Danny's cuffed hands. He sits alone in the back of a patrol car. Out the window, he can see Ellen and Pete sitting in the back of an ambulance, Julie passed out asleep between them. Ellen's MEDIC FRIENDS, some of whom we recognize from the pictures at the beginning, hover around her, elated. Ellen and Pete are talking to Mo, who looks back through the window at Danny, meaningfully.

EXT. COUNTY LIMITS - JUST AFTER DAWN

Mo's car slows to a halt just past a sign reading "Welcome to Angel County." It's a rural road -- no traffic, just thick trees on either side. No witnesses.

Mo gets out and opens the back door, revealing Danny.

DANNY

Skipping the trial, huh?

MO

You might say that.

Mo reaches for the gun on his belt ... and then past it, to a ring of keys. To Danny's surprise, Mo unlocks Danny's handcuffs.

MO (CONT'D)

You have no idea how much Ellen's gonna owe me for this.

DANNY

... I know you, don't I? Used to.

MO

Chess club. You were a year behind me.

DANNY

I remember you. You beat me that one time. You were good.

MO

Yeah, well ... I'm calling this one a draw.

Mo nods, and Danny, with one last long, lonely look back, begins to limp away down the road, toward the rest of his life...

CUT TO:

EXT. RANDALL HOUSE - NIGHT

Thanksgiving. A crisp, clear night. Cans of paint and bare planks betray the need for finishing touches to the Randalls' new porch. Through the window, we can see Ellen, Pete, and Julie wrapping up the last of Thanksgiving dinner in the kitchen, chatting happily.

The back door from the kitchen opens, and Ellen pauses at the threshold. Takes a deep breath. Steps out onto the porch, and keeps her eyes shut -- but only for a moment. Behind her, Pete and Julie wait in the doorway, smiling, proud of her.

Ellen holds a foil-wrapped plate in her hands, with a fork on top. Speaking to the dark.

ELLEN

You don't have to hide. Not if you don't want to.

She waits a long while, listening. Nothing.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Okay. Well, we made up a plate for you. I'll just leave it right here.

Ellen sets down the plate on the porch step, and heads back to her family. At the door, she pauses and turns back one last time, waiting. Then Ellen and her family go inside, and shut the door.

One by one, the lights in the house go out. The porch light

stays on. The Cat from earlier, fat and awful, ambles up onto the porch. Sniffs at the foil-covered plate. A shadow falls across it, and it hisses and runs off.

From a distance, we see the shape of Ephram Goode, whole once more, gingerly sit down on the porch steps. Ephram puts the plate on his lap, lifts the foil, and looks down. He bows his head, tucks his hands together -- we realize he's saying a silent grace. Then he picks up the fork and tucks in.

FADE TO BLACK.