

**HAP AND LEONARD**

Pilot

*"Savage Season"*

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Based on the novels by

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TEASER

**EXT. RURAL EAST TEXAS ROADS - DAY**

A 1960s Cadillac careens wildly down a dirt road, police cruisers hot on its tail. Police radio calls out "Robbery at First National Bank. Guard shot and killed. Suspects armed".

Vintage Country music jangles.

*TITLE CARD: "East Texas, 1968"*

Inside the Caddy it's chaos. THREE ROBBERS, rubber raccoon masks dangling from their necks. One drives but he's hurt, another stuffs bills into canisters while a third bleeds out in the backseat.

In the chaos, the driver looks up to see a fork in the road, and he's heading right for the split, towards an old signpost. He jerks the wheel right and the car leaps onto a tiny logging road.

CAMERA stays on the sign as they pass. It reads "*Seasonal Road. Out of service.*"

The police convoy whips by it, staying on the main road, no idea our boys have split off.

The man in the backseat tears off his mask and looks out the back window. This is **SOFTBOY McCALL**.

The Caddy bounces up and down through the mud, our boys cheering as the sounds of sirens get further away. The brush gets thicker, blocking our view ahead until we're literally plowing through leaves like a woodland car wash. Until they burst through to see...

Clear blue sky.

And an ancient wooden guardrail where the road terminates just ahead. After that a drop off into a river enshrouded by a thick forest.

Our boys can barely scream "Shi-" when they plow through the guardrail and the Cadillac soars through the air, almost gracefully.

The car hits the water, floats a beat and then sinks like a two-ton stone. Our boys struggle inside, the windows filling with water and in a matter of seconds, the car is swallowed by the muddy river. All that remains is a final bubble on the water's surface and a raccoon mask that floats up and is swept away by the current.

And then a hand breaks that surface. Softboy McCall, the one bleeding out, bobs up, gasping for air and is swept downstream, fighting and clawing the whole way to get back to the sunken car. No luck.

He spots another man from the car floating face down and grabs him as he is swept past. He rolls him over and holds on to him. The man is still wearing his raccoon mask.

As they pass a tire dangling from an old rope that hangs from a rusted railroad bridge above, Softboy reaches up with one hand and grabs the tire, his eyes locked on the spot where the car went down.

He holds on to the tire with one arm while keeping the other man afloat with his other. He looks up as the old rope begins to fray under the stress.

Snap! The rope breaks and the men are swept away. The frayed rope dangles from the iron bridge, watching them go.

**EXT. SABINE RIVER BANK - CONTINUOUS**

We find Softboy a ways downstream, crawling from the river like a bloated, wounded alligator, but he's still dragging the other man with one hand. He makes the shore, pulls the man out of the water and sits with his legs splayed, the man's head in his lap.

Softboy pulls the man's mask off. The man coughs and blood froths on his lips.

Fresh blood begins to stain the man's soaked shirt under his jacket. Softboy puts his hand on the bullet wound and blood pumps through his fingers.

The man holds his hand up and he's clutching a fist full of wet \$100 bills.

Softboy and the man look at each other and break into pained smiles. The man dies with a smile on his face, his fist releasing the bills which fly off in the wind.

Softboy watches as the bills flit off against the big blue sky and rain down onto the river which whips them away.

TRACKING SHOT across the dirt, past the bloodied raccoon mask as dollar bills dance across the screen. Then they're gone, replaced by dead leaves, dancing across the screen the same way and we...

**EXT. TEXAS ROSE FIELD - WINTER - DAY**

TRACKING SHOT CONTINUES-

Come in on a rose bush laying in the dirt, its roots twisted and gnarly.

*TITLE CARD: "20 YEARS LATER"*

A leather gloved hand reaches down and picks it up. PULL OUT to see rows upon rows of rose bushes lined up in an endless, fallow field. The sky is overcast and gloomy.

Two men dressed in tattered work clothes, wearing winter coats, **HAP COLLINS** and **LEONARD PINE** are hard at work in their row. Both around 40, Hap white, Leonard black as a raisin.

Hap guides a pulling machine down the line and yanks a rose bush, roots and all. Leonard shakes the dirt free and tosses the rose bush to a refrigerated truck waiting nearby.

Leonard stretches his aching back and looks down at Hap as he works, yanking a root that the machine missed.

LEONARD

You're getting a spot on top...

Hap looks up, feigning indifference.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Couple years you'll be doing a comb over...

HAP

It's just my brain growing...  
unlike that goose turd that passes  
for yours...

Hap kicks the machine, clearing its metal teeth then stands and stretches the small of his back, looking out around them.

We pull up and see other teams of men, all Mexican, working the field.

The **WALKING BOSS** rolls by Hap and Leonard in a modified golf cart and slows as he passes.

WALKING BOSS

Since when do we pay you to stand  
around lookin' stupid...

And he's gone, Hap and Leonard looking after him. Leonard flips the bird at the man's back. Hap moves on to the next bush, trying not to touch his bald spot.

LEONARD

(grinning)

Keep touching it... it'll get worse...

HAP

It ain't funny...

LEONARD

Think of all the money you'll save on shampoo...

Hap shakes his head and rips a bush out of the ground, tossing it to the truck as--

**INT. SUPER MARKET - DAY**

A six-pack of Dr. Pepper comes down in a shopping cart next to boxes of vanilla cookies, some toilet paper and dog food. Their work boots follow the cart, leaving muddy tracks

Leonard pushes the cart. Hap walks ahead scanning the aisle. He stops near the oatmeal, looking at the prices.

LEONARD

Regular's cheaper...

Hap grabs a box of the generic brand. Leonard comes to a stop with his cart. Up ahead, at the end of the aisle an **OLD LADY** is standing by her cart staring at them in bewilderment.

The mud stained odd couple looks back at her. Leonard smiles at her and she hurries away.

HAP

You put one box of those cookies back you can get the good coffee...

Hap is looking at a can of brand name coffee. Leonard, not having it, leans past Hap and throws two cans of the cheap coffee in the cart.

LEONARD

Coffee's coffee... but I love my cookies...

He walks off and Hap puts the good coffee back.

**INT. SUPER MARKET CASHIER'S - CONTINUOUS**

A chubby mutant of a **TEENAGE CASHIER** rings up the groceries as Hap digs in his shirt pocket and comes out with some coupons. Leonard stands with his bags ready to go, watching.

LEONARD

You do coupons now... how sweet is that...

Hap ignores him.

The old woman who was staring at them is behind them in line. Leonard glances back at her.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

He's the domestic one...

He smiles and the woman tries to crawl inside herself.

Hap digs money out of his pocket and counts it out, change and all. The cashier stares at him through her thick lensed glasses taped on one side.

Hap pushes the coupons towards her. He glances at the total on the register and turns to Leonard.

HAP

You got two bucks...

Leonard digs in his pocket and comes out with a dollar and three quarters and dimes and nickels. He counts out the change and sets it near Hap's money.

LEONARD

Nice to have friends with money... huh?

HAP

Go get the car... Rochester...

Leonard can't help but smile.

LEONARD

Yes suh... Massa Hap suh...

He passes Hap and heads out of the store. The old woman and cashier stare after him. Slowly their eyes come back to Hap.

HAP

Hard to get good help these days...

Hap looks at a charity cardboard with coin slots on the counter. It says "*You Can Help Change the World*". He digs in his pocket and places his last quarter in one of the slots.

He picks up his bags and heads out. The old woman and the cashier watch him go like he's got two heads.

**END OF TEASER**

ACT 1

**INT. HAP'S GARAGE - LATER**

The garage door opens like a curtain on a stage revealing Hap and Leonard. Each holds a shotgun, hard looks in their eyes.

They step outside in SLO-MOTION striding across the yard as our MAIN TITLES play over their determined march.

Leonard snaps his shotgun closed, wiping down the cold metal while Hap loads his double barrel with 12-gauge shells.

As TITLES end, it looks like our boys are headed into battle.

**EXT. HAP'S BACK YARD - LATE AFTERNOON**

A pine tree jungle and blue sky. Something flies into view.

Boom! It explodes into shatters and falls to the earth.

HAP (V.O.)

Pull!

Another clay pigeon soars across the sky. Boom! It explodes.

Come down to find Hap re-loading his shotgun, Leonard looking bored near a skeet launcher. Hap snaps the gun closed.

HAP

Okay Annie Oakley... two on me...

Leonard leans over the skeet machine.

HAP (CONT'D)

Pull!

Hap follows the arc of the pigeons with his shotgun. They soar and float like UFO's then begin to descend.

Boom! Boom! The clay pigeon bursts in an explosion.

LEONARD

Man... don't you ever miss...

HAP

Just on purpose...

LEONARD

You ever hear "Chickens don't praise their own soup"...

HAP

They don't eat it either...

The sound of an engine gets their attention and they turn.

An old faded car pulls in behind Hap's work shed. The door opens and a woman gets out, wearing a tight sweater and acid wash jeans. She looks at the boys as she sways towards them.

This is **TRUDY**, late-30s. Could have been a homecoming queen once and now 20 years down the road, she's still pretty as a Texas rose with blonde hair and legs that start at her neck.

Hap swallows hard.

LEONARD

Here comes trouble...

HAP

Can you be nice for once...

LEONARD

Just watch her...

HAP

I'm watching...

Trudy glides over the ground, her breasts bouncing beneath a tight sweater. Her hips keeping time like a well oiled clock.

LEONARD

You know what I mean... Don't come crying to me she does it again...

HAP

I look like a fool to you...

LEONARD

And then some... Just remember... a hard dick knows no conscience...

She comes into earshot and stops walking. She smiles at Hap.

TRUDY

Hello... Hap...

HAP

Hello...

TRUDY

Leonard...

LEONARD

Trudy...

TRUDY

What are you boys up to...

HAP

Shooting skeet...

Leonard shoulders his shotgun.

LEONARD

I got to go... Hap... I'll check on  
you later... remember what I  
said... huh...

Leonard marches off with a nod at Trudy and climbs in his car  
and takes off, a little hard on the gas, kicking up some dirt  
in the drive.

TRUDY

He mad about something...

HAP

He doesn't like you...

TRUDY

I forgot...

HAP

No you didn't...

They both smile. Trudy shivers with a chill and crosses her  
arms over her perky breasts beneath the sweater. Hap notices.

TRUDY

It's chilly out here...

HAP

You're not dressed like it's  
chilly...

TRUDY

I got hose on... under my jeans...

She smiles at Hap again and he's all for it.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Been a while... huh...

HAP

Two years...

TRUDY

I wanted to look good...

HAP

You do...

TRUDY

Jazzercise... I got a video and I do what it says... Us older ladies have to work at it...

HAP

It's working... you want something...

TRUDY

You got any coffee...

HAP

Yep...

TRUDY

Should we go up the house...

HAP

That's where the coffee's at...

She walks up to the house and Hap's eyes follow the perfect sway of her hips and follows.

**INT. HAP'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING**

Hap's house is a bachelor's home. Not dirty but not neat. He and Trudy sit at the kitchen table. Her eyes scan the room, taking in the lack of a woman's touch and the obvious poverty that Hap lives in.

The beat up old radio plays 80s country music.

TRUDY

You still working the rose fields?

She's looking at his callused and thorn scarred hands.

HAP

It's honest work...

TRUDY

You deserve better though... What do you do when you're too old for it...

HAP

You sound like Leonard...

TRUDY

Maybe he's smarter than I think...

HAP

He is...

TRUDY

Why's he hate me so much...

HAP

Might have something to do with him  
joining up for the war and you  
giving him hell for it...

TRUDY

I still think he was wrong... if  
nobody would fight... there'd be no  
wars...

HAP

And if pigs could fly there'd be a  
lot more shit heads walking  
around...

She frowns and twists her hair. Hap looks at her ring finger.

HAP (CONT'D)

How's what's his name... Howard?

TRUDY

I don't think I'm cut out for  
marriage... I had you and I screwed  
that up... didn't I...

HAP

No great loss...

TRUDY

I left you for Pete and Pete for  
Bill and Bill for Howard... we got  
divorced a year ago...

HAP

I'm sorry to hear it... *(He isn't)*  
Maybe you're better off...

TRUDY

Maybe... maybe I ought to grow  
up...

HAP

And learn to trust people...

She reaches across the table and touches Hap's fingers.

TRUDY

I trust you...

He looks at her. She smiles genuinely and she's beautiful.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I've missed you Hap... I truly  
have...

Their eyes are locked and the sexual tension is building. An upbeat version of "Jambalaya" comes on the radio. She taps her finger along, feeling it.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Remember we'd dance till the  
roadhouse closed and then fool  
around under the stars in the back  
of your car....

She pulls Hap to his feet, swaying with the music.

HAP

I wasn't fooling...

She steps to him takes his other hand, places it on her hip and they begin to dance to the music.

TRUDY

Neither was I... that was the best  
time of my life Hap...

It's a dance they've done a thousand times in their youth, practiced and perfected, almost formal in its choreography. A sexy, slower version of a hoe down two step.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Remember...

HAP

Yeah...

And in this dance, they are back in the old days, teenagers in love. Just this dance, this moment, together.

When the song ends they stand close. Then Trudy's face comes up and she covers Hap's lips with her own and they melt into each other.

When the kiss breaks Hap is visibly shaken and Trudy's face is flushed. Her eyes track down to his bulging pants.

TRUDY

Is that for me?

Hap swallows, knowing he's lost. We hear her unzip his pants and the sounds of her soft hand taking his manhood.

HAP

That ain't fair...

TRUDY

Nothing is sugar...

She smiles and leads him by his dick to the bedroom.

**INT. HAP'S HOUSE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Come in on the old radio still doing its thing on the counter. Over the music we hear bedsprings getting a workout in the other room and the animal sounds of pumping lust.

As we listen, we catch snippets of Hap's single life. The empty shelves. The stack of unopened bills on the phone table. The old plates and mismatched coffee cups. One set of silverware. Newspaper open to the JOBS section.

The sounds of an orgasm.

**INT. HAP'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

A topless Trudy collapses on top of a sweaty, shirtless Hap, burying her face in the pillow over his shoulder. Both out of breath, Hap looking like he just ran a marathon.

TRUDY

Oh Hap... We still got it don't we?

HAP

Goddamn... yeah... But I think I pulled a muscle...

TRUDY

Catch your breath and we'll go again...

She rolls off of him and scurries off to the bathroom. He watches her go then lays by himself.

Suddenly feeling predictable. And stupid.

HAP

Damn...

As if on cue, the phone rings. Hap already knows who it is.

**INT. HAP'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Hap answers the phone, pulling a blanket over his naked ass.  
INTERCUT between Hap and Leonard.

HAP

Yeah...

LEONARD (V.O.)

She still there?

HAP

Yeah...

LEONARD (V.O.)

Shit... you're fucked again...

HAP

A hard dick knows no conscience...  
remember...

LEONARD (V.O.)

Bullshit... this is Leonard you're  
talking too... not some rose field  
nigger...

HAP

Leonard you are a rose field  
nigger... And so am I... A white  
one... What you doing up at two in  
the morning minding my business...

LEONARD (V.O.)

Just checking in... thought she  
might have dumped on you again...

HAP

You drunk...

LEONARD (V.O.)

I'm getting there...

Hank William's "Setting the Woods on Fire" plays softly.

HAP

You playing Hank... that's not  
good... not when you're  
drinking.... buddy...

LEONARD (V.O.)

She talking that hippie shit?

HAP

People change Leonard...

LEONARD

Sure, and wow, the sixties, man,  
like, neat... Don't fall for it...  
it was just the eighties with tie-  
dyed T-shirts...

HAP

I ain't falling for nothing... I'm  
just getting laid...

LEONARD (V.O.)

And the next shit I take's gonna  
come out in sweet smelling  
squares... like Wheat Chex... you  
dumb son of a bitch...

Click. Leonard has hung up. Hap softly puts the phone down.  
He stands and looks at a little mirror hanging from a bird  
cage on the wall. At the 40 year old man staring back at him.

He paws at his hair, covering up a thinning spot just as--

Hands come over his shoulder and Trudy kisses his ear and  
bites it playfully. She musses his hair back to normal.

TRUDY

Leave it... It looks good...

HAP

I look like my dad...

TRUDY

There's no beauty in perfection,  
honey... What's with the bird cage?

HAP

Found it at a yard sale... Made me  
think of Cheep...

Trudy smiles at the name and sees a little yellow plastic  
bird perched inside the cage.

TRUDY

I loved that little bird...

HAP

Me too...

TRUDY

Miss letting him flying around the  
house all the time...

HAP

Felt like a Disney movie...

Trudy nuzzles into his shoulder.

HAP (CONT'D)

I miss that little guy...

Somewhere far away a train whistle blows. They stand holding each other in silence and listen to it fade.

TRUDY

Hap...

HAP

Yeah...

TRUDY

I need your help...

Hap's face. He knew this was coming.

HAP

How much...

TRUDY

I didn't come for money... and if I was another girl I might be hurt...

HAP

You always come for something... long as it doesn't have anything permanent to do with me...

TRUDY

You're the only one I could ask... it's big and it could be good for both of us...

HAP

Okay... ask...

TRUDY

Hap my love... how'd you like to make two hundred thousand dollars?

Off Hap's face, staring at his own reflection in the mirror.

**END ACT 1**

ACT 2

**EXT. LEONARD'S HOUSE - NEXT MORNING**

The house sits in the early morning dew, a quaint country style bungalow from the forties, kept up well and painted with care. The grass around the house is trim and neat.

Unlike Hap's place, no junk litters the yard, which is surrounded by tall pines.

Hap's pick-up slides into the drive and pulls up close to the house. Leonard's car is parked under a corrugated overhang built off the side of the house.

Hap gets out of his truck and heads for the door. It's locked. He reaches over the door and feels around with his fingers. He comes out with a key and opens the door and replaces the key.

**INT. LEONARD'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Hank William's voice greets Hap as he steps through the small living room into the kitchen.

An old record player sits on a table, still spinning. Hap gently lifts the arm and turns off the record player.

HAP

Hey pecker-head... you awake...

No answer. Hap pours himself a cup of coffee from a pot on the stove. He sips it and nods. It's good. Better than his.

He looks at the coffee can near six empty beer bottles lined up neatly on the sink counter.

It's the expensive brand Leonard made him put back.

HAP (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch...

**EXT. LEONARD'S YARD - CONTINUOUS**

Hap walks through the early morning air towards an old barn in back of the house, past a weight lifting bench and a line of four dog pens with cage fences. The hunting dogs wag their tails as he passes.

He stops at the last dog pen and leans down and rubs the dog's ears through the fence.

HAP  
Hey Switch... where's the Chocolate  
Avenger...

The dog looks at him as a steady *slap-thud-slap-thud* resonates from the nearby barn.

**INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS**

A shirtless, bare foot Leonard works a heavy bag with competent deftness. Straight jabs, followed by body punches and wicked left hooks. His body glistens with a sheen of sweat, his muscles torqued and pumped. It's impressive.

Hap slips inside and sips his coffee. He sets the cup on an old horse stall wall and leans back arms folded, watching Leonard with an amused grin on his face.

He throws a pair of gloves at Hap.

LEONARD  
You smell like perfume and pussy...

Leonard keeps his assault on the bag up and doesn't even look at Hap.

HAP  
It's new... got it at the Mall...  
Eau de Labia...

Hap pulls on the gloves.

LEONARD  
Disgusting... Let's tango...

Hap slaps his gloves together.

**MOMENTS LATER -**

Hap and Leonard spar, moving in circles. Trading jabs literally and figuratively, both showing an expertise in martial arts.

LEONARD (CONT'D)  
You move like a man who's getting  
laid...

HAP  
And you hit like a man who isn't...

Leonard takes a swing at Hap and connects. It stings.

Leonard grins.

HAP (CONT'D)

You're cute when you gloat you know that...

LEONARD

I'm cute when I fart... hell I'm cute when I take a shit...

HAP

No... you just look like you're melting...

Hap's winded.

LEONARD

What are you really doing here? You've never gotten up early on a Sunday in your life...

He jabs. Hap fades and slaps it away.

HAP

Got a deal... thought I might cut you in... lots of money... We wouldn't have to go back to the rose fields... for a long time...

Hap jabs. Leonard counters with a hook to the body. Hap catches it on his elbow.

LEONARD

How long we talking...

They circle.

HAP

Long... You could start your own business... get yourself a shoe shine stand down at the bus depot--

Suddenly Leonard spins, his foot arcing up and snapping out over Hap's guard and catching him on the side of the head. Thunk!

Hap drops to his knee and shakes his head. Leonard squats down next to him.

LEONARD

How you doing pecker wood?

HAP

Been worse... Barn's spinning though...

Hap lays down on his back.

LEONARD

You always overcommit my friend...  
it's your weakness... in love and  
war...

He lays down next to Hap. Two dudes recovering from battle.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

How much money we talking about...

HAP

One hundred thousand dollars...  
Each...

LEONARD

Shit... what we gotta' do... shoot  
someone...

HAP

Nope... all we gotta' do is swim  
for it...

**EXT. HAP'S BACKYARD - LATER**

Hap chops some wood and dumps it into a barrel that's  
flaming. Some old chairs surround the barrel.

Trudy stands wearing one of his coats, her arms stuffed under  
her pits.

TRUDY

I don't like being railroaded like  
this Hap... you should have asked  
me before you told him... we got  
enough between us you could've done  
that...

HAP

You don't want him... you don't get  
me... Sorry but that's the way it  
is...

**INT. HAP'S KITCHEN - INTERCUT**

Leonard takes a can of Dr. Pepper from the fridge and opens a  
cupboard. Boxes of vanilla cookies, neatly stacked.

LEONARD

(re: the cookies)

That's my boy...

He watches Hap and Trudy squabbling outside and takes a box.

**EXT. HAP'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS**

Hap and Trudy take a seat.

TRUDY

It's another thing I got to explain  
to Howard... he wasn't that keen on  
me asking you in the first place...

LEONARD (O.S.)

Just use that trailer trash  
charm... works on Hap...

She looks up to see Leonard take a seat next to Hap. He sets  
a tray on the ground with his box of cookies, his soda and  
two hot chocolates on it. He picks up the hot chocolates and  
hands one to Hap and then holds the other out to Trudy.

TRUDY

You know what's wrong with you  
Leonard... You're jealous... always  
have been...

Leonard holds the cup out to her, waiting. She takes it.

LEONARD

Hap's alright... nice perky ass...  
but he's not my type...

He stuffs a cookie in his mouth. Hap brushes it off.

HAP

Can we stop the tit for tat...  
let's be friends for now anyway...  
It'll be easier all 'round...

LEONARD

Okay... But with me and her it's  
about business... Not friendship...

Hap looks at Trudy. She pouts.

HAP

Trudy...

TRUDY

Okay... for now...

Leonard pushes the box of cookies at her.

LEONARD

See... I'll even share my cookies  
with you...

She ignores the cookies. She glares at Leonard and then Hap.

HAP

Now... tell Leonard what you told  
me... I want him to hear it from  
you before he makes up his mind...

Trudy sips her hot chocolate.

TRUDY

Okay... my last husband...  
Howard... traveled the country  
speaking against nuclear  
reactors... led marches and  
protests... Until he got  
arrested... for "damaging  
government property" they called  
it... Howard felt it was his  
responsibility as a human being--

Leonard holds a hand up.

LEONARD

No politics... it affects my  
heart... Just the straight goods...  
pretty please...

TRUDY

Fine... they gave Howard two years  
at Leavenworth...

HAP

My alma mater...

LEONARD

All her best ex-husbands go  
there...

TRUDY

And while Howard was in prison he  
met a man named Softboy McCall...

**INTERCUT FLASHBACK:**

We pick up where we left off in '68. Softboy (the surviving  
bank robber), waddles up the embankment, clutching a small  
wad of soaked bills.

TRUDY (V.O.)

Softboy was a bank robber...  
fancied himself a gangster but he  
wasn't the sharpest crayon in the  
box...

He makes it to the road and spots an oncoming car. He waves  
it down... Only to realize it's a cop car.

Mug shot pix. Softboy's in the slammer now, older, greyer. He  
sits on his prison cot telling a story to someone offscreen.

TRUDY

Howard ends up being Softboy's cell  
mate and they get close... Real  
close... So close he tells Howard  
everything... even tells him about  
this stolen money laying at the  
bottom of the river... A million  
dollars he had and lost... Said he  
had nightmares about fish and  
alligators eating it all up before  
he could ever get back to it...

The man on the other cot is **HOWARD**, 40s, smart, handsome.  
Doesn't look like a crook. PUSH IN on Howard listening.  
Thoughts racing behind his eyes.

He looks up just as Softboy says something to him.

TRUDY (V.O.)(CONT'D)

Tells him if Howard can find it...  
He'll split it with him...

**BACK TO THE PRESENT:**

LEONARD

Let me guess the ending... he told  
Howard where the money is...

TRUDY

And nobody else knows...

LEONARD

What about Softboy?

TRUDY

Softboy never made it out... Prison  
food didn't suit him...

**PRISON CAFETERIA:**

Howard and Softboy at a cafeteria table. Softboy sneakily  
steals a dessert away from a nearby **INMATE**, starts to eat it.

In a flash the Inmate realizes his dessert is gone and looks around. Some other inmates smirk and glance at Softboy.

The inmate looks across the table and watches Softboy about to stuff the last bite into his mouth. Suddenly he jumps over the table with a fork, and sticks it in Softboy's throat.

Softboy falls to the floor on his back, his feet kicking as the other inmates cheer. Howard is sprayed with blood, horrified by the sight of violence, watching helplessly as guards tackle the inmate.

The last bite of dessert lays on the floor and the inmate grabs it. With guards on his back he stuffs it in his mouth and eats it as he's dragged away to the sound of cheers.

Softboy's dead face stares up at a shocked Howard.

**BACK TO PRESENT:**

LEONARD

And you don't think the police  
searched that river for the money?

TRUDY

They did but Softboy left out one  
detail he only told Howard...

HAP

The Iron Bridge...

As Hap speaks **WE CUT TO SOFTBOY**, bleeding out as he says the same words to Howard before he dies on the cafeteria floor.

LEONARD

What Iron Bridge...

Then we're **BACK TO 1968** to see the frayed rope swing hanging from the old rusted Iron Bridge. The bridge is falling apart, half of it submerged, the other half covered in vines, but glimpses of its rusted skeleton poke through.

It's ominous, almost ghostly.

TRUDY

When Hap and I were married he used  
to talk about this Iron Bridge in  
Marvel Creek... Some place the kids  
used to be afraid of growing up...  
Said it was haunted...

Now we're on Softboy in '68 somewhere downstream, watching the money float away in the breeze as his partner bleeds out.

Softboy's eyes go down to the river and we now notice a *dark shape just below the ripples*, its scaly back, piercing the surface, then disappearing.

HAP

Only thing is... me and my dad called it "Gator Bridge"...

BACK to the look on Leonard's face.

LEONARD

That wouldn't be because it's filled with alligators would it?

HAP

Say a family of them...

Leonard shakes his head.

LEONARD

So why haven't you found the money on your own?

TRUDY

Because Howard and I don't know the Sabine River... And we can't find the bridge...

HAP

But I can...

LEONARD

You're lucky you can find your shoes you took off the night before... let alone some bridge you haven't seen in two decades...

HAP

Yeah but my shoes didn't have a shitload of money in them... Marvel Creek's one thing I haven't forgotten...

He and Leonard share a look then-

HAP (CONT'D)

How long are we gonna get by doing what we're doing? How many meal tickets you think are buried in that rose field? I want this and I want you in on it...

Leonard stops chewing. Thinks on it.

HAP (CONT'D)

What do you say partner... You in?

Just then, the tension of the moment is broken as a Police cruiser pulls up the drive. They all look. Trudy panics.

TRUDY

What are the cops doing here...

HAP

Relax... it's just Charlie... he's a friend...

TRUDY

You invite him in on this too?

A Detective climbs out of the cruiser. He's wearing a cheap Sears suit and a straw hat. He smokes a cigarette.

This is **CHARLIE**. He pushes the hat back on his head, waves hello and walks slowly over to the picnic table.

CHARLIE

Leonard... your Uncle's nuttier than a squirrel turd...

**EXT. HAP'S FRONT LAWN - DAY**

In the back of the police cruiser sits an old black man. This is Leonard's **UNCLE CHESTER**, near eighty and whip cord thin, frail with age but with fire in his eyes.

LEONARD

What'd he do this time?

Charlie takes a bite of a cookie, glancing back at the old man in the cruiser, who looks pissed and a little demented.

CHARLIE

Making a public nuisance... over at the pharmacy... they wanted me to run him in... but I talked them down... figured I'd see if you can talk some sense into him...

LEONARD

What was he doing...

CHARLIE

Got in an argument with the cashier over some out of date coupons...

LEONARD

Coupons?

He gives Hap a look then turns to the cruiser.

CHARLIE

Threatened to shove his cane up the manager's ass...

HAP

That all...

CHARLIE

Sideways...

Charlie and Hap share a grin. Leonard and Uncle Chester glare at each other for a time.

LEONARD

I should let the old bastard rot...

He stomps in the house. Hap watches then eyes Charlie.

HAP

We'll take 'em home... Let Leonard cool off first...

Trudy takes off Hap's coat and hands it to him.

TRUDY

I got things to do...

She gives Hap a hard kiss on the lips.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

(whispers to Hap)

Talk to Leonard... I need an answer by tomorrow morning... You're the only one I can trust Hap...

She turns and heads for her car. Charlie tips his hat as she passes.

CHARLIE

Who's the cantaloupe... juicy...

HAP

My ex-wife...

Charlie lets loose a long slow whistle through his teeth as Trudy climbs in her car, her cleavage showing.

CHARLIE

My sympathies... buddy...

Hap's face as Trudy drives off without waving goodbye.

**EXT. COUNTY ROAD - DAY**

Hap's truck rolls down the rural one lane road.

**INT. HAP'S CAR - CONTINUOUS**

Hap drives. Uncle Chester sits between him and Leonard, staring through the windshield, his hands on his cane. In his pocket is a "True Detective" magazine.

UNCLE CHESTER

That cracker cop won't listen...  
thinks I'm just a crazy old man...

LEONARD

You are... Much as you're seeing  
Charlie these days... you ought to  
invite him over for Christmas...  
you can buy him a new hat...

UNCLE CHESTER

Save the smart mouth for your  
boyfriend... I used to wipe your  
black ass... boy...

Leonard bites his tongue and stares out the window.

HAP

Nice cane you got there Mr. Pine...

UNCLE CHESTER

You think you're funny...

HAP

No Sir...

UNCLE CHESTER

Don't patronize me... boy...

Leonard is shaking his head. He exhales.

LEONARD

Ease up... Chester... rag on me all  
you want but leave Hap alone...  
He's doing me a favor so lay off...

Uncle Chester clears his throat and pulls a hanky from his pocket and dislodges an envelope from his pocket. It falls on his lap and some coupons stick out.

Uncle Chester coughs and spits some phlegm into the hanky. Leonard reaches for the envelope but Uncle Chester snaps it up and locks eyes with him.

UNCLE CHESTER  
Keep your faggot hands off me!

Fire in both their eyes. A whole history in that exchange. Old wounds that are still open and bleeding. Leonard breaks the stare and looks out the windshield like a scolded teen.

Hap sees it as he slows the truck down.

HAP  
Is this your street Mr. Pine...

UNCLE CHESTER  
I live on it... I don't own it...

**EXT. UNCLE CHESTER'S - CONTINUOUS**

Hap turns the truck down a narrow dirt road with old rundown houses spread out on both sides. Half of them empty and boarded up. A country ghetto.

Hap pulls towards Chester's house. It's big and needs work but it's nicer than the rest of the places.

One house down, some rough looking black dudes sit on the porch, drinking beer and smoking cigarettes.

HAP  
We're here...

Uncle Chester turns to Leonard as they pull to the side of the road in front of the house.

UNCLE CHESTER  
Let me out... then you and your  
bitch can go home and cheek stuff  
each other...

Leonard boils but gets out quickly and storms down the street a ways, steaming.

Before Chester can get out, Hap reaches out and locks a hand around his cane. Chester turns and looks at him. He yanks on his cane but Hap won't let go.

HAP  
Listen to me Mr. Pine... your  
nephew is my friend... I don't like  
dick any more than you do...  
(MORE)

HAP (CONT'D)

but he does... Loves 'em in fact...  
but that's his business and it's  
tough enough... he don't need you  
riding him on it... you do it in  
front of me again and "old" and  
"crazy bastard" or not, I'll take  
this cane... shove it up your ass  
and break it off in you...

Uncle Chester is about to reply but something in Hap's eyes  
backs him down.

Hap lets go of the cane and Uncle Chester slides towards the  
door. He hesitates and turns back to Hap.

UNCLE CHESTER

What is it with you two anyway...  
him the way he is... you the way  
you are... I don't get it...

HAP

You don't have to... now get out of  
my truck before I throw you out...  
Sir...

Uncle Chester climbs out of the truck and glances down the  
street at Leonard who stands kicking rocks into the street.

Just then, a gorgeous black woman pulls up in a nice car and  
gets out. This is **FLORIDA GRANGE**, a soft mocha-black beauty  
in a skin tight pants suit.

She waves at Uncle Chester who ignores her and shambles  
towards his porch. He stops and starts picking up beer cans  
from his lawn, glancing at the men drinking beer on the porch  
down the street and cursing under his breath.

She looks at Leonard kicking rocks. She turns to Hap who  
opens his door and gets out of his truck.

FLORIDA

Hi... I'm Florida Grange... I'm Mr.  
Pine's lawyer...

HAP

Hap... Collins... I'm a friend of  
his nephew...

She glances at Leonard who starts over towards them. She puts  
out her hand and Hap shakes it.

FLORIDA

Detective Charlie called me... told me old Chester got in trouble again... thought I'd check on him...

HAP

That's generous of you...

FLORIDA

He's my client... and he isn't as bad as he makes out... got a good side too...

HAP

Oh yeah... where's he hide it?

She smiles. Leonard steps up to them.

FLORIDA

Hi Leonard...

LEONARD

Florida...

She glances at Uncle Chester picking up the beer cans from the front yard.

FLORIDA

How is he...

LEONARD

Nasty as ever...

FLORIDA

Did you know he had a minor stroke a while back...

Leonard processes that.

LEONARD

No I didn't...

FLORIDA

Well... I know you aren't on good terms but... you're the only family he's got... maybe you should consider that...

Leonard glances at Chester who shoves the beer cans in a trash can and slams the cover down. He uses his cane and the old hand rail to climb the porch of his house.

LEONARD

We ain't been family in a long  
time...

From the porch Chester curses.

UNCLE CHESTER

Sons of bitches!

He's looking at the knob of his front door and the splintered  
wood of the door frame. It's been busted.

UNCLE CHESTER (CONT'D)

Lowlife niggers!

He turns and looks down at the house where the men on the  
porch sit laughing and drinking.

FLORIDA

What is it Chester...

UNCLE CHESTER

Them crack smoking shit heads broke  
my lock again! I ain't got shit but  
they break in anyway... steal my  
toilet paper... tuna fish... they  
think it's funny...

Florida helps Chester inside and the front door slams behind  
them. Leonard stands staring at the busted door. His eyes go  
to the men on the porch.

A few of them wave and smile and laugh.

That's enough for Leonard. He's marching towards the men like  
a bull moose in heat, steam coming off him.

HAP

Leonard!

He starts after Leonard who's already at the other house's  
porch steps.

One man smiles a gold toothed smile and steps down to meet  
Leonard, his hands out, palms up in a "what's the problem"  
gesture.

Leonard ridge hands him in the balls, grabs the back of his  
neck and hooks him down the steps onto the lawn and climbs  
the last few steps.

The other men are now all on their feet. One takes a wide  
swing at Leonard who blocks the blow and folds the man's arm  
back and snaps it at the elbow.

Leonard grabs his hair and bangs his face off the porch post and tosses him down the stairs.

Another man punches Leonard in the back of the head and Leonard turns to face him. The man cradles his injured hand from the punch in his other hand.

Leonard grabs him by the front of his belt and head butts him in the face, then lifts him up and throws him off the porch.

Another man hoists a baseball bat but Leonard steps in and stomps down on his ankle. Crack! The man stumbles back, his swing off center and out of steam but it connects with Leonard's shoulder with a crunch.

Crunch! Leonard grabs his shoulder. The man swings back.

Whoosh! Leonard ducks and the bat arcs over his head and hits the porch post, chipping the wood.

Leonard grabs the bat with both hands and pulls it from the man's grasp and shoves it back sideways into the man's face, breaking teeth and sending the man down on his ass.

Click! A revolver is cocked and Gold Tooth presses the barrel into the back of Leonard's head.

Gold Tooth sneers, cradling his nuts with one hand, holding the gun with the other. There are tears in his eye, running down his cheeks but his eyes are all fire and violence.

Suddenly Hap comes over the side of the porch and closes behind Gold Tooth, who hears him too late.

Hap kicks him behind the knee and slides to his side grabbing his gun arm and pulling it up, locking the wrist and twisting the gun free.

He holds the man's wrist and applies pressure driving the man to the porch floor, then brings his foot up and stomps the man's head hard, driving his face into the porch floor.

Hap steps back twisting the wrist the other way and the man follows, coming up bent over, jaw hanging open, face cringed in pain and staring at Hap. His tongue feels his teeth.

The man's eyes go to the porch floor. One of his gold teeth lies tinged with blood on the boards.

He looks back up and Hap's foot lashes up like a punter and catches him under the chin, lifting him up and sending back down the porch steps in a roll and he lays there out cold.

Hap unloads the pistol and smashes it against the porch post breaking the cylinder. He tosses the gun off the porch.

Leonard drags the bat man to his feet with one hand and bitch slaps him hard.

LEONARD

You mess with that old man again...  
I'll come back and fuck you so hard  
your Daddy's ass'll bleed... you  
hear me...

The man nods his head frantically. Leonard punches him short and hard and shoves him over the porch rail.

The standoff is over, a lawn full of moaning crack heads and Hap and Leonard huffing and puffing on the crack house stoop.

HAP

You done...

LEONARD

Yeah... I'm done...

Leonard tries to gather himself and his bruised shoulder. He looks at Chester's beat up house and its empty porch.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Hap...

HAP

Yeah...

LEONARD

You really think you can find this  
money Trudy's talking about?

HAP

It's been a long time since I been  
home... But yeah I think I can...

LEONARD

Alright... Then lead the damn  
way... I'm in...

**END ACT 2**

ACT 3

**EXT. LEONARD'S YARD - EVENING**

Hap comes out of the house with two sleeping bags and mud boots, past Leonard who leans on the side of his car, wiping down an old ornately carved double barrel shotgun lovingly.

LEONARD

I love this gun...

He runs his hand over the stock and snaps the shotgun closed and rolls it in a blanket with two boxes of shells.

Hap pops the trunk holding the gear but finds...

Leonard's entire gun collection, polished and laid out neatly over the spare.

HAP

Where's your .22 target pistol and your Hopalong Cassidy cap gun?

LEONARD

Ha ha...

HAP

Maybe you know a place we can get a bazooka... some hand grenades... coupla' land mines... shit... we're gonna' swim down and find some money... not shoot it...

Leonard steps over and looks at his weapons.

LEONARD

Comes to your ex-wife I get paranoid...

HAP

She weighs a hundred and ten pounds... what's she gonna' do... ambush us... Jesus Leonard these guns have guns of their own...

LEONARD

Better to have than have not... Trudy's your cross to bear... and we don't know this Howard from nothing... Turns out she's in over her head you're gonna' want to protect her... and you might need guns for that...

HAP

He's an ex-hippie idealist...  
They're gonna take their share of  
the money from the big bad  
capitalist bank and give it to a  
good cause...

LEONARD

What cause?

HAP

Save the seals... the whales  
maybe... I don't remember...

LEONARD

I get any money out of this I'm  
gonna put it to a good cause...  
Me... the seals don't got bills to  
pay...

Hap sets the sleeping bags down and makes room in the trunk  
of Leonard's car.

HAP

What's wrong with people doing  
something good they believe in...  
at least they're trying to make a  
difference...

LEONARD

Oh... You two gonna' get back  
together now... join the Peace  
Corps... tie yourselves to a pine  
tree and save it from a chainsaw...

HAP

Redwood... Pine trees are doing  
just fine...

LEONARD

And this Howard... how close are  
they?

HAP

I don't know... and I don't care...  
I told you... I'm just getting  
laid...

Leonard picks up a hunting rifle and starts cleaning it.

LEONARD

Keep telling yourself that... It  
always means more to you...

(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)

How do I let you talk me into these things?

HAP

My perky ass has something to do with it... Christ... perky ass?

LEONARD

I only said that to annoy Trudy...

HAP

You being alive annoys her...

Hap tosses the sleeping bag in the trunk and shuts it.

**EXT. ROSE FIELD - MORNING**

The Boss sits on his golf cart, chewing a ragged cigar. Hap and Leonard stand in front of him. Out in the field, workers bend to their task.

BOSS

You're kidding... right?

HAP

We'll only be gone three, four days tops... we'll work twice as hard when we get back...

BOSS

I got wet backs swarming me for work and they work cheap... you leave now don't bother coming back... ever...

Leonard's jaw clenches. Not what they hoped for.

LEONARD

What about the pay you owe us...

BOSS

Payday's Friday... come get it then like everybody else...

HAP

So that's it... after we been loyal hard workers...

BOSS

I run a business Collins... I want loyal... I'll get a dog...

He kicks his golf cart into gear and rolls away.

HAP  
Thanks a whole lot...

BOSS  
You're welcome a whole lot...

He motors off, leaving Hap and Leonard standing over the rose field, silhouettes of workers against the morning sun.

HAP  
I guess we're unemployed...

Hap's face doing the math.

LEONARD  
You better be real good at finding that money...

Leonard walks off, leaving Hap alone in the field.

**INT. HAP'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Hap lays in bed, staring up at the ceiling. A packed duffel bag by the bed.

Trudy lays across his bare chest. He strokes her hair absentmindedly, wheels spinning behind his tired eyes.

HAP  
You asleep...

Her eyes are wide open, her expression like a child's.

TRUDY  
What's it like... to have a friend like Leonard...

HAP  
What do you mean...

TRUDY  
You're like Robin Hood and Little John... You two against the world... I always thought that was gonna be us...

HAP  
It could've been... you hadn't dumped me while I was in prison...

TRUDY  
That's not fair...

HAP

You never even came to see me...

TRUDY

We could have gone to Canada like I wanted...

HAP

I wasn't gonna' run away for what I believed in...

TRUDY

You never run away... do you?

Hap has no words for this. Trudy stares out the window at the high winter moon over the pines.

**EXT. LEONARD'S BACK YARD - DAY - LATER**

Hap packs Leonard's car with the rest of their stuff.

Trudy tags along as Leonard feeds his dogs before they leave. He pets Switch through the gate then fills his water bottle.

TRUDY

They gonna' be okay while you're gone...

LEONARD

Neighbor... Calvin's gonna's stop by and check on them once a day... they love him...

Trudy leans down and goes to pet Switch. Suddenly the dog lunges and almost takes her hand off but she pulls it back in time. Switch growls at her. Teeth and slobber snapping.

She backs away from the fence in fear.

TRUDY

What's his problem...

LEONARD

He's protective... won't let strangers anywhere near him or me for that matter...

HAP

Turns on a dime... That's why his name's Switch...

Leonard pets the dog who goes back to looking sweet and happy. Hap smiles and goes to help Trudy up.

TRUDY

It's not funny... your dog's  
dangerous Leonard...

She storms off towards the truck. When she's out of earshot:

LEONARD

Just a good judge of character...

**EXT. LEONARD'S - LATER**

The sun sets over the kennels as Switch and the other dogs watch our Three Amigos drive off in Leonard's car.

**EXT. RURAL ROAD - DUSK**

The car rolls down the old road as the sun kisses the pine trees lining the roadside.

We pass tall, dank forests and roadside stores. Small towns and back country roads.

**EXT. CAR - DUSK**

Far out, above the pines, lightning flashes in the distance.

Everything is darker here. Grown over and abandoned. Empty houses here and there, boarded up.

Trudy and Leonard sleep. Hap's face as he drives.

He comes to a stop sign and looks to a road sign that says "*Welcome to Marvel Creek*". The sign is old and rusted, hanging at an angle. Someone has shot the shit out of it.

When he looks back to the road he sees a small yellow bird, now perched on the hood of his car like a hood ornament, almost an apparition.

Hap glances at Trudy asleep, her head leaning on the window.

When he looks back the bird takes flight. Hap watches it go, then pulls through the intersection.

The busted MARVEL CREEK sign stands guard as they pass.

**EXT. BACK ROAD - NIGHT**

Hap rolls along and comes to an old deserted Drive In theatre, the screen marked with holes and vines growing over everything.

An old FALLING DOWN HOUSE sits adjacent to the Drive In through the trees, down a dirt drive.

Hap slows the car as he passes, looking at the dilapidated house. The overgrown plot sits empty, almost haunted, watching him slow down as he passes.

**EXT. BACK ROAD - LATER**

Hap drives along a twisted, empty section of road. Ahead, on the side of the road, a cracked and broken fossil of a tree.

Hap comes to a stop, eyeing the busted tree. The soundtrack goes quiet and in the silence we hear the faint, echo-ed voice of Patsy Cline, so distant and quiet, it could be the wind or the swaying of leaves.

A tick in Hap's eyes tells us he's remembering something.

TRUDY (O.S.)

What is it?

The sounds drift away completely. Hap turns to see Trudy's woken up. He shifts into gear and as he pulls away-

HAP

Nothing...

**EXT. OLD DRIVEWAY THROUGH WOODS - NIGHT**

The car's lights stab through the trees and follow the old dirt road, finally illuminating an iron pole fence blocking the road. The gate is decorated with Private Property, No Trespassing and Keep Out signs.

Hap pulls in front of the fence. Trudy gets out, Hap and Leonard watching her. She goes near the gate and reaches up and pulls an old ragged rope hanging down from the trees.

A bell peels above, ringing into the night.

Down the drive past the fence a light comes on. Night fog rises from the ground, the trees looming, eerily backlit. Trudy wipes her hands on her pants and walks back to them.

TRUDY

Someone will be here in a minute...

Leonard and Hap stare past the gate, at an old guardhouse up in a tree. Past that they spot a run down obstacle course and a rusted old truck, with faded Neo Nazi decals painted on it.

LEONARD

What is this place?

TRUDY

Used to belong to a bunch of skin heads... but the Feds busted 'em and the bank foreclosed on the property... rent's cheap...

Then a figure emerges from the foggy night, coming up the road in an awkward trot. Heavy breathing.

An overweight young man slows to a walk and comes up to the gate. He has a shotgun slung over his shoulder.

This is **CHUB**, a fat doughy man/boy with long stringy hair, a tie-dyed tee shirt and loose torn jeans. His fat face is blank and dumb looking, his mouth hanging open a little, like he is too lazy to hold it closed.

He waves and pulls a key ring from his belt and starts to unlock the gate.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Hey Chub...

CHUB

Trudy...

He opens the padlock and pulls the chain through and pushes the gate open. Hap pulls through the gate and Chub locks it behind them.

#### INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Chub climbs in the backseat next to Leonard as Trudy makes introductions.

TRUDY

This is Hap and Leonard... they're with us...

LEONARD

Except I'm not giving my share to the whales... I read Moby Dick... I was rooting for Ahab...

TRUDY

This is Chub...

The fat man/boy holds his hand out. Hap shakes it.

CHUB

My real name's Charles... everyone  
calls me Chub 'cause I'm fat...

Chub shakes Leonard's hand enthusiastically as Hap pulls up  
the drive. He smiles ear to ear at Leonard.

CHUB (CONT'D)

You're black... that's cool...

LEONARD

Yeah well... you don't have to put  
the paint on every morning...

CHUB

I'm an admirer of Martin Luther  
King...

LEONARD

Never met him... but then again I  
never met Ghandi... Saw Elvis at a  
Bob's Big Boy when I was a kid  
though... you know he had blonde  
hair... dyed it black...

Chub takes it all in stride.

CHUB

Elvis had an Oedipus complex...  
that's a mother fixation... comes  
from potty training...

LEONARD

No wonder he died on the toilet...

TRUDY

Chub's father had anger issues...  
he was a wife beater... and a bigot  
but Chub's had analysis... he's  
come a long way...

CHUB

It's allowed me to find self-esteem  
and better accept who I am...

Leonard rolls his eyes. Is this guy human?

LEONARD

Don't mean I have to...

**EXT. HIPPIE NEST COMPOUND - NIGHT**

The compound is just an old ramshackle house in the woods, with a fallen down barn structure and overgrown yard surrounded by a few rusting trailers. A shit shack squatters dump of a place.

Hap pulls the car down the winding drive and stops behind an old van.

The door of the house opens and a forty something man steps out, staying on the porch. He looks like a down on his luck high school teacher. Button down shirt and a rumpled jacket. His hair is thin and styled long, tied back.

He's good looking. Better looking than Hap. This is **HOWARD**.

He waves as the car pulls in.

Trudy gets out and Howard steps to her. He greets her with a hug and kiss and holds her with his arm around her waist.

Trudy lets him but passively.

Hap sees it and doesn't move. Chub gets out and Leonard leans over from the backseat, smiling his ass off.

LEONARD

(to Hap)

Well now... Don't they look cute...  
this is getting interesting...

Leonard gets out and Hap grits his teeth then follows.

TRUDY

Howard... this is Hap...

Howard and Hap shake hands.

HOWARD

Nice to meet you...

Hap nods.

TRUDY

And this is Leonard...

Howard shakes Leonard's hand but he's looking at Trudy, a question on his face.

HAP

He's with me...

Howard still waiting for an explanation.

HOWARD

Trudy didn't tell me about this...

TRUDY

They're practically married...

LEONARD

Just engaged... still picking out china...

Howard, not quite in on the sarcasm.

TRUDY

It's okay... Leonard was a Marine... he's a trained diver...

HOWARD

So you swim... huh...

LEONARD

Like a goddamn eel...

Trudy shivers.

HOWARD

It's freezing... let's go inside... you can get acquainted with the team...

They head in but Leonard lingers on the porch a moment and looks out over the rundown compound.

LEONARD

The team... I love that... maybe they'll give us a tee shirt with their logo on it: *Bozos* or maybe *Dipshit Ex-Husbands* for you...

Just then a THUNK! from the side of the house. Hap and Leonard turn to see a store front female mannequin is tied to a post. Someone has put a Ronald Reagan mask over its head.

Arrows stick out of the body. A twisted practice target.

Thunk! Another arrow implants itself in the face of the mannequin, square through Ronald Reagan's smiling teeth.

Hap and Leonard stare as a shadow comes around the barn.

A lean man appears, backlit, wearing a black T-shirt, neat blue jeans and running shoes, his face in shadow.

This is **PACO**. As he comes towards them, carrying a cross bow his face comes into the porch light.

The right side of his face is red and angry, obviously once burned badly and scarred. His nose is like a lump of melted candle wax. The burn scars twist his mouth into a horror movie grin.

He is missing his left ear and is bald except for a tuft of hair over his large right ear. At some point his scalp had been torn off and resewn, a poor job.

PACO

I'm Paco... you must be the new  
meat...

He moves up the porch, past them and into the house.

Hap and Leonard just stand looking at each other. Holy shit-  
where the fuck are we all over their faces.

**END OF ACT 3**

ACT 4

**INT. HIPPIE NEST - NIGHT**

The place is a dump. Incense burns from the upraised trunk of a chipped ceramic elephant on a water ringed coffee table.

A rusted seen better days big butane heater. The fireplace is full of broken bricks and old ashes.

The walls are covered in old newspaper, the holes stuffed with rags and toilet paper.

An old broken down couch with a floral pattern under the dirt and stains sits in the center of the room, surrounded by some old metal folding chairs.

Hap and Leonard sit in those metal chairs. Paco and Howard are on the couch. Trudy sits next to Howard on the arm of the couch. Chub sits cross legged on the floor rolling a joint.

Howard speaks.

HOWARD

The sixties aren't dead... and those ideals we held are just sleeping... not extinct... they're like a hibernating bear... ready to awake to a new and productive Spring...

LEONARD

That's far out and all but it's been a long drive and I thought we were here to talk business...

HOWARD

Business... Business is at the heart of everything isn't it... We've become a nation that stands for nothing... full of sound bites like "top down economics"... We're on the forefront of class warfare...

TRUDY

Howard's right... People are being smothered... The rich get richer while the poor--

HOWARD

Get obliterated... Just look at you two...

Howard finishes her thought for her. It stings our boys more than expected. Hap pretends to let it go but Leonard makes for the door, pulling out a corncob pipe and tobacco.

LEONARD

I'm gonna have a pipe... You get to the folk song part maybe I'll come back... I'm good on "I Got A Hammer"...

He exits. Hap notices Paco smirk a bit at Leonard.

HOWARD

Your friend doesn't seem to like us much...

HAP

My friend didn't spend the sixties smoking dope and protesting... he spent them trying not to get his ass shot off in Vietnam...

PACO

So he knows about guns then...

HAP

Like a dog knows the taste of its own ass...

HOWARD

But he doesn't understand the cause... not like you... Trudy told me you went to jail rather than serve in an unjust war... that seems pretty idealistic to me...

HAP

And look what it got me... Tired and broke... We came here to find some money... why do I get the feeling I'm being recruited?

HOWARD

She felt you might be looking for something else... a reason... a chance to make a difference...

HAP

Look... I'm losing my hair and fighting my waistline... I'm just a middle aged country boy who had a noble idea once... but that's over...

(MORE)

HAP (CONT'D)

The world's gonna' be what it is  
with or without Hap Collins...

TRUDY

You're too smart to believe that...  
This country took something from  
you... here's a chance to take  
something back...

Hap stares back at Trudy like it's just the two of them. A heart-to-heart in a room full of distractions. He wants a way out of this. He didn't sign up for this.

HOWARD

We can make a difference...

He's dragged back to Howard's hard sell.

HAP

How... with speeches?

HOWARD

With money! The only thing that  
gets attention in this world... If  
you and Leonard kick in with us...  
put your share to good use... it'd  
go a long way to lay a foundation  
for a new movement... there's a lot  
of disenfranchised people out  
there... they just need a  
direction... they need  
leadership... and they'll follow...

TRUDY

We can make that happen Hap... all  
of us... together...

Hap lets the words soak in. For once he has nothing to say.

Chub stares at Hap, the joint in his lips. He kisses it and blows smoke at the ceiling.

CHUB

Any time change is encouraged...  
some people choose to run off and  
take it easy... it's all good as  
long as it serves them... but if it  
becomes any kind of personal  
sacrifice--

Slap! He's cut off by a knuckle rap on the head from Paco.

CHUB (CONT'D)

Owch! That was really childish...

Crack! Paco raps him again.

PACO

Shut the fuck up... or I'll hit you  
for real...

HOWARD

Who's side are you on, Paco?

PACO

My side... I'm just tired of Chub's  
shit... Let Hap alone... if he and  
Leonard aren't interested... let  
them do their job and leave it at  
that... what we do after is our  
business...

He stands and throws his crossbow over his shoulder.

HOWARD

Where do you think you're going?

PACO

Walk the perimeter... You got this  
covered...

He heads outside and the door closes.

HOWARD

So... What do you think Hap?

Howard puts his hand on Trudy's thigh.

She tenses. Hap tenses.

HAP

I think it's been a long day... And  
the kids should call it a night...  
If they know what's good for 'em...

HOWARD

What kids? We're all adults here...

Hap's looking at Howard's hand on Trudy.

HAP

Are we? No offense... Howie... but  
you sound like a first year college  
kid, got away from Mom and Dad and  
found weed and liberal politics...

Howard stands and downs his beer. He's a little drunk and  
stoned and it shows.

HOWARD

We have ideals here... that may seem childish or sissy to you... but there's more to it... we have big plans to change this country... a country that by the way turned it's back on you and your Marine friend out there... and you're too redneck dumb to see it...

HAP

Oh good... another lecture... let me get my note pad...

HOWARD

I'm not gonna' take shit from some ignorant field hand thinks he can walk in here and run things...

HAP

I'm not trying to run anything... I just don't want to be ran...

HOWARD

When's the last time you read a book?

TRUDY

Howard... you're drunk...

HOWARD

No I'm not...

HAP

No... You just don't like the fact that I've been fucking Trudy again... do you?

The room goes silent.

Then Howard smiles condescendingly at Hap.

HOWARD

You think I didn't know... she told me all about it... and you think that means something...

HAP

It means we banged till our eyes bugged out...

HOWARD

You can't talk about her like that...

HAP

I think I just did... Didn't I...

HOWARD

You prick...

Howard careens around the coffee table and goes to push Hap like a kid in the schoolyard. Hap stands up, grabbing Howard's hand and bends it forward, applying pressure and bringing Howard to his knees.

HAP

We don't want to go there...  
buddy... do we...

Howard grimaces in pain, unable to stand, his eyes watering. He looks up at Hap then at Trudy, ashamed at his weakness.

TRUDY

Let him go Hap... it's over...  
please...

HAP

Is it Howard?

Howard nods and Hap lets him go, enjoying the superiority. Howard crawls to his feet and staggers a bit. He glares at Hap then breaks off and goes into his room slamming the door.

TRUDY

You happy now...

HAP

So that's your Howard... huh?

TRUDY

What happened to you Hap Collins...

He shrugs.

HAP

Life... and you... that didn't  
help...

TRUDY

There were two of us involved...  
You chose to go prison... what was  
I supposed to do... sit and wait...

HAP

Phone call would have been nice...

TRUDY

I was young... I thought the world ended...

HAP

I know the feeling...

TRUDY

You don't know how I felt... You weren't there...

Hap doesn't answer.

Trudy looks at Chub who sits, stoned and fascinated by their conversation.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I'm gonna' check on Howard... I hope you didn't blow this whole thing...

HAP

I just want us all to know where we stand...

TRUDY

Things aren't as simple as you like to make them...

She goes in Howard's room, shutting the door behind her.

Just Chub and Hap now. Chub exhales a puff of smoke and looks like he's about to say something.

HAP

Don't even start...

**END ACT 4**

ACT 5

**INT. KITCHEN - LATER - NIGHT**

Hap lays on the kitchen floor on a sleeping bag. He tries to sleep but it's freezing. He watches his breath fog in the cold air.

LEONARD

I've let you talk me into some dumb shit Hap... but this takes the dumb shit cake.... They're a bunch of clowns... Only they're not funny...

Hap pokes his head out of his sleeping bag to see Leonard huddled next to the open oven door, the only source of heat.

HAP

Without people like them you'd still be drinking out of a water fountain that said "colored"...

LEONARD

Now you sound like the fat one...

Leonard holds his hand in the open oven. Hap gets to his feet and puts his shoes on.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Where you going?

HAP

I need some air... got some things to think about...

LEONARD

My nuts are ice cubes...

HAP

We passed an all night store a couple miles back... I'll get some of them hand warmer things... you slap 'em and they heat up... We can shove 'em down our pants and in our socks...

LEONARD

You can shove 'em up your ass...

As Hap goes to leave he spots Trudy on the couch asleep. Her blanket has fallen down. Gently, Hap pulls the blanket up over her and stands looking down on her innocent childlike face as she sleeps.

He finds the gate key hanging on a rack and goes out the front door.

**EXT. ROADSIDE ALL NIGHT STORE - NIGHT**

Hap comes out of the store with a bag and climbs in the car.

He starts the car but just sits, thinking.

He's torn.

**EXT. RURAL EAST TEXAS ROAD - NIGHT**

Hap's car pulls past the Drive-In Theatre we passed earlier. He passes the driveway of the old nearby house and drives past the mailbox.

His headlights pass over the mailbox and we now see the faded name on the side: "COLLINS".

He cruises past it.

**EXT. BACK ROAD - LATER**

And pulls up to the spot in the road by the old broken tree, blackened and twisted.

His car pulls to the shoulder and he puts it in park.

It's quiet. Just Hap and that tree. Neither one moving.

Then the HUM of a large semi sounds from the road and as it passes its headlights light up the scene and the car and we--

SMASH CUT TO:

**INT. OLD PICK UP TRUCK ON RURAL ROAD (MOVING) - NIGHT**

Rain pours down and we're in a truck from the 1950s. The disc jockey blares from the old time radio.

DISC JOCKEY

*... and here's a new one from that  
sweet new southern sensation...  
Patsy Cline...*

"Walking After Midnight" starts up and purrs from the old speakers as we come to rest on the face of a **TEN YEAR OLD BOY** who looks a lot like Hap. He plays with a wooden toy gun.

A middle age man **BUD**, (Hap's Dad) covered in engine grease, drives. Outside the storm rages on.

The truck comes upon a car on the side of the road with the hood up. The car has seen better days.

A BLACK MAN in his forties stands over the engine holding a flashlight, looking perplexed. Rain pours off his hat.

BUD

That nigger's wetter than a well digger's ass...

Young Hap grins at the image as they cruise past the stranded man. They pass the car, but Bud's face softens.

He lets off the gas and slows the truck down to a stop.

HAP

Are you gonna help him?

Bud, almost sheepishly, clears his throat, makes a decision. He starts to back up.

BUD

He's got a kid in the car... and he doesn't know what he's doing...

He comes to a stop and pulls a toolbox from under little Hap's feet. He looks in the rearview at the soaked black man huddled over the engine.

BUD (CONT'D)

You stay here baby man... hold down the wagon train...

With a last look at his son, Hap's dad shuts the door and ducks off in the rain with his tools, leaving Hap by himself.

We now see a little hand painted sign on the truck door "BUD COLLINS AUTO REPAIR".

Something in the music goes dark, the moment taking on a foreboding turn. Hap watches the scene playing outside, mostly obscured by the rain on his window. Just then--

*KRAAAAAAK!*

A white hot bolt of lightning shoots down from the clouds right outside the window, striking a tree on the road side.

Wide-eyed Little Hap's face watches through the rain soaked window as half of the shattered tree crackles and falls to the earth.

What's left of the tree stands like black molten lava, as the rain puts out the smoldering embers of its branches.

Hold on little Hap's face as a white hot glow lights up the back of his head. He turns slowly to see a pair of HEADLIGHTS in the distance getting bigger and brighter, headed straight towards us like two evil eyes.

The dark music swells inside the car as Patsy belts away in the rain, echoing in the distance.

PUSH IN on Hap as the headlights illuminate his face, getting brighter... and closer... until--

### **BACK TO THE PRESENT**

Headlights race past present-day Hap's car.

His knuckles white and shaking on the steering wheel. He gathers them and flexes to stays calm, taking deep breaths.

He looks in the rearview at the passing car and as he does--

CAMERA moves off of Hap and follows this new car.

We now see it's a POLICE CAR as it winds its way down the country road.

### **EXT. COUNTY ROAD - NIGHT**

The cop car pulls into the same convenience store where a lone white Lincoln sits in the parking lot, engine idling.

A **POT BELLIED COP** climbs out of his car, yawns and stretches, eyeing up the idling car next to him. He notices the out-of-state plates.

And that one of the tail lights is out.

The cop approaches the car casually. Behind the wheel is a man dressed in 50s style garb, right down to the Buddy Holly hair cut and black rimmed glasses, except his are scotch taped on one side. Rock-a-Billy plays on the car stereo.

COP

Hey there... fella... you know you  
got a tail light out...

The driver looks up at the cop and smiles. He has a toothpick in the side of his mouth and he rolls it around.

SMILING MAN

Hey there... officer...

His long fingers tap the rhythm on the steering wheel.

COP

Saw you pass a ways back... 'Fraid  
I'm gonna have to write you up for  
it...

He pulls out his ticket book.

SMILING MAN

You gotta' do what you gotta' do...

He smiles up again, too cool for school.

A long beat. Cop's not buying it.

COP

You high son...

SMILING MAN

High on life... that's all...

Just then there's a muffled moan from the trunk of the man's car and the cop glances at the back of the car!

The driver's expression doesn't change.

The cop's hand goes to his pistol. The moan sounds again.

COP

What's that?

SMILING MAN

What's what... Officer?

The cop unholsters his gun. The man just sits there smiling.

COP

I need you to step out of the  
car... and keep your hands where I  
can see them... we're gonna have a  
look in your trunk...

The driver climbs out of the car as the cop backs up, gun out, moving slowly. The moan sounds again.

COP (CONT'D)

Open your trunk sir... slowly...

The driver holds his hands up, the keys dangling from one hand and he rolls the toothpick again and keeps smiling.

COP (CONT'D)

What the hell you smiling about?

Suddenly, the smiling man is sprayed with blood.

He watches as the cop, his throat now sliced and spouting, drops to his knees, gurgling for breath as he collapses in a wet heap on the asphalt.

The driver spits the toothpick at the dying cop and we see the feet of a woman with heels standing behind the cop.

We come up and see an **AMAZON WOMAN**, a bloodied blade in her hand. She's over 6 feet tall, muscles ripped like early Arnold, blonde hair teased out impossibly big, a Big Gulp and a bag of fried pork rinds in her other hand.

She throws a bag of chips to the driver who wipes the blood specks from his face and squats near the dying cop.

SMILING MAN

The name ain't "Sir"... it's Soldier... I want you to remember that... 'case you think you were wronged here in anyway, you can come to me in hell and say... "Soldier, things didn't go to my satisfaction"... And I can say "Fuck. You."

The cop looks up at him holding his throat as blood seeps through his fingers. The Amazon woman steps behind Soldier and looks down at the cop, shoving a piece of pork rind in her lipsticked mouth.

Soldier glances at her, then at the convenience store. Through the window we see the DEAD CLERK folded over the bloody counter. Soldier looks back to the cop.

The cop stares up at the Amazon woman as she chews.

SOLDIER

This shapely piece of meat with the blade is Angel...

As the officer is about to drift off for good, Soldier moves in close.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Now... I'm looking for a man named Paco...

**CUT TO BLACK**

**END EPISODE 1**