

# SHINE

A Screenplay by PM KEITH

EXT. MOUNTAIN WOODS - NIGHT - 1931

A fire flickers in a dark woods, the flames emitting an ORANGE GLOW as the logs crackle.

COLONEL LARSON (90s) works in the shadows, pushing kindling into the fire as the flames lap upwards.

The fire is beneath a large pot with copper line curling from its top. Dressed in worn coveralls, his face-skin leathery and full of beard, Larson places pint jars into a crate.

The Colonel moves to a spigot at the end of the line and fills a clay jug. He corks the jug and puts it on a cart.

He returns to the spigot and runs liquid into a pint jar. He holds the jar up to the light of the moon. The liquid is crystal clear as he watches the moon through the jar.

He tastes it and then pours some of its contents into a shot glass. He lights the liquid with a match.

The flame burns blue.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A 1930 Model-A drives along a mountain road as the sunlight sparkles through the springtime leaves.

INT. CAR - DAY

JONATHAN SOUNDER (50s) drives along; he's overweight and balding; he wears a disheveled suit with his tie loose and collar open. He is sweaty. He looks determined. On the car's radio he's listening to the Delmore Brothers: "I am Lonesome without You".

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The car rounds a bend, slows, pulls to the side and stops.

The car door opens and Sounder pulls himself to his feet. He looks around, up and down the road. He sees no one.

He walks along the edge of the road looking for something. He finds a path hidden partially by new growth, slides through the bushes and starts down the embankment following a well-worn path.

The path snakes around the side of a hill for a quarter mile. He hears the sounds of the woods in the springtime, birds chirping, a light rustle as the breeze shuffles the leaves.

At the end of the path, Sounder finds the remnants of a rock wall. He fumbles for his wallet and pulls out a dollar bill.

He stoops down and places the bill on the wall and places a smaller rock on top to hold it in place. He backs off, looking around. He sees no one.

He stumbles back down the trail

Back at his car, he struggles to climb the embankment. He sweats hard as he approaches his car.

Leaning against his car, Sounder fumbles to light a cigarette. He eagerly glances at his pocket watch.

After a while, he stumbles back down the trail and finds the wall. Instead of the dollar bill there's a pint jar filled with clear liquid. It is similar to one Colonel Larson was filling. Sounder can hardly contain himself as he reaches out for the jar.

INT. CAR - DAY

Sounder drives away, the jar resting on the passenger seat.

He reaches for the jar, uncaps it, and takes it to his lips. He is ecstatic as the liquid passes his lips and he takes a large gulp.

He recaps the jar, wipes his brow, smiles, enjoys the obvious burn, and continues his drive.

INT. DONNA'S DINER - DAY

JACOB MCCANN (40's), the local sheriff, sits at a table in the rear of the diner, his back to the wall.

He is intently focused on sopping up gravy with part of a biscuit as he eagerly stuffs it into his wide mouth with his thick fingers. He takes a long drink of coffee.

The local preacher, JEREMIAH ROACH (60s), a tall and lanky Abe Lincoln-type, enters the diner and turns toward the rear, intuitively toward the sheriff.

JEREMIAH

Mind if I sit with you, sheriff?

JACOB

No mind at all, preacher.

JEREMIAH

Word has it Sheriff that Myra Zann found Elmore fairly inebriated Saturday night.

JACOB

What was it this time?

JEREMIAH

He was passed out in the barn.

JACOB

Doesn't surprise me. Surprise you, preacher?

JEREMIAH

He was face down in shit!

The sheriff tries to hide a grin.

JEREMIAH (cont'd)

Sadly, it does not surprise me Sheriff. Myra is sufficiently upset with the whole matter, though.

JACOB

As she should be. But whaddya want me to do about it, preacher? Elmore's a drunk. His father was a drunk. His grandfather was a drunk. He comes from a long line of drunks.

JEREMIAH

Precisely sheriff. That's why I'm here, because Elmore comes from a long line of drunks. (beat) Isn't this a dry county, sheriff?

JACOB

It's a dry COUNTRY, preacher. I understand that much.

JEREMIAH

You should understand that when a man gets drunked-up on corn-liquor, well, then, let's say it's an official matter for the county, and you should be concerned!

JACOB

I'll look into it for you, preacher. I will.

JEREMIAH

Not for me, Sheriff. For Myra. And for the rest of the good citizens of POLK COUNTY. But especially for Myra. I'm sure she'll be in to see you soon enough, though.

JACOB

I'm sure she will.

JEREMIAH

We don't want an epidemic, sheriff. We don't need something like that now do we? We've already seen too many of our good people possessed by the evil spirits. Drunken men, taking up with prostitutes, beating their wives and children; leaving them

to suffer the whims of the land.  
No, we don't need more of that.

JACOB

No preacher. We don't need an epidemic. I'll take care of Elmore, don't worry. I promise I'll work on it.

JEREMIAH

No, sheriff. It's not Elmore that needs your attention; it's the outlaws in this county, the ones that go by the way of the dark hours, concocting, stirring their witches brew and spreading it like a plague across this community. Those are the heathens you should be after, the ones that intoxicate good and decent men like Elmore with their elixirs; those that conjure forth the devil's drink. That's who you'll need to take care of, sheriff.

JACOB

Sure preacher. Sure. Thank you preacher. I'll look into it. I promise I will.

JEREMIAH

I know you will, sheriff. I know you will. (beat) By the way, please tell the mayor that we'll be in to see him at the council meeting next week. Tell him we'll have a nice presentation. Will you do that sheriff?

JACOB

I will preacher.

JEREMIAH

Thank you for your time, sheriff.

Jeremiah rises, nods, and walks out of the diner.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Jacob exits the diner, walks into the midday sun, adjusts his hat, and walks toward the municipal building.

INT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING - DAY

Jacob makes his way through the halls of the municipal building until he arrives at the mayor's office. He walks through the door and is greeted by a SECRETARY.

JACOB

Is he in?

SECRETARY

Want me to tell him you're here?

JACOB

No, I'll surprise him.

Jacob brushes past the secretary's desk into the inner-office of the mayor. Jonathan Sounder rests behind a large desk. The sheriff pulls the door closed as he enters the room.

JACOB

Spring has sprung, mayor. My, what a sunny day!

JONATHAN

Sunny day indeed, sheriff. The bees are buzzing and the birds are chirping!

Jonathan reaches beneath his desk and returns with a large crate. He picks through the crate, removes an assortment of items.

He pulls an envelope out of the crate. In the envelope are twenty, twenty-dollar bills. He returns the crate to the floor, places the envelope on his desk, and slides it to the sheriff.

The sheriff picks up the envelope and thumbs through the money.

JACOB  
Sunny day indeed!

EXT. WOODS - DAY

TOM STONE, a drifter, stands near the edge of a river fishing with a makeshift rig. He's tall and built strong, handsome with dark hair and eyes.

He tosses the line, pulls it in, and repeats. Eventually he catches a fish.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Tom walks down a path in the woods holding a stringer of four or five good-sized fish.

He enters a makeshift camp. A cardboard sign at the entrance of the camp reads:

HOOVERVILLE.

There are people milling around the camp. Three people sit near a campfire and they smile and comment as Tom walks by:

VOICES (O.S.)

Nice Haul!

There's a makeshift table where two women are cutting vegetables.

Tom brings them the fish and the women are obviously grateful for the addition of the food.

WOMAN 1

(gripping Tom's  
shoulder)

If some of these other freeloaders  
worked as hard as you do, we'd  
have no worries.

Tom smiles and walks toward a tent at the edge of the camp.



INT. TENT - NIGHT

Tom is lying in the tent reading THE ODYSSEY.

EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

Tom is sitting around the campfire with the other drifters. They have eaten and are full for the first time in a few days.

EXT. CAMP - DAWN

At his tent, Tom packs his belongings. As he completes his packing a man walks to him. They smile at one another and embrace.

A woman hands Tom wrapped food.

EXT. ROADSIDE -DAY

Tom walks along the road for some time, all of his belongings on his back.

A car comes into view, and Tom turns with his thumb in the air. The car passes.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Tom is alone around a small campfire. He's chewing jerky and reading.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Tom walks along the country road and a car comes into view. He turns with his thumb in the air. This time the car stops.

Tom runs to the car.

Driving the car is WILL LARSON, young, blonde, and innocently handsome.

WILL  
(sizing him up)  
What's your name?

TOM  
Tom.

Will looks around, up the road and then back at Tom.

WILL  
Climb in.

INT. CAR - DAY

The two men ride along the bumpy country road.

WILL  
Great weather for travelin'.

He looks toward Tom. Tom smiles and nods.

WILL  
So where ya headed?

TOM  
Anywhere. (beat) Lookin' for work.

The car winds along an Appalachian road.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

The car is parked in a field along the edge of the woods.

The two men are lying around a campfire.

WILL  
We'll be in POLK COUNTY in a  
couple of days. Think you wanna  
ride all the way?

TOM  
Don't wanna be a burden.

WILL  
No burden. I kinda like the

company. (beat) You can maybe pick up work around town.

TOM

Really?

WILL

I imagine so.

TOM

Haven't seen good work in a while. (beat) What about you?

WILL

Me? I gotta farm to run. It's the old man's place, but I pretty much take care of it. (beat) Ever do any farmin'?

TOM

My grandma used to raise a small garden and a few chickens. I'd help out a little. That count?

Will laughs.

WILL

I'm talkin' serious farming. 'Bout a hundred acres or more. Raisin' grain for a whole lotta people. It's real work. (beat) Ever run a team?

TOM

Team?

WILL

(laughing)

. . . of horses. A team of horses. (beat) City boy. Woo wee!! I can see that, clear as them stars up in the mighty heavens. (beat) Yeah, we might be able to find you work around the city.

Tom nods.

INT. CAR - DAY

The men drive along as the rain pours.

WILL

I know a place we can stop.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

They pass a general store and pull into a small gas station.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Will fills the car and then walks into the station. An OLD MAN sits behind the counter. Will smiles and hands the man money.

WILL

BARCLAY still in business?

OLD MAN

Sure is.

Will jogs into the rain and gets into his car.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

The car pulls into a parking lot. The two men exit the car and disappear into an alley.

INT. SPEAKEASY - HALLWAY- DAY

Will taps on a door and a dark-haired beauty, LILLIAN BARCLAY, appears.

LILLIAN

Oh, my! Well aint you a sight for sore eyes. Who's your friend?

WILL

Oh, this is Tom. He's with me.

Will turns to TOM.

WILL

You're with me, right?

Tom nods and they walk into the bar.

Its smoky and dimly lighted. There's a crude bar in the far corner of the room with several small tables throughout.

The men walk by people sitting at the tables and find a seat at the bar. There are two men and a woman already sitting at the bar when they get there.

Will smiles and nods at the patrons. The woman smiles back and the men glare. Tom takes a seat.

BARTENDER

Whaddya say, Will? Been a while.

WILL

Too long my friend.

BARTENDER

Whaddya have?

WILL

Whisky.

BARTENDER

(motioning toward Tom)

Whata 'bout your friend?

Will smiles at Tom.

TOM

Uhh, beer?

Lillian appears between Will and Tom. She pulls at Will.

LILLIAN

I gotta table over here.

The three walk across the bar and take a seat at the table.

INT. SCOTT WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sitting around a table are Jonathan Sounder; BYRON LARSON, a local farmer and Will's father; WALTER SCOTT, owner of the store and warehouse.

JONATHAN

There's a lot of buzz going around town right now. We're feeling pressure to crackdown. (beat) Preacher had a visit with Jacob.

BYRON

What's that have to do with us?

JONATHAN

Well, I'm afraid . . . I'm afraid that if we don't do something folks will begin to take matters into their own hands.

WALTER

Do something then. (beat) Town is your business.

JONATHAN

They wanna see somebody in chains.

WALTER

(shrugging)

Could be a good reason to take out some competition.

BYRON

(laughing)

OLD MAN PARSONS been runnin' up in GAINER.

JONATHAN

What about us? (beat) I mean the Colonel has been sellin' all over here. (beat) I aint so sure we should sell locally no more. We got people gettin' shit-faced all over the place. (beat) People are watchin', and I don't think we need them watchin'.

BYRON

Christ! He don't sell all that much.

JONATHAN

It's enough, aint it. I just think things would be easier if he didn't sell around here. (beat) At least not to the wide open public.

WALTER

You said it. They want somebody in chains. Have the sheriff take the axe to Parsons. It'll look good for you.

BYRON

It'll take out some of the competition.

JONATHAN

There's one thing I'm certain about at this point, my friends. Parsons aint our competition, not anymore. (beat) You're right about one thing, though, if we bring him in it would give folks something. Make it look like we've been doin' our jobs, upholdin' the law. But we still need to quiet it down.

WALTER

Jesus! How do you sober up somebody like Elmore?

JONATHAN

Don't sell to him. Keep it out of the county.

BYRON

I'll talk with the Colonel. I can't make no promises, but I'll talk with him.

JONATHAN

(changing the subject)

Your wife got any of them cookies  
left from church service, Walter?

WALTER

(laughing)

Jesus Christ!

INT. SPEAK EASY - NIGHT

Music drones lightly in the background as Tom, Will, and  
Lillian sit at their table.

TOM

Pardon me.

Tom rises, motions toward the restroom, and walks away.  
Will and Lillian watch as he disappears around a corner.

LILLIAN

I need to talk to you. We need to  
talk business.

WILL

Oh, I'm not really here to talk  
business. (beat) I was hoping  
more to find somewhere to spend  
the night. Think you could oblige  
a fella?

LILLIAN

It's not regular business. (beat)  
We need to talk.

TEXAN, a large man at the bar, stumbles out to the middle  
of the floor, interrupting.

TEXAN

(shouting)

Listen up! (slurring) I'm from  
Texas!

He addresses the entire speakeasy, even though there are  
but a few people left in the establishment.



TEXAN

I don't give a fuck about this place! (pointing around the room)  
And I don't give a fuck about any of you!

His friend, a smaller man, giggles as he watches the Texan's display.

TEXAN

(holding both fists in the air, stumbling, and mumbling)  
We're a lot meaner in Texas.  
(beat) Meaner than you hill trash, that's certain.

BARTENDER

You're drunk, buddy. Have a seat.

Texan stumbles over to Will and Lillian. At the same time, Tom appears and stands still and watches.

TEXAN

(pointing toward Will)  
How 'bout you? I'm a Texan. How 'bout you? (beat) Can you beat a Texan?

Will smiles at the Texan.

WILL

It's okay my friend. I've been to Texas and I believe it's a great state. You're right about that. But no one wants to fight you here.

TEXAN

Pussy!

The Texan stumbles, and then flips the table over forcefully, hitting Lillian as he does.

In the blink of an eye, Will springs to his feet and hits the Texan with a right hook, connecting violently with the man's jaw. The Texan falls to the floor hard; he doesn't

move.

The remaining customers scramble out of the bar.

Tom holds the Texan's friend against the bar, preventing him from getting involved.

The Bartender approaches the scene.

Will tends to Lillian.

The Bartender nudges the Texan in the ribs with his boot.

BARTENDER

You've killed the son-of-a-bitch.  
(long beat) Christ! We can't  
have a body in here. We gotta  
clean this mess up.

The Bartender moves to the door and locks it.

Lillian has a cut above her eye where the table hit her.  
She's dazed.

A barmaid races to Lillian's side bringing a cold rag and takes-over caring for Lillian.

Will approaches Tom and the Texan's friend.

WILL

(motioning toward the  
Texan's friend)  
Gag this guy.

They tie him to a chair and gag him.

Lillian has recovered and is standing near the bar.

Will is behind the bar, pouring a whiskey drink.

The Bartender returns from the backroom.

BARTENDER

We've got burlap. We can wrap the  
body up in that.

TOM

Wait a minute. What are we gonna do with this fella?

WILL

(whispering to Lillian  
and Tom)

I don't think we have a choice.

Lillian doesn't like what she hears. She turns and walks over to the Texan. She examines the Texan for a minute, goes to the bar, retrieves a bucket of water, and then returns.

LILLIAN

Christ! He aint dead.

She throws the water into the man's face causing him to regain partial consciousness.

Tom looks at Will, relieved.

LILLIAN

Get these Texas bastards out of here.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. APPARTMENT - NIGHT

Will and Lillian lie in bed. The wind ruffles the curtains and a candle flickers.

LILLIAN

Look, what I needed to tell you earlier, about business . . .

WILL

You know, I really can't . . .

LILLIAN

It's not that, we're not trying to get back into things with your daddy. (beat) Look, I'm hearing things out there.

WILL

Like what?

LILLIAN  
These guys, the BAYLOR BROTHERS.

WILL  
The WHO?

LILLIAN  
The Baylor Brothers; they're a bunch out of PITTSBURGH. These sons-a-bitches are bad news, and word has it they've got in for BIG EDDY.

WILL  
How so?

LILLIAN  
Same thing it's always been. Money. Power. Whisky.

WILL  
Whaddya know about this?

LILLIAN  
Not a lot, just that they're not liking how well Big Eddy has it. They don't like it that he's doing so well, especially so close to them.

WILL  
Well, I'm sure we'll hear about it soon enough, if we haven't already.

LILLIAN  
Just keep your eyes open out there. That's all I'm sayin'.

They kiss.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Tom and Will drive down a country road.

WILL

I like the way you handled  
yourself at Barclay's.

TOM  
Not much choice.

WILL  
You didn't have to hang around,  
and you sure didn't have to hold  
that guy back.

TOM  
I appreciate the ride.

WILL  
We might have a spot for you  
around the farm. You interested?

TOM  
Might be.

WILL  
You aint afraid of work are ya?

Tom glares at Will.

EXT. LARSON FARM - DAY

The car pulls onto a long dirt road. The fields are filled  
with freshly planted corn, staggered in different levels of  
development.

At the end of the lane, the farm opens up and there are  
several machines, buildings, animals, and men at work.

The car pulls up through the main part of the farm and  
turns onto another road. At the end of the inner-road is a  
large farmhouse with willow trees and spring flowers in  
bloom.

The car parks near the house.

INT. CAR - DAY

TOM

You gotta hell of a right hook.

WILL

It was a lucky shot. Come on,  
I'll introduce you to my FATHER.

INT. LARSON HOUSE - DAY

Sitting in Byron's office.

BYRON

You aint afraid of work are ya.

Will smiles at Tom.

TOM

No sir. I aint too afraid.

BYRON

Good. You can't be around here.  
This is hard work. We gotta lot  
of people and businesses that  
depend on us. So we gotta work  
hard, stick to our deadlines, and  
make sure we can deliver on time.  
You got that?

TOM

Yes sir.

BYRON

I gotta reputation around here  
that I intend to keep clean . . .  
so, if I hire you, you represent  
me. Got that?

TOM

Yes sir. I got it.

BYRON

Good. Will, why don't you get  
this man started then.

WILL

Yes sir, will do.

INT. DONNA'S DINER - DAY

The mayor and the sheriff sit at their usual table.

JACOB

Look, I don't think we gotta take the axe to no one. There are better ways to handle this. (beat) If all we want is for folks around here to settle down, then maybe we just need to cut down on the number of incidents.

JONATHAN

I know. But I think folks really want to see something.

JACOB

Do you think we need to be worried about what folks around here wanna see?

JONATHAN

We've got responsibilities.

JACOB

We're poking around in a hornet's nest. Parsons got them damned boys, and they aint no dummies.  
(beat)

Interrupting, MILLIE, the main waitress at Donna's, walks over and freshens their coffees.

MILLIE

Ya'll doing alright?

Jonathan smiles and nods. Jacob smiles.

MILLIE (cont'd)

I don't know 'bout y'all, but I'm sure glad spring has finally decided to show up 'round these parts. Mayor, you think the spring festival's gonna be busy this year.

JONATHAN

I think it'll be same as it always is, Millie.

MILLIE

I hope it's busy. I hear word has really gotten out. Everybody's excited. Probably just 'cause it's been a long, cold winter.

Jacob and Jonathan both smile at her.

MILLIE (cont'd)

Let me know if you need anything else, fellas.

JACOB

Thank you, Millie.

She disappears to another table.

JONATHAN

Is there anyone else? What about Jimmy Bosco? He's still runnin' aint he?

JACOB

Jimmy aint doin' nothin'. Taking the axe to Jimmy is the worst idea I ever heard.

JONATHAN

We gotta do somethin'.

JACOB

Look, you and I both know that it aint Jimmy and it aint OLD MAN PARSONS who's supplying our fine citizens with the WHITE LIGHTENING. It's us. We're the ones. (beat) It's that goddamned Colonel Larson. If you wanna put the lid on anyone, put it on him.

JONATHAN



This aint about shuttin' anyone down. It's about makin' a statement. That's all they want. They wanna see a show. Give 'em a show and they'll settle down. We'll be the heroes and things will quiet down around here.

JACOB

People like Elmore will still be gettin' found face down in it. That's for sure. (beat) Why can't they tell the Colonel to shut it down?

JONATHAN

We're gonna stop. But we gotta think about makin' a statement, too. (beat) I want you to take it to Parsons. I want you to bring him in. I want there to be a scene, a trial, all of it.

JACOB

Jesus Christ!

JONATHAN

I really think we gotta.

JACOB

(frowning)

Jesus Christ!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LARSON FARM - DAY

The farm FOREMAN is on horseback and rides up to Tom who is in the field working on a tractor.

FOREMAN

I need you to make a run into town, pick up a load at the warehouse. Take the truck.

TOM

(wiping his brow,  
annoyed)

What about the tractor?

FOREMAN

Forget about it. We're a man  
down, and we need you to make this  
run.

EXT. CARGO TRUCK - DAY

Tom steers the truck down a dirt road.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

The truck makes its way through town, turns down an alley,  
and approaches a warehouse loading dock.

INT. SCOTT WAREHOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

Tom stands at a counter. He signs a loading invoice. A  
warehouse worker is loading crates onto the truck.

MERIDITH SCOTT, Walter Scott's daughter, enters. She's in  
her 20s. She flashes a smile at Tom as she walks past and  
enters into an inner-office.

Tom looks around and follows behind her.

MERIDITH

Hello? May I help you?

TOM

(his hat in his hands)  
Oh, no ma'am. I mean, I don't  
need help. Just thought I'd say  
hello.

MERIDITH

(blushing)  
Well, hello then.

She glares at him.

TOM

Okay, well, hello, and I guess,

goodbye.

MERIDITH  
Wait! What's your name?

TOM  
Tom ma'am. My name is Tom.

MERIDITH  
Well, Tom, I'm Meridith. And it's  
very nice to meet you.

TOM  
It's very nice to meet you, ma'am.

She shows him a smile.

Tom walks back to the warehouse and disappears into the cab of the truck. Meridith walks to the window and sees LARSON'S FARM and FEED in big letters on the side of the truck.

EXT. LARSON FARM - DAY

Will works on his car; the hood is up and he is tinkering, making adjustments. Tom approaches.

TOM  
Whaddya say, stranger?

Will peers up from the engine compartment and shoots a grin.

WILL  
Wanna go for a ride?

INT. CAR - DAY

The car rides smoothly along a country road.

WILL  
Hang on.

TOM  
What?

WILL  
I said hang on.

Will accelerates the car.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The car leaves a trail of dust and continues to accelerate along the curvy road.

INT. CAR - DAY

Tom struggles to hold on. The car is moving fast.

TOM  
(the car rounds a bend,  
the rear-end sliding  
through the dirt)  
Hooooleeeee shhhhhiiiiiiiitt!

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The sheriff's car comes into view and begins to pursue Will's car, lights blazing. Will doesn't slow down and instead continues to accelerate.

TOM  
(shouting)  
Think you should pull over?

Will turns to Tom and smiles.

WILL  
(laughingly)  
You still with me?

He accelerates more. The car is faster than anything Tom has ever been in.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Will's car slows and pulls to the side. Jacob McCann

catches up and pulls behind Will.

INT. CAR - DAY

Tom is slouched in the passenger seat; he's nervous, sweating, and looks sick.

Jacob approaches the driver's side; he's in full uniform.

JACOB

Get out!

Will flashes a smile at Tom and exits the car.

Tom moans as his hands cup his face.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Jacob and Will stand in front of the patrol car.

JACOB

(lighting a cigarette)

You gotta talk to your old man.

WILL

(accepting a cigarette  
from Jacob)

Whaddya mean?

JACOB

They're wantin' me to come down on  
OLD MAN PARSONS

WILL

That's the first I'm hearin' that.

JACOB

I think it's a bad idea. They  
think it's necessary.

WILL

I'll talk to him. You know how he  
can be.

JACOB

We don't want this. (beat) Blood  
could be shed.

WILL

I'll try.

JACOB

(turning toward Will)

You know, we gotta good thing  
here. This aint something we  
wanna lose. You know? I mean we  
got it all. One big-ass payday.

WILL

I know.

JACOB

Taking the axe to OLD MAN PARSONS  
just aint the way we wanna go.  
You know them damn PARSONS boys  
well as me.

WILL

Don't worry. We aint gettin' into  
it with nobody. I'll talk to the  
old man. We'll figure this thing  
out. You just hold steady. Okay?  
Don't do anything.

JACOB

I knew you'd have sense about you  
with this. (beat) You wanna go  
fishing Saturday?

WILL

(avoiding the question)

Just stay steady. I'll take care  
of this.

Will grinds his cigarette with his boot and then walks back  
toward his car.

JACOB

By the way . . .

WILL

Yeah?

JACOB  
 Slow that damned thing down before  
 you kill someone.

Will smiles, waves, and walks away.

INT. CAR - DAY

Tom is finally calmed down. Will enters the driver's side.

TOM  
 What the hell was that?

WILL  
 (avoiding the question)  
 Hey you wanna come to dinner,  
 tonight.

Tom is has a confused look on his face.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LARSON HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The following people are at the table:

Byron Larson and his wife; Will Larson; Walter Scott and  
 his wife; Meridith Scott; Jonathan Sounder and his wife,  
 and Tom.

There are two servants moving around the room.

Byron rises with his glass in his hand.

BYRON  
 (clinking the glass with  
 a spoon)  
 A toast! Thank you all for coming  
 this evening. Here's to good food,  
 good conversation, and friends to  
 share it with.

There's a collective CHEERS! (O.S.)

Tom smiles at Meridith.

INT. LARSON HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

The party has moved away from the dining room, dispersing to various parts of the house.

Meridith, Tom, and Will sit in the living room.

Meridith and Tom listen intently as Will finishes a story.

WILL

. . . we didn't know until weeks later that the horse was a BUGGY MARE. She'd never had anyone on her back. I wish you could have seen my face when my cousin smacked that horse on the ass with me on it; it rearing up and then bucking across the meadow. It was all I could do to hold on. I thought I was a goner. Damnedest thing you ever saw.

MERIDITH

I'm sure it was quite the sight.

The three finish laughing.

WILL

It was, it was. (beat) Now, if you two will pardon me. I have some business in which to attend. I won't be long. Entertain yourselves . . . entertain!

Will rises from the sofa and exits the room, leaving Meridith and Tom alone.

MERIDITH

That was a great story. (Beat)  
It's nice to see you again.

Tom smiles nervously.

TOM

It's nice to see you. (beat) It's hard to get away from the farm



sometimes.

MERIDITH

Oh, yes. Things at the store have been busy as well. I don't make it out to these parts too often. The farm is beautiful, but I just never seem to visit as much as I'd like.

TOM

I'm sure the family store keeps you busy?

MERIDITH

Yes. I've worked there all my life.

They sit quietly. She smiles at him and he smiles back.

TOM

You wanna take a walk?

MERIDITH

That would be nice.

EXT. LARSON FARM - FLOWER GARDEN - NIGHT

Tom and Meridith walk along a path through the flower garden. They come to a bench and sit.

TOM

You ever been to New York?

MERIDITH

Oh, once or twice.

TOM

I love New York. Think I'd like to visit again.

MERIDITH

I love to visit. Once when I was nine, we spent Christmas there. New York at Christmas time is beautiful.

TOM

I used to live there. Work there.  
It's a great city. Maybe one day  
I'll go back.

MERIDITH

What happened?

TOM

Same story as everyone else . . .  
the crash!

MERIDITH

It's been tough.

TOM

Really tough. I was in banking.

MERIDITH

Oh my.

TOM

I've seen a lot of good people  
lose a lot.

MERIDITH

May I speak candidly?

TOM

Sure.

MERIDITH

You seem so free.

Tom smiles, admiring her soft complexion.

TOM

I wonder if you'd let me kiss you?

MERIDITH

(smiling)

Awfully forward of you, don't you  
think?

TOM

I've wanted to from the first time

I saw you.

She smiles, reaches out to him, and they embrace in a deep kiss.

INT. LARSON HOUSE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

BYRON

Alright, Will; you got us here.

WILL

(rising to his feet)

I know I don't usually get involved too much in the business side of things, but I have some things I need to share with you. I got word that there could be something going on with Big Eddy.

WALTER

Wait a minute, Will. What's the meaning of all this? Why are you here again? What the hell do you know about Big Eddy?

JONATHAN

(tipsy and laughing)

I'll tell you what he knows, he knows nothing!

BYRON

Hear him out, fellas.

WALTER

Awe, he's just a kid. He doesn't know anything about business. He doesn't care to know anything about business, other than when it's payday.

WILL

Look. I'm not here to meddle. I just need to share with you what I know.

WALTER

You don't know anything about Big Eddy, that's what you don't know!

WILL

Maybe you should at least talk to him. I mean, I'm hearing stuff out there. Stuff that might not be good for us.

JONATHAN

What?

WILL

The Baylor Brothers. You guys heard of 'em?

There's a collective pause in the room as the men gauge one another's expressions.

BYRON

Yea, we know 'em.

WILL

Something about them wanting to put Big Eddy out of business.

WALTER

What the hell does that mean?

WILL

I don't know, they don't like him.

BYRON

Maybe we should go see him.

WALTER

Come on, don't you think Eddy would have let us know something like this? Especially if it had anything to do with us?

JONATHAN

(shrugging)

Maybe we should run it by him.

BYRON

We gotta delivery due-in to him next week. Let's talk to him then.

WILL  
(hesitantly)  
There's something else.

WALTER  
(impatiently)  
Oh God!

WILL  
I'm sorry, really. (beat) I don't think we should bother with the Parsons.

JONATHAN  
Oh Christ! Jacob gotta hold of you.

WILL  
You gotta hold-off on this, at least until you find out what's going on with Big Eddy.

WALTER  
Look at this. A kid telling us how to run our goddamned business.

WILL  
You're right, I am. I don't think axing the Parsons is a great business move at this point.

JONATHAN  
(angrily)  
I'd say that's pretty obvious!

WALTER  
Alright, alright! (beat) (slowly)  
We'll talk to Eddy and nobody gets axed. Jesus Christ!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LARSON HOUSE - BYRON'S OFFICE - LATER IN THE EVENING

All the guests have left for the evening, Byron and Will are alone.

BYRON

We gotta talk to the Colonel. We gotta get him to stop working until things cool down. (beat) We don't need him runnin' in town. I need you to go up there.

WILL

I can.

BYRON

He'll listen to you.

WILL

Maybe.

BYRON

He won't listen to me, that's for sure. Go up there, visit with him, take him some food, ask him to stop runnin', that's all. Tell him he doesn't have to worry about anything. Just don't sell for a while, until things cool down a bit.

Byron pours bourbon into two glasses. He slides one to Will. Byron takes a slow drink.

Will admires the contents of the glass and then gulps it down.

WILL

What do you think about Tom?

BYRON

Tom? What's he have to do with anything?

WILL

I'm thinking about bringing him in on this.

BYRON

If you can trust him--and I think you can--it could be good. (beat) This aint nothing to be messing around with, though. Maybe you should give him a choice of whether or not he wants to know.

WILL

Maybe I'll take him with me to see grandfather.

BYRON

Be patient, see what he's like around the Colonel.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DONNA'S DINER - DAY

Meridith, Tom, and Will sit at a table. They've finished eating lunch.

WILL

Where you been since you left New York?

TOM

Here and there. All around.

WILL

I knew you weren't no country boy from the minute I first laid eyes on you out there on the road.

TOM

How could you tell?

MERIDITH

(smiling)

It's pretty easy.

WILL

She's right, it's pretty easy. I guess you're just not rough enough around the edges.(beat) There's nothing wrong with that, you not being a country boy. Besides, we're working on you. And I have

to admit, you're coming along  
pretty well out there on the farm.

TOM  
It's different.

WILL  
(laughing hard)  
It aint banking.

MERIDITH  
So how do you like it around here,  
compared to all those other  
places?

TOM  
Ummmm, it's average.

WILL  
(feigning disgust)  
Average!

TOM  
(laughing)  
No, it's great. It's really a  
great place.

MERIDITH  
It's home.

TOM  
No, really. I can see myself  
settling down here. Sticking  
around for a while.

WILL  
What makes you think we'd have  
you.

TOM  
I've seen some of the people they  
let roam these streets . . .  
figured I'd fit right in.

MERIDITH  
(laughing)  
Maybe I can get you a job in the



warehouse.

TOM  
Oh, I gotta job.

WILL  
That's right, he's got a job.

TOM  
You know, I don't think I've even  
seen all of the town. And I  
certainly haven't seen all of the  
county.

MERIDITH  
You really aren't missing much.

TOM  
Maybe you two could take me around  
sometime? Give me a real tour.

MERIDITH  
(flirting)  
Maybe . . . maybe not.

WILL  
Hey, I'm going to see the Colonel  
soon. Maybe you'd like to meet  
him.

TOM  
The Colonel?

WILL  
He's my grandfather. My dad's dad.

TOM  
Yeah?

WILL  
Yeah, it might be good for you to  
see the real COUNTRY. We go see  
the Colonel and you'll see it  
alright.

TOM

Was he in the military?

WILL

He was.

TOM

Don't think I've ever met a  
Colonel.

WILL

Oh, he's not a real Colonel.  
(beat) He did fight in the CIVIL  
WAR . . .

TOM

The CIVIL WAR?

WILL

The CIVIL WAR.

TOM

How old is this guy?

WILL

Ninety. (beat) Colonel's a  
nickname.

TOM

A nickname?

WILL

Story goes that he got it when he  
killed a UNION COLONEL during the  
war.

TOM

Wow! Is that true?

Tom looks to Meridith for affirmation. She just shrugs.

WILL

It's the story I've heard my  
entire life.

MERIDITH

Same story I've heard.

TOM  
It's a great story.

WILL  
I'll take you. The Colonel loves  
when I bring friends.

Millie walks to their table.

MILLIE  
Y'all finished?

WILL  
(motioning toward Tom)  
Millie, whaddya think about that  
guy?

MILLIE  
Whaddya mean?

WILL  
You think he's a country boy?

Millie looks over at Tom.

MILLIE  
Too smooth around the edges.

They share a laugh.

EXT. TOWN - LATER

Tom and Meridith are strolling through the park, walking  
along the edge of a duck pond.

MERIDITH  
So, you serious about settling  
down around here?

TOM  
I've been drifting for a long  
time.

MERIDITH  
I guess that could get tiresome.

TOM

After everything happened, it felt like the only thing I could do. There wasn't much else.

MERIDITH

What about your family.

TOM

Nah.

MERIDITH

The life of a drifter?

TOM

You know, roamin' around. Train hoppin'. Sleepin' under the stars.

MERIDITH

Sounds kind of romantic.

TOM

Maybe I'll take you some time.

MERIDITH

Yeah, I'm not too sure about that.

TOM

There really is a sense of freedom about it. Nothing tying you down. No one telling you what to do.

MERIDITH

Now that does sound attractive.

TOM

It is.

They've walked back to Scott's Store.

MERIDITH

I've gotta get back to work.

TOM

Me too. Will I see you soon?

MERIDITH

I'm sure. Come by the store some time.

TOM

I will. I will.

MERIDITH

Bye.

TOM

Bye.

She waves and disappears into the store. Tom is smitten.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Will's car is parked in a wooded area.

Will and Tom hike up a mountain trail.

The two men come to a sign that reads:

TRESSPASSERS BEWARE!

They make their way to a shack that's hidden in the belly of a cove.

Colonel Larson is standing on the porch of the shack, a rifle next to him.

COLONEL

Who's this?

WILL

This is Tom. He's a friend of mine. Works on the farm.

COLONEL

Well, okay then.

Colonel rises and extends his hand to Tom.

INT. SHACK - DAY

The three men sit at a table made of rough cut wood. Both Will and Tom show signs of having hiked the trail.

COLONEL

I imagine you've worked up a  
thirst.

The two men look at each other and nod.

Colonel returns to the table with two MASON JARS filled with a clear liquid. Will knows what is in the jars, but doesn't let on. He seizes the opportunity to play a trick on Tom.

Tom grabs the jar and without giving it a thought takes a large gulp of the liquid, believing it's water.

Immediately he is choked as he snorts and sprays it out across the room in a fine mist, a combination of a choke and sneeze.

TOM

(gasping)

Oh shit! What the hell?

Will is nearly rolling in the floor laughing.

Colonel shows a huge grin.

COLONEL

Your friend doesn't like?

Will Laughs.

WILL

I guess he just kind-a got caught  
off-guard. (beat) Can't handle  
your white lightenin' there Tom?

TOM

Whew. Powerful! (beat) Powerful!

COLONEL

I'll prepare food.

EXT. WOODS AROUND SHACK - DAY

Tom and Will walk around the outside of the shack. Will is giving Tom a tour.

WILL

There's something I think you should know. It's about my family and our business. (beat) But I won't tell you if you'd rather not know.

TOM

(caught off guard)

I don't know what to say. What are you talking about? This a joke?

WILL

(laughing)

No. (beat) Don't say anything. Just think about this. It's a family secret. A secret you'd have to keep. If you don't wanna know I won't tell you.

TOM

A family secret?

WILL

Yeah. A business secret. But it's something you could be part of.

TOM

Interesting.

WILL

I'll understand if you don't wanna know.

TOM

Okay.

The two men continue their walk

INT. SHACK - TABLE - DAY

The three men eat squirrel gravy. Colonel sops up his with a biscuit.

EXT. SHACK - LATER IN THE DAY

Will embraces Colonel; he and Tom start back down the trail.

INT. CAR - EARLY EVENING

The two men sit in the parked car.

TOM

I'm okay with what you need to tell me. I can keep your secret.

WILL

(stopping on the trail)

Listen. It's not what I need to tell you. It's what I want to tell you. (beat) I want to make you a part of something. Something big. I just need to make sure you want to be a part of it.

TOM

(nodding)

I do.

WILL

Good! Then I'll show you.

INT. LARSON FARM - PRODUCTION BARN - NIGHT

Will opens the barn door and he and Tom enter.

Lights come on and Tom sees the large distillery and signs of active operation: sugar, mash, copper line, jars, and clay jugs.

WILL

This is it.



Tom looks around, surprised.

TOM  
Shine? That's what you do here?  
Shine?

WILL  
WHITE LIGHTENING, my friend. CORN  
LIQUOR. That's what we do here.

TOM  
Wow!

INT. WILL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The two men are sharing a drink.

WILL  
Look. I know I don't have to tell  
you that this is a big deal do I?  
I mean it's pretty evident how big  
this thing is, right?

TOM  
I understand. So you're a runner?

WILL  
Something like that. (beat) We  
gotta big delivery comin' due in  
two days. (beat) You wanna ride?

TOM  
(choking on the liquor)  
Sure. Yeah, yeah, that would be  
great. (beat) We don't have to  
worry about the law do we?

Will laughs.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LARSON FARM - BARN/TRUCK - NIGHT

Will and Tom check around the delivery truck. They look at  
the tires and check the lights as men continue to fill the  
back with crates of moonshine.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Will and Tom bounce along a dirt road.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Tom watches out the side window as they approach the city.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

The truck winds through a downtown area, truck turns off the main road, and approaches a group of buildings.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Will turns to Tom.

WILL

Here we go. (beat) Just let me do  
the talking.

They pull up to a gate. Through the driver's side window Will makes contact with a man. The man waves them on as the gate opens.

EXT. BIG EDDY'S WAREHOUSE - ALLEY - NIGHT

The truck backs-up to a loading dock.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

There's a tap on the driver's side door. Will looks over at Tom and shrugs and then rolls down the window.

MAN

HE wants to see you.

Will looks back at Tom, wide-eyed, shrugs again and opens the door.

WILL

(to Tom, smiling)  
If I'm not back in an hour then  
run like hell!

INT. BIG EDDY'S WAREHOUSE - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

MAN 1 leads Will. MAN 2 follows closely behind them. They  
stop short of an inner-door.

MAN 2  
(motioning to Will)  
Up against the wall.

WILL  
Okay.

Man 2 pats him down and then nods to Man 1.

Man 1 opens the door while keeping Will at bay. Man 1  
looks into the room, nods, and then motions for Will to  
enter.

In the room are two additional men on either side of the  
room, they each have TOMMY GUNS.

Big Eddy enters the office from an attached room. He's a  
large man.

BIG EDDY  
Come in. Come in. Have a seat.  
You're Will? Right?

WILL  
(smiling)  
Yes.

BIG EDDY  
God I love your old man. He's  
just a helluva guy. And let me  
tell you. I have never had one  
complaint about the quality of  
your product. Do you know how  
significant that is?

WILL

Thank you. We come from a long  
line of runners.

BIG EDDY

(laughing)

Long line of runners. Nice.  
(beat) Look, your old man told me  
he was sending you, and I just  
wanted to meet with you. Okay?

WILL

Yeah.

BIG EDDY

Here's the thing, okay. We got  
these guys, the Baylor Brothers.  
Maybe you heard of 'em maybe you  
aint. Anyways, these guys have  
been a thorn in my side for some  
time now. Okay? And they just  
don't wanna go away. You see? I  
mean, these bastards are like the  
PLAGUE, and I'll be damned if they  
don't just keep fuckin' with me.  
Here's the thing, we're workin' on  
it okay. I just don't want that  
to disrupt our thing. Right? You  
see where I'm goin' with this?  
These fuckers are bad news, so  
keep your eyes open and let me  
know if you see anything. You got  
that? Let me know.

WILL

Yes sir.

BIG EDDY

Good. You just let me know. And  
tell your old man. He'll  
understand. Okay. (beat) Hey, it  
was great to meet you.

WILL

You too. But, but, what about  
these guys, these Baylor Brothers?  
Back home they wanna know if we  
got anything to worry about.

BIG EDDY

Jesus Christ! Am I speakin' Greek, here? You got nothin' to worry about. Those fuckin' guys are insignificant. They don't mean nothin'. You got that? Nothin'!

WILL

(smiling)

Okay, okay, I got it. That's a relief. Thank you. (beat) It's great doin' business with you. We really are happy with this arrangement.

BIG EDDY

(walking out of the room)

Jesus Christ! Would you listen to this kid. Jesus Christ. What the fuck are you talkin' about. It's all good, kid. Everything is okay. Just keep doin' what you've been doin'. Tell the boys back home that. Okay?

Man 1 and Man 2 lead Will away.

INT. TRUCK - LATER THE SAME NIGHT

Will and Tom drive out of the city.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILLSIDE MEADOW - DAY

Tom and Meridith sit beneath a tree, a picnic spread out before them. Tom lays on the blanket, his head propped up with one arm. Meridith spreads food out before him.

MERIDITH

I hope you like this.

TOM

It's beautiful. I've never seen anything more beautiful.

Meridith smiles.

MERIDITH

My father and mother have visited this same spot for a picnic every week since before I was born.

TOM

It's a beautiful place.

MERIDITH

They come here because this is where they fell in love.

TOM

I can see why.

MERIDITH

I really like you TOM.

TOM

I like you, too.

MERIDITH

No. I mean really. (beat) I think I love you.

Tom looks at the ground, unsure how to respond.

TOM

Look, I don't think your father really cares for me.

MERIDITH

Look at me.

Tom looks up at her.

MERIDITH (cont'd)

Do you love me? (beat) Don't avoid the question.

He pulls himself to a seated position. He embraces her in a

long kiss.

TOM

I love you.

EXT. HILLSIDE MEADOW - LATER

Tom and Meredith have made love and they're covered, lying in an embrace on the blanket.

MERIDITH

We should leave.

TOM

Now?

MERIDITH

No. We should leave this town.  
What about New York?

TOM

Yeah. New York. We could do  
that. What about your father?

MERIDITH

Don't worry about him. I'll take  
care of him.

TOM

Things are kind of complicated  
right now.

MERIDITH

We should leave soon. Run away.

TOM

I can't just leave right now. I  
have responsibilities.

MERIDITH

That's what running away is all  
about. You know that better than  
anyone. Just taking off. Leaving  
your responsibilities behind.  
(beat) Being together.

She pulls him close for a deep kiss.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SCOTT STORE - DAY

Meridith works the counter as two men, obviously out-of-towners, enter the front door. They saunter over to Meridith.

BAYLOR 1

Well aint you a treat.

Meridith smiles.

BAYLOR 1 (cont'd)

We need to see your old man. He around?

MERIDITH

Let me check.

BAYLOR 2

You do that.

She disappears but is back in a flash. Walter is behind her.

WALTER

Can I help you?

BAYLOR 1

We need to talk. You got somewhere?

INT. SCOTT STORE - OFFICE - DAY

BAYLOR 1

Look, I'm not going to take up a lot of your time, but I gotta business proposition for you. We know you're doing business with Big Eddy.

WALTER

Excuse me?



BAYLOR 2

We wanna pay ya 15% above what  
you're getting from that fuckin'  
slouch.

BAYLOR 1

Fifteen percent.

WALTER

I'm not sure. I mean this isn't  
just me here.

BAYLOR 1

(shooting a quick glance  
to Baylor 2)

We understand. You gotta talk to  
your guys.

WALTER

Yeah, I got some people I'll have  
to speak with.

BAYLOR 1

Talk to them. This is a great  
deal. Convince them how sweet it  
is. Let 'em know how you'd like  
to do business with a new team.

BAYLOR 2

Then get back to us. Okay? Get  
back to us.

WALTER

Okay.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LARSON FARM - PRODUCTION BARN - DAY

There are several men working a variety of vats with mash.

INT. PRODUCTION BARN - INNER OFFICE - DAY

Byron sits behind a desk, Jonathan and Walter sit across  
from him. Will stands against a wall, and Jacob sits on  
the edge of a couch.

JACOB  
(distressed)  
Jesus Christ!

The men gauge one another.

JACOB (cont')  
This aint good. That's for sure.

BYRON  
I think we need to talk to EDDY.

JACOB  
Look, I didn't get into this to be  
a gunman. I know I'm the law  
around here, but I didn't get into  
this for that.

WALTER  
You aint gonna start wimpin' out  
on us are ya? Just because  
there's a little heat. We're in  
this thing and there aint no  
turnin' tail.

JONATHAN  
Let's just take a breath, calm  
down. We just need to figure out  
how we want to handle this  
situation. (beat) One option is  
that we visit Eddy. What would it  
hurt?

JACOB  
I don't know. I just don't know.  
We are smack dab in the middle of  
it.

BYRON  
Eddy's a good guy. He'll help us  
out.

JACOB  
What if he's surrounded? I mean,  
what if he can't move?

WILL

Yeah, what if he is out of  
business?

BYRON

Eddy's not out of business!

JACOB

Maybe we should go with them.

WALTER

No way. That aint gonna do it.  
That's a surefire way to get us  
all killed.

JACOB

Then what do you suggest?

WALTER

We'll go to Eddy. We'll work with  
him. We got a great relationship  
here. I'm sure he wants to  
preserve that. I'm sure he'll  
want to offer us some type of  
protection. Or maybe he's got a  
plan for these guys.

JACOB

Maybe the plan is war.

JONATHAN

Jesus Christ, Jacob. Relax.

WALTER

We'll go to Eddy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - CITY - NIGHT

Big Eddy shovels forkfuls of spaghetti into his mouth.  
Every chance he gets he takes a large gulp of wine.

BYRON

So whaddya think?

BIG EDDY

I think these bastards have been a pain in my ass for way too long. That's what I think. Now they're fuckin' with you guys. I mean Jesus Christ. What does a guy have to do to get some respect around here. (beat) Look, the truth is that this thing is going to get worse before it gets better. That's the truth.

WALTER

But what's that do for us?

BIG EDDY

Well it's pretty obvious you can't go with those fucks. That aint no good for my business and it aint no good for your business. We gotta stick together on this. You with me? You know what I'm sayin' here?

WALTER

We're with you, Eddy. But we don't feel...

BIG EDDY

You guys don't have anything to worry about. C'mon! Jeus Christ! You got me on this? Nothin'. We're a goddamned team. You got that? (beat) Let's cut back on delivery for now. Instead of once a month we'll go once every two. Just make it bigger. (beat) And we'll give you a goddamned escort. You with me on this? An escort. Fuck the Baylor's. They want blood? They got it.

WALTER

What's that mean Eddy?

BIG EDDY

It means just that. You guys have  
nothin' to worry about.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Two delivery trucks wind across a country road. They  
appear loaded down with crates of shine.

INT. TRUCK 1 - NIGHT

Will is driving and Tom is in the passenger seat. There's  
a car stopped up ahead and a man in the road flagging them  
down.

They stop as they arrive at the man.

Will lowers the window.

MAN ON ROAD 1  
Gotta flat. Can you help.

Will nods.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

A wave of men approach the trucks from either side of the  
road in an ambush. They are armed with TOMMY GUNS.

The canvasses on either side of both trucks are pushed  
aside by the barrel of several guns; the guns start firing  
without warning.

The men surrounding the trucks fall. Some retreat.

Man On The Road 1 runs to his car.

GUARD 1 jumps from the cab of TRUCK 2 and pursues the Man  
On The Road 1.

Man On The Road 1 stumbles before clawing himself up into  
the car.

GUARD 1 arrives at the driver's side door of the car, he  
relentlessly opens fire with a handgun just as Man On The

Road 1 starts to pull away. There's blood on the passenger side window. GUARD 1 recognizes Man On The Road 1 as Baylor 2.

The car coasts a little ways along the ditch and comes to rest with the lights flashing.

GUARD 1 walks back to TRUCK 1's driver side window.

GUARD 1  
(to WILL)  
Message sent.

INT. SUSNSHINE DINER - CITY - MORNING

People are busy having breakfast.

BAYLOR 1  
(lowering the newspaper)  
It aint easy being in business.  
Everything you work for you have  
to fight for. Just aint easy.  
Sometimes you gotta go the extra  
mile, give it just a little more  
than before. Maybe that's the  
case now. I don't think there's  
any way around it. Sometimes you  
just gotta go all the way. It's a  
damn shame things have to end up  
like this. Bloodshed. Newspaper  
headlines. Guns blazing. Bodies.  
It aint over. Nah, it aint over.

THE ASSASSIN  
We'll take care of it. It'll be  
good.

BAYLOR 1  
Oh, I know it will. This is just  
a little bump in the road. Just a  
little bump. You can expect these  
things when you're trying to make  
progress. No, we gotta just go  
the extra mile on this one. Work  
a little harder than the other  
guy. Eat right. Get plenty of

rest. Don't smoke so much. It'll work out. I know it will.

THE ASSASSIN

It will. No doubt about it. We'll pay 'em a visit. That's all.

BAYLOR 1

I know. I know. We'll be okay. We'll make it. (beat) You do it, and we'll be okay. I have faith in you. I really do. It's good.

THE ASSASSIN

There are good days ahead. Don't worry.

BAYLOR 1 (O.S.)

There are my friend. There are. We can't get distracted now. We've come a long way. It's a shame that my brother won't be here to enjoy the glory of this thing we're doing. But that's okay. His blood will not have been shed in vain. (beat) I fear for this man. He had such an opportunity. But what can you do? When men are stubborn, when they don't want to accept progress, then there's not much you can do. Sometimes it comes to force. Sometimes it comes to who is the most forceful. I never really wanted to test those waters. (beat) It's us. We are the forceful ones. It's us. And in times like these, the only thing we can do is push our hand. Make them regret their decisions and see the error in their ways. (beat) It's the only thing we're left with. We can't do anything more. We can't accept anything less. Force our hand. Make them pay in a way that hurts. And in the end, things will be the way

they are supposed to be. We will  
be the victors. Make them pay.  
That's all. (beat) That's all we  
can do.

\* Note: Off screen BAYLOR 1 talks while on screen the  
following scenes are played out:

INT. DONNA'S DINER - DAY

Jacob sits at a table, his nose buried in the local  
newspaper. The headline reads: MURDER ON THE OPEN ROAD!

INT. CAR - DAY

Will sits in his car in a field. He's drinking.

EXT. LARSON FARM - DAY

Tom is working on the FARM.

INT. LARSON HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

Byron is behind his desk swirling a glass of whiskey in his  
hand.

EXT. HILLSIDE MEADOW - DAY

Walter and his Wife share an embrace beneath a tree while  
having a picnic.

In the distance two figures dressed in city attire climb  
the hill from the blindside.

The two figures make their way quietly to Walter and his  
Wife.

Walter and his Wife are surprised when the men top the hill  
and stop before them.

Walter rises quickly, one hand extended, and tries to  
approach the men.



The men draw their guns and unload on Walter and his Wife.

The two bodies are slumped over as the assassins wipe sweat from their brows.

FADE TO BLACK.

There are sounds of people shuffling around, talking softly, ice in glasses, utensils on plates.

FADE IN:

INT. WALTER'S HOUSE - DAY

Bright white and then yellow sunlight illuminate the midsections of people dressed in black.

There's busy chatter.

WOMAN 1 holds a plate eating and listening intently to WOMAN 2.

WOMAN 2

Simply tragic. I'm not sure this community has ever experienced anything like this. (whispering)  
I heard they may have been mixed up in a conspiracy.

WOMAN 1

Oh my. I wonder what Meridith will do with this place?

She places a piece of cake gently into her mouth.

INT. WALTER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A group of men are standing around in one of the home's LIVING ROOMS.

Jonathan walks over to Jeremiah Roach who is in conversation with two women.

JONATHAN

That was a lovely eulogy,  
preacher. Walter would have been

proud.

JEREMIAH

Thank you. I just hope, mayor,  
that you will work with the  
authorities to solve this heinous  
crime.

JONATHAN

I promise I am working with the  
sheriff and the state police.  
We'll bring these murderers to  
justice soon.

EXT. WALTER'S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

Meridith stands staring off into the distance.

She inhales a deep breath of the fresh summer air as she  
closes her eyes to allow the sun to warm her face.

Tom approaches her.

TOM

I'm sorry.

She smiles at him, a distraught smile of internal  
suffering.

She closes her eyes and nods gently accepting his  
sympathies.

They stand close together, both staring into the distance.

TOM

I think you should leave.

She turns to him with a distant look of confusion on her  
face.

TOM

I mean, what if it's not safe for  
you here?

MERIDITH

Everything is different now, Tom.  
Everything has changed. I'm gonna

need some time. (beat) I can't  
just leave.

TOM

What if it's not safe?

MERIDITH

Why? Do you know something that I  
don't?

TOM

No. No, I don't know anything.

MERIDITH

A few weeks ago there were two men  
here. Two men I've never seen  
before. They wanted to meet with  
daddy. (beat) He wouldn't tell me  
what they wanted. He told me  
everything. But this time he  
wouldn't talk. (beat) If you know  
something you have to tell me.

She watches him as he stares at his feet. He tries hard  
not to blurt out what he knows.

TOM

Look, I don't know anything.  
(beat) I'm just concerned. What  
happened here just don't seem  
right, that's all.

Convinced for the moment she looks away.

MERIDITH

Maybe I should leave. But I  
can't. Not now. Things have  
changed. Everything has changed.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

BIG EDDY

. . . you're on your own. Things  
have changed. Let's just hold off  
for a bit, we'll be in contact.  
Okay? You see what I'm sayin'?

BYRON

You're sayin' we're on our own. I see what you're sayin'.

BIG EDDY

Look. These things happen. There's nothin' I can do right now. I knew Walter Scott a long time. My heart aches for his family. But this is business . . . and, I hate to say it, but we all know there's risk involved. It's never easy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BYRON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jonathan, Will, and Tom sit across from Byron. They are all sipping whiskey.

BYRON

We're on our own. Eddy doesn't want anything to do with us after this. He says we should be armed.

JONATHAN

My god! We're in the middle of a war.

Byron looks down at his glass and then takes a slow drink.

BYRON

It appears so.

JONATHAN

We're on our own? What's that mean?

BYRON

There's no protection.

JONATHAN

Fine job he was doing, anyway. I mean for Christ's sake.

BYRON

Things have changed. There'll be an investigation. I have no choice but to tear things down. Stop everything for a while.

JONATHAN

Christ!

WILL

Is that it?

Byron and Jonathan turn toward Will.

JONATHAN

Whaddya mean?

WILL

I mean is that it? Are we just gonna fade into the shadows? Turn tail and run?

JONATHAN

I'm not real sure what you're suggesting here, but I'm pretty sure we are in no position to do much else.

WILL

These guys came to our town, to where we live, and they took the life of one of our friends.

BYRON

I know that it's hard to take. Walter was my friend all my life. But I just don't see how we can do any good with this. We're not like that . . . we're just farmers and business men. That's all. That's it. We're not gunmen. We're not fighters.

TOM

I am.

Everyone turns to Tom. Surprised.

TOM (cont'd)

I mean, I'm ready to fight. I know this isn't my town. I was just passin' through. Hell! I didn't even really know Mr. Scott all that well. (beat) But this meant something to me. We were doing something here. And Mr. Scott was our friend. (beat) Shouldn't we be fighters?

JONATHAN

You're right, son. We are fighters. (beat) But the thing we're not is killers. And that makes all the difference in the world when it comes to something like this.

BYRON

The Baylors, they're killers. They've proven that. They've proven that they'll do what it takes. I'm not sure we've ever been willing to take it to that extent. I'm not sure Walter was ready to die for this thing we've been doing. (beat) And the truth is I'm not either.

WILL

So that's it then?

JONATHAN

We got no choice.

EXT. LARSON FARM - FIELD - LATER

Will and Tom walk along a path.

WILL

I never thought things would end like this. I mean, how can we just walk away. You know, I'm not sure I can. We live here. You live here. We've worked here. My family

is here. And to let these bastards come in here and kill one of our own. I don't know if I can just walk away from that. (long beat as they walk) You know, I don't know how I can live with myself if I don't do something.

TOM

I'm with you.

WILL

No Tom. This aint your fight. You said it yourself, you were just passing through. No one here can expect you to be a part of what's gonna happen here.

TOM

(laughing)

Way I got it figured, I already am.

WILL

This aint your fight.

Tom stops. Will follows.

TOM

I can't let this go no more than you. (beat) I think that now is one of those points in life, you know, one of those times where you have to choose. You have to determine your own destiny. For all of us it comes down to whether or not we're gonna run or fight. (beat) Besides, who says this thing is over anyway. I mean, that's what those guys are thinking, they're thinking it's all over, that it ended with Mr. Scott's death. (beat) How do we know it did? We don't. Chances are this is a war. And it aint over. (beat) We gotta do something, or we'll live our lives

runnin'. And that just aint no way  
to live.

INT. CAR - SAME NIGHT

The mayor is parked along a country road. He takes a quart jar to his lips and gulps hard.

He's sweating profusely.

He gets out of the car, stumbles through the field, and falls to his knees.

He's weeping with his head in his hands.

INT. CAR - SAME NIGHT

The mayor is back in his car. He's drunk and slumped into the passenger seat.

As he starts to wake, he pulls himself into a sitting position. He fumbles around and finds a pint of whiskey. He lifts it to his lips and downs it.

The mayor starts the car and drives away. The car swerves down the country road fast. Tears stream down his face.

The car veers into the ditch. It crashes to a stop. The mayor has a gash in his forehead. He struggles to re-start the car.

INT. MAYOR'S HOUSE - LATER SAME NIGHT

The mayor's wife, in her housecoat, paces worriedly in the kitchen.

INT. CAR - SAME NIGHT

The mayor's car coasts slowly into his driveway. He pulls himself from the driver's side and stumbles toward his house.

INT. MAYOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT



The mayor's wife opens the door to greet him. He stumbles in, stands upright, smiles at his wife, and then collapses dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Sunday service.

JEREMIAH

My friends, our community is mourning. We've lost too many of our own lately. And it feels like the hand of the devil has reached into our little town and shaken us hard. (beat) I know we are in pain. There are things here that only the lord can understand. We are only meager human beings and are not capable of understanding. But know this friends. There will be a time when we shall rejoice, when we too will meet our friends again. But now we must move on. (beat) If I can read from the Bible, ROMANS 12:17-19 says to "repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all... If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. . . Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'."

The attendees leave the service and Jeremiah stands at the exit shaking hands with every man, woman, and child.

Will stops at the preacher and shakes his hand hard.

WILL

Thank you preacher. It was a wonderful sermon.

Jeremiah nods and smiles as Will walks away.

PREACHER

Thank you, Will.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

JACOB (O.S.)

No, you see, he drank himself to death.

FBI AGENT 1

So you don't think this had anything to do with the shooting.

JACOB

Well, in an indirect way, maybe. You know the community was shaken by all this. The mayor was no exception. He was distraught.

FBI AGENT 1

Enough to drink himself to death?

JACOB

Well, I think it is apparent that he had problems, aside from all of this. He had issues. Things we didn't know about. (beat) Not even his wife knew about it.

FBI AGENT 1

How long have you been SHERIFF?

JACOB

What? Is this about me now?

FBI AGENT 1

Just wondering. How long?

JACOB

Christ! Ten years.

FBI AGENT 1

And you had no idea the mayor was a drunk? In a town this small?

JACOB

Whaddya mean? Christ. Why are you even here? Can't the STATES handle this? I mean we've all been traumatized by this thing. Nobody wanted to see anybody get hurt. Whaddya want from me?

FBI AGENT 2

We want to know that you're okay, sheriff. That's all.  
(beat) (holding up a picture of BAYLOR 2) You ever seen this man before?

Jacob squints.

JACOB

Can't say that I have. Why?

FBI AGENT 1

He was killed not too far from here. Ms. Scott says that this gentleman and his brother visited your little town not too long ago.

JACOB

That so?

FBI AGENT 2

They're known criminals. Tax evaders. Bootleggers. Maybe even killers. (beat) Any idea why they might have been here?

JACOB

Jesus Christ! How would I know?

FBI AGENT 2

We think they might have been doing business with Mr. Scott.  
(beat) Think the mayor was involved?

EXT. LARSON FARM - DAY

A car pulls onto the farm and Tom slides into the passenger seat.

INT. CAR - DAY

Tom and Meridith drive back through the farm.

MERIDITH  
You look great.

Tom smiles.

TOM  
You're not so bad yourself.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The car is parked and it's raining.

MERIDITH  
I want you to be honest with me. I need you to tell me everything you know. I found this.

She hands Tom a ledger outlining the balance of the shine business.

MERIDITH (cont'd)  
I know now that daddy was into more than just the store.

TOM  
There aint much I can say. There just aint.

MERIDITH  
You know why they're dead, don't you? You know why those men killed them both. You know? Jonathan knew. Will knows. Those men from the FBI, they probably know. Who else knows? (beat) Everyone but me? I need this Tom. I need to know why they're dead.

EXT. CITY - DAY

Will sits in his car, parked along a city street. He nervously twists his hands on the steering wheel. He's watching something or someone.

He sits watching as it grows dark outside.

INT. BAYLOR 1 HOUSE - CITY - EVENING

Baylor 1 has dinner with his family. At the table are his WIFE, two sons, one is 14 the other is 19. His daughter, ABIGALE (18), smiles and passes a bowl with salad.

BAYLOR 1  
(turning toward his  
daughter)  
So who is this new boy?

ABIGALE  
He's not a boy daddy. He's a man.

BAYLOR 1  
(smirking)  
Ha! A man you say.

The brothers laugh.

BAYLOR 1 (cont'd)  
So who is this man, then?

ABIGALE  
It's none of your concern.

The table laughs

WIFE  
Leave her alone.

BAYLOR 1  
Leave her alone? Oh, now I'm  
supposed to leave her alone.  
There are things a father needs to  
know about the boy, excuse me, MAN

his daughter may or may not be seeing. (beat) Is he from the neighborhood at least?

INT. BAYLOR 1 HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

Baylor 1 walks into the room and takes off his jacket.

He pulls a gun from his waistband and shoves it into a desk drawer. He pours himself a drink and sips it slowly.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Will's car drives fast, almost out of control.

INT. CAR - DAY

Will is alone. He's sweating and his expression seems urgent and giddy. His car continues to accelerate; it's fast.

INT. DONNA'S DINER - DAY

Tom and Meridith sit in the rear of the diner. They're waiting for someone.

TOM

He'll be here soon. He'll tell you everything he knows.

They turn as Will walks through the door. He appears disheveled. He walks over to their table.

TOM

Sit down.

Will flashes Meridith a smile and slides in beside Tom.

INT. CAR - DAY

Parked along a country road, FBI AGENT 1 pours coffee from

a thermos.

FBI AGENT 1  
Think this ties to the Baylors?

FBI AGENT 2  
No doubt.

FBI AGENT 1  
There's more here, though. This  
little town is hiding something.

FBI AGENT 2  
Yeah.

AGENT 1 stares over at a field. It's full with tall corn stalks.

INT. DONNA'S DINER - SAME DAY

WILL  
(whispering)  
Look. I don't know all the  
details, Meridith. What I do know  
is that your daddy was mixed up  
with some real bad folks. How he  
got mixed up with them and why is  
not for me to say. Just know that  
he was, and that's what this is  
all about. (beat) I want you to  
listen to me. The best thing you  
can do right now is to get out of  
town. There's no need for you to  
stick around. Mr. McCaughley will  
buy the store from you. He's been  
after it for years. He'll give  
you enough money to go wherever  
you need to go. Take it. Take  
whatever money he gives you and  
leave.

MERIDITH  
(in tears, turning  
toward Tom)  
You said he would tell me. I  
can't trust anyone. Neither one

of you.

TOM  
You gotta listen to him, Meridith.

WILL  
Meridith, you gotta burn the  
fucking ledger and let this go.

MERIDITH  
(still in tears,  
standing up)  
I thought you would have answers.

She starts to walk.

TOM  
Meridith! You can't leave.

MERIDITH  
I need answers, and I'm going to  
get them from somewhere.

She walks out.

WILL  
Let her go. I got something for  
you.

EXT. TOWN - SAME DAY

Meridith walks down the sidewalk. She's in tears and she starts to speed up, heading for home. A car pulls up behind her. She tries to walk faster.

AGENT 1 leans out the window.

FBI AGENT 1  
We need to speak with you  
Meridith. Do you have a moment?

She keeps walking and they coast close behind.

FBI AGENT 1 (cont'd)  
It's very important. We may have



the answers you're looking for.

She stops, looks back toward the diner, and then slides into the backseat of the car. They pull away.

INT. SCOTT STORE - SAME DAY

Meridith leads the way as they walk through the store to her father's office.

FBI AGENT 2 brings up the rear and closes the door behind him.

She sits behind a big mahogany desk.

FBI AGENT 1

Look. It's pretty clear that your father, at the very least, knew the Baylor's. There's a very good chance they're involved in the murder of your parents. What we have to do is find the connection.

FBI AGENT 2

Why would they be interested in your father? No disrespect, but you, your father, your mother, this store, it's all small town, which means small time.

FBI AGENT 1

The Baylors are big time. They're big city. They're big crime.  
(beat)

FBI AGENT 2

Look, all we're saying is that we have to find the connection. Find the connection and we can bring them in, make them pay. (beat)  
You're probably the only person right now who can help us find that connection.

Meridith looks down at the ledger she's been carrying around. Then she looks back at the agents.

MERIDITH

I don't really know anything. I don't. I wish I could help, I do. But I don't know anything.

She hangs her head. The agents look at one another with confusion and concern on their countenances.

FBI AGENT 1 hands her a handkerchief.

FBI AGENT 2

Do you think we might be able to talk about it.

MERIDITH

I do, I do want to talk about it. But I can't do it now. Maybe we could talk more tomorrow. I'm just not feeling up to it.

EXT. SCOTT STORE - LATER

The agents get into their vehicle and shut the doors.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Will and Tom follow a path through the woods. The path is evident but it's apparent it hasn't been travelled routinely. They follow for a mile until they arrive at a cabin.

WILL

This is our old hunting cabin.

They walk the last few feet and Tom hears something kicking around in the cabin.

Will unlocks an old pad lock, opens the door, and walks through. He holds the door and ushers Tom in.

INT. CABIN - DAY

In the middle of the room is a person with a sack tied over

their head. They're tied to a chair.

Tom can't believe his eyes and he looks over at Will in disbelief.

Will, with a smile on his face, walks over and un.masks the victim. It's a young woman.

WILL

I'd like you to meet Ms. ABIGALE  
BAYLOR.

Tom stands with a stunned expression. His gaze alternates between the woman and Will

WILL

Whaddya think?

TOM

(whispering)

C-C-Can we step out for a moment?  
Just step outside for a moment?

Will places the sack back over the woman's head as she tries to scream.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The two men stand on the porch.

TOM

What the hell is this?

WILL

(smiling)

Revenge my friend. An eye for an  
eye.

TOM

(slowly)

I know. Revenge. But what are  
you going to do with her? How did  
you get her. I mean, where did  
she come from? (beat) What the  
hell is going on here?

WILL

Relax. This aint about you. I just wanted you to know. You aint doing nothing here. It's all me. Calm down.

TOM

Yeah. Yeah, you're right. Calm down. Shwew! Man. This is big. Whoa!

WILL

We got him. We got him! Ha ha. Show the son-of-a-bitch to come to our town, to kill one of our own. We got him right where we want him.

TOM

Look, I think we need to think this thing through. Before we do anything else, we need to be sure about what we're doing here. (beat) I mean, what are we doing here?

WILL

I went there looking for him, Tom. Looking for him. But I found something better. I mean this is way better. You kill him and it's over. You kill her and he suffers, man. I mean he really suffers.

TOM

So that's it. That's the plan? You're gonna kill her?

WILL

There aint nothing else we can do. We gotta kill her. I've gotta kill her.

TOM

Then what?

WILL

I don't know. (long beat) Dump  
her off a bridge. Ha ha!

TOM

Have you told anyone else?

WILL

No , hell, I aint told no one.

TOM

Okay. Good. We'll figure this  
all out. Just promise me you'll  
keep her alive until we do. Can  
you make that promise?

Will looks up to the sky.

WILL

I will.

TOM

Okay. Okay.

INT. CABIN - DAY

The girl struggles. She squirms in her rope. She's  
breathing heavily, gasping against the mask.

INT. BAYLOR 1 HOUSE - OFFICE - EARLY EVENING

Baylor 1 walks into his office just as the phone rings. He  
walks over and picks up the receiver.

BAYLOR 1

Yeah. Yeah. Whaddya mean she's  
gone? I mean, whaddya mean she's  
gone? Where is she. Christ.  
Christ! Get over here!

He slams the receiver down.

He drops his head, then looks back up frantically.

BAYLOR 1

(violently clearing his  
desktop with one sweep)  
Ahhhhhhh!!!!

He drops into his chair and MRS. BAYLOR appears at the door.

MRS. BAYLOR  
What is it?

He doesn't answer, just looks down.

MRS. BAYLOR (cont'd)  
(with panic in her  
voice)  
What is it? You have to tell me?

BAYLOR 1  
(raising his head slowly  
to make eye contact)  
It's Abigale. She's missing.  
She's missing.

Mrs. Baylor collapses in the doorway.

Baylor 1 springs to his feet and rushes to her. He cradles her, brushing her hair with his hand as she sobs.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BAYLOR 1 HOUSE - NIGHT

Two dark cars pull up. Six men walk up to the door.

INT. BAYLOR 1 HOUSE - OFFICE - SAME NIGHT

Baylor 1 is pacing.

BAYLOR 1  
We haven't heard anything. No  
demands, nothing. I don't think  
this is a simple kidnapping.  
There's more this.

TALL MAN  
We've been talking to everybody on  
the street. Nobody's seen or

heard anything.

ASSASSIN  
Could be an adversary?

BAYLOR 1  
Somebody tryin' to get to me?

The assassin shrugs in agreement.

TALL MAN  
Big Eddy?

BAYLOR 1  
(with some hesitation)  
Uhhh? Maybe.

ASSASSIN  
The LARSONS maybe?

BAYLOR 1  
Maybe.

TALL MAN  
They aint got it in 'em.

BAYLOR 1  
Don't underestimate. (beat) This  
is big, exactly what you might  
expect in response to what  
happened to one of their own.

ASSASSIN  
Maybe we should pay them a visit.

BAYLOR 1  
I need to get her back.

TALL MAN  
Let's at least take a ride over  
there and have a talk with these  
hillbillies. Let's do that.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Will tries to ladle water into Abigale's mouth.

ABIGALE  
(murmuring)  
I have to use the bathroom.

Will is caught off-guard.

ABIGALE (cont'd)  
(more forcefully)  
I have to go to the bathroom.

WILL  
Okay. Okay. Uh, gimme a minute.

He puts the ladle back in the bucket and stands up.  
He runs outside and returns with a long piece of rope.

WILL  
You're gonna have to go in the  
woods.

Tom walks through the door.

TOM  
What's going on?

WILL  
She has to go.

TOM  
Christ!

Will unties her feet, removes the hood, and she squints at  
the sunlight.

WILL  
Out the door.

He guides her outside.

EXT. CABIN -DAY

Will walks Abigale along the edge of the woods. He has  
fashioned a leash and secured it tightly to her waist.

They stop, he unties her hands, and motions to the woods.



She frowns and heads out.

He releases 25 feet of rope.

On the other end, Abigale comes to a jarring stop when she reaches the end of the rope.

She stoops down and urinates in the leaves.

INT. CABIN - SAME DAY

Abigale is again secured to the chair, hooded.

EXT. CABIN - SAME DAY

Will and Tom are standing on the edge of the woods, fifty feet away from the cabin.

Will is smoking a cigarette.

WILL

(blowing out smoke)

I think we . . . I mean I think  
I've gotta kill her. There aint  
no way around it.

TOM

Hey . . . hey, wait a minute.  
Let's talk about this a second.

WILL

There's no other way. I gotta  
follow thru with this. (beat) I  
gotta plan. The next time she  
goes to the woods, I'm gonna put a  
bullet in her head. Then I'm  
dropping her off at her old man's  
place. That's all. He'll get the  
message.

TOM

Look. Not yet. Hold on. Oh God.  
Let's be sure this is it. I mean,  
we're talking about a life.

WILL

You said you were a fighter?  
Think about what that ruthless  
son-of-a-bitch did to us.

TOM

Okay. Okay. But what if we can  
somehow use her to get to him.  
That's really better isn't it.  
Getting our chance at him. That's  
what we want isn't it?

Will stomps out his cigarette.

TOM (cont'd)

I just want us to be sure. That's  
all.

WILL

I'm sure.

TOM

Look why don't I head back to  
town, pick up some provisions,  
give us time to think about the  
next move. (beat) If we need to  
kill her, then we'll do it  
together.

WILL

Okay. Okay.

EXT. CABIN - SAME DAY

Tom leaves the cabin and heads back down the path to town.

INT. WILL'S CAR - SAME DAY

Tom sits in the driver's side of the car. His face is in  
his hands. He lifts his head, takes a long breath,  
contemplates for a long beat, and then starts the car.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Two of the Baylor cars drive along.

INT. CAR 1 - DAY

The Assassin is driving. The Tall Man is on the passenger side. Pointing into the passenger side floor board is a TOMMY GUN.

INT. CAR 2 - DAY

In the second car is BAD GUY 1, BAD GUY 2, BAD GUY 3, and BAD GUY 4.

INT. CABIN - SAME DAY

Will enters the cabin and approaches Abigale. He stands above her. He appears torn, distraught. He looks up to the sky and closes his eyes.

He has a pistol stuffed into his waistband; he touches it. He takes off Abigales's mask and removes the gag. She glares at him.

WILL

This is for your father. You know that, right?

She's exhausted.

WILL

I want you to know that. I want you to know that you're here because of him.

ABIGALE

(softly)

Please. Let me go.

Will stares into her eyes and then reaches out to touch her face. She doesn't resist.

WILL

I can't. Not yet, anyway.

ABIGALE

Please.

WILL

Don't worry. (beat) I promise  
everything will be fine.

He places a slice of bread in front of her mouth.

WILL

Eat this.

She turns her mouth away.

ABIGALE

He'll pay you a lot of money to  
let me go.

Will smiles and looks away.

WILL

I know. I know he will.

Will runs his fingers through her hair.

EXT. SCOTT STORE - SAME DAY

Car 1 and 2 pull across the street from the store.

INT. CAR 1 - SAME DAY

ASSASSIN

Let's watch for a bit.

They watch the storefront as a citizen exits and walks up  
main street. A few minutes pass as they sit patiently  
watching.

TALL MAN

Why don't we send someone in,  
scope the place.

ASSASSIN

I'll go.

Assassin exits the car and walks slowly to the store.

INT. SCOTT STORE - SECONDS LATER

Assassin enters the store. Immediately he sticks out. There are a few patrons at the counter who recognize him as an out-of-towner. He nods to the clerk and patrons.

The store has several rows and shelves. In the rear of the store he sees the office. Through the window he sees Meredith sitting at a desk.

He walks around the store and picks up a roll of heavy twine. He tries to remain inconspicuous as he scopes it out.

He walks to the front of the store to a cooler, lifts the lid, pulls out a bottle of soda, and then takes his products to the front counter.

He smiles again at the CLERK and places his items on the counter.

CLERK

That'll be sixty-five cents.

The Assassin pays the clerk and exits the store, then crosses the street to the first car.

INT. CAR 1 - SECONDS LATER

The Assassin slides into the car

TALL MAN

Well?

ASSASSIN

The girl's in there.

TALL MAN

Yeah?

ASSASSIN

(handing the rope to the  
tall man)

I think we should take her.

INT. SCOTT STORE - OFFICE - SAME DAY

The office phone rings and Meridith picks up the receiver.

MERIDITH

Yes?

TOM

I need to talk with you. Can we meet. It's important.

EXT. SCOTT STORE - MINUTES LATER

Meridith exits the store.

TALL MAN

Holy shit! There she goes.

ASSASSIN

Follow her.

The Assassin exits the car, crosses the street, and follows at a distance.

Meridith walks up MAIN STREET, turns left onto SECOND STREET, and approaches the WAREHOUSE. The Assassin is at a distance.

Meridith walks through the front door of the warehouse, through the main counter area, through the hallway, into the office where there is a waiting area.

Tom is sitting and rises when he sees Meridith.

Meridith rushes over to Tom and lays her head on his chest as they embrace. They hold the embrace for a long beat, she looks up at Tom, and they kiss.

She releases the kiss and takes him by the hand to lead him into the inner-office.

EXT. SCOTT WAREHOUSE - DAY

The Assassin walks cautiously up the front steps of the

warehouse, looks through a window, and then slowly opens the front door as he enters.

INT. SCOTT WAREHOUSE - DAY

He cautiously looks around, listens, and then moves slowly toward the back hallway.

INT. WAREHOUSE - INNER-OFFICE - DAY

Meridith and Tom stand in an embrace in the rear/main office.

MERIDITH

I missed you.

TOM

I missed you too. (beat) We gotta talk.

INT. SCOTT WAREHOUSE - DAY

The Assassin makes his way down the hallway and is ready to enter the waiting area of the inner-office. He peeks around the corner and sees the shades are drawn on the inner-office window. He can tell that there are people in the office.

He slips into the waiting area and then over to one side of the window where he listens to the conversation.

TOM (O.S.)

Will is over the edge.

MERIDITH (O.S.)

What do you mean?

TOM (O.S.)

It's a long story. But he knew who killed your parents.

Her expression turns to horror.

TOM (O.S.) (cont'd)

(whispering)  
Look, it's hard to say this, but .  
. . he's kidnapped a girl.

Assassin hears the conversation; his expression changes as he makes the connection and learns that Will knows the way to Abigale.

Taking action, the Assassin saunters slowly into the inner-office. The door creaks as it opens and Tom and Meridith are caught off-guard. The Assassin walks into the room, slowly. Tom stands in front of Meridith in a defensive stance.

ASSASSIN

Hello.

He slides his jacket over revealing a revolver in his waistband.

INT. DONNA'S DINER - SAME DAY

FBI AGENT 1 and 2 are having lunch at a table near the rear. The diner is filled with people.

FBI AGENT 1

You know, it's interesting that the Baylor Brothers have led us to this town. It's a quaint place. Different. Not like the city. The people here are laid back. Peaceful. Quiet. Patient. Not in a hurry. A nice place to lay down some roots.

FBI AGENT 2

So what's the connection?

FBI AGENT 1 smiles and wipes his mouth with his napkin. He lifts his coffee cup to his mouth and takes a slow, cautious sip.

FBI AGENT 1

Moonshine.



INT. PRODUCTION BARN - SAME DAY

Workers are disassembling machines and vats and stills.  
Byron oversees the work.

INT. CAR - SAME DAY

The Assassin points his gun into the back seat holding it  
on Tom and Meridith.

EXT. TOWN - SAME DAY

Car 1 and 2 pull through town. At the same time, Jacob  
walks down the steps of the courthouse. As Jacob reaches  
the sidewalk, he sees the figures in the front seat who  
appear suspicious.

Jacob makes eye contact with Tom and then drops his head  
quickly as if he's seen nothing. He has made a connection  
that something is wrong.

INT. CAR - SAME DAY

The ASSASSIN smiles at his passengers.

ASSASSIN  
(to tall man)  
Let's take a ride to the country.

EXT. TOWN - SAME DAY

The car leaves town.

INT. DONNA'S DINER - SAME DAY

Jacob walks through the front door, stops, looks around,  
and finds what he's looking for. He walks over to the  
Agents' table and pulls up a chair.

JACOB  
I need your help. I think we got  
a problem.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - SAME DAY

The cars come to a halt beneath a willow tree. The Assassin and Tall Man exit and pull Tom and Meridith out. Bad Guy 1, 2, 3, and 4 follow close behind.

They march their hostages to the edge of the woods and sit them down. The Tall Man ties them both.

The Assassin walks over and points his gun at the top of Meridith's head; she's gagged but lets out a stifled squeal.

ASSASSIN  
(watching Tom)  
I'm going to kill her.

TOM  
No!

The Tall Man pushes Tom back with his foot as Tom tries to rise up.

TOM  
No! What do you want from us?

ASSASSIN  
Mr. Baylor sends his regards.  
(beat) I aint here to fuck around. You understand? I aint here to play no fuckin' games. You got it? (beat) So stop playin'. Okay? (long tense beat) You already know what we want from you.

Tom drops his head.

TOM  
Look, don't hurt her. Okay? Just don't hurt her.

Bad Guy 1 and 2 hold their guns on Tom and Meridith.

Assassin and Tall Man walk back toward the cars but stop

midway; they have a conversation. After a few minutes, they walk back to the captives.

ASSASSIN  
(exhaling smoke and  
dropping his cigarette)  
Okay. Here's your one chance.  
You take us to the girl and I  
won't shoot your girlfriend.

Tom contemplates the proposal.

TOM  
(defeated)  
Okay.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MINUTES LATER

The Assassin is near Bad Guy 2.

ASSASSIN  
If we aint back in two hours, you  
kill her. Understand?

Bad Guy 2 looks over at Meridith then back at the Assassin.

MAN 4  
(nodding)  
2 hours.

INT. CAR - MINUTES LATER

Tall Man drives the car. Bad Guy 4 is in the passenger seat, while Assassin is in the backseat holding his gun on Tom.

ASSASSIN  
What should we expect?

TOM  
(looking away)  
There's only one man.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MINUTES LATER

The car pulls to a stop. Assassin and the other men exit the vehicle. Bad Guy 4 pulls Tom from the backseat. Tom's hands are still bound.

Tom holds his hands up signaling that they're tied as he turns to Assassin.

ASSASSIN

Cut him loose.

Tall Man cuts the rope.

TOM

(motioning into the woods)

It's about a mile up the mountain.

ASSASSIN

How many guns?

TOM

One or two. Maybe a hunting rifle.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Tom leads the way up the mountain. They all struggle, but the gangsters struggle the most. The Assassin stops to wipe his brow.

They come to a point near the top, near the edge of the woods and the meadow where the cabin is located. The four men rest against some rocks.

TOM

(breathing hard)

It's just up there. Into the meadow and to the left about a mile. Look. (beat) When we get to the edge of the woods, I think it's better if I go it alone.

ASSASSIN

Go it alone?

TOM

It's wide open up there. If he sees you then there's gonna be a shootout. What if I just bring the girl to you?

EXT. END OF TRAIL - MINUTES LATER

They reach the edge of the woods and Tom steps into the MEADOW.

ASSASSIN

You got 15 minutes.

Tom nods in acknowledgement and starts down the meadow; he walks through tall grass.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Tom sees the cabin and stops. He surveys the area and then continues. He approaches the cabin and stops 20 feet from the entrance; it's eerily silent.

TOM

Will? Will? You there?

The cabin door is open.

TOM (cont'd)

Will?

Tom moves closer to the cabin. Suddenly Will appears at the door, sobbing. Will stumbles out of the cabin.

WILL

(moanning)

Oh Christ! Oh Christ!

TOM

Will! What is it man? What is it?

WILL

She's dead. Christ. She's dead.

Will falls to his knees in front of Tom.

TOM  
What? Wh-wh-what?

WILL  
(sobbing)  
She's dead.

TOM  
(grabbing him by the  
shoulders)  
God no! No! She can't be. No!  
Christ no!

Tom falls to the ground.

TOM (cont'd)  
My God! What have you done?

INT. CABIN - DAY

Tom's enters the CABIN. The woman is still tied to the chair, hood still over her face. As he closes in on her, he sees blood oozing from beneath the hood.

WILL (O.S.)  
I had to do it. You don't  
understand. I had to.

Tom turns to Will.

TOM  
You've killed them both!

EXT. EDGE OF MEADOW - DAY

The gangsters are sitting around, waiting.

ASSASSIN  
He's taking too long.

INT. CABIN - DAY

TOM

(slowly)

There are three men, three of  
Baylor's men headed this way right  
now. They're going to kill us.

WILL

(confused)

She's dead.

TOM

(shaking Will)

Look! We need weapons. Where are  
the weapons. I need a gun. We  
need to arm ourselves.

Will returns SLIGHTLY to his senses.

WILL

Here . . . over here.

He leads Tom to a trunk in the rear of the CABIN.  
Tom reaches in and retrieves a shotgun.

ASSASSIN (O.S.)

(from a distance)

Let us see the girl!

Tom stops in his tracks.

TOM

Christ!

Tom edges over to the window.

TOM

(whispering)

They're here.

Will peeks out the window and then slides to the opposite  
side of the doorway, closing the door as he goes.

WILL

(moaning)

Oh God.

ASSASSIN

Let the girl go! And we won't  
kill you. (beat) Now!

TOM

They want the girl or they're  
gonna kill Meridith.

WILL

They got MERIDITH?

Tom nods, his chin lowered.

TOM

Look. We're gonna have to shoot  
our way out.

ASSASSIN (O.S.)

You got five seconds.

TOM

Don't shoot! You'll hit the girl!

ASSASSIN

Tom! (beat) Didn't we go over  
this? I thought we settled this?  
I told you I wasn't playin' no  
fuckin' games. Remember? Don't  
you remember that? Now I'm  
fuckin' comin' in there to get the  
fuckin' girl!

The Assassin starts to move.

TOM

Don't come no closer.

Assassin stops. He looks around at the other two guys and  
motions toward the cabin. The two men move into positions  
surrounding the cabin.

INT. CABIN

WILL

(whispering)

We gotta get a bead on them.



TOM  
They're moving.

Will fires a shot, grazing the arm of Tall Man.  
Tall Man leaps and rolls behind a nearby tree.

TOM  
Back-off! Or we'll kill her.

ASSASSIN (O.S.)  
We can't do that. No backing off  
today. (beat) Matter of fact, I  
don't think you got the girl in  
there. I think you are full of  
shit. She aint in there is she,  
Tom?

TOM  
You can find out the hard way.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The Assassin contemplates the situation.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Will turns to Tom and lips:

I'M SORRY.

WILL  
(yelling)  
The next bullet goes in your head!

Unexpectedly, Will rises up and runs for the door. He  
bursts out of the cabin and charges toward Assassin, gun  
blazing.

EXT. CABING - DAY

As Will runs toward the Assassin, Bad Guy 4 reacts, turns,  
and mows Will down with his TOMMY GUN. Will gets off one  
round as he falls to the ground.

The Assassin stands perfectly still, and then drops to his knees. He falls facedown into the grass.

BAD GUY 4

Noooooo!

Bad Guy 4 turns toward the cabin and stands steady, unloading on the cabin with his TOMMY GUN. Tall Man takes his cue from Bad Guy 4 and begins to spray the cabin with bullets.

INT. CABIN - Day

Bullet holes spray open throughout the cabin. The bullets spray for what seems like an eternity.

Tom ducks low, waiting for a pause in the firing. Items are blown apart around him. Bullets narrowly missing him as he hovers the floor.

When the firing stops, Tom pauses for a brief second then rises up with his shotgun in hand. He takes aim and fires. The round tears through the chest of Bad Guy 4, knocking him back, down, and into the grass.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Tall Man chambers a round into his TOMMY GUN, turns, and begins to unload. He moves forward as sprays the cabin.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Tom leaps across the doorway to the other side of the room. He rolls across the floor, rises to the window, and blasts Tall Man, killing him dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FBI CAR - SAME DAY

The two FBI AGENTS drive along with Jacob in the back seat.

EXT. WILLOW TREE - DAY

Bad Guy 1 and 2 stand guard over Meredith; she sits on the ground. Bad Guy 3 is in the woods.

INT. FBI CAR - DAY

Jacob sits nervously in the backseat.

JACOB  
(motioning to a dirt  
road on the right)  
Turn here.

The car slows and rounds a bend. Jacob spots a car parked up ahead.

JACOB  
STOP! There they are.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - SECONDS LATER

The Agents and Jacob exit their car.

JACOB  
I don't think they can see us.  
I'll go straight at 'em. You two  
follow the edge of the woods.

Jacob makes his way up the ditch line. The gangsters are chatting. He maneuvers his way up until he reaches their car. He slides along the passenger side, out of their sight and then ducks around to the front of the car. He can clearly see Bad Guy 2 and 3. Meredith is out of view.

EXT. EDGE OF WOODS - DAY

The Agents make their way along the edge of the woods, slowly.

EXT. WILLOW TREE - DAY

Jacob sits with his back against the car. He appears to be summoning courage. His gun is in front of him. He slides around the front of the car. He stays low and crawls

toward the tree.

JACOB  
(pointing his gun at the  
two men)  
Hold it!

Before he even completes shouting the order, Bad Guy 2 sees him, goes for his own gun, and crouches down ready to fire.

Jacob reacts, firing a bullet into the man's chest.

Bad Guy 3 leaps out of the scene and onto his stomach in the tall grass. At the same time, Meredith runs for the woods.

Bad Guy 3 fires several shots at Jacob who is pinned down behind the WILLOW.

EXT. WOODS -DAY

Meredith runs through the woods.

Bad Guy 1 hears the shots and retreats behind a tree.

EXT. EDGE OF THE WOODS - DAY

The Agents are hurrying to the scene.

FBI AGENT 1 approaches the WILLOW.

FBI AGENT 1 sees Bad Guy 3 rise up from the grass, as he does, FBI AGENT 1 fires a shot into his side.

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Running through the woods, Meredith trips and falls into the leaves. She rises to one knee, stopping and listening.

From a few feet away Bad Guy 1 spots her. The two make eye contact. He moves toward her. Her gag is still on and she can't scream. He approaches with his gun drawn.

FBI AGENT 2

(gun pointing at Bad Guy  
1)  
Don't!

Bad Guy 1 turns quickly, the two men fire their guns simultaneously. Bad Guy 1 falls to the ground. Meridith pants, exhausted and relieved.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TRAIL HEAD - EVENING

Tom walks out of the woods and onto the road. He walks alone for awhile. The FBI Agents pull up.

Tom pauses in the road. The sheriff appears from the passenger side, while FBI Agent 1 appears from the driver's side.

Slowly the rear car door opens and Meridith rises from the car. Tom smiles. Meridith Smiles.

The two walk toward one another.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END