

BRIGHT ANGEL

Screenplay

by

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. DUCK MARSH - DAWN

1

JACK RUSSELL and his 18-year-old son, GEORGE, crouch in a makeshift cattail blind. Roosting ducks are dropping into the marsh. On the water floats an arrangement of duck decoys which have lured the ducks to the pond.

In the blind, Jack holds a long-barrel, semi-automatic shotgun. George mans a sealed-beam car-light hooked to a portable car battery. The light is not yet shining. Jack peeks through at the ducks while George keeps his head down, checking and retwisting the connections to the battery. It's mid-June on the northern Montana Hi-line, and it's chilly as the sky barely lightens eastward. The ducks settle and the marsh goes quiet. Jack, in the blind, takes a long, deep breath, squeezes off the safety of his shotgun, regards his son beside him.

JACK
Shine, George. Shine now.

George clicks the crude switch on the car-light and the yellow beam streams out onto the marsh surface through the cattails. The ducks are there, all of them on the water, completely exposed and not yet alarmed by the light. Jack stands and begins shooting down on the water with the shotgun, methodical shooting, not fast, but gauged to cover as much of the water as he can. Most of the ducks are hit sitting in the water, but some fall just as they begin to lift off. Jack shoots, in all, eleven times. On the water after the last gun blast, there are 54 ducks dead or dying.

JACK
(quietly)
Well. There's that.

GEORGE
Yessir.

JACK
A lot of 'em. A lot of 'em that
time. Good work on the light,
George. You were steady as a rock.

Jack and George begin to wade into the marsh to collect the ducks floating there.

2 EXT. RURAL MEAT LOCKER/SLAUGHTER HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

2

Jack drives his truck up to a local meat locker/slaughter house, HONKS his horn. The LOCKER OWNER walks out while George grabs sacks of ducks from under a tarp in the truck cab. Jack stays behind the wheel.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

LOCKER OWNER
(to Jack)
How many?

JACK
Forty-three Mallards. Mostly
green-heads. *

LOCKER OWNER
Did you see any game wardens out
there?

JACK
(sarcastic, smiling)
Saw a hundred of 'em. They just
didn't see me.

The Locker Owner begins to count out cash from his pocket into Jack's hand. George sees the transaction as he walks with the sacks toward the slaughterhouse.

LOCKER OWNER
(counting)
How's the railroad, Jack?

JACK
Mean and lean. Pay's regular.

3 OMITTED

3

4 INT./EXT. GRAIN ELEVATOR/Broadview- AFTERNOON

4 *

George finishes a hot, airless job cleaning the inside of an elevator which has just been emptied. He is sweaty and dusty. He exits, goes inside an airless little washroom, washes his hands and face. He exits the silo, starts walking toward town.

5 EXT. POLAR BAR/Broadview AFTERNOON

5 *

George crosses street and enters Polar Bar.

Sunburst is a tiny, grain-elevator town built on the Great Northern Railway, twenty miles south of the Alberta border.

6 INT. POLAR BAR - AFTERNOON

6

The room is convivial and peopled by a few farmers and railroad crewmen, a country bar with a few poker, keno

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

machines, high school football schedules tacked to the back bar walls.

Jack sits at the bar smoking a cigarette over his beer and whiskey. He is a railroad brakeman, 44, a tough, soft-spoken man whose life has dropped him in a place he might not have planned, but that he's made accommodations for. He's mildly drunk.

George loads nickels into one of the poker machines against the walls, hitting the buttons, while one of the older bar habitues, slightly drunk watches him from the next machine. *

BAR HABITUE

Ace George! Jesus you can't win this game. This game's rigged against you. You better quit. (Laughs.) *

George gives the machine a hard shove and a kick. He turns, glances at his father at the bar. A MAN--a fellow railroader--is huddled with Jack, talking seriously. Their conversation can't be heard. The man puts his arm on Jack's back, says another ardent word, then walks out of the bar. George turns away from the poker machine and walks to where Jack is sitting at the bar. Jack is moody, as if he's heard bad news. *

GEORGE

What's happening?

The BARTENDER drifts past Jack's empty glasses.

BARTENDER

Ready for another one, Jack?

JACK

(ignoring him, to George)
Let's get out of the bar. Okay? I saved back three quackers. I'll grill 'em. Do something different. Surprise your mother.

GEORGE

(uneasy)
Good. That'll make her happy.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

Jack takes a painful pinch of George's belly, using his hard grip.

JACK

You can't box on dead legs. You gonna make your weight?

GEORGE

I think so.

JACK

It'd actually be nice to come in a little over. That's the way you win.

GEORGE

(patiently)

I can't. You can't do that anymore.

CLAUDE PHILLIPS enters the bar and motions to George from the door. Claude is 19, dark, black-haired and good-looking, a full-blooded Blackfeet Indian who looks more Latin than Indian. He's a wild boy, already sophisticated with girls, whereas George is less savvy, more home-turning but restless for some kind of action.

CLAUDE

(to George)

Come here. I wanna show you something.

George walks to his father, who's obviously on his mind.

GEORGE

I'm, uh, going outside with Claude just for a minute. I'll be right back.

Jack looks skeptically across the bar at Claude.

JACK

Don't fuck around. Okay. I'm not stayin' long.

GEORGE

I won't. I promise.

Jack makes a pistol gesture at Claude, who smiles roguishly back. He and George exit.

7 EXT. BROADVIEW STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

7 *

Something is clearly up with Claude. He's in high spirits. They walk, hurrying toward Claude's car, a '72 Chevy junker, which is across the street.

CLAUDE

Get in the car with me, asshole.

GEORGE

What is it?

CLAUDE

Sherman's got a woman with him out at the motel, which is typical. He dead-headed her in from Havre last night. Now he wants out of it. So who does he call? His son. I'm going to get him out of it. It oughta be funny. I guess you don't want to see it, though.

GEORGE

I'll see it. I'd like to have a look at it.

They enter the car.

8 INT. CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

8

Claude produces a half-pint vodka bottle from under the visor, and they each take a drink.

CLAUDE

Sherman forgets where he hides it.

Claude laughs, takes a drink, gives the bottle over to George.

GEORGE

(laughing)

Rocket fuel!

CLAUDE

Fire up your missile.

They drive out of town.

9 EXT. SONIC MOTEL - LATE AFTERNOON

9

The Sonic Motel is a little cottage camp with 6 units and a skinny gravel lot. Claude drives in behind the pickup and HONKS his horn. George looks at the office cabin.

(CONTINUED)

A woman--the MANAGER--is standing in the doorway watching. A 7-year-old child is playing in front of the office in the dust. After a moment, the cabin door opens and SHERMAN PHILLIPS steps outside, closes the door behind him and walks to Claude's car.

GEORGE

What does your mother think about this?

CLAUDE

She married a gash hound. Here comes the great lady's man. The big Indian.

Claude revs the engine. Sherman is a large, dark Indian with a big, tight belly. He wears glasses and is in his socks and has on a long-sleeved white shirt. His hair is tied in a long ponytail.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Clear conscience is no conscience.

SHERMAN

You two're drunk as monkeys.

CLAUDE

No, we're not drunk at all.

SHERMAN

I've got to get home right now. Hazel thinks I'm still in Havre.

CLAUDE

Maybe you are. Maybe we're all in Havre. What's her name?

George looks and sees a WOMAN looking out Sherman's cabin window.

SHERMAN

Lucy. She's a nice girl. She's a Canadian.

CLAUDE

That's probably why she likes you. Maybe she'll like me.

SHERMAN

I'm going to bring her out here.

CLAUDE

Is she going to be my present from you?

(CONTINUED)

Sherman suddenly reaches through the window, catches Claude's hair in the back and twists it. Sherman is wearing a big silver and turquoise ring that digs at Claude's scalp.

SHERMAN
You're not funny. You're a couple of clucks.

Sherman drags Claude out of the car.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)
Okay. I'll just break your goddamned arm.

Sherman speaks intently to Claude out of George's earshot. George looks at the motel Manager who goes back inside. Finally, Sherman turns Claude loose and walks back to the cabin. Claude comes and flounces into the open doorway of the car.

CLAUDE
So. Fuck him.

GEORGE
What're we doing?

CLAUDE
I'm taking her off somewhere. He's telling her he's going to meet her some place later, but he isn't. And I'm just getting rid of her. Maybe I'll kill her. That's what Indians are supposed to do, right? What else is available?

Sherman emerges again, walks to the car and stuffs some money into Claude's shirt pocket.

SHERMAN
This is shut-up money. So shut up.
(looks in at George)
You can shut up, too, George. Go the hell home, in fact.

Sherman motions toward the cabin door. The screen opens and a young woman steps out. This is LUCY. She's wearing sunglasses, a sundress and carrying a small suitcase. She's thin and of an age that could be 15 or 25, but obviously nobody's pushover. She comes to the car looking sullen.

SHERMAN
(to Lucy)
So, all right now. This is Claude.
(MORE)

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

He's my son. This is his close friend, George, who's not going with you. Claude's going to take you to get something to eat. This is Lucy. I'll be back in an hour or two.

SHERMAN

(gruffly)

Let her get in, Claude.

CLAUDE

She doesn't want to go with us.

SHERMAN

Yes, she does.

Sherman takes Claude's arm and urges him out. Lucy leans and looks in the back seat.

LUCY

(arrogantly)

I'm not getting in that back seat. There isn't any seat back there.

GEORGE

Let her in front.

SHERMAN

Get in the front. Watch out.

Claude reluctantly gets all the way out and Lucy crawls into the middle of the seat, putting her suitcase in the back.

LUCY

(smiles at George)

Hello.

GEORGE

Hello.

SHERMAN

Don't cause me any fucking trouble, or I'll break you up.

He turns immediately and starts back toward the cabin. Claude gets in the car and the three of them sit in the front seat without speaking.

LUCY

I'm hungry. Spend some of that money on me. Be a big shot.

(CONTINUED)

CLAUDE
(still furious)
I don't give a shit if you're hungry.

LUCY
You're a real odd match for father and son. You don't look like each other.

CLAUDE
Who do I look like?

LUCY
Some Greek. Maybe your mother.

CLAUDE
Where's she now? My mother.

LUCY
Wherever you live. At home, I guess. You want me to guess?

CLAUDE
(darkly)
No. She's dead. Are those my father's glasses?

LUCY
He gave them to me. If that was your father. Do you want them back?

GEORGE
Are you divorced?

LUCY
I'm not old enough. I'm not even married.

GEORGE
How old are you?

LUCY
Twenty. Sixteen. How do they sound? You might be criminals.
(smiles at George)
How old do I look?

CLAUDE
Eight. Or maybe a hundred.

LUCY
Let's eat something.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

Claude jumps on the motor, spewing gravel all the way out of the parking lot and whirling off toward town.

10 INT. CAR - MOVING/BROADVIEW - LATE AFTERNOON

10 *

Lucy removes her sunglasses for the first time. She reaches and turns on the radio, stares imperturbably at Claude and George. MUSAK commences in the form of The Ray Coniff Choir singing "April in Paris". Claude turns the radio up full blast and drives.

11 EXT. BROADVIEW - PRE-DUSK

11 *

As Claude's car makes a run through Sunburst and past the Polar Bar, Jack is walking across Main Street, weaving very slightly, heading toward his truck. He recognizes Claude's car and waves them down and comes to the window.

JACK

What'd you rob?

GEORGE

Nothing.

JACK

You robbed something. You've taken on a new accomplice.

GEORGE

We're going to ride down to Great Falls.

JACK

You're not. You're coming home with me. We've got some ducks to clean.

George looks at Lucy and at Claude. He wants to stay, but lacks the choice. He pops the door open, climbs out.

GEORGE

(frustrated)

Okay.

LUCY

(flirting)

We'll miss you.

Lucy slides over to occupy George's empty space by the window. Claude is silent, staring ahead.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

JACK

Come on, son. You don't know what I'm saving you from.

LUCY

Yes he does.

She pulls the door closed. Claude revs the Chevy again and heads off out of town, into the night.

12 INT. CAR - DUSK

12

On the drive home, George drives and Jack drinks out of his own pint bottle from under the seat. He and George both take a drink. Jack is somber, unsettled.

JACK

Who's that with Claude? You two into some trouble?

GEORGE

Nothing Claude can't handle.

They drive.

JACK

(wearily)

Boy-oh-boy. You know, Georgie, your mother said something to me once I've never forgotten. She said, "Nobody dies of a broken heart." This was somewhat before you were born. We were living down in Casper still then. We'd had some big blow-up, and that was the idea she had. I don't know why. I don't know why I thought of it.

(shakes his head, drinks)

Have a drink, son. Something oughta be good in life.

George takes a drink, then holds the whiskey in his mouth, letting it trickle hotly down his throat. George hands the bottle back.

JACK (CONT'D)

What do you worry about, George? Do you worry about girls? Do you worry about your future sex life? Is that some of it?

GEORGE

I don't worry about that.

(CONTINUED)

JACK
Well, what then? What else is
there?

George sits up straight and enfolds the steering wheel in
his arms.

GEORGE
I worry if you're going to die
before I do. Or if mother is. That
worries me, that's all.

JACK
If I were you I'd worry we might
not. Things pass too fast in your
life, George. Don't worry about
that.

(a beat)
Just stop here. Just a second.
Just stop.

George slows the truck, then stops in the road between wheat
fields. He cuts the lights and the engine. Jack rolls down
his window and puts his face out, listening.

JACK (CONT'D)
I just want to listen now, George.
Just listen. I don't know. You
have to do that. I like that.

Jack listens. George tries to listen without knowing what
he's listening to. Jack is just gathering himself for
whatever's next.

JACK (CONT'D)
(suddenly satisfied)
Let's go. Let's go home the back
way.

They drive on toward home from the alternate direction.
Sitting in the field beyond the windbreak olive trees is an
unidentified car. A Pontiac hardtop.

JACK
Well. There's a car. Isn't it?

They drive into the house yard. The house is a prairie
farmhouse, white-frame and dormered, with a front porch.
MAJOR, a black Labrador retriever, walks out of the Quonset
barn and stands in the headlights.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

Jack is clearly suspicious, as though he's known what to be suspicious about before now. George is nervous.

JACK (CONT'D)

Let's see what's happening here.

Jack opens the car door and gets out.

14 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

14

George and Jack enter from the mud-room steps. A tall, young man, WOODY, who is maybe 29, stands behind the kitchen table. He's dressed nicely in beige, pleated pants and a floral shirt with the short sleeves neatly rolled, partly disclosing a tattoo. He has wavy blond hair combed back on the sides. Woody is a stranger and seems not intended to be found. Woody keeps his eyes on Jack. A glass of whiskey sits on the table. Jack looks around the kitchen.

JACK

(flatly, but charged)

Hello.

WOODY

(edgy, but unafraid)

Hello.

JACK

What's your name?

WOODY

Woody.

JACK

(seemingly amused)

Woody. Where's Aileen--I mean-- where's Mrs. Russell, Woody? I guess you aren't robbing my house, are you?

WOODY

No.

(a beat)

Upstairs. I think she went upstairs.

JACK

(smiles)

Good. That's a good place.

Jack walks toward the stairs, which are in the hall, then turns to George.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

JACK (CONT'D)

Georgie, you and Woody step outside
and wait on me. Just stay there and
I'll come out.

A phone begins to RING.

AILEEN (O.S.)

Who's that?

JACK

It's me. It's Jack.

He disappears up the stairs to confront his wife as the
phone continues to ring. George stares at the phone, which
is on a table beside the stairs. He seems to want to answer
it, but does not.

GEORGE

(quietly)

Let's just go outside.

WOODY

All right.

They step toward the door.

15 EXT. HOUSE/CAR YARD - DARK

15

George and Woody step outside into the car yard and stand
waiting beside the house. Woody shuffles foot-to-foot. It
isn't at all clear why he doesn't leave while he has the
chance. Though he's a nullity--his effect on the world is
only chaotic and his behavior random. Woody smokes a
cigarette as they stand, and it's not possible to see that
he's wearing cheap black and white shoes.

WOODY

I like it out here. Nothing to
bother you. I bet you could see
Chicago if the world was flat. The
Great Plains commence here.

GEORGE

I don't know.

WOODY

Do you play football?

GEORGE

No.

(CONTINUED)

WOODY

I have been drinking. But I'm not drunk now.

JACK (INSIDE)

That's a real joke! Find your goddamned suitcase. Just find it!

Inside, a drawer opens and slams shut. George looks anxiously at the house. He sees Aileen then Jack pass by the upstairs window, arguing. Woody seems not to notice. They hear a plane flying overhead.

WOODY

I once passed my brother in the Los Angeles airport, you know, and didn't even recognize him. He recognized me, though. Of course he said, "Hey, bro, are you mad at me, or what?" I wasn't mad at him. We both had to laugh.

George eyes Woody with both suspicion and interest. A pause opens.

WOODY (CONT'D)

Did you know your mother was married before?

GEORGE

Yes, I knew that.

WOODY

(smiling, knowingly)
It happens to all of them, now.
They can't wait to get divorced.

GEORGE

I guess so.

Jack suddenly comes out of the house with AILEEN behind him. Aileen is carrying a suitcase. She is a handsome, young-looking woman, 42 years old. She stops at the top of the back steps, looking grave. Jack is coldly furious and looks shaken. He walks straight up to Woody, comes close enough for their clothing to touch. Aileen gives George a guarded half-smile.

JACK

(softly)
What do you do for a living?

WOODY

I'm in the Air Force.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

JACK

Is this your day off, then?

WOODY

No.

JACK

What's the matter with you? Don't you understand something?

Jack takes a big revolver out of his coat pocket and puts it under Woody's chin. Woody's face rises, but his arms stay at his sides.

JACK (CONT'D)

I don't know what to do with you. I don't have any idea. I just don't.

Jack pulls the hammer back and raises the gun higher under Woody's chin. For a long moment no one says a word.

AILEEN

(calmly, finally)

Jack, let's stop now. Let's just stop.

Jack looks into Woody's face, his teeth gritted together.

JACK

You're crazy, aren't you? You're a goddamned crazy man. Are you in love with her, too? Are you? Say you love her so I can blow your fucking brains in the sky.

WOODY

All right. No. It's all right.

AILEEN

He doesn't love me, Jack. For God's sake.

Jack turns and glares at Aileen, keeping the gun under Woody's chin.

JACK

(shouts)

You're leaving! That's why you're packed. Get out. Go on.

AILEEN

You're not making me leave, sweetheart. I'm just leaving.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AILEEN (CONT'D)

George has to be at work in the morning.

She mouths silently, but very intently to George:

AILEEN

You do what your father tells you to.

Aileen walks off the steps, rounds the corner of the house and disappears into the ark. Woody's car door opens and shuts audibly. Jack returns his attention to Woody.

JACK

I'd like to think of some way to hurt you. I feel helpless about it.

(pause)

You think I'm a fool?

WOODY

No.

JACK

Where are you from?

WOODY

Chicago. A suburb of there.

JACK

(intensely)

Are your parents alive?

Jack pushes the gun harder under Woody's chin.

WOODY

Yes. Yes, sir.

JACK

Too bad they have to know what you are. I bet they both wish you were dead, though...Somebody else'll have to kill you. I don't want to have to think about you.

(lowers the gun)

I guess that's it.

Jack just stands perfectly still in front of Woody, the gun at his side. Woody says nothing. He waits an awful moment, then steps back, looks at George, then quickly follows where Aileen has gone. Jack looks at George helplessly.

JACK (CONT'D)

Does this seem stupid to you? All this yelling and going nuts? I wouldn't blame you. You shouldn't even see this. I don't know what to do now.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

GEORGE
(sympathetically)
It'll be all right.

George walks out to the road. He stands, watching Woody back the car out of the field. The car stops a moment while Woody and Aileen sit in the car seat and have an animated conversation George can't hear. It is only clear they aren't arguing. When the car moves off, Aileen turns and waves at him through the back window, then Woody drives away down the road into the cold night.

16 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

16

Jack has mixed himself a drink and now furiously puts together sandwiches for the both of them. He's on the edge and trying to stay sane. The pistol is lying on the table. George puts it into a kitchen drawer.

JACK
So. What do you think?

GEORGE
You could've been more limited, maybe. Maybe you shouldn't have had her leave.

JACK
That's one version. Okay. That was a mistake. She should still be here, I guess. This is not her usual.

GEORGE
You could probably go find her. We could do that. *

JACK
(sarcastic)
Where would you look?

GEORGE
I don't know. Maybe in the café.

JACK
That's probably exactly where she is or will be soon. I think I'll eat first, though, if that's okay? I made your dinner here. Do you want to eat?

GEORGE
I'll eat.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

JACK
(unexpectedly)

Wait a minute. Wash your hands first. You've got dirt on your hands. I'm your father, I oughta be able to do something for you. Shouldn't I?

GEORGE

Sure.

Jack moves George by his shirt sleeve to the old-fashioned high-faucet sink, turns on the hot tap, pushes George's hands under and begins to soap them fiercely. George flinches from the painful water, but his father's hands are in it, too, and he submits.

JACK

Harsh words are all alike, George. You can make 'em up. They all mean the same thing.

GEORGE

What's that?

JACK

They mean...

Jack quits washing George's hands, wipes his own on his pants.

JACK (CONT'D)

They mean, "What about me?" That's all. You understand? That's all it is. Just me.

17 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

17

At 10:00 p.m., Jack sleeps--passed out on the couch with the television playing. George enters, turns off the TV, then leaves the house through the kitchen.

18 OMITTED

18

19 EXT. TOWN/DRIVING THROUGH - NIGHT

19

George drives through town. Train cars are being shuttled on the tracks. He parks in front of the lighted Sunburst cafe.

20 INT. CAFE -NIGHT

George walks inside. TWO RAILROAD SWITCHMEN sit at a table drinking coffee. The PROPRIETRESS, a woman in her fifties, sits on a stool back of the counter, chatting with them.

FIRST SWITCHMAN

George. What trouble are you in?

George sits at the end of the counter.

GEORGE

I'm just on the loose.

FIRST SWITCHMAN

(grinning lewdly)

Loosey goosey.

SECOND SWITCHMAN

(smirking)

You know what you find when you're on the loose, don't you, George?

GEORGE

Uh-uh.

SECOND SWITCHMAN

I'm not going to spoil it for you.

He mutters the punchline of the joke to his friend, then they laugh.

GEORGE

(to the Proprietress)

I'll drink a Pepsi.

PROPRIETRESS

(bringing the Pepsi can)

How's your mom, George?

GEORGE

(shyly)

She's fine.

PROPRIETRESS

She rolled by here tonight. I thought she was trying to run you down. Or your dad, one.

GEORGE

She found me. Did she say where she was going?

PROPRIETRESS

Nope, nope, nope. Did not.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

Outside a car pulls up. Lucy and Claude get out.

Lucy and Claude enter. She is carrying her suitcase and still wearing Sherman's sunglasses in the middle of the night. They each seem bored with the other. Lucy looks at George curiously. Claude immediately heads for the back where there's a restroom sign.

CLAUDE

(privately)

I got to piss so bad I could cry.

Lucy sets her bag down three stools away from George and takes a seat.

LUCY

(to George)

You forget something?

GEORGE

Yeah. I forgot to stay out of town. Where'd you and Claude go?

LUCY

(sarcastically)

Oh, we had a wonderful time. You wouldn't believe the places we went or the things. Great Falls, Montana. That's a nice place. I'm glad I got to see that.

(a beat, then to Proprietress)

I'd like a coffee, please.

(smiles at Proprietress)

Indians are just bumps in the road, if you ask me, frankly.

GEORGE

Did you get something to eat?

LUCY

I had a buffalo-chip burger, which was wonderful. I forget what it had.

GEORGE

Have you seen a Pontiac hardtop driving through town?

LUCY

I haven't been paying much attention to passing cars.

GEORGE

Where're you guys going?

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

I'm riding the bus in the morning, I guess. Looks like what's-his-name's old man had an engagement he forgot about. Is this place open all night, I hope?

GEORGE

It closes when the midnight yard crew gets off.

LUCY

(grimly)

Lucky me. Why don't you take me home with you?

GEORGE

You wouldn't be very comfortable.

LUCY

You wouldn't be, you mean.

GEORGE

Where're you going on the bus?

LUCY

Casper, Wyoming, where I already should've been two days ago if I was worth anything, which apparently I'm not.

GEORGE

What's down there?

LUCY

My brother's in jail down there.

GEORGE

That sounds nice.

LUCY

Doesn't it? We're all very happy for him. Let's go to another "Jeopardy" category, okay?

GEORGE

I have an aunt in Casper...

George turns on his stool and looks at his car.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

My mother's sister.

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

Maybe I'll see her when I'm there.
You have any messages for her?

GEORGE

You want me to drive you?

George is without outward expression but has surprised himself by the offer. Lucy looks at him dismissively, then drinks her coffee.

LUCY

(softly, skeptical)

Uh-huh.

GEORGE

I'm serious.

LUCY

(half-believing)

How far is it?

GEORGE

Can't be that far. I don't have to
work tomorrow. You pay for gas.

LUCY

(sharply)

I've got money.

Claude comes out the door at the back. He's in good spirits. He thinks he's getting rid of Lucy and is ready for high-jinx.

CLAUDE

This young lady's riding the ole
blue-doggy tonight. She has a date
with fate in the great state
of...Wyoming.

GEORGE

I'm driving her down there.

Claude grins widely. He looks at George then at Lucy.

CLAUDE

How long was I gone?

LUCY

Long as your attention span.

Lucy finishes her coffee and pays for it. George stands.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

GEORGE
I don't have anything to wait on.

CLAUDE
(suddenly)
I'm going, too.

LUCY
(tired of him)
Why?

CLAUDE
(eyes sparkling)
The new and the strange. The quick
and the dead.

LUCY
(regarding Claude)
This is the last vestige of life as
we know it.

They leave the cafe into the street.

21 EXT. BROADVIEW STREET - NIGHT

21

*

GEORGE
Get in my mother's car. I've got to go
over here and leave a note for somebody.

*

*

LUCY
Who is it, your wife?

George runs across the street to the switch yard show-up
shack.

*

22 INT. SHOW-UP SHACK - NIGHT

22

A single bulb lights this tiny, dark room. George is
laboriously writing a note in pencil. Just as he finishes,
Lucy enters and meanly snatches the note.

LUCY
You writing your memoirs in here?
(reads aloud)
"Dear Dad," that's nice. "I'm fine,
but I'm just going to take a drive."
To Wyoming. "Don't worry about me.
I'm fine" You said that once. "and
will be home pretty soon. I will
not drop any weight." You worried
about losing weight?

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

GEORGE
(annoyed)
Let me have it back.

She hands it to him and leaves. George folds the note and puts it in Jack's dark cubbyhole in the shack, then exits the shack.

23 EXT./INT. CAR, BROADVIEW- NIGHT

23

Lucy waits in the front seat, Claude looks in the back of the car as Lucy and George arrive.

CLAUDE
See what your old lady's got back here? Here's a fishing rod. Here's a six-pack. A pair of blue jeans.

He reaches into a small bag and tosses articles from it, including a diaphragm case, into the front seat. Lucy casually opens the diaphragm case.

GEORGE
Why don't you leave that stuff alone?

CLAUDE
Here's some lipstick. I don't want to guess what else is back here.

Claude laughs raucously.

LUCY
(to George)
Where's your mom, now?

GEORGE
Where's she supposed to be? That must be where she is.

Lucy displays the diaphragm derisively.

CLAUDE
What's that thing?

LUCY
That's a thing the dentist gives you to make you keep your mouth open. Are we going to drive, or are we going to sit here and hallucinate?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

GEORGE
(upset, but determined)
We're driving out of here.

George begins to drive off as Lucy tosses the diaphragm out the window.

24 INT. CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

24

The dash and the radio light illuminate the front seat. Claude sleeps off his drunk. Lucy sits by the window, erect and focused on what's happening to her. She smokes a cigarette. The RADIO plays softly. George drives.

LUCY
(absently)
What does your father do on the railroad?

GEORGE
Brakeman.

LUCY
Is he gone all the time?

GEORGE
(ignoring the question)
What does your old man do?

LUCY
(hardening)
Farmer. He's an American. He left to avoid the draft and got very lucky to marry my mother. They got everything through inheritance from her family. Not that they're rich. They're conservatives now, of course.

GEORGE
What were you doing with Sherman?

LUCY
The chief? He's a long story. Best left.

She thinks about it, then decides to tell it.

LUCY (CONT'D)
I was in the Rendezvous Bar in Havre, Montana, where I was too young to get in. I'd hitched down with this gorilla-trucker, and he somehow passed from view.

(MORE)

*
*

24 CONTINUED:

LUCY (CONT'D)

And here was Chief Sherman, coming on like the Mounties. And yah, yah, yah. All of which explains why I'm here with you. And...

(referring to Claude, sighing)

...that idiot. Sigh.

(a beat)

You get in odd situations.

GEORGE

I heard that.

Lucy reflects a moment.

LUCY

The Chief, you know. Sherman. He's not so bad. You certainly wouldn't think he'd sit in the dark in the middle of the night and pray in a motel. Would you? But he does. I laid there and listened to him.

They drive on.

25 EXT. ALL-NIGHT TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

25

At an all-night truck stop on Interstate 90, after midnight. Across a gravel lot is a juke joint where cars are parked and an occasional customer floats out into the still, summery dark. Lucy emerges from the ladies room with her suitcase, running her fingers through her hair. George pumps gas. Claude is asleep in the back seat, though he raises himself once, looks around. Lucy sets her suitcase on the floor of the front seat.

LUCY

I'd like to take a bath and I can't do it in a washroom sink.

GEORGE

You must be dirty.

CLAUDE

(raising himself again)

Where is this, Chicago? I oughta be driving. We're going the wrong way.

Lucy gets in the car and Claude crawls into the front seat next to her. George finishes pumping, gets in back.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

LUCY
(to George)
You can have a beauty sleep.

CLAUDE
(resentful of their rapport)
George is an Indian, sweetheart. He doesn't need sleep. Don't you think he's probably a Sioux? I do. You're a Sioux, George. This is all it takes to be one. They let me decide those things.

LUCY
He's nicer than you are, at this stage. He's not an asshole.

CLAUDE
He'll say anything to get on your pretty side, though. Won't you, George? Don't get him pissed off, though. Uh-oh.

LUCY
You're the odd couple, aren't you?
(stares out)
What's the fun out here? That must be a well-kept secret.

CLAUDE
You're it. You're our reward for being able to put up with you.

LUCY
Good luck with that party. You'd do better alone, wouldn't you?

CLAUDE
Being with you is like being alone.

They pull out with Claude driving.

26 INT./EXT. CAR DRIVING - NIGHT

26

George lies back on the seat. George eyes Claude in the rearview. Lucy rests her head against the cool window. Claude drives, watches George in the mirror. Lucy sleeps.

27 EXT. RIVER SIDE - MORNING

27

George sits in the warm sunlight on the grass below Aileen's

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

car watching Lucy undress at the edge of the small clear-flowing river. The car door is open and the RADIO is playing softly. A six-pack of beer sits in the grass along with some junk-food sacks, some still full. Lucy's suitcase is open beside her, as if she were alone in a bathroom. Claude rigs up the fishing rod from the back seat.

CLAUDE

You'll have to look real close if you want to see anything.

George watches Lucy intently. It is a gift to him that he's about to see her undressed. She turns, naked now, to see George watching her.

LUCY

Have a good look. I've got a brother, remember?
(steps into the cold water)
Oh, shit!

Claude walks off down the river bank 20 yards and begins turning up rocks for bait. Lucy stands in the stream, dips water up onto her arms, underarms and across her chest. She has a small bar of motel soap in her palm and uses it sparingly.

LUCY

(to George)
Which way's north? I like to stay oriented.

George glances at the sun and points west without speaking.

LUCY (CONT'D)

You got a clothespin on your tongue?

She continues dipping water onto herself as though to taunt him with herself. Down the bank, Claude finds something he likes for bait, rigs up a hook and casts his line into a slow-moving eddy. He is skillful and seems confident of catching a fish.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Did you ever have the dream that somebody you know is leading you into a river and just when you're knee-deep you step into a hole and fall under? And you jump in your sleep it scares you so much?

GEORGE

I've had that. When I was little.

(CONTINUED)

27

LUCY

Are you a man now? Am I supposed to think that now that we're out here?

GEORGE

It doesn't matter what you think.

She kneels demurely into the water, cups her hands and raises water to her face.

LUCY

(Dripping)

I think a bath'd do you good. I don't think he's ever had a bath.

GEORGE

Do you think your parents ever lie to you?

LUCY

Did somebody lie to you?

GEORGE

Not that I know of.

LUCY

I hope mine lie to me. I wouldn't want to know all the shit they know, would you?

GEORGE

Sure. I want to know it.

Lucy finishes her bath, walks out of the water and kneels in front of her suitcase, realizing a tiny bit of modesty. She puts on a long flannel shirt, a man's size. She stands and walks up the grass bank to where George sits.

LUCY

I want to get in the sunlight. It's warmer up here. I think I'll have a warm beer.

She takes a beer out of the six-pack and sits on the grass beside him. On the RADIO a weather forecast for central Wyoming is audible. Rain is forecast.

WEATHER MAN

Say good-bye to sunshine, east central Wyoming!

LUCY

(Softly, to herself)

Good-bye, good-bye, say good-bye.

She extends her legs into the morning sunlight. She is making conversation and watches Claude finagle a big fish.

CLAUDE

All right! Here's a fish.

LUCY

He's a fool, you know.

GEORGE

He's not a fool. He's smart. You just wouldn't want to be him. He wouldn't want to be you either.

Claude shouts again in delight.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

LUCY
(carelessly)
Okay-I'm-too-hard-on-him-he's-your-buddy.

(a beat)
And I don't mind feeling lonely out here. Though I don't know why I think I've got time to just lie here like this.

GEORGE
That's your business, I guess.

LUCY
Do you have a girlfriend?

GEORGE
No.

LUCY
(impatient)
Then tell me what you've done that's shameful. You already know something about me, even though I've done worse.

She turns toward him provocatively.

CLAUDE
(wenching the fish)
I see him now. This is a fish! You have to see this son of a bitch!

GEORGE
Nothing. I haven't done anything.

LUCY
(confidently)
Lying. That's shameful. You lied because you're ashamed. There isn't any out to this.

GEORGE
You're not ashamed of anything, are you?

LUCY
Yes. I am. I'm ashamed of leaving home without saying anything to anybody. And I'm ashamed of spending the night with Sherman in that motel. That's just two days of things.

(CONTINUED)

27

27

GEORGE

That'll go away by tomorrow.

LUCY

It'll all go away.

Claude jerks the fish up onto the bank. He whoops with enthusiasm.

GEORGE

(Softly)

My mother took off recently, and I was glad about it. I'm ashamed of that.

LUCY

That's a shameful lie, right there. She's probably happy, anyway.

Lucy is clearly moved by George's admission, and sympathetic to his predicament. She pulls closer to him, looking up, but at a loss for how to sympathize correctly. She takes off her sunglasses and looks up at George.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Why don't you just kiss me? Just for a minute.

George looks down at Claude, who's dragging a big whitefish up onto the bank.

LUCY (CONT'D)

I don't care. Let him see us.

She reaches up and kisses George hard, first with her lips sealed, then with her lips parted.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Just do that. Kiss me back. I like that.

George puts both arms around Lucy and kisses her awkwardly.

CLAUDE

(Shouting, watching them)

You're both drunk! You're both fuck drunk.

LUCY

Don't act jealously.

At Claude's feet is a large, gasping fish.

CLAUDE

I'm down here fishing. Come look at this. This is a great fish.

Lucy pulls away from George, sits up and stares coldly at Claude. George is disoriented.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

LUCY
(suddenly)
Let's see his poor fish. Then maybe
we can get out of here.

She stands and walks barefoot down to where Claude is standing over his fish. George follows after her reluctantly.

Lucy looks down at the big, silvery fish, its gills rising and subsiding in the grass.

CLAUDE
(enthusiastically)
Isn't it lively? It's a whitefish.
They're good to eat.

LUCY
What a surprise that must be for the fish.
Everything just goes crazy at once. I wonder what it
thinks? *

CLAUDE
Fish don't think. *

He kneels beside the fish, holding a long clasp knife, and tries to take the hook out with a deft turn of his knife blade, but in doing it he causes the fish to twist in his grasp and the knife to jab his palm. He drops the knife, wrings his hand, then sucks the cut. *

CLAUDE (CONT'D)
(hand in his mouth)
Son of a bitch thing! Fucking fish
is dangerous.

LUCY
Is that the Indian way of fishing?

Claude glares at her in a fury. He seems moved to strike her and it is a moment of fierce tension.

CLAUDE
(hatefully)
Okay. It's your fish. You do
something with it. I don't want the
fucking thing.

Lucy looks at the fish and by some inner grasp-on-purpose seems to relax.

LUCY
Okay.
(reaches forward)
Let me have that knife.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

Claude picks up the knife and extends it, but as she reaches for it, he jabs it at her.

CLAUDE

You might kill me if I gave this to you.

Claude looks at George, trying to be amused.

LUCY

I'm going to put this poor fish out of its misery.

CLAUDE

Okay. Do it.

He hands Lucy the knife. She merely leans over and confidently pushes the knife--not without resistance--straight through the fish's side, behind the gills. The fish makes a noise in its throat. Lucy then raises the whole contraption--knife and fish together--and slings it out into the river, where it disappears.

LUCY

There you go.

(looks inquiringly at George)

You want me to be ashamed of that, too?

It is a tense moment.

GEORGE

No.

CLAUDE

I bet you'll do anything, won't you?

He's been vanquished and doesn't know what to do to ease the humiliation.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

You'd fuck a pig in knickers, I bet.
You Canada girls?

LUCY

I do commit the wrong sins
sometimes.

This obviously refers to Sherman. Claude steps toward her and with his fingertips, very slowly raises the front of the shirt Lucy's wearing.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

CLAUDE

What do you think you're good for?
Everybody thinks they're good for
something. Or are you just good for
nothing?

Claude raises the shirt further, uncovering her.

LUCY

You boys all seem alike to me.

CLAUDE

You don't have to act that way.

Claude unbuttons the top button of Lucy's shirt, while
George looks on. He's clearly about to rape her.

LUCY

I guess I've had all the fun I'm
going to have.

CLAUDE

(unbuttoning)

Not yet.

LUCY

I think I have.

Lucy's face is becoming pale but not flinching.

GEORGE

(reluctantly)

I don't think that's necessary now.

CLAUDE

You had a kiss. You can be second.
I'm not going to kill her.

GEORGE

Let it go, huh?

George steps forward and moves Claude's hand away gently but
without hesitation.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

This is not a way to act. This
isn't any good.

CLAUDE

(arguing the point)

This is what I want.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

GEORGE
 (softly, shaking his head)
 No, no.

They are all three standing very closely, so that their softest voices can be heard.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
 Claude, I'll take you back up to town. You can catch the bus. Let's stop this.

Claude looks at Lucy and at George. He's finished.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
 (softly)
 Get in the car. It's all right. I've got some money. I'll buy you a ticket.

CLAUDE
 (defeated)
 Fuck you guys. Just fuck you, okay?

LUCY
 (walking away, disgusted)
 You boys. I love you boys. You're so wonderful.

28 EXT. POST OFFICE/SMALL WYOMING TOWN - LATE MORNING

28

George, Claude and Lucy pull up in Aileen's car. Claude gets out, holding the remains of a six-pack of beer and stands alone in the street where the wind has risen and the clouds from the mountains are roiling for the rain.

CLAUDE
 (angrily)
 I'm all right. Fuck it.

He turns around to address the remark to Lucy and George but they are already driving away.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 That's great. All right. That's great.

Back in the car, driving.

LUCY
 The great fisherman. I wonder what he's thinking about.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

GEORGE
He's thinking about you.

LUCY
(derisively)
He thought he was in love with me.
That's what he told me. Isn't that
strange?

She looks out at the passing scenery. George declines to answer.

29 INT./EXT. DRIVING MONTAGE - DAY

29

They drive through a variety of Wyoming landscape, through rain, Lucy taking a turn driving while George sleeps.

30 INT. CAR - DAY

30

Lucy and George sit parked in a terrific downpour in a roadside turn-out. In the car they have sandwiches and beer. The windows are open, letting in the cool, rainy air. The RADIO is playing. Lucy sits in the driver's seat, smoking a cigarette. She idly pulls down the sun visor, looks at the photograph.

LUCY
Who's this? Your whole family,
featuring you as a kid?

George looks over at the photograph without visible response, but he is moved.

GEORGE
That's when my old man got out of
the Air Force. He wanted to be a
jet mechanic. But he didn't do
that. He went to work on the BN.
Switching.

LUCY
What're your plans for a bright
future?

GEORGE
I'd like to go to college. I'd like
to be on the boxing team, if there's
such a thing as a boxing team.

LUCY
(motioning)
College is back that way, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

GEORGE

Yeah. It is.

LUCY

I think you're headed in the wrong direction then. Right?

GEORGE

I'd like to join the Marine Corps after that. Make that a career.

LUCY

Warrior. You're a warrior. And you're a worrier, I believe.

Lucy sighs. Her feet are on the dashboard.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(dreamily)

We always pluck geese in the fall. Hunters bring the geese they shoot to our house in Sceptre, in Saskatchewan, and we dip 'em in this waxy water and get the feathers off and gut 'em and wrap 'em. For a charge. The whole family's involved ...I'd like to rise up above that. Rise up in the world. Be a star in some firmament.

GEORGE

You'll have to leave Canada for that. There aren't many Canadian stars. George Chuvalo. He's all I can think of.

LUCY

Giselle Mackenzie. Bob Hope.

GEORGE

I didn't know Bob Hope was Canadian.

LUCY

Yeah. He is.

31 EXT. CAR OVERLOOKING CASPER - MORNING

31

They pull into a turn-out looking out over the city of Casper. The wind is blowing and the skies are full as they get out to look at the expanse of the town and the grouping of oil rigs below. George kicks rocks over the ledge to one side, then gazes over to Lucy, who is stretching, staring off in the other direction.

32 INT./EXT. CASPER - MORNING

32

George and Lucy drive through Casper. Casper is an oil and mining town, a roughneck town of high risk and boom-or-bust. Casper is unforgiving, tough, palpably dangerous. George and Lucy drive into town sightseeing.

LUCY

What a place. My brother said it was nicer than this. Maybe it grows on you if you're here longer than I plan to be. What would you do for amusement?

GEORGE

Beat people up. Steal things, maybe. The usual.

LUCY

I know you think that's amusing.

33 OMITTED

33

34 EXT. LAZY K.T. MOTEL - DAY

34 *

Lucy returns from using the pay phone on the outside wall of a motel, gets back in the car where George waits.

LUCY

It's not an easy matter to have your brother in jail. You can't talk to him.

GEORGE

That's what they have in mind. You didn't seem to be in any hurry till now.

LUCY

(momentarily melancholy)

I know it.

(a beat, distracted)

Where're you staying?

She half knows the answer, and means this as an invitation. George looks out the window at the traffic.

GEORGE

I've got my aunt in town somewhere.

He looks up at the blasted hillside of tacky, lower-case suburban houses and, farther on, oil rigs, then out at the Lazy K.T. Motel.

*

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT'D)
You gonna afford this place?

LUCY
I've been saving my money. I'm
where I'm going, anyway.

GEORGE
You're lucky.

A hollow moment yawns open for George.

LUCY
(chipper)
This is a honky tonk town, isn't it?

GEORGE
I guess.

LUCY
You want to stay with me tonight?
Till you figure it out. Two beds.
Two people asleep?

35 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

35

They enter the motel room and Lucy sets down her bag. George walks around the room, peeking out the window, looking in the closets, the drawers, turning on the TV. Lucy, who's exhausted, sits on one of the two beds in the half-light.

LUCY
How many times have you been in a
motel room with a girl?

GEORGE
(prowling around)
Not many times...Not any times.

LUCY
This is a big deal for you, then,
isn't it? Too bad it can't be with
somebody you're in love with, not
that that makes a lot of difference
to men, or boys, whichever you are.

GEORGE
It doesn't make any difference to
me.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

George sits on the bed opposite Lucy who lies down needing rest. There's intimacy, but not precisely sexual intimacy, though it could be.

LUCY

You probably are in love with me,
aren't you?

GEORGE

No. I'm not. No.

LUCY

Good. That's very smart.

Lucy falls into exhausted sleep. George watches her sleep for a long moment, then gets up, restless, gazes out the door, then goes to find a phone book in a drawer and looks up a number. Silently he decides not to call for fear of waking Lucy. But he takes the book, opened to the Casper city map, and quietly slips out of the room.

36 OMITTED

36

37 OMITTED

37

38 EXT. MOTEL - DAY

38

As George walks out and closes the door quietly, he sees a large MAN in his fifties wearing rough ranch clothing, get out of a pickup and walk to the pay phone next to George's car. The Man takes a piece of paper from his pocket and reaches for the phone. He turns and looks aggressively at George as George passes. George, unsettled, looks away and speeds his walk.

MAN

Hey!

George doesn't respond, reaches his car and opens the door.

MAN

(insistent)

Hey. What're you up to?

GEORGE

(finally)

I'm minding my own business. Is
that safe here?

(CONTINUED)

MAN

You looking for a job, pay you a lot of money? Just yes or no. Say that.

GEORGE

No.

MAN

You a farm boy?

GEORGE

No.

MAN

You'd of fooled me. You sure you don't want a job? I got a job.

GEORGE

Yeah. Sure.

MAN

'Bye.

The man begins to make a call. George drives away.

39 INT./EXT. DRIVE THROUGH CASPER - DAY

39

George uses the telephone-book map and drives into his aunt's neighborhood, which is in town, to a middle-class row house with a fenced-in half-acre lot. Judy's house has a wheelchair ramp up to the front porch. George parks and goes to the door.

40 EXT. JUDY AND HARLEY'S HOUSE - DAY

40

JUDY opens the front door smiling, not recognizing George. She is near Aileen's age but pretty and appealing in a somewhat more wholesome way.

JUDY

Hi, there.

GEORGE

(hesitantly)

Hi, Judy. It's George. Aileen's son. I kinda thought I'd come by.

JUDY

(loudly, affectionately)

Oh-Jesus-Christ-it-is-not! You're a little bitty boy. You can't be this...immense. And handsome.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

Judy hugs him and brings him inside.

41 INT. JUDY AND HARLEY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

41

Here it's antiseptically neat--a couch, matched chairs, a preserved old TV--but un-lived in. Judy and Harley "live in the back" of the house where Judy takes George.

42 INT. DEN/KITCHEN - DAY

42

Here is a sunny, remodeled kitchen and an opened-up, added-on den with a wheelchair ramp for HARLEY, Judy's husband, who's black, handsome and trapped in a wheelchair, which is pushed up to a kitchen table set for lunch. Judy and Harley seem a more dependable, more affectionate couple than George's parents.

JUDY

(entering)

Now, Harley, I don't want you to get up out of your wheelchair or anything but who do you think this is? It's George. Remember George? My sister's only baby? Well, this is what he's turned out to be, right here!

Judy pushes George toward Harley, who smiles crazily and gives him a fierce black-power handshake up from his chair.

HARLEY

All riiight! How you doin'? You're up there, aren't you? You're way up there. Up in the clouds.

Harley fidgets his fingers on the padded arms of his wheelchair.

JUDY

(busily setting a place)

We're just about to have lunch. I want you to sit down and eat with us.

HARLEY

C'mere, let me show you something, George.

Harley suddenly pushes his chair backward away from the table.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

JUDY
(noticeably patient)
Oh, Harley, for goodness sake, let
him sit down.

HARLEY
(ignoring her)
Right.

Harley lurches off toward a small hideaway room off the
kitchen. He opens the door and pushes in, George behind
him.

43 INT. GUN ROOM - DAY

43

HARLEY
(chuckling, entering)
All right. Come in here.

Harley switches on the fluorescent lights in the ceiling.
The room contains a huge TV, cheap wood-panelled walls and
two walls full of guns in racks. Harley is a gun nut.
Military rifles, hunting rifles with scopes, a machine gun,
sawed-offs with pistol grips, pistols of all kinds
displayed. Harley wheels straight over to the wall and
takes down the one particularly malevolent-looking scoped
rifle he can reach unaided. He mounts it--still seated--and
makes several severe popping noises.

HARLEY (CONT'D)
(boasting)
Starlight. Light you up after dark.

George looks at Harley, then at the gun. Harley cuts his
eyes at George, smiling.

HARLEY (CONT'D)
I'm a civil engineer. Did you know
that?

GEORGE
I knew that. We met once.

HARLEY
Did we? I don't remember. I met
Judy right down on Wyoming Street in
town. Two days after I got out of
the U.S. Army. I came out here to
get rich...You know what you can do
with this instrument?

GEORGE
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

HARLEY

I can part some cowboy's hair in a different spot for him, long distance.

GEORGE

Why would you want to do that?

HARLEY

Why not! They put me in this chair. How do you think I got in this chair? I'm standing down underneath the rig and somebody opened up his lunch bucket and dropped an orange straight down on my head. Broke me all up to pieces. And one of these days they're going to come up here to finish the job and that's when I'll be sitting here waiting with my answer.

GEORGE

Do you think they'll come up here? Right to your house? I don't see anybody doing that.

HARLEY

Sure they'll come up here. They'll have on white sheets and come right in the front door. "Boom," is what I'll have to say to those motherfuckers, "Boom, boom, boom!"

GEORGE

That'll be great.

HARLEY

It will be great. Won't it be great? I have a sense of personal mission in this, son. I've suffered a loss. Somebody has to pay for that.

GEORGE

I guess that's true.

HARLEY

Oh, yes, it's true. It's true as that I'm sittin' here. And I'm sure sittin' here.

44 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

44

At the lunch table, in the neatened-up kitchen, there's a table full of good food. Judy is perky as they eat. Harley eats mechanically in his chair. George is uncomfortably a guest.

JUDY

You're not through with school, are you?

GEORGE

Yeah, I am. I finished in summer school.

JUDY

(smiling, fork poised)
And how old are you?

GEORGE

Eighteen.

JUDY

Gee whiz. Are you? I don't think you're that old. I must've blinked.

Harley frowns and snaps back in his chair as if he's been shot at long range.

GEORGE

You haven't heard anything from my mom, have you? I thought she might've called you. I thought she might even have come down here.

JUDY

Where was she going?

GEORGE

She and my dad had kind of a blow-up. I left.

JUDY

(disturbed)
What kind of a blow-up?

GEORGE

I don't know about it exactly. They got mad and she left.

HARLEY

Who was it with?

GEORGE

Nobody. She just left, that's all.

(CONTINUED)

HARLEY

Nobody just leaves. Not in my experience. If you leave by yourself, that's where you're going to be. And nobody wants to be that place. I'll tell you that right now.

GEORGE

Well, that's what she did, anyway. You may not know everything about everything.

HARLEY

(smiles)

I know enough. That's for goddamned sure. She wouldn't come here, anyway.

GEORGE

Why not?

HARLEY

She likes me too much, that's why. Even in this cripple's chair she couldn't resist me. There's ways around everything.

JUDY

Harl, now, that's not true. Don't say that. It's not true, George. Aileen never did anything like that. It's his mother, Harl, for God's sake. Don't lie about her.

HARLEY

I'm not lying about her.

GEORGE

(calmly)

Yeah, you are. You're lying about her. You're full of shit. She wouldn't have anything to do with you in a million years.

HARLEY

Why not? Why don't you think she would? Is something wrong with me?

GEORGE

No. Nothing's wrong with you. You're married to her sister. That's all. She wouldn't do a thing like that.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

HARLEY

Right!

Harley roars with agonized laughter, then abruptly rolls his chair back from the table and spins it toward his gun room-- though it's just a meaningless half-threat.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

They never do that, do they? That's what they never ever do? They never like the wrong guy.

Harley disappears into the room and slams the door behind him. The TV comes on then, LOUD through the walls. "Wheel of Fortune" is audible, then a cheer.

45 EXT. JUDY AND HARLEY'S HOUSE - DAY

45

Judy and George walk out to the car. Judy is sympathetic and affectionate.

JUDY

Was she by herself? She's my sister. I forgive her if she wasn't.

GEORGE

(reluctantly)

She wasn't. Dad made her leave, though. He pushes things out too far, sometimes.

JUDY

And are you calling yourself looking for her? Is that what you're doing here, hon?

GEORGE

I guess so. I don't know. Do you always know what you're doing when you do it?

JUDY

Not always, hon. That's right.

Inside the house, George can see Harley through the little picture window, watching them.

JUDY

We're not real close anymore. But. She might call here. You do strange things. Everybody does.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

JUDY (CONT'D)
I've run off before. Four times.
But I came back.

GEORGE
Did Harley come looking for you?

JUDY
He couldn't very well. He can't do
much in his chair. He just had to
wait till I showed up.

Judy reaches forward and kisses George on the cheek and hugs
him lightly.

JUDY (CONT'D)
It'll be all right or it won't.
You'll survive. Are you staying in
town?

GEORGE
Yeah. I'm all right.

JUDY
I guess you're a man now, Georgie.
It's sad, isn't it? You have so
many new things to think about. I
remember when I figured out I wasn't
a girl anymore. It just hit me one
day. I laid down on the bed and
cried.

GEORGE
How old were you?

JUDY
Oh. Thirty-something. I don't
know.
(laughs)
Too old, or not old enough, right?
Call up here, though, sweetheart, if
you want to. If I know anything
I'll tell you.

As George gets in his mother's car, he notices Harley staring out at him. *

46 EXT. MOTEL - LATE AFTERNOON

46

George taps on the screen door, pushes it open.

47 INT. MOTEL - LATE AFTERNOON

47

Lucy sits on the bed, talking to Johnny on the phone. She looks toward George, disguising her surprise and relief.

LUCY

(to Johnny)

I know it, hon. It's awful in there...It was a long way...It sure is...No...What news can you make from a jail cell?...Whatever it is, I'll do it...You just stay put... 'bye-'bye...'bye-'bye.

She puts the receiver down, dismayed by having to do what she's come to do.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)

Great. Great-great.

(to George)

What'd you go do? I thought you were a history lesson.

GEORGE

I drove up and saw my aunt.

LUCY

My aaunt. That's what we say in our family. Aaunt. What'd she say? Anything about your mom?

(mocks herself)

Mom.

GEORGE

No.

LUCY

She's probably in Las Vegas farting through silk this very minute, or in Hawaii. Some people are actually innocent, you know.

GEORGE

After you, who else?

LUCY

After me? Nobody.

GEORGE

What did your brother do to get to be in jail?

LUCY

Stole oil and got caught at it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

LUCY (CONT'D)

Although he says they don't have a good charge against him. That's always the story isn't it? But I'm supposed to get him out, and I will.

(rises)

Let's go drink something. I'm tired of talking to myself.

48 EXT. TRAILS END BAR - NIGHT

48

The Trails is a long, wood-sided roadhouse, with cars parked in a gravel lot.

49 INT. TRAILS END BAR - NIGHT

49

Lucy and George sit at a table drinking beer. The Trails End is a cowboy-and-roughneck bar with poker and keno tables popping, people dancing and in the large back room a pitiful, small-time "Tough-Guy Contest," using a crude fight ring, shallow makeshift ceiling lights and a sparse, drunk crowd in attendance--vaguely interested COWBOYS, INDIANS and their GIRLFRIENDS. Two INDIAN BOYS spar but no one in the audience pays much attention; some are booing and taunting the boxers. The Indians are bloodying each other almost without effort.

George is remotely cocky. Lucy is half-drunk and ill-tempered from the strain of the previous days and from her responsibilities.

GEORGE

How do you think you can get somebody out of jail?

LUCY

I've got a plan to do it.

GEORGE

Let's hear about it.

LUCY

Let me just say this as true. The way to get out of trouble is find somebody with worse trouble and get them to help you.

GEORGE

That isn't true about women.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

LUCY

What's true about women in the words
of the great expert?

GEORGE

My father said never hook up with a
woman who's got worse troubles than
you do.

LUCY

Asshole-heart. What're you doing
away from home, anyway?
(to waitress)
You know he's underage. Shit.

She turns away in her chair, disgusted.

LUCY (CONT'D)

I hope you don't mind if I went down
on your friend. Clark, or Klaus.
Whatever. I just had too many
troubles to help myself. You know?

GEORGE

(ill-at-ease)
Whatever floats your boat.

LUCY

Well, that floated mine, and it
floated his right to the top. I
guarantee you.

A BARMAID passes through the tables handing out challenge
cards by which a customer can enter his name to fight the
bar champ in the ring at the back, win a hundred dollars and
become the "Tough Guy."

BARMAID

(blandly)
You wanna fight?

George glances at the card, shakes his head no.

LUCY

No. I'm sure you don't.

Lucy slides the card across the table in front of her. To
the cowboy at the next table she says:

LUCY (CONT'D)

Lemme borrow your fountain pen a
second, Butch.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

He gives her a ballpoint and she writes George's name on the card.

LUCY (CONT'D)
What's your last name?

George tries to beat her game by not answering.

LUCY (CONT'D)
(smiling grimly)
George what?
(staring at him)
George...No-lead-in-his-pencil.
We'll make you an Indian again.

She writes this and slides the card back to George.

LUCY (CONT'D)
You couldn't pour piss out of a
boot. You poor thing.

GEORGE
Is that right?

George takes the card, looks at it.

LUCY
Maybe you can win a hundred dollars
and get out of my life.

GEORGE
It won't cost me that much.

He crumples the card she gave him, takes another card from the several on the table and walks to the back of the bar.

50 INT. BOXING RING ROOM/TRAILS END - NIGHT

50

A man is seated ringside at a wooden table on top of which is a bell and a piece of metal for sounding rounds. George steps up hesitantly, puts down the card, signs it right there, then stands nearby waiting to fight the INDIAN, who is a lean, rangy boy who sits ringside wearing no shirt, drinking a beer. George takes his shirt off but not his boots.

51 INT. BOXING RING - NIGHT

51

George gets into the shabby ring and fights the Indian, who's barefoot and an assassin. George uses the ring skills he's learned in school.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

But the Indian makes quick work of him, using tough, street smarts, taunting and bullying. As Lucy watches at the room's entry along with a room full of rummy strangers, the Indian holds-and-hits, gouges, thumbs and generally kicks George around, finally knocking him down and kicking him.

52 OMITTED

52

53 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

53

Lucy lies languorously on the bed, indifferent to George, who's standing in the bathroom after his shower, pouring ice from an ice bucket onto a wash rag then putting the rag on his swollen cheeks. Lucy offers no sympathy. George notices Lucy watching.

GEORGE

When did watching me get to be so interesting?

LUCY

I wasn't watching you. I was looking at you and thinking about something else. People must do that to you a lot.

GEORGE

(grimly)

I got my ass kicked. I don't like that.

LUCY

I was just thinking about that. That's what my mother is. A kick-ass. Isn't that funny?

GEORGE

No.

LUCY

(examining her nails)

That's because you don't think it's funny. She cuts nobody a-n-y slack. Not my father, not Lucy, not Mr. Johnny-be-good-that-wasn't, and...not herself. No slack.

GEORGE

Where is she now.

Lucy ignores him.

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

They have a life of bliss. She has her dazzling sexual fantasies and he has his and they live in Canada.

(mocking)

Eh? So. What? You mum-n-dad had a big bust-up. What'd she do?

George steps into the room and sits on the single chair, facing the bed.

GEORGE

She was in the house with some phony when my dad came home. He threw her out. I guess she was screwing him. So she left.

Lucy turns onto her belly and looks sideways at George, feeling more warmly toward him. They seem to be in similar predicaments.

LUCY

What's your dad doing about it? *

GEORGE

I don't know. Nothing. Maybe. *

LUCY

You going to bring them back together again. Be little cupid?

GEORGE

(sarcastic, but nodding)
Right.

LUCY

Bullshit. Bull-period-shit-period.

GEORGE

No, then. Is that better?

LUCY

You're out is where you are. Simplified. You'll find your mom when the lady catches the fish with her gold watch in it. Later. Very much later.

GEORGE

Okay. I left town with you. Have you got a better idea? I'll get the hell out of here if you do.

(does not get up)

I can leave you to your brother. I don't mind.

LUCY

(liking him better)

No. Don't do that. You don't have

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LUCY (CONT'D)
to do that. I'd rather have you in here. It's nicer. You can protect my interests.

GEORGE
What interests?

LUCY
I got a lot of money with me.

GEORGE
How much?

LUCY
Six thousand dollars. American money.

GEORGE
Where is it?

LUCY
(arrogantly)
Under this mattress I'm lying on. You want me to show it to you?

GEORGE
Where'd you get it?

LUCY
My pop. He hoards shit. Money. Things like that. In his boxes. He can't use the banks because he's an American fugitive. So. I borrowed some. Someday I'll give it back.
(a beat)
Maybe.

He comes over to where she's lying on the bed and sits beside her. She reaches under the mattress, produces a man's leather wallet with money in it. She displays the bills, then puts the wallet back.

LUCY (CONT'D)
I trust you. You can kiss me again. That's fine. That's nice. I don't mind that.

GEORGE
Everybody gets to kiss you, I guess.

LUCY
No, that's not true. That isn't
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

LUCY (CONT'D)
 true at all. You don't understand
 about that. Plus, who cares? I
 don't care who you kiss. I don't
 care what you don't understand,
 either.

She sits up and kisses him hard on the mouth, a quick,
 hurtful kiss, then lies back in bed with her back to him.
 George sits on the bedside with the light from the bathroom
 shining out into the dark room, casting a yellow
 refrigerator-glow.

GEORGE
 (thoughtfully)
 That Indian could fight. I couldn't
 whip him.

LUCY
 (facing away)
 I know you couldn't. You didn't
 whip him. Surely you would've if
 you could've.

GEORGE
 I couldn't whip him if we had a
 hundred fights and I got better
 every time.
 (a beat)
 Sometimes you can't win, but you
 can't believe it. You can't see
 yourself losing. You're always a
 winner when you think about it.
 Then you have to get used to losing.

LUCY
 Tell me something I might not know.

GEORGE
 I wish I could. I'd like that.

He turns off the light and gets into bed with her to--sleep.

54 OMITTED

54

55 INT. COUNTY JAIL - MORNING

55

The jail is a part of the county courthouse, which also
 contains the sheriff's office, morgue, courtrooms and other
 county offices. There's much activity in the corridors.
 Lucy and George ask their way through to the visitor's

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

waiting room. They walk down a corridor, come to a door marked "Jail Visitors." They hesitate.

LUCY
Come in with me.

GEORGE
It's not my business.

LUCY
Please come in. I need you to come.
You're the American in this.

George reluctantly goes in with her.

56 INT. VISITOR'S WAITING AREA - DAY

56

George and Lucy sit and wait along with two lowlifes.

GEORGE
(softly)
They probably won't let you stay
very long.

LUCY
I don't want to stay very long.

Shortly, a female DEPUTY appears.

DEPUTY
(to Lucy)
Okay. Stand up and come this way.

Lucy stands and exits with Deputy.

57 INT. VISITING ROOM/INT. VISITOR'S WAITING AREA - DAY

57

Interior room has windows all around, a table and two chairs. George looks in through the window. He can hear nothing. Lucy waves at him through the panes. He waves back.

Just then, JOHNNY enters with a male DEPUTY and is told to sit. He's wearing an ill-fitting orange jail jumpsuit and tennis shoes. Lucy hugs him, then they both sit.

Johnny is 25, fresh-faced, blond and pretty with an arresting, cold malevolence only a sister could ignore. He sits at the table, folds his hands tensely, expectantly. He glances out the window at George, who's trying not to be conspicuous, while realizing he's in view. George reads their lips:

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

JOHNNY
Who's that asshole?

LUCY
(glancing, very tense)
Oh. I don't know. It doesn't
matter who he is.

George, disturbed, turns away awkwardly, then walks to a more hidden position from where he can watch Lucy's and Johnny's intense discussion. A phone is beside him. On impulse he dials home.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
AT&T Operator...

GEORGE
I'd like to make a collect call to
... my dad...Jack. *

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Your name, please.

GEORGE
George.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Thank you, George.

George becomes more and more anxious as the phone rings unanswered (5 times) during which time he sees Lucy's conversation with Johnny take a desperate turn while the deputy and lowlifes in the waiting room seem to stare at him.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
(comes back on)
There's no answer. Would you like
to place your call later?

GEORGE
No, thanks.

He hangs up.

58 OMITTED

58

59 INT. CAR - DAY

59

George and Lucy drive through Casper. Lucy studies a map in the motel phone book, giving George uncertain directions.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

BOB

How can that possibly be? Doesn't
the whole world work on trust?

LUCY

I'll give you half of it and you can
have the rest right after.

BOB

Don't cause me anxiety.

Bob puts the pistol down and picks up his coffee mug.

BOB (CONT'D)

How will we get it? You gonna mail
it? What's my address? P.O. Box
dumbfuck?

LUCY

I'll mail it. You can just tell me
where to.

BOB

(arrogantly)

Isn't that trust?

LUCY

I'll do it. You get half first. I
promise.

BOB

(mocking)

You promise?

NINA

(absently)

I'd trust her.

BOB

You're trusting. Look at who you're
married to.

Art looks sourly at Bob.

BOB (CONT'D)

I'll tell you what. Where're you
two sleeping?

LUCY

At the Lazy K.T. Motel. Right on
the main drag.

Lucy looks uncertainly at George, hoping she's doing this
right.

(CONTINUED)

BOB

I'll tell you what. You be there tonight at eight o'clock. If I'm in the neighborhood maybe we'll conduct some business. Or maybe I'll blow you off. How's that sound?

LUCY

(fearfully)

It sounds fine.

BOB

Fine? Is that fine? That's what you wanted, wasn't it?

Bob walks to the big window and stares down the hill toward town.

LUCY

Yes.

BOB

(his back to them)

You, too, George?

GEORGE

Sure.

BOB

You two going to play a trick on me? Ruin my day?

LUCY

No.

BOB

Then get out of here. I gotta make a phone call. I gotta call my travel agent, okay?

(turns to them)

Nina can show you out.

NINA

Okay.

Nina gets up smiling and walks toward the front door. It's still overcast.

NINA (CONT'D)

You kids aren't dressed for the weather. If I had a coat I'd give it to you. It's supposed to rain sheets.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

They leave.

64 INT. CAR/DRIVING - CASPER - DAY

64

George drives Lucy, low in the seat, who puts her feet up on the dash, biting her fingernails nervously.

LUCY

(half to herself)

1790 Madera. Sounds just like a place regular people would live, doesn't it?

George drives on as they assimilate what's just transpired.

65 INT. CHUCK WAGON RESTAURANT - DAY

65

The Chuck Wagon is a franchise joint full of late lunchers. George and Lucy sit in a booth. Lucy studies the menu.

GEORGE

I don't know about this guy Bob. You know what I mean?

LUCY

(occupied by reading)

I love breakfasts. I'd eat breakfast for every meal if they'd serve it to me.

GEORGE

(still preoccupied)

How do you know he'll come through?

LUCY

I just know that he won't if somebody doesn't do something.

(looks at George)

Would you like it better if I said it was all fucked? Okay, it's fucked up. Johnny's in jail. I have to pay money to some guy I don't know. Bob. How's that? I'm just full of hope.

George, scolded, looks out the window.

GEORGE

That's all right. I hope things.

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

What do you hope? I already know what you're ashamed of. Let's hear the flip side. You probably hope something about me, don't you?

GEORGE

Some things I don't worry about.

LUCY

That's the first smart thing I've heard you say.

(pause)

What are you going to do? In a matter of minutes and a matter of days?

GEORGE

(inventing it)

In a matter of days I'm going on down to Texas. I can get a job in Texas.

LUCY

You'll be the only one that's got one. Though I guess busboys are always in demand. Too bad you can't deal cards. Maybe you can become a professional boxer. In about two hundred years.

GEORGE

For the moment I'm in this with you.

She kisses her fingers and reaches and puts it on his cheek.

LUCY

(mocking)

You're too sweet.

GEORGE

I am sweet.

LUCY

What'd I say? Didn't I just say that? Sweet boys are not in demand, though. Unfortunately. Neither are sweet girls.

Lucy laughs and George smiles.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

LUCY (CONT'D)

Eat a breakfast. They can do that right in places like this. You might as well let 'em.

66 EXT. GREYHOUND STATION/CASPER - LATE AFTERNOON

66

It's blustery, greenish, almost cold despite summer. George and Lucy walk inside.

67 INT. GREYHOUND STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

67

Lucy and George walk to a bank of lockers, open one. Lucy produces an envelope full of bills. She and George huddle against the locker in a pitiful attempt at secrecy. She counts half the bills into George's hands, then pauses.

LUCY

Maybe I just oughta give it all to 'em right away. He might have a hard time getting into it and get pissed off.

GEORGE

Go with the deal. He gets the second three thousand when you send him the key. If your brother doesn't get out the way he's supposed to, then you're not wiped out.

He takes the money, puts it in another envelope they've brought and lays it in the locker. He closes it and keeps the key.

LUCY

(smiles, sweetly)
How'd you get so smart?

GEORGE

Ill show you something else.

He puts a quarter into another locker several rows down, takes the key and closes the locker.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You keep an option. Eighty-one's got money. Fifty-four's got air.

He offers her both keys but she takes only one.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

LUCY

You keep the real one. I don't trust myself for some reason. I've got the shakes just all of a sudden. You can deal with this better than I can.

GEORGE

You hope.

LUCY

I hope. Right.

They leave.

68 EXT. LAZY K.T. MOTEL - DUSK/NIGHT

68 *

Only 2 or 3 lights burn in rooms. The weather is blustery.

69 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

69

Lucy and George await Bob. Only a table lamp is lighted and the room is dim. The curtains are pulled shut. Outside the weather is bad, windy, rainy, wild. Lucy is sitting in a chair with \$3,000 in a folding wallet she's holding. George is drinking a can of beer and lying on the bed fully clothed. The radio is playing Sam Cook, "Darling, You Send Me." George is a little drunk.

LUCY

Don't get drunked up, for Christ sake. This is important to me. I might need you for something.

GEORGE

I don't buzz up on beer.

LUCY

Tough guy. You're a tough guy. Give me a drink out of it.

Lucy gets up, comes over for the beer, which George extends to her. But as she takes it he holds her leg with his hand and draws her closer to him, his hand rising up her leg under her skirt.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(wearily)

Oh, my. It's you, now. I just don't think so. I don't think this is a great idea.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

LUCY (CONT'D)

Bob might get the wrong idea about us--he might think we were trash and get disgusted.

GEORGE

(softly, but not serious)

Maybe we are. Maybe that's what we are.

Lucy lies across the top of him, drinks the beer with her mouth close to his, pushes her fingers through his hair, gets beer on his face. Until now she has been observing a small code of conduct with regard to George--some innocence in him touching some innocence in her. But now, from fatigue or compromise or familiarity or futility, giving in to each other might not matter, might in fact be a source of consolation.

LUCY

(softly)

What does it matter, huh? Just do a thing? Do it cold?

GEORGE

I don't care. Hot, cold, whatever.

LUCY

You poor thing...

(kisses him)

You don't know anything, do you?
You're lost. But you think you're found. That's terrible.

They begin to kiss passionately, relinquishing the anxiety of the moment, until Lucy pulls back.

LUCY

Just hold me.

DISSOLVE TO:

70 EXT./INT. MOTEL/MOTEL ROOM - DARK

70

The room is dark but for the TV burning silently. Lucy and George lie in bed as they were, clothes on. A car's lights swing across the room through the curtains from outside. A big car engine is audible. There's a KNOCK on the door. Lucy sits up. George answers the door.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

Nina is outside in the wind. She's smiling winningly, though in a daffy way, and seems nervous.

NINA

Hi, kids. Ready to go?

Nina is wearing a dress, high heels and a man's windbreaker that is long for her. It is Bob's jacket. Inside the room Lucy hurriedly puts on her coat.

LUCY

I'm ready. Where's Bob?

NINA

We're going to drive you to meet him. He's waiting for us.

Outside, Art is visible in the driver's seat of the big purple Cadillac idling in front of the room.

LUCY

(firmly)

George is coming with us.

NINA

(smiling, nervous)

That wasn't the plan, hon. That's not a good idea tonight.

Nina glances back at Art, who glares at her. Lucy stands still in the cheap motel light.

LUCY

(abruptly)

Then no deal, then. I need him.

Nina again looks worriedly at Art inside the car, as if asking advice. But Art vigorously motions her to come on. Nina turns back, smiling.

NINA

(brightly)

Okay, then. But let's hurry up. We don't want to take all night.

71 INT. CADILLAC - DARK

71

In the Cadillac and underway, Nina and Art are in the front seat, George and Lucy in the back. In the big Cadillac seat George and Lucy are small and seemingly helpless. Lucy, after an uneasy silence, says:

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

LUCY
Where's Bob?

ART
(benignly)
We're going to see him right now.

They drive through town out into the cold, rising desert, the red lights of pumping oil wells in the distance.

Nina, becoming chatty as a chaperone, looks back at Lucy.

NINA
Now, are you two related?

GEORGE
(vaguely put off)
No.

NINA
I thought maybe you were. You sort of favor each other.
(stares seriously)
Don't you think?

LUCY
(abruptly)
Yeah.

NINA
Where're you from?

Lucy says nothing and George only reluctantly answers.

GEORGE
Montana.

NINA
That's where your folks are?

GEORGE
Yeah.

NINA
That's nice. That's a nice place to raise a family, I'd think. Everything simple. You can see everything so clear up there is how I imagine it.

GEORGE
That's right.

(CONTINUED)

George turns and looks uneasily out the back window at Casper retreating into the night, becoming just a grid of lights.

LUCY
Where're we going?

ART
Out here a ways. Where it's safe.

LUCY
I see.

NINA
Art and I have been married four years. Though we lived together for a time before that. Maybe a year?

She looks at Art inquiringly, but Art doesn't react.

NINA (CONT'D)
I have two kids from another marriage, too. They live in San Antonio, Texas, which is a city of canals. I'd have another child, I think, if Art thought he wanted to.

ART
(nodding approval)
I'd do it. Why not? Kids're great.

NINA
Art and I are probably old enough to be you two's parents.
(laughs)
Art's probably old enough to be one of my parents.

Nina smiles at Art admiringly.

ART
(amused)
Right.

Silence intervenes as the rainy, windy night rushes by.

LUCY
(uncomfortably)
What line of work are you in?

ART
In-surance. Yep. I used to work for a company that insured oil wells.

(MORE)

71 CONTINUED:

ART (CONT'D)
(smiles grimly)
The oil business.

LUCY
(peering out)
What's out here?

ART
Just a well site. Nothing
important.

NINA
(promptly)
Bob's out here.

ART
Oh, right. Bob'll be out here when
we get there. That's where we'll
transact our little bit of business.

NINA
Then I'll run you kids home.

Art looks at George in the rearview mirror.

ART
What do you like to do, son?

GEORGE
Box.

ART
(amiably)
You a boxer? Is that right? Who
taught you how to do that?

GEORGE
(protectively)
My father did.

ART
Is he a fighter?

GEORGE
He was. In the Air Force.

NINA
I don't care for boxing.

ART
(chiding)
Can you protect yourself pretty
good?

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

Art holds both fists up above the steering wheel.

ART (CONT'D)

Two-fisted? You gotta be two-fisted.

GEORGE

(sullenly)

I can take care of myself.

ART

I bet you can.

72 EXT./INT. DIRT ROAD/CAR - NIGHT

72

They drive off the road and up a dirt drive into the dark.

ART

Can you take care of yourself against one of these?

He holds up a silver short-barrel shotgun with a pistol grip.

ART (CONT'D)

This can clear the room of assholes.

George is riveted, says nothing.

LUCY

I don't see why we need guns. This is not a gun thing.

NINA

It's all right. Don't worry, sweetheart. Art always has a gun. He'd take a gun to the grocery.

They bounce up to where a derelict oil drilling rig sits in the dark with only a small utility light shining over the well storage reservoir, giving it a spectral, expressionistic look in the shadows. The wind is blowing dirt and cold rain together. In the distance, the lights of Casper prickle up out of the night.

GEORGE

(looking out)

I don't see Bob out here.

ART

He'll be here.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

NINA
He's always late.

73 INT. CAR/EXT. OIL RIG SITE - NIGHT

73

Art stops the Cadillac beside the rig, gets out, then opens George's door and points the silver shotgun into the back seat.

ART
Now you and Miss Priss get out.

Nina pops the trunk from the front seat. She leads Lucy, and Art leads George, around to the back where they peer inside the lighted trunk. Bob's dead body is wrapped in a bloodied green shag carpet.

LUCY
Oh, my, no.

GEORGE
(aghast)
That's Bob.

ART
Bob had an accident. He wanted Nina and him to take your money and leave me in the house in some condition I wouldn't be happy in. That was the accident part. Nina's not that kind of person to do that. She loves me. So. Here he is. Here's Bob now.

GEORGE
(grimly)
What am I supposed to do?

ART
Just reach in there and take Bob out. I want you to drag him over to the well cap, which isn't on, and we'll cap the well with Bob. It'll be easy.
(to Lucy)
You can help here if you'd like to.

NINA
You don't really have to, hon. He can do it. Art got him in there.

Lucy, horrified, assists George as they reach in and with difficulty drag Bob and the carpet out of the trunk, bumping the whole package on the ground.

(CONTINUED)

George and Lucy drag the carpet with Bob in it over to the well landing, which is in the car lights. Art has a flashlight and shines it on the planking that covers the well.

ART

Pick up those planks. They're not nailed down. It'll keep him warm.

(laughs)

It is blowy as shit out here.

George leans to pick up a plank board and as he hauls it up, half rises then swings it flagrantly at Art, who instinctively shoots the rotted plank half off and in a second motion, bashes George in the face with the barrel, then spontaneously does the same to Lucy as she tries to intervene. George is cracked in the cheek and hand. Lucy is hit in the head, knocked down hard, stunned.

NINA

Oh, God, Art. Don't hit her.

ART

(furious)

Just what in the fuck is this! You think this is some fucking cowboy movie! You asshole! You can't just get this gun away from me. I won't let you. I'll kill you with it, then I'll kill your asshole girlfriend and forget about both of you.

George regards Lucy as though he would help her. Lucy is on the ground, injured but not unconscious.

ART (CONT'D)

Don't be a shithead. Just put Bob in the hole!

GEORGE

(dazed)

All right. I'll put him in there.

George, his face and hand hurt, swelling and painful, is chastised and under Art's direction now.

ART

(ludicrously)

You fucking kids. People kill each other. It's not just some board game. I'm fifty-four years old. I'll kill you dead as shit.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ART (CONT'D)
 (noticing Lucy)
 How's Miss Priss?

George clumsily and with difficulty rolls Bob's corpse over across the oil rig landing, then upends it into the open well. Nina kneels to minister to Lucy, who's bleeding from her scalp. Nina has a Kleenex packet. Lucy takes one.

NINA
 Here's a tissue, hon. Wipe your blood off.

LUCY
 (dazed)
 I'm fine.

George pushes Bob's legs so that they go down, shoves the shag carpet to conceal it, then replaces the planking--while Art is watches him with the shotgun and flashlight.

ART
 Put him in there right, Jesus.

When he is finished, George stands under the derrick waiting to be told what to do next. Lucy gets to her feet and stands close to George. They are both stricken. She is shivering in the wind and rain.

ART (CONT'D)
 (to Lucy)
 All right, where's the goddamn money? I want it right now.

LUCY
 (dazed)
 Here it is.

She extends the purse with the money inside. Bob takes it then hands it to Nina, who goes through the money.

NINA
 (to Art)
 Three thousand.

ART
 Where's the rest of it? There's more of it. I want all of it.

GEORGE
 That wasn't the deal.

(CONTINUED)

ART

There isn't any deal! The deal's in that hole over there.

GEORGE

(fearful)

We were supposed to tell you when Johnny got out.

ART

He's not getting out. He killed a pipefitter out in Natrona--he hates goddamn pipefitters. He's not getting out. He probably forgot to tell you.

LUCY

He did.

ART

He stabbed this guy with a screwdriver. I saw him do it! Just where's the money, sweetheart? Lots of dead people are out here. Nobody's going to notice you two.

GEORGE

(to Lucy)

Give him the key.

Lucy, who's obviously hurt badly, reaches in her skirt pocket and produces the empty locker key and gives it to Art. Art holds the key in the light, looks at Lucy curiously.

ART

(to Lucy)

What's this, some school locker key? You leave it in your locker?

LUCY

We didn't.

GEORGE

It's at the bus station.

NINA

I don't want to go there. I've been in too many bus stations.

ART

You want this money?

(CONTINUED)

NINA

Yeah, but I hate bus stations.

ART

Just get the cuffs out of the glove box.

Nina retrieves the handcuffs from the car and Art takes them then marches Lucy and George over to the rig where Bob's body is stashed. An edge of the carpet is visible through the planks.

ART (CONT'D)

(to George and Lucy)

You sit down here. And you sit on the other side of this pipe. It'll do you good.

It is a pipe attached to a piece of rigging and when George and Lucy are seated close together but on opposite sides of the pipe, Nina closes the handcuffs on each one of their wrists so that they can't escape. She then moves the cuff around on Lucy's wrist, who's shuddering now from the onset of shock.

NINA

Is that too tight? I don't want it to cut off circulation.

(to Art)

You hit her too hard. She's shivering.

ART

(to George, ignoring Nina)

I can't believe you tried to hit me with that plank. If the money isn't in the box, I'm coming back out here by myself. If it's there, then maybe something nice'll happen to you.

NINA

(smiling, brainless)

You kids'll be okay here.

She runs her hand sweetly through Lucy's hair, then she and Art walk toward the Cadillac.

NINA (CONT'D)

I just don't think you should leave them out here exposed.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

ART
(archly)
Don'tcha?

NINA
No. I think we should take them.

ART
(calmly)
Do you want me to leave you out here
with them?

NINA
I don't want that. No.

ART
Well, then, catch a ride with me.

Art gets in the car. Nina looks at Lucy and George then
climbs in the Cadillac. They drive away.

74 EXT. OIL WELL - NIGHT

74

When Art and Nina have disappeared, George thinks he sees a
way of getting loose by raising their two joined hands to a
loosely threaded bolt in the pipe, loosening it and setting
them free. Wind is whipping the rain and debris around
them.

GEORGE
Stand up. I want to reach that pipe
bolt. They're not going to strand
us out here.

Lucy is very unsteady, but they both manage to stand.
George tries reaching the bolt with her hand joined to his
injured hand, then climbing to it.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Climb up on your side.

LUCY
I can't. It's all right.

GEORGE
Well, fuck it then.

They sit back on the cold planks, side by side. Lucy wears
only her cloth coat, skirt and shoes.

LUCY
(fractured)
Get closer. I'm frozen.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE

Fold your hand in.

She reluctantly folds her thumb and little finger into her palm. George tries to pull, then twist, then wedge the handcuff off her small hand. But fails.

LUCY

Nature is the enemy. You're not even Catholic.

GEORGE

No...Listen. Are you okay?

She puts her head on his shoulder and gives in a little.

LUCY

This hurts. I hate a marble sky. They make me so sad. No stars. I'm going to just be still. It'll be okay. I'm young enough.

George looks at Lucy's wound.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(shivering)

That's okay, isn't it?

GEORGE

It is. It's okay...Goddamn it. I need to start a fire.

LUCY

You'll burn us up. I want to tell you that I did not go down on your friend. Klaus or Claude or Carl. I guess.

GEORGE

I didn't believe that.

George painfully goes into his pocket for matches. It's obvious he's scared and that Lucy is failing, though she isn't precisely aware of it. He finds the matches and looks around him for something flammable. He strikes a match and holds it to some of the planking, but the wind snuffs it. He tries again, then again, without success.

LUCY

He did ask me to marry him.

GEORGE

(matter-of-factly)

I can see you married. To somebody.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

LUCY
(sweetly)
Who to? You?

George is frantic but attempting to appear calm. He tries to take off his own jacket and can actually slip it off his arm and onto hers so that it covers her. He's left with a flannel shirt. Lucy seems at one moment relatively clear-headed, the next, confused.

GEORGE
No. To somebody else...Do you think I'm pretty handsome?

LUCY
(fatigued)
You might become handsome. I don't know.
(draws closer)
Oh, I'm so cold now. Your coat doesn't help much.

She is becoming light-headed again.

LUCY (CONT'D)
My head feels zizzy. You're supposed to get out of bad things, aren't you?

GEORGE
I don't know.

LUCY
If I'd known Johnny had killed somebody I would've never come down here. The fucker...I wish I was older.

GEORGE
(holding her closer)
It'll be all right.

LUCY
(pause)
You could tell me some dream of yours. I feel like hearing a dream all of a sudden. Maybe I'm short of sleep. That'd be nice. Do you remember one?

GEORGE
(musing)
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

LUCY

Which way's north now? I like to stay oriented.

Lucy tries to look around, though she's losing her strength. George motions with his head toward the desert clothed in darkness.

GEORGE

It's that way.

LUCY

I'll never get back there.

(rests, close to him)

What was your dream, Georgie?

GEORGE

It was when we were driving down here.

LUCY

Wait. Lie on top of me, baby. Make me warmer.

George negotiates himself sideways so that he can move on top of her, his face near hers, his lips close to her ear.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Oh, that's good. I'm fine now.

George turns his head so he can look down at the glittering city.

GEORGE

In this dream I was driving down some highway and it was snowing. And off the road there was a wrecked car on fire. And inside, in the flames, were these people. I could see them in the windows, trying to get out. But they were trapped. And I stopped and ran up, and I pulled the door and pulled it and pulled it until it opened, but it was hot and smokey inside. And I reached and grabbed inside and I felt all their hands. First, an adult's hands and then children's. And I took them all out until they were all out in the dark beside the highway. Safe. And I just stood

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

GEORGE (CONT'D)
there beside that burning car then,
and nobody talked. But I was their
hero.

Lucy has fallen asleep close to him.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
(imploring)
Don't go to sleep. That's a
mistake. There's more in this
dream...

George shakes her, then slaps her cheeks softly with his
injured hand, trying to keep her alert.

LUCY
(feebly)
That's a sweet dream. You're the
hero. Your conscience is clear,
isn't it?

She dozes.

GEORGE
No, no, don't go to sleep. I
shouldn't have told that to you.
I'm sorry.

LUCY
(drifting off)
I'm blue. I must be blue. I feel
blue. Goodness.

She passes into sleep.

GEORGE
(faintly)
Don't sleep. I could marry you. I
could.

He desperately shakes her and simultaneously tries to cover
her with his body, finally embraces her when she doesn't
respond. She is in shock. The rain and wind swirl around
them.

FADE OUT:

FADE UP:

75 EXT. OIL RIG - DAWN

75

It is the moment before the first light of dawn. The lights

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

of Casper still twinkle. A pair of car lights moves up the road. For a time it's not clear that Art has not come back, though as the lights come nearer the car grows visible as a reservation police car on a night patrol. When the car nears the oil rig, it stops. A POLICEMAN runs his flashlight across the well platform, disclosing Lucy and George, who seem asleep where they've been handcuffed and are covered with dirt and frost. When they reach George one of the Indian policemen squats, brushes frost off George's face.

POLICEMAN

What are you two doing here?

He shakes George, who wakes to the light in his face and the faraway sound of the Indian's voice. Lucy remains still beneath him, almost unnoticeable. The policeman holds his finger to Lucy's neck, but there's no pulse.

POLICEMAN

(to his partner)

Not this one.

GEORGE

(faint, desperate)

I have the right key. She made a mistake. You can have it now.

In an instant, George recollects himself, tries to lift himself off Lucy, turns his face to hers and sees she's died of shock and concussion during the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

76 INT. CASPER SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MORNING

76

It is several days later. George, his face bruised, sits beside an empty detective's desk in a large room where 3 other sheriff's detectives are working at their desks, talking on phones. They ignore him. A fourth DETECTIVE casually enters from another office carrying a metal container, which he sets on his desk and from which he produces George's wallet, some change, a clasp knife and the locker key from the Greyhound depot.

George picks up his belongings with his bandaged hand and stuffs them in his pockets.

DETECTIVE

(sarcastically)

You've had a time, haven't you?

GEORGE

Yeah. I did.

(CONTINUED)

The detective puts up his feet and pulls his pants legs up over his boot tops, revealing the butt of a pistol in one boot.

DETECTIVE

What else you got in mind?

GEORGE

What are you going to do about her brother?

DETECTIVE

Don't think about that boy now.
He's in another world from you.

(a beat)

Tell me something else you got on your mind.

GEORGE

(mutedly)

Go home. I guess I'll go home.

DETECTIVE

(smiling, leaning in his swivel chair)

You done enough damage, you figure?
Had enough fun?

GEORGE

Yeah. I've done enough.

DETECTIVE

You couldn't have stood much more fun, could you?

GEORGE

(looks up malevolently)

That's right.

DETECTIVE

(arrogantly)

What else?

GEORGE

Nothing.

After a pause, the detective nods.

DETECTIVE

Then let 'er rip, I guess, son. In the event we locate Mr. Falcone and Miss Bennett, how easy is it to find you to get you to testify?

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

GEORGE
Sunburst, Montana.

DETECTIVE
Pretty easy. There's a lady outside
to give you a ride.

77 OMITTED

77

78 INT. DAIRY QUEEN - DAY

78

George eats a burger and drinks a milkshake. Judy eats
nothing.

JUDY
I never reached your dad.

GEORGE
He's probably working.

JUDY
He probably is. But you oughta go
home. You could go in the wrong
direction pretty easily now.
(a beat)
It may not seem like it.

GEORGE
It doesn't exactly seem like it.

JUDY
(smiley)
Well. Whatever's right.
(a beat)
I haven't wanted to ask you a whole
lot of questions. You could've
called me quicker. I could have got
you out of juvenile home. I'm your
next of kin.

GEORGE
Yeah.

JUDY
That poor girl, though. I'd like to
ask you how you got with her. And
that other man, that man in the
hole. And those other two people?
How'd you get in with them? You
could've gotten killed out there.
You know that? You wouldn't have
been the first.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

She is scolding now. Something that's happened to George frightens her but also has pricked her curiosity.

GEORGE
(staring out)
I guess so.

He is silent for a few seconds, as if the question has no place in his thinking, nor the answer any relevance.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Luck, I guess.

JUDY
Not luck I'd want.

GEORGE
Bad luck.

Judy looks at him uncertainly.

JUDY
(with distaste)
Aileen wants her car back, George.

George looks at her, emerging out of his preoccupation at the sound of his mother's name.

GEORGE
Where's she?

JUDY
(reluctantly)
She called from down in Rock Springs. I don't really know the particulars. She wanted me to wire her some money. Which I did. But of course I told her about you. And she said she wanted to see you, said she'd take the bus up here. She's afraid you're mad at her. I told her you'd been through a patch down here. It wasn't a real nice chat.

GEORGE
Yeah. Thanks.

JUDY
She was real interested about her car, too.

GEORGE
It's her car.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

GEORGE (CONT'D)

(a beat)

Where is she?

JUDY

Out at the Tropicana Motel, like you're coming in from Natrona, room 242. She called last night from there. She sounded all right. I don't know what to tell you, George. She's your mother.

*
*

GEORGE

Okay.

JUDY

I don't want you to take me home now. Just leave me sittin' here and go on. I'll call somebody. Harl's nuts today. I may have to leave myself pretty soon. I can't always take it even though I love him.

(laughs humorlessly)

That's catchin', isn't it?

GEORGE

I guess so.

Judy leans across the table and hugs him and kisses him on the cheek.

79 INT. GREYHOUND DEPOT - DAY

79

George goes directly to the locker. He opens it and there is the envelope with the \$3,000, just as he and Lucy had left it. He pockets the money and walks out.

80 EXT./INT. DRIVING THROUGH CASPER

80

George drives toward the western outskirts of Casper, He drives until he sees a yellow hotel, turning in and driving around to the parking lot.

*

ins.

81 OMITTED

OMITTED

81

*

82 EXT. MOTEL ROOMS - MORNING

82

George walks along the 2nd level of motel rooms, looks in through one screen, sees a man lying on a bed asleep, then walks out farther until he reaches room 242. He sees Aileen through the window before she notices him. She finally does, comes to the door.

*
*
*
*

83 INT. AILEEN'S MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

83

Aileen is in stocking feet, wearing blue jeans, her hair tied back as though it was dirty. She turns in the middle of the small room and smiles at him. Her suitcase is open on the floor beside the bed. Some folded clothes are on the unmade covers. She is packing and unrepentant but wishes, if possible, still to be his mother.

GEORGE

Hi.

AILEEN

(sweetly)

Come in, George. It's the height of grandeur in here, isn't it? I was just trying to put some order on things.

Aileen looks around the room. The bathroom door is open and the light on. She goes over and closes it, then sits on the bed.

AILEEN (CONT'D)

Privacy can be your burden sometimes.

(a beat)

Looks like somebody whacked your cheek.

GEORGE

Yeah. They did.

AILEEN

What happened to your hand?

GEORGE

Same thing.

AILEEN

We can talk about all that business if you want to.

GEORGE

We don't have to.

(CONTINUED)

AILEEN
I'm interested.

GEORGE
It's not very interesting.

AILEEN
Have you been trying to find me?

GEORGE
No.

AILEEN
(sympathetically)
That's good. I just took a flyer.
You know?

GEORGE
I know.
(a beat)
Where's Woody?

AILEEN
Oh. Woody.

She clears her throat and begins to put on a pair of high-heeled shoes.

AILEEN (CONT'D)
Woody decided to leave the Air Force early. But they came and took him back. I didn't see any future in that for me.

GEORGE
(watching her)
I guess not.

Aileen finishes with her shoes and smiles at him.

AILEEN
Have you got a compliment for your old mom? I'd like one.

GEORGE
(reluctant)
You look pretty. I'm glad to see you.

Aileen takes a piece of folded clothing from beside her and lays it in her bag.

(CONTINUED)

AILEEN

That's a nice one. I'm glad to see you, too.

(a beat)

Would you like to go have lunch?

GEORGE

No, thanks.

She smiles at him in acknowledgment, then reaches to the night table, takes a tissue out of a small package and blows her nose. She's not crying, only at a loss.

AILEEN

Sometimes, you know, I'll think about something I did. Just something. Years ago. Or last week even. And it's as if I'd read it. Isn't that strange?

GEORGE

Yes.

AILEEN

(smiling)

Maybe that's not so bad, finally, maybe it's a disease I have. You think I'll get well?

GEORGE

(smiling)

I don't know. Maybe. I hope so.

AILEEN

Why don't you sit down?

George sits in the little writing-desk chair, facing her.

AILEEN (CONT'D)

(smiles)

How's my beautiful car holding up? Did you drive it?

She stands, walks to the window and looks out. She can see her car in the lot.

GEORGE

It's fine. It could use an accelerator pedal spring is all. You can have it back.

AILEEN

(turns to face him)

Maybe I will.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AILEEN (CONT'D)

(a beat)

Georgie, I'm not very good at sharing things right now. I'm sorry. I'll answer anything you'd like to ask me. Whether I even want to or not. You don't have to trust me. We're both grown-ups.

GEORGE

(abruptly)

Were you ever married before?

AILEEN

(indignant)

Who told you that? That isn't true. Did Jack say that to you? That's an awful thing to say.

GEORGE

(sheepish)

He didn't say it. Woody did it. I just wanted to know the answer.

AILEEN

(packing)

Woody. How wonderful. Not that it matters. When I married your father I thought he'd take me out of the sticks. And that is not exactly what happened. So. I'd like a less domestic life for a while. That's all.

GEORGE

I understand that.

AILEEN

(sweetly)

Do you think you understand women? Have you had some experience with women?

GEORGE

Sort of. Yes.

AILEEN

(resigned)

Sort of's enough. Your life's your own business, sweetheart. Sometimes it scares you to death, it's so much your own business, you just want to run. You know?

(CONTINUED)

83

83

GEORGE
I didn't. But I do now.

AILEEN
(good-humored)
Do you want me to go home with
you? Is that what you'd like?

GEORGE
Do you want to?

AILEEN
Well, no. I really don't.

GEORGE
Well. Then. Don't.

AILEEN
You're not exactly like your
father, are you? *

GEORGE
(confidently) *

No. *

AILEEN
Okay. We're on our own in this, right?

GEORGE
Right, we are. *

AILEEN
(smiles sadly)
You can't fix people.
(pause)
Let's get out of here. This place gives
me the willies.

They exit the room.

84. EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - MORNING

84 *

George and Aileen walk toward her car, George carrying her bag.

AILEEN
Where'm I taking you?

GEORGE
Bus station.
(a beat)
Where're you going?

AILEEN
(light-hearted)
I don't know. Florida? Get a tan.
Maybe I could go to college. Who knows?
You wanna go?

84 CONTINUED

84 *

GEORGE

No.

AILEEN

I don't blame you.

GEORGE

I've got some money. DO you want
some of it?

AILEEN

How much have you got?

GEORGE

A thousand dollars.

George stops, takes the money from his pocket, hands it to Aileen.

AILEEN

I don't know where you got it.

GEORGE

Here. It's great. I worked for it.

They resume walking to the car.

85 INT. CAR/DRIVING IN CASPER - WYOMING

85 *

Aileen drives, George rides. They are released from some pressure. They arrive at the Greyhound station. Aileen stops outside.

AILEEN

(smiles, embarrassed)

So. I'm forty-two years old. This
is where I am at this point.

George reaches and takes the photograph from under the visor, holds it without looking at it.

GEORGE

It's just something I want.

AILEEN

Oh, right. That's for you. You keep
that. We'll look at it someday and laugh
about it.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

George opens the door to get out.

AILEEN

I want you to have a good life.
Give me a hug. I'll see you again.
That's for sure.

GEORGE

Okay.

They embrace in the front seat. Tears are in Aileen's eyes.

AILEEN

I've got a knot in my stomach, of
all things. Isn't that odd?

George gets out, closes the door. Aileen drives away,
leaving George standing alone, watching her go.

86 INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - DAY

86

George goes to the ticket desk, looks beyond the ticket
AGENT, reads the departures and arrivals. He looks at the
clock, sees it is 2:00 p.m.

GEORGE

When's the next bus going to San
Francisco?

AGENT

(routinely, reads from a sheet)
Ten o'clock tonight.

GEORGE

How about north?

The agent rubs his eyes and looks at the board.

AGENT

(vaguely sarcastic)
North. Like to Canada?

GEORGE

(reacts to mention of Canada) Beat.
No. To Montana. Great Falls.

AGENT

(bored)
Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Helena,
Great Falls. Five-eighteen.

George looks at the board again, considers.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

86

GEORGE
Okay. Great Falls.

He pays for a ticket using the money Lucy left and puts it in his pocket.

87 INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL/PAY PHONE - DAY

87

George makes a collect call to his father, who answers.

GEORGE
(softly, close to phone)
Hi, hi. It's me.

JACK (V.O.)
(sternly, but relieved)
Where the hell are you?

GEORGE
(quickly)
Down in Wyoming. I'm in Casper.

JACK (V.O.)
What the hell for? What the hell are you doing?

GEORGE
I'm on my way home. I'll probably be there tomorrow. I'm on the bus.

JACK (V.O.)
Where's your mother? Are you with her?

GEORGE
No. She's not.
(a beat)
I saw her. She got back her car.

JACK (V.O.)
(sullenly)
She'll need it. Does she think she's coming back?

GEORGE
No. Not right away.

JACK (V.O.)
I don't get any of this. I don't get any of it. You know what I mean? I don't.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

GEORGE
 (softly)
 I know. I'll be home tomorrow
 afternoon. Okay?

JACK (V.O.)
 Sure. Why not? Come home. That's
 great.

GEORGE
 (apologetically)
 I'll see you.

JACK (V.O.)
 I'll see you.

They hang up.

88 INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - MONTAGE - DAY

88

George takes a seat to begin his 3-hour wait for the bus home. The effects of the last few days have settled on him and he is abstracted and undirected. He unwraps the bandage on his hand and exercises his fingers painfully. He throws the bandage away.

He's incapable of relaxing or sitting still and begins to wander around the bus station. As he does, time seems to fracture. He passes people randomly, overhearing conversations, becoming indistinguishable within the populated depot.

OVERHEARD
 I went out there in the night where
 he was changing his shirt.

OVERHEARD
 I wondered if the FBI would be
 calling my house.

He stares at soldiers and Indians, farmers, old men and backpackers, fixating on an idle gesture or on someone's shoes. He's becoming more abstracted.

OVERHEARD
 I thought he wanted me, you know.
 But when he started he just lost his
 heart.

He plays pinball. He goes into the little diner, drinks a Coke and watches the fry-cook. For brief moments time seems to slow down, the sounds blurring.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

Two girls, early twenties, stand in front of an open locker. One vaguely resembles Lucy, changes her blouse while the other girl shields her. George watches, transfixed, standing against a column. He is remembering Lucy.

A man walks past where George is standing. He is a large, bulky man in his fifties, wearing extremely handsome western clothes: snake-skin boots, whipcord trousers, a silver rodeo buckle belt, white shirt and hat and a fleece-lined denim jacket. He is carrying a hard-sided attache case and a wrapped package, which he delivers to the ticket counter for express service. It is the man George had seen making a call outside the Eden Isle motel days before. The man has noticed George and walks over, surprising George out of his reverie.

MAN

(amiable but businesslike)

Did you ever find any work? I saw you at the motel.

GEORGE

I wasn't looking for work.

MAN

You seeing your family here?

GEORGE

No.

MAN

Buses never go anyplace particularly good, do they?

GEORGE

Sometimes they do.

MAN

Where's yours going?

GEORGE

Home.

MAN

Where's home?

GEORGE

Broadview, Montana.

MAN

What do you do there?

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE
(suspicious)
I live there.

MAN
You broke?

GEORGE
(uninterested)
No.

MAN
(accusing)
You look broke.

GEORGE
Looks lie, then.

The man smiles at George as if to dismiss him and leave.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
(idly)
You still passing out jobs on the
street?

MAN
(casually)
Why, did you decide you wanted to
earn a lot of money?

GEORGE
Doing what?

MAN
Working. That's the only way to
make money, unless you steal it.

GEORGE
Working doing what?

MAN
Working the oil fields up in
Gillette. Roughneck work.

GEORGE
Where's that at?

MAN
It's a long way from here. A half
day's drive in a car. Twenty years
on the bus.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE

(idly)

How would I get there if I wanted a job?

MAN

I'd take you.

GEORGE

(earnestly)

I don't know anything about that kind of work.

MAN

Well. You'd just have to learn then. You ever learned anything before?

GEORGE

(getting the point)

Yeah.

MAN

You get along with your parents okay?

GEORGE

None of your business.

MAN

They busted up?

GEORGE

No, they're not busted up. They're at home.

MAN

What happened to your hand?

The man reaches and takes George's red, scratched hand and looks at it.

GEORGE

Nothing. It works fine.

George looks vaguely around the squalid bus station, his immediate prospects coursing through his mind, then coming to a dead stop. He looks down, thinks a moment more, then looks at the man.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'll take a job if you got one. I can work.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

MAN

I don't know.

(looks around)

Come over to that bathroom with me.

George smiles, looks at the man a bit disbelieving.

GEORGE

(smile)

What for?

MAN

I'll show you. Don't worry.

*
*

George doesn't move, smiling suspiciously, looks across at the battered restroom door then up at the man.

GEORGE

(as if teased)

What is it?

MAN

(good naturedly)

Come on. What's the matter? You afraid?

GEORGE

(quickly)

No.

George glances around as if he's being watched doing something shady, follows the man across the depot waiting room and walks inside.

89 INT. RESTROOM - DAY

89

In the restroom a traveller is standing at the mirror wiping his face after shaving. George and the man step inside. The traveller glances at them. The man sets his attache case on a sink top, opens it as if looking for papers. George looks around the room, waits, on what he isn't sure. As he talks, and unseen by George, the man takes a pair of cow-skin driving gloves out of his case and puts them on.

MAN

I always look forward to eating a decent meal when I come into town, you know. But the one place I really like, this Enrique's. They closed. Just gone. I like that Italian food, boy. Lasagna. Vermicelli. Veal Marsala.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

The traveller leaves. George looks around relaxed by the man's conversation. The man turns and looks at George seriously.

MAN (CONT'D)

All right now, son.

He steps in and hits George a hard blow with the flat of his hand straight across the cheek, knocking George against the sink and half off his feet. The man advances on him quickly, without speaking, flashes an ungainly left hand--open fist--and hits George across the other cheek, knocking him further down. George scrambles up, his eyes narrowed, gasping for breath. Again the man very quickly and methodically moves in, but George slides off to the left and when the man swings his flat hand, George is angled beside him and hits him 4 times in the face--in combinations--using his painful, injured hand, and knocks the man against the unlatched stall doors causing him to lose his balance and fall inside. As with the fight against the Indian boy earlier, this is a sudden, vicious, unmerciful fight. *

Real ferocity has been triggered in him, a fierceness only the last week of his life could've precisely released. *

MAN

(Ending the test)

All right! Back off, you son of a bitch!

GEORGE

I'll beat you to death!

MAN

(surprised)

Jesus! It's okay!! You're trying to kill me.

GEORGE

(angrily)

What the fuck is this?

George stops and steps back.

MAN

Help me out of here. *

GEORGE

Pull yourself out. *

George turns and stalks out of the bathroom. He walks to the seat he's been occupying. He's red-faced, out-of-breath and angry, feeling he's been had. He sits, in a state of confused belligerence, his eyes darting. THE MAN, who's come out of the restroom after him - though not actually chasing him - approaches, wiping his face with a white handkerchief. *

MAN

No use taking any pussies up there.
You looked like a pussy to me.

GEORGE

So. Well. I wouldn't get the job otherwise?
Fuck you. How's that? *

MAN

(derisively) *

A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do. *

Six hundred bucks a week. You up for it?

GEORGE

No. *

MAN

(dismally) *

Great. *

GEORGE

(second-thinking but still angry) *

Eight hundred.

MAN

(smiling, derisive) *

And not a penny less, I'm sure. *

George stares him in the eye, says nothing. *

MAN

(smiling still) *

O-kay. You got it.

90 EXT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - AFTERNOON

George and the man are leaving the building, talking. The man reaches in his inside pocket.

MAN

You broke?

GEORGE

(lying) *

Sure.

The man produces a wallet, gives George a hundred-dollar bill.

MAN

Don't gamble it away. Save your money
for college.

GEORGE

I don't gamble.

The man laughs.

MAN

Whew! You just started
(a beat)
Come on.

90 CONTINUED:

90

The two of them walk across the parking lot to a large, new pickup.

91 EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - AFTERNOON

91

A roughneck in a hard hat sits inside the pickup. He looks blankly at George.

The man opens the driver's door, puts his case inside.

MAN

Get in the back. We'll find you a place inside once we're going.

George looks at the back of the pickup. The man turns to him.

MAN (CONT'D)

My name's Billy Abbott.

GEORGE

(halting)

George.

They shake hands. George climbs in the bed of the pickup.

BILLY

You can't get trustworthy boys anymore. I prefer you farm boys. You know how to work.

GEORGE

(softly)

I'm not a farm boy.

Materiel is in the back; coils of wire, tools, groceries. George makes a place for himself. The man gets in, checks on George, who's settled, then starts the truck.

BILLY

(good-naturedly to roughneck)

I wouldn't want to be a kid again.

George says nothing, looks out over the back of the truck. We FOLLOW close on George as the truck pulls away, out into the street and up to a red light.

CAMERA moves very close, resting quietly on and examining George's face as he stares out while the truck idles at the long red light.

Finally the light changes. Truck and George slowly pull away.

END