

GALE FORCE
an original screenplay
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Reg. WGA/w

FADE INTO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

Vast, empty and calm. It's a beautiful, sunny day. Just then, the wind starts to pick up, kicking the waves into a froth.

AT THE HORIZON

The sky darkens.

CLOUDS

Big malevolent ones. A bolt of lightning SNAPS from one to another. The air boils.

THE OCEAN

Has turned slate gray and ominous. Wind driven waves churn across the surface. It's the birth of a storm; a big one.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH CAROLINA BEACH - SUNSET

Gentle waves lap at a beautiful white sand beach. A MAN suddenly RISES out of the surf, dressed in wet suit and scuba gear, carrying a spear gun and a net full of fish.

An OLD COUPLE and a gaggle of KIDS gather around to admire the fish, while the Scuba Man kicks off his fins.

BEYOND THE BEACH

A green Chevy station wagon beater with Louisiana plates, is parked in the trees. The scuba diver drops his fish, and starts to climb out of his scuba gear.

Off come the tanks, the mask and wet suit hood. The scuba man is blond and square-jawed, built like a line backer.

Looking around to make sure he is unseen, he pulls something from a zippered pouch in his wet suit; it's a length of baling wire, and a couple of miniature detonators.

Now, he leans into the car, and pulls a tarp off a bulky rectangular item hidden behind the seats, revealing a sophisticated, ship to shore radio. He carefully hides the wire and the blasters, picks up the mike and hits the transmitter switch.

SCUBA MAN
(into the mike)
This is Don the Beachcomber calling
home...come in please...

He waits a beat. A burst of static. Then;

RADIO VOICE
This is home base...what is your
status, Beachcomber?

SCUBA MAN
The table is set. I repeat... The
table is set.

He shuts down the radio.

EXT. BEACH - A SHORT TIME LATER

The Scuba Man drives along the coast road. Stops at a point over-looking the local marina; a small cove, harboring a few hundred boats, separated from the ocean by a long wharf.

AT THE END OF THE DOCK

A huge luxury YACHT sits at anchor, seventy feet long and gleaming white. The kind Aristotle Onassis would have.

Scuba Man puts high powered binoculars to his eyes. Focuses on the yacht.

THROUGH THE LENS

A party is in progress; a well dressed crowd, sipping cocktails and eating food served by liveried black men.

Scuba Man pans the marina:

FURTHER UP THE DOCK

WILLIE PEACOCK closes down the marina for the night. He is muscular and blue-eyed handsome, in his mid-twenties, with a small shark tattooed on his bicep.

Keys dangling from his belt, he shuts and locks the outside gates. Hauls sails to a dockside shed, locking them up.

SCUBA MAN

Lowers the binoculars, puts the car into gear, and drives off.

WILLIE

Turns off the gasoline pumps, locking down the hoses. Glances at the yacht, stopping for moment to watch the party. A pretty blond WOMAN approaches, tanned and sexy, carrying her red, high-heeled pumps.

WOMAN

Hi...I saw you down here and thought you might be hungry, or something.

WILLIE

Thanks, but I got a big dinner waiting for me inside.

She looks dubiously at the Marina compound, then back at Willie.

WOMAN

You sure? There's plenty of food.

Willie gives her a friendly smile.

WILLIE

Really...I'm okay.

WOMAN

How 'bout a nice cold drink, then?

WILLIE

Tell you what...maybe I'll stroll down when I'm all finished here, okay?

She gives him a seductive look.

WOMAN

Wait long enough, you might be just in time for dessert...

Turns to go.

WOMAN

Catch you later...

Benused smile from Willie as he watches her head back to the yacht.

INT. MARINA COMPOUND

Willie enters, flips on the light and rummages in the refrigerator for a root beer and his big dinner, a frozen pizza. Pops the pizza into the microwave. Sips the root beer.

BATHROOM

Willie fills the sink with water. Whips off his T-shirt. Washes his face. A couple of scars decorate his torso, a small one on his stomach, and a really nasty one along his side.

KITCHEN

Willie shovels his microwaved pizza onto a plate, grabs his root beer and heads out.

WORK SHED

Willie flips on a light, then the radio; Nashville country.

ON THE WORK BENCH

Willie's own scuba gear; a gleaming black tank with a highly complicated air regulation device, gauges and compass attached. Across the front, his tank bears a scratched emblem; an eagle with a missing wing.

He sets his dinner down, picks up a screw driver and goes to work on the air regulator, whistling softly with the music.

CUT TO:

INT. MARINA COMPOUND - LATE NIGHT

Willie sleeps under a thin blanket. A woman's laughter floats over the lullaby of waves against the pier. Then something else; the faint sound of a powerful motor.

Willie rolls over, struggles to consciousness. Lies awake for a moment, listening to the night. He glances at the clock; 3:15. He gets out of bed, crosses to the window and raises the blinds.

THE YACHT

The party is over. Two people sit on the aft, feet dangling over the side. It's too dark to see who,

but their voices reach him. He's about to lower the blinds, when something catches his eye.

END OF THE DOCK

A movement in the darkness. Could be a man heading silently for the yacht. Maybe two or three. The yacht people are oblivious, sharing a laugh.

Willie quickly pulls on some pants.

EXT. MARINA

Willie walks warily along the dock, carrying a crowbar, every sense alert. A CREAKING behind him makes him whirl around.

He is face to face with a MAN dressed head to foot in a black wet suit. The Man whips out his knife, grabs for Willie and tries to slice him.

WILLIE

Reacts instantly, blocking the blow. Counters with a lightening combination of his own; an elbow to the man's gut and a knee in the nuts.

Bullseye; Wet Suit goes down hard.

Running footsteps along the dock. Three more MEN materialize out of the darkness, all dressed in black wet suits. All carrying automatic weapons. Willie is surrounded.

1st Wet Suit gets to his feet. Draws a .45 from his wet suit.

SECOND WET SUIT

No gunshots. Use your knife.

FIRST WET SUIT

Fuck it.

Willie flicks them a look, trying to get a glimpse of their faces, as the man levels the pistol at him. Suddenly, the yacht engine ROARS to life. The Wet Suits look off.

WILLIE

KICKS the gun from Wet Suit's hand, BURSTS past the men and throws himself into the water.

THE WETSUITS

Let go with a volley, raking the water. They turn and run up the dock, where the yacht is already pulling away. 1st Wet Suit picks up his gun, fires one more volley into the water, then runs off himself.

THE RAIDERS

Hop into a couple of rubber assault rafts and FIRE up the engines.

WILLIE

Surfaces amid the pilings. Scrambles up onto the dock.

THE YACHT

Steams out of the marina, flanked by the rafts. There is a SCREAM as the two yacht's people are tossed off the stern, and flounder in the water.

WILLIE

Races along the dock.

KABOOOOOOOOWMMMM! An explosion rips the night. Willie is HURLED backward. A burst of orange flame shoots high into the sky. The decimated dock seals off the marina.

The sky rains debris. WHAM! Something hits Willie. The world goes black.

THE WATER

Churning from the force of the explosion. Two bodies float face down. It's the blond WOMAN and her companion.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Willie lays in bed, with his head bandaged. He's surrounded by a quartet of uniformed lawmen; two LOCAL COPS, and a couple of OFFICERS from the South Carolina Marine patrol.

1ST MARINE PATROLMAN

I want to hear more about this...
motor that woke you.

WILLIE
Must have been the rafts.

2ND MARINE PATROLMAN
Tell us about the rafts, Willie.

Willie is tired.

WILLIE
C'mon...we've been through this.
already.

1ST MARINE PATROLMAN
Indulge us.

Long exhale from Willie.

WILLIE
After the explosion, I thought I
saw them take off in two rubber
rafts.

2ND MARINE PATROLMAN
Can you describe them?

WILLIE
I dunno...they looked like the kind
we used in the SEALS. We'd get
launched from our ships, and hit the
beaches in those rafts.

1ST MARINE PATROLMAN
So...you'd like us to believe they
got launched from a ship?

WILLIE
Yeah...maybe...

The lawmen exchange glances.

1ST LOCAL COP
And maybe not.

WILLIE
What's that supposed to mean?

2ND LOCAL COP
Were you drinking, Willie?

Willie bristles.

WILLIE

What the hell is this?

The 1st Local pulls a folded sheet of paper from his pocket. Unolds it.

1ST LOCAL

You know we got the sheet on you, Peacock.

Glances at the sheet.

1ST LOCAL

Five years in the South Carolina State pen for involuntary manslaughter.

Willie's dander is up.

WILLIE

I did my time, and that's that.

2ND LOCAL

Just thought you might have some more to say about how they got into the marina...where they dropped the boat off...things like that...

WILLIE

(Incredulous)

You think I had something to do with this?

1ST LOCAL

Did you, Willie? Maybe tipped off some of your pals there was easy pickin's down here?

WILLIE

You're pissing up the wrong tree.

2ND LOCAL

Consider this, Peacock...you only been out six months. Now, two people are dead here...you go back to jail...we're talkin' death row... 'less you want to cooperate.

WILLIE

You want to waste everybody's
time, go ahead and charge me.
Otherwise, get outta my face.

Conversation over. Willie turns away. The lawmen exchange glances again. They don't have a case, and they know it.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARINA - DAY

Willie gets out of a cab and heads into the marina, where work crews are already rebuilding the decimated docks.

OFF SHORE

A big Coast Guard cruiser sits at anchor. A couple of uniformed Coast Guard officers look around the compound.

Willie wanders out onto the dock, examining the destruction. Aside from the dock, several boats have been torched in the explosions, listing over on the sides, or half sunk.

Willie kneels down to get a good look at the explosion site. A red high heeled shoe floats by. Willie fishes it out. Sits back on his heels. Takes another look around and gets up.

AT THE COMPOUND

A couple of phone messages are tacked to his door. He reads them, frowning. Rips them off the door.

INSIDE

Willie flips on the light in the workshed. Picks up the phone and starts to dial. Glances at the work bench. It's empty; his beautiful scuba gear is gone. He slams the phone down.

WILLIE

Goddammit!

There is a step on the threshold behind him. Willie turns to find a well-dressed older man smiling tightly at him; ARTHUR WELLINGTON, president of the marina.

WELLINGTON

Good to see you back, Willie. How
you feeling, son?

Willie shakes his head.

WILLIE

Aside from everything else, the
sonsabitches stole my scuba gear.
Stuff cost me over a thou.

WILLINGTON

Terrible business. Just a good
thing you weren't hurt badly.

WILLIE

Guess I'm lucky.

WELLINGTON

Reckon so... Uhh, Willie...why don't
you come up to the bar and let me
buy you a beer.

Something in Wellington's voice makes Willie look at him
carefully.

WILLIE

I don't drink.

WELLINGTON

That right?

WILLIE

What's up, Mr. Wellington? Lay it
on me.

Wellington takes a breath.

WELLINGTON

I hate to be the bearer of bad news,
Willie...but while you were in the
hospital, we got a message from
your home...some kind of family
emergency.

WILLIE

Yeah...I got that message, thanks.

Tosses the phone messages on the table.

WELLINGTON

And there's something else...

Willie flicks him a look.

WELLINGTON (Cont'd.)

You may not know this, but there was an incident up the coast 'bout two months ago. A salvage operation was hit. They got away with over a million in reclaimed gold. Two dead ...owner and his son.

Wellington eases into a chair.

WELLINGTON

Now...nobody's accusing you of anything...

Willie's back is 'up again.

WELLINGTON

But there was a vote a few days ago, and the members just decided they'd feel better having one of our own running things down here, from now on.

Willie just stares at Wellington.

WELLINGTON

I'm sorry, Willie.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

Willie wheels his Norton 650 Black Shadow motorcycle into the station. He's packed for the road. The green Chevy station wagon with the Louisiana plates is parked at one pump, with the hose stuck in the gas tank.

Willie pulls up at the other pump. An OUT OF ORDER SIGN is pasted across the front. Willie makes a face. Looks around the station.

IN THE GARAGE

A mechanic is buried under the hood of a car.

IN A PHONE BOOTH

Scuba Man talks on the phone.

Willie guns his engine, trying to get his attention. It

doesn't work. He just keeps talking.

Willie kills the engine, gets off the bike and knocks on the phone booth. Scuba Man glances at Willie and nods, giving him the "one minute" sign. Willie ambles off.

He leans against the fuel pump. Still, Scuba Man talks on the phone. Willie gets impatient again. He paces in front of the phone booth. No response. Scuba Man keeps talking.

Willie strolls back to the pump. Glances into the back of the Chevy; it's a jumble of equipment, covered by the tarp.

SCUBA MAN

Sees Willie looking into his car. Quickly gets off the phone and heads out of the booth.

SCUBA MAN

Hey! Don't be snoopin' around. I said I'd be off in a minute.

Willie just stares at Scuba Man, who unhooks the gas hose and fits it back into the pump. Now he hustles around to the driver's side, starts his car and heads off.

Willie watches him go. Takes the hose and starts to fill his tank. A police car cruises into the station. It's the two cops from the hospital. They pull up right next to Willie.

COP

Hear you'll be leaving us.

Willie glares at the cop.

WILLIE

Hey, y'know what? I just remembered something about one of the guys who hit me. He was fat and stupid, and real ugly. What were you doin' that night, anyway?

The cop bristles. Guns out of the station.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Willie rides through the night, black hair flowing in the wind. Eyes hidden behind goggles.

stern. Powers over to the freighter. Pulls up along side. The officer scrambles aboard, a briefcase in hand.

SUGGERS

Meets him at the gangway. The men shake hands.

SUGGERS

Captain...

GERMAN

Captain...

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Suggers and the German sit across the table from each other, a bottle of whiskey, two glasses and a HUGE stack of money between them. Suggers counts the money as the German pours a shot and takes a sip.

INT. SHIP COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Fitted with the very latest in sophisticated communications gear, operated by CHOU, a tough-looking Oriental.

Chou tunes his powerful radio. First a burst of static, then;

RADIO VOICE

...Roger, Coast Guard 118...sector
two all clear...we're shifting to
sector three...copy longitude...28
degrees south south west...

Chou listens, fine tuning the dial.

Just then, his satellite receiver starts clicking out a message. Chou wheels around. Reads the message as it comes out. Whistles. Rips off the message and heads out.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Chou knocks and enters. Hands Suggers the communique.

CHOU

Satellite report.

Suggers grunts. Reads it quickly.

SUGGERS

Jesus...

Slides the paper across the table. The German reads it.

Quickly stands. Knocks back his shot of whiskey and gathers his briefcase.

EXT. BRIDGE

Suggers and the German salute each other.

GERMAN
Good hunting, Captain.

SUGGERS
Happy trails, Captain.

And the German is down the gangway and into his launch.

THE STOLEN YACHT

Already being hooked to the German's tow cable.

SUGGERS

Heads into the bridge. His SECOND MATE, a rugged Swede has his eyes glued to the horizon.

SWEDE
Orders?

SUGGERS
Rig for storm running.

The Swede gives Suggers a nervous look.

INT. COMMUNICATION CENTER

Suggers enters, tosses a map onto Chou's table. It's got a coastal town circled in black; FORT FOSTER, SOUTH CAROLINA.

SUGGERS
Raise the Beachcomber. Tell him
Flash Override is on.

CHOU
We goin' in?

SUGGERS
Remember the operation we ran down
in Gulf Shores last year?

CHOU

Hell yes.

SUGGERS

Well...one more big score, just
like that, and we're outta here.

Big grin from Chou.

CHOU

Yessir!

Suggers leaves, as Chou lifts the mike and punches the call
numbers into the radio.

EXT. THE OCEAN

Still sunny, beautiful and calm, but;

AT THE HORIZON

The sky has turned inky black.

THE FREIGHTER

Has picked up steam, knifing through the water, heading
south.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Willie looks beat as he drives along a two lane road. The
weather has turned sullen; slate gray sky, and the air dead
calm.

Willie slows the engine and pulls off the road at the crest
of a hill. Rolls to a stop, next to a big sign; "THE CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE WELCOMES YOU TO FORT FOSTER, SOUTH CAROLINA-
RESORT PARADISE BY THE SEA.

DOWN BELOW

The coastal flats. Fort Foster clustered at the ocean's edge.
The ocean itself; restless, infinite.

WILLIE

Contemplates Fort Foster a long moment, face betraying no
emotion. He guns the engine; once...twice...a third time.

Slips the machine into gear.

Hesitates again, as if going down that road is the hardest thing he's ever had to do. Draws a deep breath. Makes up his mind and eases the bike back onto the highway. Lets her fly down the hill.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETARY

Willie pulls up to the entrance. He shuts down his bike, among the parked cars, climbs off and tries to smooth his hair.

AT THE GRAVESITE

A flower-decked casket, rests over an open grave. A few feet away two older gravestones are set close together; CHARLES PEACOCK JR., 1918-1970, and CLARA PEACOCK, 1921-1970.

A MINISTER reads to the assembled townspeople from his bible.

IN THE FRONT ROW OF MOURNERS

A tall, broad-shouldered man in his early thirties; Willie's older brother TIMMY, the town sheriff. His wife RYE, a classic beauty, with dark curly hair to her shoulders, a wide sensual mouth and sculpted cheekbones. Their six year old son LYLE. And 55 year old SANFORD ADAMS, with his scraggly beard and ancient suit.

There's a disturbance at the edge of the crowd. Murmurs of anger. Heads turn. The minister stops reading. Looks up. His face goes cold.

Timmy and Rye turn to see what the story is.

WILLIE

Makes his way through the crowd. Timmy and Rye flash each other a look, then Timmy goes to greet his brother. They hold each other stiffly, at arms length.

TIMMY

Jesus, Willie... You always did have a great sense of timing. Least you could'a dressed for the occasion.

WILLIE

You think grandpa would'a cared if
I had on some spiffy threads to
see him get buried?

Timmy shakes his head. Takes Willie by the arm and steers him to the front row.

He passes Rye, exchanging a quick glance with her, then tousles Lyle's hair, and gets a warm handshake from Sanford, who also gives him a playful swat on the head.

Timmy nods to the minister, who gives Willie a distainful look, then finds his place in the bible, and continues.

Willie's gaze turns to Rye. She feels it. They lock eyes. Then Rye looks away.

AROUND THE CROWD

A lot of sullen faces staring at Willie.

VOICE (OS)

Just a damn minute!

The minister stops. Everyone looks off.

GEORGE GAGE

Shoves his way forward. He's a thin, wiry guy in his mid-fifties. His wife MOLLY tries to restrain him, but before she can stop him, he's at the grave site.

GAGE

This is a gathering of civilized
folks. That animal...

Points at Willie.

GAGE

...got no business here.

Gage takes a threatening step towards Willie. Molly tries to lead him off.

MOLLY

George, please...

He shakes her off. Timmy steps in his way.

TIMMY
Try and show some respect here,
George.

GAGE
(with savagery)
Get him outta here, then we'll talk
about respect.

Timmy puts a consoling arm on George's shoulder.

TIMMY
I understand how you feel, George,
but a man's got a right to mourn
his family.

George SHOVES Timmy's hand away.

GAGE
Not HIM!

He LUNGES for Willie. Timmy grabs him and wrestles him to
the ground. George Gage is insensate, struggling against
Timmy, who straightens him up and pushes him away.

TIMMY
Molly...I'd appreciate you takin'
your husband home now.

She slips her arm through George's. He's seething, but allows
himself to be lead away. The crowd parts to let him pass.
Some of the townspeople offer words of encouragement, or pat
him on the back as he goes. No mistaking how they feel.

Timmy watches the Gages until are out of sight.

WILLIE
(to Timmy)
Thanks...

Timmy gives him a pissed off look then turns back to the
minister.

TIMMY
I'd like to bury my grandfather
now, Reverend.

WILLIE

Emotions veiled. Eyes fixed on the ground, as the Reverend

picks it up again. A gust of wind suddenly BLOWS through the cemetery. Women grab their hats.

CUT TO:

EXT. FORT FOSTER - LATER

Timmy drives his Sheriff's car along a winding driveway to the entrance of the Cypress Cove Hotel. It's magnificent, built right against the beach. Willie pulls up right behind on his cycle.

The wind is picking up, bending the cypress trees that line the driveway. Workmen are busy shuttering the hotel windows.

THE OCEAN

Filled with white caps, and the sky is closing in.

INSIDE

The brothers cross the lobby to the stairs. The season has just ended, and the place is deserted. Timmy waves to the Concierge behind the desk.

CONCIERGE
Barometer's dropping.

TIMMY
Yeah...feels like a big one.

The brothers head up the stairs.

WILLIE
Things are looking pretty prosperous around here.

TIMMY
Yeah...we've had a few big summers in a row.

INT. HOTEL, TOP FLOOR

The brothers come to the penthouse. Timmy finds the right key on his key ring and opens the door.

INT. PENTHOUSE

Furnished, with Persian rugs, oriental art, framed medical degrees, and a big ocean view. Also, filled with family pictures; on the stereo, on the bookshelves, by the bedstand.

Empty boxes are piled in the middle of the room.

Willie gazes around, while Timmy gets right to work packing stuff in the boxes. A stack of medical references go first.

WILLIE

Grandpa sure knew how to live.

TIMMY

Yep...a gentleman doctor to the end.

Willie wanders the penthouse, glancing at the pictures. Digs into his grandfather's black medical bag, filled with tools of the medical trade.

WILLIE

Sorry I busted up the funeral.
Didn't know George Gage was
gonna go off his head like that.

TIMMY

What did you expect, a big hug
from the guy?

Willie looks away.

WILLIE

Yeah...right...

Timmy jams a couple of books into the box. After a beat;

TIMMY

I heard about the trouble you had
the other night. Got a bulletin
from the Marine Patrol to keep
an eye out for that yacht.

WILLIE

Look...you don't have to worry about
me staying around, Timmy. I'm on my
way to the Keys to find some work
for the season.

TIMMY

Well...I think you got a lotta guts
coming back here at all, little
brother.

WILLIE

And I want you to know...I haven't
had a drink since the accident.

Timmy looks up at Willie, his face softening.

TIMMY
I'm glad to hear it, Willie.

Timmy goes back to packing. Willie watches him a beat, then continues to look around. Finds a picture on the bedstand. It's an old family portrait. Willie and Timmy as kids, in the arms of their parents and grandfather.

WILLIE
There aren't many of us Peacock's left, y'know? It's down to you, me and Lyle.

TIMMY
Tell me about it.

WILLIE
Answer me something...before he died, did grandpa...y'know... say anything about me?

TIMMY
Like what?

WILLIE
Did he ever...forgive me?

The brothers look at each other.

TIMMY
I don't think he ever got over it.

Willie nods, hides his hurt. Puts the picture down. Moves to the window and stares out at the seething bay.

WILLIE
(trying to sound causal)
So...how are you and Rye?

Timmy flicks Willie a look.

TIMMY
Fine. We have our ups and downs.
You know...

Timmy picks up the pace, stuffing things into boxes. Willie just watches him, brooding on something.

WILLIE
 (with an edge)
 No...I don't know.

Timmy stops what he's doing.

TIMMY
 What's that supposed to mean?

WILLIE
 Nothing. Forget it.

TIMMY
 I thought we were finished with
 this.

WILLIE
 I said forget it.

A gust of wind POUNDS the hotel. They both look out the window. The surf is CRASHING against the sea wall.

TIMMY
 You know...I think I better check
 this out. There's a hurricane watch
 on for the next few days.

He heads for the door.

TIMMY
 Don't leave town without saying
 goodbye...okay?

Willie nods. Timmy leaves. Willie glances into the box Timmy was packing. Lifts out a stack of photos. On top is a picture of him and Timmy smiling at the camera, their arms around Rye, and hers around them.

He folds it back so just Rye's face shows. She's laughing, face animated, full of joy. She's simply beautiful.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT FOSTER POLICE STATION

A couple of deputies hover over a telex machine, which prints out a bulletin. Two others have a map of the coast spread on the front desk.

Deputy JIMBO THORNTON, a young blond guy, is at his desk

dealing with old MRS. BLAKELY.

MRS. BLAKELY
I won't let it go this time, Jimbo.
I want him arrested.

JIMBO
Aren't you taking this thing a
little far, Mrs. Blakely?

MRS. BLAKELY
Hell no! This the third time this
year his damn dog has come into
my yard and pooped all over my
rhodadendrons. Last time I had
to re-pot 'em. This time they're
all droopin' over and sickly. Now,
I want that vile man behind bars.

TIMMY

Strides into the station. A couple of his deputies wave him
over to the telex, which continues to print out. They're
joined by the two map readers.

TIMMY
What's the scoop?

DEPUTY #1
Damn storm's took a left turn. Now
it's headin' right up our nozzle.

TIMMY
How bad?

DEPUTY #2
Gusts up to one seventy five.

Timmy whistles.

TIMMY
What's the estimated time of landfall?

DEPUTY #1
'Tween six and eight tonight.

Looks at his deputies. They're waiting for his decision.

TIMMY
Well...guess we better evacuate. You

TIMMY (Cont'd.)
guys know the drill...get over to
your neighborhoods and get things
rolling. I want this town shut down
tighter than pussy in church.

They leap into action, grabbing their hats and heading out
the door. Timmy ambles over to Jimbo's desk.

TIMMY
We're gonna be evacuating the town,
Mrs. Blakely. I'd appreciate you
getting back to your house and
getting ready to go.

MRS. BLAKELY
I ain't going nowhere, 'till I get
some satisfaction here, Sheriff.

Timmy looks to Jimbo for help.

JIMBO
Tell you what, Mrs. Blakely. When
the hurricane's over we'll have
a serious talk with Mr. Hofstead,
okay?

MRS. BLAKELY
What about my Rhododendrons?

JIMBO
He'll have to replace them, of
course.

Mrs. Blakely gets up.

MRS. BLAKELY
Okay.

She stops at the door.

MRS. BLAKELY
But I want that man and his dog
strung up by their whoozies.

SLAM! And she's gone. Jimbo just shakes his head. Timmy gives
him a grateful look.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - A SHORT TIME LATER

The hub of a bustling, small town business district.

The GREEN CHEVY STATION WAGON with the Louisiana plates pulls into a parking place. Scuba Man gets out, glances up and down the street and heads into the bank.

Willie coasts into a parking space in front of CORA'S DINER. The CLOSED sign is out, and the blinds are down.

INT. CORA'S DINER

Even though the place is closed for business, a couple of old time LOCALS lounge at the counter, drinking coffee and shooting the breeze.

At the grills, Sanford Adams flips hamburgers and tosses french fries. Willie comes in, takes a seat at the counter. The genial banter instantly dies out. The locals nod at Willie, look away.

ONE LOCAL

Well...guess I better get my boat up in dry dock. Hear we're in for a hell of a blow.

Slaps some change on the counter and heads out.

SECOND LOCAL

Yeah...guess I'll be headin' back to work now...

He digs some money from his pocket, tosses it on the counter and follows the first. Willie is left alone with Sanford.

SANFORD

What...are you carryin' the plague or somethin'?

WILLIE

Looks that way.

SANFORD

Well...people 'round here is just slow to forget. Take some time for 'em to get used to you being back.

WILLIE

What...they think I'm stayin'?

SANFORD

Oh, you know how people take things.
They figure you wouldn't have
showed up if you didn't mean to
stick around.

WILLIE

Well, they can rest easy, 'cause
I'm not.

SANFORD

Maybe that's for the best.

He sets a cheeseburger in front of Willie.

SANFORD

Double cheese with extra bacon...
just like you like it.

Willie grins at him.

WILLIE

Thanks.

He takes a big bite, looking around the diner.

SANFORD

She ain't here.

Willie is embarrassed at being so transparent.

SANFORD

Didn't want to open up today on
account of the funeral.

WILLIE

'Course, you got no such respect for
the dead.

Sanford grins.

SANFORD

Gimme a break, will ya?

WILLIE

Face it...you wouldn't know what
to do with yourself if you couldn't
cook burgers and clean the grills.

SANFORD
(laughing now)
Yeah...prob'ly right. You realize I
been doing this since Rye's mom
opened 'er up back in 1949?

WILLIE
Where is she?

Sanford gets serious now. Looks at Willie a beat.

SANFORD
Up at the house.

Suddenly, a siren WAILS! a few streets over. Sanford and
Willie exchange a look.

SANFORD
Aw damn...must be that storm. Last
thing I feel like doin' right now
is movin' fast.

Timmy's police cruiser squeals to a stop out front. Timmy
bounds in the door. The siren crescendos as the door opens.

TIMMY
We're evacuating the town. Sando...
shut this place down and get up to
the house and help Rye, okay?

SANFORD
I'm on it.

He goes into automatic mode, shutting down the stoves,
collecting dishes and clearing the counter.

TIMMY
Willie...maybe you could head up to
City Hall and help 'em lay sand
bags.

WILLIE
Tell you the truth, I was thinking
it might be time to make my exit.

The brothers look at each other a beat. Timmy nods.

TIMMY
Whatever you want, Willie.

Sanford gives Willie a sympathetic look, but keeps on moving. Willie takes a last bite of his cheeseburger and gets up, zipping his jacket.

TIMMY
I'm glad you came, Willie. Let me know when you get settled.

WILLIE
Sure thing.

There's an awkward moment, where they don't know what else to say.

TIMMY
Well...got a town to shut down.

He spins and heads out. Willie and Sanford face each other. Shake hands.

WILLIE
Tell Rye I stopped in.

SANFORD
Why don't you tell her yourself?

Willie gives him a look. Turns and heads out.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN - SAME TIME

It's already starting to rain. The wind is blowing hard.

ALONG THE STREETS

People are hammering boards across windows, and piling sand bags around doors.

SCUBA MAN

Cruises along Main Street in the Green Chevy, watching the town preparing for the storm.

TIMMY

Passes him, going to opposite way. Inside the car, Timmy talks into his C.B.

CUT TO:

EXT. COASTAL WATERS-SAME TIME

The Freighter plows through the churning seas, whipped to a frenzy by howling winds.

INT. BRIDGE

Captain Suggers watches the sea rage around his ship. He's totally in command, a seaman at ease in his element.

INT. MISSION ROOM

Two young WHITE GUYS; the recon unit, stow their radios into water-proof cases.

A four man assault team wrestles into heavy duty wet suits; a one-eyed ORIENTAL, a HUGE BLOND GUY, a BLACK GUY with a fierce looking moustache and goatee, and a muscular ALBINO. Another crew secures their gear in the assault rafts, and gasses up their twin 500 HP Mercury outboard engines.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE AND MOLLY GAGE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

George sits in a chair, lost in reverie, surrounded by his memorial to his dead son, a scrapbook of press clippings open on his lap,

All over the walls, pictures of a strikingly handsome teenager, in action on the football field, posing with the team, with his father, receiving an athletic award.

The bookshelves are choked with trophies; football, basketball, baseball. A framed award for national scholastic excellence. Another frame contains an official letter of acceptance from Notre Dame.

At their center is a framed high school graduation picture, covered with black ribbon.

The door swings open. Molly Gage bustles into the room.

MOLLY

(urgent)

George...what are you doing?
I thought you were taking care of
the upstairs.

GAGE

You go on. I'll finish up myself.

She whips open one of the windows and swings the storm shutters closed, locking them tight. Turns to look at her husband.

MOLLY

George...c'mon now...don't be sitting here. It's not healthy.

GAGE

Did you see Willie Peacock, standing there like nothing happened? Guess he thinks it's okay to come back...everything's forgotten.

MOLLY

George...what are you talking about? We've got to go.

She takes his arm, tries to pull him up. He turns to her, his eyes frighteningly intense.

GAGE

Go on now...get packed and join the caravan. I'll find you after the storm.

MOLLY

(last desperate try)
This won't bring our son back...

GAGE

(sharp)
Leave it, Molly. Just leave it.

She backs away, frightened. Leaves the room, closing the door.

George turns back to the scrapbook, flipping to the last page. A newspaper article shouts a headline; "HOMEGROWN HERO KILLED BY DRUNK DRIVER...WILLIE PEACOCK HELD WITHOUT BAIL."

A gust of wind PUMMELS the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH ROAD - SAME TIME

The road narrows at the sea wall, then threads through a pine woods.

IN THE TREES

The Green Chevy wagon is pulled off the road, hidden from view.

THE SEA WALL

Taking a pounding as the ocean gears up. Wind howls off the bay.

SCUBA MAN

Kneels on the sea wall, hammering something into the rocks. A wave CRASHES over him, but he keeps hammering. Now he checks to see if his work is secured. He hops off the wall and takes the road in a couple of strides.

AT THE CAR

He pops the rear compartment, and pulls the tarp away.

Underneath is the ship to shore radio, secured in its holder. And something else; gleaming black scuba gear with a wingless eagle painted on the front.

Scuba Man lifts the transmitter and hits the switch.

SCUBA MAN

Home base...this is Don the Beach
Comber...please come in.

A beat. Then a burst of static.

RADIO VOICE

We read you, Beachcomber...what is
your status?

SCUBA MAN

The table is set. I repeat...the
table is set.

He shuts down the radio.

THE SEA WALL

Scuba Man has planted a sonic beeper in rocks. It PULSATES red light. A wave CRASHES over it. It keeps blinking.

THE GREEN CHEVY

Pulls out of the woods and heads off.

CUT TO:

EXT. RYE'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Rye is up the ladder pounding a plywood sheet across the window. At the bottom, Lyle holds the ladder steady and passes her nails.

Willie turns into the driveway. Shuts off his bike. Rye stops hammering. Climbs down the ladder.

RYE
(to Lyle)
Time out a sec, champ.

She goes to Willie. They're standing close to each other.

RYE
Thought you'd be down helping Timmy.

WILLIE
No...I'm takin' off...and I wanted
to see you before I did.

Disappointment flickers across her face, but it's gone in a second.

RYE
You're not going to stay?

WILLIE
I can't.

She nods, understanding. He's looking into her eyes.

WILLIE
I wanted you to know...the whole
time I was locked up, I kept
thinking about the time before...
when it was just you and me.

She puts finger to his lips.

RYE
Don't...I know...

He takes her hand away.

WILLIE
What's the matter. Afraid to hear
it?

Her face says yes, she is afraid to hear it.

WILLIE
It doesn't matter how much time
has passed. I'm telling you, it's
not any easier now than it was the
day I came home...to find you in
love with my brother.

They can't look away from each other.

RYE
Please, Will...don't you think we've
suffered too?...We never wanted to
hurt you. It just happened.

A gust of rainy wind blows through the yard. Willie glances
at the sky.

WILLIE
I gotta go.

RYE
(from the heart)
Willie...

He doesn't stop. She watches him get on his cycle and kick it
over. She watches him pull out of the driveway, and barrel up
the street.

Rye turns. Her face freezes.

LYLE

Perched at the top of the ladder getting ready to hammer a
nail into the board.

RYE
Lyle! Get down from there!

Too late. A gust of wind topples the ladder, sending Lyle flying. He lands with a THUMP! and grabs his leg; it's a bad one. Rye rushes to his side.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF FORT FOSTER - LATE AFTERNOON

AT THE TOWN HALL

A caravan is forming in a driving rain, and the gathering gloom. Cars lined up for blocks. The siren WAILS.

THE LEAD CAR

Puts on its lights and heads off. The line of cars snakes out of town. Scuba Man's Green Chevy is among them.

MAIN STREET

Businesses and stores all boarded up and sandbagged. Not a soul anywhere.

A RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Houses shuttered. Deathly quiet reigns, save for the rising wind and the slap of rain on the pavement.

THE HOSPITAL

The last evacuee is loaded into an ambulance and driven off.

THE WATERFRONT

The angry sea hurls itself at the sea wall.

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN - SAME TIME

Darkness has fallen. The Freighter is battered by killer waves.

ON THE STERN

Six men in heavy duty wet suits. Two assault rafts full of their gear. Everyone is clipped to the rafts with nylon umbilical cords.

THE BRIDGE

Suggers peers over Chou's shoulder, into the radar scope.

CHOU

All clear.

SUGGERS

(to the Swede)

Launch the rafts.

THE STERN

A light flashes from the bridge.

THE MEN

Leap into action, tossing the rafts overboard. They jump in after, and haul themselves aboard. Now they rev up the outboards, and blast off, disappearing in the trough of a 30 foot wave.

CUT TO:

INT. RYE'S HOUSE - LATER

Rain beats a tattoo on the roof, while the beams groan under the wind's assault.

Timmy and Sanford carefully tie a home made splint to Lyle's leg; a length wood paneling and a of couple of saved-off canoe paddles. The boy's limb is black and blue and badly swollen.

Rye cradles Lyle's head while he squeezes her hand.

RYE

Picked a hell of a time to learn
how to fly, buster.

His face is pinched with pain, but he manages a grin.

SANFORD

Wouldn't surprise me if it's
fractured.

TIMMY

Yeah... 'fraid you might be right.
But this ought to do the trick
'till the storm blows itself out.

The men stand back to examine their work. Rye pulls the covers over him.

TIMMY

(to Lyle)

Now you got to keep still, pal.
No squiggling around. I mean it.

LYLE

Will I get a real cast on it?

TIMMY

You can count on it.

(to Rye)

I want you to call me every hour.
When the phones go down, switch
over to the shortwave.

(to Sanford)

Thanks for staying, Sando. I feel
a lot better knowing you're here.

SANFORD

Shoot...it ain't nothin'. I been
through hurricane's before. What's
one more?

Timmy pats him on the back. He leans over Lyle and kisses him on the forehead. He and Rye head for the door.

TIMMY

You got everything you need?

RYE

Got lots of food. Sure got enough
water.

TIMMY

No joke, Rye...anything goes wrong,
gimme a call and I'll be right over,
okay?

RYE

Of course.

They hug.

TIMMY

Willie come by before he left?

She nods.

RYE

I feel so bad for him, Timmy...the way everybody treated him today. And you know he's still not over...us.

TIMMY

Yeah, well it's time he got over it.

Rye gives him a quick look.

RYE

That's bein' kinda' hard, don't you think?

He opens the door.

TIMMY

I gotta get down to the station. Talk to you in a while. And keep him warm.

And he's gone. Sanford watches them from door of Lyle's room.

EXT. HOUSE

The wind is blowing so hard, Timmy has to hunch over as he scrambles to his car. He starts it up and takes off.

INT. CAR

He picks up his CB.

TIMMY

Okay sportsfans...I'm gonna take one last spin around, then I'll meet everyone back at the station. It's gettin' mighty ugly out here.

His headlights cut a dim swath in the stormy blackness.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH FRONT- SAME TIME

The ocean pummels the shoreline, consuming the beach. A screaming wind bends the cypress trees to the ground. Hurricane Alice has arrived.

A BLACK SHAPE

Is spit out of the maelstrom and skids along the beach. A moment later, another tumbles from the sea; the rubber rafts. The men scramble from the rafts, pull them out of the surf.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS TIME

The evacuation caravan snakes along the road.

AT THE CROSSROADS

A couple of troopers swathed in storm gear wave cars through a road black. Away from the coast, the wind is less intense, but not the rain; it's pouring out of the sky.

BACK IN THE LINE

Willie drives along the shoulder, keeping pace with the caravan. He passes car after car, all loaded to the gills with kids, animals, food, sleeping bags.

There's old Mrs. Blakely, barely able to see over the steering wheel of her ancient Oldsmobile. Her car is jammed full of potted plants.

Just then, Willie does a double take. He's right behind the Green Chevy with the Louisiana plates.

He eases off the gas, keeping the Chevy in sight.

EXT. HIGHWAY - UP THE ROAD A FEW MILES

The road curves past an old stone country church, darkened and boarded up. Scuba Man turns into the parking lot, and kills its lights. He gets out of his car. Looks around to make sure he is unseen.

Pops the rear compartment, uncovering the ship to shore radio. Picks up the transmitter.

SCUBA MAN

This is Don the Beachcomber,
calling home, please come in...

A BUZZ of static. Then;

CHOU'S VOICE

We have you, Beachcomber. Please report.

SCUBA MAN

Evacuation is complete...Send them off the beach...but tell them to be careful...local police have stayed behind....I repeat...

Scuba Man is suddenly bathed in light. He quickly shuts off the radio and tries to toss the tarp over it. Willie pulls up right next to him. Gets off the bike, but keeps the light on.

Scuba Man tries to see the intruder, deflecting the glare with his hand, while putting himself in front of the radio.

THE BLACK SCUBA TANK

Sticks out from under the tarp, reflecting in Willie's light. Willie steps up to the car. Glances at his oxygen tank.

WILLIE

Nice scuba gear.

He reaches for the tarp.

SCUBA MAN

Hey...what the fuck...

Scuba Man grabs for Willie's hand, but Willie gets the tarp off, revealing the radio beneath.

WILLIE

Have a nice conversation with the ship?

Scuba Man lunges for Willie, but Willie is too quick, grabbing Scuba Man and pinning him to the ground.

WILLIE

They're coming, aren't they?

SCUBA MAN

What are you talking about?

WILLIE

In the middle of a hurricane...It's crazy..

Suddenly, he gets it.

WILLIE

No...I take it back...it's not crazy at all. The town is empty... That's it, isn't it?

SCUBA MAN

Fuck you.

Willie forces his head back.

WILLIE

What do they want? There's no big boats down there.

SCUBA MAN

You're so smart, figure it out.

WILLIE

No...I want you to tell me.

Scuba Man makes a lightning move. Gets an arm free. Spins on Willie, a knife suddenly in his hand. Willie blocks the blow. The men wrestle into the darkness behind the car. There is a scuffling, then a sickening SNAP.

Willie emerges from the darkness, hops on his cycle and ROARS off.

UNDER THE CAR

Scuba Man's body, his neck twisted at an impossible angle.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Willie blows back along the road.

THE ROADBLOCK

State Troopers are just waving the last cars through.

WILLIE

Barrels out of the night. The Troopers dive out of the way. Willie SCREAMS past the barricades. The Troopers watch him go, shaking their heads.

CUT TO:

EXT. FORT FOSTER BEACH ROAD

Timmy's cruiser passes along the sea wall. It's taking a pounding from the surf. Timmy's car is HIT with a spray.

INSIDE

Timmy struggles to keep his car on the road.

HIS POV

The road curves past the darkened hotel. Suddenly, a light FLICKERS in his rear view mirror. Timmy stops the car.

Turns and peers through his rear window. Nothing to see. Just impenetrable darkness. Timmy frowns. Backs his car around so his headlights are pointing at the wall.

Now he flips on the cruiser's spot light and pans it along the wall. Nothing but rain, and blackness. He gets out of his car.

TIMMY

Hey! Who's out there?

Visibility is nil. He moves closer to the sea wall. The wind howls around him. Something MOVES along the wall; two shapes rise out of the night.

TIMMY

Who's that?

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Timmy is flung back, his flashlight flying. He lies face down, unmoving, blood flowing.

Two wet suits converge, standing over Timmy. One is the Huge Blond, a .45 in his hand. The other is the Black with the fierce goatee.

HUGE BLOND

Let's find the rest of 'em.

Fierce Goatee turns and signals. His four other companions materialize from the darkness, shrouded in their wet suits and armed to the teeth.

TIMMY

Motionless. Floodlit by his headlights, and pelted by rain. One of the invaders turns off the car, and kills the lights.

They file off into the darkness.

CUT TO:

EXT. FORT FOSTER STREET - CONTINUOUS TIME

Willie zooms into town, the wind nearly tearing him off the cycle. He wheels past the Confederate War Memorial.

A SHAPE suddenly appears in his headlight. He SWERVES at the last second. The cycle spins in the water, sending Willie skidding along the pavement. He's momentarily stunned.

The Shape looms over him. Points a shotgun in his face. It's George Gage.

GAGE

You're a stupid boy, Willie. What made you think you could come back here without getting what's coming to you?

WILLIE

George...you have no idea what kind of shit is about to come down here.

George pokes Willie with the shotgun.

GAGE

Turn over!

Willie does what he's told. George loops a rawhide thong around Willie's wrists and snaps it tight. Willie winces.

GAGE

Get up.

WILLIE

I don't know what kind of insanity you got in mind, but I paid for what I did, George. Five years worth.

GAGE

You ain't paid my dues.

George yanks Willie to his feet and prods him with the gun barrel. They head off down the street.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SAME TIME

The invaders head along the street, moving carefully from doorway to doorway, the Huge Blond leading the way. They come to the bank, and take cover in adjoining alley.

ACROSS THE STREET

The police station, with light shining through the cracks in the storm boarding.

The blond signals the One-eyed Chinese, who takes the street in a few strides, ducking under the station's boarded windows.

He peeks through a crack in the boards.

INSIDE

Jimbo fiddles with the short wave radio, while the rest sip whiskey and leaf through skin mags.

THE ONE-EYED CHINESE

Whips out his flashlight and signals his comrades. Here they come, splitting up, taking positions around the station.

EXT. TOP OF MAIN STREET- SAME TIME

Willie and George turn onto the street.

GAGE

You can stop now, Willie.

Willie turns to face George, shotgun in his face.

GAGE

This is hallowed ground, Peacock.
My son Paulie died right here in the
ambulance, with me holding his hand,
his perfect body all smashed and broken.

He POKES Willie with the shotgun. Willie winces.

GAGE (Cont'd.)

He liked to train at night. Did you
know that? He liked the night air
in his lungs.

He POKES Willie again.

GAGE (Cont'd.)
 No tellin' how great my Paulie
 would'a turned out if some drunk
 son of a bitch hadn't run him down.

WILLIE
 Isn't a day that goes by I don't
 regret what happened, George.

GAGE
 Regret just ain't enough, Willie.
 You took something from me. Now,
 I'm gonna take something from you.

George cocks both barrels. Willie looks up at him, rain
 washing over his face, wind whipping his hair.

GAGE
 Willie Peacock, for the crimes of
 arrogance, godlessness and murder,
 I sentence you to die.

WILLIE
 I'm sorry, George. I wish I could
 bring him back.

GAGE
 Well, you can't. So...there's
 nothin' else to say.

GEORGE'S FINGERS

On the twin triggers. Begin to squeeze.

WILLIE

Looking right George's eyes.

KAZOOOOOOOOM! A blast of orange flame ERUPTS from the police
 station.

GEORGE

Recoils. Looks off.

WILLIE

A blur of motion; he kicks the shotgun away and tosses George
 to the ground.

DOWN THE STREET

A couple of deputies stagger from the station, bodies blazing. A burst of automatic fire from the alley cuts them down. They die, writhing on the rain swept street.

WILLIE AND GEORGE

Watch, stunned.

THE INVADERS

Grab the dead bodies and drag them off the street, dumping them by the smoldering police station.

Now they head for the bank. One pulls a slab of plastique from his sack and slaps it on the bank door. Attaches a detonator clip, and takes off across the street. The rest of the invaders take cover.

FLAM! The bank door disintegrates. The alarm wails. The invaders pour inside. A barrage of automatic fire silences the alarm.

WILLIE

Stumbles to his feet, hands still tied behind him, picks up the shotgun and takes off into the blackness.

AT THE POLICE STATION

Willie cuts his hands free on the broken glass of the front door. Kneels by the dead bodies. Timmy is not among them.

INSIDE

Willie picks his way through the wreckage. A body lies face down under a couple of smoldering beams. Willie flings the beams away.

WILLIE

(trying to contain his panic)

Timmy?

He turns the body over. It's Jimbo. Willie sags with relief.

EXT. MAIN STREET

Willie makes his way along the street, keeping to the recessed store fronts. Comes to the Gage's Sporting Goods store. Kicks the door in.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK

The invaders pack the main vault with plastique.

CUT TO:

INT. GAGE'S STORE - SAME TIME

Willie chooses a couple of pistols from the gun case, and lays them on the counter. A noise from the street freezes him. He grabs the shotgun and gets behind the door.

George pushes in, rain water streaming off him. Willie slams the door. George whips around, facing the twin shotgun barrels pointed in his face.

WILLIE
(poking him)
Back up.

George does as he's told. Willie moves back to the gun counter.

GAGE
Better shoot me while you can,
Peacock. I get away, I won't
miss again.

Willie sets the shotgun down, picks up a .45 and starts sliding bullets into the chamber.

WILLIE
Case you haven't noticed, we been
invaded by pros. So this vendetta of
yours is gonna have to wait.

Willie finishes with the .45, and moves on to loading a Walther PPK.

GAGE
Some of your prison buddies?

Willie starts filling a cartridge belt with shotgun shells. George narrows his eyes, scrutinizing Willie.

WILLIE
They're pirates, George. They been
raiding up and down the coast.

GAGE
What the hell they want here?

WILLIE
That's what I'd like to know.

Willie slaps the cartridge belt around his waist.

WILLIE
I hear the town had a big summer.

GAGE
Yeah...

WILLIE
So everybody made out okay...

GAGE
Yeah...pretty good.

WILLIE
Bank must be stuffed with your
money, hunh?

George flicks him a sullen look. Willie shoves the pistols,
and a big hunting knife into the cartridge belt.

GAGE
What the hell you doin', anyway?

WILLIE
I'm going to stop them.

GAGE
This ain't your fight.

Willie chooses a heavy duty poncho from the rack. Slides it
on.

WILLIE
I just made it my fight.

GAGE
Why? You could slip outta here,
and nobody'd know the difference.
Be just like you.

WILLIE
Maybe I owe this town something.

GAGE

Damn straight, you do.

WILLIE

Well, maybe I can even up the score
some. 'Sides... I got family to
protect.

Venom fills George's face again. He lunges at Willie, who
jams the shotgun barrels into his chest.

GAGE

(heaving with emotion)
You're going to die tonight,
Willie. I swear...if they don't
get you...I will. That's the
only way our score gets settled.

BOOOOOM! An explosion echoes from down the street, rattling
the cases in Gage's store. Both men look off. Then back at
each other.

WILLIE

That'll likely be the bank. I
gotta go now, George, and I
can't have you roamin' around
like a loose cannon.

GAGE

Gonna shoot me?

WILLIE

No...but you're gonna have a hell
of a headache.

Willie slams his fist into George's chest, just above his
heart. George grunts, doubles over. Willie grabs him by the

neck and presses the jugular. George staggers, then drops
like a stone.

Willie drags his body to a display canoe and flips him in. He
fishes a length of rawhide off the rack and ties George's
hands to the canoe's middle thwart.

Grabs the shotgun, and steps out into the howling wind.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH

The ocean; a wild, implacable beast.

THE SEA WALL

Taking a savage beating. A huge chunk suddenly TEARS off. The ocean pours through the breach.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK

The four invaders wade through the rubble of the decimated vault door. One by one, they pull their waterproof hoods back from their heads, and scan the vault. They break into whistles, laughing, slapping each other five.

THEIR POV

Behind a locked mesh cage, stacks of cash are piled floor to ceiling.

The Albino, BUDDY BELL, from the streets of Newark, pulls a heavy duty wire cutters from their equipment bag.

BELL

Our captain got the nose for
money, don't he?

He sets to work cutting the cage open.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET

Huddled in the alley, the RECON MAN keeps watch on the street in front of the bank, his radio at arm's reach.

DOWN THE STREET

A second RECON MAN, scopes out the lower end of Main Street. Across the intersection is Pete's HI-Tide Inn, 'the friendliest place in town'.

The Recon Man lifts the his radio transmitter. Punches the call button.

1ST RECON MAN
 (through receiver)
 This is dark eyes. Speak to me,
 darlin'...

2ND RECON MAN
 Found the friendliest place in town,
 man. Think I'm gonna keep watch
 where it's nice and dry.

He hefts his radio and crosses the street.

AT PETE'S INN

The Recon Man pulls a crow bar from his sack and slips it
 between the storm boarding and the door.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK VAULT

The invasion team loads the last of the cash into a deep
 water proof sack, and zips it up. EDDIE WEATHERS, the black
 guy with the fierce goatee, hefts it onto his shoulder.

WEATHERS
 Let's hit it, brothers.

The sound of rushing water stops them. A stream of water
 surges through the door, into the vault.

BELL
 Jesus...good thing we brought
 water wings.

Laughs from his squad as they pull on their wet suit hoods
 and head out of the bank.

EXT. STREET

Water rising; it's at sidewalk level, and seeping into the
 stores along the street. The recon man appears from the
 alley.

BELL
 Anything?

RECON MAN
 Yeah...couple dolphins, a sea
 otter and a pregnant nun.

BELL
Very funny. Where the hell's Lyndon?

RECON MAN
Found some bar up the street.

Bell steps into the street and heads off. The others follow.

BELL
That little shit. He gets drunk on
me...I'll break his scrawny neck.

WEATHERS
Hey...hit of somethin' hard soundin'
real good to me 'bout now.

They hunch into the wind as the rain pelts them.

ACROSS THE STREET

Willie hides in a door way, watching them pass. He focuses on the Huge Blond. Something about him registers familiar.

WITH THE INVADERS

As they wade along Main street. A spot light flashes at them from the doorway of Pete's Hitide Bar and Grill.

BELL
Alright...let's take fifteen.

The gang heads for the bar.

WEATHERS

Sees something across the street. Breaks off from the group, and heads for Cora's Grill.

WEATHERS
Hey...be wit' you by and by.

Slings his Uzi over his shoulder, whips out a crowbar and snaps off the front door lock. Lets himself in.

INT. CORA'S

Weathers plays a flashlight around the interior. The beam of light passes over the cash register.

Weathers sets the bag of money on the counter and fiddles

with the register's buttons. It won't open. He SLAMS it with his forearm. The drawer pops loose. He quickly empties it and stuffs the cash into a pocket inside his vet suit.

Now he finds the refrigerator with his flashlight. Swings the door open. Digs out a plate of chicken. Sets the flashlight down and takes a bite.

WILLIE (OS)
Need some mustard?

Weathers whips the plate at Willie's voice, DIVES for the flashlight.

Willie beats him to it. Pins Weathers in the beam of light.

WEATHERS
Who's that?

Weathers feints, lunges for Willie. Grabs air.

WILLIE
Shouldn't have come here.

Willie SLAMS the flashlight into Weathers' temple. The man drops with a splash. Willie is on him, holding his face under water until he goes slack.

Willie picks the money satchel off the counter, grabs Weathers' Uzi and leaves by the back door.

CUT TO:

INT. RYE'S HOUSE, LYLE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS TIME

The hurricane thunders around the house. Lyle sleeps fitfully, wrapped in blankets. Sanford tightens the binding on the homemade splint, being careful not to wake him.

Rye enters carrying a tray of food, setting it on the desk.

RYE
How's he doin'?

SANFORD
Out cold.

She leans over her son, tucking in his blanket.

SANFORD

He's looking more like his old man every day. But he's got some of Willie in him, don't you think?

RYE

It's those Peacock eyes.

Sanford takes a sandwich and settles onto the couch. Rye does the same, folding into a big easy chair at the foot of the bed.

SANFORD

I miss having him around, y'know? Seein' him again reminded me of the old times. The good ones.

RYE

You always did like Willie best, didn't you?

SANFORD

Yeah...guess I did. Like a wild horse he was.

RYE

More like a volcanoe ready to blow.

Sanford muses on that a moment, while the storm pummels the house.

SANFORD

Always thought you two'd end up together.

RYE

So did I.

SANFORD

What happened?

RYE

I don't know...he scared me...so full of anger. And his drinking. Maybe it was losing his folks when he was so young. Timmy was different. He made me feel safe.

SANFORD

I don't remember as you bein' one

SANFORD (Cont'd.)
to play it safe.

She smiles at the memory.

RYE
I changed.

SANFORD
Yeah? I do believe part of you
still loves that boy.

She flashes him a look. Just then, the sound of rushing water turns their heads. Rye gets up and opens the door. Water pours into the room, sweeping over her feet. Sanford jumps off the couch.

RYE/SANFORD
Oh my god!/ Holy Mama!

Lyle wakes, groans.

LYLE
What's wrong?

RYE
I'm not sure. Everybody stay put.

Sanford comforts Lyle as Rye heads out of the room.

WITH RYE

As she makes her way to the front door. Slides on her storm gear and unlocks the door. The wind BLOWS it open.

HER POV

Her street is flooded. Water is cresting at porch level.

RYE
Sweet Jesus...

She pushes the door shut.

INT. LYLE'S ROOM

Rye hurries back in.

RYE
(to Sanford)
We've got to leave.

LYLE
It hurts, mom.

RYE
I know, darlin'. But we can't
stay. The house is floodin'.

A look of fear on Lyle's face.

LYLE
We're not gonna drown, are we?

She hugs him hard.

RYE
Nobody's drownin', baby.

She and Sanford exchange worried looks.

SANFORD
We'll need to make make a stretcher.

Rye nods, makes for the door.

LYLE
(rising panic)
Where you goin'?

RYE
I'll be right here, honey. I'm
just gonna raise your daddy, and
have him come take us to the hotel.
(to Sanford)
We'll hole up in the old man's
penthouse.

She wades into the kitchen. Grabs the phone. Makes a face.
Taps the receiver button; it's dead.

She hangs up and opens a nearby closet, and rummages along
the top shelf. Out come several trophies for marksmanship
excellence, with her name on them.

Now she brings down a small generator and a short wave radio.
She sets them on the table and gives the generator a yank. It
whirrs to life.

She flips on the radio and spins the dial. Lifts the mike.

RYE
This is Rye Peacock calling Fort
Foster police...hello Timmy...are
you there?

She depresses the receive button. Nothing but static and the
sound of the storm outside.

RYE
Come in Fort Foster Police. This is
Rye Peacock...can you hear me?

Fingers the receive button. Nothing. She's getting worried.

RYE
Fort Foster Police...please answer.

No reply. She stares at the radio. Makes a quick decision.
Zips up her storm gear.

RYE
(calling out)
Stay calm, Lyle. I'll be back to get
you in a minute.

She goes out the door.

ON THE FRONT PORCH

Rye wades down the steps, and struggles to the garage. Yanks
the twin doors apart.

INSIDE THE GARAGE

A sea of junk floats around the submerged Ford pinto.
Next to the car, the family row boat bobs against the garage
wall. Rye grabs a couple of tent poles, tosses them into the
boat and drags it to the front porch, tying it to the
railing.

Now she heads back into the house hauling the tentpoles.

INT. LYLE'S ROOM

Sanford takes the tentpoles and slides them into the
stretcher he's made with blankets.

RYE
 I don't know where the hell anyone
 is. So we're gonna have to get
 ourselves to the hotel.
 (to Lyle)
 You ready for an adventure?

He nods, clinging to Rye. She and Sanford lift him off the
 bed and set him on the stretcher.

CUT TO:

INT. FREIGHTER'S BRIDGE

Captain Suggers stoically watches the sea, as it tosses his
 boat between the giant waves. He checks his watch, picks up
 the intercom.

SUGGERS
 Radar...gimme an ETA to the eye
 of the storm.

INTERCOM VOICE
 About twenty minutes at present
 speed, captain.

SUGGERS
 Thank you.

He hits the intercom again.

SUGGERS
 Radio...

INTERCOM VOICE
 Yessir...

SUGGERS
 Time to raise the boys. Tell them
 the eye of the storm will make
 landfall in two hours. I want them
 in those rafts and on the way when
 it hits.

INTERCOM VOICE
 Sir!

CUT TO:

INT. BAR

A row of empty bottles lines the bar, where the gang is gathered. The mood is upbeat; a strong sense of camaraderie. Jorgenson uses his knife to jimmy the cash register. It pops open.

JORGENSON

Hey...I got a joke. What's better
then roses on your piano?

A chorus of 'I don't knows', as Jorgenson helps himself to the money in the cash register.

JORGENSON

Two lips on your organ.

He breaks up. Gets a few chuckles from the gang. Bell looks anxiously across the street.

BELL

What the hell's Weathers doin?...
cookin' a goddamn meal?

JORGENSON

Relax will ya'? Takes darkies a
lotta time to eat. They gotta
figure out which is the fork and
which is the knife. Ain't that
right, Ming?

Turns to the forth member of the assault team, the one-eyed Chinese. Ming says nothing. Just stares at Jorgenson with his one good eye. Leans over and spits on Jorgenson's boot. The Blond bristles. Just then, the radio buzzes to life.

The RADIO MAN grabs the receiver.

RADIO MAN

This is Dark Eyes. Go ahead.

The radio man listens as the gang gathers around.

RADIO MAN

Got it...

Disconnects and turns to the men.

RADIO MAN

Eye of the storm will make landfall

RADIO MAN (Cont'd.)
in two hours. We gotta be in the
rafts and on the way when it hits.

Bell checks his watch.

BELL
Two hours?...Jeez might as well take
in a movie.

JORGENSON
Or hit that hotel down at the beach.
There's gotta be a vault.

The men look at each other.

BELL
What the hell are we waiting for?

Everyone gathers their gear. They all zip up their wet
suits, and fan out into the street, weapons ready.

EXT. BAR

Water in the street continues to rise. The gang makes their
way to Coras, where the door sways open in the flood.

BELL
(above the storm)
Yo Weathers! Let's go!

Silence, except for shutters rattling in the wind. Bell
exchanges looks with his men. They spread out, combat ready.

Bell gives the signal, and they spring through the door.

INSIDE

Blackness. Swirling water.

BELL
Jorgenson!...Light!

Jorgenson produces his flashlight. Weathers' body floats into
the beam, skull bashed in, dead eyes staring up.

BELL
Jesus...

Kneels down to examine Weathers, as the others cover the
place with their weapons.

JORGENSON
The fucking money is gone.

The men look at each other, stunned.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET

Willie wades through a flooded back alley, carrying the sack of money on his shoulder. Something catches his eye, and he retreats a few steps. The back door of the coin-op laundromat has popped open in the storm. Willie goes inside.

INT. LAUNDROMAT

Like everywhere else, dark and flooded. Willie chooses an industrial sized dryer, and stuffs the bag of money inside.

Now, he hefts his weapons and heads back into the storm.

CUT TO:

INT. CORA'S

Ming and Eddie Bell haul Weathers' body out of the water and lay him on the counter, while the others guard the doorways. Bell examines Weathers' fatal wound. Ming seethes.

MING
Man was my friend. I find his
killer and...

Says something in Chinese, making an obscene gesture with his dick.

JORGENSON
Fuck that. I just want my money.

BELL
Hey...case you assholes forget...
Weathers was one tough dude.
Whoever took him, is out there...
(jerks his thumb towards
the street)
waitin' for us to show our faces.

A silent beat.

MING
Let's level town.

JORGENSON
Not 'till I get my money.

BELL
Doin' both sounds about right.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET

Willie hides in the alley across from Cora's back door. A random BURST of automatic gunfire makes him jump back.

CORA'S

The invaders pour out of the door and take up positions along the street, firing as they run.

WILLIE

Shoots from the hip. POOM! Now he takes off in a crouched run for another doorway.

The street goes quiet again, except for the raging storm.

Then, from the darkness;

BELL
(shouted above the storm)
Hey cowboy!

Willie takes aim at his voice. POOM! Squeezes off another round. Splashes for another doorway; the urban guerrilla.

BELL
Listen up, asshole... I'll make
it simple. You give the money back,
we'll be outta here.

Willie peers into the night, trying to home in on the voice.

BELL
You don't... we're gonna level it,
man.

Willie raises his shotgun. Takes a bead along the barrels.

BELL
Up to you.

The wind howls through the alley. Willie waits.

BELL
Whattya' say, man?

And waits.

BELL
You're tryin' my patience, dude.

Willie cocks the shotgun.

BELL
Okay...that's it. We're done being
reasonable.

Willie fingers the triggers.

PAZOOM! A muzzle flash from the across the alley. The night
EXPLODES! Orange flame SHOOTs from Cora's, flooding the
street with blinding light for an instant.

WILLIE

Let's it fly with both barrels. POOM! POOM!

MING

Blown two feet backwards, both rounds dead on target. The
M-60 Grenade launcher flies out of his hands.

JORGENSON

Fires a burst from his Uzi.

WILLIE

Flinches. Wood splinters by his head. He staggers. Drops to
his knees, holding his face. Blood flows through his fingers.

CORA'S

A gaping hole is blown in the back wall. The fire fizzles in
the rain and goes out.

WILLIE

Feeling for the damage to his face. Finds a wood sliver
rammed deep into his cheek. Takes the end and yanks it out of
his face. The pain is terrible. Blood everywhere.

He suddenly looks up, tensing. They're close by. He can feel them.

JORGENSON
(from the darkness)
I'm sure I hit him.

BELL
You better hope he ain't dead.
Let's spread out.

He hears them approach across the flooded alley. They've got him surrounded.

He lets the shotgun slide into the water, and pulls out the two pistols. Taking a breath, he lowers himself into the water.

THE INVADERS

They're coming, weapons poised. Only four left now; Bell, Jorgenson and the two radio men.

A BLACK SHAPE

Floats towards them.

JORGENSON
There!

BELL
Gimme some light!

Radio man Lyndon whips out his light. Shines it on the floater.

JORGENSON
It's him.

BELL
Damn it! The fucker's dead.

He leans down to roll Willie's body over. Willie comes up shooting. BAM! Bell gets one between the eyes. BAM! Lyndon goes down. The other radio man freezes.

JORGENSON

Stunned.

JORGENSON

Peacock!

He whips up his Uzi.

WILLIE

Beats him to the draw. CLICK! Nothing. The bullet is wet. He throws the gun at Jorgenson, who ducks. Willie dives into the flood.

JORGENSON

Looses a volley, raking the water all around.

JORGENSON

Gimme a light, damn it! He's getting away!

The radio man snaps to and shines the light over the water. Nothing. Willie has vanished.

JORGENSON

Goddammit!

Jorgenson lets it rip again in frustration, spraying bullets everywhere. The clip empties. He throws down his Uzi. Plows through the floodwater to Ming's body. Disentangles the grenade launcher and the ammo sack.

JORGENSON

Let's hit that hotel, and get the fuck outta here.

RADIO MAN

You know that guy?

Jorgenson allows himself a grim chuckle.

JORGENSON

Shit...do I know Willie Peacock?

Jorgenson slides a grenade into the launcher and wades off into the darkness.

WITH JORGENSON

As he and the radio man slog around the corner back onto main street. He levels the grenade launcher at another Fort Fisher establishment. PAZOOM! The place disintegrates.

The flames cast a ghostly glow in the storm. Then they're extinguished, and the two pirates are engulfed by the darkness again.

A beat. PAZOOM! Another explosion down along main street.

IN THE ALLEY

Willie looms out of the darkness. Soaked to the skin. Blood and rainwater flowing down his face. He heads after the surviving pirates.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH

Another chunk tears off the sea wall and disintegrates in the maddened surf. The ocean explodes through the new hole.

BEYOND THE BEACH

A rowboat moves through the swirling floodwater. Sanford at the oars, rowing for all he's worth. Lyle is stretched in the bow cocooned in storm gear, with Rye huddled over him.

UP AHEAD

The hotel looms against the black sky.

A muffled explosion from the town makes Sanford stop. He and Rye look off. A dim orange glow mushrooms through storm, then disappears.

RYE

What the hell's that?

SANFORD

I don't know, and I ain't stoppin' to find out.

He starts to row again.

LYLE

Mom! There's something out there!

OFF THE BOW

Something bobs in the water. Knocks into the boat. It's a dead body.

SANFORD
Holy Mama! Who is it?

The body bumps the rowboat, rolls over. It's one of the deputies, bullet holes stitched across his throat.

RYE
Don't look, Lyle!

But Lyle can't help it. He's transfixed by terror. Sanford pushes the body away from the boat with his oar. Then the waves sweep the body away.

RYE
(sudden panic)
It's one of Timmy's deputies.

Sanford and Rye shoot each other a look. A wave nearly swamps the boat.

LYLE
(freaked)
Row!

And Sanford does, with frantic strokes.

AT THE HOTEL

Sanford paddles to the entrance. Another muffled explosion from the town stops him. Again, the brief orange glow.

THE FRONT DOOR

Swings ajar, the broken lock and chain swinging in the wind.

Rye hops out, pulling the boat out of the flood. Sanford scrambles out, grabbing one end of the stretcher. Rye grabs the other, and they wrestle Lyle inside the hotel. He moans.

INT. HOTEL

Dark and flooded. Furniture floats, upended. They wade over to the stairs, carrying Lyle.

TOP FLOOR

They come to the penthouse, both out of breath. The door is already open. Inside, it's completely black. Rye and Sanford exchange a nervous look.

RYE
(calling out)
Anybody there?

No answer. Just the wind THUMPING the storm shutters.

They step inside and set Lyle on the floor. Rye strikes a match, and finds a kerosene lamp in a closet. She lights it and surveys the room.

The lamp throws a dim circle of light, illuminating the jumble of half packed boxes. One of them contains liquors.

RYE
Think we could all use some of this.

She sets the lamp down, fishes a bottle of brandy from the box and cracks the cork. Kneels next to Lyle.

RYE
How you doin', champ?

LYLE
Was that man dead?

RYE
Yes, baby, he was. Now, I want you to drink some of this. It'll help you sleep.

LYLE
What happened to him?

SANFORD
We won't know 'till after the storm. Now go on and drink up like your momma says.

Rye tosses him an appreciative glance. She gives the bottle to Lyle, who takes a belt, wrinkling his face.

LYLE
Ick.

SANFORD
Better let me show you how it's done, son.

He takes the bottle from Lyle and knocks back a stiff belt.

SANFORD
Whew...The old man had good...

His face falls.

SANFORD
Holy Mama! What in hell is that?

ON THE FLOOR

A trail of blood, leading into the darkness of the front room. They both look off, frightened.

RYE
(tremulous)
Anybody there?

No answer. She and Sanford exchange glances.

SANFORD
I don't know what the hell's goin'
on 'round here, but it's scarin'
the bejesus outta me.

RYE
Stay here.

She grabs the lamp and makes her way into the next room.

HER POV

More half packed boxes. Stacks of books and pictures. Suddenly, she gäsps. A body is stretched across the floor. She kneels, gently turning it over.

It's Timmy, a bloody cloth clenched over the bullet hole in his gut.

RYE
Oh my god...Timmy!

He cracks an eye at her. He's still alive, but not by much.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET- SAME TIME

Another Fort Foster business burns and smoulders. a jagged hole blown in its facade.

UP THE STREET

Edgar Jorgenson and his radio man plow through the waters, now waist deep.

A huge shape looms in front of them. It's an uprooted tree, with both the invader's rubber rafts still attached.

JORGENSON

Looks like we caught us a little break here.

They cut one loose, hop in and paddle off.

WILLIE

Appears from the darkness, just in time to see them disappear in the raft. He slogs over to the tree, cuts the other raft loose and climbs in.

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE

Rye's got the place lit with kerosene lamps. Lyle is stretched out on the couch, Timmy on the bed, sweating heavily, fever raging.

Sanford brings a pot of steaming water to the bed, where Rye hovers over her husband. She takes a washcloth and gently rinses his forehead.

RYE

(completely freaked)
What the hell's happening here,
Timmy? Who shot you?

He grabs her hand.

TIMMY

It has to come out.

RYE

What are you talking about?

TIMMY

The bullet.

Rye blanches. Sanford leans in, carefully peels back his shirt. Timmy grits his teeth. The bullet wound is completely enflamed and angry red.

SANFORD

He's right.

RYE

You're both crazy!

SANFORD

We leave it in, he dies.

RYE

(giving way to panic)

No! No way...we can't!

Sanford takes her by the arms.

SANFORD

Rye! Listen to me...we gotta try.
You understand? If he don't bleed
to death, the infection'll get him.
And soon. So, we ain't got a choice.

RYE

How the hell are we supposed to
dig a bullet out of him? Fish
around with our fingers?

Timmy motions across the room. It's taking all his strength.

TIMMY

My grandfather's bag.

Sanford gets up, finds the black medical bag among the boxes.
And a book on surgical procedures. He brings them back to
the bed.

Opens the bag and empties it out; scalpels, pincers, forceps,
syringes, bottles of penicillin, chloroform, morphine,
cotton. And a .22 caliber pistol. Sanford picks it up.

SANFORD

All the tools for life and death.

Rye looks the stuff over.

RYE

I need a drink.

She goes for the Cognac bottle, pours herself a stiff one.

SANFORD

You get yourself ready. I'll do
some homework.

He flips open the book of medical proceedings.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL

Jorgenson and the radio man paddle out of the storm. Glide up
to the front door.

He signals to the radio man and climbs through the door. The
radio man quickly follows.

INT. HOTEL

Jorgenson sweeps the lobby with his light, while the radio
man covers the place with his Uzi.

JORGENSON

Raise the ship and let 'em know
what's going on. And keep an eye
out for our friend. I'm gonna find
the goddamn safe.

He sloshes off across the lobby.

AT THE WINDOW

The radio man, cranks up his radio, keeping an eye out the
window.

RADIO MAN

This is shore to ship...Dark Eyes
here...come in please.

INTERCUT WITH SHIP'S RADIO ROOM

RADIO ROOM OPERATOR

Go ahead Dark Eyes...

BACK TO RADIO MAN

RADIO MAN

We are in a world of shit here.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHIP

The sky has lightened and the winds diminished as the ship cruises in the eye of the storm.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SHIP

Captain Suggers pores over a navigational chart. A sailor appears in the door.

SAILOR

Captain...this just came in.

Suggers takes the radio communique. Scans it quickly. His face darkens. He hits the intercom.

SUGGERS

Gunnery crew! Report to the bridge, on the double.

Turns to his helmsman.

SUGGERS

We're going in. All ahead full.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY

Jorgenson shines his light along the walls. No sign of a safe or vault. He grabs the message racks and shoves them over.

THE RADIO MAN

Keeping guard at the window.

HIS POV

A shape appears out of the blackness. It's Willie, paddling the raft, keeping low to the water.

THE RADIO MAN

Tenses. Cocks his Uzi.

RADIO MAN

It's him!

Aims his weapon. Jorgenson rushes across the room. Takes a position at the window.

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE

Sanford reads a page in the medical volume, while Rye fills a syringe with morphine. She finds Timmy's vein. Empties the syringe into his arm.

The sound of automatic gunfire rattles above the storm. She jerks around, rushes to the window, and frantically fiddles with the shutter. It flies open in the wind. She peers into the darkness.

WILLIE

Throws himself into the flood.

DOWN IN THE LOBBY

Jorgenson sweeps his spotlight across the water.

WILLIE

Surfaces. The light beam passes over him.

JORGENSON

There!

Willie dives as bullets rake the water all around.

RYE

Watches, horrified.

RYE

Willie!

IN THE LOBBY

Jorgenson and the radio man exchange a look. Jorgenson kills his light and climbs out the door, scanning the hotel's facade.

RYE

Pops back into the room, slamming the shutter behind her.

JORGENSON

Slips back inside.

JORGENSEN

Top floor.

He and the radio man head for the stairs.

PENTHOUSE

Rye grabs her storm gear. Sanford is on his feet.

RYE

Willie's out there!

She heads for the door.

SANFORD

Rye!

She turns. Sanford holds up the .22. She comes back into the room.

Too late. The penthouse door BLOWS open. Jorgenson and the radio man spill into the room. Sanford slips the gun under the blanket, next to Timmy. He and Rye face the invaders, frightened, but holding their ground.

Jorgenson motions Rye and Sanford to the couch, checks out the sleeping Lyle, then Timmy, who rambles in delirium, off his head. The radio man scopes out the rest of the penthouse.

JORGENSEN

Looks like a goddamn hospital in here.

RYE

(summoning her courage)

Who are you, and what do you want?

The radio man returns to give the all clear sign. Jorgenson focuses on Timmy, pulling the blankets back. The pistol is just out of sight. He stares at the bullet wound a beat.

JORGENSEN

I'll be damned...son of a bitch is still alive.

RYE

You shot him?

He lets the blanket fall back.

JORGENSON
Alright...everybody just relax, and
we'll be outta here real fast.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL

The eye of the storm has arrived. The world has suddenly gone quiet, save for the pounding of the surf.

IN THE SKY

The moon glows between the drifting clouds.

WILLIE

Swims along the back wall of the hotel. Comes to the service entrance. Pulls out his knife and jimmys the door lock. Slips inside.

INT. LOBBY

Willie silently wades through the darkened hallway. Comes to the lobby, now pervaded by ghostly moonlight. Crouches by the wall, trying to penetrate the gloom.

JORGENSON
(from the staircase)
Hey Peacock...

Willie ducks behind the front desk.

JORGENSON
Come on out, Willie. Game's all
changed around now. Looks who
joined us.

Jorgenson snaps his light on. Rye's face shines like a star in the void.

WILLIE

He can't believe it.

JORGENSON
You know what I want, Willie. Now
I'll give you five seconds to show
yourself, or I'll hurt her.

Willie emerges from his hiding place. Sloshes across the lobby.

JORGENSON
Willie goddamn Peacock... What the hell you doin' here?

RYE
(to Willie)
You know these men?

WILLIE
Me and Edgar were in the SEALS together.

JORGENSON
We're in sort of a different line of work now, Willie. It's real profitable.

WILLIE
Yeah? How much you get for the yacht?

Jorgenson grins.

JORGENSON
I'll be goddamned. That was you?

Breaks into a laugh.

WILLIE
Rye...I don't know where Timmy is. He may be dead.

RYE
He's upstairs....with a bullet in him.

Willie gives Jorgenson a killer look.

JORGENSON
Alright...enough goddamn chit chat. You got exactly a half hour to get me that bag of money. You're not back, I start by throwin' the kid out the window.

The light snaps off.

RYE

Willie!

Jorgenson clamps a hand over her mouth and drags her up the stairs. Willie is left alone in the darkness.

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN

The freighter plows through the surf, at full speed.

ON DECK

The sea thunders over the gunnery crew as they wheel a load of shells to the deck gun, hooked to nylon life lines.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE GAGE'S STORE

George Gage surfaces to consciousness, still tied to the canoe.

He twists around, trying to get a look at his rawhide bonds. He gives them a yank. Winces. Gives them another tug. They don't give.

He goes into a frenzy, pulling, bucking, straining to bust free. They just cut into his skin. He lies back, catching his breath.

He cranes his neck over the gunwales. The knife case is just a few feet away. He swings his feet over, tipping the canoe. He's momentarily stunned at how deep and cold the water is.

He quickly recovers, dragging the canoe to the knife case. SMASHES it with his foot. Kicks all the glass out of the way and leans his face into the case. Clamps a knife between his teeth and gingerly pulls it out of its sheath.

Twists back, straining upward with his hands, trying to close the synapse between the blade and his bonds.

He opens his mouth, dropping the knife into his hand. The point pierces his palm, drawing blood. He wraps his fingers around the blade, slicing them to ribbons.

Oblivious, he gets control of the handle, and cuts through the rawhide. He's springs from the canoe, shoving it out of the way.

A wave of pain shoots through his head. He squeezes his eyes shut rubbing his temples. Blood trickles down his face.

Startled, he looks into his hand. The blood flows freely from his lacerated fingers. He washes his hand in the floodwater, and rips off a piece of cloth from the display case. Ties it around his hand.

Grabs his shotgun and a box of shells. Storms out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. LAUNDROMAT

Willie fishes the bag of money from the dryer. Looks at it a moment. The thing bulges with hard currency. Willie unzips it. There's easily a couple of million in the bag. Maybe more.

He takes a bundle in each hand. Stuffs it back in the bag, seals it up and shoulders it.

EXT. STORE

Willie makes his way along Main Street, carrying the sack. Comes to Coras Diner. Lets himself in.

INT. CORAS DINER

Eddie Weathers' body is still stretched out on the counter. Willie sets the sack down and unclips Weathers' gun belt, strapping the .45 around his own waist.

Now he takes out his long bladed knife and ties it backwards around his neck so that the sheathed blade hangs under his collar, down the middle of his back.

He lifts the sack and heads out the door.

EXT. STREET

Willie dumps the sack onto the pirate's rubber raft. Hops in and paddles off.

BACK UP THE STREET

George Gage wades past the decimated store fronts. He looks neither left or right. He's just got one thing on his mind; finding Willie Peacock.

He tenses. Peers into the silvery darkness. Something's moving up ahead. He starts to run, but can't move very fast; the water is getting deeper.

HIS POV

Whatever he saw has now vanished. Just the uprooted tree rises in the middle of the flooded street.

George shoulders his shotgun, and studies a demolished store front. A big piece of window boarding dangles, groaning in the wind. George rips it off and tosses it into the water, where it bobs and floats.

Now he whips out his knife, cuts a limb off the tree, and pares it down. He slides onto the floating board, and using the tree limb, pushes off.

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE

Jorgenson sprawls on the couch, Uzi loosely cradled in his arms, keeping an eye on his prisoners.

ACROSS THE ROOM

The radio man powers up the radio. Picks up the transmitter.

ON THE COUCH

Rye covers Lyle with a protective arm. The boy is awake, and silent with fear, never taking his eyes off Jorgenson.

Timmy lies under the covers, muttering, slipping in and out of delirium. Sanford sits stone-faced in a nearby chair.

Jorgenson's gaze keeps coming back to Rye. He's starting to get how beautiful she is. She knows what's going through his brain. Instinctively she coils, drawing her legs tight up against herself, and pulling Lyle closer.

RADIO MAN

(into the transmitter)

Shore to ship...this is Dark Eyes...
please acknowledge.

INTERCUT WITH THE FREIGHTER RADIO ROOM

Suggers is on the other end.

SUGGERS

This is the captain speaking.
Go ahead.

RADIO MAN

Glances at the hostages.

RADIO MAN

It's a whole new enchilada, Sir...
we're holdin' a queen high
flush...

BACK TO SUGGERS

Listens a beat.

SUGGERS

Listen carefully. When you get the
money, I want you to kill them
all. Leave no witnesses. Do you
understand? And when that's done,
go get our bodies and bring them
back. And make it fast. The back end
of the storm is ridin' right up
our asses.

BACK TO THE RADIO MAN

Gives Jorgenson a meaningful look.

RADIO MAN

Aye aye, Captain.

He shuts down the radio. Comes over to Jorgenson and whispers
in his ear. Jorgenson glances at the trio on the bed.

RYE

A jolt of fear goes through her.

JORGENSON

(to the Radio Man)

Why don't you go have a peek out
the window...see if our boy is back.

Jorgenson rolls his eyes towards Rye. The Radio Man gets it,
grinning lasciviously. Gives Jorgenson a wink and takes his
vigil at the window.

Jorgenson gets up and sits next to Rye. Runs his hand over her hair. She shrinks under his touch. Sanford flies at him, but Jorgenson FLINGS him back into her chair so hard, it knocks the wind out of him.

RYE

(bravely as she can muster)
Keep your damn hands off me.

JORGENSON

Ooooh, I bet you made 'em sweat
when your titties was up for grabs.

LYLE

(tremulous)
Leave my mother alone.

Jorgenson is amused.

JORGENSON

Atta boy, tiger.

RADIO MAN

(from the window)
Here we go.

Jorgenson gets up, crosses to the window.

DOWN BELOW

Willie paddles into view. The bulky sack is in plain sight. He looks up, sees them in the window.

The Radio Man looks at Jorgenson, then at the bed.

JORGENSON

(softly)
First, I get the money in my hands.
Then I diddle the girl. Then, we do
'em.

DOWN STAIRS

Willie climbs through the door, lugging the sack. Wades across the lobby and lays it on the desk. Takes a deep breath, centering himself for what's about to come. Turns and heads for the stairs.

TOP FLOOR

Willie comes to the penthouse. The radio man waits in the doorway, pointing the Uzi at him.

Willie takes in the situation with a glance; his is family huddled across the room. He and Rye exchange a quick look. A glimmer of hope is kindled in Lyle's eyes. Sanford gives Willie a huge grin. Timmy is talking a blue streak.

Jorgenson is pouring himself a drink. Sets the bottle down, noticing Willie is empty handed. His face darkens.

JORGENSON

Where is it, Willie?

WILLIE

It's here.

Jorgenson flies across the room, grabs Willie and pins him against the wall.

JORGENSON

(hissing like a snake)

Don't fuck with me.

Willie just stares him in the eye. Jorgenson releases him.

JORGENSON

Okay...what's the game?

WILLIE

I left it downstairs. You take it, get back in your raft and clear out.

JORGENSON

That's it?

WILLIE

That's it.

Jorgenson grins. Then grabs Willie again, spinning him against the wall. Pats him down for weapons. Under the arms. Down his sides. Finds the .45, tossing it aside. Continues down his legs, into his boots. The long bladed knife has gone undetected.

JORGENSON

That's a really good plan. Only, I

JORGENSEN (Cont'd.)
 think you should come along...so I
 can blow your face off, case things
 don't go right.

Jorgenson pushes Willie towards the door, grabs his Uzi and
 turns to the radio man.

JORGENSEN
 Any one of 'em moves, shoot 'em
 all. 'Cept the girl. We want to
 make sure she's okay.

He laughs. Willie tosses Rye a glance as Jorgenson opens the
 door.

INT. HALLWAY

Willie moves along the darkened hallway, with Jorgenson a
 half step behind, pointing his Uzi at him.

JORGENSEN
 Now let's keep our heads on
 straight, and we'll get through
 this okay...you dig, Willie?

WILLIE
 I hear ya.

JORGENSEN
 I know you do, Willie. 'Cause
 you're a smart boy. Always were.
 Fact...that little floating
 corpse trick? Never seen it
 done better. No sirree.

WILLIE
 'Preclate that Edgar.

They head down the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE

The Radio Man eases into a chair, so he can keep an eye on
 all his prisoners. Timmy continues to babble, breaking into
 his high school fight song, still sweating heavily.

Rye can't take it any more. She gets up, crosses to the bed.
 The Radio Man tenses, pointing his Uzi at her.

RADIO MAN

What are you doing?

RYE

Just wiping him down...okay?

She reaches for the washcloth, wipes Timmy's forehead. He moans. She pulls the blanket back; the bullet wound is on fire. The pistol is hidden right next to his leg.

She eases her hand under the blanket. Timmy starts to laugh hysterically; it's unnerving.

The Radio Man springs from his chair.

RADIO MAN

Make him stop!

Rye flinches, pulling her hand out.

RADIO MAN

Make him stop...or I'll finish him.

Rye is really frightened. She puts her hand on Timmy's chest. That seems to calm him. His voice trails off.

RADIO MAN

Now get back over there.

He motions her back to the couch. She obeys. The Radio Man resumes his watch from the chair.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWAY

Willie leads Jorgenson to the main lobby, silhouetted in the beam of his spotlight

JORGENSON

Okay...let's stop the party right here.

Willie halts. Jorgenson sweeps the lobby with his light. The coast is clear.

JORGENSON

What now, boy scout?

Willie just points to the desk. Jorgenson shines his light at the desk. Willie loosens the buttons at his throat.

ACROSS THE LOBBY

The money sack is lit by the beam.

Jorgenson turns the light back on Willie.

JORGENSON

Now listen up, Willie...keep your hands in sight and move to the center of the room.

Willie does as he's told. Jorgenson heads for the desk.

JORGENSON

You know the drill, Willie. Move, and I'll kill you.

WILLIE

Total concentration. Every sense alert.

JORGENSON

Slogs over to the desk, still eyeballing Willie.

JORGENSON

You know, ...it's still not too late to stop all this hostility and join us. Lotta money in this gig. I'm here to tell ya'.

WILLIE

No thanks, Edgar.

JORGENSON

Then tell me something, Willie... last I heard, you were pulling some time. How'd you wind up in this dipshit town, anyway?

WILLIE

I once heard a story about a guy who meets death on a street. Scares the shit out of him, so he gets on his cycle and zips off to another town.

Jorgenson sets his Uzi down, and trains the light on the bag.

JORGENSON

Yeah?

WILLIE

He gets off his cycle, in this other town, and there's death waiting for him.

Jorgenson pulls the bag to him.

JORGENSON

Yeah?

WILLIE

The guy says to death...hey...what are you doin' here? I just saw you in the other town.

Jorgenson chuckles, fingers the zipper on the bag.

JORGENSON

Yeah...so what does death say?

WILLIE

He says...I was there for somebody else...but I'm here for you.

Willie GRABS for his knife. WHIPS it at Jorgenson, and dives into the darkness.

JORGENSON

ZUK. The knife is buried in his shoulder. It staggers him, but he's overcome with rage and he yanks out the knife, grabs the Uzi and sprays the lobby with bullets.

JORGENSON

Goddammit! Not this time!

He vaults the desk. Takes off after Willie, shooting as he runs.

INT. PENTHOUSE

Gunfire rattles from the lobby. Everyone freezes. The Radio Man leaps from his chair, unsure what do. Timmy goes off his head again, shouting football plays.

RADIO MAN

I told him to stop!

He advances on Timmy, his weapon leveled.

RADIO MAN

I'll kill him!

He's at point blank range. Rye flies off the couch. Sanford tries to stop her.

RYE

No!

CRACK! CRACK! The Radio Man staggers back and drops like a stone, with two bullets between the eyes.

Timmy pulls away his blanket. The .22 smokes in his hand.

Rye rushes to him. Timmy sinks back on the bed, completely spent. She lays her face against his forehead. Sanford springs out of his chair, making sure the Radio Man is dead. He drags the body into the next room.

TIMMY

Everybody okay?

RYE

Yes Timmy, we're okay. And that was some damn act. You scared the hell out of me.

TIMMY

Yeah...well you put enough morphine in me launch the space shuttle.

He manages a grin. Then gets serious.

TIMMY

Take the gun now, Rye...you know what to do...

They lock eyes. She nods. Kisses him. Crosses to Lyle.

RYE

Listen to me, honey. I have to go help Willie, or those men will come back and hurt us. I need you to be very, very brave now, okay? I'm going to leave you here with Sanford and your daddy.

Sanford returns, carrying the Uzi.

RYE

You know how to use that thing?

SANFORD
Hell no...I'll just scare 'em to
death.

She grins. Automatic fire echoes from the lobby. She and Sanford exchange a frightened look. Rye kneels next to Timmy.

RYE
I love you.

BACK IN THE LOBBY

Jorgenson chases shadows, spraying bullets all around the lobby. The clip empties. He yanks it out.

WILLIE

Erupts from the water and dives out the door.

JORGENSON

Tosses the gun aside. Whips out his Navy knife follows.

EXT. HOTEL

Willie is in the rubber raft, madly paddling.

JORGENSON

Throws himself into the water, knife in his teeth, swimming in furious strokes.

RYE

Racing down the stairs. Reaches the lobby. It's empty. She sashes towards the door.

HER POV

Jorgenson catches Willie. Slashes the raft. Air gushes out.

WILLIE

Swings the paddle at Jorgenson.

JORGENSON

Ducks, grabs for Willie, pulling him into the water.

RYE

Aims the pistol. She can't shoot. Their bodies are locked together.

JORGENSON

Slashes at Willie with the knife. Willie blocks the blow. They disappear under the water.

RYE

Gets on one knee, in firing position.

JORGENSON AND WILLIE

Have surfaced, hands at each other's throats.

Willie gets the palm of his hand under Jorgenson's chin, forcing his head back. But Jorgenson is massively strong, oblivious to knife wound in his shoulder. He goes for Willie's eyes, digging his thumbs into the sockets.

RYE

Cocks the pistol, but clouds have covered the moon, and she can't see who she's aiming at.

WILLIE

Has to let go, trying to keep Jorgenson from gouging him. Jorgenson punches him in the face, hard. Willie is stunned. Jorgenson pushes him under.

RYE

Sighting along the pistol. The wind gusts. The clouds part; moonlight filters through. Only the blond giant is visible. BAM! BAM! BAM! Rye lets it fly.

JORGENSON

Mouth agape. Doesn't have a clue what hit him. Lets Willie go. He bursts out of the water, gasping for breath. Jorgenson is in his face, blood flowing from his mouth. He pitches forward, dead.

Willie looks around for his savior. Sees Rye in the doorway, holding the gun.

He swims to the hotel. Rye wades out to help him. They grab on to each other and hug.

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE

Willie is seated by the bed wrapped in a blanket. Everyone gathered around. Sanford cradles Lyle, who stares shyly at Willie. Rye tends to the gash in Willie's cheek. Timmy watches them with glazed eyes.

WILLIE

That mother ship is out there, sure as hell. I expect they'll be showing up any time now.

RYE

What will they do?

Willie shrugs.

WILLIE

I don't know.

SANFORD

Well, it don't matter one bit what the hell they do. We still have to get the bullet out of Timmy. We lost enough time as it is.

Willie and Timmy look at each other.

WILLIE

How bad is it?

Timmy nods; bad as it can be.

WILLIE

Well..let's get at it.

Sanford picks up the medical bag.

SANFORD

I'll sterilize these babies.

He heads out of the room. Willie and Rye face each other.

WILLIE

You get washed up. I'll get the table ready.

She nods. Starts off. He grabs her. Timmy watches them.

WILLIE

Nice shooting out there.

They gaze at each other a beat. Then she goes.

Willie drags the dining room table into the bedroom. Finds a clean sheet in the closet and covers the table. Glances at Lyle, who follows his movements.

WILLIE

You're a brave little boy, Lyle.

LYLE

Thanks, Uncle Willie.

Willie pulls the blankets off Timmy.

WILLIE

We're gonna have to move you.

Timmy nods weakly.

TIMMY

Looks like there's gonna be another Peacock grave in the old family plot.

WILLIE

Don't be getting morbid on me, big brother. Take more than a bullet hole to put you away.

TIMMY

What made you come back?

Willie shrugs.

WILLIE

You're my blood.

Timmy watches as Willie moves to table to the center of the room.

TIMMY

There's something I want you to know.

WILLIE
What's that?

TIMMY
All this time, I let you take the blame for Paul Gage's death, knowing it was my fault too.

WILLIE
Let's quit the crap, okay? I was drunk and speeding.

TIMMY
Shut up and listen. I took your woman, and I know what that did to you.

Willie turns away.

WILLIE
I don't want to hear this.

Starts smoothing the sheet over the table.

TIMMY
I never wanted you around 'cause I was afraid there still might be something between you and her.

Willie turns back.

WILLIE
Well there's not, so stuff a sock in it.

TIMMY
If I don't make it, Willie...

Just then, there's a loud buzz of static across the room. Then:

RADIO VOICE
Dark Eyes, this is your momma callin'
...what is your status?

Willie springs to his feet. Finds the radio parked in the corner.

Rye and Sanford stop what they're doing. Filled with dread. Willie grabs the receiver.

WILLIE

You listen good now. They're is no more Dark Eyes. They're all dead. Now why don't you turn that ship around and head outta here.

INTERCUT WITH THE FREIGHTER

Suggers stands behind his radio man. He grabs the transmitter.

SUGGERS

Who is this?

WILLIE

(through the receiver)
This is Willie Peacock. And this is the second time we've done this dance. You won the first round, but I don't intend to lose this one. So back off.

Suggers's face twists with rage.

SUGGERS

You listen to me, Willie Peacock. I am your worst goddamn nightmare. I am your evil twin from hell.

He slams the transmitter down. Hits the intercom button.

SUGGERS

Raise gunnery. Tell 'em to find that hotel, and lay an egg right in their goddamn laps!

EXT. DECK OF THE JOHN HENRY

The gunnery crew loads a shell into the breech. The muzzle swings around towards the shore, now visible off the bow.

DECK

The gun swivels. A beat. Then; FOOOOOOM!

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE

Willie stares at the silent radio. Glances at Rye. She's

pulling on surgical gloves, face tight with anxiety. Sanford appears from the kitchen, waiting for news. Timmy watches Willie, unafraid.

Willie makes a quick decision.

WILLIE
We've got to move.

Too late. A high pitched whistling over the roar of the ocean.

WILLIE
Down!

He dives for floor.

WHAAMMM! The hotel is ROCKED. Windows shatter. Rye and Lyle are tossed to the floor. Sanford is thrown across the room. Timmy's bed collapses, throwing him on his face, where he's frozen in a paroxysm of pain.

CRACK! A ceiling beam tears loose, and crashes down. Sanford is buried.

A stunned heartbeat passes. Willie is quickly by Timmy's side. Rye goes to Lyle, who grits his teeth, bearing his pain stoically.

Timmy's eye's open. He can't speak. He just grabs Willie's hand.

RYE
(frantic)
Willie...

He looks up at her.

ACROSS THE ROOM

Sanford lies unmoving, with the beam across his throat. Willie jumps up, grabs the beam and throws it off.

Sanford's breath rattles in his chest. Flecks of blood bubble at the corners of his mouth.

WILLIE
Nooooo!

Sanford's body vibrates in his death throes, then goes still.

His dead eyes stare at the ceiling. Willie won't let go of his hand.

Rye joins them, putting her hand on Willie's shoulder.

WILLIE
(softly)
My old friend...

The radio buzzes to life. Willie grabs it.

WILLIE
Yeah...

INTERCUT WITH JOHN HENRY

Suggers is on the transmitter.

SUGGERS
I hope you got the message, Willie Peacock. Now unless you do exactly as I tell you, I'm going to destroy the hotel, then I'm going to flatten your town.

BACK TO WILLIE

WILLIE
I'm listening.

SUGGERS

SUGGERS
It's simple. Bring me the money, Mr. ex-SEAL, and we'll sail out of your life.

WILLIE

Hangs up the receiver. Shuts down the radio.

He covers Sanford with a blanket. Rye puts an arm around him. Willie has a faraway look in his eye.

RYE
I'm sorry, Willie.

Long exhale from Willie.

WILLIE

Lyle okay?

RYE

Yes, thank god...he's a tough kid.

WILLIE

Like his mom. Now...let's get my brother on the table.

Rye takes Timmy's feet, Willie his shoulders. Together they lay him on the table. Pain shoots through Timmy's body, taking his breath away.

He reaches for Willie, grabbing him by the shirt.

TIMMY

You going for those bastards?

Willie nods.

TIMMY

Don't take any prisoners.

Willie plants a kiss on his forehead. Heads into the next room.

Find's Jorgenson's sack, left by the radio. It's full of plastic explosives, detonators, grenades for the launcher and ammo clips for the Uzi. He closes it up and shoulders it. Turns to Rye.

WILLIE

Do your best.

She looks into his face.

RYE

Come back to us, Willie.

They're standing inches apart, gazing into each other's faces. They're suddenly in each other's arms. She kisses him hard.

TIMMY

Watching them. They disengage. Willie heads out the door. Rye comes into his room. Stands over him and takes his hand.

TIMMY
You still love him, don't you?

She picks up the black medical bag.

RYE
You ready?

He nods.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL

Willie climbs into the remaining rubber raft. At the rear, a tarpaulin covers a mound of equipment. Willie pulls it back. Underneath is the scuba gear; wet suit, fins, masks, oxygen tanks, a pair of collapsible grappling hooks, and a long knife.

Willie paddles the raft to the sea wall.

BEYOND

The ocean churns madly.

IN THE SKY

Thick clouds have shut out the moon, and the wind is steady again.

AT THE HORIZON

A beam of light shines in the blackness; it's the freighter, cruising the mouth of the bay.

Willie navigates the raft to the sea wall. Climbs out and drags the raft after him. Huge waves pound the wall, almost sucking Willie over.

He whips off the tarpaulin and grabs the wet suit and pulls it on. Lifts the oxygen tanks out, kneeling to adjusting the straps.

He stops cold; the twin barrels of a shotgun are pointed in his face. It's George Gage.

GAGE
Dyin' time, Willie.

He cocks both barrels. Willie looks him in the eye.

WILLIE

You're a religious man, ain't you,
George? Eye for an eye and all that?

George says nothing. His mouth a thin line, pulled tight with hate.

WILLIE

You shoot me now...the man on that
boat...

(gestures to the freighter)
will kill my brother, and Lyle
and the woman I love. They already
got Sanford Adams. So you pull the
trigger...and you'll have us all.
That what you want, George? Will
that even the score?

George's hands tremble on the gun. A wave crashes over them.

WILLIE

You let me finish this...
(jerks his thumb at the sea)
and if I live, we'll settle it. If
I don't...the debt's paid anyway.

They stare at each other.

WILLIE

What do you say, George?

His eyes bore into Willie. Impossible to read.

WILLIE

I gotta go now.

Willie turns back to the oxygen tank. A big wave crashes the wall. Willie glances back at George. He's gone.

Willie drops the tank, and runs along the wall, frantically searching for George.

HIS POV

The ocean has him. For a split second, George's terrified face is visible before the sea sucks him under.

No hesitation. Willie jumps in after. His powerful strokes

are useless. The maelstrom tosses him between waves and consumes him. Now they're both gone.

The ocean boils, crashing against the sea wall. Still no sign of them.

Suddenly, Willie bursts to the surface, with George locked under his arm. But the ocean won't give up, pulling them under again. But neither does Willie. He thrashes to the surface, kicking furiously with his fins.

This time he catches a wave and rides it to the wall. He pulls George out, turns him over and sets to work reviving him. Blows into his mouth, and jams on his chest. Then does it again.

George twitches, rolls over and vomits, gasping for breath. Another wave nearly knocks them both over the wall.

WILLIE

You'll be alright now. Better get outta here.

Willie pats him on the back and goes back to work, struggling into the oxygen tank.

George sits up and watches him, expressionless.

Willie tosses the raft into the surf and jumps in after. The little craft is nearly flipped, but Willie manages to get the twin Mercury engines into position. They kick over with a roar, and Willie sets off, disappearing into the black night.

George struggles to his feet, looking after Willie. All the fight has gone out of him. Another wave nearly knocks him flat. He turns and moves along the sea wall towards the hotel.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOOKOUT TOWER, FREIGHTER

Two sailors scan the bay through binoculars.

1ST SAILOR

Got 'im!

He points for the other, who picks up the direction and swings his glasses around. The first sailor grabs the intercom.

1ST SAILOR
Lookout to bridge...

INT. BRIDGE

Suggers picks up the intercom, listens a beat, then lifts his binoculars, scanning the water. Finds Willie.

SUGGERS
(into intercom)
Let's get the spot on him.

A beacon of light shoot out over the water.

SUGGERS
Okay kid...come to mamma...

EXT. OCEAN

Willie guides the raft through the swells. The ocean washes over him, but the twin Mercs keep him on course. Suddenly, he is bathed in light.

INT. BRIDGE

Suggers follows Willie's progress through his binoculars. Hits the intercom.

SUGGERS
Bridge to operations...let's give
him a welcoming committee...

EXT. DECK

A heavily armed squad of sailors fans out along the deck. Two of them break out the ropes and the gaffer's hooks.

EXT. OCEAN

Willie finds the collapsible grappling hook, and snaps it into position. Slides a face mask into place, and fits the mouth piece for the oxygen tank between his teeth.

The raft plunges into a deep trough. The ship is momentarily hidden from view.

INT. BRIDGE

Suggers still following Willie through his binoculars. His face suddenly darkens.

SUGGERS
Son of a bitch!

HIS POV

The raft is empty, spinning in the surf.

Suggers grabs the intercom.

SUGGERS
Bridge to lookout! Sweep the
lights. Don't lose that raft!

Suggers hits another switch on the intercom.

SUGGERS
Engine room! All back one third.
(now to his pilot)
Bring her around sweet for me.

He grabs a bullhorn and bounds out the bridge door. The howling wind assaults him. He leans over the rail, switching on his bullhorn.

SUGGERS
(shouted to his deck crew)
Bring that raft in, and keep a
sharp eye out for him.

He gets a salute from his sailors. Takes a moment to scan the wild sea. Turns and quickly heads back inside. Grabs the intercom again.

SUGGERS
(into intercom)
To all hands...this is the captain.
Break out the weapons, and stay on
your toes. This is condition one...
combat alert.

Suggers hangs up and heads out of the bridge, taking the stairs down two at a time.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Suggers opens his locker and takes out his service revolver. Checks the clip. Straps it on.

EXT. OCEAN

Willie swims just below the surface, lugging the waterproof sack and the grappling hook.

ON THE SURFACE

The freighter turns into the waves to pick up the raft.

WILLIE

Surfaces an arm's reach from the ship as it surges by. He tosses the grappling hook and holds on as the hook catches, and the sea SLAMS him into the hull.

Hand over hand, he pulls himself over the railing, onto the deck. He lays on the deck a moment, catching his breath.

Quickly gets to his feet and slips into a nearby hatchway.

INT. SHIP

Willie kicks out of his flippers and opens the sack. Picks out a belt full of grenades and straps it on. Fits a new clip into the Uzi and slips it over his shoulder.

Grabs the bag again and opens the hatch door.

EXT. DECK

Willie makes his way along the deck towards the bow, while the ship plunges through the surf. He holds to the railing as the ocean cascades over him.

AT THE BOW

The sailors are trying to bring the rubber raft in.

Willie makes it to the deck gun housing. Making sure he is unseen, he opens the bag, withdrawing a handful of plastique. He lines the base of the gun housing, and fits it with a detonator. Attaches the detonation wire and quickly moves away.

A wave nearly topples him overboard. But he hangs on. The ship levels out again. Willie yanks the detonation wire.

FAZODOOM! The deck gun is BLOWN off its moorings and goes skidding across the bow.

THE SAILORS

That haven't been killed by the blast are crushed and tossed into the ocean as the massive gun slams through the railing, toppling into the sea.

INT. BRIDGE

Suggers is apoplectic.

SUGGERS

My ship!

He hits the emergency button. A siren resounds through the ship. KA0000GA! KA000000GA!

He draws his .45 and dashes out of the bridge.

INT. SHIP

Mayhem! Red emergency light flashes. The alarm wails. Sailors running in confusion. Officers shouting orders.

WILLIE

Hidden in a doorway. Waits for the coast to clear. Pops through the hatchway and heads into the bowels of the ship.

A trio of sailors runs along the passage way. Startled to see Willie. They go for their guns. Willie drills them with the Uzi. Their bodies scatter like bowling pins. Willie runs past and down another set of stairs.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

The rhythmic thrumming of powerful engines. The toughest grease monkeys in the service work down here, oblivious to the pitching of the ship, and the blistering, stagnant air.

Willie appears in the hatchway. Two beefy sailors spot him, give the alarm. The crew goes for the guns. Willie vaults the railing and dives behind the engine pumps.

A GREASE MONKEY

Blasts away. Jumps after him.

WILLIE

Ducks behind the pistons. Yanks two grenades from his belt.

Pulls the pins and rolls them across the floor. FLAM! The engine crew goes down, screaming.

Willie scampers out of hiding. Finds the engine's main drive shaft. Opens his bag and pulls out the last of the plastique. Packs the drive shaft where it meets the outer hull. Primes it with a detonation device. Rolls out the detonation wires.

BLAM! A gunshot sends Willie spinning on his back, grimacing in pain. Blood runs from a hole in his shoulder.

SUGGERS

Stands in the hatchway, .45 in his hand, eyes wild.

SUGGERS

Not to my ship, you bastard!

Willie struggles away. BLAM! Another shot punctures a cylinder an inch from his head.

Willie slides behind the engine housing, reeling from pain.

SUGGERS

Leaps down the stairs, closing in for the kill.

WILLIE

Pulls his knife. Crawls into a sitting position, cradling his bloody arm.

HIS POV

Suggers's feet, just around the corner.

SUGGERS

The hunter. Gun poised to shoot. Every sense alert. He springs around the corner.

WILLIE

FLINGS the knife. It hits Suggers high in the chest. He staggers, getting off a shot before he hits the ground and the gun skids away.

Willie crawls to the detonation wires. Suggers is still alive. Sees Willie, and crawls for his gun. He's got it. Wheels around.

Willie has the detonation wires in his hands. Suggers raises the gun. Willie yanks the wire.

FLAAMMM! Willie and Suggers are flung back. Water explodes through a gaping hole in the hull.

The ship tilts at a crazy angle as the engine room fills with water.

PASSAGEWAYS

Men run for the stairs. The cry of 'Abandon Ship' is heard up and down the decks.

INT. BRIDGE

Chaos. Sailors abandon their posts, rushing for the hatchways.

EXT. SHIP

The ship begins to flounder, veering straight through the waves, towards shore.

ON THE DECK

Sailors race for the life boats. The raging surf sweeps several overboard. The ocean closes over them. The freighter is a wounded juggernaut, out of control.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Willie surfaces under the hatchway stairs, gasping for breath. Face etched with pain. Begins to pull himself up the stairs. Water surges over him. He fights to keep afloat, reaching the hatchway.

He tumbles through, but it takes all his strength. Blood bubbles through his soaked shirt.

He gets up, staggering along the passageway. Two panicked sailors rush past, knocking Willie out of the way. Suddenly, the lights go out, plunging the ship into darkness. Frantic shouting echoes along the decks.

Willie crawls up the next set of stairs, his strength failing.

ENGINE ROOM

Like a specter from hell, Suggers drags himself through the hatchway. Willie's knife is still buried in his chest. His eyes burn with the feverish intensity of the walking dead.

Somehow he manages to keep himself upright. Hugging the walls for support, he stalks Willie.

EXT. SHIP

The life boats are away. Men left behind jump into the ocean, trying to swim to the lifeboats. The ocean is merciless, swamping the lifeboats and pummeling the swimmers into oblivion.

The ship itself continues to take water, but still powers through the surf.

INT. SHIP

Deadly quiet and dark. Willie makes it to the bridge, stumbling to the tiller. Breath heaving, he fights the wheel, pulling it around so that the dying ship is headed straight for destruction on the shore breakers.

THE BRIDGE DOOR

Flies open; it's Suggers. In a burst of insane strength, he throws himself at Willie.

They land on the floor, Suggers hands around Willie's throat.

Willie is too weak to fight him off. The life is being squeezed out of him.

EXT. SHIP

The freighter is closing in on the breakers. Closer. Closer.

INT. BRIDGE

Suggers lets go of Willie's throat. Hands go to his chest. He yanks the knife out, and raises it to administer the coup d'grace to Willie.

WILLIE'S POV

The knife poised to strike. Suggers' insane eyes. Willie is beaten.

CRAAAAAASH! The ship SLAMS onto the breakers. Suggers flies across the bridge, smashing his head against the wall. He lies still.

Willie skids along the floor, caroms into the tiller. For a moment, nothing moves. The storm shrieks all around the ship. Waves pound its decimated hull.

The ship tilts over. Water floods into the bridge. Willie is submerged. He comes up coughing and spitting water. Struggles to his feet.

EXT. SHIP

Willie makes his way along the deck, holding on to the railing. Climbs over the side, and drops onto the rocks, just a few feet down.

The surf claws at him, but the Willie fights his way along the breakers to the sea wall.

An unearthly GROAN makes him turn. The sea drags the freighter off the rocks, flips her over, and swallows her.

Willie turns back and passes out. A wave crashes over him.

A figure appears out of the storm. It's Rye. She drags Willie off the wall and manages to get him into her row boat. She takes the oars and rows for the hotel.

Willie stirs, looks at his savior.

RYE

It's okay, Willie. It's all over.

WILLIE

Timmy?

RYE

I got the bullet.

He lays back on the seat, giving way to exhaustion and pain.

DISSOLVE

FADE INTO:

EXT. FORT FOSTER, TWO DAYS LATER - MORNING

A beautiful, cloudless day. Brilliant sunshine.

AT THE BEACH

The sea wall, with its gaping holes. Beyond, the ocean is flat and glassy. Completely calm.

AT THE BREAKERS

A couple of Coast Guard helicopters hover over the wreckage of the freighter, now exposed on the sand flats. Out in the bay, another Coast Guard cutter sits at anchor, while a crew of frogmen dive for bodies.

MAIN STREET

The flood water has receded, leaving the place looking like a war zone. The street is strewn with debris; dead fish, sea weed, garbage, and the uprooted tree. Here and there, a decimated building; the police station, the bank, Cora's.

The town is slowly coming back to life. Store owners pry the storm boarding off their windows and haul sand bags away from doorways.

A MUNICIPAL TRUCK

Inches along the street, followed by a crew which tosses storm debris into its trash compacter.

AT THE BANK

A crew of men in white shirts examines the damage.

WILLIE

Cruises along the street on his motorcycle, his shoulder wrapped in a special brace. People stop what they're doing to watch him pass.

AT THE HOSPITAL

Willie pulls to a halt, shuts down his machine. Goes inside.

INT. HOSPITAL

Timmy lies in bed, torso heavily wrapped, tubes plugged in everywhere. Rye sits by his side, holding his hand. Willie enters, drops into a chair. Timmy gives him a weak smile. Rye steadies her gaze on him.

WILLIE

Figured I'd get a jump on the day
while the jumpin' was good. Wanted
to say goodbye...again.

RYE

All packed?

WILLIE

Yeah...

Timmy turns to him.

TIMMY

Why don't you stay, Willie?

WILLIE

Too much history here, bro. 'Sides,
what would I do?

TIMMY

I need deputies.

WILLIE

Hell...I'm no lawman.

TIMMY

How 'bout just being my brother
then?

They look at each other a silent beat.

WILLIE

I'm always gonna be that.

They clasp hands.

TIMMY

You won't change your mind?

WILLIE

I appreciate it...but I gotta get
someplace new...start something of
my own.

He looks at Rye again. She doesn't look away.

RYE

That'll be easy for you, Willie.

Just then, the door flies open. Lyle hobbles in on crutches, his leg encased in a cast.

LYLE

Uncle Willie!...watch this...

He does a little dance step with his crutches, trips and sprawls on the floor. Willie and Rye jump to their feet. But Lyle hops up laughing, and hobbles off down the hall.

Willie and Rye turn to each other.

WILLIE

Well...guess this is it.

RYE

Don't be a stranger, Willie.

They hug. He goes to Timmy, looks down at him a moment. They grin at each other.

WILLIE

See ya 'round.

Willie turns and leaves. Rye watches him go a moment, then takes her seat by Timmy's side.

EXT. HOSPITAL

Willie exits the hospital, pulling on his riding gloves. Starts down the stairs. Stops short.

HIS POV

The whole town is gathered. Willie is unnerved for a moment. But he makes his way through the crowd. The townspeople converge. One by one they shake his hand, or pat him on the back.

TOWNSPEOPLE

Thanks, Willie...We're grateful,
Willie...god bless you Willie...
you saved us, Willie...why don't
you stick around, Willie...come
back to us, Willie...

Willie is immobilized with emotion, shaking hands and accepting the town's gratitude, until the crowd thins down, and the townspeople head off.

Willie is left alone on the street. He gets to his cycle.

GAGE (OS)

This is where we finish it, Willie.

Willie spins. George Gage steps out from behind a tree, pointing a pistol into his face.

WILLIE

George...

He and Willie are eye to eye. CLICK! He pulls the hammer back. His finger curls on the trigger.

A long beat.

Gage lowers the gun. Long exhale.

GAGE

It is finished.

He turns and walks away, dropping the gun.

Willie gets on his machine. He kicks it over. He puts it into gear and heads up the street.

EXT. FORT FOSTER

Willie gets to the top of the hill. Stops the bike. Looks down on his town. It's looks like a nice place to live, clustered at the edge of the peaceful ocean.

Willie slips the machine into gear and ZO0000OMS off.

THE END