All The Wrong Men

written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT GUN RANGE - DAY

The sun is high. Heat waves ripple across a hot concrete pad littered with shell casings. TWO MEN roast in the heat at the final bay of the firing line.

A RANGE ATTENDANT in a faded uniform and a straw hat pushes a broom, sweeping brass. He hides his brown skin from the sun as he works his way down the firing line.

A pistol fires. A steel target PINGS.

HAYDEN SEGER (20s) takes aim behind the barrel of a Smith & Wesson Model 10. A tattered cotton utility shirt and aviators hide a sweaty, greasy kid. Just over his shoulder, Range Attendant sweeps casings.

RANGEFIRE.

PING.

Beat.

RANGEFIRE.

Beat.

RANGEFIRE.

PING.

THEN, in the distance:

BANG!

BANG!

A distinctive cadence.

The Range Attendant stops sweeping.

BANG!

Hayden searches the firing line --

But sees nobody...

BANG!

CUT TO:

SATURDAY

SERIES OF SHOTS - MORNING

>> Hayden dry-fires a revolver at paper targets from his couch. COPS playing on TV.

>> Hayden jogs in a security t-shirt. Fires invisible shots at an imaginary fleeing suspect

>> Hayden field strips his Model 10 and times himself assembling it. DIRTY HARRY playing on TV.

>> Hayden at a tactical gun range, taking aim from behind hay bales, ducking between barricades.

EXT. MACGUFFIN DATA SYSTEMS OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Hayden pulls into the parking lot in a 1970s model wagon.

Car parks.

Door swings open.

His black boots land on the damp pavement.

A cigarette butt glows red as it lands by his foot and is stamped out.

His pants are pressed, his belt is buckled.

He opens his revolver revealing a fully loaded piece, spins the wheel and SNAPS it closed.

Hayden tucks the revolver beneath his shirt and smooths the shirt over it. He looks in the side view mirror to ensure his mustache is laying flat.

INT. MACGUFFIN DATA SYSTEMS OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Hayden walks the empty halls with swagger and confidence.

He punches a timecard on the wall without breaking stride.

SECURITY OFFICE

He plops down into his office chair.

Hayden looks at the silent, black and white feed from sixteen security cameras on a monitor.

A clipboard left by dayshift indicates

'BREAK ROOM COFFEE MACHINE BROKEN'.

INT. VAN PARKED OUTSIDE MACGUFFIN - NIGHT

TWO SHADY GUYS sit in a darkened van. TOUSSAINT (50s) is wiry and French-accented. He looks like an artist whose preferred medium is scandal. CONRAD (40s) is American. He's a brute with the conscience of a rattlesnake. He sits in the passenger seat with a Big Gulp.

Quietly, the radio plays.

Headlights illuminate the windows of the van as a brown station wagon passes by and parks near the entrance to the building. Toussaint watches the wagon as Conrad takes another sip from his Big Gulp.

The clock in the van reads 7:56.

TOUSSAINT
Right on time.

Across the lot, the wagon parks near the building. Hayden gets out and goes through his routine. He walks like someone who thinks they're starring in a movie about them.

TOUSSAINT
(eyes on Hayden, annoyed)
Turn the fucking music off.

Conrad shoots a disrespectful look at Toussaint. But he turns the radio off.

Hayden enters the office building.

Against the night sky the building is a shadowy character with a glowing smile that says ‘MacGuffin Data Systems’.

INT. MACGUFFIN DATA SYSTEMS OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Hayden scans the camera feeds. Nothing on the monitor deserves his attention. His workspace has designated places for pens, tape, and documents.

At the other end of the countertop workspace, things progressively get more cluttered.

Magazines, crumpled papers and ashtray, overflowing with butts.

A pair of crusty boots rest on the counter.

They belong to STEVIE MILLER (20s), the other night shift guard -- and the only thing crustier than his boots. With a cig resting between his lips, his eyes squint through the smoke at the November 28, 1983 issue of Sports Illustrated.

The one with Michael Jordan and Sam Perkins on the front.

STEVIE
You'd think Michael Jordan was the next Moses Malone the way these journalists write about him.

Stevie's words don't register. Hayden turns away from the monitor.

STEVIE
I don't get it.

Hayden scans the cover of the magazine.

UNC RANKED #1

HAYDEN
Well, I mean, UNC is #1.

STEVIE
It's preseason. Means exactly dick.

He doesn't notice he misses the ashtray when he flicks his cigarette in its general direction.

STEVIE
You think Jordan can take UNC to a title? It's not gonna happen. Jordan's gonna have four fouls by halftime -- half the time.

Stevie backhands the article.

STEVIE
And there's no Worthy to put the team on his back anymore. Perkins definitely can't do it. They act like this kid Jordan walks on water ever since he made the shot to win it against Georgetown. Everybody knew the ball was going to Worthy.

Hayden fixates on some inconsequential thing on the screen.

STEVIE
He got the ball because the defense went zone to account for Worthy down low.
(Beat)
Let me tell you something, Hayden, some guys can make a career out of being the clutch, big-time-shot guy... hand in their face, double-team, whatever.

Flicks his ash.

STEVIE
I don't see it in him. Not when everyone knows he's getting the ball. That would take some real stones, ya know? Do that and I'll be impressed, ya know?

Hayden's eyes stay glued on the monitor.

HAYDEN
Yea. Totally.

He extinguishes the cigarette in the overflowing ashtray.

STEVIE
Besides, if there ever was anything special about him, Smith'll have it coached out of him before he gets a chance to go pro -- He's a real team-first guy...

Hayden is hardly listening. Stevie buries his face behind the magazine again.

STEVIE
It says right here they're thinking of starting Jordan in right field this year.

HAYDEN
(disengaged)
Yeah. That's what I heard too.

Stevie drops the magazine and rolls his eyes.

STEVIE
Hayden.

Hayden doesn't look over.

HAYDEN
Hmm?

STEVIE
Michael Jordan. Basketball. He's a fucking basketball player.

HAYDEN
What?

STEVIE
You're not listening to a word I'm saying, man!

HAYDEN
I am, I am...

STEVIE
And? Do you have any thoughts on Jordan?

HAYDEN
I know he’s not a baseball player, man...

STEVIE
No shit, Numbnuts. But do you? Have? Any opinions?

HAYDEN
Stevie --

Hayden steals a moment away from the monitor

HAYDEN
He‘s young like us. He’s dedicated. He’s always looking for ways to make an impact. I think he knows when to take the shot.

Hayden‘s attention runs back to the security feed.

STEVIE
Can you just take your eyes off those damn monitors for five minutes? Dude, we sit here every night and nothing ever happens. I just wanna bullshit about some normal, random, guy shit. There's nothing on the monitor -- you don't even have to watch them! Nothing ever happens!

HAYDEN
That's not true.

STEVIE
Oh? What happened?

HAYDEN
Last Tuesday.

STEVIE
What happened Tuesday?

HAYDEN
Camera 12 went out.

Stevie is dumbfounded as Hayden points to the feed from Camera 12.

A SOLID GRAY BOX.

STEVIE
You need a girlfriend, man.

He pulls a folded piece of junk mail from his pocket and tosses it onto the counter in front of Hayden.

A Circuit City ad with a stereo system circled.

HAYDEN
What's this?

STEVIE
This Friday, I'll have saved up enough to make that bad boy mine.

Hayden's gaze wanders across the page, leaving the stereo system and landing on a surveillance camera.

HAYDEN
This is what we need.

He tilts the page toward Stevie.

STEVIE
What do you need video surveillance for?

HAYDEN
Not at my house, we need it here.

STEVIE
Dude, we have sixteen cameras on this property and 24 hours a day they all show nothing, nonstop.
(MORE)

STEVIE (CONT'D)
That's 16 times 24... That's a lot of hours of zilch, what do we need another camera for?

HAYDEN
Camera 12.

STEVIE
You think about this shit all night, huh?

Hayden jumps at the invitation to elaborate.

HAYDEN
Did you know the light by the west entrance cuts out sometimes?

STEVIE
Call maintenance.

EXT. WEST ENTRANCE - NIGHT

An exterior door glows orange beneath an incandescent fixture. Toussaint's van lurks in the shadows. The light flickers then goes out.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
It's a blind spot in the surveillance. A security threat, but it isn't the only one...

INT. 5TH FLOOR - NIGHT

A long, straight corridor. It takes a while to walk the length of this hall, but at the end of the hall,

A CORNER MOUNTED CAMERA

points down the intersecting hallway. Finally it rotates toward the long, straight corridor. Recording light aglow.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
On the 5th floor, Camera 8 has a delayed pan. Look here. 23 seconds. You could apply for a new library card in the time this camera takes to scan both hallways.

INT. LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

An egress door in a concrete room waits beneath an analogue clock. The clock shows 7:59 as the second hand is nearly to 12. The clock slips out of view when

THE ALARM SYSTEM CLICKS

A tiny display light illuminates.

Printed beside the light: 'ARMED'

HAYDEN (V.O.)
And did you ever realize that the loading dock alarm doesn‘t arm until 8 o'clock?

INT. VAN PARKED OUTSIDE MACGUFFIN - NIGHT

Conrad unfolds a building schematic across the dash while he describes his reconnaissance to Toussaint with a flashlight.

CONRAD
The breaker panel is right here.

EXT. MACGUFFIN DATA SYSTEMS OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Inside a well-lit room, Conrad works at the breaker panel.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL the building's entire facade.

Conrad flips three switches.

The lights go out in three blocks, sequentially, including the breaker room.

CONRAD (V.O.)
Access to it is going to be easy, but there is a radio dead spot in this area. We’ll have to come up with some other way to green light from here.

From the darkened window, Conrad flashes his flashlight three times toward the van, parked outside.

INT. VAN PARKED OUTSIDE MACGUFFIN - CONTINUOUS

TECH GUY sits in the back of the van, his face partially illuminated by some glowing screens. He sees the flashlight signal and reaches for his radio.

TECH GUY
Toussaint, go.

INT. 1ST FLOOR - NIGHT

Toussaint moves stealthily through a corridor. As he passes through a shadow, A FAULTY SURVEILLANCE CAMERA

hangs overhead. Wires are disconnected at the back, no red light glows on the front, no motion at all.

CONRAD (V.O.)
See this corridor here? There's no surveillance at all. Hasn't been working since last Tuesday. Gives us plenty of access to the stairwell. We can take it to the 7th floor.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Conrad ascends the stairs. Toussaint waits there for him, smoking a cigarette, next to a sign that says

'LEVEL 4'

Toussaint takes one last drag and tosses the butt.

He leads the way up to the 7th floor.

INT. 3RD FLOOR - NIGHT

Hayden makes his rounds.

He walks slowly. Purposefully.

Before turning a corner, he checks the

CONVEX SAFETY MIRROR.

CONRAD (V.O.)
We ain't gotta worry about the dumb shit Security guard, but this other guy thinks he's Columbo.
(Beat)
He makes his rounds at exactly 9:30 every night. Breaking into the executive suite is gonna make some noise, so we have to be perfect here.
(MORE)

CONRAD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(Beat)
Too soon and he could see us on video. Too late, he could be right below us on the 6th floor.
(Beat)
So we're looking to bust in while he's on the 2nd or 3rd floor.

As Hayden walks the 3rd floor, the building architecture becomes like the floors of a dollhouse, rocketing up.

4th floor.

5th floor.

6th floor.

7th floor.

Toussaint and Conrad are walking down the hall with a small duffel and a crowbar. They arrive at the door of the executive suite and stand together over the lock.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - NIGHT

Toussaint and Conrad work on the executive door in black and white, one of sixteen feeds on the monitor.

Stevie's nose is buried in Sports Illustrated. Faint music comes from his cheap Walkman headphones. His foot bounces along on the counter top.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Hayden steps into the stairwell on the 3rd floor and moves up to the 4th floor.

He pauses, sniffs, and scans the floor.

He finds Toussaint's discarded cigarette.

He puts it to his lips and takes a puff.

He exhales.

SMOKE

A sharp CLANK echoes down the stairwell. Hayden picks up the pace.

He opens the door to enter the hallway, drawing his pistol from under his shirt.

INT. 7TH FLOOR - NIGHT

Conrad struggles to bust the executive door open with the crowbar. The bar slips in his hands causing a loud CLANK. He slumps against the door, catching his breath while Toussaint stands over him.

CONRAD
You gonna give me a hand or just watch me?

Toussaint pulls a 9mm from his waistband. With his foot, he pushes Conrad out of the way and BLASTS the doorknob off. He exchanges a glance with Conrad and swings the door open.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - NIGHT

Hayden's voice comes over the walkie talkies. Stevie hangs his head in annoyance as he picks up the radio.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Stevie. Come in, Stevie.

STEVIE
Yea?

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Do you see anybody on the monitor?

Beat.

STEVIE
Yea.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
I knew it. Where are they?

STEVIE
4th floor. In the hall.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Shit. Description, gimme their description.

STEVIE
I dunno. 6'2", wearing a security guard costume, looks like a real homo.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Fuck you, Stevie. There's someone up here. Come back me up!

CAMERA 6 SECURITY FEED

The executive suite door has no handle, but nobody appears in the hall.

Nothing to see here!

INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE - NIGHT

Toussaint busts in. He scans the room. Conrad enters behind him and shuts the door.

TOUSSAINT
Find it.

Conrad and Toussaint split up.

Conrad rifles through the top drawer of a filing cabinet. Papers and folders fall like a hurricane to the floor.

Toussaint ransacks the top drawer of a desk across the room. Pencils and staples fly over his shoulder.

A WOODEN BOX

is hidden at the back of the drawer.

Conrad stands on a floor buried under papers.

Toussaint opens the box.

A GOLD ROLEX shines under the fluorescent light -- He shouts in frustration -- and smashes the watch on the desk -- before chucking it.

Conrad moves on from the empty filing cabinet to a closet. Things fly off shelves too fast to even know what they are at this point.

Toussaint goes to open the final desk drawer.

It’s locked...

He beckons for Conrad's attention.

Conrad abandons the closet and grabs his crowbar.

INSIDE THE DRAWER

Toussaint and Conrad's smiling faces peer down.

Toussaint removes a small plastic floppy disk case -- 50 beige floppy disks neatly stored inside -- his finger dances across the tops -- the disks cascade back into place with a flurry of PLASTIC CLICKS.

Toussaint tears through the stack of disks, immediately discarding disk after disk labeled with an official IBM sticker.

INT. 6TH FLOOR - NIGHT

Hayden maneuvers down the hall. Tactical precision with every step. He radios to Stevie.

HAYDEN
(on radio)
Stevie, are you on your way?

STEVIE (V.O.)
Yea almost there.

Above him, a muffled CRASH grabs Hayden's attention. He sprints for the stairwell.

HAYDEN
7th floor! 7th floor!

INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE - NIGHT

Toussaint and Conrad scowl at the now-empty floppy disk case.

Toussaint hoists the bulky computer monitor and launches it across the room.

CRASH!

Conrad peeks out into the hallway.

THE CPU

looks peculiar on the desk without a monitor.

Toussaint fixates...

He presses the spring loaded eject button.

The drive half spits out a

RED FLOPPY DISK

Toussaint pulls the disk from the drive -- a hand scrawled label --

'MACGUFFIN FILES'

A radical SYNTH STING announces the discovery.

INT. 7TH FLOOR - NIGHT

Hayden breathes heavily, he closes in on the executive suite.

He darts into every open door, through the shadows.

Conrad emerges from the executive suite.

Hayden ducks behind an industrial drinking fountain.

Toussaint rejoins Conrad in the hall and puts the red floppy between his teeth. He faces the door as he pulls it closed.

Conrad racks his Browning. He raises it to the back of Toussaints skull.

BANG!

Bloodspray paints the door -- Toussaint falls into a heap on the floor.

Conrad steps over him and reaches for the floppy disk, but

The elevator right behind him

DINGS.

He straightens up.

The doors open, Stevie stands there -- headphones on, reading his Circuit City mailer. He looks up.

STEVIE
Who the fuck are y--

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Stevie hits the elevator floor faster than the mailer he was holding. It falls like an autumn leaf onto his chest.

Three blood spots on the back elevator wall.

CONRAD
Oh, hey, Dumb Shit.

Hayden stifles a panic attack behind the drinking fountain. He opens his revolver. Fully-loaded.

He closes it --

Springs to his feet --

BANG! BANG!

Conrad sees Hayden at the end of the hall.

As the elevator doors close on dead Stevie, he scrambles to get in. The doors close.

The coast is clear.

Hayden approaches dead Toussaint -- weapon drawn.

He kicks his lifeless body.

Beat.

Hayden rolls Toussaint over.

Next to a growing pool of blood. . .

THE RED FLOPPY

He picks it up.

A radical SYNTH STING.

HAYDEN
MacGuffin Files?

Hayden ponders this, then finds the door to the stairwell.

It's so far away.

Danger looms.

He slips the floppy into his shirt pocket, running toward the stairwell. As he nears the door, he yanks a fire alarm.

ERR ERR ERRRRRR! ERR ERR ERRRRRR!

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Conrad faces forward as he descends. He pats his thighs and chest. He searches, horrified.

CONRAD
No. No.
Fuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuck.

Conrad mashes the button to the 7th floor like a Tommy gun. The elevator climbs again. A strobe flashes in the elevator and the fire alarm blares.

ERR ERR ERRRRRR! ERR ERR ERRRRRR!

The elevator doors open and dead Toussaint lays on the floor, face up. Conrad frantically frisks him for the disk.

CONRAD
Fuck! FuckFuckFuckFuckFuck! Fuck me, fuck him, and fuck you too, you fucking - FUCK!

Conrad scans the hallway.

THE PULLED FIRE ALARM

He runs for the stairwell.

INT. HAYDEN'S STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Through the rear window, the streetscape changes rapidly and dramatically.

A CAR HORN whizzes by.

Hayden steadies the vehicle with one hand while he leans to open the glove box. He nearly tosses the floppy in, but he stops himself.

He eyes himself in the rearview.

HAYDEN
Easton.

He hardly slows down as he whips a U-turn.

In his rearview, a pair of headlights also makes a U-turn.

EXT. MACGUFFIN DATA SYSTEMS OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Conrad exits the building from the west entrance. The van is parked just beyond the door, but Conrad doesn't walk toward it, he crosses the lot headed in the opposite direction.

He digs in his pocket --

more and more of the parking lot is revealed --

He approaches the driver side of a

‘73 TRANS AM,

unlocks it,

and slides in.

New Mexico license plate:

‘CONMAN’.

EXT. EASTON’S PLACE - NIGHT

Hayden's station wagon enters frame right, rolls to a stop at the curb.

The engine idles.

He doesn’t move, just watches the rearview.

Finally he kills the engine.

He opens the door and steps out. He closes it carefully. The door doesnt quite latch. He reopens it.

SLAM.

A big dog BARKS in the distance.

He stands there a moment.

It’s a short driveway. Small house on a one-way street. No porch light.

Hayden’s boots drag across the pavement as he walks up. A trash can waits at the curb. He steps over a garden hose.

He checks for the floppy.

He proceeds across the front walkway. A motion sensor flood light illuminates the driveway. A truck in the driveway flaunts HUGE STEER HORNS mounted on the grill.

Hayden reaches the front porch. In the picture-window beside the door, a blanket obscures any view into the house.

Hayden turns to his car. He heads down the steps.

He spins on a heel and turns back to the door.

On the porch, he shakes out his hands. Deep exhale.

Back down the steps, he moves briskly across the yard.

Hayden stops. He rallies -- and marches up the steps.

Hayden raises his hand to the door knocker.

A BRASS WOODPECKER is mounted like it’s perched at a tree trunk. Hayden presses the tail. Its head rears back.

TAP. TAP. TAP.

Hayden checks up and down the street.

TAP. TAP.

Hayden looks out at the world.

Behind him, the blanket in the window peels to one side.

Hayden doesn’t notice he’s been identified.

He reaches for the door knocker one more time.

The door cracks open and a face appears behind the door chain.

EASTON
Hayden, seriously what the fuck?

HAYDEN
I need to come in.

EASTON
Man, I'm not holding, plus you didn't call.

EASTON FAIRWOOD (30s) starts to shut the door in Hayden's face.

Hayden puts his foot in the door.

HAYDEN
I need to come in, Easton. I'm not here for --
(lowers voice)
I'm not here for blow. I need to use your computer. Let me come in.

EASTON
Right now? It's 10:30. You woke me up because you need to use my computer? The fuck is wrong with you?

Hayden cranes his neck to scan the street.

HAYDEN
Yes. I need to use your computer. It's an emergency. Can I pretty please with a mother fucking cherry come into your house at 10:30 and use your computer?

Easton's eyes narrow. He does not mirror Hayden's sense of urgency.

EASTON
Are you being followed? Are you bringing the cops to my house? You better not have any cops on your tail man.

HAYDEN
No! No no. Nobody's coming.

Easton gives him a once-over, unsure.

EASTON
(insincere hospitality)
Suuure! Mi Casa Su Casa. Should I put on a pot of tea?

Easton swings the door open and turns inside. Hayden leans his head out, checks both ways, and shuts the door.

EXT. MACGUFFIN DATA SYSTEMS OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

The colored lights of a half dozen emergency vehicles wash the side of the building. FIRST RESPONDERS move dutifully on site.

Detective GOODMAN (30s), clean-cut, Black, arrives on scene. He walks like a heavyweight boxing champ with a Beretta strapped to his shoulders. A small gold hoop in his left ear catches the reflection of cop lights all around.

FIREFIGHTER
We got here thinking it was a fire. No fire. Two bodies on the 7th floor.

GOODMAN
You guys eat yet?

FIREFIGHTER
Yea, we're good.

Goodman pulls his wallet out, removes a few bills, and sticks them in the FIREFIGHTER's hand.

GOODMAN
There's a diner down the street.
Make sure everybody gets something.

FIREFIGHTER
We already ate, Detective.

Goodman turns to face the firefighter, walking backward into the building.

GOODMAN
(endearingly cocky)
It's not for you, it's for us.
We're gonna be here a while.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - NIGHT

The Sports Illustrated magazine sits on the counter next to the overflowing ashtray. A few OFFICERS are reviewing surveillance footage.

OFFICER 1
North Carolina at the top, huh.

OFFICER 2
Worthy is gone, they're putting a lot of faith in this Jordan kid. What do you think, Goodman?

Goodman enters the room looking for the security footage.

GOODMAN
Kid's an assassin. Which camera caught the action?

OFFICER 1
Camera 6. It's right outside the executive suite.

The tape shows Toussaint close the executive door just before Conrad executes him. Conrad halfway stoops down, but then turns and opens fire into the elevator. A moment later, he flinches and hurries into the elevator.

OFFICER 2
Couple bullet holes at the far end of the hallway. This guy here must've brought a pistol to work today. Logbook says his name is Hayden Seger.

Officer 2 hands Goodman a ledger. Goodman's eyes remain fixed on the tape. Hayden comes into frame. He picks something up off the ground, examines it, and takes off in the direction he came.

OFFICER 1
Whatever it is Seger just picked up, the thug comes back for it in a few minutes.

GOODMAN
Where is Seger now?

OFFICER 1
No clue, Sir.

GOODMAN
If we don't find him before this piece of shit, he's going to be another stain on a wall.
(Beat)
I need to know everything about him. What did the suspect drive away in?

OFFICER 2
We've been through all the surveillance, but the exterior cameras don't provide a lot of coverage. As far as we know, these two came in on foot.

GOODMAN
Ok. I'll have a team assigned to track down our suspect. I'll track Seger down. He's the only living witness. Fired shots at a double homicide suspect and left the scene with whatever it was this guy came here to get. His clock's ticking.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - NIGHT

Easton and Hayden sit at a cheap, four legged table in Easton's dining room, in front of a window covered by a blanket. Oscillating fans keep the place cool.

Easton (30s) looks like a man who has spent considerable time trying to seem dangerous, but honestly, he just looks strung out. He strives for “badass”, but lands somewhere closer to a rock star's vamp cousin.

EASTON
Let me get this straight. He offs his partner and you're hiding behind the drinking fountain?

HAYDEN
(replaying the moment)
I fucking froze.

A thousand-mile stare.

EASTON
Then your colleague steps off the elevator and get whacked right there?

Easton motions violently with finger guns.

HAYDEN
I mean, he's not my colleague, he's a coworker. But yeah...

EASTON
You could've saved him, dude.

HAYDEN
(self-loathing)
I fucking froze.

EASTON
I get that. So, they do all this for a floppy disk... which you go get... after you fire at this maniac --
(the verbal dagger)
and miss?

HAYDEN
Well, he was pretty far away, but yeah.

EASTON
That's wild man. Wild. Damn. If you hadn't kept hounding him over the radio your colleague probably wouldn't've gotten blasted.

HAYDEN
He's just a coworker --

As Hayden speaks, headlights illuminate the blanket draped over the window.

Tires roll by outside. Music blasts from speakers.

Hayden holds his breath.

The headlights vanish. The music fades.

EASTON
(paranoid)
What?

HAYDEN
Nothing.

EASTON
That was not nothing.

HAYDEN
So, can I use your computer?

EASTON
Yea, no problem. You wanna do a line?

HAYDEN
I thought you weren't holding.

EASTON
I lied. I was kinda hoping you'd fuck off.

INT. EASTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

An IBM PC 5150 era machine sits on a table.

Hayden flips the power switch.

CLICK.

The machine hums as a tiny point of light expands across the glass. Green characters appear against the black screen.

As Hayden sits, the screen settles.

C:>

He inserts the floppy into the drive.

The drive chatters as Hayden's eyes scan the monitor.

Hayden's fingers clatter across the keyboard.

CLICKCLACKCLICKCLACK

He hits ENTER.

CLICK.

In Hayden's eyes, the screen reflects. Green characters fill the screen.

His expression changes.

EXT. WEST ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Goodman stands at the driver side window of a police squad car, chatting with the officer inside. They're discussing the the case, but the details of their conversation are inaudible.

The light above the door cuts out.

In the dark, Goodman turns to see the faulty light. He returns to his conversation.

GOODMAN
Our work is cut out for us, gonna be a crazy week.

OFFICER 1
Yea. See you in the morning.

GOODMAN
Okay brother. Tell Melissa and the kids I said hello.

OFFICER 1
10-4.

The light cuts back on and the squad car reflects the soft orange glow as it pulls away.

Something catches Goodman's attention on the ground.

He cocks his head to the side.

A half-smoked cigar and several fresh clumps of ash on the wet pavement. The foil label glistens in the dim light.

MACANUDO

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - NIGHT

Easton's face swings up into view.

Eyes wide.

A $100 bill to his nose.

EASTON
Alright man. What was on the disk?

Hayden's face swings up into view.

Eyes wide.

A $5 bill to his nose.

Conversation moves quickly.

HAYDEN
I dunno.

EASTON
You don't know?

HAYDEN
I don't know.

EASTON
You don't know. What the fuck does that mean? You come over to my house at 10:30 at night, you beg me to use my computer. You have this batshit story to tell me --

Easton's hands gesture that his mind exploded.

EASTON
about your colleague and these fucking maniacs and you don't fucking know?

HAYDEN
The disk is fucking encrypted. I dunno.

EASTON
Encrypted? What?

EXT. EASTON'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Conrad's Trans Am enters frame right, slow-rolling past the house.

HAYDEN (O.S.)
You know, 'encrypted'. It's like fuckin password protected. It's secure. It's encrypted. I couldn't see what's on it.

Headlights off. The brown station wagon's engine TICKS as it cools.

EASTON (O.S.)
Password protected. Password protected. Well? Did you try guessing the password?

Conrad hunches to get a view out the passenger side window. He locks Easton's street number in his mind.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

HAYDEN
Yes! I tried everything I could think of, I tried MacGuffin, I tried --

EASTON
Dude, is that a fucking $5 bill?!

HAYDEN
Yeah.

EASTON
Dude, you cannot be tootin' with a fiver, are you nuts?

HAYDEN
What's the big deal?

EASTON
You know how many G-strings that things been tucked into? How many sweaty, stinky, chlamydia ridden wiener wallets it's grazed? How many Tom Dick and Harry's have passed that bill around after they do a little Hairy Dick Tomfoolery? And you've got that thing shoved up your nose giving it the Ole' --

Easton plugs a nostril and snorts an invisible rail like a vaudeville idiot.

EASTON
Hoover Maneuver --
(Beat)
Find a cleaner bill, bud.

HAYDEN
Okay.
Okay.
Jeez.

Beat.

EASTON
I know a guy who can crack it.

HAYDEN
Crack it?

EASTON
The disk. He can get past the password stuff.

HAYDEN
I uh... no, I don't think so. That's not a good idea.

EASTON
Why the hell not?

HAYDEN
(stammering)
Seriously? The guy. The guy. He's gonna come looking for it. He's probably looking for me right now. It's just not a good idea. He saw me, man.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - DAY (2)

Hayden sleeps on a tweed sofa in front of a wood panel wall. He lays belly-down, a bead of drool runs from the corner of his mouth. His hand is partially buried under the same throw pillow his head rests on.

Peeking out from behind the pillow -- the red floppy disk.

The front door CLICKS.

EASTON'S CEILING FAN SQUEAKS as it spins slowly.

Easton and CARL (20s) lean over, silently exchanging eye contact.

Carl wears thick metal frame glasses and a wrinkled graphic tee featuring the NASA Crew insignia badge for STS-1 Columbia. His tube socks have lost their will to live.

Easton and Carl stand over Hayden having an argument in JACKASS SIGN LANGUAGE over who will do it.

A hand gently fishes the floppy out from Hayden's sleepy grasp.

A clumsy moment triggers a sleepy SNORT.

Finally, the red floppy disk is free.

A radical -- but quiet -- SYNTH STING.

EASTON
(whispering)
I have to make a run to pick up some inventory. How long is this gonna take?

CARL
(whispering)
It depends. It could be a while.

EASTON
Do it quick. I'll be back.

BEDROOM

Carl's face reflects in the black glass of the computer monitor as he sits down. Easton's truck REVS and DRIVES OFF. Carl powers on the computer.

CLICK. HUM.

The side of the monitor has an MTV sticker slapped on. Surrounded by wood paneling, Carl cracks his knuckles. Carl looks over his shoulder toward the living room.

MATCH CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM

Carl still checking over his shoulder from Easton‘s room. He faces forward. Hayden still sleeps on the couch.

BEDROOM

Carl readies the floppy.

CARL
(quietly, in falsetto)
Help me, Carl Kenobi. You're my only hope.

He inserts it into the drive.

CLICK.

A progress bar indicates that the files are opening.

10%... 45% 46% 47%... 90%... 100%

CARL
There's no encryption...

Carl shifts in his seat. He begins to understand the significance of what he's seeing. PULL BACK as Carl's understanding broadens.

LIVING ROOM

Hayden stirs on the couch. Around the corner, Carl checks over his shoulder again.

CARL
(quietly)
Fuck.

Panicked keyboard CLACKING.

Hayden feels under the pillow --

He wakes up like a bear trap --

He runs his hand between cushions --

Cushions fly from the couch.

HAYDEN
(shouting)
WHERE THE FUCK IS THE FLOPPY?!?

CARL
I'm in here!

Hayden springs to the bedroom door.

BEDROOM

HAYDEN
Who the fuck are you?

CARL
Carl. You're the security guard?

HAYDEN
What are you doing with my floppy?

CARL
Easton said you needed to hack it. He said it was encrypted, but this thing is raw-doggin' it like Ron Jeremy.

Hayden's demeanor changes.

HAYDEN
(playing it cool)
So, uh... you've seen it then?

CARL
Yes! And listen man, I don't know the plan from here but whatever it is, I'm in.

HAYDEN
Just like that, huh?

CARL
Absolutely.

HAYDEN
I'm gonna take a leak. Pull it up so I can see.

BATHROOM

Hayden thinks frantically as PISS STREAMS into the toilet.

He steadies his breathing.

BEDROOM

Carl is studying the screen, eyes wide.

CARL
(to Hayden in the bathroom)
You have no idea what you have here, man! This is huge!

BANG!

Carl's head explodes onto the monitor as Hayden's pistol smokes from behind him.

Hayden calmly ejects the disk and tucks it away.

EXT. EASTON'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

The brown station wagon squeals away, Hayden behind the wheel.

It exits frame left.

Hold on EASTON'S PLACE.

And hold.

And hold.

From frame right, Conrad's Trans Am enters and parks where Hayden's vehicle was.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

The front door swings open and Conrad's cowboy boots step inside.

The couch has been slept on.

A mirrored tray and some razor blades on the dining room table.

Dead Carl slumps against the wall in front the computer.

Conrad takes it all in and CLICKS his tongue.

INT. MACGUFFIN DATA SYSTEMS OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A photographer is taking pictures of the destruction in the executive suite while a crime team collects evidence. Goodman questions the CEO OF MACGUFFIN, who bends over to pick up his cracked Rolex.

GOODMAN
We've got plenty of surveillance in the hallway to give us a timeline of events, but nothing in here.

CEO OF MACGUFFIN
Have you found Hayden Seger, yet?

GOODMAN
We're working on that, but trying to get through the details of what happened here first.

CEO OF MACGUFFIN
Sorry. I've got an employee dead in the elevator, a burglar executed in the hallway

A CAMERA FLASHES over bloodstains in the doorway.

CEO OF MACGUFFIN
And my office has been ransacked. My head is all over the place.

GOODMAN
(sympathetic)
Sure.

OFFICER 2
(hollers)
Got a latent print on the doorknob!

Goodman glances up to the doorway.

GOODMAN
What were they looking for in here?

CEO OF MACGUFFIN
I don't know. I don't keep anything of value in here. They obviously didn't appreciate my taste in collectible timepieces.

CEO holds up the broken Rolex.

GOODMAN
Well, they came straight to this office. Only room in the building they broke into. They were obviously looking for something.

CEO's eyes come to rest on the computer with an empty drive.

A beat.

CEO OF MACGUFFIN
I know what it was.

DOWNSTAIRS

Goodman walks to the security office through a hallway bustling with police activity. He passes a CUSTODIAL WORKER pushing a trash can and tosses a coffee cup as he turns the corner into the security office.

Goodman stands over Officer 1, Camera 6 is up on the monitor.

GOODMAN
Right there. Seger picks something up off the floor. What is it?

OFFICER 1
I can't get a good view.

GOODMAN
The disk.

EXT. HAYDEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Door opens, ROOMMATE (20s) answers the door, squinting. He looks like he fell asleep doing a headstand.

Goodman flashes his badge.

GOODMAN
Hayden Seger?

ROOMMATE
No.

He groans.

ROOMMATE
I'm his roommate.

GOODMAN
Is he here?

ROOMMATE
I don't think so, he didn't come home last night.

GOODMAN
He vanished from work, I'm trying to find him. You know where he might've gone to?

ROOMMATE
No.

Goodman looks past Roommate at a bong on the coffee table.

GOODMAN
No ideas at all?

Roommate sees last night's accoutrements. His eyes close and his head falls back.

ROOMMATE
Maybe Easton's. Easton Fairwood. That's his plug.

GOODMAN
Cool. You got an address?

ROOMMATE
No.

GOODMAN
You sure?

EXT. EASTON'S PLACE - DAY

Goodman's squad car enters from frame right, parks at the curb. Easton's truck sits in the driveway.

INSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Easton has dead Carl by the feet. He's dragging him out of the bedroom.

KNOCK

KNOCK

KNOCK

GOODMAN
(from outside)
Albuquerque Police! Open up!

Easton freezes.

Dead Carl is a bloody mess.

A huge amount of cocaine is on the table.

Scales.

Bags.

He drags dead Carl faster.

OUTSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Goodman's hand bangs on the door. Mid-bang, it opens a few inches. Easton's face wedges into the crack.

EASTON
Detective.

Easton forces a smile, eyes adjust to the light.

GOODMAN
Easton Fairwood?

EASTON
Yeah.

GOODMAN
I'm looking for Hayden Seger.

EASTON
Can't help you.

GOODMAN
You expecting someone?

EASTON
No.

Beat.

GOODMAN
You mind if I come in?

EASTON
Actually, yeah. Place is a fucking disaster.

GOODMAN
I don't mind.

EASTON
K. You got a warrant?

Goodman holds eye contact through a scowl.

GOODMAN
No.

EASTON
(cheekily)
Then I don't think so.

GOODMAN
You know where Hayden went?

EASTON
Nope.

GOODMAN
Haven't seen him?

EASTON
Not recently.

GOODMAN
When was the last time?

EASTON
I dunno, a couple weeks ago?

GOODMAN
His roommate says he came here last night.

EASTON
Well, maybe he did. I don't make my guests sign in at the front desk.

Goodman bites his lip in aggravation.

GOODMAN
If you hear from him, have him call me.

EASTON
Sure.

Goodman hands him a card.

GOODMAN
Don't lose it.

Door closes. Behind the closed door, Easton exhales as he thinks of a plan to get dead Carl off the floor.

EXT. EASTON'S PLACE - DAY

Goodman closes the door to his cruiser and starts the engine.

The police DISPATCHER speaks through static.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Detective Goodman, come in.

GOODMAN
Go ahead.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
We got a hit on that latent from the office building.

GOODMAN
Who?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Conrad.

Goodman listens closer.

GOODMAN
Conrad?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Conrad. Can't get a read on the last name, it's smudged.

GOODMAN
What's his story?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
He's got a record. Violent stuff. Armed robbery, assault. Consider him armed and dangerous.

GOODMAN
Where is he?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Don't know. No current address, we're putting out a BOLO.

Goodman puts the car in drive.

GOODMAN
(under his breath)
Seger, the pile of shit you're standing in just keeps getting deeper.

EXT. ROADSIDE MOTEL - DUSK

A dated sign glows against the night sky.

INT. ROOM 38 - CONTINUOUS

A New Mexico State driver's license sits under a small desk lamp. The name on the license:

JOHN LIST

The hotel room key sits on the desk, just outside the lamp light. The oversized plastic key tag is marked with the room number:

38

A hand slides a razor blade into the corner of John List's ID, separating layers of lamination.

The same hand deconstructs Hayden's driver's license.

Tweezers carefully peel the photograph from Hayden's license. Adhesive is applied to the back.

INT. POLICE STATION - DUSK

Goodman leans against a desk while Officer 2 hangs up a phone.

OFFICER 2
Nothing under Seger.

He hands a document to Goodman.

OFFICER 2
No credit card activity, no bank activity. No hospital admissions, no arrests.

GOODMAN
Bus Stations?

OFFICER 2
Nothing.

Goodman stares at the document.

GOODMAN
What about Greyhound?

OFFICER 2
We checked, nothing.

INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - NIGHT

The finished fake ID slides across a counter to the GREYHOUND TICKETING LADY.

Behind the security window, Greyhound Ticketing Lady half frowns at the ID. She studies Hayden over her green cat-eye frames.

She stamps a ticket.

CLACK.

Slides it back to Hayden

PASSENGER: John List

DESTINATION: Santa Fe, New Mexico

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - NIGHT

Easton scrubs the carpet in his bedroom in front of the computer.

The phone rings. He lets the answering machine pick up.

EASTON
(outgoing message)
It's Easton. If you're calling about money, I know. If you're calling about drugs, I know. If you're the cops -- I don't know.

BEEP

HAYDEN
(incoming message)
Easton. Pick up. It's Hayden. Pick up the phone. I know you're --

Easton picks up.

EASTON
Hayden, I'm a little fuckin' busy right now.

INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - NIGHT

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

HAYDEN
I know.

EASTON
You don't know shit.

HAYDEN
I know you told that fuckface doofus I wanted him to look at the floppy after I explicitly told you not to.

EASTON
Yeah, well, how else were you gonna find out what's on it?

HAYDEN
I know what's on it, you moron!

EASTON
You're welcome, you fuckin' psycho. Some thanks I get! I do you a favor and you knock off a good paying customer and the captain of my Wednesday night bowling team --

HAYDEN
You're welcome? I didn't need your help, Easton! The disk wasn't --
(lowers his voice)
The disk wasn't encrypted I knew what was on the disk without your fucking help. You know what your problem is man? You're too damn curious!

EASTON
Yeah, you're damn right! You show up at my house in the middle of the night, every car that drives by scares you shitless, and you got this floppy disk that SOMEONE wants bad enough to kill some motherfuckers for --

Easton shouts directly into the mouthpiece.

EASTON
You know the cops showed up at my place looking for you today? Yeah. They showed up looking for you while I'm trying to deal with a DEAD GUY from AV Club in my living room -- NO SHIT, I'm curious!

HAYDEN
Yeah, well. Curiosity killed the cat.

EASTON
Satisfaction brought it back.

Beat.

HAYDEN
The cops came to your house?

EASTON
Yeah.

HAYDEN
Did they ask about the disk?

EASTON
No.

HAYDEN
Well, it's only a matter of time.

EASTON
What's on the disk man?

HAYDEN
I'm on the move right now, but I'm going to need to call you again.

Easton picks up Goodman's card from his computer desk.

EASTON
Where are you?

HAYDEN
That's not important. We need a contact schedule. I'll call you at your house at 10 o clock.

EASTON
Every night?

HAYDEN
Yeah.

EASTON
OK. How do I call you?

HAYDEN
You don't.

CLICK.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - NIGHT

Easton bounces the contact card between his fingers.

EASTON
That motherfucker.

He slams the phone onto the receiver.

The phone RINGS again.

EASTON
Listen up you cocky little shit, what if I need to call you?

CONRAD (V.O.)
I'd be careful how you talk to me, Easton Fairwood. Where's the floppy disk?

EASTON
I don’t know what you’re talking about.

CONRAD (V.O.)
You know the one. Don't get yourself killed.

EASTON
Who is this?

Easton walks to the fridge and grabs some pizza coupons from under a magnet.

CONRAD (V.O.)
Conrad. The disk belongs to me. Where is it?

EASTON
I don’t know. What's on it?

He walks back to the receiver.

CONRAD (V.O.)
The kind of thing men kill for.

EASTON
Which men?

CONRAD (V.O.)
All the wrong men.

Beat.

CONRAD (V.O.)
Find it. I’ll be waiting.

CLICK.

Easton punches a number in the phone.

EASTON
Hi, I'd like to place an order for a couple large pizzas. Carryout, please.

INT. GOODMAN'S HOME - NIGHT

Goodman quietly closes the front door.

BEDROOM

11:58pm. In the darkness, His WIFE (30s), stirs. She keeps herself looking good -- even in the chaos of being a young mother and a cop-wife.

A closet light flicks on as he undresses. He comes to bed.

WIFE
Avery, it's late. You're running yourself ragged at work, the kids haven't seen you at dinner in three weeks and they haven't seen you before bed in a few days.

GOODMAN
I know.

He leans into the darkness to kiss his wife.

GOODMAN
I'm in a race against time to find this kid. He's the only witness to this double homicide case and he's run off with the perp's score. If I don't get to him first, he's gonna be a headline.

WIFE
Would it be crazy to let one of the other detectives get to him first, so you could come home to your wife before midnight?

GOODMAN
Or what?
(flirty)
You make me a headline?

WIFE
Maybe. Or... If you give the kids a bath I might even give you a headline.

In the moonlight, they disappear under the covers.

MONDAY

INT. ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY (3)

Goodman walks through the bullpen carrying a paper cup of coffee.

OFFICER 1
Goodman!

GOODMAN
How’d the fishing trip go?

OFFICER 1
Cold as hell.

GOODMAN
You catch anything?

OFFICER 1
Yeah, couple bass.

GOODMAN
Your boy catch anything?

OFFICER 1
He caught one, he won’t shut up about it!

GOODMAN
Alright!

Goodman continues to his desk.

TWO YOUNG OFFICERS screw around at the trash can, taking turns launching wadded-up paper at it from across the room.

Goodman snags a paper wad out of the air and drops it into the trash can without breaking stride.

YOUNG OFFICER 1
That was going in, Goodman!

GOODMAN
(hollering)
We got work to do today, boys. Your jumper's ass anyway, Rook!

GOODMAN'S DESK

Easton waits in Goodman's chair, feet propped up on his desk.

Goodman stops cold.

EASTON
Morning, Detective.

GOODMAN
Did you get lost on the way to the Whitesnake concert?

Easton admires his acid wash jeans.

EASTON
First of all, fuck you. And second of all, no.

GOODMAN
What do you want then, I got a lotta work to do.

EASTON
I remember.
(Mocking)
Knock, knock! Hayden Seger, where is he?

Goodman, stonefaced.

EASTON
You ever heard the story of the scorpion and the frog?

GOODMAN
No.

EASTON
Oh cool, you' re gonna like this. So there's this fuckin' scorpion -- and he needs to get across the river -- Problem is, scorpions cant fuckin' swim --

Goodman waits.

EASTON
So he's thinkin' about how he's gonna get across and he sees this frog at the river bank -- so he says to him, "hey frog, carry my black ass across the river"

GOODMAN
Frog says no.

EASTON
Of course he says no -- he's like "Are you kidding? You're a fuckin' scorpion. You'll sting me"

Easton settles in, enjoying himself.

EASTON
So the fuckin' scorpion says, "why would I sting you? If I sting you, you die. If you die, I drown"

GOODMAN
Sounds reasonable.

EASTON
That's what the frog thinks! So he says, "alright, get on" Scorpion hops on his back and the frog starts swimming across the river --

Easton audibly sucks his teeth.

EASTON
They get halfway there -- and the Scorpion stings the frog right in the back! The frog doesn't even have to look, he can feel the poison start coursing through his veins -- He's like, "Dammit! What did you do that for?"

EASTON smiles.

EASTON
And the scorpion says as they both start sinking --

Beat.

"Cause I'm a fuckin' scorpion."

Easton lets it sink in.

EASTON
I came here because I'm going to help you across the river. But -- don't think for a second that I don't understand what kind of animal I'm dealing with. I know exactly what you are.

GOODMAN
(incredulous)
You think I'm the scorpion?!

Goodman tenses up over Easton in the chair. His badge flashes on his belt and his weapon is plainly visible.

EASTON
Yeah. Obviously.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - DAY

Hayden sits alone against the window, headphones over his ears. The red floppy hides under a Walkman, resting on top of his backpack. The clear playback window reveals a Willie Nelson cassette, spinning.

The highway rolls past quickly in the foreground while the high desert looms in the background.

Hayden sketches in a notebook -- He's no Bob Ross, but decent enough.

IN THE SKETCHBOOK

Conrad stands over Toussaint, as seen from behind the drinking fountain. A pair of Converse sneakers hang out from an elevator door.

Conrad points his smoking pistol at the body -- but Conrad isn't looking at the elevator.

He stares directly at Hayden.

Hayden pauses and studies Conrad's eyes.

He closes the notebook.

INT. ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

The station phones ring, conversations buzz, and typewriters clack. Amid the commotion, Officer 1 speaks on the phone.

OFFICER 1
You're just off I-25 south side of Central? Great, thanks.

He hangs up and turns to Goodman.

OFFICER 1
We've got a confirmed hit on Seger's card.

GOODMAN
10-4. I'm on it.

EXT. ROADSIDE MOTEL - DAY

Goodman pulls into the parking lot. Same sign towers over the property. Goodman enters the glassed-in office.

INT. ROADSIDE MOTEL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A FAT OLD MAN smokes at the desk. He hasn't moved from that spot since his first dollar was framed, up on the wall.

GOODMAN
Detective Goodman, Albuquerque PD, I'm looking for Hayden Seger. He's staying here.

Fat Old Man runs his finger down a handwritten logbook.

EXT. ROOM 38 - CONTINUOUS

Goodman parks his squad car next to Hayden's abandoned brown station wagon. The metal '3' is missing, but its outline remains on the door.

FAT OLD MAN (O.S.)
He checked out already.

GOODMAN (O.S.)
I'm going to need the key.

INT. ROOM 38 - CONTINUOUS

Goodman walks in.

The bed unmade.

Nothing in the bathroom.

The desk lamp shines as he heads to the door. In the wastepaper basket, he notices something left behind. He pulls it out.

A DRIVER'S LICENSE

NAME: Hayden Seger

But no little photo in the top left corner.

Goodman double—takes. A small paper square remains at the bottom of the basket.

A DMV PHOTO of a man...

But not Hayden.

GOODMAN (O.S.)
(to himself)
An alias.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - NIGHT

Easton's phone cord is knotted like a drunk snake.

EASTON
Did you get a name?

He holds the phone away while he does a line of blow.

GOODMAN (V.O.)
Negative. He made a fake ID.

EASTON
(through bated breath)
Oh cool. Well, we can just ask around town for Bart Simpson and Ben Dover and Seimore Butts.

GOODMAN (V.O.)
Do you ever, for a moment, shut the fuck up with your jive ass bullshit?

Easton thinks.

EASTON
No. Not really.

GOODMAN (V.O.)
You said Hayden is going to check in with you? Find out what name he's using.

EASTON
What if he doesn't trust me enough to tell me?

GOODMAN (V.O.)
Swim, Frog.

EXT. SOMEWHERE - NIGHT

Hayden lifts a payphone off the receiver and shoves a quarter into the slot.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - NIGHT

Easton walks around the house fighting with the lengthy, knotted cord as he navigates doors and wall corners.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

EASTON
You're gonna have to be smarter, Hayden. That detective -- Goodman -- came to my house again today.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
What now?

EASTON
He wanted to know if we've had any contact. He mentioned that they tracked your debit card to some hotel.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
They can do that?

EASTON
Fuckin' hell, man, of course they can do that. They can see you everywhere you go! Big Brother is watching you man, read a fuckin' book sometime!

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Shit. Thanks.

EASTON
Yea and that's not all. Fucking Conrad called me on the phone... at my house!

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Wait, what? What did he want?

EASTON
YOU, man! You watched him murder two men in cold blood and then you took the thing he killed them for. And now I know what's on that disk, dude. You're a human bullseye. Conrad is going to hunt you down.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
You know what's on the floppy?

EASTON
Yea. And. It's definitely the kind of thing he's gonna kill you for.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Yeah...

EASTON
Yeah.

Beat.

EASTON
So, what's the next move man? You need to get around more discreet.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
I might have a solution for that.

EASTON
Ok, I'm all ears.

Hayden hesitates.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
I shouldn't say.

Easton blows an annoyed raspberry through his lips.

EASTON
How am I supposed to help you if you can't trust me enough to keep me in the loop?

HAYDEN (V.O.)
I know, I know. But what if they like... bugged your phone or something?

EASTON
Hayden, I pushed a kilo of blow through here last month -- and yesterday I disposed of a dead body -- if the cops cared enough about what I got goin' on to bug my phone, I'd be in prison by now. Now, you wanna keep getting intel from me, or no?

Hayden hesitates.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
I made a fake ID. I stole it from out of the hotel desk when I checked in.

EASTON
Smart thinking. So who are you now?

HAYDEN (V.O.)
John List.
Easton --
Do.
Not.
Tell.
The detective.

EASTON
You don't have to worry about that, baby! If there's one thing Easton Fairwood never does -- it's get involved with cops!

INT. ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY (4)

Easton approaches Goodman at his desk.

GOODMAN
Did you get it?

Easton raises his hands and shrugs in self-celebration.

EASTON
John List!

GOODMAN
John List?

EASTON
John List. I told you I'd carry you across the river.

GOODMAN
(warmly)
I can't believe it. You actually came through.

Easton pulls up a chair, cigarette between his lips. He searches for his lighter. Goodman flicks his own lighter and offers it. Easton leans into the flame.

INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - DAY

Goodman walks through the lobby of the Greyhound Terminal. BRAD (20s) sits behind the security glass of the same ticketing window. He probably polishes his nametag after he pins it to his sweater vest.

BRAD
(too bubbly)
Hi! Where are we headed today?

GOODMAN
Detective Goodman, Albuquerque Police. I'm hoping that's what you can tell me. I need to get copies of some bus records. I'll need the logs from each bus that left here in the last 24 hours. Bus numbers, departure time, destinations, and names of the passengers. Can you help me with that --

Goodman smoothly checks the nametag.

GOODMAN
-- Please, Brad?

SLAM TO:

A dot-matrix printer loudly prints departure records. The records fold back and forth on the floor next as they print. The last page finishes.

PRTTTTF!

The records tear along the perforation.

GREYHOUND ATRIUM

Goodman sits at a bench with his folded records. He takes hold of the first page and lets the rest cascade to the floor.

The top of each page describes the bus information and individual passenger information shows up in a table underneath.

Goodman's hands hold the sides of the dot-matrix paper. The records scroll up quickly through his hands

...

BUS 3124 - DALLAS, TEXAS 04:15 AM

BUS 1886 - DENVER, COLORADO 04:35 AM

BUS 2425 - FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA 05:05 AM

BUS 1872 - EL PASO, TEXAS 05:15 AM

BUS 1309 - OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 05:25 AM

...

And then slower, like the intro to Star Wars

...

BUS 2920 - SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 06:50 AM

PASSENGERS:
ARMSTRONG, FRED
ASTON, GARY
CHAPMAN, MELISSA
CHAPMAN, RUSSELL
...
LIST, JOHN
...

A WHIP-CRACK as Goodman laser-focuses on his discovery --

GOODMAN
I'm coming to you, Hayden Seger.

TICKETING WINDOW

Brad waits, eager to help again.

GOODMAN
One ticket to Santa Fe, please.
Round trip. Soonest ya got.

Brad types into his keyboard. He frowns slightly.

BRAD
I don’t have anything going north stopping in Santa Fe until 6:30 tonight.

GOODMAN
That’ll work.

EXT. EASTON’S PLACE - DAY

Goodman’s squad car enters frame right. Easton’s truck sits in the driveway.

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

Goodman hardly waits before pounding on the door again.

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

Goodman shifts impatiently.

The window blanket pulls to the side and Easton‘s face peers through the window. It disappears. The door opens.

EASTON
Shit man do you always knock like that? I thought it was the cops!

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Easton smokes a cigarette at the dining room table. The smoke floats through some lamplight in an otherwise dim house.

Goodman maps his surroundings. From where he sits, he can see into Easton's bedroom. His eyes pause for a moment on the large stain on the bedroom floor.

GOODMAN
Hayden took a bus to Santa Fe. I'm gonna take a ride up there.

EASTON
When?

GOODMAN
Taking a 6:30 bus.

EASTON
You could just drive it, it's an hour with traffic.

GOODMAN
The cruiser has APD decals all over it. I'll stick out too much.

EASTON
I could go with you?

GOODMAN
Nope. I need you here. I don't know where to find him once I get there. He hasn't been using his card for a while.

EASTON
You want me to just stay here? I'm just a plug to you, huh? I'm just the information plug, right?

GOODMAN
What -- now you wanna be something more?

Beat.

That's all you've ever been to anyone, Fairwood, you're a plug --

Goodman stands up.

So yeah. Sit here, wait for his call and get me something I can use -- call me at the El Rey Inn when you do.

Goodman flips him a phone number and walks out the door.

After waiting a moment too long, Easton thinks of a comeback.

EASTON
(shouting through the door)
You don't have to be an asshole about it!

He scrambles over to the door.

EASTON
Take that badge off and you're just --

He flings the door open.

EASTON
An asshole with a gun!

Conrad waits outside the door and punches Easton right between the eyes.

THWAK.

CUT TO BLACK.

LIVING ROOM

Conrad and Easton sit toe to toe on cheap wooden dining room chairs. Conrad loosely grips a pistol -- Easton arms himself with a bag of frozen peas, pressed firmly to his eye.

CONRAD
How long you been working with the cop?

EASTON
I'm not working with anybody.

CONRAD
That's not how it looks from where I'm sittin'.

EASTON
He comes by, asks me questions.

CONRAD
Don't lie to me -- it's not gonna work out well for you.

EASTON
I'm not lying, I swear.

CONRAD
(patronizes)
Ok. Ok. Today, he comes by. You didn't say anything... But Monday, you cozied up to him at the station and you were signin' like Etta fuckin' James!

Conrad puts the gun to Easton's head.

EASTON
Okay. Alright, alright. I feed him information!

CONRAD
Information about what?

EASTON
Hayden Seger.

CONRAD
What does he care about the kid?

EASTON
Well, friend, what did you say your name was again?

CONRAD
Conrad.

EASTON
(patronizes back)
Ok. Well, Conrad, he's hoping to get to Hayden before you do -- because... I think HE thinks YOU think -- Hayden might testify against you in court -- and you're probably gonna kill him...

CONRAD
Ya think?

Easton pulls the frozen peas from his eye. What a mess.

CONRAD
What's the cop working on now?

EASTON
He's headed to Santa Fe.

CONRAD
What's in Santa Fe?

EASTON
Hayden.

Conrad laughs through a scoff.

CONRAD
He's not in Santa Fe.

EASTON
Yeah he is! He's staying at the El Rey Inn --

CONRAD
Not the cop , the kid -- he's not in Santa Fe.

EASTON
Where is he?

CONRAD
I haven't got that far yet.

EASTON
So... how do you know he's not in Santa Fe?

CONRAD
Because I know what I'm looking for.

Easton listens intently.

CONRAD
The cop doesn't give a shit about you. You think you're helping him find Hayden.

Beat.

CONRAD
He's helping himself.

EASTON
Come again?

CONRAD
When he finds the kid, he gets the disk.

EASTON
And?

CONRAD
And... what do you think happens to you after that?

Conrad starts toward the door.

CONRAD
You end up having to explain that stain by your computer. Find me the disk, Shit Head.

Easton looks to his bedroom floor then back at Conrad.

EASTON
And if I don't?

CONRAD
You'll end up with two stains by your computer.

INT. EL REY INN - NIGHT

As she prepares a key and an information pamphlet, the FRONT DESK GIRL (late teens), Black, speaks confidently. She could probably run this place even though she still attends high school.

FRONT DESK GIRL
Here's your room key Mr. Goodman. All of our rooms are individual adobe casitas. You'll find everything you need in the room or dial '0' for the front desk.

GOODMAN
Got it, thank you. Hey, do you have any guests this evening under John List?

Front Desk Girl checks her logs.

FRONT DESK GIRL
No, Sir.

GOODMAN
Ok. If anyone calls for me, put 'em through to my room, please.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - NIGHT

Easton's phone rings. The clock reads 10:05pm.

EASTON
What took you so long?

INT. A SMALL BAR - NIGHT

Some guys are shooting pool over Hayden's shoulder while he stands at a payphone. Mexican ranchera music plays from the jukebox.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

HAYDEN
Sorry. Had to get some change for the payphone.

EASTON
You picked a hell of a day to keep me waiting.

Hayden plugs the ear opposite the phone.

HAYDEN
Why?

EASTON
Well, for one, Goodman knows you took a bus to Santa Fe. Where are you man? It's loud as shit there.

HAYDEN
Just... some bar.

Easton cusses silently.

HAYDEN
How does he know about Santa Fe?

EASTON
I don't know, Hayden. But he's not the only guy who paid me a visit today.

HAYDEN
Who else?

BILLIARDS PLAYER
(in the background)
No dude. White Sands is less than an hour from here. Straight shot down 70.

EASTON
What was that?

HAYDEN
Sorry. Lotta noise here.

Easton rifles through drawers until he finds a New Mexico road map. He unfolds it on his table and smooths the creases.

EASTON
Its fine. Your scary murderer friend Conrad came by today.

NEW MEXICO ROADMAP

Easton holds a red sharpie over Albuquerque. It drifts north to Santa Fe. He fires a quick X over the entire city.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Is he any closer to finding me?

EASTON (O.S.)
In Santa Fe?

The sharpie flies south across the map and lands sharply on White Sands National Park. Easton's sharpie comes down on the landmark and bleeds into the paper like a gunshot wound.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
... yea ...

EASTON (O.S.)
You know, it seems like he's a whole lot closer to you than Goodman is. But the motherfucker is close as hell to breaking my nose. It must be really nice, you're down in Santa Fe and I'm up here in Albuquerque getting a makeover from Apollo Creed.

The sharpie drifts east along SR-70 to a small town --

ALAMOGORDO

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Shit, Easton, I'm sorry for getting you involved.

Easton scrawls a question mark over the small town. He retraces back to the sharpie gunshot wound, then moves the sharpie west along SR-70.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Look, I gotta go. I'll call you tomorrow.

EASTON (V.O.)
Wait --

LAS CRUCES

The red sharpie circles the city three times.

INT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - FLASHBACK

The Greyhound Ticketing Lady half frowns at the license. She studies Hayden over her green cat-eye frames.

She stamps a ticket.

CLACK

And slides it back to Hayden

PASSENGER: John List

DESTINATION: Santa Fe, New Mexico

She stamps another ticket.

CLACK

And slides it back to Hayden.

PASSENGER: John List

DESTINATION: Las Cruces, New Mexico

Hayden turns from the ticketing counter and goes to dial Easton from a payphone. Through the glass doors, people gather around the BUS TO LAS CRUCES with their tickets.

INT. EASTON'S PLACE - NIGHT

RING.

RING.

RING.

EASTON (V.O.)
(outgoing message)
It's Easton. If you're calling about money, I know. If you're calling about drugs, I know. If you're the cops, I don't know.

BEEP

GOODMAN
(incoming message)
Fairwood, I'm in Santa Fe -- gimme something, man. I'm up here you're supposed to call me.

INT. EL REY INN - NIGHT

Goodman stands in front of his bed. He empties his pockets. He opens his wallet to look at pictures of his wife and children. He touches his wife's face through the plastic sleeve.

RING.

Goodman doesn't let the phone even fully ring.

GOODMAN
Tell me something good, Chaka Khan.

CONRAD (V.O.)
I'm about to keep you from wasting a whole bunch of time.

GOODMAN
Who's this?

CONRAD (V.O.)
Conrad.

Goodman's eyes narrow.

GOODMAN
Conrad who?

Silence on the other end of the line.

CONRAD (V.O.)
Hayden isn't in Santa Fe, Detective.

GOODMAN
Oh yeah? Where is he then, wise guy?

CONRAD (V.O.)
Am I supposed to do your job for you?

GOODMAN
How do you know he's not in Santa Fe?

CONRAD (V.O.)
Maybe you forgot. I'm looking for him too. He has something of mine.

GOODMAN
Right. And you're just helping me out as a good friend?

Conrad scoffs.

CONRAD (V.O.)
Close, but no cigar.

Goodman notices the MACANUDO cigar ashtray on the dresser.

GOODMAN
Gimme one reason why I should believe you.
(MORE)

GOODMAN (CONT'D)
Because it seems like you're trying to throw me off Hayden's tracks.

CONRAD (V.O.)
I don't have to throw you off Hayden's tracks. He already did that himself. Did you stop and consider that maybe he bought
(Half beat)
Two tickets
(Half beat)
Detective?

CUT TO:

The brass clips on Goodman's beat-up briefcase flip open. The case opens up.

Goodman brings the Greyhound Departure records under a light.

This time, he starts with

BUS 2920 - SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 06:50 AM

His hands march rapidly down the sides of the long ream, scanning a dozen pages until he sees it again.

LIST, JOHN

Goodman finds the bus information a the top of the page.

BUS 4445 - LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO 9:20 AM

GOODMAN
(to himself)
Two tickets! Dammit, Avery!

EXT. A BAR IN LAS CRUCES - DUSK (5)

Hayden jaywalks across a main thoroughfare. Hopping onto the curb, he checks his pocket for spare change.

He crosses a parking lot full of cars and approaches the building.

The building has no name, but a single neon sign glows in the tinted windows.

TEQUILA

Familiar ranchera music plays from inside the building.

Hayden puts his hand on the door pull --

before yanking it --

something catches his eye in the parking lot.

Moving at mach speed across the lot, a WHIP CRACK punctuates the landing, square in front of a STEER HORN TRUCK GRILL --

Hayden sticks his head in the door.

Easton is sitting at the bar, laughing it up with some Mexican fellas.

INT. A BAR IN LAS CRUCES - CONTINUOUS

Easton carouses with the other patrons. He doesn't know the THREE MEXICANS to his right, but they laugh and get along famously. Easton entertains them with jokes in Spanish. He speaks with an unmistakably Gringo accent, but delivers punchlines with confidence.

EASTON
Entonces, el granjero dice: "Ese no es mi burro. El mío lleva sobrero."

AMIGO #1
Tus chistes están cada vez peores.

EASTON
Ya estoy borracho! Dame cinco minutos y voy a empezar con las imitaciones!

AMIGO #2
Dios, nos ayude.

While they laugh, Hayden enters frame right and walks along the back wall, keeping an eye on Easton all the way until he exits frame left.

Hayden arrives at the pay phone. He puts a quarter in and turns his back to the bar patrons.

EASTON (V.O.)
(outgoing message)
It's Easton. If you're calling about money, I know. If you're calling about drugs, I know. If you're the cops -- I don't know.

BEEP

HAYDEN
(lowered voice))
Easton, it's me. I gotta be quick -- I'm in Las Cruces, but I ran into some trouble. I'm hitching a ride to El Paso. Conrad found me here in Las Cruces. I don't know when I'll be able to call again. I'm freakin' out. Shit I gotta go!

Hayden hangs up. He drops another quarter in the slot. He dials a phone number he wrote down and waits for someone to pick up.

HAYDEN
Dutch, it's Hayden... Long time brother! Yeah, I'm in El Paso tonight, let's catch up.

INT. NEW CLOCK RESTAURANT, EL PASO - NIGHT

A photo of Hayden stares up from John List's driver's license. Hayden flips it over. With a ball point pen, he writes on the back of it.

"IF FOUND CALL (505) 272 - 0535"

He tosses the ID in his backpack and finishes the last couple bites on his plate. His water glass is refilled.

WAITRESS
Here's the bill when you're ready, hun. Pay it up front.

Hayden reaches into his backpack, nestled between his legs. When he finds the red floppy disk and an envelope filled with cash, he hides them away in his jacket pocket. Under the table, he slides the backpack with his foot.

Hayden breezes past the cashier podium to the parking lot. Outside, he takes off one shoe and chucks it.

INT. A BAR IN EL PASO - NIGHT

A black leather boot paired with a white socked foot on the chrome crossbar of a barstool. Atop the stool, Hayden nurses a beer, the only patron at the bar.

A tall, handsome man takes the stool beside him. LOBO (50s), is wearing a wolf-collage shirt like you'd find for sale at a truck stop and an expensive black Stetson. Difficult to say if he's Mexican or American. He motions to the barkeep.

LOBO
Two of whatever he's drinkin'.

He turns to Hayden.

LOBO
You lost your shoe?

HAYDEN
Yeah.

LOBO
Shoot.

Two beers slide into Lobo's reach. He leaves a few Mexican Pesos on the counter.

LOBO
You look like a man who's already up 'n left.

HAYDEN
Come again?

LOBO
Nothin'. You from here?

HAYDEN
No.

LOBO
That's what I figured. Where ya from?

Hayden polishes off his beer and exhchanges it for the one Lobo bought him.

HAYDEN
What difference does it make?

Lobo smiles.

LOBO
No particular difference.

Lobo, making no effort to be discrete, bends to see Hayden's shoeless foot.

LOBO
Where ya headed?

HAYDEN
I never said I was headed anywhere.

Lobo pays no mind.

LOBO
Mexico's a good place to maybe go...

Hayden tries to decode Lobo’s zig-zagging line of questioning.

HAYDEN
You been?

LOBO
Once or twice.

HAYDEN
You got family there?

LOBO
Everybody's got family somewhere.

Hayden studies him, perplexed. Lobo suddenly notices Hayden's confusion.

LOBO
Relax. I ain't tryin' to sell you nothin'.
(Beat)
Unless yer lookin‘ for somethin'.

HAYDEN
What do you sell?

Lobo tugs at his shirt. The tacky illustration tautens across the fabric. Lobo considers the artwork for a moment.

LOBO
Depends who's askin'. My name is Jacques --

He tips his hat.

LOBO
-- but my associates call me Lobo.

HAYDEN
Lobo. That's spanish -- for 'wolf'?

LOBO
Yeah. I'm not very creative.
(Beat)
But I know my way around here.

Hayden stares at his lap. He nearly smiles.

HAYDEN
Well, 'here' doesn't seem to be doing me a lot of good.
(Beat)
Mexico is a good place to maybe go.

Out of the corner of his eye, Hayden gauges Lobo's reaction.

LOBO
Somethin' tells me you won't have any problems sneakin' INTO Mexico.

HAYDEN
Oh yeah? Why's that?

LOBO
Well fer one, they spend most of their energy catchin' hombres coming the other way. But I reckon you look like you've already got one foot out the door.

Hayden looks at his sock and smiles for the first time.

LOBO
See?

Hayden lifts his beer.

INT. EASTON'S TRUCK - MORNING (6)

Easton lays across the front bench seat in his pickup truck. Brilliant morning sunlight streams through the windshield. His eyes crack open. His head remains completely still while he checks his surroundings.

PAYPHONE - CONTINUOUS

Easton's head pounds with every button he presses. He can hardly keep his eyes open.

AUTOMATED RECORDING (V.O.)
Welcome to the voice message retrieval service.
(MORE)

AUTOMATED RECORDING (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You have two new messages. To hear your messages, press ‘1’.

Easton presses one.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
(lowered voice)
Easton, it's me. I gotta be quick. I'm in Las Cruces, but I ran into some trouble. I'm hitching a ride to El Paso. Conrad found me here in Las Cruces. I don't know when I'll be able to call again. I'm freakin' out. Shit I gotta go!

AUTOMATED RECORDING (V.O.)
To hear the next message, press ‘1’.

Easton presses one.

RAY (V.O.)
Hi, Mr. List? This message is for John List. This is Ray, I'm the manager at the New Clock Restaurant. Last night, you left your ID and backpack here. I'm sure you were just tired, it being so late an' all. But also there wasn't no money left to cover the bill. If it ain't a trouble, like to have you come down and settle up and I can give you yer belongins.

Easton's truck hums down a quiet desert road.

INT. GOODMAN’S SQUAD CAR - DAY

A cassette partially hangs out of the tape deck. Goodman pushes it in. Hip hop music paves the way as he flies by a highway sign.

LAS CRUCES 33 MI

INT. NEW CLOCK RESTAURANT, EL PASO - DAY

RAY
It's, uh, $13.29.

Easton hands Ray his card. Ray hands Easton the backpack. Easton casually rummages through Hayden’s stuff. He flips the sketchpad open to Hayden's drawing of Conrad.

EASTON
Say, Ray, I had a little too much to drink last night. Where'd you find all my stuff?

Ray points to the table Hayden sat at the night before.

RAY
Under the table right over there. You didn't lose a boot did ya? Found a leather boot in the parking lot coming in this morning.

Ray holds up Hayden's black leather boot.

EASTON
No.

Ray puts Easton's card in the imprinter.

CLICK. CLACK.

RAY
Oh hey, John? This card says it belongs to an Easton Fairwood.

Easton shoves a gun in Ray's face.

EASTON
(in hungover agony)
For fucks sake, run it, Ray!

INT. EASTON'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Easton frantic --

ZIP! ZIP!

Hayden's backpack upside down --

The contents of the backpack spill onto the floor board --

Sketchbook --

Walkman --

Fake ID --

Pens --

EASTON
Fuck!

Easton peels out of the parking lot.

INT. GOODMAN’S SQUAD CAR - DAY

Goodman's hip hop music is still playing. He passes a highway sign headed toward I-10 W.

WEST LAS CRUCES, I-10 W (over right lanes)

EL PASO, I-10 E (over left lanes)

RADIO (V.O.)
Goodman, Central. Got a hit on that Fairwood credit activity request. New Clock Restaurant, El Paso. Card was used this morning.

GOODMAN
(over radio)
10-4

Goodman reads the road signs.

GOODMAN
(to Easton, somewhere out there)
If you're in El Paso, he's in El Paso.

Goodman cuts across traffic to get in the left lanes.

EXT. NEW CLOCK RESTAURANT, EL PASO - DAY

Goodman's APD cruiser drives past the building slowly.

INT. GOODMAN’S SQUAD CAR - CONTINUOUS

Goodman rubbernecks as he passes New Clock Restaurant.

He scans parking lots as he drives.

He turns the wheel when he spots Easton's ridiculous steer-horned truck nearby.

Easton appears distraught in the driver's seat of the truck.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP PARKING LOT - DAY

Goodman slams his door shut.

GOODMAN
(shouting)
FAIRWOOD!

Easton cranks his window down.

EASTON
(insincerely)
Oh great, Detective, there you are. I've been looking all over for you.

GOODMAN
My ass. You were supposed to call me in Santa Fe. Where's Seger?

EASTON
Probably at the bottom of the Rio Grande by now.

Easton wrings his hands around the steering wheel.

GOODMAN
What are you talking about?

EASTON
(stressed)
Hayden called. Said Conrad found him and he was running to El Paso -- this restaurant called and said John List left his ID and backpack last night -- I get here, his stuff's all there except the floppy disk --

Goodman notices the backpack on the passenger seat.

EASTON
They found Hayden’s boot in the parking lot -- Conrad probably stuffed him in his trunk.

GOODMAN
(nodding toward backpack)
Let me see that.

Goodman searches the backpack. He examines the ID.

GOODMAN
Motherfucker is playin'. Any money in that backpack?

EASTON
No.

GOODMAN
Cuz Seger needs it.

He checks the backpack.

GOODMAN
Any blood?

EASTON
No.

GOODMAN
Restaurant folk seem suspicious?

EASTON
No, not really --

GOODMAN
He's still running, man, and he's got you lookin like a real punk!

EASTON
(offended)
Oh yeah? You're so fuckin --
(interrupts himself)
What about his boot in the parking lot?

Goodman slips off one shoe.

He tosses it.

Beat.

GOODMAN
It's a half-ass trick!

Goodman glares.

GOODMAN
You're seeing everything he WANTS you to see --
(Beat)
You look like shit.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Easton sits over a cup of coffee. Goodman across from him.

GOODMAN
You said he called you from Las Cruces?

EASTON
Yeah.

GOODMAN
Where were you?

EASTON
In Las Cruces.

Goodman stares at him.

GOODMAN
So you left me in Santa Fe with my dick in my hand and you knew to come down here?

EASTON
Lucky guess.

GOODMAN
Lucky guess.

He leans back.

GOODMAN
My kid's tee ball game is in a half hour and you wanna play around -- lucky guess -- man, fuck you --

EASTON
(forcefully)
I'm sorry, Goodman. I shouldn't've gone rogue -- I got tired of feeling like second fiddle and I took matters into my own hands --

For once, no smirk.

EASTON
My sister's got two kids.

Easton stares into his coffee.

EASTON
I probably won't ever have any of my own, but damn, I love the shit outta those two -- I bring them pizza every Sunday.
(Beat)
My nephew thinks I'm the coolest guy on earth.

Real shame crosses his face as he finally makes eye contact with Goodman.

EASTON
(feigning humor)
Got him fooled, don’t I, Detective?

Goodman’s lips tighten.

GOODMAN
Fairwood --

He stands up from the table.

GOODMAN
We all feel like we aren‘t the man we need to be for our babies.

Beat.

His jaw works.

GOODMAN
(quieter, half to himself)
There are weeks I don’t even --

He doesn't finish it.

Clears his throat and swallows the rest of his sentence.

GOODMAN
Even you -- are better than you think.

Goodman turns and walks to the restroom before he finishes.

Easton’s eyes drop to Hayden's backpack, sitting half-open on the floor.

He reaches down.

Pulls out the sketchbook.

He opens it to the drawing of Conrad.

Beat.

Easton flips through a few pages and stops.

A sloppy hand written note:

"DUTCH - (915) 489 - 7766"

Goodman returns.

GOODMAN
You pull some shit like this again and I'm gonna --

EASTON
Hey...

Goodman stops in his tracks.

INT. DUTCH'S TRAILER - DAY

Hayden wakes up on the couch in a small trailer. The whole trailer is decorated with Army stuff hung on the walls. A folded United States flag framed in the corner. Some pictures of guys wearing fatigues.

Hayden squints at the clock. 10:41am

He explores.

On the counter, a note left for him:

"Breakfast in the cupboard, coffee in the pot, hot water doesn't last long. -Dutch"

Coffee streams from a percolator into a white mug.

Hayden makes himself at home.

Runs his fingers along combat badges in a velvet display.

Plays records, kicking his feet up in a La-Z-Boy.

A denim jacket hanging. Dutch patched a tear in the elbow.

A photo of Dutch, his arm around Hayden, the day Dutch graduated Ranger school.

Dutch's eyes flash determination beneath gaunt features --

Hollow cheekbones accentuate his smile --

His pride is visible -- sewn black and gold onto the left chest of his baggy fatigues --

RANGER

same badge Dutch has taped to the glass of the photo.

In the photo, Hayden wears his infantry fatigues -- and an infantry smile.

RING.

Hayden picks up the phone.

HAYDEN
(suspicious)
Hello?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

EASTON
You almost had me.

HAYDEN
You almost had me.
(Beat)
In Las Cruces at the bar. But you didn't drive three hours to come have a beer with me.
(Beat)
I know that. You know that.

EASTON
Carajo.
(Beat)
Hayden, you don't speak Spanish, do you?

HAYDEN
No.

EASTON
Are you ready for life in Mexico?

HAYDEN
Who says I'm going to Mexico?

EASTON
C'mon. Las Cruces... El Paso... Pretty obvious.

Hayden fidgets.

EASTON
Why not just cut me in?

HAYDEN
Cut you in?

EASTON
Yeah. Partners.

HAYDEN
Why would I do that?

EASTON
Because you're tired of running. Goodman is only a half-step behind. Conrad is out there somewhere. Who knows when he'll catch up to you.
(Beat)
Give me the disk, I'll hold it somewhere safe.

HAYDEN
I'm just gonna give you the disk?

EASTON
Just until we can deal with these two. When the trouble clears, we move forward.

Easton eyes Goodman, out in the parking lot.

HAYDEN
I need to think. Call me here at our normal time.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Goodman approaches his cruiser. Something awaits him under the windshield wiper.

He flips the wiper up.

A yellow legal pad sheet wrapped around a Polaroid.

Goodman unfolds

THE NOTE

"DROP THE DISK. NOON TOMORROW. 31.75922° N, 106.48300° W. I'M WATCHING"

THE POLAROID

Goodman’s wife. Tied up and distressed.

Easton exits the coffee shop just beyond Goodman's cruiser.

He glances at Easton. Then back at the photo.

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE NEXT FEW HOURS

>> Hayden makes a checklist: American Canal - dry, Tortilla Curtain - compromised, Rio Grande Canal - dam closed/shallow, Border Patrol 20-30 mins

>> Goodman and Easton walk and talk

GOODMAN
Where's Seger now?

EASTON
He wouldn't say but he wants to meet up.

GOODMAN
Where?

EASTON
Location TBD. He's giving me details tonight. Let's meet in the morning.

>> Hayden grabs some essentials at a drug store:

flashlight, compass, new backpack, english-spanish dictionary

>> Leaving the drugstore, Hayden grabs a free publication from a newspaper box

>> Easton compares pistols at a gun shop

>> Goodman calls Officer 2 to request a wellness check on his wife

>> Hayden sits down at a table in Dutch's house, takes a deep breath

>> Easton places weapons in his truck. Pistol in the glove box. Shotgun hanging on the rear window.

>> Goodman drives around town scanning every parking lot, bus stop, and gas station

>> Easton buys a new outfit. He transforms from a rock star's weird cousin to a metrosexual outlaw

>> Hayden drops the red floppy disk into a yellow envelope and tucks it between the pages of the publication

>> Officer 2 performs wellness check

OFFICER 2 (V.O.)
Her car is there, but no one is answering. I peeked through a couple windows, nobody is there.

GOODMAN
Thanks.

>> Hayden returns to the newspaper box and buries the magazine at the bottom of the stack

>> Goodman has an anxiety attack staring at the Polaroid

>> Easton gets a haircut and a shave

>> Hayden packs his new backpack: essentials, loaded weapon, English/Spanish dictionary

>> Goodman pulls into a church and walks in. After he enters the church -- at the end of the block -- a Pontiac Trans Am shifts into drive and takes off

EXT. AN EL PASO DRUG STORE - NIGHT

A truck rumbles, headlamps beaming. A giant set of steer horns silhouettes against the bright lights.

RINGING TONE.

RINGING TONE.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Hello?

EASTON (V.O.)
Are we partners?

Easton exits the truck and approaches the newspaper box. He opens the plastic door.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Yeah.

Beat.

EASTON (V.O.)
Where should we meet up?

The publication at the bottom of the stack feels thicker than the others. Easton snatches it.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
No meet up. Go get the disk. It's in a newspaper box at the drug store on Alameda and Locust. Keep it safe. Don't tell Goodman.
(Beat)
Don't tell anybody.

EASTON (V.O.)
Goodman was asking about the disk today.
(Beat)
First time I've heard him ask about it. He's mostly just cared about getting to you. Til now --

Easton climbs into his truck. The dome light flicks on.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Keep him away from me. Keep him distracted. I'll be in Mexico by sunrise.

Easton rips the tape off of the yellow envelope.

EASTON (V.O.)
What about Conrad?

His fingers slide into the envelope.

HAYDEN (V.O.)
Don't worry about Conrad. When he finds me, I'll be ready.

His fingers extract the red floppy disk.

"MacGuffin Files"

A radical SYNTH STING.

FRIDAY

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAWN (7)

The lamp casts light on the ceiling, Goodman lays on his bed, restless and awake.

The alarm on his stainless steel, digital Casio watch cues 6:00am.

Goodman finishes getting dressed and puts his arms through his shoulder holster. His gun and magazine adorn the nightstand. He snaps the magazine in and holsters the weapon.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Goodman locks the door and proceeds across the second floor catwalk.

He comes down an exterior flight of stairs two steps at a time.

As he approaches the vehicle, he sees it under the wiper.

ANOTHER NOTE

Written on the publication page of an English-Spanish dictionary --

"EASTON HAS THE DISK."

EXT. SOCORRO MISSION - DAY

Goodman's cruiser enters frame left and Easton's truck enters frame right. They park ten feet apart, exit their vehicles, and meet face to face in front of an expanse of white adobe.

GOODMAN
You spoke with Seger?

Easton lights a smoke.

EASTON
Yep.

GOODMAN
And?

EASTON
He thinks he's going to outsmart you again.

GOODMAN
He told you that?

EASTON
No, but hasn't that been his play at every turn?

Goodman glares as Easton.

EASTON
He let us catch up to him in Las Cruces, he let us catch up to him in El Paso. You can taste Mexican dirt every time the wind blows around here. You're seeing everything he WANTS you to see.
(Beat)
He's headed East, Detective. He said he wants us to meet him at the border, but he's not going to be there. He's buying time so he can get a head start.

GOODMAN
What makes you so sure he's headed East?

EASTON
I found a receipt for a bus ticket to San Antonio in the backpack.

Easton gauges Goodman's reaction.

GOODMAN
(assertively)
Give me the disk, Fairwood.

EASTON
What? I don't have it.

GOODMAN
Don't do that.

A forceful finger lands on Easton’s sternum.

EASTON
I don't have the disk!

GOODMAN
Don't DO that.

The finger-poking evolves into a shove.

EASTON
You think I don't know what's going on here, Detective? This isn't about Hayden anymore. You're after the disk for yourself. And what'd I tell ya? On the other side of that badge, all I see is another asshole with a gun.

GOODMAN
(snappy)
Maybe you're right.

Goodman draws his weapon and smashes it angainst Easton's forehead.

GOODMAN
Gimme the disk, Fairwood!

EASTON
Goodman -- I don't have the fucking disk, man. I don't have it!

Easton takes a half step back. Goodman advances, backing Easton into the steer horns of his own front bumper.

Weapon still raised, Goodman reaches his hand into Easton's inner jacket pocket.

Easton appears unimpressed when Goodman discovers the red floppy disk.

A radical SYNTH STING.

GOODMAN
Yeah.
(Beat)
Yeah.

Goodman backs away from Easton, gun pointed at his face.

BANG!

Goodman shoots Easton's front tire flat.

Easton throws his hands up, Goodman lunges --

Goodman cracks Easton over the left eye with the butt of his pistol.

THWACK! THWACK!

GOODMAN
Every! Time!

Easton goes fetal --

Goodman stomps his face --

GOODMAN
You lying -- piece of human --
fucking -- garbage --

Easton buried his face in the pavement to shield it from Goodman's fierce blows--

Goodman straddles him and throws haymakers to the side of the head --

GOODMAN
I told you --

THWACK!

GOODMAN
Not to do --

THWACK! THWACK!

GOODMAN
That!

EXT. THE HORSE FOUNTAIN - DAY

Goodman parks and walks across the street. As he walks, he drops the floppy into a brown paper bag and folds it up.

Goodman checks over his shoulder.

At the coordinate location, Goodman finds an old horse watering fountain in a small plaza. Water spews from the mouths of four bronze lions riddled with mineral buildup.

Two benches flank the fountain. Goodman lays the bag on a bench and surveys the area one more time before returning to his car. He drives off.

SOME TIME LATER...

Conrad arrives and sits down on the bench, right next to the disk. The sun is shining. Conrad lights up a cigarette and inhales the finest smoke ever smoked. He casually spreads open the brown paper bag and peers down into the bag. The red floppy disk sits at the bottom.

A radical SYNTH STING.

The FIREBIRD on the hood of Conrad’s Trans Am rumbles as he starts it up. He pulls away from the curb into traffic. Up the street, Easton’s truck turns through an intersection to follow Conrad on a spare tire.

EXT. SOCORRO MISSION - FLASHBACK

A spare tire leans against the front door of Easton's jacked-up truck. Easton, on his knees, turns the lug nuts on his front wheel. Goodman stands over him, gun to his head.

GOODMAN
You're gonna help me.

EASTON
Me? Help you? You must be out your motha --

GOODMAN
You --

Goodman yanks Easton's head back by his hair.

GOODMAN
Are going to make sure that this floppy disk --

Goodman smashes the red plastic into Easton's broken nose.

GOODMAN
Never leaves your fuckin' sight.

Beat.

Easton spits blood onto the pavement.

GOODMAN
Conrad wants this by noon. He's got my wife. I've got coordinates for the drop. I’d like to tail him, but he’s gonna have eyes on me. And my ride makes me too easy to spot.

A look at the squad car proves his point.

Easton, still in his pimp outlaw clothes, wipes the bloody spit off his chin, his face level with the giant steer horns. He stares Goodman down.

EASTON
(out of breath)
No problem. I can be discreet.

EXT. THE STREETS OF EL PASO - DAY

Conrad honors the speed limit through El Paso. At red lights, he hangs his burning cigarette out the window. He drives through town like a pageant winner taking a victory lap --

He checks his reflection in the rearview too often and waves other drivers in aggressively when they signal to merge.

Behind Conrad's open T-tops, Easton's truck follows, but never with fewer than 3 cars between them. When Conrad turns a corner, Easton disappears a moment too long. Time after time, Easton reappears -- turning the same corner.

Conrad ends up in a strip mall. As he crosses the parking lot, Easton parallels him one aisle over -- lagging a bit behind and craning his neck to see over the cars.

INT. RADIO SHACK - DAY

DING-A-LING.

RADIO SHACK GUY looks up to see Conrad approach him.

RADIO SHACK GUY
Howdy! What can I do for you?

Conrad peruses some of the merchandise on the floor before stepping to the counter.

CONRAD
(lowers voice)
You got a 40-track head-cleaning cartridge?

Radio Shack Guy is confused.

RADIO SHACK GUY
Head cleaning... cartridges?

Conrad swallows.

CONRAD
Yeah. For a Model III.

Radio Shack Guy puzzles.

RADIO SHACK GUY
I know we don't carry them. Let me find out if that's something we can order. Gimme just a sec, okay?

Conrad nods.

Radio Shack Guy disappears through a door.

Conrad darts behind the desk, helping himself to the computer on the front desk.

He inserts the disk into the drive.

He types A> DIR.

He dances nervously while the disk loads.

One file is available.

README TXT

He types A> README

DOS responds:

BAD COMMAND OR FILE NAME

Radio Shack Guy props the door open, still talking with someone in the back.

Conrad freezes.

He reaches for his pistol.

Radio Shack Guy needs further clarification. He returns to the back.

Conrad types A>TYPE README.TXT

He presses the RETURN key.

The contents of the file roll onto the screen:

EASTON :

DID YOU REALLY THINK I'D GIVE YOU THE REAL ONE?

YOU UNDERESTIMATE ME AT EVERY TURN.

THAT'S WHY YOU'LL NEVER GET EL AUTÉNTICO, DUMMY.

Conrad seethes.

He blinks.

EL AUTÉNTICO.

The word on the screen stares back.

EL AUTÉNTICO

INT. EL PASO DRUG STORE - FLASHBACK

>> Hayden browses the office supplies aisle and puts an English-Spanish dictionary in his basket. Browsing, he finds a box of rainbow color floppy disks. A bright red floppy is shown on the front. He drops it in his basket.

>> Back at Dutch's trailer, Hayden works at a small table. He carefully smooths a paper label across a brand new red floppy disk. He references the real floppy disk as he duplicates the handwriting onto the counterfeit.

>> 'MACGUFFIN FILES'

>> He takes a deep breath and drops the counterfeit into a yellow envelope.

INT. RADIO SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Radio Shack Guy returns, holding a catalog. Conrad is standing at the computer.

RADIO SHACK GUY
We can probably have it here --

Conrad shoots him.

Seven rounds.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

Radio Shack Guy drops behind the counter.

Conrad disappears through the door to the back.

RADIO SHACK MANAGER (O.S.)
Sir, I have a family!

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

Beat.

Conrad reappears.

He pops the eject button and yanks the disk out.

He notices a SECURITY CAMERA in the corner.

He raises his pistol.

CLICK.

Empty.

Conrad swings his pistol at it.

Almost.

He kinda jumps and swings at it.

Still too high.

Beat.

EXT. RADIO SHACK - DAY

Easton speaks into a payphone. One eye is a kaleidoscope of black, blue, and what-the-fuck-happened. The other one looks like ass, too.

EASTON
He went into a Radio Shack.

Easton lights a cigarette.

EASTON
Alameda and Paisano.
(Beat)
Yeah, alone. Move quickly.

Easton hangs up and takes a drag.

Conrad exits the Radio Shack in the distance and tosses something on the ground.

Easton watches Conrad walk to his car. As Conrad pulls out Easton walks over to inspect Conrad's litter.

Easton stares down, clouds above him --

In Easton's palm, the red floppy disk is snapped in half.

A dissonant SYNTH STING.

GOODMAN (O.S.)
(from behind Easton)
Seger gave you a ringer, huh?

Goodman joins Easton, looking down at it.

Easton turns to Goodman.

EASTON
Fuck you, man.

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE BORDER

>> A Mexican flag hangs at customs. Conrad's Trans Am pulls into a mostly-empty lane.

>> Easton sticks his head out the window to yell at someone taking too long ahead of him.

>> Goodman flashes his lights and chirps his siren behind cars ahead of him. They move aside for him.

>> Conrad rolls up to the gate. An ATTRACTIVE WOMAN works the gate. Window down, passport out. He breezes through.

>> Easton explains the shotgun in his back windshield to a HUMAN SLOTH in a uniform.

>> Goodman butters up the HISPANIC GUY at his gate while he is processed. --

GOODMAN
You ever thought about becoming a cop?

>> The gate goes up, Conrad takes off in a cloud of dust.

>> The gate goes up, Goodman takes off in a cloud of dust.

>> The gate stays down, Easton made to step out of the vehicle.

>> The gate is up, Easton takes off in a cloud of dust.

INT. A CANTINA IN JUÁREZ - NIGHT

Hayden pushes through cigarette smoke at the bar. Glasses clink, laughter ricochets around the room. The shelves behind the bar are a mosaic of sparkling agave.

One seat is available around the bar, Hayden takes it. The BARKEEPER checks in.

HAYDEN
Whatever's cold.

The man to Hayden's left takes notice of the new arrival. They lock eyes.

LOBO
(above the bar noise)
Are you following me?

Lobo smirks.

HAYDEN
(surprised)
Lobo!

Hayden laughs.
Listen, man -- I've been looking over my shoulder so much lately -- I couldn't follow you out the front door!

Lobo smiles and takes a swig as he nods to the music.

LOBO
Guess that's why you walk into Juárez and order the first thing you see --

HAYDEN
Could be --

Barkeeper sets a Pacifico in front of him, Hayden raises it.

HAYDEN
-- But it'll wash this desert sand out of my mouth!

He takes a long slug from the bottle.

Lobo watches the crowd.

Hayden lets himself settle into the noise.

For the first time in a while, it seems like he can breathe.

HAYDEN
You know what?

Lobo turns.

HAYDEN
I don't think anybody knows where the hell I am.

LOBO
No?
(Beat)
Do you?

HAYDEN
(English dialect)
Juarez.

LOBO
(Spanish Dialect)
Juárez -- not bad, it's a good start.

Hayden grins as he tips his bottle to his lips.

HAYDEN
(Experimentally)
Suárez...

Hayden lip syncs the pronunciation.

HAYDEN
Well, I'm not going anywhere now.

LOBO
Everybody’s going somewhere, hermano.

HAYDEN
Not me --

LOBO
Only one type of man stops going anywhere...

HAYDEN
Yeah, I'm just saying I’ll probably never go back to the States --

Hayden chuckles.

HAYDEN
I didn’t even bring my passport!

Lobo studies him for a moment.

He reaches for a small crystal dish full of matchboxes on the bar.

He takes one.

LOBO
You wouldn't need it. Just ask for Lobo.

He hands it to Hayden.

Hayden turns it in his hand.

JACQUES' CANTINA
TEL 9-62-14-41

Hayden's eyes trace the rows of tequilas shining on the shelf, then settle on Lobo.

LOBO
You'd be surprised how little you actually need to cross the border.

Hayden lights a cigarette with a match.

HAYDEN
Try me.

LOBO
Met a man in here earlier. Mexican fella. No name.

Hayden screws up his eyes.

HAYDEN
No name?

Lobo sucks his teeth and shakes his head.

LOBO
He had a good drink and some good smoke. No name though.

HAYDEN
(to Barkeeper, pointing)
Two shots of that there --
(to Lobo)
Lobo, you never met a stranger, did you?

LOBO
People usually tell you what they want. Trick is -- to listen long enough to let 'em get to it.

Barkeeper pours two shots. Hayden slides one to Lobo and raises his glass.

SERIES OF SHOTS - MEXICO (8)

>> Sunrise. Conrad sits on a balcony. A sharpie scribbles "El Auténtico" on a bullet. Bullet slides into the magazine. Browning Hi-Power. He tosses the gun onto the passenger seat. Keys in the ignition. The cigarette lighter pops and the coil glows red. Flies down the road -- cig in mouth -- a trail of dust.

>> Goodman cleans his Beretta 92. Holstered. Badge clips to belt. He adjusts it -- then takes it off and throws it on the bed. Cruiser door slams. Polaroid goes on the dashboard, blocking view of speedometer as he races off.

>> Easton practices Hollywood pistol-draws in a full length mirror. His Colt Python is a bit cumbersome. He admires the Winchester 1897 hanging in his rear window before he starts the truck. Shuffles through some cassette tapes. Scorpions "Blackout“ -- he throws it in the tape deck.

EXT. DESERT GUN RANGE - DAY

Hayden walks up to an adobe building with an open-air counter beneath the vigas.

HAYDEN
One-hour range rental. And 40 rounds of .38 special.

As he empties his pocket to get so cash, the red floppy disk comes out. It returns to his chest pocket.

The sun is high. Heat waves ripple across a hot concrete pad littered with shell casings. TWO MEN roast in the heat at the final bay of the firing line.

A Range Attendant in a faded uniform and a straw hat pushes a broom, sweeping brass. He hides his brown skin from the sun as he works his way down the firing line.

A pistol fires.

A steel target PINGS.

Hayden takes aim behind the barrel of a Smith & Wesson Model 10. Aviators hide his greasy, smudged-up face. Just over the shoulderstrap of his tattered cotton utility shirt, the Range Attendant sweeps casings.

HAYDEN
(to Range Attendant)
You know what I like about those old war generals? They didn't fuck around.

RANGEFIRE. PING.

HAYDEN
History books bleed a thousand pens dry obsessing over military strategy. Plans. Intelligence. Predicting the opposition's next move. But nobody fucking knew. Wars went on for years because limpwristed leaders waited for the enemy to march themselves between a rock and a fuckin' hard place.

RANGEFIRE. Hayden inspects his shot.

HAYDEN
Carpe Diem, man. At some point you've gotta quit trying to figure out the next 20 moves and just make something happen. That's what separates the men from the boys. They don't wait for the perfect opportunity. They take the one that's there.

RANGEFIRE. Hayden settles behind the pistol.

HAYDEN
(quoting)
"A good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan executed next week."

Three quick shots ring out.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The world disappears. We snap forward -- a high speed tunnel-vision rush across the sand.

A sharp WHIP-CRACK splits the air and slams to a dead stop at the target.

PING! PING! PING!

The brightly colored paint peels around a tight cluster of bullet holes.

HAYDEN
Know who said that?

The Range Attendant quietly notices Hayden was talking to him. He goes back to sweeping.

HAYDEN
Ulysses Grant.

THEN, in the distance:

BANG!

BANG!

A distinctive cadence.

The Range Attendant stops sweeping.

BANG!

Hayden searches the firing line --

But sees nobody...

BANG!

EXT. GUN RANGE PARKING LOT - DAY

The Trans Am drives past a 20' tall plywood sign on the side of the road. It's an Aztec illustration of a crow, it's eyes X'ed out and blood spurts from the bird's chest.

Conrad pulls into a dirt lot. The lot is empty other than a mint green '57 Bel-Air parked under the lone street lamp. A stray dog runs out in front of his car.

He parks abruptly, grabs his gun from the passenger seat, and steps out of the car. There is rangefire in the distance.

Conrad takes a few calm steps toward the range before hearing a car door slam.

GOODMAN
Conrad!

Conrad stops in his tracks but doesn't turn around.

GOODMAN
Conrad. I gave you the disk, now where's my wife.

Conrad casually turns to see Goodman taking aim at him.

CONRAD
Detective Goodman.

Conrad's eyes are steely as he speaks.

If I had just a quarter of the REAL floppy disk for every time you were outsmarted by a rent-a-cop, your wife would be safely back at home.

Goodman releases the safety.

GOODMAN
What's on the disk, you want it so bad...

CONRAD
That's the thing, Detective.

Conrads hand slowly moves toward his gun.

GOODMAN
Keep your hands where I can see them, Conrad.

Goodman steps cautiously toward Conrad.

CONRAD
Sure, sure. That's the thing, Detective. If you were in a position to know, you wouldn't have delivered a bogus fucking disk.

Rangefire rings out in the distance.

GOODMAN
Where's my wife, Conrad?

CONRAD
You think I have her?

Goodman's hand sweats around the handle of his pistol.

GOODMAN
Yes. Yes, I do.

CONRAD
I don't have her, Detective. But I do know where she is, and that's the beauty of all this.

Goodman steps closer, gun drawn.

CONRAD
Because you got that piece pointed right at my heart, I know it. But, if you shoot me, you'll never find her.

Conrad's hand again slowly moves to his gun.

GOODMAN
Conrad, I swear on my wife's life if you reach for your gun one more time, you'll be dead before you hit the ground.

Rangefire in the distance.

CONRAD
Easy, Detective Goodman.

Conrad gestures with open palms.

CONRAD
Listen, because here's what you need to know. The real disk is with the kid, a hundred yards that way.
(Beat)
Right. Over. There.

His finger delicately punctuates the sentence.

GOODMAN
Put these on.

Goodman tosses a set of handcuffs at Conrad's feet and steps a bit closer.

CONRAD
Let's just go get the floppy. You help me, I help you. The way it was always meant to be.

Rangefire in the distance. A triplet.

GOODMAN
Cuffs. Put em on.

Conrad's hands lower slowly.

His hand reach his belt line, inches from his gun.

He reaches for it.

BANG! BANG!

Conrad gasps.

Goodman winces.

Goodman falls to his knee, two shots stain his white shirt on his ribs.

Easton stands across the parking lot, gun pointed at Goodman.

Goodman returns fire, shakily. BANG!

Easton advances.

EASTON
I'm just a plug, right Detective?

BANG! Easton fires a fatal shot into Goodman's chest.

EASTON
All you ever did was use me for what you could get out of me. I'm just a plug, man. I'm just a fucking plug!

Easton leans over Goodman, speaking quietly.

EASTON
Get a new plug. You're leaking, bitch.

He stands up and collects himself. He scowls down at dead Goodman one more time.

EASTON
It's been a good ride. I'll take it from here.

Beat.

Conrad has drawn his pistol by now. He looks at Easton. Then at Goodman.

CONRAD
You know that’s a cop, right?

EASTON
Was.

Conrad smiles.

CONRAD
Damn, you’re a mouthy pain in my ass. Wanna make that two was’es?

EASTON
Two was'es? What the fuck are was'es?

CONRAD
Goodman was a cop.
You was a mouthy pain in my ass.

Easton relaxes his weapon now using it to gesture as he speaks.

EASTON
I'm a pain in your ass?! How's that?

CONRAD
As soon as Goodman got involved, I figured I'd just let him track down the kid who stole my disk.

Goodman lies in a heap on the ground.

CONRAD
I'd keep an eye on him, when he got to the disk, I'd know it and I'd cut his legs out from under him -- take the disk, kill the kid.
Wasn't til you got involved that started gettin' difficult.

EASTON
Bullshit. I was the only one ever got any closer to Hayden.

Easton waves his gun casually as he speaks.

EASTON
And -- I call bullshit on you hanging back letting Goodman do the tracking, too. You were closer to Hayden than I was back in Las Cruces.

CONRAD
Las Cruces?
(Beat)
I was never In Las Cruces...

Easton replays events in his head.

EASTON
Fuck.

CONRAD
In fact, as capable as you may be in the hunt -- you also fell for that cheap movie prop gimmick.

EASTON
No. Goodman thought he could pull the wool over your eyes, he said --

CONRAD
Easton, your name was on the disk -- The kid left a sweet little note for you on the disk.

Easton is caught in a lie.

CONRAD
I'd almost take you on as a co-conspirator in future business endeavors -- but I can't trust you.

Conrad's posture tightens.

CONRAD
See, I'm reliable. You may not like what I do. You may not like what I stand for --

EASTON
You don't stand for anything.

CONRAD
But you always known my intentions. Like I said before I can't trust you. And what do you do with a dog that bites you -- even just once?

Conrads finger tightens around the trigger.

BANG!

A revolver against Conrad's temple sends a misty spray of blood from the other side.

HAYDEN
You put it the fuck down.

As Conrad bleeds into the dirt, Hayden faces Easton.

HAYDEN
Howdy.
(Beat)
Partner.

EASTON
It’s like you don’t even know what that word means. Time after time, Hayden, you -

BANG!

Hayden fires a shot straight into Easton’s gut.

EASTON
Fuck you! You greedy little --

Through clenched teeth, the words can’t escape. Easton is down on a knee. With one hand, he applies pressure to his wound. With the other, he tries to aim his enormous pistol at Hayden.

Hayden advances toward Easton. Conrad lays lifeless behind him.

HAYDEN
Did you know Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team?

Easton labors to hold his pistol still, aiming it at Hayden.

EASTON
Who the fuck is Michael Jordan?

Hayden stops. He looks offended.

BANG!

Easton's gun flies from his hand.

EASTON
Holy fuckin fuck!

Easton's hand has a hole going clean through.

Easton now screams maniacally.

Hayden ignores it.

HAYDEN
His own coach couldn't see his talent. Now UNC is ranked #1. And it’s all because of him.

Hayden squats down beside Easton.

HAYDEN
I mean, it's only preseason. So…
(Half Beat)
Means exactly dick. But people are starting to take him seriously. Even when they won the championship against Georgetown, everybody knew Worthy was going to get the ball.

Easton writhes in agony.

EASTON
What the fuck are you talking about?

HAYDEN
Worthy was supposed to take the shot. But the ball went to Jordan.

Hayden reaches into his pocket and pulls out the red floppy disk. He holds it in front of Easton's paling face, feeling the weight of it between his fingers.

HAYDEN
When you get a clean shot, you have to take it. You gotta have the stones to do it yourself.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Easton's body thrashes with each shot.

Hayden stands over him.

He calmly tucks the floppy disk back into his jacket pocket.

He pulls out a soft pack of cigarettes and tips his last smoke out of the little hole. He tucks it between his lips.

He doesn't have a lighter.

He reaches into Easton's pocket and finds a lighter.

He sparks it and enjoys a moment of calm.

Hayden opens the cylinder. Six spent cartridges tumble into his palm. He tosses them onto Easton's body.

Hayden puffs his cigarette.

He turns to walk off, but someone is suddenly there --

BANG!

Hayden flies backward through the air and lands on his back, spread out in the hot Mexican sun.

Blood pools quickly in the dirt.

The chamber of Easton's Winchester clears as the shotgun is pumped.

CLACK CLACK.

Under the shade of an old straw hat, the Range Attendant/Amigo#2/Custodial Worker/Tech Guy slowly steps to Hayden as he takes his last breath. He is EL JODÍSIMO (50s). He leans over Hayden's body and tips his hat.

EL JODÍSIMO
Señor.

El Jodísimo frees the floppy from Hayden's chest pocket and raises it in the sunlight.

A radical SYNTH STING.

His gold incisor flashes beneath a bushy mustache --

He lays the shotgun across Hayden's body.

He passes Easton, Conrad, and Goodman. He walks past a Trans Am, a cop cruiser, and a steer horned truck with a door open. He approaches his mint green '57 Bel-Air.

From the breast pocket of his range attendant costume, he removes a fresh cigar.

MACANUDO

He puts it in his mouth as he settles down in the driver's seat.

He sets the floppy beside him on the leather bench seat.

From the dashboard he grabs a matchbox and strikes one. As he closes the matchbox, the print becomes visible for a split second.

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He draws the match-flame into the end of the cigar and puffs a few times.

El Jodísimo puts the car in reverse, then back in park.

He removes the pistol from his waist as heavy breathing pierces the air. He makes eye contact in the rearview mirror with Goodman's wife, tied and gagged.

BANG!

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: ALL THE WRONG MEN