

BAD TIMES AT THE EL ROYALE

by

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Final Shooting Draft

1

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY/NIGHT

1

It's 1958. We're in a lonely motel room.

A key hits the lock. A MAN throws open the door and races into the room. He slams the door. He peeks out the window and studies the parking lot.

He struggles to catch his breath.

We may notice blood on the sleeves of his suit.

This is FELIX O'KELLY.

He steps away from the window. He's carrying a RED DUFFEL BAG. He sets it down and surveys his room.

CUT TO:

Felix shoves the bed to the side of the room.

[Note: for the duration of this sequence, the camera remains in the same position. Fast jump cuts.]

Felix opens his red duffel bag. He removes a crowbar. A hammer. A handgun.

CUT TO:

Felix, his jacket off now, yanks up the carpet from the corner of the room, revealing the WOODEN FLOOR BOARDS below.

Felix looks at the floor boards. Looks at his tools. Thinks.

CUT TO:

Felix adjusts THE RADIO antenna. Static. He fiddles with the dial. Fifties folk-pop fills the room as Felix finds a station playing "26 Miles" by The Four Preps.

Twenty-six miles across the sea, Santa Catalina is a-waiting for me...

Felix turns up the volume.

CUT TO:

Felix hammers the crowbar between slats in the center of the room. The sound is somewhat muffled by the radio.

(CONTINUED)

He pries up the floorboards one by one.

CUT TO:

Santa Catalina, the island of romance, romance, romance...

We may notice it's NIGHT outside now. Felix has his shirtsleeves rolled up. He's covered in sweat. There's now a large hole in the floor. The floorboards are all neatly stacked to the side.

Felix zips up the duffel bag. We never get a good look at what's inside.

He drops the bag inside the hole.

CUT TO:

Felix replaces the floor boards. He hammers the nails in time to the music. He smokes while he works.

CUT TO:

Felix rolls the carpet back. Stamps it down in the corner.

He looks down at the hammer in his hand. Looks at the crowbar on the bed. Thinks.

CUT TO:

The room is empty now. Through the open door, we can see it's raining outside. We hear a trunk SLAM.

CUT TO:

A soaking wet Felix crawls on his hands and knees and scoops up the sawdust on the carpet. He stands. Surveys the room. *Looks good.*

Felix catches a glimpse of himself in the LARGE MIRROR mounted on the wall. *Looks less good.*

CUT TO:

Felix stands in front of his mirror. He combs his hair with a black plastic comb.

Twenty-six miles across the sea...

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

Felix paces back and forth. He stubs out one cigarette and lights another.

CUT TO:

Felix sits in the wooden chair in the corner. He smokes. The ashtray next to him is filled with butts.

HEADLIGHTS flare the curtains. Felix stubs out his cigarette.

Forty kilometers in a leaky old boat...

There's a knock at the door.

Felix grabs the handgun from the night stand. Moves to the peephole. Studies the outside world.

Any old thing that'll stay afloat...

His shoulders relax when he sees who it is.

Felix throws the latch. Opens the door. Gestures for the person to *come on in...*

BOOM. A shotgun BLAST hits Felix O'Kelly square in the back. He's launched clear across the room, and the second his body SLAMS INTO CAMERA, blood splashing the lens --

CUT TO TITLE:

Bad Times At The El Royale

Over black. Title clears. A new song ("25 Miles") signals a new era. Driving sixties soul as Edwin Starr calls out, "*All right, feet, start moving...*"

TITLE: Ten years later

EXT. EL ROYALE - DAY

The El Royale is a motor lodge nestled in the woods north of Lake Tahoe. It once had dreams of being a mid-level vacation hideaway. Those dreams do not appear to have been realized.

"You've got to get me there..."

A wooden arch bears the name of the establishment, welcomes visitors to the mostly-empty parking lot.

A dented gray Studebaker drives through the arch.

(CONTINUED)

The defining characteristic of the parking lot is A RED LINE that bisects the lot dead center and leads straight to the double doors of the lobby lodge.

"It's twenty-five miles from home..."

The Studebaker parks. The driver opens her door. We get a better look at her:

Late thirties. African-American. As she stares at the El Royale, we can almost hear her thinking, "How in the Lord's name did I end up in this lonely place?"

This is DARLENE SWEET.

She opens her trunk and removes HER ODD BAGS. One is a large flowered suitcase. The other appears to be an enormous roll of fabric, bound with a rope around it.

It would be too much luggage for a lumberjack, let alone Darlene. But she lifts the burden without complaint, balancing one in each arm.

As she approaches the lodge, she notices A MAN standing in the parking lot:

He's in his sixties. He's wearing a priest collar. He's staring at the hotel. He looks lost and confused.

This is FATHER DANIEL FLYNN.

Darlene slows when she sees him.

DARLENE

Are... you lost, Father?

Flynn almost jumps when he hears her. His eyes become clear again, as though he just awoke from a dream. He smiles.

FATHER FLYNN

No. No, I suppose not.

(looks down)

According to this, I'm in Nevada.

ON THE GROUND: the RED LINE runs right between them. On the west side of the line, stenciled letters read "California." On the east side of the line, "Nevada."

DARLENE

(smiles)

I've never been to Nevada. What's it like?

FATHER FLYNN

Not bad. Looks like it might rain.
What's California like?

Darlene looks over her shoulder to the west.

DARLENE

Still sunny.

Flynn picks up his valise.

FATHER FLYNN

Can I give you a hand there?

DARLENE

That's very kind of you, thank you.

She hands him the flowered suitcase. If Flynn is curious about the strange roll of fabric in Darlene's arms, he gives no indication.

They walk towards the motel. The border leads straight to a set of doors, one door on each side of the line.

They enter through the California side.

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

Ring-ring. The front door chimes as Darlene and Flynn enter and study the unique accommodations:

The interior of the El Royale plays on the same border theme. The line bisects the large room perfectly in two.

ON THE CALIFORNIA SIDE: everything is decorated in warm orange hues. We may notice a bar, a set of tables, a lounge seating area.

ON THE NEVADA SIDE: everything is decorated in cool purple hues. We may notice the front desk, some gaming tables, a black and white television currently showing coverage of Richard Nixon's 1969 inauguration speech.

At the back of the room, half in California and half in Nevada, is a colorful JUKEBOX.

Flynn looks down at the border, Darlene follows his gaze. They're both standing in California. Flynn gestures: *be my guest.*

Darlene smiles. Takes a mock deep breath...

And steps across the border.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN

How are you enjoying Nevada so far?

Darlene shrugs. *So far, so good.*

VOICE

Those are my accoutrements...

The voice has a thick Mississippi accent. It's coming from behind the bar on the California side. A man wearing a charmingly rumpled seersucker suit reveals himself:

This is LARAMIE SEYMOUR SULLIVAN.

LARAMIE

(points)

At the front desk there.

They look to the front desk, where a large amount of luggage has been piled.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

That's my trunk, that's my fortnighter, that's my hat case. And I'd ask that you folk respect my claim when it comes time to divvy the rooms. Though when that'll be is anyone's guess. I been ringin' that bell so long my hand's sore and my ears is tired and my constitution needs coffee. So. That's why I'm back here scroungin'.

He holds up a pack of coffee grounds. He dumps it into the elaborate machine behind the counter.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Success! Though I can't say I vouch for the quality.

He starts the machine. While it grinds and grumbles, Laramie crosses the room, extends his hand to Flynn.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Laramie Seymour Sullivan. Sales manager, Calhoun Appliances. My name may not be on the masthead, but that don't mean it ain't a family business.

He hands Flynn a business card. Tips his hat to Darlene.

(CONTINUED)

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Ma'am.

DARLENE

Hello.

LARAMIE

What should I call you, Father?

FATHER FLYNN

Daniel Flynn. It is nice to meet you.

LARAMIE

Father Flynn, huh. That's easy to remember, alliterative and such. Whereabouts is your parish?

FATHER FLYNN

The Immaculate Heart of Mary's in Bloomington, Indiana.

A beat as Laramie sizes up Flynn.

LARAMIE

Well.

(then)

Let me just say up front that me and the good people of East Biloxi Baptist may have our differences with your Pope, but in our hearts we both believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ, and that makes us brothers as far as I'm concerned. Who handles your hospitality at the Heart of Mary?

FATHER FLYNN

I'm sorry?

LARAMIE

You know, who keeps the place clean and tidy?

FATHER FLYNN

Her... name is Barbara.

LARAMIE

Could I trouble you for Barbara's phone number? I believe the good Lord has put me in your path to make her life easier.

(CONTINUED)

Flynn studies Laramie. Thinks.

FATHER FLYNN

I confess my memory is not what it used to be. But I have it written down in my valise. I'd be happy to get it for you once I check-in and am squared away.

LARAMIE

I'd sure appreciate it. Though, again, Lord only knows when that'd be.

He points to the brass bell on the front desk.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

You can go ahead and give it a whirl. I ain't had much luck with it.

(turns)

How 'bout you, darlin' -- you in the hospitality business?

Darlene seems genuinely taken aback.

DARLENE

I -- how did you know my name?

LARAMIE

Your name is "Darlin'?" Ain't that a pip! And they say fate died in '63.

Darlene realizes the mistake.

DARLENE

Oh. Sorry. I thought you said... never mind. I'm not in the hospitality business. No.

LARAMIE

Well, I'll give you my card nonetheless. I'm sure you know some gals who need a vacuum.

A beat. Then Father Flynn rings the bell.

The group waits in awkward silence. No response. Laramie rolls his eyes: *see what I mean?*

(CONTINUED)

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

This your first time at the El Royale?

Both Flynn and Darlene nod. Laramie crosses back to the bar.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

It didn't always used to be like this. And I don't jus' mean you could find the clerk come check-in. Naw, this place used to be hustlin' and bustlin'. Tahoe's best kept secret. I mean, it was always a novelty, but there's state fair novelty and old horse novelty and we are now firmly in the old horse variety.

He removes the coffee carafe from the machine and grabs three cups. As he starts making his way back across the room:

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

'66 this place had swing. Hell, I'm sure I couldn't get a main lodge room if I tried.

He points to the photographs adorning the California wall.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

It was a hidey hole for the Tahoe swells.

Darlene looks at the photos. The El Royale in more boisterous times. There's Frank Sinatra lounging by the pool. There's Martin Luther King, Jr. shaking hands with a crowd of well-wishers. There's Bobby Kennedy making pop-superstar VESTA SHEARS laugh.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Dean Martin even sang a song about it. "Half In California With Judy?"

(off their looks)

No?

(shrugs)

Wasn't one of his best. Coffee?

Flynn nods. Sure. Darlene shakes her head.

DARLENE

No, thank you.

LARAMIE

Aw, come on. I made a whole pot.
Can't let it go to waste.

He hands her a cup. *Take it.* She relents.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

(as he pours)

Atta girl. I'll let the clerk give you the whole spiel, should he ever show up, I mean. But the part they tend to leave out is about, oh, a year ago this place lost its gambling license. Some problems with the commission or something. And so the swells took their business elsewhere. Now the main lodge is all that's open and the pool is filled with ducks and they rent rooms by the hour if you ask quiet-like.

(then)

'Course, if we're bein' honest, that's probably why a priest, a vacuum salesman, and a Negro can afford freight here, right Father?

(laughs)

I'm just funnin'. My stay's on Calhoun Appliances, if I'm bein' truthful, which is why room choice is so important and I ask you to respect my accoutrements there as a proxy for my person. I intend to lavish myself. Always wanted to stay in The Honeymoon Suite.

He holds up his left hand. His ring finger is bare.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Though I am not currently on my honeymoon.

They wait in awkward silence. They sip their coffee.

A light bulb goes off over Flynn's head. As though he's been thinking about something else this entire time:

FATHER FLYNN

Oh.

(turns)

"Darlene."

Darlene nods. Smiles.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

Nice to meet you, Darlene.

DARLENE

Nice to meet you too, Father.

LARAMIE

Well, hell. We have to wait much longer, I might as well open up that there trunk and set up the Calhoun Electrovax. Give you folks a proper demonstration. You sure you ain't in the hospitality business, darlin'?

Darlene, once again, shakes her head.

DARLENE

No, sir. I am not.

She walks behind the front desk to THE DOOR that says "Employees Only." Gives it a proper thumping with her fist. *Wham wham wham.*

There's a THUD from behind the door.

LARAMIE

Ho! The lady's got a luckier hand than we do, Father. Shame these here tables is decommissioned, we could make ourselves some real money.

4

We hear fumbling. Footsteps. The door finally swings open, revealing a twenty-year-old kid with a baby face and an ill-fitting desk clerk jacket. He looks a bit like a wet rat. 4

This is MILES MILLER.

MILES

I'm very sorry to keep you waiting.

If you had to guess how long it has been since Miles has last slept, you'd probably go with "Five days."

LARAMIE

Damn, boy, I been in this lobby so long, I'm due for a shave. What's wrong with you?

MILES

I'm very sorry.

(CONTINUED)

Miles stops cold. If it's possible for him to go paler, he does when he sees Father Flynn.

MILES (CONT'D)

Wh... what are you doing here,
Father?

Flynn seems genuinely unsettled.

FATHER FLYNN

Do I know you, son?

MILES

No. But... I mean... this is not a
place for a priest, Father. You
shouldn't be here.

LARAMIE

We may need to work on your sales
pitch, boy. "The El Royale: Ain't
No Place For A Priest."

MILES

There are other hotels, Father.
Maybe closer to Tahoe? I could
help you find one, I'm sure you'd
be happier there.

Flynn recovers. Smiles a patronly smile. Looks at Miles' name tag.

FATHER FLYNN

"Miles," is it? If this is not a
place for a priest, Miles, then
this is exactly where the Lord
wants me.

LARAMIE

Well, the Lord don't want you in
The Honeymoon Suite, I promise you
that much. Miles, those is my
accoutrements there, and I stake my
claim as such. But you can go
ahead and check them in first for
all I care.

(looks in mirror, rubs
chin)

Any luck I'll have a full Jeb
Stuart by the time we're done.

Miles looks back and forth between Laramie and Flynn. He continues to seem genuinely anxious.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN

It's all right, son.

LARAMIE

Go ahead, boy. Give 'em the spiel.
"The El Royale..."

MILES

The El Royale is a bi-state establishment. You have the option to stay in either the great state of California OR the great state of Nevada. Which would you prefer?

FATHER FLYNN

What's the difference?

MILES

Between California and Nevada?

FATHER FLYNN

Between the rooms.

MILES

Well, for starters, rooms in California cost a dollar more.

LARAMIE

(whistles)

Shoot. Really. When that happen?
What makes 'em a dollar better?

MILES

They're in California.

LARAMIE

And that's worth a dollar?

MILES

Some people think so.

LARAMIE

You got a number for those people?
'Cause I got a vacuum they might be interested in. Speaking of which!
Who's your Head of Hospitality here?

MILES

Currently that is also me.

(CONTINUED)

LARAMIE

(grimaces)

Well. Then let's worry about that later then.

FATHER FLYNN

May I see a map of the hotel?

Miles nods. He pulls out A MAP. From above, the El Royale looks like an upside-down "U" with the parking lot in the middle. As Father Flynn looks it over --

MILES

Only the main lodge is available in the off-season.

(then)

You can still use the California amenities if you choose to stay in Nevada.

LARAMIE

(chuffs)

What exactly is a "California amenity?"

MILES

For instance, we are not allowed to sell liquor in Nevada.

LARAMIE

Lost that when you lost your gamblin' license? So, you're saying, if we want to drink, we gotta do it on this side of the room?

MILES

That's correct, sir. Also, coffee is twenty-five cents a cup.

LARAMIE

Let me guess, you're also the bartender.

MILES

That's correct, sir.

Laramie rolls his eyes. Removes a quarter from his pocket. Slaps it on the desk next to Flynn, who seems genuinely rattled by the map.

(CONTINUED)

LARAMIE

Feel free to flip that if you need
to make a decision, Father.
Starting to cost me money waitin'
around here.

The quiet of the lobby is suddenly disturbed by the ROAR of
an engine from outside. All four people turn towards the
windows to see a GREEN DODGE CHARGER scream into the lot.

Tires SQUEAL as the Charger screeches to a stop.

Flynn turns his attention back to the map. Shakes his head.
Picks up Laramie's quarter and flips it. *Heads.* Shrugs.

FATHER FLYNN

I'll take Room Four.

Miles looks away from the window. Gets a key from the wall
behind him.

Laramie moves closer to the window for a better look. IN THE
CAR: we can make out A WOMAN in the driver's seat. She seems
to be watching the road behind her intently.

MILES

I'll need one night in advance.
Eight dollars. And twenty-five
cents for the coffee. Please sign
the ledger.

There's a large leather ledger on the desk. Flynn takes out
\$8.25 and puts it on the counter. Picks up the fountain pen.

CLOSE AS HE SIGNS: **Father Daniel Flynn.**

MILES (CONT'D)

Who's next?

Laramie is still interested in the car outside. He gestures
to Darlene. *Go ahead.* She steps forward.

DARLENE

I'd like a room in Nevada, please.

Miles nods. Grabs a key. Slaps it on the desk.

MILES

Room Five.

DARLENE

(uncomfortable)
Oh.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DARLENE (CONT'D)

(then)

Is there another room available,
possibly? Further away. Maybe at
the end?

OUTSIDE: the car door slams. The WOMAN starts walking
towards the lodge. She's in a hurry.

Laramie turns his attention back to the desk.

MILES

These rooms have not been serviced
and are unsuitable.

LARAMIE

He does the housekeeping, remember.

MILES

There are rooms in California
available, ma'am.

LARAMIE

(losing patience)

She doesn't want to be near the
priest.

Flynn, who was collecting his belongings and moving to exit,
stops in his tracks. *I'm sorry?*

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

(to Flynn)

Like we don't see her walkin' in
here with her own bedrolls under
her arms.

(to Darlene)

Don't worry, darlin', we ain't here
to judge. Father here can even
teach you 'bout Mary Magdalene and
forgiveness and what not.

Darlene's eyes flash with embarrassment and anger.

Ring-ring. Right then, the woman from outside walks into the 5
El Royale.

She's in her late twenties. Looks to be a card-carrying
member of the flower generation. She's trying her best not
to look distressed. And failing.

This is EMILY SUMMERSPRING.

Emily stops in her tracks, not expecting to find this many
people in the lobby. *What did I just walk into?*

(CONTINUED)

Darlene turns her attention back to Miles, eager to get out of there. She takes a small coin purse from her jacket and counts out eight one-dollar bills.

DARLENE
Room Five will be fine.

MILES
Please sign the ledger. And it's
twenty-five cents for the coffee.

Darlene's eyes instinctively look to Laramie. He's not making eye contact.

DARLENE
(quietly)
Okay. Of course.

As she starts to reach for her coin purse. *Clack.* A hand puts a quarter on the desk. Darlene sees it belongs to Flynn. He nods. *It's on me.* Darlene nods back. *Thank you.*

She grabs the pen.

CLOSE ON THE LEDGER as she writes: **Darlene Sweet.**

She grabs her bags.

FATHER FLYNN
Can I give you a hand to your room?

DARLENE
No.

She stops herself, realizing this man is not the one who deserves her anger.

DARLENE (CONT'D)
Sorry, Father. That's kind of you.
But I can manage from here.

Ring. Laramie makes a show of holding the door for her.

LARAMIE
(tips hat)
Ma'am.

Flynn waits a beat. Gathers his valise. Moves to leave. Nods to Emily as he passes.

FLYNN
Afternoon.

She gives him a curt nod. *Ring.* Flynn exits.

And then there were three. Miles looks to both of them. *Who's next?* Laramie just shakes his head. Throws up his hands.

LARAMIE

Please. Be my fuckin' guest.
(yells to window)
Sorry, Father.

Emily shrugs. *Fine. I'll go.* Steps forward.

EMILY

I need a room.

MILES

The El Royale is a bi-state
establishment. You have the option
to choose a room in either --

She grabs the map from the desk. Studies it. Taps it.

EMILY

I'll take that one.

Miles looks down at her choice. His shoulders slump just slightly. His weary eyes look back to Laramie.

LARAMIE

Don't fuckin' tell me.

Emily removes a large wad of cash from her jeans.

EMILY

I'll take Room One.

LARAMIE

You can't have Room One.

Emily turns and stares at him. Defiant. *Why not?*

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Do you see my fortnighter right
there at your feet? Is this really
happening?
(to Miles)

Am I really about to explain the
concept of a free market claim
stake to the goddamn hippie?

Emily just stares at him with cold eyes.

Then she relents. Turns back to the map.

EMILY

Give me something along this wall.

MILES

The available rooms on that wall
have yet to be cleaned.

EMILY

I don't give a shit. How much?

MILES

Eight dollars.

She peels off eight dollars. He puts a key on the desk.
Room Seven. She reaches for it. He slides it away.

MILES (CONT'D)

Please sign the ledger.

Emily stares at him. *Really?* He stares back. *Yes.*

She grabs the pen. Scrawls something fast. Grabs the key.
Heads towards the door. *Ring.*

LARAMIE

You have yourself a pleasant day,
now.

Laramie steps forward. Finally. He grabs the pen. Looks
down at the ledger. Sees Emily's signature.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Nice.

CLOSE ON THE LEDGER: ***Fuck You.***

Laramie signs his name at the bottom of the page.

CLOSE ON THE LEDGER as he writes with flourish: ***Laramie
Seymour Sullivan.***

CLOSE ON LARAMIE as he looks up at Miles and smiles.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

I'll take Room One.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE:

Room One

6

INT. ROOM ONE - DAY

6

We hear the sound of a key jangling. *Click*. Laramie enters, hits the lights. He carries his accoutrements into the room. Takes off his hat and jacket. Folds the jacket carefully and lays it over the back of a chair. Rolls up his white shirt sleeves. Studies the room.

The Honeymoon Suite is on the California side of the border, and thus decorated in warm orange hues. It would never be described as luxurious by any means, but it does have a notable king bed on a raised platform and a jacuzzi tub in the floor.

CLOSE SHOTS: locks flip. A suitcase swings open, revealing: neatly folded clothes. Everything feels regimented. A hand removes A DOPP KIT.

CLOSE SHOTS: items are placed along a sink. A toothbrush. A soap case. A small bottle of shampoo. A hair tonic. All meticulously ordered just so.

CLOSE SHOTS: locks flip. The trunk swings open, revealing: the Calhoun Electrovax. The vacuum is removed. *Click*. A false bottom is removed from the trunk. A BLACK BRIEFCASE is removed and placed on the bed. The briefcase swings open, revealing an array of SMALL TOOLS.

CLOSE SHOTS: a pair of glasses are removed from a case.

Laramie sits on the bed. In his shirtsleeves and wireframed glasses now, he looks a far cry from the seersucker southerner we met moments ago.

He removes a pair of pliers and a screwdriver from the case.

He thinks of something. He checks his watch. Does a small double take. Picks up the phone and dials it. Listens. Then.

LARAMIE

Hi, my love. I know, I know...
check-in took a little longer than
I expected...

And as Laramie talks, we may notice that his thick Mississippi accent is now GONE.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Is she still up?

(CONTINUED)

While Laramie waits, he takes the screwdriver and begins to unscrew the baseplate of the phone receiver. He works quickly, with clinical precision.

LARAMIE (CONT'D)

Hi rabbit! I know, I'm sorry. I got delayed. Yes, the clock is right. Daddy's wrong.

And between the accent, the wife, the child, and the toolkit, it should be obvious that this man has not been honest about who he is. In fact, we should probably start calling him by his real name. *This is not Laramie Seymour Sullivan...*

This is DWIGHT BROADBECK.

DWIGHT

But I got you before you went down. Ready? Of course. I'm on my knees.

Dwight pulls off the baseplate, flips the housing over. Looks under the receiver...

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

"Now I lay me down to sleep, pray the Lord my soul to keep..."

Dwight removes a SMALL BLACK MICROPHONE from the receiver. Holds it up to the light. Nods, pleased. He sets it down on the night stand.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

"And if I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord --"

(listens)

What do you mean we're not saying that anymore?

(listens)

How do you even know what "morbid" means -- what does Mommy want us to say?

Dwight begins to reassemble the phone.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

Okay. "When I wake in the morning light --" Okay, okay, from the beginning...

Dwight frowns. Something's WRONG. He holds the receiver up to the light to get a better look. Grabs his pliers.

(CONTINUED)

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

"Now I lay me down to sleep, pray
the Lord my soul to keep. And when
I wake in the morning light..."

Dwight removes *something else* from the phone with the pliers.
Holds it up to the light.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

"Teach me to do what's right."

It's another microphone.

This one's different than the other. Smaller. Tan in color.
Dwight stares at it, confused. Clearly troubled.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

Amen.

(then)

I gotta go, Rabbit. Tell Mommy I
love her, okay?

(listens)

A couple days. I love you.

He hangs up. Places the tan bug on the night stand next to
the black bug. Stares at the two different microphones.

His eyes narrow. He looks to the rest of the room.

CUT TO:

Dwight stands on the armchair. Unscrews the wall sconce.
Reaches behind the light with a pair of pliers.

CLOSE SHOT: an identical black bug is placed beside the
first.

Dwight pulls the light fixture from the wall. Frowns.

CLOSE SHOT: an identical tan bug is placed beside the first.

CUT TO:

Dwight's in the bathroom now. Covered in sweat. Unscrews
the light. Frowns.

CLOSE SHOT: Four black bugs are now on the night stand.
Dwight's hand places a fourth tan bug in the row beneath it.
And then a fifth tan bug.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

6

CONTINUED: (3)

6

Dwight stands in the center of the room. Arms folded. Staring at the night stand covered in surveillance bugs. Deep in thought.

He shakes his head. *None of this makes sense.* He turns. Something catches his attention. And the hair stands up on the back of Dwight's neck. We follow his gaze...

To the large MIRROR mounted on the back wall.

In the reflection, he can see a full view of the bed in the center of the room.

Dwight stares at the mirror. Thinks.

7

EXT. EL ROYALE - DUSK

7

CLOSE: A brown shoe steps carefully through the pine twigs. A second shoe steps directly in front of it, placing heel in front of toe.

Dwight, still in shirtsleeves and glasses, walks carefully along the east edge of the El Royale. Heel-to-toe. Heel-to-toe. Heel-to-toe.

He's measuring the hotel.

Dwight reaches the corner. Folds his arms. Stares at the hotel. Thinks.

8

INT. LOUNGE - DUSK

8

Ring-ring. Dwight steps into the lobby. Looks the place over. It's empty. The black and white television is still on, casting flickering pale light all around the room.

ON THE TELEVISION: a SPECIAL NEWS REPORT breaks into the Nixon coverage. We see shots of police cars outside a large mansion. News logo reads: "Malibu Beach Massacre."

Dwight opens the front desk drawer. Sees the room keys. Spots THE MASTER. He takes it.

Dwight unlocks the door marked "Employees Only." He eases the door open...

9

INT. HALLWAY

9

Dwight steps into the narrow hallway. We can hear music coming from somewhere. "Bend Me Shape Me" by The American Breed. Dwight surveys. At the far end of the hallway, there's a HEAVY METAL DOOR.

(CONTINUED)

9

CONTINUED:

9

Closer to Dwight, there's another door with the words "MAINTENANCE CLOSET."

"Bend me shape me anyway you want me..."

10

INT. MAINTENANCE CLOSET

10

Dwight eases the door open, looks into the room. His face falls. Reverse to reveal --

A cramped closet. A cot. A hot plate. A transistor radio.

And Miles. Passed out cold. Slumped against the wall. A bent spoon on the floor beside him. A syringe still hanging from his bloodied arm.

"As long as you love me, it's all right..."

Dwight closes the door.

11

INT. HALLWAY

11

Dwight approaches the HEAVY GRAY DOOR at the end of the hallway. Tries the handle. It's LOCKED. He tries THE MASTER KEY. It doesn't work.

Dwight reaches into his pocket. Pulls out a case of LOCKPICKS. Drops to his knees. Works the lock.

Click.

12

INT. CORRIDOR - WEST

12

Dwight steps into a dimly-lit corridor. Shuts the door behind him. Music stops. The world goes silent.

Dwight steps carefully down the corridor. At the end of the corridor, the corridor branches. West or East. Dwight chooses *West*. Careful not to make a sound. Rounds the corner...

And finds the mirror. Or, rather, the OBSERVATION WINDOW. A perfectly framed rectangle looking into a hotel room. Specifically...

His hotel room.

He stares at Room One. Arms folded. Thinks. Looks down at the feet. Takes note of THREE SCUFF MARKS on the floor.

13

INT. CORRIDOR - EAST

13

Dwight enters the East Corridor. Looking for something. There. Way down at the other end of the hall. It looks like...

A 16MM CAMERA. Mounted on a tripod.

[Note: from this point forward, this entire scene will be done in ONE CONTINUOUS TAKE.]

Dwight starts walking down the hall. Passes ANOTHER OBSERVATION WINDOW. The room's dark. Dwight squints. Seems empty. Dwight keeps moving. We track with him. Watch him STOP SHORT when he gets to the next window.

Room Four.

As Dwight stares, we angle around to reveal: FATHER DANIEL FLYNN. Unaware that he's being watched, Father Flynn's busy shoving his twin bed up against the wall. He reaches into his valise, pulls out what looks like A CROWBAR and A HAMMER. He goes to the corner of the room...

And starts yanking the carpet free of the tacks.

Dwight stares. The corridor eerily silent as the priest works. Father Flynn yanks an entire swath of the carpet free, exposing the old wood boards underneath.

Flynn takes the crowbar... and starts hammering it into the floorboards.

Dwight can't believe what he's seeing. *What the hell is this old priest doing?*

Dwight watches in silence for a second. Then turns his attention back towards THAT CAMERA. Keeps moving. But stops in his tracks yet again when he passes...

Room Five.

Darlene Sweet's room. And, yes, there she is...

Also doing something strange.

She's standing on her dresser, trying to hang what looks like a large swath of fabric on her west wall. She has thumbtacks in her mouth, she uses them to secure the fabric in place.

She hops off the dresser. Grabs another roll. Goes back to work hanging it on the wall.

(CONTINUED)

And she unrolls it, Dwight realizes this fabric is the "bedding" Darlene was carrying earlier. It's not bedding at all...

It's soundproofing foam.

Darlene fastens the last piece in place. Steps back and surveys her handiwork. Her look seems to say: *Well, it's not great, but it'll do.*

Darlene reaches into her bag. Removes A METRONOME. Sets it on her table beside her. Sits down. Starts the metronome. The pendulum rod starts to swing back and forth, but we can't hear anything.

Darlene closes her eyes. She takes a deep breath.

Her lips start to move.

It looks like she's singing.

Dwight frowns. Looks down. Notices, *there*, below the window...

A SPEAKER. And a SWITCH.

Dwight flips the switch. Darlene's voice fills the corridor.

DARLENE

*I try hard to hide, my hurt inside,
this ol' heart of mine, always
keeps me crying...*

Dwight jumps. The singing is LOUD. He half expects someone else to hear him. Instinctively looks to the corridor. Nobody's coming. He turns his attention back to Darlene.

Her rendition of The Isley Brothers' "This Old Heart of Mine" is haunting. No music. Just HER VOICE and the click of the metronome. Dwight watches. Transfixed.

Then, concerned, he walks back to...

Room Four.

And there's Father Flynn. Standing waist deep in the floorboards of his room. Perfectly still.

He's staring at the wall next to him.

DARLENE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

*Maybe it's my mistake to show this
love I feel inside...*

(CONTINUED)

Father Flynn slowly climbs out of his floor. Empty handed. He walks to the wall. Puts his ear up against it. Listens.

Dwight walks back down the corridor.

Room Five.

Darlene's belting it out now. Swaying in time to the music. Clapping.

DARLENE (CONT'D)
*'But I... I love you. This ol'
 heart... is weak for you.*

Dwight stares for a moment longer. Then remembers... THAT CAMERA. Starts moving down the hallway.

Room Six.

Empty.

Room Seven.

Also empty. But seems to be inhabited. There's a bag on the dresser. And ROPE. And A HUNTING KNIFE.

Dwight stops. Frowns. And just then...

Emily kicks open the door to Room Seven.

Dwight jumps. Surprised. Emily hurries into the room. Dragging something heavy. It almost looks like A PERSON.

Emily kicks the door shut behind her. Carries her burden RIGHT UP CLOSE to the observation window. Dumps it in A CHAIR. It's a person, all right...

This is ROSE.

She's unconscious. Looks to be about eighteen years old. Waifish. Half-dressed. She slumps forward, her head hits the mirror. *Thump.*

Dwight instinctively edges backwards.

DARLENE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*This ol' heart of mine been broke a
 thousand times, each time you break
 away...*

Emily stares at the unconscious body in the chair. Breathing hard. She looks scared. She runs her hands through her hair. The look on her face says *what do I do next?*

(CONTINUED)

She grabs the knife.

She grabs the rope.

She starts lashing Rose to the chair.

This all happens RIGHT UP CLOSE TO THE WINDOW. Emily cuts the rope, ties Rose to the chair. Steps back. Thinks. Grabs a bandana. Uses it to GAG Rose.

Rose never flutters. Out cold.

Dwight watches. Stunned. Can't believe what he's watching. He tells himself to stay on task.

Keeps walking.

Room Eight.

End of the line. Empty. But the 16 MM Camera is there. Mounted on the tripod. Dwight studies the camera. Opens the case. It's empty.

No film.

Dwight turns. Looks back down the hall from where he came. Thinks. Then. Starts walking back.

Room Seven.

There's Rose. Unconscious and bound. Right up close to the glass. Dwight stops. Stares at her. Gets close to her. Puts his hand on the window.

Keep moving, Dwight.

He starts back down the hall. Moving faster.

Room Five.

There's Darlene. On her feet now. Swaying and clapping and dancing.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*You got me never knowing if I'm
coming or going but I --*

Click. Dwight flips the speaker. The corridor goes SILENT. We see Darlene still singing. Dwight doesn't break stride.

Room Four.

Dwight passes. Exits frame. We HOLD on the observation window.

There's Father Flynn. He's taken a chair and placed it against the wall he shares with Darlene's room.

He sits with the back of his head against the wall. Looking to the ceiling. Hands in his lap.

He listens to Darlene sing.

CUT TO:

EXT. EL ROYALE - PARKING LOT - DUSK

Dwight exits the lobby doors. Moving fast. With purpose. Doesn't even look up as the RUMBLE of THUNDER overhead signals an incoming STORM.

He's heading to the other side of the parking lot. Where a lonely PAYPHONE stands beside the gate.

He grabs the phone. Dials a number from memory.

DWIGHT

Director's office. Case 246673.

Dwight waits. RUMBLE. That thunder clap makes Dwight look up. *Pat pat pat...* The first drops of RAIN start to fall.

Dwight straightens up as a voice answers on the other end.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

Director Hoover. This is Special Agent Broadbeck. I'm on site at the El Royale.

CLOSE ON DWIGHT as he stares back at the hotel. Rumble.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

Sir, we have a problem.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: Room Five

OVER BLACK, we hear the upbeat tempo of The Crystals singing "He's A Rebel..."

THE CRYSTALS

See the way he walks down the street...

15

INT. STARDREAMS STUDIO - FLASHBACK

15

A genuine WALL OF SOUND hits us as we find ourselves moving through a SIXTIES RECORDING STUDIO in full swing:

There's the LIVE BAND. The DRUMMER snapping the snare. The PIANIST tapping out that iconic rhythm. The SAX PLAYER waiting to come on in...

Over there... in the isolation booth... there's the lead singer. Her name is VESTA SHEARS. She's in her early twenties, and in six months Dick Clark is gonna call her "the future of pop music" on live television.

But for now, she's singing her heart out while THE MEN BEHIND THE GLASS watch.

VESTA SHEARS
*My he holds his head up high when
he goes walking by-y-y-y...*

We keep moving through the studio... There's THE THREE BACKUP SINGERS. We're moving down the line of them as they sing their parts. All wearing bright, colorful dresses. All sporting bouffant hairdos.

BACKUP SINGERS
Oooooo..... Oooooo...

And THERE... at the end of the backup trio, is a face we recognize...

There's DARLENE SWEET.

She looks at least ten years younger, even though the reality is only half that. She's wearing a green dress. Her eyes are closed. Lost in the music. Smiling bright as she belts it out:

DARLENE
*He's a rebel and he'll never ever
be... any good...*

There, watching her through the window, that's British wunderkind producer BUDDY SUNDAY himself. He's dressed in his standard Savile Row suit and scarf.

His arms are crossed. He's glowering. Staring right at Darlene. Even though she's only the third backup singer in this whole elaborate affair.

(CONTINUED)

DARLENE (CONT'D)
*But he's not a rebel, no no no,
he's not a rebel, no no --*

BUDDY (FROM THE BOOTH)
Cut. Cut. Cut it.

They all stop playing. Buddy looks exasperated.

BUDDY (FROM THE BOOTH) (CONT'D)
Let's take a break, everyone.
Darlene... a word.

The other singers give Darlene sympathetic looks.

INT. STARDREAMS STUDIOS - DAY

The musicians file out of the studio as Buddy enters. Darlene watches as he stops Vesta before she leaves. He cups her cheek. Tender. Nurturing. We can barely make out their conversation:

BUDDY
*...no, no, you were brilliant.
This is why I have you tracked
solo.*

VESTA SHEARS
I can come in stronger...

BUDDY
*I don't want you thinking, pet. I
want you to stay in this --
(waves his hand over her
body)
And let me worry about the knobs
and dials. Okay? Now. Get some
air. This'll be but a minute.*

Vesta exits. Leaving Darlene alone with Buddy.

Buddy approaches. His eyes go cold as he studies Darlene. Lights a cigarette.

BUDDY (CONT'D)
Where were you last night?

DARLENE
I'm very sorry. I wasn't feeling
well. I called your house and
spoke with your... butler.

BUDDY

Valet.

DARLENE

He said he would give you the message. I figured I should rest. So I could be fresh today.

BUDDY

Is that your assessment of your performance thus far? "Fresh?"

DARLENE

I... I don't know, sir.

BUDDY

I told you, please, call me Buddy. Or Mr. Sunday, if you must. But never Mr. Buddy. Impossible not to make that sound patronizing. Sounds like a chocolate bar. Do you know how much my time is worth, Darlene?

DARLENE

No, sir. Mr. Sunday.

BUDDY

Columbia Records does.

He points to the paperwork he has spread out on the mix console.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Columbia Records currently values my time at two hundred dollars an hour. Are you currently in a position where you can turn down two... four... six hundred dollars when it is offered to you?

DARLENE

No. I am not.

BUDDY

Six hundred dollars of my time. But, instead, you wanted to stay fresh. Which, apparently, means flat on the intro and sharp on the harmonies.

(CONTINUED)

DARLENE

I'll get it right, Mr. Sunday. I promise.

BUDDY

Do you know how much your time is worth, Darlene?

DARLENE

Twelve dollars a session.

BUDDY

No matter how long the session. Which, I suppose, means the longer I keep you, the less your time is worth.

He offers her a cigarette. She politely declines.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

You have a choice here, Darlene. Give me one year of your time. And I can make you a star. You'll be singing lead. You'll be staying at The Carlyle. You'll be headlining the Riviera. Or. You can continue to treat my time as disposable. And you can keep scrounging for twelve dollar backup gigs until they dry up. And in five years you'll find yourself shuffling between shit hotels, begging for the opening slot on waffle night in...

(shudders)

Reno.

(then)

All right. Darlene? Do we understand?

CLOSE ON DARLENE as we PRELAP the sound of *tick... tick... tick... tick...*

MATCH CUT TO:

SAME FRAMING. Darlene sits in silence as the metronome sways back and forth. *Tick... tick... tick... tick...*

She reaches out, stops the metronome.

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

She looks at her luggage. Her suitcase is open. Something catches her eye. She reaches in, pulls out HER SHOW DRESS. Holds it up. She notices the seam is split.

Her shoulders slump. *This will have to be sewn.*

We get the sense this happens a lot.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

Darlene jumps in surprise. Who could that be? She frowns.

DARLENE

Yes?

FATHER FLYNN (THROUGH DOOR)

Hello, Darlene? It's Father Flynn.
From earlier.

She leaves the chain intact. Opens the door. Father Flynn looks at her through the crack. Behind him, the rain is beginning to pour.

DARLENE

I'm so sorry. I was making too
much noise, wasn't I?

FATHER FLYNN

No, no. Not at all...

DARLENE

I have a show tomorrow, and I have
to rehearse, I tried to make it
quiet, but...

(shakes head)

I'm so sorry. I won't bother you.
I'll figure something out.

FATHER FLYNN

It's no bother. Quite the
opposite, actually. It's lovely.

DARLENE

Oh. Thank you.

FATHER FLYNN

What was that you were singing?
Did you write that?

DARLENE

No. No -- that's The Isley
Brothers.

(CONTINUED)

There's a rumble of thunder on her line.

FATHER FLYNN

Your brothers wrote that?

DARLENE

No.

(smiles)

It's a famous song. It's been on the radio.

FATHER FLYNN

Oh.

(sorry)

I don't know much about the radio these days.

DARLENE

I'm very sorry, Father. I promise I'll keep it --

FATHER FLYNN

I'm gonna go find some food. In the lounge. I thought I'd see if you want to join? With this place, there's probably strength in numbers.

DARLENE

Oh. No, that's all right.

FATHER FLYNN

You sure? On me. You can consider it payment for earlier. For letting me listen to you sing.

DARLENE

That's...

(softens)

That's a very nice thing to say.

Ding. The lounge is empty. Flynn and Darlene wait for a moment, just to see if anyone arrives.

Nobody arrives.

FATHER FLYNN

Why even have a bell?

DARLENE

I suspect we're on our own.

Flynn reaches into his pocket. Slaps a handful of pocket change on the desk.

FATHER FLYNN
I handle food, you handle
entertainment?

DARLENE
Deal.

Darlene takes a couple quarters, glances at the television on the desk.

NEWSCASTER
*Police are still searching for
suspects in the grisly murder of a
Beverly Hills banker and his --*

Darlene shudders. *Click.* She turns off the television.

Flynn makes his way over to the California side of the room. Notices THE FIREPLACE. *Come to think of it, it is a little chilly in here...*

Darlene heads towards the jukebox.

DARLENE
So you've really never heard of The
Isley Brothers?

Flynn shakes his head as he strikes a match and lights the fireplace.

Darlene makes her way to THE JUKEBOX: a beautiful Wurlitzer bubbler stocked full of .45s.

DARLENE (CONT'D)
Then we have some work to do.
(scans)
How 'bout The Four Tops? You've
heard of them.

FATHER FLYNN
(thinks)
I'm aware there is a group called
The Four Tops. But that's about as
much as I got.

DARLENE
Well. Then. You are in for it.

She puts in a quarter. Loads up some selections.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

I almost envy you.

"I Got a Feeling" by The Four Tops starts to play. *"When you're in my arms... oh when you're in my arms..."*

Darlene sways a bit. Flynn nods. *I like it.*

DARLENE (CONT'D)

How you making out over there?

Flynn is standing in front of a 1950s sandwich vending machine.

FATHER FLYNN

I think you're better at your job than I am at mine.

Darlene walks over. Sees the vending carousels of food. Sandwiches, fruit, pastries. Everything looks gray.

DARLENE

Oof.

FATHER FLYNN

How lucky are you feeling tonight?

DARLENE

Definitely not eat-that-sandwich-lucky.

They stare at the machine. Music plays.

FATHER FLYNN

Pie?

DARLENE

Pie works.

CLOSE SHOTS: Quarters drop. Pie spins.

Flynn and Darlene sit in the banquet on the California side of the room. They eat their pie. It's not bad. They both bop their heads to the music.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

You really never heard this before?

FATHER FLYNN

(shrugs)

My knowledge of what's going on ends somewhere in the fifties.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

At a certain point, you get left behind. It's good, though.

DARLENE

You gotta listen to something.

FATHER FLYNN

We got a pretty good choir at the Heart of Mary.

DARLENE

That's how I got started. Church choir. St. Paul's Evangelical in Decatur. Lutheran. We don't have to get into all that, though.

FATHER FLYNN

(smiles)

You're forgiven.

DARLENE

I'm sure we sing some of the same stuff. Let's see... you got "Nearer My God to Thee?" "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus?"

Flynn nods. Sure.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

How about "Lift Me In Your Arms, Hold Me On High?" That was my first solo. You got that?

(sings)

"Lift me in your arms, hold me on high..."

Flynn shifts uncomfortably in his seat. He seems almost embarrassed.

FATHER FLYNN

To be honest... my memory isn't quite what it was.

DARLENE

Oh. Okay.

They sit in awkward silence for a moment.

FATHER FLYNN

I think I'm going to have a toddy. Can I interest you?

DARLENE

No, thank you.

FATHER FLYNN

You sure? Nothing like whiskey on
a cold night.

DARLENE

I'm fine.

Flynn stands up and heads to the bar.

CLOSE SHOTS: The record ends. The jukebox switches out the
.45. "Bernadette" by The Four Tops starts to play.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

(smiles)

This one. This is a record.

She lip syncs along. *"Bernadette, people are searchin' for
the kind of love that we possessed..."*

CLOSE SHOTS: Whiskey pours into a glass. A pencil writes
"I.O.U. - Whiskey" then makes a slash next to it.

Flynn sits back down. Takes a drink of whiskey.

FATHER FLYNN

That's where you're from? Georgia?

DARLENE

Illinois. People make that mistake
all the time. I'm not quite sure
why the world needs two Decatur.

FATHER FLYNN

What are you doing out here?

DARLENE

I live in Bakersfield now. But I
got a job singing in Reno tomorrow.

FATHER FLYNN

That's exciting.

DARLENE

That's not exactly the word I'd use
to describe a six o'clock shift at
a keno lounge. But. It's a job.

FATHER FLYNN

Why are you staying here?

(CONTINUED)

DARLENE

It's not a good job. Don't pay nothing. If I stayed in Reno proper I'd end up in the hole. Outskirts are cheaper.

FATHER FLYNN

Why do it at all?

Darlene hesitates. Sadness in her eyes. She shrugs. *I don't know...*

DARLENE

Some days... I ask myself that same question.

She recovers.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

Singin's singin', I guess.

(then)

How 'bout you? How'd you end up at the El Royale?

FATHER FLYNN

I was up in Oakland. Visiting my brother. Making my way back to Indiana. Had to get off the road before dark. My eyes are bad at night.

(then)

Ritz-Carlton was booked. So here we are.

DARLENE

I'm guessing the church pays about the same as a Reno keno parlor?

FATHER FLYNN

(nods)

About that.

DARLENE

You and your brother close?

FATHER FLYNN

We used to be.

He thinks about it. Drinks.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

We used to be.

(then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

Can I confess something to you,
Darlene?

DARLENE

Isn't it supposed to be the other
way 'round?

FATHER FLYNN

(smiles)

We can make allowances for that, if
need be. But...

(then)

When I said my memory wasn't what
it used to be... I may have been
understating things a tad.

(drinks)

For the last few years, I've been
having problems with my recall.
And I don't think it's just my age.

(then)

I'm certain it's not just age.

*"But how can they control you, Bernadette? When they cannot
control themselves, Bernadette?"*

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

I wake up some days, and I can't
remember who I am. I have moments
where I lose time... when you saw
me in the parking lot, today,
actually. I had completely
forgotten where I was. What I was
doing. It's the strangest feeling.
You look around and you're someone
else. And you don't know who that
is.

DARLENE

Father... can I say something?

(then)

It sounds like you should see a
doctor.

FATHER FLYNN

I did.

(smiles)

He agrees with my assessment that
it's not just age.

DARLENE

(oh)

I'm sorry.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DARLENE (CONT'D)

(then)

I'm very sorry.

He smiles a kindly smile.

FATHER FLYNN

I wasn't looking for pity. Might be for the best, in fact. Some parts of my life aren't worth remembering. No, I'm just telling you because, if I seem scattered... I don't mean offense.

She pats his hand.

DARLENE

None taken.

Flynn finishes his drink. Exhales.

FATHER FLYNN

I could use another.

He stands up. Makes his way back to the bar. She gets up, too. Carries their dirty plates over to the bar.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

Sure I can't tempt you? My memory may be spotty, but I do recall it's a sin to let an old priest drink alone.

DARLENE

Okay, sure. One drink.

FATHER FLYNN

Grand.

Darlene walks back over to the jukebox.

CLOSE SHOTS: Flynn pours two drinks.

Flynn glances up at Darlene. Confirms she's not looking at him. She's lost in the music.

And in this moment, as he stares at Darlene, Father Flynn's face changes. The kindly old priest disappears. And is replaced by a different man.

A much harder man.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

Perhaps I could even tempt you to
grace me with a song again later?

Father Flynn reaches into his jacket and removes a small
glass vial. He pours a clear liquid into Darlene's drink.

Darlene doesn't see any of this happen.

DARLENE

(back turned)

Don't push your luck, Father. But.
If you happen to find yourself in
Reno tomorrow... I go on at six.

FATHER FLYNN

I'd like that.

HOLD ON FLYNN. His face drifts again. As though he's
forgotten, once again, where he is.

Or.

Perhaps he's having second thoughts about what he's about to
do. He repeats the words to himself, as though he's
realizing he really means them:

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

(quietly)

I'd like that.

But. Then. His face hardens with resolve. He picks up the
glasses. He turns around...

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

But until then --

And Darlene bashes him in the face with a wine bottle.

CRASH! The bottle SHATTERS. Blood and glass flies
everywhere. Father Daniel Flynn goes down in a wet heap.

Darlene stares down at his unconscious body. On the jukebox
we hear Levi Stubbs scream out:

LEVI STUBBS (O.S.)

Bernadette!

CUT TO BLACK.

DWIGHT (ON TAPE)
...in the process of retrieving our equipment, I discovered an additional wiretap and four microphones.

TITLE: Washington, D.C.

TITLE: 5th Floor

HOOVER (ON TAPE)
Did you recognize the equipment?

TITLE: Northeast Corner Suite

DWIGHT (ON TAPE)
I do not believe it was ours, sir.

TITLE: Anteroom

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - ANTEROOM - NIGHT

HELEN GANDY began working for J. Edgar Hoover in 1918. She will remain his executive assistant until his death in 1972.

Her fingers fly across the typewriter as she transcribes his conversation from earlier.

DWIGHT (ON TAPE) (CONT'D)
Upon investigation, I discovered the room also had a two-way mirror. I found similar rooms in this hotel, along with camera equipment.

HOOVER (ON TAPE)
Did you find film?

DWIGHT (ON TAPE)
No sir. I called as soon as I discovered the camera.

HOOVER (ON TAPE)
No one is to leave there, Agent Broadbeck, until you have any and all existing surveillance materials in your possession.

DWIGHT (ON TAPE)
Understood, sir.

20

EXT. EL ROYALE - NIGHT

20

Rain is pouring down now as Dwight makes his way through the parking lot. He's watching the front carefully, he does not want to be seen.

He slides up to Emily's Mustang, pops the hood. Yanks the DISTRIBUTOR COIL CABLE free. Pockets it in his raincoat.

CUT TO:

Dwight repeats the process on Flynn's Futura.

CUT TO:

Dwight repeats the process on Darlene's Studebaker. He shuts the hood... and stares at the hotel.

DWIGHT (ON TAPE)

Sir... there's something else.
While investigating the observation corridor, I witnessed what appeared to be a kidnapping in process. A young woman, Caucasian, holding another woman hostage. Also Caucasian.

HOOVER (ON TAPE)

The priority is the surveillance material, Agent Broadbeck. Peripheral matters are not our concern.

Dwight stands in the rain. Staring at the hotel.

DWIGHT (ON TAPE)

Sir...

21

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - ANTEROOM - NIGHT

21

Tape reels spin as Helen transcribes:

HOOVER (ON TAPE)

I am not in the habit of repeating myself, Agent Broadbeck, but I will do so here to ensure there is no confusion....

CLOSE ON HELEN'S PAGE as her keys type:

"DO NOT INTERFERE."

22 **INT. ROOM ONE - NIGHT**

22

Dwight stands in front of his mirror. Soaking wet.
Breathing hard. Thinking.

He glances at himself in the mirror.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: Room Seven

We HEAR the gentle sound of crashing waves...

23 **EXT. SANTA MONICA - BEACH - DAY**

23

A solitary trail of BOOT PRINTS leads up the beach to where a young eighteen-year-old girl sits beside a large Army duffel.

It's Rose.

She's wearing cowboy boots and jeans.

She sits in the sand with her knees to her chest.

She's crying.

A BAREFOOT MAN walks along the boot prints. Theirs are the only footprints on the beach.

BAREFOOT MAN

Hi.

Rose looks up and squints. The man is BACKLIT by the setting California sun. We never get a good look at his face.

ROSE

Hi.

BAREFOOT MAN

I like your boots.

ROSE

They're my Daddy's.

BAREFOOT MAN

Don't look like they're your
Daddy's no more.

(then)

That why you're crying?

Rose shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

BAREFOOT MAN (CONT'D)

Don't get a lot of girls down here
in boots. You come straight from
the station?

Rose shrugs.

BAREFOOT MAN (CONT'D)

It's all right, Boots. You don't
got to say nothin'. I'll figure it
out in three guesses. Watch.
Tennessee.

Rose just looks at him.

BAREFOOT MAN (CONT'D)

Nah. Too easy. And you ain't no
Texas girl, I know that much for
sure. West Virginia?

(she shakes her head)

'Course not.

"Let's not be insulting, Billy
Lee." Nah, I'm just messin' about
with you. I knew it the second I
saw these bootprints in this beach.

(then)

You're an Alabama girl.

OFF HER LOOK.

BAREFOOT MAN (CONT'D)

See. Told you I could do it in
three.

He takes his shirt off, drops it next to her.

BAREFOOT MAN (CONT'D)

Now you got to come swimming with
me.

ROSE

(smiles)

That wasn't the deal.

BAREFOOT MAN

Sure it was. You knew the game the
second we started playing.

He unbuckles his belt. Slips out of his jeans. Naked. He
walks towards the ocean.

(CONTINUED)

BAREFOOT MAN (CONT'D)
C'mon, Boots. You got no reason to
cry no more...

CLOSE ON ROSE as she hears:

BAREFOOT MAN (CONT'D)
You're in California now.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ROOM SEVEN - NIGHT

SAME FRAMING. CLOSE ON ROSE. Bound and gagged. Her eyes
flutter. She groans.

Emily looks up from across the room, where she's busy
stashing her gear under the bed. She hurries over to Rose,
kneels down next to her.

EMILY
Rose? Rosie? It's okay. You're
safe. You're here with me. It's
Em.

Rose's eyes from fear to recognition to anger in a flash.
She strains against her bonds.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Rosie. Stop. You're safe. But I
can't untie you. Not 'til you're
right. We gotta get you right.
(Rose struggles)
I 'spect you're all kinds of mad at
me. And some extent you're right
to be. But we're gonna wait this
out. We're gonna wait 'til you're
clear. Then we'll have it out.

She kisses Rose on the forehead. Rose looks at her with
malice.

EMILY (CONT'D)
I had to get you away from him,
Rosie. He's all kinds of bad. And
we gotta get as far away from him
as possible. You'll understand.
We just gotta get you clear... and
you'll understand.

And right then... there's a KNOCK at the door.

(CONTINUED)

Both jump in surprise. Emily hops to her feet, grabs her handgun. Locks eyes with Rosie. Holds a finger to her lips. *Shhhhh...*

Emily creeps to the door. We hear Dwight's VOICE outside:

DWIGHT (O.S.)

Ma'am? Hello? I'm so sorry to bother you.

Emily looks through the keyhole. Frowns.

EMILY

What do you want?

DWIGHT

Ma'am, it's Laramie Sullivan. We met earlier in the lobby. Would you mind opening up the door?

EMILY

No, I ain't gonna do that.

DWIGHT

Of course. I certainly respect that. Good to be cautious. We can talk through the door if that suits you.

EMILY

What do you want?

DWIGHT

Storm's wreckin' hell on the hotel. Gettin' all kinds of complaints with people's power and such. Boy up front asked me to help check on the women, make sure everyone's safe.

EMILY

I'm fine.

DWIGHT

That's good news.

(then)

Listen... if you wouldn't mind --

EMILY

Fuck. Off.

There's a long silence.

DWIGHT

I'm very sorry to have spooked you,
ma'am. Have a safe night.

We hear footsteps walking away. Rose watches Emily in the mirror. Emily watches through the keyhole. Waits. Turns back towards Rose...

And Dwight kicks in the door.

Wham! The door hits Emily -- she spins to fire -- but before she can, Dwight BACKHANDS her with the butt of his gun. She goes down hard, between the two beds. Her gun goes skittering across the floor.

Dwight puts his foot on Emily's gun. Kicks it into the bathroom. Keeps his gun trained on Emily.

But she's unconscious. Not moving.

Rose CRIES OUT beneath her gag.

Dwight hurries over to her.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

It's okay -- it's okay. I'm the
law. It's all right...

He reaches into his pocket. Pulls out a switchblade. Starts cutting free her ropes.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

You're safe now.

ON THE GROUND. Emily groans as blood drips from her temple.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERSPRING HOUSE - NIGHT

SAME FRAMING. Eight-year-old EMILY on the ground. Blood dripping from her head.

MAN'S VOICE

Don't touch it. Let it bleed.

HER POV: we see THOSE BOOTS from earlier walking away from her across the wood floor.

The voice belongs to her father, HUTCH SUMMERSPRING.

(CONTINUED)

MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Next time you want to get smart you
look down at all that red and you
think twice.

Tears well up in Emily's eyes.

HER POV: Hutch walks to the kitchen. Opens the fridge.

HUTCH

Where's Rosie?

Emily struggles to her feet. Races up the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

An angelic FOUR-YEAR-OLD is fast asleep in her bed.

YOUNG EMILY

Rose? Rosie? Get up. It's okay.
Come with me.

Downstairs. We hear glass breaking. The man yelling.

Emily leads a half-asleep Rose to what looks like a guest
room. There's a four-post bed. She pushes Rose under the
bed. Gets on her hands and knees. Looks Rose in the eye.

YOUNG EMILY (CONT'D)

Don't you come out, okay? No
matter what you hear, you stay put.

HUTCH (O.S.)

Where's Rosie?

Rose's POV: looking at her big sister from under the bed.

YOUNG EMILY

No matter what you hear, don't make
a sound.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ROOM SEVEN - NIGHT

SAME FRAMING. Looking at Emily from under the bed. She
winces in pain. Her eyes struggle to find focus.

She locks on something. She's looking right at us.

Emily's POV: under the bed, a green army duffel. Sticking
out of it:

(CONTINUED)

A SHOTGUN.

ACROSS THE ROOM -- Dwight finishes untying Rose. Pulls the gag down out of her mouth.

DWIGHT

You don't have any reason to be scared. You're safe now.

ROSE

(smiles)
Okay, good.

EMILY

Rosie...

They turn as Emily rises.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Get out of the way.

Rose steps aside. Revealing Emily.

Pointing her shotgun.

Right at Dwight.

BOOM.

The shot is DEAFENING. Emily shoots Dwight right in the chest. Both barrels.

His chest explodes. Behind him, the mirror SHATTERS.

Dwight's body hits the ground in a bloody mess.

Rose stares down at his dead body. Curious. Surprisingly calm for what's just transpired.

Emily struggles to catch her breath. Struggles to process what the fuck just happened. She lowers the shotgun. Looks to the dead body. Looks to her sister.

And then she looks to where the mirror used to be.

Because there's not a wall behind that mirror. Instead, there's A BLACK HOLE.

And there seems to be sounds coming from that hole.

Somebody is screaming.

Emily and Rose look to each other. Look back to the hole.

(CONTINUED)

27

CONTINUED: (2)

27

Camera floats between the two girls... over Dwight's dead body... towards what's left of that mirror... and into the BLACK HOLE.

CUT TO BLACK.

28

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

28

RAPID FIRE shots bring us back to earlier: *The second-hand on the wall clock ticks forward. Darlene grabs a wine bottle from the rack. WHAM! She bashes Dock in the head. He crashes down HARD.*

CLOSE SHOTS: the mechanical arm chooses another record in the Wurlitzer. Drops it onto the turntable. The needle hits the vinyl. We hear THE CRYSTALS start singing:

THE CRYSTALS

*Well he walked up to me and he
asked me if I wanted to dance...*

Father Daniel Flynn lies unconscious on the California side of the lobby. Broken glass and puddles of booze.

THE CRYSTALS (CONT'D)

*He looked kind of nice and so I
said I might take a chance...*

We hear footsteps. TENNIS SHOES run into frame.

VOICE

Father? Oh no...

It's Miles. He races to Flynn's side.

MILES

*Father Flynn -- Father Flynn -- oh
no no -- wake up -- Father --*

Flynn groans as Miles pats his face. He gasps. Disoriented. Shoves Miles away. Fear in his eyes. Tries to sit upright.

MILES (CONT'D)

Father, don't try to move --

Flynn looks at Miles with dazed eyes.

FATHER FLYNN

I'm not your father.

(CONTINUED)

MILES

Take it easy. Take it real easy.
You're hurt. What the heck
happened?

Father Flynn touches the wound on his head. Rubs the blood
between his fingers. His eyes drift as he listens.

FATHER FLYNN

What's this song?

MILES

Father... do you know where you
are?

Clarity starts to creep into Flynn's eyes.

FATHER FLYNN

What happened?

MILES

That's what I'm askin' you. I just
found you like this. On the floor.
You got glass in your head.

Flynn picks broken glass out of his head.

FATHER FLYNN

Where's... where's...

(then)

Was I alone?

MILES

Yeah. Why? Was you with somebody?

FATHER FLYNN

(thinks; then)

No.

Flynn gets to his feet. But as he takes a step, his knees
get weak. He manages to slide into the banquet.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

Kid... what's your name again?

MILES

Miles.

FATHER FLYNN

Miles. I need a drink.

(then)

Fix me a drink.

(CONTINUED)

MILES

I'm not so sure that's a good idea.

FATHER FLYNN

Just one drink. To clear my head.

I'd do it myself, but...

(gestures to mess)

Look what happens.

Miles hesitates. Unsure.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

I fell down, Miles. I'm old. Shit happens. Get the whiskey.

Miles heads towards the bar. Flynn sits in the banquet and listens to the music. He catches a glimpse of himself in the reflections on the wall. Sees the priest collar.

MILES

Father... I was hoping...

(pours drink)

I was hoping I could ask for your

help. I been gone. I been gone

from the church for a while now...

He hands Flynn a glass of whiskey and a towel.

MILES (CONT'D)

But I was devout. My whole life.

Baptized. Confirmed. Never missed

a Sunday 'til I left Indiana.

Flynn drinks. Still a little woozy.

FLYNN

I was born in Indiana.

MILES

Really? No kiddin'. Whereabouts?

Flynn doesn't respond. He takes the towel and dabs his head. Looks at his own blood.

MILES (CONT'D)

Father... I was hoping... see...

(then)

I got things I need to confess.

FATHER FLYNN

Not right now, kid.

(CONTINUED)

MILES

Okay, Father. Right. Of course.
It's just... I'm penitent, Father,
I promise. I'm penitent and I'm
afraid for my soul.

(then)

I've done horrible things.

FATHER FLYNN

So's everybody. You'll be fine.

Flynn finishes the drink. Stands. Takes a few steps. He's got his sea legs back.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

You got a master key to this place?

MILES

Did you lock yourself out of your
room?

FATHER FLYNN

(nods)

Like I said, kid, I'm old.

CLOSE SHOT: the drawer slides open, revealing the room keys.

MILES

Should be right here...

But it's not. There's an empty hook instead.

Miles looks distressed.

INT. MAINTENANCE CLOSET - NIGHT

Miles rummages through his cramped closet. Looking for the key. He can't find it. Knows something's wrong.

Flynn watches over Miles' shoulder. Miles sees Flynn looking at his heroin rig.

MILES

Father...

Flynn shrugs. Does a quick sign of the cross on Miles.
You're forgiven.

FATHER FLYNN

Where's the key?

Miles shakes his head. Walks towards THE CORRIDOR.

(CONTINUED)

MILES

I told you this wasn't a good
place, Father.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Miles walks round the corner. Flynn follows. Stepping with
caution. What the fuck is this place?

Miles stops in front of the first window. Head down in
shame. Flynn steps forward.

Sees it's his room.

FATHER FLYNN

You watched me?

His eyes flash. He grabs Miles by the throat. Slams him up
against the wall. Miles cries out in pain.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

What did you see?

MILES

I didn't see nothin'! I didn't --
I only watch who they tell me to
watch.

FATHER FLYNN

Who's "they?"

MILES

Management. I get a call, "So-and-
sos checking in, set up the
camera." Hasn't happened as much
since the election...

Flynn's head whips around. He sees THE CAMERA down at the
end of the hall.

Flynn lets go of Miles. He starts walking towards the
camera. Stops at the next room...

Darlene's room.

MILES (CONT'D)

Mostly they just want, you know,
people... screwin'.

It's empty. No sign of Darlene anywhere. But the sound
baffles are still on the walls. Flynn stares at them.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN

What do you do with the film?

MILES

Develop it in one of the back
cabins. Mail it to Management.
P.O. Box in Pennsylvania.

Hold on Flynn. His mind racing. He keeps walking down the
hall. Miles follows.

FATHER FLYNN

You ever keep any of the film?

Miles doesn't respond.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

Miles.

MILES

Last year. The big celebration.
Man stayed with us... he was known.
A big deal. You know? Management
wanted him. They really wanted
him. But he was kind to me. So I
told them there wasn't no woman in
his room.

FATHER FLYNN

But you kept the film?

Miles doesn't say anything. Tears start to well in his eyes.

MILES

Father... this ain't even what I
was tryin' to confess. I done so
much worse than this...

Miles puts his head in his hands.

FATHER FLYNN

Miles...?

But something catches their attention. Light flickers,
shadows move on the wall across from Room Seven.

Miles steps forward. And stops right in his tracks.

Flynn joins him. And we angle around to reveal:

Rose. Bound and gagged. Right up close to the window.

(CONTINUED)

MILES

Who is that?! *Jesus.*

Emily crosses from the other side of the room. Squats down next to her. Starts talking. We can't hear her.

Miles flips the intercom switch.

EMILY (IN ROOM)

You're safe. But I can't untie you. Not 'til you're right. We gotta get you right...

MILES

We gotta help her.
(then)

We gotta help her, Father.

Flynn stares at Emily and Rose. Mind racing. Makes his decision. Grabs Miles. Pushes up so he can't see in the room anymore.

FATHER FLYNN

What did you do with the film?

MILES

(panicked)

Father, we gotta do something. *We gotta help her --*

Flynn speaks with a calm, gentle voice.

FATHER FLYNN

Miles. Listen to me.

(then)

The Lord wants you to tell me where the film is.

CUT TO:

Flynn yanks the mattress off Miles' cot. Sees the cinder blocks underneath. Lifts one up, revealing a little hiding place:

Some heroin bindles. A bible.

And a can of 16mm film.

32 **INT. OBSERVATION CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

32

Miles watches in growing horror as Emily stands with her handgun, talking to Dwight through the door:

EMILY

Fuck. Off.

DWIGHT

*I'm very sorry to have spooked you,
ma'am. Have a safe night.*

WHAM! Miles jumps as Dwight kicks the door open, BACKHANDS EMILY across the room.

MILES

Father Flynn!

33 **INT. MAINTENANCE CLOSET - NIGHT**

33

Flynn has unspooled a length of the 16mm film. He's holding it up to the light. He turns his head as he hears Miles screaming for him.

34 **INT. OBSERVATION CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

34

Flynn comes hurrying around the corner, sees a panicked Miles down at the end of the hall.

MILES

*Father Flynn get down here that
vacuum man just busted down the
door and he beat up that other girl
and he's got a gun --*

Flynn races forward.

EMILY (O.S.)

Rosie -- get out of the way.

We hear the cold metal RACK of the shotgun.

FATHER FLYNN

Kid -- GET AWAY FROM THE WINDOW!

KA-BOOM! The window EXPLODES in the shotgun blast. Miles disappears in a storm of BUCKSHOT and GLASS.

Flynn jumps, slams on the brakes. Watches in horror as Miles hits the ground.

HOLD ON FLYNN. Staring at the hole where the window used to be. He looks down at Miles.

(CONTINUED)

And Miles starts to move.

His face is a mess of blood and glass and buckshot. But he seems to be *alive*.

He CRIES OUT in pain.

HOLD ON FLYNN. Frozen. Not knowing what to do. Miles cries out on the ground.

MILES

Ahhhhh... help me...

Flynn takes a step forward. Moving to help him.

But then thinks twice.

Flynn stops.

He starts backing up.

He turns and runs.

We're at the far end of the hall. He races past us, rounding the corner. And just as Flynn disappears from view --

Emily sticks the shotgun through the hole. Swings it towards us. Scans the corridor. Sees the bloodied boy on the ground.

EMILY

Jesus Fucking Christ!

CUT TO BLACK.

CLOSE SHOTS. The mechanical arm chooses a record.

"Bernadette" starts to play.

TICK! The clock ticks forward.

WHAM! Darlene bashes Flynn in the face with the bottle.

WHUMP! Flynn hits the ground in a heap.

RING-RING. Darlene races out of the lobby, into the rainstorm. Panic on her face. Breathing hard.

She scans the parking lot. *Think, Darlene...*

37 **INT. ROOM FIVE - NIGHT**

37

Darlene grabs her keys from her night stand. Grabs her purse. Looks to the rest of her belongings. *No time. Leave them behind.* She bolts towards the door.

38 **EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

38

RUMBLE. The rain is a genuine deluge. The crashing sounds of water and thunder drown out all other noise.

But Darlene creeps through the darkness nonetheless. Stepping carefully. Keeping an eye on THE LOBBY. She sees NO MOVEMENT through the windows. *Okay, good.*

Breathe, Darlene. Breathe.

Time to go. She turns to step out of the darkness, into the parking lot, when --

WHUMP.

She hears something. A muffled thump in the parking lot. She turns, and sees --

Dwight.

He just shut the hood of Flynn's Futura. He's making his way over to the Studebaker.

Darlene's car.

Darlene stays crouched in the shadows. Watches in growing horror. *What is this man doing?*

Dwight pops Darlene's hood. He searches around in her engine. RIPS something out of it.

Then Dwight steps forward. Stares at the hotel.

HOLD on Darlene. Staring at this man. Standing motionless in the middle of the storm. It's unsettling.

Dwight walks to his room. Disappears.

Darlene waits. *Oh god, what did he do?* She bolts through the rain to her car. Slips into the driver's seat. Fumbles with her keys. Hands shaking. *C'mon, Darlene.* She manages to get the key into the ignition. Turns it...

Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

The car's dead. No. She tries again. Click. And again. Click. *Nothing.*

And all the fear and panic that Darlene's been keeping at bay, it all comes home. She starts pounding at the steering wheel... No no no no NO...

Hold it together, Darlene.

She grips the steering wheel tight. *What do I do what do I do?* She closes her eyes. Tries to keep her voice calm.

DARLENE

(quietly)

Dear Lord, please give me guidance.
I am here in darkness and I need
your light.

She sees something outside.

It's Dwight again.

He's left his room. He's heading towards Room Seven.

Now what?

Darlene watches from the covered darkness of her car: *Dwight knocks on the door. Dwight seems to be having a conversation with the person inside. Dwight seems to be getting frustrated. Dwight steps away from the door.*

Dwight pulls HIS GUN out of his coat.

Darlene's eyes go wide as Dwight steps quickly to the door and KICKS IT OPEN. Darlene JUMPS -- *oh my god* -- as Dwight disappears into the room.

Darlene opens her door. Moving on instinct -- through the rain -- staying covered. Trying to get a better look at *what's happening inside that room.*

There's Dwight, cutting Rose free. There's Emily getting to her feet. With a shotgun. Before Darlene can scream --

BOOM. Emily shoots Dwight.

Darlene claps her hands over her mouth to stifle her scream. *Oh god NO.*

Darlene's POV: Emily and Rose look at each other in shock. Look to the shattered window. Emily steps forward. Cautious. She pokes her head through the hole.

(CONTINUED)

EMILY
Jesus Fucking Christ!

The storm around Darlene makes it hard to hear exactly what's being said in the room. We hear distant screaming. Words come through muffled.

EMILY (CONT'D)
What is this?
(then)
Keep your fucking hands where I can see them! What the hell is this?

Emily thinks. Looks to Rose.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Rosie. Stay right there.

ROSE
Okay.

Emily takes the shotgun, clears the remaining glass on the edge of the window.

She CLIMBS THROUGH the hole, keeping her gun trained on the ground below.

Then she disappears.

EMILY (O.S.)
I said keep your hands where I can see them!

HOLD ON DARLENE. Crouched in the pouring rain. Watching these strange horrors unfold:

Rose steps forward. Looks through the hole in the window. *Huh.* A curious child.

Then Rose turns away. Surveys the room. Something catches her attention...

The telephone.

INT. ROOM SEVEN - NIGHT

In the room now. We can hear things much clearer. Emily YELLING. Miles SCREAMING.

MILES (O.S.)
*I don't have a gun --
You shot me in the face --*

EMILY (O.S.)
What are you doing? Jesus!

Rose picks up the phone. Glances back towards THE HOLE. No sign of Emily. She dials a number from memory.

Listens. When she hears the voice on the other end, her face LIGHTS UP with happiness. Speaks quietly:

ROSE (INTO PHONE)

Hi! It's me.

(listens)

I don't know. I'm with Em. She had me all tied up. I think she shot a cop.

EMILY (O.S.)

What is this place?

ROSE (INTO PHONE)

We're in a hotel. I don't know.

(smiles bright)

You will? Okay, let me look...

40

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

40

Darlene watches Rose talk on the phone. Can't quite make out what she's saying. Sees Rose start to open drawers. Looking for something...

41

INT. ROOM SEVEN - NIGHT

41

Rose holds up A MATCHBOOK.

ROSE (INTO PHONE)

It says "El Royale."

EMILY (O.S.)

Rosie -- c'mon --

ROSE (INTO PHONE)

I gotta go.

(smiles)

Okay. See you soon.

Rose hangs up. She walks back across the room. Looks down at Dwight's lifeless body. *Huh.*

EMILY (O.S.)

Get up! MOVE.

We hear Miles CRY OUT in pain.

Rose hops up on the window. Slips through the hole into the darkness.

(CONTINUED)

EMILY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*What the hell are you doing back
here?*

HOLD on the empty room as the sounds of Emily, Miles, and Rose recede.

Camera drifts back towards THE FRONT DOOR. Rain and lightning and thunder.

Darlene's head peeks into the room.

She steps forward tentatively, eyes on that window, ready to bolt at the first sign of movement.

She creeps into the room.

Heart pounding. *Keep it together, Darlene.* Eyes LOCKED on that window.

She slides up next to Dwight's dead body. Starts patting his bloodied chest. *Where is it? Where is it?*

There.

She reaches into his jacket. Eyes still watching that window. Pulls out...

The distributor coil cable.

Actually, to be precise, she pulls out three distributor coil cables. And they're all bloodied. And they look like they've been chewed with buckshot.

Darlene's heart falls. Panic takes hold once again. *Not right now, Darlene.*

Her eyes glance down to Dwight's face. His glassy, empty eyes stare up at her.

Get moving, Darlene.

She starts to head back the way she came. But then she stops. Sees something across the room. There. On the floor...

Dwight's gun.

Darlene grabs it. Bolts from the room.

42 **EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

42

Darlene pops the hood of her Studebaker. Stares at the engine. Looks at the bloodied cables in her hands.

What do I do with these?

She searches for where they might fit. Her hands shake. It's dark. She can barely see the engine, let alone discern where the cable might go.

She makes her best guess. Tries to lock one of the cables in place. She closes the hood.

43 **INT. STUDEBAKER - NIGHT**

43

Darlene gets in her car. Shuts the door. Her hands fumble for her keys. *C'mom... c'mon...*

She puts the key in the ignition. Take a breath. *Please.*

Darlene turns the key.

The engine groans. But doesn't turn over.

She grips the steering wheel so tight her knuckles turn white.

DARLENE
(closes her eyes)
Lord...

There's a KNOCK at the passenger's side window.

Darlene CRIES OUT in surprise. She reaches into her coat, pulls out the gun, points it RIGHT AT --

Father Flynn.

He's at the passenger window. Holding both hands where Darlene can see them. *Don't shoot. I mean no harm.*

He gestures for Darlene to roll down the window.

After a moment, she does. Never taking the gun off him.

FATHER FLYNN
I just want to talk. Can I get in?

Darlene thinks about it for a moment.

DARLENE
I will shoot you in the face.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN

I believe you.

He doesn't wait for further invitation. He opens the door. Sits down in the passenger seat slowwwwwly.

He rolls up the window.

He wipes the rain from his forehead.

He stares at the hotel.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

Well.

(then)

We're in a bit of a pickle here.

Darlene just stares at him. Tries to keep the gun from shaking as she points it right at him.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I tried to drug you back there in the lobby.

(then)

I wasn't trying to diddle you or nothing like that. I just needed to break into your room and I didn't want to hurt you. More than need be, I mean.

(then)

No hard feelings about bashing me in the head, is what I'm saying.

Flynn stares at the hotel. Thinks.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

I'm pretty sure those girls just killed a cop of some sort.

DARLENE

(nods)

They did.

FATHER FLYNN

You saw it?

Darlene nods.

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

That his gun?

She nods again. Flynn thinks.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

This is not so good for us.

He looks at her. Almost as an afterthought:

FATHER FLYNN (CONT'D)

I'm not really a priest.

DARLENE

Yeah.

(then)

No shit.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: Room Four

We HEAR what sounds like sleigh bells jingling. And is that some sort of Christmas music in the distance?

INT./EXT. ARMORED CAR - DAY

SAME FRAMING. CLOSE ON the man we know as Father Flynn. At least, we think that's him... it's hard to know for sure beneath that BLACK HAT and MASK he's wearing. We should probably start calling this man by his real name now:

This is DOCK O'KELLY.

We start slowly tracking back... ROTATING as we do so... Dock seems to be frantically shoving CASH into a familiar RED BAG.

Cash seems to flip and flutter in the air around us... we keep pulling back... snowflakes drift in among the cash...

Dock turns, climbs towards us, and we reveal we are in:

1958. Small town, main street U.S.A. Christmas time. Festive lights frame the folksy storefronts. Decorations and snowdrifts line the streets. And right in the middle of it all...

A horrible car accident. AN ARMORED CAR has been flipped completely upside down by a black Chevy truck.

It's chaos. Smoke billows from the cars. Cash and snow drift through the air. Dock climbs out of the back of the car, moving fast, shotgun in one hand, red bag in the other.

He looks to LARSEN ROGERS, who is similarly dressed in a suit, hat, and mask. Larsen is crouched down, looking at the TWO UNCONSCIOUS GUARDS near the wreckage.

(CONTINUED)

DOCK
Are they dead?

LARSEN
They'll live.

DOCK
(angry)
Where'd you learn to drive?

LARSEN
They swerved.

DOCK
They tend to do that when you're
box sweepin' 'em --

LARSEN
"Stay on his fender." That's what
you said. "I want 'em scared."

DOCK
Scared. Not... comatose.

LARSEN
(sheepish)
Comas are scary.

SCREECH. A ROARING BUICK tears around the corner, expertly
swerving to a stop in the middle of the action.

The third member of the team hops out of the car...

FELIX O'KELLY.

Dock's brother.

The same man we saw at the beginning of the film.

He surveys the wreckage. Steps towards Larsen. Angry.

FELIX
Are they dead?

LARSEN
Okay...

FELIX
Where'd you learn to drive?

LARSEN
We've been over this --

DOCK

Shut your fucking mouth. Get the money. Not one more word.

Larsen begrudgingly starts scooping up what loose money he can from the ground.

DOCK (CONT'D)

(to Felix)

They ain't dead.

FELIX

Praise the Lord. We can't leave this here...

Felix hops behind the wheel of the wrecked Chevy. Turns it over. The engine groans and rumbles... but it starts. Felix slams it into reverse, pulling it free from the armored car.

He backs up a few feet, right next to Dock. The two men listen to the clanking engine.

DOCK

Will it run?

Felix just shrugs. *Who the fuck knows?* They stare at Larsen as he scoops up the money.

FELIX

Think the kid's bent or just stupid?

DOCK

I'm going with stupid but I'm willing to be persuaded.

ACROSS THE WAY: ONLOOKERS peek out from a CHRISTMAS TREE LOT.

DOCK (CONT'D)

Hang on, I better scatter these kids...

Dock steps towards the Christmas trees. He RACKS the shotgun and yells at two children:

DOCK (CONT'D)

This'll cut your little legs off at the fucking kneecaps!

The kids run. Dock turns back to Felix.

FELIX

You're starting to sound like Mom.

(CONTINUED)

DOCK

Don't start.

In the distance, we HEAR SIRENS.

FELIX

What do we do, Dock?

HOLD ON DOCK. Standing in the middle of this chaos. Thinking. Then.

DOCK

Get out of the car, Felix.

Dock opens the door. Hands Felix the RED BAG.

DOCK (CONT'D)

Take the kid. Ditch the Buick at Rocklin and split up. I'll lead them south and burn this once I'm clear.

(then)

We'll meet at the El Royale.

There's a moment as these two brothers stand in the center of the storm. Snow drifts down as they lock eyes.

DOCK (CONT'D)

Felix...

Dock glances at Larsen.

DOCK (CONT'D)

Play it close.

Felix nods. Dock slides behind the wheel of the truck.

FELIX

You sure about this?

CLOSE ON DOCK. As he stares out at the CHAOS.

DOCK

I got it under control.

VOICE (PRE-LAP)

Please rise...

MATCH CUT TO:

45 **INT. COURTROOM - DAY**

45

SAME FRAMING. CLOSE ON DOCK. Now cleaned up in a cheap suit and tie as he stands up next to his lawyer and awaits his sentence.

JUDGE

Donald O'Kelly. On the charges of grand larceny and conspiracy to commit larceny, I hereby sentence you to fifteen years in the federal penitentiary.

HOLD ON DOCK as he hears his sentence.

Pre-lap the sounds of A MAN SCREAMING...

MATCH CUT TO:

46 **INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT**

46

SAME FRAMING. Though now Dock's lying on his back. And he looks a decade older. His wild, terrified eyes look up at us as he thrashes about in his bunk.

DOCK

Where am I where am I where am I?

His CELLMATE is a large, tattooed man named SAMMY WILDS. He tries to roust Dock from what seems like a waking nightmare.

SAMMY

Dock, Dock -- stop -- hey -- HEY --
You're okay --

Dock sits up. Stares at his cramped cell. Confused. Terrified. Gasping for air. A frightened child.

DOCK

Where am I?

SAMMY

Same place you've been for the last ten fucking years. Cell Block Four. Just breathe... you're okay...

Sammy's voice seems to be calming Dock down. We get the sense this happens a lot.

(CONTINUED)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

(exhales)

Jesus, Dock. We gotta do something about this.

HOLD ON DOCK as he stares at his cell. Trying to remember who he is.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON HOSPITAL - DAY

SAME FRAMING. CLOSE ON AN X-RAY of a skull.

DR. WILLIAM LAURENCE studies the X-Ray. Takes a drag off his cigarette.

Dock sits in a prison hospital bed. He's wearing his prison clothes. One hand is handcuffed to the bed rail. He's got a black eye and a bandaged forehead.

DOCK

What do you think?

DR. LAURENCE

I think you should stop fighting with the niggers, for starters.

DOCK

Mexicans. This time. And I didn't do nothing.

DR. LAURENCE

I'd hate to see what it looks like when you do something. They tell me that boy down the hall may not walk again.

DOCK

They jumped me.

DR. LAURENCE

Sure.

Dr. Laurence stares at the chart. Lost in thought.

DOCK

It's not the fighting.

Dr. Laurence takes a drag off his cigarette. Grave.

(CONTINUED)

DR. LAURENCE
(agrees)
It's not the fighting.

He wheels himself closer to Dock.

DR. LAURENCE (CONT'D)
Tell me about your family. Any
history of dementia? Alzheimer's?

Dock nods.

DOCK
My mother.
(then)
Her father.

Dr. Laurence offers Dock one of his cigarettes. Dock takes it. Dr. Laurence lights it for him.

DOCK (CONT'D)
How long do I got?

Dr. Laurence thinks. Smokes.

DR. LAURENCE
When are you up for parole?

DOCK
Six months.

DR. LAURENCE
(shrugs)
You should make it 'til then.

OFF DOCK --

MATCH CUT TO:

SAME FRAMING. Dock sits in the passenger seat. Stares out at the rain. Darlene keeps the gun on him.

DOCK
Ten years ago, my brother Felix and I robbed an armored car in Sacramento. Job went bad. I think we got burned by our crew. I went to prison, Felix got killed at the meetup. Which was here. At the El Royale. We had a plan, case things went south.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DOCK (CONT'D)

Bury the money in the floor of the room. When they found his body, they never made no mention of the money.

(then)

I couldn't remember what room we said. Either four or five. It was true what I said back there about my mind not being what it was. I guessed wrong. So. I think there's a whole mess of money buried in your room.

(then)

And I need your help to get it.

They sit in silence for a bit. The rain pours down.

DARLENE

And you expect me to believe all that.

Dock considers her question.

DOCK

Um. Well. It's the truth. So there's that. But... no. I get it.

(frowns)

How'd you know I wasn't on the up-and-up in the first place?

DARLENE

(shrugs)

You spend your life gettin' shook, you learn to spot a shaker.

Dock nods. Likes the way that sounds.

DOCK

Is that from a song?

Darlene shakes her head.

DOCK (CONT'D)

What if you were wrong? You'd have bashed a priest in the face for no reason.

DARLENE

I'd find a way to forgive myself.

(CONTINUED)

DOCK

(thinks)

I suppose I'd do the same if I was
in your situation.

DARLENE

And now? What would you do if you
was me?

Dock thinks about it.

DOCK

I guess my first instinct would be
to shoot this old man in the face
and clear out of Dodge.

DARLENE

You're dead right so far.

DOCK

But then I'd think that through.
The cars don't work, and this storm
isn't letting up. How far am I
getting on foot tonight? People
are gonna come looking for that
dead cop soon enough. And I sure
don't want to be the black woman in
the woods with the gun when they
do.

(beat)

So. Then I start thinking about my
other options. I suppose I could
walk back in there and take my
chances with those kids...

DARLENE

I promise you I ain't thinking
that.

DOCK

Which leads me to option three.
Maybe I hear this old man out.
Maybe he's telling the truth.
Maybe he can help me.

(then)

Maybe there really is money in my
room. And maybe this old man...
maybe he doesn't have a lot of time
left. And he's fine with fifty
percent of whatever we find in that
floor.

HOLD ON DARLENE. Staring at Dock.

(CONTINUED)

DOCK (CONT'D)

If I'm wrong, I can still shoot him later. But if I'm right, I just might survive this night.

(then)

If I'm right... I can walk out of here with enough money to change my life forever.

Darlene stares at Dock O'Kelly. Seeing him for who he is. Seeing what he's offering.

She thinks.

She glances at The El Royale.

Then.

DARLENE

How much money we talking about exactly?

CUT TO:

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

The mechanical arm chooses another record.

The needle hits vinyl. *Click click click...*

"Give me a ticket for an aeroplane... ain't got time to take a fast train..."

Rose stands motionless in the dead center of the room. Staring UP. It's unclear why.

After a moment, she exits frame... and returns with a CHAIR. She seems to be building something.

Her movement carries us over to Emily, who has tied up Miles in a chair across the room. She sits down across from him. Looks him in the eye.

EMILY

So what is this? Some sort of pervert hotel?

Miles is in rough shape. His face peppered with buckshot and glass. He's whimpering. She slaps him out of it.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Hey -- c'mon --

(CONTINUED)

MILES

No? Yes? I don't know. *You shot me in the face.*

EMILY

Let's be clear. I shot another man who had it comin'. You were back there being creepy and caught a face of buckshot for your trouble. Hold still. You got glass in your head.

She looks over his wounds. Brushes some of the larger chunks of glass away.

MILES

How's it look?

EMILY

I honestly can't remember what you looked like before this, but you should probably make peace with the fact that things have changed.

MILES

Are you gonna kill me?

EMILY

(thinks)

How can I not, after what you've seen?

MILES

I seen worse. And I ain't said a thing.

EMILY

You've seen worse than a man gettin' sawn in half with a shotgun?

Miles thinks about it. His haunted eyes start to drift.

MILES

I seen all sorts of bad.

In the background, Rose continues to build her project.

(CONTINUED)

MILES (CONT'D)

I seen a Senator beat up a whore so bad she had to shove her own stockings back where her teeth used to be, to keep from bleedin' out through the mouth. I seen... I seen a junkie paint "Sorry" on the wall in his own filth, like that'd make it easier when I cleaned all that shit off his cold body.

(thinks)

I saw a man lay with a wolf once. Guy drags a full grown, feral wolf on a choke-chain into his room. Ties it up to the bed. Then takes off all his clothes, climbs in bed beside it, and holds the thing all night. Like, it wasn't sexual, but it wasn't not sexual, either.

(thinks)

Guy just lay there crying. Saying "Help me" while he held that wolf. All night.

(then)

I never told nobody 'bout none of that.

EMILY

(Jesus Christ)

I ain't so sure you shoulda told me that now.

A beat. And then we hear Rose's footsteps ring out as she begins to run... climbing up the furniture stack and leaping into the air...

Rose catches hold of THE CHANDELIER. She swings back and forth with glee, like a child at the playground.

The light in the room swings *back and forth, back and forth...*

Emily stares at Rose. *I can't even deal with this shit right now.* She lights a cigarette. She and Miles watch Rose swing back and forth for a beat. Miles glances back at Emily.

MILES

(quietly)

You don't have to kill me.

(CONTINUED)

MILES (CONT'D)

What could I even say about you anyway? "Some girls shot a guy who was gonna shoot them?" I don't even know your names.

ROSE

I'm Rose!

Miles winces. So does Emily.

EMILY

Don't tell him your --

ROSE

Rose Summerspring.
(then)
That's my sister Emily.

Emily's eyes fall. A hint of sadness now as she glances at Miles. They share a look. As though they both know what this means.

Emily thinks. Then she picks up her shotgun and walks over to the front desk.

Miles watches Rose swing.

ROSE (CONT'D)

What's your name?

MILES

Miles. Miles Miller.

ROSE

Nice to meet you, Miles.

CLOSE ON THE LEDGER. Emily rips the page free. She looks at the names. Thinks.

EMILY

Where are the others?

CLOSE ON THE METRONOME. A finger comes into frame. Starts the pendulum rod.

Tick... tick... tick...

Darlene sits in a chair in the middle of her room. We start creeping towards her.

Tick... tick... tick...

She reaches up, grabs her hair. Pulls at it. It's A WIG.
She tosses it aside.

She glances up at herself in THE MIRROR.

Tick... tick... tick...

She begins to sing.

DARLENE

*I need love, love, to ease my
mind... I need to find time,
someone to call mine...*

Her voice is soft at first. Timid. Weak.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

My mama said...

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Emily walks through the dark corridor. She's carrying the
shotgun. She walks past Room Four. Stops at Room Five.

Sees Darlene sitting in the middle of her room. Hands in her
lap. Singing.

Emily frowns. Flips the switch on the intercom.

DARLENE (IN ROOM)

*...no you just have to wait... she
said love don't come easy, it's a
game of give and take...*

Emily watches.

Darlene takes up most of the window. We may notice the beds
behind her have been moved slightly.

DARLENE (IN ROOM) (CONT'D)

*You can't hurry love... no you just
have to wait... you got to trust,
give it time... no matter how long
it takes...*

INT. ROOM FIVE - CONTINUOUS

IN THE ROOM. Darlene closes her eyes. Voice starting to get
STRONGER.

(CONTINUED)

52

CONTINUED:

52

DARLENE

But how many heartaches must I stand? Before I find a love to let me live again...

As she sings, camera starts to drift... behind Darlene... to floor space between the beds...

DARLENE (CONT'D)

Right now the only thing... that keeps me hanging on...

...where Dock is busy trying to tear up the floor.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

...when I feel my strength, yeah is almost gone... I remember mama said...

It's tough goings. Dock has to stay low between the beds. He's got the carpet torn up, and he's trying to wedge the crowbar in between the boards.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

You can't hurry love, no you just have to wait...

53

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

53

Emily steps closer to the mirror.

DARLENE

She said love don't come easy, it's a game of give and take...

54

INT. ROOM FIVE - NIGHT

54

CLOSE ON DOCK. Sweat dripping down his brow as he works.

DARLENE

How long must I wait? How much more can I take?

DOCK'S POV. Down the canyons of the beds, he has a clear view of Darlene in her chair. He watches her sing.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

Before loneliness will cause my heart... heart to break?

Darlene claps her hands. Stands up. Losing herself in the music now.

(CONTINUED)

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*No I can't bear to live my life
alone...*

She claps in time to the beat.

Dock grabs his hammer.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*I grow impatient for a love to call
my own...*

She locks eyes with Dock for a moment while she dances.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*But when I feel that I, I can't go
on...*

She claps. Dock strikes his hammer at the exact same time.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*These precious words keep me
hanging on...*

She claps. Dock strikes.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*I remember mama said... you can't
hurry love... you just have to
wait...*

CLOSE ON EMILY.

DARLENE

*She said love don't come easy, it's
a game of give and take...*

In the corridor, the claps and DARLENE'S VOICE cover any sound of Dock working.

But Emily keeps watching.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*You can't hurry love... no, you
just have to wait... she said
trust, give it time... no matter
how long it takes...*

(then)

Now break...

Tick... tick... tick...

56 **INT. ROOM FIVE - CONTINUOUS** 56

Song break. The room goes entirely silent. Just the sound of that metronome.

Tick... tick... tick...

Darlene sways. She catches a glimpse of Dock between the beds. Crowbar under the boards. Ready to pry. Frozen. Watching Darlene.

Darlene squares herself to the mirror.

Tick... tick... tick...

DARLENE
*No, love, love... don't come
easy...*

She walks towards the mirror. We follow.

DARLENE (CONT'D)
*But I keep on waiting...
anticipating...*

She's belting it out now. Her voice full of power. She walks right up close to the mirror... looks herself in the eye...

57 **INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS** 57

It looks like Emily and Darlene are standing nose-to-nose.

DARLENE
*For that soft voice... to talk to
me at night... for some tender
arms... to hold me tight...*

58 **INT. ROOM FIVE - CONTINUOUS** 58

And Darlene screams:

DARLENE
I keep waiting...

59 **INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS** 59

Emily jumps back. Startled.

But Darlene keeps swaying.

DARLENE
I keep on waiting...

(CONTINUED)

59

CONTINUED:

59

She claps. It almost looks like she's having fun.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

But it ain't easy...

60

INT. ROOM FIVE - CONTINUOUS

60

CLOSE ON DOCK. As he pries up the boards under cover of Darlene's singing.

DARLENE

It ain't easy. But mama said...

The board clears.

There.

Down in the dirt.

THE RED BAG.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

You can't hurry love... no you just have to wait...

Darlene sways back into Dock's view.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

She said to trust, give it time...

They LOCK EYES. *It's there.*

Darlene's eyes dance.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

No matter how long it takes.

61

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

61

Emily turns away.

DARLENE

You can't hurry love... no --

Click. Emily shuts off the intercom.

The world goes eerily silent once again.

Emily walks through the halls. Stops at Room Four.

It's empty. She stares at it.

Thinks.

62

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

62

"I Think We're Alone Now" by Tommy James & the Shondells plays on the jukebox. The chandelier is now on the ground, smashed.

Rose seems unfazed. She pulls a log out of the fireplace and uses it to light the braziers around the room.

MILES

Rose? That's your name, right?
Please, Rose... please don't kill
me.

Rose stands motionless in the center of the room.

ROSE

It ain't entirely up to me.

FLASHBACK TO:

MALIBU MANSION - NIGHT

Same framing. Rose stands over what looks like a DEAD BODY.

BACK TO:

LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

MILES

You can talk to her. She's your
sister? She'll listen to you.

ROSE

It's not up to her, either.

MILES

Who's it up to?

OFF ROSE, MATCH CUT TO:

MALIBU MANSION - NIGHT

CLOSE ON ROSE. As she stares down at the body, we see the
SHADOW OF A MAN in the WINDOW behind her.

BACK TO:

LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Rose doesn't respond to Miles. She turns to light another
brazier.

(CONTINUED)

Emily enters. Deep in thought. She sets the shotgun down on the front desk.

She drums her fingers on the desk. *Something about this is not right...*

EMILY
Where's the priest?

She looks across the room. Miles shifts uncomfortably.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Miles?

MILES
I don't know.

Emily moves towards him.

EMILY
But you know something, don't you?

She reaches into her pocket. Pulls out Miles' heroin. Slaps it on the table.

EMILY (CONT'D)
This is yours?

Miles nods.

EMILY (CONT'D)
You want it?

Miles stares at the heroin. Nods.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Where's the priest?

MILES
I don't know. I promise. I want to find him, too. Please.

Tears start to well up in his eyes.

MILES (CONT'D)
Please. I'll do whatever you want. Just let me talk to the priest when you find him.
(then)
Just let me talk to him before you kill me.

In the background, Rose pirouettes on the border.

ROSE

I been trying to tell him, we might not have to kill him. But it's not up to us.

Emily's face falls. *Wait. What?*

EMILY

Who's it up to?

A CHILL runs down her spine as she looks to her sister.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Rosie... what did you do?

In the darkness behind Emily, the shadows MOVE...

EXT. ROOM FIVE - NIGHT

Darlene and Dock slip out of Room Five. Darlene holds the gun, Dock holds the bag. They keep their eyes locked on THE LOBBY as they creep towards the parking lot.

They give each other a look. *We did it.*

Darlene motions for Dock to wait. She creeps forward, stares at the front windows of the lobby. It's DARK. *Why's it so dark?* She waits as the sound of thunder crashes around them.

We can feel Darlene's heart pounding. *Something is wrong... but, if we're gonna move, we better move now.* Darlene turns to Dock... *let's go...*

And a man has a knife at Dock's throat.

Darlene's eyes go wide with shock. She starts to raise the gun... a hand whips out of the shadows behind her, grabs her arm, puts a knife to Darlene's throat...

It all happens FAST in the flashing tempest of the storm.

"Twelve-Thirty" by The Mamas & the Papas starts to play.

I used to live in New York City... Everything there was dark and dirty...

A MAN approaches.

He's walking towards them though the deluge. As the lightning FLASHES, we catch glimpses of THIS MAN:

He's young. Late-twenties, if we'd had to guess. He's wearing a white shirt, open all the way to his navel.

(CONTINUED)

63

CONTINUED:

63

He's barefoot. His feet step through the parking lot with rhythm, as though he can hear music nobody else can.

Darlene and Dock lock eyes. Stare at this approaching figure.

Outside my window, there's a steeple...

The man stops as he nears. Lifts his face to the rain. Bathes in the storm as though it was a warm shower.

With a clock that always reads twelve-thirty...

The man smiles. The music SWELLS to CRESCENDO.

MAN IN THE RAIN

Howdy.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: Billy Lee

The four-part harmony sings: "Young girls are coming to the canyon..."

64

EXT. TOPANGA CANYON - DAY

64

We're looking STRAIGHT DOWN on a field of yellow wildflowers.

A nude man runs through the field, cutting the frame.

"And in the mornings I can see them walking..."

We finally get a good look at HIS FACE.

This is BILLY LEE.

As he walks through the field of wildflowers, we can see a group of mostly-naked followers behind him. We may see Rose back there.

Billy Lee leads them through the yellow. Feels the sun.

BILLY LEE (PRE-LAP)

How long you lookin' to stay with us?

65

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

65

Billy stares at Emily. It's just the two of them. They're both clothed. They walk through the dense oaks and eucalyptus trees.

(CONTINUED)

Emily shifts under his gaze.

EMILY

I'll be here as long as my sister
is, I suppose.

BILLY LEE

You don't get to be part of the
family just 'cause you're kin. Why
do you want to be here?

EMILY

Rosie says you treat her good. I
'ppreciate that.

They come upon a large, gnarled oak. Billy Lee sizes it up,
starts climbing it. Emily watches.

BILLY LEE

That's the second time you brought
up your sister when I was askin'
'bout you. Don't worry about
Rosie. Rosie's right where she
needs to be.

(climbs)

You comin' up?

Emily stays right where she is.

EMILY

I'm fine.

Billy Lee leaps from bough to branch to bough with relative
ease. Clearly at home up in the treetops.

BILLY LEE

Don't get me wrong. I know what
you've done for your sister. She'd
still be in that house in Alabama
without you. So thank you.
Sincerely. For sendin' her our
way.

EMILY

(bristles)

Rosie... she told you about where
we come from?

BILLY LEE

Sure. Not that I particularly
care. You know who else has a
rough past, Emily? Fuckin'
everyone.

(CONTINUED)

He climbs higher and higher.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

These trees don't care about your past. This canyon don't care about your past. You want to be someone else?

He rips free a handful of leaves, tosses them down towards Emily with flourish.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Poof!

The leaves flutter all around Emily.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

You're someone else.

The leaves settle. Billy Lee looks down at Emily with THOSE EYES.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Or maybe you're still you.
(shrugs)
I don't know. We'll see, I guess.

Emily stares up at Billy Lee. He breaks gaze first. Smiles.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

You sure you ain't coming up?

CLOSE ON BILLY LEE. As he stares out from the bough. Leaves framing his face.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

You can see the whole world from up here.

MATCH CUT TO:

SAME FRAMING. CLOSE ON BILLY LEE. The bonfire flames frame his face:

BILLY LEE

What does God mean to you?

He stares at the assembled crowd of HIS FOLLOWERS:

All young. Nobody over thirty. Everybody half-clothed. Free. They drape over one another in the firelight.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Is He some being in the sky? Do
you pray to Him at night? Do you
ask Him to watch over you?

There's Emily. Watching from the edge. Billy Lee starts to
drift towards her.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Is He here with us now?
(then)
Would you know God if he was
standing right in front of you?

He locks eyes with Emily.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Or maybe... maybe there is no God.
(mock whispers)
Maybe it's all lies.

He turns his attention back to the crowd. Warm again.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

I honestly don't know the answer.
Part of me thinks that if I just
keep talking 'til the drugs kick
in, you all will think I'm
insightful. Is it working? Give
it a second.

Everyone laughs. They're all enraptured by him.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

I ain't saying I got it all figured
out. But. I do see the game.
They define right and wrong and
then make you choose. That's how
it all starts. With a simple
choice. Which side are you on?
Up/Down. Good/Evil. Right/Wrong.
God... or no God. It's simple.
Just pick.

(to Rose)

Boots. Quick. Choose. Are you
good or are you bad?

ROSE

I'm neither.

BILLY LEE

She's cheating. She knows what
answer I'm looking for.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

I'm giving a whole speech here,
Rosie. In front of people. Don't
mess this up for me.

(crowd laughs)

They'll get you to pick. You get
older, the world changes. Sooner
or later, you'll need something.
And they'll get you to pick a side.
You won't even know what happened.
Watch. I'll do it right now.

(locks eyes with Emily)

I'll do it right now with my star
pupil.

He smiles. Turns to Rose.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Boots, why don't you come up here
and help me out?

He chooses another girl.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

And Millie, why don't you join us,
too. We're gonna have a tussle
tonight.

The crowd cheers, excited.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Been a while since we've had a
tussle, right? Oh, but Rosie don't
want to tussle, right? She's smart
enough to know not to play the
game, right? But this is how I get
her. I dangle something she really
wants. You two are gonna have a
proper tussle tonight. And the
winner... well, the winner gets to
sleep in the big house with me
tonight. How'd that be?

And from the looks on both Rose and Millie's faces, it's
clear this is quite an honor.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

See? Now we got skin in the game,
as they say.

(then)

What do you think, Boots? Want to
play?

(CONTINUED)

ROSE
(quietly)
Yes.

BILLY LEE
So pick a side. Do want to be
Right or do you want to be Wrong?

ROSE
I'll be Right.

BILLY LEE
Then Millie will be Wrong. Let's
have ourselves an allegory.

The girls nod. They size each other up and down. Billy circles the crowd. Positions himself so he's between the girls and Emily.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)
You girls make sure you stop when I
tell you to stop. Not like last
time, Millie, you hear me.
(then)
All right, then. Have at it.

The girls charge each other. It happens fast. They SLAM into each other and crash into the ground. It's surprisingly violent.

Emily steps forward to help her sister.

But Billy Lee steps right in her way.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)
Easy, Emily. She's a big girl.
She can take care of herself.

Emily's eyes dart to her sister. ON THE GROUND: Rose belts Millie in the face. Millie claws at Rose. The crowd roars approval.

BILLY LEE
(back to crowd)
Now. Here's the important part.
While they're fighting, what am I
doing? Cause I sure as hell ain't
fighting. What am I doing? I'm
watching them. Gettin' off on it.
And then, while they're distracted,
I'm coming over here. I'm taking
what's theirs.

(CONTINUED)

He goes over to where Rose was sitting. Grabs her bag. Pulls out her cigarettes, stuffs them in his pocket.

BILLY LEE

I'm the one already sleeping in the big house, and I'm robbing them blind. This is all mine now. And they don't even notice, 'cause they're too busy playing my game.

ON THE GROUND. Rose spits blood as Millie cracks her.

Emily steps forward, but Billy Lee flashes her a look that says *don't you fucking dare*.

Rose lets out a primal scream and head-butts Millie in the face. Millie goes momentarily limp. Rose rolls on top of her. WHACK. Punches her right in the face. WHACK. Hits her again.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

All right.

But Rose doesn't stop.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

All right, Rosie. Shit.

He pulls Rose off Millie. Gestures to one of his lieutenants, WADE, to help up Millie.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

You did good. Tussle's over. Now love each other.

The crowd cheers. People slap congratulations to Rose and Millie. Rose gives Millie a hug.

Millie looks dazed. Beaten. Ashamed.

Rose wipes her lip. She has blood on her face.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

What are we doing out here, anyway? We just a bunch of kids doing drugs and fucking each other in the woods?

(thinks about it)

That doesn't sound so bad, actually, now that I say it out loud.

(everyone laughs)

(CONTINUED)

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Shit, maybe we do have it figured
out after all.

Everyone laughs, cheers. Billy Lee lets the crowd settle.

Billy Lee cups Rose's face. Kisses her lips. Tastes her
blood. Looks to the crowd.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Maybe we won't play their game no
more.

(then)

Maybe we won't listen to their
lies.

(then)

Maybe the only truth in this world
is here...

He places his hand on his own chest.

He puts his hand on the woman next to him. And the man next
to her. Goes down the line.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

And here... and here... and right
here.

The crowd cheers. He circles back to Rose and holds her. He
locks eyes with Emily across the fire.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Maybe. For tonight. We get to be
our own Gods.

The crowd erupts into cheers.

Emily holds his gaze.

MATCH CUT TO:

Emily stares forward as Wade cinches ropes tight around her.

Next to her, ANNABELL, a wiry woman in her twenties, is
cinching ropes around a panicked Miles.

MILES

(looks to Dock)

Bless me Father for I have sinned --

(CONTINUED)

ROMAN and FLICKER, two men in their twenties, are now busy cinching ropes around both Dock and Darlene.

Across the room, in California, Billy Lee is on the couch holding Rose in his arms.

BILLY LEE

Kid, if you don't shut up, I'm gonna tie your mouth shut.

MILES

Father, please --

Billy Lee looks to Annabell. *Do it.* She takes the bandana from her neck and ties it around Miles' mouth.

Billy Lee kisses Rose. Smooths her hair. Picks up the red bag. And the film can.

As he crosses, we get a better look at the room: Dock, Darlene, Emily, and Miles are all now tied in chairs near a roulette table in Nevada. Billy Lee takes the red bag and dumps all the cash on the roulette table. He stares at Dock and Darlene. Tosses the film can on the table as well.

Darlene looks at the film can. Looks at Dock. *What is that?*

Dock says nothing.

Billy Lee stares at them. Thinks. He grabs THE LEDGER PAGE.

BILLY LEE

So I'm guessing you're Father Flynn, which makes the dead guy in seven Laramie Seymour Sullivan. And you're Darlene Sweet, right? Though I suppose you could be Fuck You, but something tells me that's my Emily here. Any other people in this hotel?

The four of them trade glances. Eyes look to Miles.

He shakes his head. No.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

(reads name tag)

Miles. I'm gonna have my friends search this hotel. They find any other souls, you die bad. Understand?

Miles nods.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Any other people here?

Miles shakes his head.

Billy studies him. Thinks.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Annabell, Wade. You two are on sentry. Stand behind these four. They try to get out of those seats, shoot 'em in the back of the head.

They do as instructed. Wade has a rifle. Annabell picks up Emily's shotgun.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Flicker, Roman -- go get that body out of room seven. Find his car keys, stick the body and all his stuff in the trunk. After that, go room to room. Find anybody, bring 'em here. In fact, you find anything of interest, you bring it here.

FLICKER

Define "of interest."

BILLY LEE

"Oh wow oh wow, Billy Lee should see this."

Flicker and Roman nod. Head towards the door. As they go:

FLICKER

(re: the four)

And them?

BILLY LEE

I don't know. But I'd leave some room in that trunk.

Ding. Flicker and Roman leave.

Billy Lee crosses to the bar. Pours himself a drink. Crosses back into Nevada. Sits down at the table.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Hiya, Em.

She stares at him.

(CONTINUED)

EMILY

Billy Lee.

BILLY LEE

You left without sayin' goodbye.

She doesn't respond.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Did you think I wouldn't take offense?

EMILY

Naw, I figured you would.

(then)

But I'd be ready when you did.

BILLY LEE

You don't look ready.

EMILY

You caught me on a bad night.

Billy Lee almost laughs at that.

BILLY LEE

Ain't that the luck.

(then, quietly)

You tell them what she did?

Emily shakes her head. No.

ROSE

What'd I do?

(remembers)

Oh. Right.

(then)

I'm sorry 'bout all that.

BILLY LEE

That's okay, Boots. We'll deal with that when we get back to California.

(looks around)

We got us a Nevada problem now.

Billy Lee takes a drink. Thinks. Looks to Miles.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

So what is this -- some sort of pervert hotel?

The four sit in silence. Miles looks at a loss. *What?*

(CONTINUED)

DOCK

The kid can't answer you. You tied his mouth shut.

BILLY LEE

Why don't I ask you, then? Why don't I ask the priest walking out of the hotel with a bag full of money?

DOCK

All right.

(then)

Yes. I think it's some sort of pervert hotel.

(then)

Kid told me he films people doing... what not, then sends the films off to his bosses.

BILLY LEE

Who are his bosses?

DOCK

(shrugs)

People who own the hotel? I don't know. Does it really matter?

Billy Lee studies Miles. Shrugs. I guess it doesn't.

BILLY LEE

And he just offered this up to you?

DOCK

I think he was trying to confess. I think it's been weighing on him.

(looks at Miles)

I think he's trying to confess right now. Because he knows how this is gonna go. And he fears for his soul.

Tears well up in Miles' eyes. He nods. *That's right.*

Billy Lee rolls his eyes. Pats Miles on the face.

BILLY LEE

If you're so worried about your soul, kid, maybe you shouldn't been doing all this bad shit in the first place, huh?

(CONTINUED)

He opens the film can. Unspools the 16mm film. Holds it up to the light to get a better look. Squints.

He jumps in surprise. *Holy shit.*

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Is that who I think it is?

Miles nods.

ROSE

Who? I want to see.

Billy Lee tosses Rose the film. Studies Dock.

BILLY LEE

Now what's a man of God like yourself doing with that in your coat?

Rose holds the film up to the light.

ROSE

It's just people fucking.

(then)

Wait... I know him.

(then)

He's dead.

BILLY LEE

(nods)

That he is, Rose. That he is.

Billy Lee drums his fingers on his face. Looks to Darlene.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Where's the money come from?

DOCK

It's --

BILLY LEE

I ain't asking you right now,
Father.

(then)

Where's the money come from?

Hold on Darlene. As she stares at these children around her. Then. Defiant:

DARLENE

It's mine.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY LEE

(laughs)

It's yours.

(all right then)

So where's a girl like you get all
this money from?

DARLENE

I earned it. Singing.

BILLY LEE

(okay)

You must be one hell of a singer,
then.

DARLENE

I am.

She holds his gaze.

After a moment, Billy Lee looks away. He turns his attention
back to Dock.

BILLY LEE

Where's the money come from?

DOCK

She's telling you the truth.
That's her money. She earned it
singing.

BILLY LEE

And you're a man of the cloth.

DOCK

I am.

BILLY LEE

I forgot to mention...

Billy Lee finishes his drink. Leans in close to Dock.
Stares at him with THOSE EYES.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

I hate priests.

(then)

You want to change your story?

Dock doesn't flinch. Stares right back.

DOCK

Nope.

(CONTINUED)

Hold for a moment. These two men staring each other down.
Then.

Billy Lee smiles.

BILLY LEE
Alrighty then.

He hops up.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)
Boots, why don't you find us
something to listen to on that
there jukebox. It's too quiet in
here. Gives me the willies.

He grabs Dock's change from where it fell on the floor
earlier. Tosses Rose a quarter.

She picks a song.

"Hush" by Deep Purple starts playing. Rose and Billy Lee
sway a bit to the bass line.

HOLD ON DOCK AND DARLENE as the music plays around them.
Darlene tense. Dock listening.

DOCK
Who's this?

Darlene looks at him. Realizes he's serious.

DARLENE
It's... Deep Purple. I think.
But, it was originally someone
else. Billy Joe Royal, maybe?

Dock listens. Frowns. Shakes his head.

DOCK
It's not for me.

Billy Lee crosses back over to the table. We may notice he
has THE REVOLVER tucked into the front of his jeans.

BILLY LEE
(to Dock and Darlene)
I want you two to pay real close
attention to what happens next.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

And keep it right up there in the front of your mind when I ask you questions looking for truthful answers.

He sits down at the end of the table close to Emily and Miles. He stares right at Emily.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Emily.

(then)

Pick a color. Red or black.

Across the room, Rose looks up from the film.

Emily stares at Billy Lee. Then she shakes her head.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Well that's not hardly nice. I'm offering you a chance here on account of the fact that we're practically family. That's downright charitable of me, considering.

(then)

Boots, you hear what your sister's doing?

Rose looks at Emily with sad eyes.

ROSE

Emily... if Billy Lee's offering you a chance... you should take it.

Billy Lee smiles. Nods. Locks those eyes on Emily.

BILLY LEE

(leans in)

Did you really think you could take what's mine and I wouldn't come a-huntin'?

EMILY

She ain't yours.

BILLY LEE

(oh yeah?)

Rosie? Are you mine?

Rose smiles.

ROSE

Of course!

(CONTINUED)

Billy Lee shrugs. *There you go.* He pours himself another drink.

BILLY LEE

We used to raise goats out on the farm. Boer goats, 'cause you can breed 'em year round. Bucks are ready to go once they're about seven weeks old. Seven weeks!

(looks to Wade)

Can you imagine? Think of something that happened to you seven weeks ago. If you were a baby then, you'd be fucking now.

(then)

'Cause you're male, I mean. The does take about eight months 'fore they're much use. And you learn. When you got a litter, you learn to separate the females before those bucks come ruttin'. 'Cause once those does go into heat... they'll kill each other. I seen it over and over. They'll bash each others heads until their brains spill out in the dirt. Happens with mothers-daughters, too. Something about the blood, I guess. But it ain't like the sisters.

(then)

Ain't nothing as violent as sisters.

He finishes his drink.

EMILY

(quietly)

None of that is true.

Billy Lee looks at her. *I'm sorry?*

EMILY (CONT'D)

There wasn't no violence 'til you.

BILLY LEE

Maybe. Maybe not. But it's there now, though, isn't it?

(then)

Pick a color, Em. I ain't askin' again.

HOLD ON EMILY. As she studies this man. As she looks to her sister. As she sees her sister nod. *Do it, Em...*

(CONTINUED)

Emily's shoulders fall. Then.

EMILY

Red.

Billy Lee looks mildly surprised. *Good.* He gives Annabell a look. She steps in closer behind the four.

BILLY LEE

Well then I guess that makes you
black, alter boy.

And Billy Lee spins the roulette ball.

Everyone TENSES as they realize what's happening. The ball whips around the wheel. Wade and Annabell lean in with their guns. Their eyes saying *stay in your fucking seats.*

Miles coughs beneath his gag. Billy Lee takes pity on him.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

You got some prayers, you can say
'em now.

Billy Lee pulls down Miles' gag.

MILES

*Forgive me Father for I have
sinned, please -- I done so much
worse than you know --*

Billy Lee starts laughing.

MILES (CONT'D)

*Father Flynn, please, I have sinned
and I repent --*

Dock stares at Miles. Genuine sadness on his face. He shakes his head.

DOCK

Kid...

Clack. The ball slows in its revolution, letting out a sharp crack as it bounces in the tray.

MILES

Father Flynn --

BILLY LEE

Do you want to tell him or you want
me to do it?

(CONTINUED)

67

CONTINUED: (11)

67

Clack.

MILES
I HAVE SINNED AND I REPENT --

DOCK
Miles...

BILLY LEE
He's not a fucking priest, kid.

CLOSE ON MILES. As Billy Lee's words land. As he sees Dock, finally, for who he really is. And he realizes he's going to Hell.

Clack.

The ball comes to a stop in the tray.

Red.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)
Well, it looks like the Lord hasn't forsaken you yet.

Billy Lee pulls his revolver.

And shoots Emily right in the chest.

BANG BANG BANG. She pitches straight backwards. Knocking over Miles. She crashes to the floor.

We're CLOSE ON HER as she hits the ground. On impact, we --

MATCH CUT TO:

68 INT. SUMMERSPRING HOUSE - NIGHT

68

YOUNG EMILY screams out as her sister is ripped out from under the bed beside her.

MATCH CUT TO:

69 INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

69

Emily's eyes look up to her sister. Billy Lee steps in beside Rose.

BILLY LEE
I gave her a fair shake, Rose.

(CONTINUED)

69

CONTINUED:

69

CLOSE ON ROSE, as she nods --

MATCH CUT TO:

70

INT. SUMMERSPRING HOUSE - NIGHT

70

YOUNG ROSE, in her father's arms, stares back at her sister as she's carried away. Her father holds her close.

MATCH CUT TO:

71

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

71

Billy Lee holds Rose. Emily's eyes go dim.

ON MILES. On the ground, rocking back and forth. Crying. Hands still bound in front of him. Staring at Emily's dead body.

BILLY LEE

Now then. Who wants to play next?

Darlene and Dock tense in their seats.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Ah ah -- Wade, Annabell -- keep a close eye there. Everyone's liable to get more squirrely now that they know the stakes.

(to Dock)

She'll cut you in half with that shotgun.

Billy Lee sits down across from Dock and Darlene. Grabs the roulette ball. Tosses it back and forth in his hand.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

You two gonna be more forthcoming?

Dock thinks about it. Nods.

DOCK

Sure.

(then)

Could I have some of that whiskey?

BILLY LEE

(studies him)

Why not.

(then)

Boots! Get the padre here a glass.

(CONTINUED)

She does. As she crosses back to the table, her eyes linger on the body of her dead sister. Miles whimpers on the ground. He's muttering something to himself as he rocks back and forth.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)
Kid, you don't shut the fuck up,
I'm gonna make you play again.

Miles quiets down. Rose puts the glass on the table. Billy Lee pours Dock a drink.

Dock's hands are tied behind his back. He doesn't know what to do. Rose looks at Billy Lee. *You want me to untie him?*

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)
No. His hands stay tied.

Billy Lee picks up the drink. Holds it to Dock's lips. Dock drinks.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)
Where's the money from?

DOCK
I stole it from a bank about a decade ago. I hid it here, but got myself caught by the cops. Did some time. Got out a few days ago. Came back tonight to retrieve it.

And he says it real matter-of-fact. So much so, it takes Billy Lee a second to absorb it. Then he laughs.

BILLY LEE
Tonight.

Dock nods.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)
Why you dressed up like a priest?

ON MILES. Watching Dock across the room.

DOCK
I didn't want too many questions. People tend to look the other way when you're wearing a collar.

Billy Lee nods. Satisfied. Looks to Darlene.

BILLY LEE
And you?

Darlene shifts a bit in her seat.

DARLENE

I'm just a singer. The money happened to be hid in my room. He said he'd split it with me if I helped him get it back.

BILLY LEE

'Course he did. 'Cause that ain't even the real score, is it, padre? No, 'cause you found this.

Billy Lee picks up the film. Brings it back to the table.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

(to Darlene)

I bet he didn't tell you about this, did he? Don't you even want to see who's on it?

DARLENE

No. I don't. It doesn't matter.

BILLY LEE

(laughs)

Darlin', then you ain't understandin' what's on this --

DARLENE

Stop. Stop talking.

(then)

I don't need to look at the film. Let me guess: it's some man who talks a lot. He talks so much he thinks he believes in something. But really... he just wants to fuck who he wants to fuck.

(then)

I've seen that enough. I'm not even angry about it anymore. I'm just tired. I'm just bored. Of men like you. You think I don't see you for what you are? A fragile little man. Preying on the weak and the lost.

He starts to speak, but she cuts him off --

DARLENE (CONT'D)

I've heard it. I don't care.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DARLENE (CONT'D)

I'd rather sit here and listen to
the rain.

Billy Lee's eyes flash. Darlene doesn't blink.

The whole room seems to hold its breath. We hear the rain
outside. It seems to be getting louder.

Then.

Billy Lee breaks Darlene's gaze. The violence in his eyes
vanishes as quickly as it appeared. He throws a patronizing
shrug Darlene's way --

BILLY LEE

You go right ahead.

And turns his attention back to Dock.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Why didn't you just leave when you
had the film? That's worth way
more than some bag of money.

Dock considers.

DOCK

I did time for that money. My
brother died for that money. That
money's mine.

DARLENE

That money's ours.

DOCK

That money's ours.

ROSE

Why's that filmstrip worth so much
anyway? That guy's dead. Who
cares?

BILLY LEE

Well, Boots... sometimes, the
memory of a man matters more than
the man himself. Ain't that right,
padre?

DOCK

If you say so.

Billy Lee drums his fingers. Thinks.

BILLY LEE

Who's gonna come looking for this money?

DOCK

Nobody.

BILLY LEE

Somebody's always looking for money.

DOCK

They're all gone. 'Cept me.

BILLY LEE

And who are you again? Let's say I want to check this story out... who am I looking for? What's your real name, father?

DOCK

(nods)

It's...

And Dock's face goes blank.

DOCK (CONT'D)

(searches)

It's, um...

Dock almost laughs at the absurdity. *He can't remember his own name.* But then we see real fear in his eyes, just like we saw in the prison. Just like we saw when we first met him, standing in the parking lot.

He can't remember.

He looks to Miles.

DOCK (CONT'D)

(hang on)

It's...

Billy Lee rolls his eyes.

Dock looks to Darlene. Almost pleading.

DOCK (CONT'D)

Did I tell you my real name?

Darlene looks at Dock with sympathetic eyes.

(CONTINUED)

DARLENE

You never did.

BILLY LEE

Really? Now you want to start playing games again?

DARLENE

He can't remember. His mind -- it ain't all there no more.

BILLY LEE

That's what he told you.

DARLENE

He did.

BILLY LEE

And you believe anything this old crook says.

DARLENE

I believe that much. Yeah.

Billy Lee stares at both of them. Fed up with all of this.

BILLY LEE

Well then. Let's see if we can't jog his memory.

(then)

Darlene. Pick a color.

BOOM. Right then, a violent CLAP of thunder shakes the hotel.

And all the power goes out in the room.

Everyone jumps in surprise.

Dock and Darlene realize, too late, they missed a chance. But Annabell and Wade still have guns trained at their heads.

Billy Lee holds up his hands. Take it easy, take it easy...

Everything QUIET. The jukebox silent.

Billy Lee starts laughing.

BILLY LEE

Oof. That's right unsettling.

The only light comes from the firepits around the room.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

(shivers)

It's quiet again.

ROSE

I don't like it.

BILLY LEE

No, I don't like it either.

(thinks)

Ain't you supposed to be a singer?

Why don't you sing something for

us, then, Darlene?

Darlene's eyes go cold. She stares at Billy Lee. After a moment, she shakes her head.

DARLENE

No thank you.

Billy Lee smiles.

BILLY LEE

Tell you what. You sing something for us. And if you're as good as you say, I won't make you play the game.

DOCK

Don't do it.

(then)

He's gonna do what he's gonna do.

But he don't deserve to hear you sing.

DARLENE

No. He does not.

Billy Lee stares at both of them. Unable to mask his anger at Dock's words.

BILLY LEE

Suit your fuckin' selves.

Billy Lee spins the roulette ball.

DARLENE

Wait.

Billy Lee catches the roulette ball. Everything goes silent.

Everyone stares at Darlene.

(CONTINUED)

HOLD ON DARLENE. As she looks at these people around her. These felons, these criminals, these children. All of them.

She closes her eyes.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

Oh... My love...

Her body relaxes. As though she's no longer here in this dead-end border hotel. Her words come out quiet, never weak.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*My darling, I've... hungered for
your touch...*

Everyone dead still as she sings. The firelight casting orange flickering shadows on their faces as they watch.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

A long, lonely time.

Her voice grows LOUDER.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*And time... goes by, so slowly....
And time, can do so much...
(belting it out now)
Are you, still --*

BILLY LEE

I've heard better.

He spins the roulette ball.

Dock's eyes go blood simple.

WHAM! Dock explodes out of his seat, shattering his chair. He slams his forehead right into Billy Lee's face. Blood SPLATTERS as Billy Lee's nose SHATTERS -- Billy Lee and Dock topple backwards --

And a bunch of things happen ALL AT ONCE:

-- Dock and Billy Lee crash right into one of the firepits, sending fire and embers and flaming logs everywhere.

-- Annabell, surprised by the violence, FIRES HER SHOTGUN. BOOM! The sound rips through the room, the buck shot cutting through the air where Dock just was, blasting flames and shredding furniture.

-- Darlene, moving on terror and instinct, kicks herself backwards, away from the table. The table FLIPS --

(CONTINUED)

-- Everyone hits the ground in a mess of CASH, CHIPS, WHISKEY, and GLASS.

Dock lands right on top of Billy Lee.

Billy Lee's gun goes skittering across the floor.

And stops right between Darlene and Miles.

Annabell raises her shotgun again. Pulls the trigger. But Rose grabs the barrel at the last second.

ROSE

NO!

BOOM. The shot cuts the room. Blows another brazier into a fireball.

ROSE (CONT'D)

You'll hit Billy Lee!

74

Dock and Billy Lee tear into each other on the ground. Violent and feral -- two men desperately trying to kill each other. Billy Lee bashes Dock -- Dock grabs a FLAMING LOG -- WHAM! He bashes Billy Lee in the face again and AGAIN -- ashes and FLAMES spread --

74

Rose SCREAMS. She dives at Dock. Tackles him off of Billy Lee. Annabell and Wade can't get clean shots.

FLAMES leap throughout the lobby, burning the rugs, the couches, the walls.

75

ON THE GROUND: Darlene looks at the gun. Just feet from her. But her hands are tied behind her back. She looks Miles in the eyes. *He can grab it.*

DARLENE

Miles --

But Miles is terrified. No longer fully with us anymore. Rocking back and forth on the ground. Crying. We start to hear what he's been muttering this entire time:

MILES

I can't I swore to God I can't kill no more people --

DARLENE

Miles, HELP US --

MILES

I can't kill no more people.

(CONTINUED)

And Darlene finally realizes what he's saying. *Wait. What?*
Her words come out almost as a reflex:

DARLENE

H-how many people have you killed,
Miles?

CLOSE ON MILES as he thinks about it.

MILES

One-hundred and twenty-three.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: Maintenance Closet

EXT. MILLER FARM - DAY

SAME FRAMING. Eight-year-old MILES MILLER raises a rifle.
He takes his time, sites the rifle...

CRACK.

Whump.

Widen to reveal Miles is standing on his family farm.
They're having some sort of family gathering. Brothers and
sisters, aunts and uncles all eating food, drinking
moonshine, having a day.

But everyone's watching Miles.

CRACK.

Whump.

This little eight-year-old boy is shooting sparrows out of
the air *while they're in flight* with a rifle.

Miles' AUNTIE RUTH stands next to his momma, GINGER.

AUNTIE RUTH

Ho my heavens, Ginger! Look what
your boy can do. If you're not
careful, you're gonna have an army
sniper in the family.

GINGER

Over my dead body. Daddy'd roll in
his grave if I let Miles join the
Army. No sir...

(CONTINUED)

ON MILES. Firing his rifle. We can see Ruth and Ginger in the background.

GINGER (CONT'D)

That boy is a *Marine* if there ever was one.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. KHE SAHN - NIGHT

SAME FRAMING. Miles, now grown, fires his sniper rifle as fast as he can as the cacophony of war rings out all around him. Two SOLDIERS stand in the frame where Auntie Ruth and Ginger stood. They look up at the sound of --

SOLDIER

INCOMING!

BOOM. The soldiers are obliterated. Miles is blasted down the hill. The blood of his company all over him.

We're in Khe Sanh, January, 1968. One of the bloodiest battles of the entire war. All around us: bullets fly, artillery explodes, men scream.

SERGEANT RENFRO races forward. Yanks Miles to his feet.

SERGEANT RENFRO

Miller! Why the fuck have you stopped shooting!?

Miles' head is ringing. He's clearly in shock. Terrified. As he stares at the war around him --

MILES

I can't -- I can't do it no more --

SERGEANT RENFRO

Get back on your fucking post! We don't hold this line, WE ALL DIE!

(then)

MILLER!

Miles shakes his head. He's gone. Clearly in shock. Renfro stares at him. Genuine compassion in his eyes.

SERGEANT RENFRO (CONT'D)

Miles.

(then)

Miles. I don't want to die here. I don't want to die here on this hill tonight.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SERGEANT RENFRO (CONT'D)

(then)

I want to go home.

Miles stares at Renfro. Hearing him.

SERGEANT RENFRO (CONT'D)

Do you want to go home?

Miles stares at the violence all around him.

He nods.

SERGEANT RENFRO (CONT'D)

Good.

Sergeant Renfro thrusts the rifle back in Miles' hands.

SERGEANT RENFRO (CONT'D)

Now shoot every fucking thing that moves.

Miles nods. He raises his rifle once again. CRACK. *Whump*. CRACK. *Whump*.

ANGLE IN ON MILES. Crack. *Whump*. Settling close on HIS EYES. Crack. *Whump*.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. KHE SANH - DAY

SAME FRAMING. Miles' eyes SNAP OPEN. He gasps for air. As though awakening from a horrible nightmare.

WIDEN. It's three days later. Miles is half-buried in the jungle. A mess of ruined bunker and debris all around him.

It's day now. It's clear. It's quiet.

Miles pulls himself from his shallow grave.

He steps out of the clearing. His face blank. Deep in shock. The walking dead.

He face doesn't react to what he's seeing. We angle around to reveal:

The aftermath of The Bloody Battle of Khe Sanh.

Dead bodies EVERYWHERE. Hundreds... no... *thousands*... North Vietnamese and U.S. Solders, all around. All half-buried in the sordid muck of Vietnam.

(CONTINUED)

Miles walks through the carnage.

His hands start shaking.

He drops to his knees.

He begins to pray.

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

SAME FRAMING. ON MILES. Shaking his head. Near-catatonic.

MILES

*I can't do it... I swore to God...
I can't kill no more people... I
can't...*

ON DARLENE. Watching Miles. And, yes, there's no real way she can know what he's done, but she can see *enough* in his face. She can see he's in agony. She can see he's lost.

Her face softens. Genuine compassion in her voice.

DARLENE

*It's all right, Miles. You don't
have to kill no more people.*

Those words seem to get through to Miles. Darlene closes her eyes.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

*I don't want to die. Please don't
let me die here, Lord.*

Miles looks at her.

ACROSS THE ROOM: Wade CRACKS Dock across the back of the head with the rifle. Dock goes limp. Billy Lee skitters free. Wade and Annabell pummel Dock.

AROUND THEM: smoke and fire fill the room.

Billy Lee struggles to his feet. His nose destroyed. His face covered in blood. Fury in his eyes.

Billy Lee grabs Annabell's shotgun from the floor. Finds loose shells. Reloads it.

BILLY LEE

Get him up.

Wade and Annabell yank Dock to his feet.

Dock's face is beat up pretty good. But he's alert. His eyes still register when Billy Lee takes the shotgun and sticks it right up under Dock's chin.

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

See if you can't remember this.

Click.

Billy Lee freezes as he hears the unmistakable sound of a revolver being cocked behind him.

Everyone turns.

To find Miles. On his feet. Pointing the gun right at Billy Lee.

Billy Lee holds his hand up. *Calm down...*

BILLY LEE (CONT'D)

Take it easy, alter-bo--

CRACK. Miles shoots Billy Lee right between the eyes.

Rose lets out a horrific, primal scream.

ROSE

NOOOOOO!

Wade swings his rifle, Annabell reaches for Billy Lee's shotgun...

CRACK CRACK. Two shots. On the move. Miles drills them both right between the eyes. Whump whump.

Rose cradles Billy Lee's body in her arms. Screaming.

ROSE (CONT'D)

No BILLY LEE no!

Miles keeps moving. We see the soldier now. He checks the load on the revolver. One bullet left. He grabs the hunting knife off the floor. Hands Dock the revolver. Keeps moving.

Miles kicks Wade's rifle up to himself. Catches it in a smooth motion. Dives towards the front window. CRASH! He breaks the front window with the butt of his rifle.

Remember Flicker and Roman? They had just finished loading Dwight's body into the trunk when they heard the commotion.

And now they're frozen in the parking lot. Crouched behind cars. Holding their guns.

They peek their heads up, trying to get a sightline to the front window. Trying to figure out *what the hell's going on in that lobby.*

Flicker and Roman lock eyes. Ready to move. Flicker peeks over the car.

CRACK. Flicker's head explodes.

Roman jumps in surprise.

CRACK. Roman takes it right between the eyes.

Whump. Whump. Two down.

INT LOUNGE - NIGHT

Dock cuts Darlene free, helps to her feet. She rubs her wrists. They look towards --

ROSE. Screaming and crying on the ground. Rocking Billy Lee's dead body in her arms.

ROSE

*No no no no no... don't leave me,
Billy Lee, don't leave me...*

Miles listens to her cries. The soldier falls away. The innocent boy returns.

He drops his rifle. Walks over to her. Puts his hand on her shoulder.

MILES

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Rose's eyes narrow. She pulls THE KNIFE out of Billy Lee's belt.

SHRACK. She cuts Miles' stomach open.

Miles pitches backwards. *Whump.* His body lands right on the border between California and Nevada.

DARLENE

NO --

BANG. Dock shoots Rose in the chest with the revolver. She slumps dead. Still entangled in California with Billy Lee.

83 ON THE GROUND. Miles gasps. Looks at his hands. Blood everywhere. *Oh god.* 83

Darlene races to him. Holds this terrified boy.

MILES

No no no no -- I can't die. I
don't want to die... *not yet* --

Darlene looks at Miles wound. Sees how bad it is. Looks to Dock for help.

Dock's frozen. Flames starting to burn all around him.

MILES (CONT'D)

*No no Lord please no I can't die
not like this* --

DARLENE

Help him.

Dock steps across the line into Nevada. Kneels down next to them. Sees the bad news for himself. *There's nothing to be done...*

DOCK

I can't.

MILES

Please God I don't want to die not
yet --

Darlene grabs Dock's shoulder. Looks him in the eye.

DARLENE

Help him.

CLOSE ON DOCK. As he realizes what she's saying. As clarity washes over him.

DOCK

(quietly)
Confess.

He takes Miles in his arms.

DOCK (CONT'D)

My son. Confess.

Miles stares up at Dock. Confused. Dying. He shakes his head. Blood coughing from his lips.

(CONTINUED)

MILES

You're not... You're not a...

DOCK

Miles Miller. My name is Father Daniel Flynn. And I am here to absolve you of your sins.

ON MILES. As he stares at Dock. A calm starting to wash over him.

MILES

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned...

Dock holds him. Nods. *Continue.*

MILES (CONT'D)

I've sinned, I've sinned more times than I can count. I've killed, I've killed so many people... in war, here, I know it was wrong they told me to do it and I know it was wrong and I did it anyway... I'm so sorry, Father...

DOCK

It's all right.

MILES

It's not. I did so much bad. I lied. I stole. I hurt people. I killed people. I did it all even though I know it was wrong... I'm so sorry, Father...

ON DOCK. Staring at this terrified boy in his arms.

DOCK

Do you seek absolution for your sins?

MILES

I do. Yes.

DOCK

Do you give yourself to the mercy of the Lord?

MILES

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

DOCK

Will you give to Him the time you
have left?

MILES

I'm too late.

DOCK

It is never too late, my son.

MILES

Yes. I will try. I will try to be
better. I will try to be a better
man.

(then)

I repent. Father Flynn, I repent.

(coughs blood)

Lord, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Dock takes his hand, places it on Miles' chest. Holds his
gaze. *Shh.*

DOCK

You are forgiven.

Miles begins to relax as soon as he hears those words.

DOCK (CONT'D)

Miles Miller. In the name of the
Father, the Son, and the Holy
Spirit... you are forgiven.

Miles nods. His eyes drift to the middle distance. At
peace, finally.

He dies in Dock's arms.

A moment. Dock and Darlene share a look. Dock lays Miles'
body down gently to the ground. Darlene closes his eyes.

Dock and Darlene stand.

They look around. The flames are now crawling the walls.
Smoke billows through the room. They glance at each other.
A silent agreement. They spring to action.

They both scoop up what cash they can.

They stuff it into the red bag.

Time to go.

As they're leaving, Dock sees THE FILM CAN.

(CONTINUED)

He picks it up.

Thinks.

Hands it to Darlene.

She stares at it for a moment.

Then she throws it into the fire.

WHUMP. We're CLOSE on the film reel as it burns and twists and smokes in the heat.

Somebody tosses THE LEDGER PAGE on top of it as well. We see the names, underlit by the flames: **Laramie Seymour Sullivan... Fuck You... Darlene Sweet... Father Daniel Flynn...**

Dock and Darlene head for the door.

HOLD ON THE PAPER. The names burst into flame.

WIDE ON THE ROOM. As flames devour the El Royale, Dock opens the Nevada door for Darlene. We see the first rays of dawn on the horizon.

Ring-ring.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE:

Reno

OVER BLACK, we hear the sounds of a not-so-bustling keno parlor. People talking, slot machines ringing...

We hear the voice of MILTON WYRICK, our emcee for the evening...

MILTON (O.S.)

Folks, I feel like we've got a genuine Humdinger Jackpot in here tonight, I really do...

TITLE:

Humdinger Lounge

MILTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Last time I felt this way, we gave away a brand new, candy-apple red Chrysler De Soto to a lovely couple from St. Paul, Minnesota.

TITLE:

6 p.m. shift

MILTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Bill and Elaine... McIntyre, I want
to say. Good people. Could be
you. Here we go...

TITLE: **Wednesday**

INT. HUMDINGER LOUNGE - NIGHT

We're FOLLOWING A MAN as he walks through the Humdinger Lounge, Reno's sixth-best combination dinner lounge and keno parlor. We hear the sound of the emcee calling to us from another room:

MILTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Seven, nine, sixteen, thirty-one,
forty-two, forty-seven, sixty-
three, seventy-six, and... eighty.

The man makes his way through the smoke-filled rows of people playing slots. He's heading towards the back lounge, where a group of musicians are setting up on a small corner stage.

The man stops at the threshold.

He rubs his hands on his pants. As though he's not quite sure what to do.

He looks for a seat in the lounge. (There are plenty available.)

MILTON (ONSTAGE) (CONT'D)
If you hit, come see the cashier so
we can get you down before the next
draw.

The man sits down.

We see his face.

It's Dock.

MILTON (CONT'D)
Now, we've got a special treat for
you tonight. Coming to you all the
way from beautiful Los Angeles,
California. You've heard her sing
on records with artists such as The
Crystals, Martha Reeves, The
Marvelettes, Wilson Pickett, and
The Miracles. Ladies and
gentlemen, let's give a warm, Reno
welcome to... Darlene Sweet!

(CONTINUED)

Darlene steps on stage to a scattering of applause. We may notice she has a brand new dress.

She nods hello to her band for the evening. *Hi boys.* She looks to the audience.

DARLENE

Thank y'all for coming out to
listen to me tonight.

A moment. As she stands in the light. Grateful for her life.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

It means the world.

She sees Dock. Sitting alone in the back of the room. She almost seems surprised to see him. *It's you.*

He nods hello.

She smiles. *Hello, Dock.*

Then. Back to business.

Two, three, four...

Darlene grabs the microphone.

CUT TO BLACK.

The End

OVER CREDITS: Darlene Sweet and her backup band level the 6 p.m. Wednesday crowd at the Humdinger Lounge with an absolutely blistering cover of Sam & Dave's "Hold On, I'm Coming."

Don't you ever be sad...

Lean on me, when times are bad...

Just hold on.

I'm coming.