

Red Mullet and Cow-Boy

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OPENING FLASHBACK - MIDDAY

OPEN WITH AN AERIAL SHOT OF REMOTE KENTUCKY WILDERNESS.

CUT TO YOUNG RED-HAIRED BOY (8-10) DRESSED IN A DIRTY T-SHIRT AND JEAN SHORTS, WORN OUT TENNIS SHOES, A RAGGED RED CAPE, AND A PLASTIC RED EYE MASK. HE IS THE RED RAT-TAIL.

FOLLOW HIM RUNNING THROUGH THE WOODS, SHOOTING HIS SLINGSHOT AT TARGETS/IMAGINARY BAD-GUYS, JUMPING OVER LOGS, CLIMBING TREES ETC. HE HEARS A NOISE IN THE DISTANCE AND QUICKLY HEADS IN THAT DIRECTION.

Eventually he rounds a corner and stumbles onto a group of bigger kids (various ages 8-12) abusing a chubby kid, BOBBY (6-9), with glasses, pushing him and calling him names.

BULLY #1
"You better stay down."

BULLY #2
"Nerd!"

BULLY #3
"Cry Baby!"

BOBBY
"Stop it!"

RED RAT TAIL grits his teeth and steps in to intervene.

RED RAT-TAIL (RRT)
"Hey! Leave him alone!"

BULLY #3
"Mind your own business!"

BULLY #2
"Yeah! Butt-out, dweeb!"

BULLY #1
"We do what we want."

RRT
"Not on my watch."

BULLY #1
"Ha! Who's gonna make us? You, super-dork?"

Group of kids laugh and make snide remarks

BULLY #1 (cont'd)
 "Lookit that guy!"

BULLY #2
 "Yeah!"

BULLY #3
 "What a doofus!"

until a small object zips up and strikes the biggest kid, BULLY #1, in the temple. He reels in pain and drops to the ground.

BULLY #1
 "OW! Song of a --!"

The other kids are shocked and stare at the wounded kid with their mouths open.

BULLY #2
 "What happened?"

BULLY #4
 "What was it?"

BULLY #3
 "Are you okay, dude?"

RED RAT-TAIL grabs the BOBBY's arm while they are distracted and they take off running.

RED RAT-TAIL
 (whispers) "C'mon!"

Big kid screams.

BULLY #1
 "What're you standin' around for?
 Get him!!"

Other kids give chase. RRT and BOBBY dart through the trees and underbrush with little difficulty, but the bullies are hot on their heels.

Along the way, RRT reveals he has some tricks up his sleeve. He sets off snares, pitfalls and booby traps that trip up a few of his pursuers, but still they follow, yelling threats and brandishing sticks and rocks.

BULLY #4
 "You're dead, red head!"

BULLY #3
"Freckled freak!"

BULLY #2
"Ginger geek!"

The two boys run through a cow pasture and spot a barn in the distance, showing that they almost home free. BOBBY casts a quick glance behind, then trips and tumbles to the dirt. RRT pulls up and runs back to help. He yanks BOBBY to his feet and urges him to run.

RRT
"Go! I'll hold 'em off! RUN!"

BOBBY hesitates, then runs toward the barn. RRT turns and puts on a brave face for the approaching bullies.

BULLY #1
"You done runnin'?"

BULLY #2
"Let 'im have it!"

BULLY #3
"Take him down!"

BULLY #4
"Kick his ass!"

BULLY #1
"Show him who's boss!"

He is easily overpowered and they proceed to beat him up. As the children collide, the scene smash-cuts to

PRESENT DAY INT WAREHOUSE - 1AM

SMASH CUT TO THE INTERIOR OF A LARGE NOISY WAREHOUSE WHERE ADULT RED MULLET IS TAKING SOME HARD KNOCKS.

Red Mullet (32-38), in full costume, wears a red cape, red boots, red gloves, red shorts with grey stockings underneath, red eye mask, red utility belt, and a grey "wife beater" shirt emblazoned with his red RM logo. He is bloody and exhausted, still with that determined look on his face; almost a smirk.

WE CAN SEE FROM THE SET UP AND BY THE LOUD, BARKING COMPANY IN CAGES AND ON LEASHES THAT HE IS IN A MAKESHIFT UNDERGROUND DOG-FIGHTING ARENA.

Tough-looking thugs surround RM, taunting and threatening while they take turns throttling him.

THUG 3
"Kill that punk!"

THUG 2
"Nice cape!"

THUG 1
"Who is this guy?"

RM takes a pretty good beating before one thug grabs him by the cape and flings him into a stack of boxes and crates, which come crashing down on impact. Things are looking grim as Red Mullet regains his bearings, but he notices a roll of duct tape that topples out of a tipped over toolbox, and his resolve is renewed.

RM smirks and grabs the duct tape. Staggering to his feet, tape in hand, and dives once more into the fray.

THUG 1 (cont'd)
"What? Did you really think you were gonna take us all in by yourself?"

RED MULLET
"Aw, boys. I ain't here to take you in. I'm here to make sure you don't leave."

He is re-energized and continues the fight by displaying his unique, unorthodox brand of martial arts, successfully incapacitating a few of his enemies.

It almost looks like he might be turning the tide for a brief moment when a thug, CAIRO CLEMENT (20s-40s), pulls out an automatic handgun and starts firing wildly.

Red Mullet ducks for cover, as do most of the other ruffians. He prepares a counter attack and is ready to charge in when COW-BOY (26-30), in full costume, plows through a wall in an old pickup truck, immobilizing some of the thugs and disabling CAIRO. RM hops into the bed of the vehicle without hesitation and they peel out.

RED MULLET (cont'd)
"Time to hoof it, CB!"

COW BOY
"You got it! Hey, how'd you like my entrance?"

RED MULLET
"Compliments later! Drive!"

EXT WAREHOUSE - 1AM

They pass a fancy red 4x4 belonging to "DIRTY" TED DUBOIS parked outside in the back. Thugs scatter in all directions, and we see a large shadowy figure sneak away unnoticed.

Police pull up just as the heroes pass out of sight into the dark of the night.

POLICE (LOUDSPEAKER)
"This is the police! Hold it right there!"

PULL BACK ON A MOONLIT VIEW OF THE WILDERNESS.

EXT HQ - EARLY MORNING

Exterior shot of RM's hideout/HQ, which is a weathered barn/shed in the middle of a heavily wooded area. We hear dialogue coming from inside.

COW BOY (CB)
"Hold still, Jess!"

RM
"Owch! Dangit! Just leave it be!"

INT OF SHED/BARN HQ - EARLY MORNING

CB IS TENDING TO RM'S WOUNDS. HIS COSTUME CONSISTS OF A BLUE JOGGING SUIT, MODIFIED BATTING HELMET WITH HORNS AND GOGGLES, STEEL-TOED CLOVEN-HOOFED BOOTS, BLACK UTILITY BELT, PROTECTIVE ATHLETIC PADDING, AND A LARGE "POWER UDDER" ATTACHED WITH STRAPS AND CONNECTED TO A BACKPACK RESERVOIR CONTAINING UNKNOWN SUBSTANCES. BOTH HAVE REMOVED MASKS, GLOVES, CAPES, BELTS ETC. BUT STILL WEAR BASIC COSTUMES.

RM IS HUNCHED OVER HIS COMPUTER AT A WORKBENCH AND IS SCANNING NEWS ARTICLES. THE INTERIOR IS CROWDED WITH AN ASSORTMENT OF SPARE PARTS, FARM EQUIPMENT, MACHINERY, WEAPONS, RADIOS, TVS ETC. RUSTIC AND CHAOTIC. NEWS CLIPPINGS AND POSTERS HANG ON THE WALLS. BOOKS ARE SCATTERED AROUND ALONG WITH TOOLS AND EMPTY FOOD AND DRINK PACKAGES/CANS.

CB insists on cleaning RM's wounds and dabs at them with a cotton ball. RM keeps wincing and shrugging him off.

CB
 "I gotta clean it or it will get infected!"

RM
 "Well just pour some peroxide on it and be done."

CB
 "I think you need stitches on this one."

RM
 "Use the superglue."

CB
 "But..."

RM
 "It'll be fine. I don't like the way you stitch."

Insulted CB puts down the cotton and reaches for the super glue.

CB
 "Maybe you should do it yourself. Or go to a hospital for once."

RM
 "Or maybe I'll get a butler, or how 'bout a nurse? A sexy nurse?"

CB carefully glues the wound together.

CB
 "Oh, great. What will I ever do if I can't spend my time putting band-aids on your boo-boos?"

RM
 "You could always go down to the VA hospital and change bed pans."

CB puts the glue down and picks up a roll of duct tape, tearing off a small segment. He slaps the silver square over the wound and RM winces, gritting his teeth.

CB
 "Nice. Glad to know you think so highly of my skill set. You want me gone so bad, just say the word. It's not enough I have to save your

(MORE)

CB (cont'd)
 skin and patch you up after your
 ridiculous antics, but I have to
 put up with your verbal abuse too?"

RM sits up and puts his hand to his ear.

RM
 "Shh! You hear that?"

CB
 "What?"

RM
 "Quiet!"

CB
 "Whatever, Jess. You're always
 hearing things."

RM
 "Shutup! There it is again."

CB
 "You think those guys followed us?"

RM grins and turns his attention back to the screen.

RM
 "No. I think it's a whiny little
 heifer who don't know his udder
 from his antler."

CB
 "Cows have horns."

RM
 "But I got the udder part right?"

CB
 "Yes. 'Udder' is preferential to
 'Squirty-Baggie-Cow-Belly-Thing'."

RM
 "When have I ever called it that?"

CB
 "This morning. And yesterday it was
 'Poofy-Milky-Pew!-Pew!-Dealy'."

RM
 "I still say it's excess baggage.
 Gotta pack light; stay streamline."

CB

"I'll have you know the 'Power Udder' is extremely useful and aerodynamic to boot."

RM

"Yeah. Useful when you don't want to wear your seat belt. Name one thing that contraption can do that a good-ole-fashioned roll of duct tape can't."

CB is indignant and defensive. RM leans back and crosses his arms.

CB

"Well it can... uh--"

RM

"Nope."

CB

"Well it's got--"

RM

"Got it."

CB

"It does--"

RM

"Done it."

CB

"There's the--"

RM pats the roll of duct tape and shakes his head.

RM

"Here too. Admit it, CB. It's just a lame gimmick, and it's weighing you down. How much weight do you carry in those canisters on your back anyway?"

CB

"That's beside the point."

RM

"Oh is it? So next time we are on foot in pursuit of some low-life goat-rustler, you gonna keep up?"

CB

"Not all heroes are defined by their physical prowess."

RM

"That's true enough said. Very well. State your case."

CB paces the floor like a courtroom attorney. RM watches with amusement.

CB

"Let's think about it for a minute. Well, we could depend on our limitless income to fund advanced technology. Or there's our intimidating reputation to strike fear into the psyche of our enemies. Then of course there's our amazing super-powers... oh, wait. We don't have any of that! We're just a couple of amateurs trying to set things right with what's at our disposal."

RM

"Well spoken, sidekick. And I think we manage pretty well."

CB

"Of course that statement might not pertain to your most recent endeavors."

RM

"It turned out alright.
(pointing to computer screen)
The police showed up and arrested the game runners. Animal control seized the dogs. All is well."

CB

"Yeah, until they pay their fines and do their time. Then they'll be back at it again, and out to get us."

RM stands and putters around the lair. CB tinkers with some equipment.

RM

"Well, it's not a perfect system. That's why we intervene. A sort of
(MORE)

RM (cont'd)
supplement to law enforcement, if
you will."

CB
"You almost make it sound legal.
Don't forget, we're vigilantes. We
could go to jail."

RM
"Now who would arrest a face like
this?"

CB
"I'm serious, Jess. How long do you
think we can keep this up before
we're caught, or killed?"

RM
"You worry too much. 'Sides, what
else are we gonna do in this
one-hose town?"

CB
"Well, we could --"

RM
"If you are gonna mention Community
College again, don't."

CB
"C'mon. At least consider it."

RM
"What's there to consider? An
office job, synchronizing
spreadsheets? Air conditioner
repair? Manager at the Piggly
Wiggly? Not everyone can be a
rocket scientist like Richard Arlis
Bovine."

CB
"Leave my brother out of it. He has
nothing to do with this. Besides,
he a software developer, not a
rocket scientist."

RM
"Whatever. You're just jealous that
he got out and you didn't. He left
you behind to take over the family
business when your daddy kicks the
milk bucket."

CB

"Which I'll be much more prepared to do if I can get a degree."

RM

"Now you need a degree to milk cows? What would your grandpappy say?"

CB

"He'd say there's nothing wrong with trying to better yourself and further your education. Your's would say the same."

RM

"I'd rather not have that conversation with PawPaw Lonnie."

CB

"Fine. Then have it with me. You haven't lifted a finger since you got out of the army. How do you live with yourself surviving on your disability check alone? Don't you want to contribute?"

RM

"I am contributing! What do you think Red Mullet does?"

CB

"I mean legally... I... I don't know why I argue with you. It's like talking to a brick wall."

RM

"Thank you."

A pause as they focus on their tasks. Feeling, guilty, RM relents.

RM (cont'd)

"Okay, fine. We can check out the college. But no promises."

CB

"Yeah? You sure?"

RM

"Don't ask me that. I'm liable to change my mind."

CB

"You won't regret it."

RM

"We'll see."

EXT CRIME SCENE - LATE MORNING

MORE VIEWS OF THE RURAL SCENERY, FOLLOWING JESS AND BOBBY DOWN ROADS WINDING THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS.

Jess and Bobby, now in civilian attire, take the "scenic route" to the college, driving near the warehouse and coming upon a crime scene road block.

The crime scene, which is on the shoulder of a two-lane highway, is taped off with police barricades. Numbered markers surround chalk outline smeared with blood. One CSI agent is taking photos and putting evidence in bags.

Two squad cars are parked nearby with lights flashing. One officer wears bright fluorescent vest and directs traffic. The other is speaking with an older local man dressed in overalls and trucker cap.

RM and CB, now in civilian attire as their secret identities, JESS and BOBBY, arrive in the old pickup. Behind the police tape, Jess spots and recognizes the prostrate corpse of CAIRO CLEMENT as the coroner prepares to transfer the mutilated body into a bag and onto an OMI van.

They slow the vehicle, roll down the window and stop next to the traffic cop, HANK (25-33), attempting a friendly conversation.

OFFICER #1(HANK)

"You boys move along. Nothin' to see here."

JESS

"Heya, Hank."

HANK

"Hey, Jess. Bobby."

JESS

"What happened here?"

HANK glances at the other officer, Sheriff JEROME DADE (50s-60s), who is distracted, then leans in, speaking softly

HANK

"Looks like a bear attack. Not sure how this guy was all the way out here."

JESS

"He wasn't hunting?"

HANK

"Not with the piece he was packing. Least not the local wildlife."

JESS

"Gotcha. Thinkin' foul play?"

HANK

"Could be. Specially with the pocket full of crank we found. Rumor has it--"

Sheriff looks up and interrupts.

JEROME

"Deputy! Do your job and stop chatting up the locals!"

HANK

(to Sheriff)

"Yessir.

(to JESS and BOBBY)

Sorry, fellas. I already said too much. You guys get going now."

Hank steps back and waves them along.

JESS

"Sure thing, Hank. See ya around."

EXT COLLEGE - LATE MORNING

THE SIMPLE BUT PRISTINE CAMPUS OF CLETUS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMES INTO VIEW.

Jess and Bobby drive into the parking lot.

INT SCHOOL OFFICE - LATE MORNING

A PLAIN TOUPE COLORED OFFICE SPACE WITH PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS ON THE WALLS AND CUBICLES SEPARATING THE STAFF. TYPICAL OFFICE PARAPHANALIA LIKE FILING CABINETS, POTTED PLANTS, A WATER COOLER AND COFFEE MAKER ETC. FURNISH THE ROOM.

The boys sit in the cubicle of admissions adviser GLORIA TRUFFAUT (30s-40s). She is overweight not particularly attractive but put-together and well groomed. BOBBY is attentive to the enthusiastic woman's promotional talk, but JESS is glassy-eyed and shifts uncomfortably. GLORIA taps at the computer keyboard and prattles on. JESS watches the clock on the wall.

GLORIA

"...and we have just the most perfect little gathering area in the middle of campus where students like to hang out between classes and study or play frisbee or eat lunch."

BOBBY

"That sounds nice. Doesn't it sound nice, Jess?"

JESS

"Hmm? Oh, yeah. Swell. Love me some frisbee."

GLORIA

"On Wednesdays they even have a sing-along where students and teachers bring their instruments and just have a good old fashioned log-jam."

BOBBY

"That's great. And when does the semester begin?"

GLORIA

"Well, we've already started this year, but if you're interested in beginning soon, we could get your admissions started for the Spring semester."

BOBBY

"Terrific! Do you have a course list handy?"

GLORIA

"Of course! Here you are."

BOBBY takes a moment to glance over the paper.

BOBBY

"Lookit' this, Jess. They have a welding shop."

JESS

"Oh, yeah? Always wanted to learn how to burn myself with molten metal."

GLORIA

"Oh, we take every safety precaution possible. No one has been injured in any of our shop classes for over a month."

JESS

"Is that right? A new record?"

BOBBY

"*ahem* Hey, they even have a pre-med program. Maybe you could meet one of those nurses you were talking about."

GLORIA

"Well, I wasn't going to say anything, it's not my business after all, but a large percentage of our students to form lasting relationships, if you know what I mean."

JESS

"No, what do you mean?"

GLORIA

"Well, the Bovington Journal named our little college the number one matchmaking destination in the county."

JESS

"Is that right? Lotta desperate lovebirds out there I reckon."

GLORIA

"Uh... yes."

JESS

"You married yourself, Miss...?"

GLORIA

"Truffaut. Gloria Truffaut. No I am not."

JESS

"Miss Truffaut. Maybe you oughta take, um..."

JESS grabs the paper from Bobby.

JESS (cont'd)

"...Basket Weaving for Beginners. Maybe you'll find you a basket lovin' beau there."

GLORIA

"Yes, I suppose..."

BOBBY

"Well thank you, Miss Truffaut, for your time. Well be in touch."

JESS motions "call me" and GLORIA blushes. The boys exit.

INT TRUCK - EARLY AFTERNOON

Back in the truck, Jess steers the conversation to the mystery of Cairo Clement.

JESS

"So, sounds like some mean bears runnin' around lately."

BOBBY

"Bears? Oh, right. Yeah, poor guy."

JESS

"You mean the poor guy who pulled a gun on me last night at the illegal dogfight? That poor guy?"

BOBBY

"I wouldn't wish death-by-mauling on anyone. Regardless of criminal activity."

JESS

"Yeah, okay. But bears ain't malicious. What with the drought and all, a bear is just doin' what bears do. I wanna know where the meth is comin' from."

BOBBY

"The meth what that addict was carrying?"

JESS

"Yup. And chances are, the dogfight goes hand-in-hand with the drug dealing."

BOBBY

"So who's making the meth?"

JESS

"You're a quick study, boy. Maybe I'll just keep you around."

BOBBY

"You keep me around 'cause I can fix your computer."

JESS

"You know what they say. 'Keep your enemies close and your computer repairman closer.'"

BOBBY

"That makes me fee all warm and fuzzy inside."

JESS

"I thought cows was fuzzy on the outside."

BOBBY rolls his eyes and ignores the joke.

BOBBY

"So now we're on a narc hunt?"

JESS

"Good thing it's open season."

BOBBY

"You don't think the police have a handle on that?"

JESS

"I think the police are too busy lookin' for rabid bears."

BOBBY

"Where do we start?"

JESS

"Same place everybody goes to get drugs. The drugstore."

BOBBY

"That's not... I don't think... are you... um..."

JESS

"You got a better idea?"

BOBBY

"No. No I do not. Drugstore it is."

EXT STRIP MALL - DAY

REVEAL THE MAIN STREET OF BOVINGTON HOLLOW. THERE IS LIKELY A WHITE WOOD paneled church, a grocery store, a bank, a gas and service station, post office, and maybe a stop light and water tower, along with some other non-descript structures. The town is clean, but somewhat neglected and weathered.

Pickup truck pulls into the parking lot of an old brick strip mall. Another pickup is backed in to a feed store where an attractive young blonde woman in cut-offs, ELLIE MAE (22-28), and a middle-aged man in overalls, MR. SWINEGOOD (55-60), load sacks onto the bed. JESS plays it cool while BOBBY is obviously shy.

ELLIE MAE (EM)

"Hey, y'all!"

JESS

"Oh! Hi, Ellie Mae; Mr. Swinegood."

MR. SWINEGOOD

"Boys."

MR. SWINEGOOD continues to load the cargo while ELLIE MAE hops out of the truck bed and engages the boys in familiar conversation.

EM

"You boys hear about the bear attack over by the freeway?"

JESS is a little surprised. BOBBY glances at him, but JESS avoids eye contact.

JESS

"Yes, ma'am. How'd you know?"

EM

"Heard about it on Daddy's police scanner. You know we lost two hogs last night? Somethin's gotta be done 'bout them bears."

JESS

"Reckon so. I'm sure the Forrest Rangers got a handle on it."

MR. SWINEGOOD

"Hmph. Not likely."

EM

"Daddy says the Sherriff's probably done called the FBI to come and investigate. Ain't that excitin'? A federal investigation, right here in our little town!"

JESS

"I doubt that. The feds ain't gonna bother themselves with a few bear attacks in our backwoods speck on the map."

BOBBY

"That's the last thing we need. A bunch of federales snooping around, stirring things up. Let the locals handle it, I say."

JESS

"Darn tootin'. You set a bunch of our boys loose in them woods with their shotguns and some malt liquor for a couple of days and they'll kill anything that moves."

EM

"You think that's a good idea?"

MR. SWINEGOOD stops his chore long enough to interject.

MR. SWINEGOOD

"Course it ain't a good idea! It's a damn fool idea! We pay the government enough in taxes, I say let them do somethin' for us once in a while."

EM

"Oh, Daddy. Don't get all worked up. Jess was just foolin', weren't you Jess?"

JESS

"Anything you say, Miss Ellie Mae. You all be safe now."

EM

"Tuh! What's the fun in that?"

ELLIE MAE climbs back in the truck bed and resumes loading the sacks with her father.

INT DRUGSTORE - DAY

JESS and BOBBY walk into a quaint, clean drugstore and are greeted by the elderly pharmacist, TOM OLMSTEAD (68-80), behind the counter.

TOM

"Howdy, boys. What can I do ya for today?"

JESS

"Needin' to pick up the prescription for Paw Paw Lonnie, Tom."

TOM

"Hmm. Let me see. Don't look like he's due for a refill for another couple of weeks, Jess. You sure?"

JESS

"You know what? I reckon you're right. I got my weeks messed up. Sorry 'bout that, Tom."

The bell over the door rings and a group of sloppy looking teens (14-17) shuffle in. BOBBY glances at them and they glare at him. TOM and JESS take notice but continue to talk.

TOM

"No worries. Anything else I can help you with?"

JESS

"Now that you mention it, you see anyone suspicious around here lately? Anything strange?"

TOM

"Funny you should ask. Old Mrs. Faxon came in here the other day with her poodle, all dyed bright pink. Darndest thing I ever saw."

BOBBY nonchalantly wanders away to browse the store and keep an eye on the kids. He pretends to shop for items while watching the convex security mirrors.

JESS

"That *is* unusual. Course, she had her lime green a few weeks ago."

TOM

"I never saw that. Musta' been when I was down in the Keys visiting my ma."

JESS

"That's right. Who was it that was mindin' the store while you was gone?"

TOM

"Jimmy Weisner. Had to let him go though. Found out he was stealing cold medicine off the shelf."

JESS

"He mention anything funny happening?"

TOM

"Well, he claimed it wasn't him. Said it was some big roughneck guy that pushed him around when Jimmy tried to stop him."

EXT DRUGSTORE - DAY

JUST OUTSIDE THE DOORS OF THE DRUGSTORE.

JESS exits and walks down the length of the strip mall and around the corner into an alleyway. The group of sloppy looking young people (15-22) stand around smoking and drinking beer. They pretend not to notice the two men, but JESS ignores their indifference. BOBBY hustles up from behind, carrying a shopping bag full of snacks.

EXT ALLEYWAY - DAY

JESS

"Afternoon, folks. Which one of you fine upstanding citizens is Jimmy?"

The teens snicker and one boy, REGGIE ORR (17-20), looks up and spits.

REGGIE

"Who's askin', old man?"

JESS

"Old? Listen, punk! I oughta--"

JESS tenses and takes a step forward. BOBBY stops him with a hand on his shoulder.

BOBBY

"Easy, Jess.

(to REGGIE)

Reggie Orr, you know your mamma would stroke out if she knew you were out here skippin' school today. And let's not forget the shoplifting."

JESS

"Ooooo. I hate shoplifters."

REGGIE

"Bobby, why you hang around this gimp loser?" (motions to JESS)

JESS

"'Gimp' now is it? You got some kinda mouth on you--"

JESS takes another step forward and clenches his fists. BOBBY blocks him with an arm across his chest.

BOBBY

"Just tell us where Jimmy is."

REGGIE

"Yeah alright. He got a job down at the chop house. You ain't gonna tell my mamma are you?"

BOBBY

"The chop house?"

BOBBY's eyes grow wide and the color leaves his face.

JESS
"Bobby, you ok, buddy? You lookin'
a little green around the gills."

BOBBY
"*Gulp* I'll be fine. You kids stay
in school now, y'hear?"

The two men turn to leave, but REGGIE flicks a cigarette at them and yells.

REGGIE
"Yeah, yeah. Screw you! And your
cripple."

JESS grins and turns back around.

JESS
"I was hopin' you'd say somethin'
stupid like that."

INT DRUG STORE - DAY

TOM is startled when JESS drags REGGIE through the doors in a submission hold.

JESS
"Tom. This young man's got
somethin' to say to you. Go ahead,
young man."

REGGIE
"Uhhn. Ouch! Okay! I'm sorry I
stole from your store."

JESS
"And...?"

REGGIE
"Augh! And I ain't gonna do it
again. Alright?!"

TOM
"Thanks, Jess. I'll take it from
here."

EXT OF STORE AGAIN -- DAY

JESS re-exits, wiping his hands, and is joined by BOBBY who is waiting for him outside, eating snacks.

JESS

"Looks like we're going to the chop house."

BOBBY is reminded of the unpleasantness that awaits. He makes a face, holds his stomach, and tosses the rest of the snacks in the trash.

BOBBY

"*Groan* Looks that way."

EXT ROAD TO CHOP HOUSE - DAY

THE TRUCK RUMBLES DOWN A WINDING ROAD TO AN OLD MEAT-PACKAGING PLANT.

INT OF TRUCK CAB - DAY

BOBBY is looking pale and heaving into a paper bag. JESS is looking on with pity but otherwise unaffected by the smell.

EXT TRUCK IN CHOP HOUSE PARKING LOT - DAY

They pull into parking lot and stop.

INT OF TRUCK CAB - DAY

JESS

"Maybe you ought to wait here."

BOBBY

"Naw, *hurp* I'm alright."

JESS

"You sure? I think I can handle this."

BOBBY

"Like you handled those kids back there? Nuh-uh."

JESS

"Suit yourself."

INT CHOP HOUSE - DAY

WALK THROUGH INT OF THE MEAT PROCESSING PLANT. LARGE SLABS OF MEAT ARE HANGING AROUND ON HOOKS. SOUNDS OF MACHINERY AND ANIMALS BEING LED TO SLAUGHTER.

BOBBY is looking queasier by the step. JESS plods ahead and hails a worker. Their voices are drowned out by machinery noise. Worker points in one direction and JESS nods, motioning for BOBBY to follow.

They approach a nervous young man, JIMMY WEISNER (17-22), standing at a conveyor belt with his back to them. JESS taps JIMMY on the shoulder who swings around, wielding a large cleaver. BOBBY flinches but JESS simply reaches up and grabs the boy's wrist, giving him a smile and a pat on the shoulder.

INT BREAK ROOM - DAY

THE THREE SIT IN FOLDING CHAIRS AROUND A TABLE UNDER FLUORESCENT LIGHTING. THE ROOM IS ADORNED WITH INSPIRATIONAL POSTERS. VENDING MACHINES HUM IN THE CORNER. COFFEE POT PERCOLATES.

JIMMY nurses a cup of water and seems a little more at ease. JESS sits near him with a cup of coffee and a relaxed demeanor. BOBBY attempts to take notes on a yellow pad on the other side of the table.

JIMMY

"I tried to tell Mr. Olmstead that it wasn't me. It was that other feller."

JESS

"Can you tell us what he looked like?"

JIMMY

"Scariest s.o.b. I ever seen. As big as a mountain and twice as solid. Bald, real tan. Big gap in his teeth."

JESS

"Anything else you remember?"

JIMMY

"Umm. He smelled like a wet dog. And his jeans was all ripped up. He had a big belt buckle with a

(MORE)

JIMMY (cont'd)
picture of a wolf howlin' at the
moon too."

BOBBY is writing everything down while trying to cover his
nose with his shirt sleeve.

JESS
"Thanks, Jimmy. We'll let you get
back to work."

JIMMY
"Hey, put in a good word for me
with Mr. Olmstead. I ain't no
thief."

JESS
"You got it. Let's go, Bobby."

BOBBY
"Mmmhmm."

JIMMY
"What's wrong with him?"

JESS
"He likes cows."

INT BACK @ HQ - LATE AFTERNOON

RM is working at his computer, searching through police
files and looking at most-wanted photos. CB comes in drying
his hair with a towel.

CB
"Gah! Can't seem to shake that
smell!"

RM
"Tomato juice."

CB
"That's for skunk spray."

RM
"Yeah, well, any reason it wouldn't
work for all a sundry of unpleasant
aromas?"

CB
"Guess not. 'Cept then I'd smell
like spaghetti sauce."

RM
 "Stop. You're makin' me hungry."

CB puts on a shirt and takes interest in RM's search.

CB
 "Any luck?"

RM
 "Naw. How big you suppose is 'big as a mountain'?"

CB
 "I dunno. Big as you can find, I suppose."

RM
 "Biggest so far is 6 foot 4 inches. My high school basketball coach was taller than that."

CB
 "Maybe it was him."

FLASHBACK - INT HIGH SCHOOL GYM - DAY

Young JESS (14-16) is standing on a basketball court wearing an ill-fitting uniform. OTTO GREEN (50-60) is blowing his whistle and yelling at the team. JESS is distracted and gets beaned with a basketball.

PRESENT DAY - INT HQ - LATE AFTERNOON

RM shakes his head, dismissing the idea.

RM
 "Mr. Green? Naw. 'Sides. He was a black man and probably 80 years old by now."

CB
 "Well, maybe Jimmy was exaggerating."

RM
 "About his skin color? No. More likely it ain't no one the local police got a wrap sheet on."

CB

"What about the FBI? Did you check their database?"

RM

"You know what happened last time I tried to hack the feds."

FLASHBACK - INT LIBRARY - DAY

Adult JESS is in a public library at a computer station. Suddenly, non-descript men in black suits approach and escort him out as the LIBRARIAN looks on in horror.

PRESENT DAY - INT HQ - LATE AFTERNOON

RM is momentarily distracted by the memory.

RM

"They still won't give me back my library card."

CB

"Then step aside. Let a pro have a go."

CB sits down and pops his knuckles before furiously typing away. In moments...

CB (cont'd)

"There you have it. Now let's see... narrow down our search... over 7 feet tall... Caucasian... last known whereabouts... there. Ott Beuregard. Arrested for manufacturing crystal meth. Released from the state pen on parole 6 months ago and hasn't been seen since."

SCENE TRANSITIONS TO A SERIES OF SHOTS INVOLVING OTT, WHILE RM AND CB CONTINUE TO DISCUSS IN VOICE OVER.

INT MOBILE HOME METH LAB - DAY

OTT BEUREGAURD (40-50) is in a mobile home, hunched over a counter cluttered with containers and other chemistry equipment. He is an enormous, intimidating human being. His clean-shaven face and head are marked with scars. He wears an unbuttoned, tattered flannel shirt, ripped blue jeans,

big muddy work boots, and a large belt buckle decorated with a wolf howling at the moon. He is mixing components and cooking up batches of crystal meth.

RM (V.O.)

"Sounds like our boy."

CB (V.O.)

"Jess, I'm not sure I like where this is going."

RM (V.O.)

"You never like where these things are going. Now, if I were an escape con cooking meth and whatnot in the woods, where would I hide?"

CB (V.O.)

"Be real. There's hundreds of acres of untamed wilderness out there. It'd be like lookin' for a needle in a haystack."

OTT looks up from his work and glances out the window. There is some sort of altercation outside. He squints his eyes and furrows his brow, grumbling, then he throws down his tools and stomps out of the lab.

RM (V.O.)

"A seven foot needle. Reckon we need a pretty big magnet to draw 'im out then."

CB (V.O.)

"What do you have in mind?"

EXT METH OPERATIONS CAMP - DAY

THE CAMP IS A HODGEPODGE OF MAYBE A DOZEN OLD AND NEW VEHICLES LIKE PICKUP TRUCKS AND SUVS WITH MAYBE A BUS AND SOME VANS, ALONG WITH CAMPERS, MOBILE HOMES, TENTS, MAKESHIFT LEAN-TOS, FOUR WHEELERS, CAMPFIRES, FLOODLIGHTS, LAWN CHAIRS, FOLDING TABLES AND GENERATORS. THERE ARE UPWARDS OF 20 ROUGH-LOOKING ADULT CHARACTERS MILLING AROUND OF ALL AGES, ETHNICITIES, AND GENDERS.

OTT interrupts the altercation with a shout. The men look up and start pointing fingers at each other.

INT MOBILE HOME METH LAB - DAY

VIEW OUT THE WINDOW. VOICES MUFFLED.

OTT lumbers closer and starts barking orders, shoving guys around and even kicking one guy in the back. It is obvious that he wants them to go on errand, so a few pile into vehicles and drive off.

EXT METH OPERATIONS CAMP - DAY

OTT re-enters the mobile home and slams the door.

RM (V.O.)

"Well, we know he likes cold
medicine."

INT DRUGSTORE - DAY

(Bluegrass (?) music plays
over a sequence of the next
few scenes.)

Jess and Bobby talking to Tom the pharmacist who sells them some empty medicine bottles. Tom calls other pharmacies and law enforcement in neighboring towns, warning them to watch their supplies for theft.

INT HQ BARN - DAY

Sequence continues back at the HQ where the two heroes are unscrewing caps to several of the bottles, using an eye droppers to dispense unknown liquid into the bottles, poking small holes in the bottles with a pointed tool, then packing the bottles back into boxes and loading them onto the pickup.

EXT ROAD TO RECENT CRIME SCENE - EVENING

The pickup drives down the road near the recent crime scene.

EXT PICKUP TRAVELING DOWN ROAD -EVENING

The truck bed gate is left open and the boxes bounce around near the edge. Jess swerves on purpose so that the vehicle hits a few bumps until the boxes tumble out. He checks the rear view mirror, smiles, and then continues down the road.

EXT ROAD TO RECENT CRIME SCENE - NIGHT

Night falls and Jess and Bobby, now in full hero attire, return to the scene in the pickup. The boxes that they dropped are nowhere to be found.

They park the vehicle off the road and out of sight. They exit the truck.

RM holds a large flashlight. He clicks it on and it sheds an unnatural light. Turning it to the ground, it immediately illuminates a fluorescent splatter trail that leads into the woods. They follow silently.

EXT WOODED AREA - NIGHT

(We get the sense that the journey continues for some time.)

CB is growing weary and breathes heavily. RM is getting irritated, but still determined. Eventually they come to a stream and the trail stops.

(music fades)

CB

"Aww, cow patties! Now what?"

RM shines the light all around and can't pick up any traces of the liquid.

RM

"Too bad you're not 'Bloodhound-Boy' instead of Cow-Boy. Would've been a lot more useful."

CB

"Shh! You hear that?"

RM

"What?"

CB

"That's the sound of a whiny hillbilly with no backup plan."

RM

"Shoot. What makes you say that? I always got a backup plan."

CB
"Oh yeah? What is it?"

RM
(shouting)
"HEY, OTT! WHERE YOU AT, OTT? C'MON
OUT!"

CB
"Holy tarnation, Mullet! What about
the element of surprise?"

RM
"SHOW YERSELF YA BIG GALOOT! YOU
CAN'T HIDE FOREVER!"

CB
"You really are a knucklehead. I'm
goin' back to the truck."
(turns to leave)

RM
"You got any better ideas?"

CB
"Yeah. Sleep."

RM
"You serious? We're just getting
started. You can't give up now."

CB
"Can and will. We'll think of
somethin' else tomorrow. Besides,
how hard is it gonna be. He's
already shown us how stupid he is
by taking the stuff in the first
place."

OTT
(off screen)
"Who you callin' stupid?"

Ott emerges from the shadows and looms over CB.

CB
"Oh, boy."

RM
"I can't believe that actually
worked."

OTT

"You freaks here for a fix?"

CB

"Uh... humina... humina..."

RM

"On the contrary, friend. We're here to fix you."

OTT

"Is that a fact? Well I reckon you gonna have your hands full then."

Other thugs lumber out of the woods and surround the heroes. They are not as big as Ott, but still very threatening.

CB

"Uh, Mullet..?"

RM

"Oh, ho. This is gonna be fun. Hope you boys get good health insurance on this job, 'cause yer gonna need it."

RM and CB brace for a fight while Ott and his men rush forward. The thugs are fairly well organized and manage to restrain the heroes quickly. "DIRTY" TED DUBOIS (30s-50s) takes RM's duct tape and winds it around RM and CB, covering their mouths and attaching them firmly to a nearby tree.

It is obvious that OTT want to kill the two intruders, but TED disuades him.

OTT

"So what's it gonna be for you clowns? A bullet or a blade?"

RM and CB struggle against the bonds but to no avail.

TED

"Hey, boss. Maybe we don't kill these two."

OTT turns on TED menacingly.

TED (cont'd)

"We already got heat from that mess with Cairo. Some of the boys even spotted the feds cruisin' through town."

The sound of a helicopter in the distance causes everyone to look up. The thugs begin to get uneasy. They turn off flashlights and wait for OTT to give orders.

OTT

"Z'at right? We can't have that now, can we? Guess it'll have to wait for another time. Later, freaks."

OTT turns and leaves the scene, his thugs following suit. TED drops the case of cold medicine "bait" at RM's feet and snickers. He then jogs away too.

The helicopter gets closer. BOOM! A bright spotlight covers the area and a voice blares over a megaphone from a helicopter.

AGENT

"This is the FBI! You are all under arrest!"

RM rolls his eyes and CB whimpers.

INT OF INTERROGATION ROOM

MAKESHIFT INTERROGATION ROOM AT THE POLICE STATION. LARGE WINDOW, TABLE IN THE MIDDLE, TWO CHAIRS - ONE ON EITHER SIDE, SECURITY CAMERA IN THE CORNER.

RM has his mask off and is getting chewed-out by an angry AGENT SHEFFIELD (40s-60s) with a mustache.

SHEFFIELD

"... and another thing! If I ever find you anywhere near a crime scene ever again, I will personally drop kick your butt out of a plane over Guantanamo Bay. Do you understand?!"

RM

"Yessir. Completely, sir. Just one question."

SHEFFIELD

"What is it?"

RM

"In this imaginary scenario, are you gonna get a tattoo that says, 'I touched Red Mullet's--'"

EXT OF INTERROGATION ROOM

THROUGH THE LARGE WINDOW WE SEE SHEFFIELD IS RED IN THE FACE AND LOSING IT.

Indecipherable screaming comes from behind closed door.

EXT REPO LOT

A DUSTY LOT WITH MAYBE HALF DOZEN RANDOM VEHICLES PARKED IN NEAT ROWS. A SMALL SECURITY SHACK NEXT TO THE OPEN GATE STRADDLES A CHAIN LINK FENCE THAT SURROUNDS THE LOT.

RM and CB, still in costume, wait on a bench to recover their pickup.

CB

"Honestly, I don't know why I let you talk me into these situations. I mean, I could've had a degree from a reputable community college. I could've had prospects. A future. Now what do I have? A police record!"

RM

"Don't get your panties in a wad. You know Judge Thrift will throw out the charges again. Your daddy will make sure of that."

CB

"And that's another thing. What makes you so sure we won't go to jail next time? I wouldn't survive, Jess. I'm always dropping the soap in the shower at home. I don't stand a chance!"

RM

"Hey! Cool it. Take a deep breath. I ain't gonna let that happen to you. Or to me. We'll get that Ott feller and our names will be cleared for good."

CB

"Didn't you hear anything that agent said in there? We can't go anywhere near that guy. This is their investigation and has been for a while. Let it go!"

RM

"Uh uh. No way. This ain't over by a long shot. They still haven't found his hideout. I think somethin' else is goin' on here that they ain't tellin' us."

CB

"They don't have to tell us anything! They're the government!"

RM

"Well, even the government don't know everything."

CB

"Seriously, Jess. You gotta know when to quit. The cards are not in our favor."

Attendant, RICK (25-35), pulls up in the shiny red tricked out 4x4 from arena scene and hands the keys to RM.

RM

"Hey, Rick. Very funny. You know this ain't my ride."

RICK

"That's what matches the number on the ticket."

CB

"But..."

RM

"Cow-Boy. That's what matches the number on the ticket."

CB

"But... ok."

Truck peels out of the lot, spraying dust and gravel all over the old pickup.

INT TRUCK TRAVELING DOWN ROAD TO CRIME SCENE

RM and CB drive slowly past the original crime scene. A black Suburban with tinted windows is parked conspicuously on the side of the road. The heroes continue on.

RM

"Where do you think that creek was we stopped at last night?"

CB

"Well, it could have been Tumbler's Creek. That seems about right. Otherwise it might have been as far as Kitchman Point."

RM

"Naw. Don't think it was that far. Terrain wasn't rocky enough. Any roads that run near Tumbler's?"

CB

"Not that I know of."

RM

"Me either. Best ask Paw Paw Lonnie."

EXT PAW PAW LONNIE'S

A FEW YARDS FROM THE HQ BARN SITS AN OLD MOBILE HOME. IT HAS BEEN REPAIRED MULTIPLE TIMES AND IS WORSE FOR WEAR. MAKE-SHIFT LEAN-TOS JUT OUT FROM IT, AND THE SURROUNDING AREA IS CLUTTERED WITH ALL ASSORTMENT OF DEBRIS.

PAW PAW LONNIE (70-90) sits in his beat-up HoverRound at a picnic table, fiddling with some contraption. JESS and BOBBY have some maps spread over the rest of the table and the ground.

PAW PAW LONNIE

"No, no, no! That's the one from 1972. You need the one from '65."

JESS

"This one, Paw Paw?"

PPL

"Yeah, that's it. Look, there. That gully runs through them hills and spills out Tumbler's creek into that quarry. You'd have known if you got that far. Smells like chalk down there."

JESS

"So if we take the service road to the old rock quarry, we can get to Tumbler's Creek the back way?"

PPL

"Uh huh. But watch out down there. They abandoned that quarry a long time ago for a reason. Strange things happened in them parts."

BOBBY

"Thanks Paw Paw Lonnie. We'll be careful."

PPL

"I mean it, boys. There's scarier things than moonshiners in them woods."

JESS

"What are you getting' at, old timer?"

PPL

"There's an evil, ancient as them hills. They say it come from the old countries. Dark and vicious; thirsty; thirsty for blood. More powerful than ten men, they say."

JESS

"Now you're just tryin' to scare us with bedtime stories."

PPL

"There's truth to them stories. Don't go thinkin' you seen it all, even if you live to be my age."

JESS

"Ok, Paw. We'll watch out for the Boogeyman."

PPL

"And don't ferget the aliens."

JESS

"Wha...?"

PPL

"The space aliens. Don't ferget them."

JESS

"Don't start again with..."

PPL

"It's the truth, I tell ya! Danged flibberty jibberin' martians came down and ab-ducted your parents right outa this here trailer, Jess! I seen it with my own eyes!"

JESS

"Cryin' out loud, Paw Paw. I told you to go easy on them meds!"

PPL

"I only take what you put in them little boxes. And you know I ain't touched the devil's fire since that night either! Much as I'd like too... gotta keep my wits about me, 'case they come back. I'll be ready."

PPL goes back to fiddling with contraption and mumbling to himself. JESS and BOBBY just glance at each other.

EXT QUARRY - NIGHTFALL

RM and CB rumble up to the ridge surrounding the rock quarry in the new pickup. Waning moon shines on the pool in the basin.

They exit the vehicle and start to hike.

EXT WOODED AREA - NIGHT

Soon they are back to the spot from the former evening, but on the opposite side of the creek.

CB

"Well, now which way? And if you start hollerin' again, so help me..."

RM

"You wanna split up?"

CB

"Heck no!"

RM

"Then I suggest we go the opposite way the FBI went."

RM points to a series of trees tied with flags. They head upstream to higher elevation.

EXT SPARSELY WOODED AREA WITH ROCKY TERRAIN - NIGHT

They walk for some miles and begin to notice the weather changing. Clouds roll in with a strong wind.

RM
"Guess we best find cover,
Cow-Boy."

CB
"I ain't sleepin' out here!"

RM
"We'll never make it back to the
truck before the bottom lets out."

Heavy rain begins to fall. Lightning and thunder commence.

EXT ROCKY OUTCROPPING - NIGHT

They hurry to an overhanging rock and hunker down.

INT ROCK SHELTER/CAVE - NIGHT

CB
"Great! Just great! I didn't even
bring a snack."

RM Reaches into his utility belt and pulls out a cellophane-wrapped snack cake.

RM
"Moon Pie?"

CB
"Oh. Thanks. Don't mind if I do."

RM
"Always be prepared."

CB
"Now you're a boy scout AND a
superhero?"

RM
"Boy scout? No. Paw Paw Lonnie
taught me that. He taught me a lot
of things."

FLASHBACK - INT AND EXT SCENES - DAY

NO DIALOGUE, BUT SOUNDS OF LAUGHTER AND AMBIENT NOISE. WE SEE SCENES OF YOUNG JESS WITH PARENTS: PLAYING WITH TOYS/GAMES, WRESTLING, SWIMMING, CHASING, ETC. LONNIE IS SEEN IN BACKGROUND IN VARIOUS STAGES OF DRUNKENNESS.

INT TRAILER - NIGHT

In one scene, parents put JESS to bed, reading to him until he falls asleep. They tiptoe out of the room and close the door.

DAD hears a noise outside. LONNIE is passed out in a chair, so DAD grabs a shotgun and exits the trailer, MOM close behind.

EXT TRAILER - NIGHT

He starts at another noise, and takes aim as a raccoon knocks over trashcan and scampers off. DAD turns to go inside when an intense beam of light shines on him and high-pressure wind blows around. He shouts something to MOM as he begins to lose his footing and ascend into the air. She grabs his hand and screams.

INT TRAILER - NIGHT

LONNIE is startled awake and falls out of his chair. He squints at the light coming in through every door and window. His whiskey bottle topples off a nearby table and he leaps into action. He darts into Jess's room and snatches the boy out of his bed.

EXT TRAILER - NIGHT

They escape out the back door and into a tornado shelter as the parents disappear into the light and darkness resumes.

PRESENT DAY - INT ROCK SHELTER/CAVE - EARLY MORNING

RM awakes with a start, gasping. It is still raining. CB is curled into a fetal position, snoring heavily. RM moves to edge of cave and looks at the sky.

EXT WOODED AREA - MORNING

Morning breaks and it is still raining. RM and CB hike through the woods back to the quarry and the truck. CB is miserable and does not hide his discomfort.

CB

"I sure am glad I let you talk me into sleeping out here. What a great idea. First class accommodations! That Sealy Slab of Stone was de-light-ful! Which way to the continental breakfast?"

RM

"What's the matter CowBoy? I thought you bovine liked sleeping outdoors."

CB

"Not when it's rainin' buckets! I'm likely to catch my death out here *sneezes*"

RM

"Ahh. A little rain never hurt nobody."

Just then, CB slips and falls face-first into mud. RM keeps walking.

EXT QUARRY - LATE MORNING

They make it back to the truck and RM makes CB sit in the bed since he is all muddy. CB begrudgingly complies. RM takes off cape, utility belt and boots. He empties water from his boots.

EXT PICKUP TRAVELING UP ROAD - LATE MORNING

A few miles down the road, another pickup rumbles out of the woods and begins to pursue them.

As it gets closer, we see that it is their old pickup, driven by TED with another thug, JUDD, in the passenger seat. They are gaining quickly and CB begins to get worried.

CB knocks on the window to get RM's attention. RM glances in the rearview mirror and nods. He slides the back window open and shouts,

RM
"Hang on!"

CB
"To what?!"

RM hits the gas and they speed up just as the other pickup reaches them. JUDD points a gun out the window and prepares to shoot. CB is panicking. He fumbles with his Power Udder and manages to spray a stream of sticky fluid onto the pursuing truck's windshield.

This slows the thugs down momentarily as they try to use the wipers to clear the gunk off. JUDD fires out the window and hits the tailgate, the back window, and the utility box behind CB.

This is more than CB can take. He screams and passes out. The old truck cannot maintain the speed and backfires then swerves, slowing down and losing ground.

CB (cont'd)
"AAUUGH! He got me! I been shot! I been..."

FLASHBACK/DREAM SEQUENCE - COW PASTURE - DAY

RETURN TO OPENING SCENE WHERE YOUNG RED RAT-TAIL IS GETTING BEAT UP BY BULLIES.

Just then, Bobby charges in, hooping and hollering on the back of a large horse. Bullies scatter and RRT looks up and smiles.

FLASH FORWARD - EXT TRAILER - DAY

JESS IS A BOY BUT OLDER THAN BEFORE. HE IS UNDERGOING PHYSICAL TRAINING AT THE INSTRUCTION OF PAWPAW LONNIE.

They spar, exercise, do obstacle courses, and lift weights. Bobby is seen off to the side, watching, eating, and working on gadgets.

A FEW RANDOM SCENES SHOW JESS AND BOBBY INT SCHOOL.

Bobby is frequently picked on by other kids, and Jess always comes to his rescue, often getting punished for it.

INT AND EXT SCENES

They hang out a lot, making plans and building contraptions and vehicles. They get into mischief, tipping cows, playing pranks. Bobby helps Jess with his homework, and Jess shows Bobby how to defend himself.

PRESENT DAY - INT HQ BARN - DAY

BOBBY WAKES UP TO FIND HIMSELF IN THE BARN, DRY AND VERY MUCH ALIVE. IT'S EVENING AND STILL RAINING. RM SITS NEARBY.

CB

"How long was I dead for?"

RM

"You want the good news or bad news?"

CB

"Some good news would be nice."

RM

"Good news is, you weren't dead. You weren't even shot."

CB

"I wasn't?"

RM

"Naw. You just fainted like a stuck opossum."

CB

"I... I... I saw my life flash before my eyes. You were there. And PawPaw Lonnie. And--"

RM

"Oh stop bein' so dramatic. We got work to do. Surprise bonus: that locked utility box in the truck is now wide open and it's got a ton of glass measuring tools from a lab somewheres."

CB

"What's the bad news?"

RM

"For one thing, it's still rainin' and from the looks of it, it ain't gonna stop for a while."

CB

"Well how're we supposed to find a meth lab in the rain? We couldn't find it when it was dry."

RM

"That's the other bad news. We gotta cut off their ingredient supply."

CB

"More cold medicine?"

RM

"Nope. They need more than that. Chemicals and whatnot. Stuff you find in a science lab."

CB

"Like where? This is Bovington. Where would there be a science lab?"

RM holds up the course list from the college.

RM

"Pharmacy Technician Program."

CB

You think they'd try?

RM

"I wouldn't put it past 'em."

CB

"When? How soon?"

RM

"Dunno. That's why you're gonna patch in to the security cameras to find out."

EXT COLLEGE - EVENING

JESS AND BOBBY IN CIVILIAN ATTIRE STAKE OUT THE COLLEGE FROM A DISTANT CORNER OF THE PARKING LOT AFTER CLOSING HOURS.

INT TRUCK - EVENING

BOBBY MANAGES TO TAP INTO THE SECURITY CAMERAS FROM A LAPTOP. THEY WATCH MULTIPLE MONITORS OF VARIOUS LOCATIONS AROUND THE SCHOOL.

BOBBY

"Alright. Here's what we've got: this is the hall where the science lab is. Over here is the main entrance. Here is the south entrance, and here are the east and west entrances. This the service entrance for the cafeteria. This is a view of the student parking lot, and this is faculty parking. And there's our friends from the FBI. Anything else you want to see?"

JESS

"The roof."

BOBBY

"There are no cameras on the roof."

JESS

"Well that's where I'd come in."

BOBBY

"Well you'd be out of luck. 'Cause there's no access to the buildings from the roof."

JESS

"You sure about that?"

BOBBY

"Pretty sure. Unless there's some maintenance hatch that I don't know about."

JESS

"Like the one they're using?"

BOBBY

"What?! Where?"

JESS taps BOBBY on the head and points to the roof of the college. DIRTY TED and crew are gaining access through a HVAC panel on the roof, avoiding the alarms.

JESS

"There."

BOBBY

"Jess! We gotta tell someone!"

JESS

"Who? The FBI? They already think we're a joke."

BOBBY

"Maybe I can set off the alarm or somethin'."

JESS

"Now you're thinkin'."

BOBBY frantically sets about triggering the alarm remotely, but their progress is impeded when GLORIA, the admissions adviser, pulls up next to them in her car and greets them, engaging in a overly long, annoying conversation. BOBBY hurriedly closes the laptop.

GLORIA

"Well, hi there, gentlemen. Funny running into you here."

JESS

"Yes, ma'am. Just waiting on a friend. Carpooling to... work. You know, gotta save on gas. Help the environment."

GLORIA

"Good for you! That's so responsible."

JESS

"What about you? Thought the school was closed at this late hour."

GLORIA

"It is. I just forgot my laptop charger. 'Admissions never sleep' so they say."

JESS

"Do they now?"

GLORIA

"Yes. But really I like to watch my shows in bed with my cats, and my laptop gets the best wifi signal. Promise you won't tell anyone?"

JESS

"My lips are sealed."

GLORIA

"Given anymore thought to starting classes in the Spring? We've got a excellent Intro to Pottery course that is still wide open."

JESS

"I'll bet it is. We were actually thinking more along the lines of something in the medical field. Maybe pharmacutacles."

GLORIA

"Wonderful! Well, don't wait too long. Those classes fill up fast. I'd better let you fellas go. Have a nice evening at work."

BOBBY

"WAIT! I mean...uh...you don't have to go inside. I've got an extra laptop charger right here."

Bobby grabs his laptop charger from his case on the floor and hands it to her.

GLORIA

"Oh, no, that's alright. It'll just take me a minute."

JESS AND BOBBY

(simultaneously)

"NO!"

JESS

"I mean. Don't bother. It's all dark in there and we wouldn't want anything to happen to you."

BOBBY elbows JESS.

BOBBY

"Like if you tripped an fell, or something."

GLORIA

"That's so nice! I am rather clumsy."

JESS

"Not at all. We're just trying to look out for you."

BOBBY

"Yes. Please. Take it."

GLORIA

"Are you sure? How will I get it back to you?"

BOBBY

"I'm sure we'll be seeing each other soon."

GLORIA

"Well I will certainly look forward to that. Good night. And thank you!"

JESS AND BOBBY

(simultaneously)

"Good night!"

GLORIA pulls away and Bobby gets back to work. The cameras show that the burglars are already in the lab looting the equipment.

BOBBY succeeds in setting off the alarm, but it merely serves to alert the thieves inside and expose a squad of federal agents who were also staking out the campus.

Unprepared for this turn of events, Jess and Bobby can only look on in horror as a firefight breaks out and several Feds are injured while Ott's guys get away. Any attempt by the heroes to follow the criminals is foiled as arriving emergency vehicles block their path and the pursuit is over before it begins.

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY

FBI agents encounter Thugs. Agents take aim and shout a warning, but thugs pull guns too and start to fire while ducking behind lockers. One agent is hit by a stray bullet and the other is distracted long enough to catch one as well.

EXT SCHOOL

Thugs are making their getaway. The crooks got away and the FBI agents are wounded. Sirens are heard in the distance.

JESS and BOBBY are visibly upset, but they reluctantly leave the scene.

EXT OTT'S METH OPERATION - LATE AFTERNOON

IT IS OBVIOUSLY A DIFFERENT LOCATION. TRAILERS AND MOBILE HOMES ARE CIRCLED UP AND MEN DART BETWEEN THE VEHICLES IN THE RAIN.

The old pickup truck and another pull up and stop. The TED and JUDD hop out and hurry to Ott's lab and enter without knocking.

INT TRAILER LAB

TED

"Hey, Ott. We got the--"

OTT

"You idiots! Don't ever come in here without knocking. You all wanna get blown off the map? 'Cause one wrong move and we all smoked."

TED

"Sorry, Ott. I forgot."

OTT

"Yeah. You forget a lot of things. Like how keep from getting' caught."

TED

"I didn't tell the cops nothin', Ott. I swear!"

OTT

"You better swear. You better swear by everything you hold dear. Including your nuts. You hear me, you spineless crawdad?"

TED

"Yeah, Ott. Whatever you say."

OTT

"Dang right, 'whatever I say'. You find that retard in the cape yet?"

JUDD

"Yeah, man! He was drivin' Ted's truck! Ha ha!"

TED

"Shuttup!"

OTT

"Zat right? You lost your toy truck to the village idiot?"

TED

"I'll get it back."

OTT

"All in good time, dummy. Let him enjoy new his ride for a little while longer. He'll get his soon enough."

EXT ROADSIDE BAR - EVENING

STILL RAINING.

INT ROADSIDE BAR

TYPICAL ROADHOUSE TYPE SETTING. DIM LIGHTING, NEON SIGNS, POOL TABLE, JUKEBOX, DART BOARD, TV WITH SPORTS PROGRAM ON. FEW PATRONS: OLDER COUPLE DANCING, TRUCKER PASSED OUT IN CORNER BOOTH, BARTENDER, JOE (40-60), CLEANING GLASSES.

JESS is at the bar, nursing a bottle, and BOBBY is shooting pool alone. BOBBY knocks the 8 ball into a pocket and winces. He walks over to JESS with a pool cue.

BOBBY

"Sure you don't wanna shoot a few rounds?"

JESS

"Na."

BOBBY

"Darts? You still owe me a rematch."

JESS
 "Not tonight."

BOBBY
 "Alright. Guess I'll play by m'self
 then. Gentlemen, place your bets."

BOBBY proceeds to throw darts at the board. JESS watches out of the corner of his eye, at first with disinterest, then with increasing annoyance as BOBBY continues to throw poorly.

JESS
 "Aww, you're doin' it all wrong!"

BOBBY
 "Is that a fact? Well, Mr.
 Professional Dart Thrower, why
 don't you show us all how it's
 done?"

JESS
 "Maybe I will."

JESS snatches darts from BOBBY's hand and inspects them for a moment before checking his stance and taking aim. Just as he throws, the door opens, ringing a bell and breaking his focus, sending the dart wide. BOBBY pays no attention to the door and laughs at Jess's miss.

BOBBY
 "Ha! I can do that!"

ELLIE MAE strides in, drenched from head to toe, wearing a cute sun dress and carrying her cowboy boots in her hand. Every eye in the place turns to her and the song on the jukebox changes to something sultry. She tosses her hair and shakes the excess water out, wrapping it around her free hand and wringing it out over her shoulder. She smiles at the bartender.

EM
 "Heya, Joe. Got a towel?"

JOE tosses her a dish towel and she heads for the restroom without looking up. All eyes follow her until door closes, then the spell is broken and activity resumes. JESS swallows hard and coughs.

JESS
 "Ahem. Hand slipped. Where was I?"

BOBBY

"Uh huh."

JESS regains his composure and takes aim again. In quick succession, he hits the bull's-eye three times. BOBBY shakes his head and inspects his own darts while JESS retrieves his. JESS saunters back to the bar and tries to give BOBBY some advice.

JESS

"It's all in the wrist. Don't take your eyes off the target. Visualize where you want it to go."

BOBBY concentrates really hard, sticks his tongue out and tosses the dart. It hits just below the bull's-eye and he grins.

JESS (cont'd)

"There ya go! Nothin' to it."

ELLIE MAE re-enters and sits down next to Jess at the bar.

EM

"I got winner."

JESS

Yes, ma'am."

BOBBY is startled and now nervous and misses wildly at the next few attempts. ELLIE MAE steps up and takes the darts from his sweaty hands. He sits down at a table and quickly gulps his beer. JESS begins to give the same advice to EM, but she cuts him off.

JESS (cont'd)

"Now, it's all in the --"

EM

"The wrist, right? Like this?"

She flicks the dart and hits the bull's-eye. JESS is surprised and impressed. He smiles and steps back. EM holds two darts in one hand and whips them both at the target, striking home again. She turns to Jess and smirks.

EM (cont'd)

"Loser buys next round."

She flips the last dart over her shoulder without looking and it hits the center of the board again. BOBBY is gawking, wide eyed, beer at half-tilt. JESS scratches his head and watches her walk away. She sits down next to Bobby and

crosses her legs. JESS starts to take his position and aim at the target. This time, as he lets the dart go, the door slams open and the Scene 1 THUGS enter. His dart goes wide again and he drops his head in frustration. When he looks up, the lead thug, TED, is staring him down from across the room.

JESS
"Aw, piss in a bucket."

TED approaches rapidly.

JESS (cont'd)
"Listen, fellas. I'm sure we can work somethin' out without any--"

TED punches JESS in gut, then grabs the back of his neck when he doubles over. JESS is gasping for air.

JESS (cont'd)
"*wheeze* Or maybe not."

BOBBY stands to help, but JUDD grabs his shoulder and pushes him back into his seat.

JUDD
"Down chubby."

BOBBY fumes. JUDD is being a little too aggressive with EM and the others are laughing.

JESS elbows TED in stomach and twists out of his grasp. He punches him in the ear and turns to glance at the rest of the gang. Bartender is nervous and is eager to avoid any further violence in his bar.

JOE
"Jess, you want me call the police?"

JESS
"It's alright, Joe. These gentlemen were just leavin'"

TED catches his breath, but is still holding his ear. He tackles JESS from behind and they crash into a table.

TED
"I ain't done with you yet, runt!"

TED lands on top of JESS and pins him down. JESS smashes a beer bottle on TED's head and then kicks him in the chest. He jumps to his feet and grabs a pool cue, brandishing it

like a bo staff. TED blindly grabs a broken table leg and swings it at JESS, who ducks out of the way and smacks him in the head with the stick. TED lunges again and JESS dodges, clubbing him behind the knees, buckling them. JESS breaks the stick in two over his own knee and strikes a Bruce Lee pose before boxing the thug's ears with the pieces. TED finally collapses.

JESS

"If you wanted your truck back, you just had to ask nicely."

Seeing their leader defeated, the rest of the gang charges JESS. BOBBY trips one and then stands up. He picks up his chair and swings it around, laying out another thug. EM is still struggling against JUDD who has her by the arm. She punches him in the nose and he keels over in pain. JESS is a flurry of moves as he fends off multiple assailants. It's a full-on barroom brawl that continues whilst bluegrass music plays.

A gunshot rings out and good guys freeze while conscious bad guys scatter. They all look to the front door where a troop of FBI agents stand, SHEFFIELD holding a smoking gun.

JOE

"I didn't call 'em, Jess. I swear!"

JESS

S'okay, Joe. They ain't no police anyhow."

INT JAILHOUSE - MORNING

JESS AND BOBBY IN JAIL CELL.

BOBBY is playing harmonica and JESS is stretched out on cot. Both are bloodied and bruised, torn and tattered. TED is still passed out and lies crumpled in a heap in the next cell. AGENT SHEFFIELD enters the room.

SHEFFIELD

"I suppose I should thank you for taking down Dirty Ted here. We've been after him for months."

JESS

"Aww, no need to thank--"

SHEFFIELD

"I'm not! I ought to leave you in here to rot! You and your tubby mamma's boy!"

BOBBY

"My momma's here?"

SHEFFIELD

"You wish. Your luck isn't that good. In fact, it seems to be quite the opposite."

JESS

"What does that mean?"

SHEFFIELD

"I mean everything you touch seems to turn to shit."

JESS

"Well that's just crass."

SHEFFIELD

"Jimmy Weisner's dead. Killed outside the Chop House after work last night."

JESS hangs his head. BOBBY glances at him and then back at SHEFFIELD. He looks like he's about to cry.

SHEFFIELD

"You're both being charged with impeding an investigation and assisting a prime suspect in evading arrest. If we don't get any new information out of Ted here, we might tack on a few more offenses."

Just then a door opens and PAW PAW LONNIE enters, decked out in military dress uniform and leaning on a cane. JESS sits up and BOBBY's draw drops. AGENT unlocks cell door and holds it open. JESS and BOBBY start to exit. AGENT slaps a ticket on JESS's chest.

SHEFFIELD

(to LONNIE)

"Make sure they don't miss their court date, Captain."

PPL

"Don't you worry none about that."

EXT JAILHOUSE

Three men walk away from jailhouse and enter the repo lot.
Rain has slowed to a drizzle.

EXT REPO LOT

JESS

"Joe call you?"

PPL

"Yep. Good thing I knew Sheffield's
daddy in the war. Otherwise I d'
have let y'all sit in there 'til
next Christmas."

JESS

"No you wouldn't."

PPL

"Well, 'til tomorrow mornin'
anyhow. What were you thinking'?
Pickin' bar fights? Of all the dumb
ideas..."

BOBBY

"Wasn't us, Paw Paw. Those thugs
came in ready to kill Jess!"

PPL

"Hush up, Bovine. Yer' pappy's
madder 'n hell. You best hole up at
our place 'til he cools off."

BOBBY

(hanging head)

"Yessir."

PPL

(to Jess)

"As fer you, you best stay out the
way of them government boys.
They're fit to be tied."

JESS

I can handle the feds, Paw Paw..."

PPL

I'm serious. I best not be getting'
anymore calls in the middle of the
night sayin' 'Jess is in the pokey
again.'"

JESS prepares to argue, then stops when he realizes what PPL is saying.

JESS.
"You won't, sir."

RICK pulls up in their old pickup and tosses JESS the keys. JESS sighs. It's in worse shape than before.

INT AND EXT TRAILER AND HQ

All of the bad news and new obstacles weigh heavily on the heroes and this strains their relationship further. The mood is reflected in the relentless rain.

Sequence of Jess, Paw Paw Lonnie and Bobby waiting out the weather. Days go by. They play checkers/cards, do puzzles, work on inventions, watch TV, take Lonnie to church and VFW, work on the truck etc.

EXT ABANDONED METH OPERATIONS CAMP - DAY

Red Mullet even attempts to go on patrol a few times while Cow-Boy sits in the truck. He explores Ott's abandoned camp, frustrated that the trail has gone cold.

EXT DRUGSTORE - DAY

One day, JESS drives into town and notices the FBI loading up their equipment and personnel, obviously breaking camp from the local sheriff's office. He regards them with curiosity and a sense of relief mixed with annoyance.

JESS enters drugstore.

INT DRUGSTORE

TOM
"Heya, Jess."

JESS
"Tom."

JESS proceeds to grab a drink from the cooler and an armful of snacks. He approaches the counter.

JESS (cont'd)
"Looks like the government's done had enough of our little village."

TOM

"Suppose so. Guess they found what they was lookin' for."

JESS

"Oh yeah? I didn't hear nothin'."

TOM

"Well, they picked up that Dirty Ted Dubois character and broke up his dog fightin' ring."

JESS

Humph. Yeah, I did hear that part."

TOM

"Suppose they gotta move on sometime. Got to keep up with them bad guys!"

JESS

"Yeah."

(thoughtful)

"Later, Tom."

EXT DRUGSTORE - DAY

JESS walks back outside and stands under the shelter out of the rain. He sips his drink and looks across at the FBI crew. The AGENT looks up and sees him. They make eye contact.

JESS

(mumbles to himself)

"Gotta move on."

JESS jumps in his truck and speeds off. The AGENT watches him go.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

Truck slides through mud up to PAW PAW LONNIE's trailer. JESS hops out and runs inside.

INT. TRAILER

JESS is rummaging through the maps again.

BOBBY

"Hey, man. Where's the snacks?"

JESS ignores him and continues to search furiously.

BOBBY (cont'd)

"Hey! Dude, where's the food? Did you already eat it all?"

JESS

"Here!"

JESS pulls out a map and spreads it on the table, knocking off stuff BOBBY was working on.

BOBBY

"Where? I didn't see you bring it inside. HEY! What the...? I was working on that!"

JESS

Look! They're mobile. That's why the feds say they haven't been able to pinpoint 'em."

BOBBY

"Yeah, we knew that. Tire tracks and whatnot."

JESS

"Right. But what if the feds don't want to find the camp? What if they just want Ott?"

BOBBY

"Wouldn't the camp be the best place to find him?"

JESS

"Yes. If they were equipped to take on the small army he's got."

BOBBY

"You think they're not?"

JESS

"No I don't. I think they're bluffing. I think they're afraid of him."

BOBBY

"Well I for one don't blame them. But still, why wouldn't they have

(MORE)

BOBBY (cont'd)
the fire power to take his
operation down.

JESS
" 'Cause they're not feds."

BOBBY
"Are you sure? Didn't that Agent
Sheffield flash his badge at us?"

JESS
"No, he did not."

BOBBY
"Then who are they? They seem
pretty well organized."

JESS
"Dunno. But I think we should find
out. Time to suit up."

BOBBY rolls his eyes, but slowly follows JESS out to the
barn anyway.

INT BARN

They suit up and hop in the truck. RM turns the key and the
engine sputters. He tries again to no avail. COW-BOY climbs
out in a huff.

Repeat similar sequence from earlier. Working on truck,
playing board games, watching TV etc. Jess is increasingly
irritable. Bobby is quietly satisfied and fills out forms
for community college.

EXT ROAD TO TOWN - DAY

JESS has to hike into town to look for a repair part. He is
strolling down the side of the road in the rain, carrying
the broken part wrapped in some oil-stained rags when ELLIE
MAE pulls up in her father's utility truck and rolls down
the window.

EM
"Need a lift?"

INT UTILITY TRUCK

JESS sits in the passenger seat with his seatbelt on, cradling the broken part. EM rattles on, trying to make conversation. JESS smiles politely.

EM

"I was real sorry they hauled you boys in the other night. I tried to tell them agents that you was just fightin' in self-defense, but it seems they were already gunnin' for you. I couldn't believe it when you K.O.d that Ted fella. Not that he didn't have it comin'. Throwin' them poor puppies in a ring and makin' 'em fight like that. What kind of human being does that sort of thing?"

JESS

"Hrmp. There's worse than him out there, believe you me."

FLASHBACK - EXT WAR-TORN VILLAGE IN MIDDLE EASTERN SETTING
- DAY

JESS (19-25) is serving military duty in the Middle East.

Explosions going off and gunfire all around. Soldiers and civilians are running around and screaming. Dead bodies are scattered about the rubble. Chaos. JESS in full combat gear tries to guard several families and escort them to safety.

They eventually arrive at a transport and he ushers everyone on. He is about to board too when he sees another vehicle approaching at high velocity. Behind the wheel is a wild eyed man with beard and turban, and he is surrounded by high explosives.

JESS fires his weapon at the car bomb to no avail. He is shouting for people to get off the bus, but it is too late. He leaps out of the way just as the terrorist slams into the bus and detonates.

PRESENT DAY - INT UTILITY TRUCK

JESS

"I've run in to a lot of bad people in my short time on this here earth. Bad people do bad things. Simple as that."

EM

"That what happened to your leg?
Someone do that to you?"

JESS

"I'd rather not talk about it."

EM

"What about them bears? Ya' know, daddy says there ain't been any bears sighted in these parts for years. Wolves neither. Maybe a coyote from time to time, or the occasional cougar, not including Ms. Lancaster. What do you think is causin' all the sudden attacks lately?"

JESS

"Dunno. Thought maybe it was the drought. Haven't heard of any more problems since the rain started."

EM

"That's true. It's been almost a month now since the last one. Daddy says it was the full moon. Says wild animals always do crazy things by the light of the full moon."

JESS

"That may be, but it don't explain why them meth heads was wanderin' around in the woods in the middle of the night."

EM

"Maybe they was watchin' the dog fights and got lost."

JESS

"Naw. There weren't no... wait. Did all them attacks happen on a full moon?"

EM

"Believe so. Once a month for the last three months."

JESS

"Pull into the sheriff's station here."

EM

"You sure? Didn't you just get out of there?"

JESS

Yeah. But Dirty Ted didn't."

EXT UTILITY TRUCK - DAY

Ellie Mae pulls the truck into the parking lot at the sheriff's station. Jess hops out and hurries inside.

INT SHERRIFF'S STATION

HANK is sitting at the front desk and looks up.

HANK

"Hey, Jess. Back so soon?"

JESS

"I gotta talk to Ted."

HANK

"You gonna kiss and make up?"

JESS

"Naw. I already did that with your momma last night."

HANK

"Ha! You met my momma? She'd mess you up worse than Ted there."

HANK stands and fumbles with his keys as he leads JESS down the hall to the jail cells.

INT JAILHOUSE

TED is sitting in his cell, bruised, swollen, but awake and brooding. He sees JESS and growls.

TED

"Wadda you want, runt?"

JESS

"When did you run the dogfights? What nights?"

TED
 "I ain't tellin' you nothin'."

JESS
 "Spit it out, Ted! Who calls the shots? You or Ott? Why were the fights during the full moon?"

At the mention of OTT's name, TED flinches. JESS grins.

JESS (cont'd)
 "When he finds out you squealed on him, you gonna wish you was back in that bar with me."

TED
 "He can't find out! I ain't said nothin'! Don't tell him I squealed!"

JESS
 "Make it easy on yourself, you rotten sack of rat turds. Fess up and maybe they'll put you in protective custody."

TED
 "You can't protect me. I'm as good as dead. Come next full moon, we're all dead."

JESS gets concerned and presses for more info, but TED turns to the wall and balls up into a fetal position.

JESS
 "What does that mean? What do you know? Dangit, Ted! Talk!"

HANK
 "I don't think he's gonna... Jess?"

JESS turns and sprints out of the station.

EXT. REPO LOT. - DAY

JESS is peeling out in TED's tricked-out 4x4 and RICK peeks out the door of his office with disinterested look on his face.

ELLIE MAE watches from the Sheriff's Station parking lot as JESS zooms down the street.

EXT. TRAILER HOME - DAY

JESS rumbles past in the truck and pulls straight in to the barn/HQ, skidding to a halt.

INT. TRAILER

BOBBY looks up from where he is working and peers out the window.

BOBBY
Not again..."

INT. HQ BARN LOFT

JESS is frantically sorting through trunks and boxes of equipment and makeshift weapons. BOBBY enters and watches for a few beats before making inquiries.

BOBBY
"Spring cleaning?"

JESS
"The dogs! I think they're tossin' the junkies to the dogs."

BOBBY
"What? Did you get the coroner's report or somethin'?"

JESS
Right. Like CSI is gonna just hand me that kind of info. No! The dog fights were happening on the same nights those people were attacked, right? They must be doin' somethin' to the dogs during the full moon."

BOBBY
"Slow down, Jess. You're not making any sense."

JESS
"That's just it! Something real whackadillo is going on. This guy is bad news."

BOBBY
"You didn't pick up on that when the FBI said they was after him?"

JESS

"IF that's who they are. I knew they wasn't tellin' us everything."

BOBBY

"But we're still not any closer to knowing where they might be camped. Same as before."

Both are so distracted that they don't hear ELLIE MAE enter behind them. She has a bloodhound, GENERAL SWEEDUMS, on a leash.

EM

"I might be able to help you boys with that."

Both men are startled. They look at her, then at each other. Then at all the superhero paraphernalia strewn about their secret headquarters. They are dumbstruck.

EM (cont'd)

"Oh, c'mon. It ain't like there are that many guys runnin' around with red mullets hanging out for all the world to see."

INT. HQ

Trio + dog is sitting around a table. JESS is emphatically trying to get EM to go home. BOBBY is being shy but petting the dog.

JESS

"Out of the question. It's too dangerous."

EM

"You think I can't handle myself, jus' 'cause I'm a woman? What kind of pig-headed, chauvinistic, John Wick operation is this anyhow?"

JESS

"It ain't like that. These guys are hardened criminals. They won't hesitate to kill you, or worse. 'Sides, I was lookin' out for the General here too."

EM

"I still say the best way to find a dog is with a dog. You ain't gonna find a better tracker than Sweedums."

(to dog)

"Ain't that right precious?"

BOBBY

"She might have a point, Jess."

JESS

Ah. That so, Dr. Watson?"

BOBBY

"Jus' sayin'."

EM

Thank you, Bobby."

BOBBY

"'Sides, we can go during the day, find the whereabouts from a ways off, and head back before anyone spots us."

JESS

"I still don't like it. What if the General goes with us while Ellie Mae stays in the truck?"

GEN. SWEEDUMS

"*Growlllll*"

JESS

"Ok, ok. Don't get your fur in a bunch. But if she gets hurt, it's on you."

EM

"Yea haw! Do I get a uniform?"

JESS

"No! No uniforms. Plainclothes civilians. That way, if anyone stops us, we can just say we was out huntin' squirrels or something'."

EM

"Aww. I wanted a uniform."

JESS

"Reckon we need a scent for him to track."

BOBBY

"Well, we got their truck."

EXT WOODED AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF JESS, BOBBY, ELLIE MAE, AND GENERAL SWEEDUMS WALKING THROUGH WOODS DRESSED IN HUNTING ATTIRE, COMPLETE WITH CAMO AND ORANGE VESTS.

JESS carries a rifle, BOBBY carries an empty sack, and EM leads GEN. SWEEDUMS on a long leash as he sniffs the ground.

CLOSE ON GEN. SWEEDUMS SNIFFING.

PAN UP TO EM WHO IS DELIGHTED TO BE INVOLVED. PAN TO JESS WHO IS ALERT AND ATTENTIVE. PAN TO BOBBY WHO IS NERVOUS AND FIDGETY.

Suddenly, GEN. SWEEDUMS catches a scent. He perks up and bays loudly. BOBBY cringes.

BOBBY

"Does he have to do that?"

JESS

"You havin' second thoughts, Bobby?"

BOBBY

"No. I just don't see why he needs to announce our location to every living thing around."

EM

"Here we go boys!"

The crew sets off at a quick pace. EM and GS put some distance between themselves and JESS while BOBBY struggles to keep up with even him.

BOBBY

"Knew we shoulda' brought the four-wheeler."

JESS

"You alright back there, Bobby?"

BOBBY
 "Right behind you."

BOBBY does his best to jog behind, but it isn't long before the others are out of sight. He hears GS baying in the distance.

BOBBY (cont'd)
 "Stupid mutt's gonna give us away."

He looks around, considering his options, then finally plops down on a fallen log. He reaches in his pocket, pulls out a snack and begins to unwrap it.

BOBBY (cont'd)
 "Always be prepared."

He is munching away happily on his snack when he hears a noise, like a twig snapping. He is startled at first, glancing around, then relaxes. Another snap. Small flock of birds is disturbed and takes flight. He looks around again.

BOBBY (cont'd)
 "Jess? That you?" Silence.

BOBBY (cont'd)
 "Ellie Mae?
 (pause) Sweedums?
 (pause)
 C'mon you guys. Quit foolin'
 around."

More rustling in leaves. Sudden movement. Bobby whirls around, a frightened look on his face.

BOBBY
 "JESS!!"

EXT WOODED AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

CLOSE SHOT OF JESS FROM BEHIND WITH EM AND GS IN DISTANT BACKGROUND. HE HEARS THE CALL AND SPINS AROUND.

JESS
 "Bobby! He's in trouble. Dangit!
 (to EM)
 You stay put!"

JESS turns and runs back the way he came. EM watches him go with concern. Jess running through woods at top speed.

JESS (cont'd)
 "Hang on, Bobby! I'm comin'!
 I'm..."

He skids to a halt.

JESS (cont'd)
 "You gotta be kiddin' me."

BOBBY IS SURROUNDED BY ARMED DEA AGENTS.

BOBBY
 "Sorry, Jess."

JESS
 (ignoring Bobby; to agents)
 "Your cousins up and left without
 sayin' 'good bye'. Guess there
 wasn't enough room in this town for
 the both of you"

SHEFFIELD
 (obviously the same as LEAD
 FBI AGENT but no moustache;
 wearing cap)
 "Cut the cutsie crap, redneck. What
 are you doing out here?"

JESS
 "Huntin' squirrels. What does it
 look like?"

SHEFFIELD
 "I don't have time for your
 hillbilly antics, freak. Your
 grandpa won't save you from where
 I'm going to send you. Answer the
 question."

JESS
 "You know what? If I didn't think
 you were so full of horse manure, I
 might just have to kick your..."

They all hear ELLIE MAE scream in the distance and GEN.
 SWEEDUMS barks furiously. The sound of more than one four
 wheeler driving away can be heard. JESS takes off. AGENT
 SHEFFIELD yells after him.

SHEFFIELD
 "Hey! HEY!! What the...! After
 him!"

Other agents follow JESS. AGENT SHEFFIELD grabs BOBBY by the arm and stomps after the rest.

EXT WOODED AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

JESS, with agents close behind, rushes to the spot where he left EM and GS, but they are nowhere to be found. He frantically searches the ground for their tracks. Soon he spots boot prints leading to four-wheeler tracks that go off to one side. He follows them and agents follow him. It's not long before he becomes winded, but he continues to hustle. The agents overtake him and rush ahead.

JESS is frustrated, then he hears the sound of an approaching vehicle. He cocks the rifle and aims at a black SUV that closes on him. It slows to a stop and the passenger window rolls down. BOBBY peaks out and waves. AGENT SHEFFIELD is in driver's seat, scowling.

BOBBY

"You comin'?"

JESS lowers rifle and climbs in rear passenger door. They rumble off.

EXT WOODED AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

Soon they catch up to the other agents who are standing in a circle. The SUV stops and passengers jump out. As they approach, the agents make room and we see a four-wheeler parked and idle. Next to it kneels a non-descript thug in hand-cuffs. Jess is furious and starts to attack the thug.

JESS

"Where is she?! What'd you do with her?!"

Agent grabs his arm. Another agent speaks up.

AGENT 2

"He was a decoy. He won't tell us where they took the girl."

JESS

"He'll tell me! Lemme at him!"

BOBBY

"Easy, Jess. We'll find her."

SHEFFIELD

"No you will not. You will go home
and let us do our job."

JESS

"You gonna stop me?"

SHEFFIELD

"If I have to."

JESS

I'd sure like to see you try."

BOBBY

"Jess..."

Another agent clubs Jess in the back of the head with the butt of his gun. Jess crumples to the ground.

BOBBY (cont'd)

"... watch out."

FLASHBACK - EXT BUS STOP - DAY

JESS IN HIS MILITARY FATIGUES WITH DUFFEL BAG PREPARING TO LEAVE.

He is saying sad good-byes to PPL and Bobby, then he boards a bus. ELLIE MAE watches from a distance with tears in her eyes.

FLASHFORWARD TO MIDDLE EAST CAR BOMB SCENE - DAY

Jess is lying on his back covered in blood and rubble. The transport bus is a smoldering black frame. He tries to move and immediately cries out in pain. Zoom out to see his leg is missing below the knee. Military medics rush in to attend to him.

FLASHFORWARD TO INT TRAILER.

JESS IS LYING IN BED STARING AT THE CEILING.

BOBBY sits silently by his side. PPL walks in and scolds JESS, but the wounded soldier just turns over and closes his eyes. Bobby looks on with pity. Then he gets an idea.

INT BARN

Bobby is scrounging through the barn, looking for scrap pieces and hardware.

EXT TRAILER - DAY

He carries a plethora of materials to the picnic table and drops them in front of PPL, who looks up at him inquiringly. BOBBY shows him a drawing of a prosthetic leg. PPL squints at it.

INT AND EXT TRAILER - DAY

Next scenes show Bobby and PPL coaxing Jess out of bed and onto his new leg. They work with him extensively, going through physical therapy and eventually combat training.

PRESENT DAY - INT HQ - DUSK

Jess awakens. He sits up and groans, rubbing his head.

JESS

"Son of a badger's papoose..."

BOBBY

"You alright?"

JESS

No. No I ain't. Every time we get close, somethin' goes wrong. What am I even doin'? Who am I foolin'? That Sheffield is right. I ruin everything I touch. Trying to convince myself that I'm some kind of superhero. What a joke. I can't even keep my friends safe. In fact, I just put them in harm's way. What kind of hero does that?

(pause)

That's it. I'm done. Done with this foolishness. It's time to grow up. Time to get a real job and take care of Paw Paw. Maybe I'll even settle down, raise a family. That's what normal people do. I'm still young. I got my whole life ahead of me, right? Why am I wasting it on some boyhood fantasy? I can't believe I ever dragged you into this, Bobby. I..."

BOBBY

"Now you shut up! I've heard just about enough. Stop talkin' nonsense! I'm a grown-ass man and I make my own grown-ass decisions. You didn't drag me into nothin'. I'm with you 'cause you got somethin' special, Jess. You got a passion for justice that's contagious. You see things in black and white, and that's a gift. Them agents with their guns and technology and rules and red tape, they gotta wade through a sea of grey-toned jurisdiction, and if things work out after who-knows-how-long, then maybe they get to be heroes for a minute or two. But you, you get to live in the moment and follow your heart. So yeah, maybe one day you get to lay back and relax; fade into a mediocre existence, or be lucky enough to start another adventure with wife and kids, but this is not that day. This is a day for action; for justice. Today belongs to The Red Mullet."

Silent pause. Moment is tense. Mood is abruptly interrupted by slow applause from PAW PAW LONNIE who stands in the doorway.

PPL

"Mighty fine speech, Bovine. You ought to make a fine politician one day."

BOBBY

"Thank -"

PPL

(ignoring Bobby; to Jess)
 "As for you, stop feelin' sorry for yerself. Suit up and get back out there. Time's a wastin'."

JESS

(hesitates)
 "But what about..."

PPL

"GIT!"

(Jess and Bobby spring into
action)

"'Sides. Who gonna marry you
anyway, 'cept'in you rescue that
pig farmer's girl? Go on!"

EXT WOODED AREA - NIGHTFALL

BACK AT THE CLEARING WHERE ELLIE MAE DISAPPEARED.

RM and CB search the ground again, this time with
flashlights.

RM

"There's other boot prints here,
but they don't seem to lead
anywhere. And no other
four-wheelers, or dirt bikes
either."

CB

"You thinkin' tunnels maybe?"

RM

"Could be. But that's a lot of dirt
to move. So if they didn't go
underground, they had to go..."
(shines flashlight up into
trees)
... up."

Light glints off of barely distinguishable cable stretching
between thick foliage of trees. RM begins to inspect trees
until he finds one that allows for decent climbing.

He ascends to find the cable attached to the tree and
notices a distinct path through the canopy of branches. He
calls down to CB.

RM (cont'd)

"Some kind of zip line I think.
Sure wish we had the trolley..."

CB

"Catch."

CB tosses a makeshift trolley up to RM who catches it and
inspects it with admiration.

EXT WOODED AREA IN THE TREETOPS - NIGHT

RM and CB zip through the trees by the light of the moon.

EVENTUALLY THEY ARRIVE AT THE END OF THE LINE. NOT FAR AWAY THEY SEE THE METH FACTORY/DOG FIGHTING ARENA, SIMILAR TO BEFORE. IT IS A GROUP OF TRAILERS, RVS, TENTS, AND CANOPIES WITH TRUCKS, FOUR-WHEELERS, AND DIRT BIKES PARKED AROUND. DOGS BARKING, MEN LAUGHING, MUSIC PLAYING, BONFIRES BURNING.

EXT WOODED AREA - OTT'S METH OPERATION CAMP - NIGHT

RM and CB climb down the tree and creep forward, staying out of the light. Overhear two thugs drinking and talking.

THUG 1

"Man, I'm telling you. Tonight's gonna be gruesome."

THUG 2

"Yeah? You got the stomach for it?"

THUG 1

"Me? You're the one who puked everywhere last time..."

Another group of thugs is placing bets and arguing loudly.

THUG 3

"Get out of here! You ain't paid your debt from last time!"

THUG 4

"I know, Eddie. Just front me this once.

EDDIE

"Forget it! Beat it, you leach!"

THUG 4

"C'mon, Johnny. I promise I'll pay it back this time."

THUG 5

"Somebody shut him up."

THUG 4

"Get yer hands offa me! I mean it! Just two G's on the wolf."

RM and CB look at each other. RM mouths the word "wolf" with a confused expression.

EDDIE

"I might as well pay myself. Take your lousy luck to Chuck E. Cheese."

Thugs laugh and continue to argue. RM spots a trailer with an armed guard, JUDD. He motions for CB to follow.

EXT TRAILER - NIGHT

They sneak up to the back of the trailer and peak in the window.

INT TRAILER

ELLIE MAE IS SITTING ON A COT WITH HER HANDS TIED BEHIND HER BACK. HER EYE IS BLACK AND BLUE AND HER LIP IS SPLIT, BUT OTHERWISE SHE APPEARS UNHARMED. GEN. SWEEDUMS HAS HIS HEAD IN HER LAP. HIS BREATHING IS SHALLOW AND LABORED.

RM taps on the window. EM looks up and smiles. RM winks and ducks out of site.

EXT TRAILER - NIGHT

Meanwhile, CB is crawling under the trailer toward the guard. He has a makeshift taser in one hand.

When he gets close enough, he tags JUDD on the leg, which causes the man to convulse and fall to the ground. CB takes the JUDD's keys out of his pocket and crawls back to RM.

RM is already helping EM out the window, but she is protesting. CB jingles keys with an annoyed look.

EM

"No! Not without Stonewall!"

RM

"Tarnation, woman. I said we'd come back for him."

EM

"He's hurt. He needs help."

RM

"Well it ain't gonna help his condition to pull him through the window."

CB
 "I can go around the front."

RM
 "Nuh-uh. You'll be spotted."

Just then, they hear a voice from far off.

THUG 6
 (off screen)
 "Hey! Judd! You sleepin' on the job
 again? Judd?"

RM
 "Too late now. C'mon."

EM
 (still halfway through window)
 "I ain't leavin' without my dog."

CB
 "Take this."
 (hands her the taser)

INT TRAILER

EM slides back through window and hides taser behind her back.

EXT TRAILER - NIGHT

THUG 6, EARL (20-40), is prodding JUDD.

EARL
 "Huh. Drunk. Vomited all over
 hisself too. Lousy bum."
 (he knocks on the door of the
 trailer)
 "You alright in there,
 sweet-cheeks?"

EM
 (through door)
 "I'd be better if'n I had a big
 strong man in here with me."

EARL
 (excited)
 "Say no more."
 (opens door and enters,
 closing door)
 (MORE)

EARL (cont'd)
 "What the..."

WE HEAR A COMMOTION AND TASER NOISE ACCOMPANIED BY A FLASH OF LIGHT THROUGH WINDOWS.

A moment later and EM peeks out wearing EARL's hat and jacket. She struggles to carry GEN. SWEEDUMS out the door, but manages to do so just as a shopping cart rattles up to her. She glances over to see RM and CB giving her the "thumbs up" from the shadows. She places the dog in the cart and proceeds to cover him with a tarp/rags. Another thug, VERN (20-40), approaches from behind and she freezes.

VERN
 "What are you doin', Earl?"

EM
 (clears throat and tries to
 disguise her voice)
 "Ott wanted me to get rid of this
 dead dog before it's starts
 smellin' up the place."

VERN
 "Ha! You got dead dog duty. You
 musta' got on his good side!"
 (glancing over at trailer and
 noticing JUDD on ground)
 "Judd passed out again?"

EM
 "Yep. Lousy bum."

VERN
 "That sweet piece of tail still in
 there by herself?"

EM
 (clears throat again)
 "Reckon so."

VERN
 "Think I might go have a taste."

EM
 "She's all yours."

VERN walks over to trailer, kicks Judd, then opens door and steps inside. Immediately notices EM missing.

VERN
"Hey! Where'd she go?!"

EM starts running, pushing the cart over the bumpy terrain and heading for the woods. RM and CB meet her there, grab the dog, and hurry into the thick underbrush. Angry voices come from the camp as the thugs gather a search party.

EXT WOODED AREA NEAR METH OPERATIONS CAMP - NIGHT

The heroes can see from where they hide that OTT has emerged and is assessing the situation.

EXT METH OPERATIONS CAMP - NIGHT

He picks JUDD off the ground and roughs him up in an attempt to wake him.

VERN pulls EARL from the trailer and tosses his limp body in front of OTT. OTT rears back to strike him, but stops mid swing. He has noticed something. He sniffs like he has caught a scent on the breeze. He looks around and stops in the general direction of the heroes. He motions for the thugs to spread out and find them.

EXT WOODED AREA NEAR METH OPERATIONS CAMP - NIGHT

The heroes are not sure what to do. They look at each other.

CB sets his jaw and takes off running, but not away from the camp. Instead he runs around the perimeter, purposefully causing a distraction.

RM waits for a beat while the thugs take the bait, then hefts GEN. SWEEDUMS over his shoulders and sets off into the woods with EM close behind but looking back with worry.

EXT METH OPERATIONS CAMP - NIGHT

CB is huffing and puffing and making cow noises while he hurries to draw the enemy's attention. The thugs are quickly closing in. CB jumps on a four-wheeler and fumbles with the keys he lifted from JUDD. He tries a couple before finding one that actually works. He laughs with relief and guns it just as the thugs are within striking distance. A few fall over themselves trying to reach him. Others jump on other ATVs and the chase is on.

CB is a skilled rider and he plows through the camp causing mayhem and some destruction. His pursuers are just as destructive and they hoop and holler in their rage. CB spots OTT and makes a beeline for him. OTT notices him approaching and stares him down. He casually picks up a 2x4 and as CB is about to run him over, he sidesteps and clubs CB in the chest, knocking him off the vehicle. CB is on the ground. His armor has protected him, but he is struggling to catch his breath. OTT looms over him and other thugs circle around. Dogs on leashes are barking and thugs chuckle while brandishing weapons.

OTT

"Well, boys. Looks like we're having beef for dinner tonight."

Thugs laugh and OTT pulls out a large hunting knife. He kneels down and holds it under CB's chin.

OTT (cont'd)

"Who wants a nice juicy steak?"

RM

(from off screen)

"Hands off, Jim Bowie. The cow's with me."

OTT

"I's hopin' you'd show up. I reckon we started somethin' we never got to finish."

(he sheathes his knife)

RM

"Then let's dance, partner."

OTT

"Ohhoho. You boys are in for a real treat tonight."

Ott stands up and the two men begin to circle each other.

RM

"Yeah? Why's that? You makin' ice cream in them trucks?"

OTT

"Nuh uh. It's a surprise."

RM

"I don't much like surprises."

OTT

"Well ain't that just too bad.
'Cause I got a doozy."

RM

"Why don't you just shut-up and
fight."

OTT

"Whenever you and your
party-in-the-back are ready."

RM

"Business first. Since you wanna
have the last word, why don't you
use it to call off your goons?"

OTT

"Alright."
(to thugs)
"You heard the ginger-head man.
Back up!"

RM

"I prefer 'The Ginger Avenger'."

OTT

"People really call you that?"

RM

"No. Just me."

OTT

"Cute."

Thugs open wide the circle and two of them hold CB by the arms. Ott takes off his shirt and RM drops his cape. They square off. RM strikes a martial arts-esque pose and OTT a traditional boxing pose. They close in, and then Ott takes the first swing. RM ducks and lands a punch in his ribs. OTT is surprised, but shows no pain. He rethinks his strategy and throws a couple quick jabs. He taunts RM.

OTT (cont'd)

"I done heard about you boys on the
news. Thought it was some kind of
publicity stunt."

RM

"I do all my stunts for free."

RM blocks OTT's punches and manages to land a side kick to his thigh. This doesn't seem to phase OTT either and RM is starting to get a little worried.

OTT

"Is that right? I been hopin' to see what you are made of..."

(pulls out knife again)

"... on the inside."

RM

(taking out a roll of duct tape)

"That's kinda' creepy."

He unrolls a length of tape and wraps part of it around one hand, stretching the material between his fists.

OTT

"Ha! What're you gonna do with that? Tie me up 'til the cops get here?"

He lunges with the knife and takes a swipe.

RM

"Somethin' like that."

He dodges the blade and deftly loops the tape around OTT's wrist. He then twists under OTT's arm, slipping around behind him and pulling the arm with. Continuing his maneuver, he wraps the tape around OTT's torso, flips over his head and slides between his legs from back to front.

OTT is now in a bowing position with his arm and the knife pinned behind his back. He is furious and swings at RM with his free arm. RM blocks again, grabs that wrist and head-butts his opponent. CB lets out a "whoop!" while the rest of the crowd audibly cringes. RM is momentarily stunned by the solidity of OTT's head. OTT snorts and spits.

OTT

"You made me bleed my own blood. Good fer you. Lemme return the favor."

OTT rips off the duct tape and stomps over to where RM is trying to clear his vision. He lands a heavy boot kick to the hero's neck/shoulder. RM tumbles away into the dirt. OTT follows and kicks him hard in the ribs. RM goes airborne and then hits and rolls again. He tries to get to his feet, but before he can, OTT reaches down and grabs his mullet, yanking his head back. OTT rears back to punch him in the face.

OTT (cont'd)
"You call yourself a hero, boy? You ain't even a sidekick."

CB
(from offscreen)
"No! That'd be me!"

OTT spins around. CB is only a few paces away. On the ground lay two of the thugs and standing over them is EM, brandishing the taser and holding the other thugs at bay.

CB (cont'd)
"And you never take your eyes off the sidekick!"

CB activates a weapon on his Power Udder and it shoots a white compound directly into OTT's face. OTT is stunned and annoyed, then livid and in pain as the compound does not come off and begins to burn his eyes.

OTT
"You little turd! I'm gonna flay you!"

He charges blindly at CB who easily drops and does a leg-sweep, propelling him into his gang of thugs. OTT begins screaming.

OTT (cont'd)
"Get him! Get them both! Get all of them! Get this stuff offa me!"

Brawl ensues. Some thugs pull guns but hesitate shooting near their own people. EM tags a few more with the dying taser before using some impressive fighting moves to defend herself. CB utilizes his Power Udder to incapacitate more thugs and he shows some effective fighting styles as well. RM is on his feet and contributing mightily to the fight. Ott continues to flail and scream on the ground, injuring any thugs who try to help him.

RM
(to CB)
"What IS that stuff?"

CB
"Quick-drying epoxy with some pepper spray mixed in. Very effective."

RM

"Remind me never to make fun of that thing again."

CB

"Respect the udder."

EM

"Boys! A little help here!"

EM is being overpowered by three thugs. RM runs over to help, but his path is suddenly blocked by more thugs who tackle him.

OTT

(from off screen)

"No! He's mine!"

THUG 8

"You sure boss?"

OTT

(breathing hard)

"Leave him! It's time!"

Thugs seem to know what this means. They back off and some run for cover. Dogs whine, cower and hide. Ott is picking himself up. He is mostly in shadow, but there appears to be some sort of painful transformation occurring.

He begins to emerge from the shadows. He is larger and bulkier than before. Grey fur sprouts all over his body and his arms are elongated. Gruesome popping and tearing sounds accompany his movements along with a guttural growl.

Finally he lurches out, hunched over but still hulking, gnashing his long yellow fangs; a werewolf.

OTT (cont'd)

"How you like me now, freak?"

RM's eyes are wide, his mouth hangs open. Shot of CB and EM, now standing together, with similar expressions. OTT slowly steps toward RM, snarling. RM regains his composure and weakly smiles.

RM

"Well ain't you the ugliest mutt that ever pissed a minute?"

OTT

"I'll be pissin' yer blood come morning."

RM

"You're just nasty, you know that?"

OTT

"I can't wait to pick my teeth with yer bones, boy."

RM

"Yeah? Well you obviously don't brush 'em."

OTT

"C'M'ERE!"

OTT leaps at RM with terrific speed. RM just has time to move out of the way before Ott's outstretched claws rip through his cape. RM discards the torn cape, then turns and prepares for another attack. Ott is on all fours and spins abruptly to leap again. This time, when the wolf lands, RM springs into the air and onto OTT's back, wrapping his arms around his neck and trying to choke him while holding on for dear life. OTT tries to shake him off, then reaches back, grabs RM, and flings him several yards.

RM crashes into some debris, but recovers and picks up a big stick. He meets OTT's next attack with several blows to the face and forelegs in quick succession, but OTT snatches the stick and splinters it in his teeth. RM jumps and lands a kick square in OTT's nose. The creature pulls back and snorts, then snaps at him with his enormous jaws. RM swings around with a round-house kick right to the clenched snout, cracking a few teeth. OTT wags his head and snaps again, this time catching RM around the ankle. He yanks him into the air and tosses him around like a rag doll a few times before chucking him into some barrels.

CB

"MULLET!"

The shout diverts OTT's attention and he turns on CB and EM. He is snarling and approaching on all fours. CB is trying to shield EM with one hand and activate the Power Udder with the other hand. The Udder seems to be empty, so CB reaches into his utility belt to grab another weapon. He pulls out some smoke pellets and goes to throw them on the ground, but OTT swats them away and they explode into a cloud several yards away. He rears up onto his hind legs and his jaws drip saliva and blood onto CB's steel-toed cloven-hoofed boots. CB looks down and then up. He draws back his leg and throws a swift kick toward Ott's crotch, but it never lands. OTT swats that away with one paw and pins CB to the ground with the other. He grins at EM with his claws digging into CB's chest. CB whimpers and OTT chuckles, licking his chops.

OTT

"No one to save you now, rump
roast."

Just then, GEN. SWEEDUMS explodes out of the woods and leaps onto OTT's back, sinking his teeth into his neck. OTT shrieks and arches his back in pain and surprise, and tries to claw at the bloodhound. He rolls in the dirt and the two animals struggle for a moment, jaws snapping and claws scratching.

Alas, the werewolf is too powerful and he bats the limp form of the heroic dog away. OTT is wounded and bleeding heavily now. One ear is torn and bits of flesh and fur are missing. Still, he returns to the horrified CB and EM with deadly intent. RM stirs and a barrel rolls away, drawing everyone's attention. He stands up but favors his prosthetic leg, now cracked and broken.

OTT (cont'd)

"Still kickin', huh?"

RM

(spits)

"That the best you got, furball?"

OTT

"Ha! That stupid dog put up more of
a fight than you!"

RM

"Well he smells better than you."

OTT

"You know what? I think I'm gonna
let you live. Just long enough to
watch me eat the gizzards out of
your friends here."

RM

"Seriously, you gotta stop with the
yuckity-yuck. Yer grossin' me out."

OTT

"I'm just gettin' started."

BOOM. Suddenly a bright light floods the scene.

RM

"Aww, not again!"

OTT springs into the illuminated air and RM hurls a wooden stake directly at his heart. Both wolf and projectile freeze

in mid-air, inches apart. Wind swirls violently. OTT is perplexed and can't seem to move. RM stares up in amazement. CB and EM are equally astounded. Buzzing/whirring noise echoes around and OTT is drawn up further into the source of the light until he disappears. RM is shielding his eyes and straining to see what is overhead, but the sound gets louder, the wind gets stronger, and then everything abruptly ends and all is dark and still, including the floodlights from the camp have blinked out. The stake falls to the ground and lights flicker back on.

RM (cont'd)

"Hmph. Glad Paw Paw Lonnie missed that. I'd never hear the end of it."

SHEFFIELD

(over loudspeaker offscreen)

"This is the CIA. You are completely surrounded. Throw down your weapons and put your hands in the air."

RM

"Man! Are you serious with this?"

Armed agents emerge from surrounding woods. They have all of Ott's thugs in handcuffs and are loading them into vans. Lead Agent SHEFFIELD and a few others approach RM, CB and EM. RM throws his hands up and prepares to be arrested.

SHEFFIELD

(obviously the same as FBI and DEA AGENT, this time wearing glasses)

"Do you need medical attention?"

RM

"Not if you're just gonna drop kick me out of a plane over GITMO."

CB

"I could use a medic."

AGENT nods and medical team attends to the heroes.

AGENT

"When you're ready, we need to have a debriefing."

RM

"Yessir."

EM

"Sweedums!"

An agent is carrying GEN. SWEEDUMS to a van. EM runs up and stops him. She strokes the animal's head and tears fall from her eyes. RM and CB watch with pity.

EM (cont'd)

"Good, boy. Good, boy."

AGENT

"I'm sorry, ma'am. We have to take your dog in so forensics can document it. We'll return the body when they're through."

EM

"Okay."
(sniff)

EXT REMAININGS OF METH OPERATION CAMP - MORNING

Later, just before sunrise, most of the CIA has cleared out.

The camp is empty of any evidence. RM and CB are bandaged and RM has a splint on his leg. LEAD AGENT is climbing back into his vehicle and having final word with RM. Headlights illuminate the scene.

SHEFFIELD

"I'm glad we have an understanding. Your discretion in these matters is appreciated."

RM

"Yessir. Any chance we can get a ride back to our truck?"

SHEFFIELD

"That's been taken care of."

Vehicle drives off, leaving RM, CB and EM standing in the clearing. Behind that SUV is parked the TED's red 4x4.

CB

"That could have gone a lot worse."

RM

"I'm beat. Think I'll hit the hay."

EM

"What about your leg?"

RM

"Psh. Ain't even my good one. Got a spare back at the barn."

EM

"I guess it's your lucky day then."

They make their way toward the truck.

RM

"Guess so."

CB

"I'm starving. Got any Moon Pies?"

EM

"Shh! Y'all hear that?"

RM

"Hear what? My ears are still ringin'."

EM

"That."

EM runs to the edge of the clearing and begins to search through some bushes. RM and CB look on with curiosity. Then they hear it too. A high-pitched bark and whine like that of a puppy. They shine their flashlights toward the sound and EM emerges from the woods carrying a small bundle.

EM (cont'd)

"Boys. I think the CIA missed somethin'."

She uncovers the bundle and a tiny wolf pup's head pokes out. RM and CB look at each other and then back at the pup. As the sun breaks over the horizon, the pup begins to transform. It's black nose fades, it's fur falls out and it's claws turn to chubby hands. EM smiles and looks at the two men.

EM (cont'd)

"Can I keep him?"

EXT ROAD AWAY FROM TOWN - MORNING

Dirty TED is being transported from the jail in a van. The agents drive to the recent battle grounds, to meet the rest of the CIA convoy, but the driver is unfamiliar with the wet winding roads and, being momentarily distracted by dropping his coffee, he looks up to see a squirrel in the path.

He swerves to miss it, loses control, and plummets off the narrow highway. When the vehicle comes to a rest, it is on its side and the back doors have broken open.

Ted is free, but banged up and still handcuffed. He stumbles out of the wreckage, limps across a highway, and is promptly struck by a passing car, driven by GLORIA the admissions adviser.

GLORIA is horrified and stops immediately to look around, but TED has rolled off the road, down an embankment, and into a pond. The surface of the pond shimmers mysteriously with an otherworldly glow. Bubbles rise to the surface.

THE END