

"HAIL MARY"

by

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Based on his novel

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"HAIL MARY"

FADE IN

INT. DRUMMOND BEDROOM - DAY

CREIGHTON (CRAY) DRUMMOND, at 35 is still trim and holding. He pats his flat tummy. He stands in shorts and T-shirt before the open window admiring his peaceful residential street below while taking in deep refreshing breaths. His face glows with satisfaction. He turns to look in the bedroom mirror.

CRAY (VO)

TODAY! Today's MY day. My day.  
Today's the day ol' Creighton  
Drummond walks in and demands that  
raise he should've got two years  
ago. But with the Griswold payroll  
account under my belt, I think I  
can pretty much demand my price.  
(chuckle)  
Oh...a quick shower.

DISSOLVE TO

Cray, standing again before the mirror but now dressed in a dated dark blue suit and white shirt as he adjusts his deep red, not overly-assertive power tie. He smiles happily.

CRAY (VO)

Boy, I haven't worn this suit since  
the day George Zimmer promised I'd  
like the way I look. He guaranteed  
it. Well, Mr. Zimmer, I like the  
way I look. Man o' man, when Mr.  
Frazier called last night and told  
me Griswold had signed, I almost  
fainted. Wow!

Cray's eye catches the faintest trace of a small stain by one lapel. He frowns. He's not sure.

CRAY (VO)

I know I got that damned enchilada  
stain out. Why can I still see it?  
Because I know it's there? Well,  
nobody else can see it. That's what  
counts, big boy.

Cray gives a final smoothing touch to his hair and turns toward the bedroom door.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

CELESTE (CELIE), 33. Cray's wife, also still attractive if usually a bit mussed from housework, kids and their dog, ROWLF. At this moment, Celie is at the range cooking pancakes. Hearing Cray's APPROACH, she quickly slips the PANCAKE MIX BOX into the cabinet next to the range.

BROOKE, 14. At that age. Brooke puts down her fork and rises from the table as Cray ENTERS.

HARRY, 12. Named after his grandfather, HARRY "BULLDOG" DRUMMOND, 71, retired police detective.

Cray takes a stance just inside the kitchen door.

CRAY

Listen up, folks. I have an announcement. Today is the day. Our day. A big day for all of us.

Nobody pays any attention.

CRAY

I -- well, I don't want everyone to get too excited, but starting today, I'll be handling the Griswold payroll. Griswold is an important company with some three-hundred employees. That means my long-awaited fat raise will be coming in at last. Mr. McClatchy promised me...well practically. I've been thinking about some new wheels for us. Maybe a Jag. I've always liked their style.

Ignoring her father, Brooke walks past him to the kitchen door. As she PASSES, she tosses over her shoulder:

BROOKE

Malcom Harleaux across the street just bought like a zillion dollar Mercedes. I sat in it with his daughter, Elise. Real soft leather...and...

(Brooke's voice fades away as she disappears.)

HARRY

(barely glancing up)  
Jaguars are made in India now. I heard they use child labor and beat

(MORE)

HARRY (cont'd)  
 the kids for going too slow. I  
 wouldn't trust one on a bet.

CRAY  
 I don't believe that, Harry. Come  
on! Jaguars have been a proud  
 British tradition since day one.  
 Right up there with Mercedes, I  
 might add.

CELIE  
 Come have a cup of coffee and I'll  
 make you some pancakes.

CRAY  
 I don't have much time.

CELIE  
 But you always love my homemade  
 buttermilk pancakes.

Harry glances up at his mother with a scornful look.

CRAY  
 Well...okay, maybe two, but I've  
 got to go. Big day for the  
 Drummonds around McClatchy  
 Accounting.

INT. FRONT DOOR DRUMMOND ENTRY - DAY

ROWLF, a huge sort-of-maybe part bloodhound, lies motionless  
 across the threshold.

Paying little attention to Rowlf, Cray with his heavy  
 briefcase, pulls hard at the door, forcing it OPEN, pushing  
 Rowlf's inert body with it. To all appearances, Rowlf could  
 be dead.

INT. MCCLATCHY ACCOUNTING OFFICE - DAY

All "associates" at McClatchy Accounting dress VERY  
 CONSERVATIVELY. Men wear dark suits, subdued ties and white  
 shirts while women wear DRESSES. No jeans, slacks and  
 nothing "funky". The exception will be CARA DOLES.

Along with a number of OTHER EMPLOYEES, Cray ENTERS a very  
 large room filled with desks, each with a computer and  
 phone.

Other EMPLOYEES are already there, some at desks, others gathered around the coffee machine.

As Cray ENTERS, he sniffs at the stale air and makes a face. He deposits his briefcase under his desk, and sits down, switching on his computer. He looks at the vacant secretarial desk in b.g. at the far side of the office opposite him and just behind to the right of the desk, a frosted glass door bearing the legend:

JOHN MCCLATCHY PRESIDENT AND CEO

PRIVATE

Cray shakes his head, smiles and OPENS his briefcase, laying out material on the desk. He JUMPS when right on top of him a gallon of heavy perfume hits him and a sexy voice WHISPERS in his ear.

CARA DOLES, 40. A bit over-ripe, but still illegally hot, and she knows it. Cara is the exception to the dress code. She wears short tight skirts and low cut blouses that allow her over-size breasts to "breathe".

Cara leans in over Cray as close as she can get, her heavy over-exposed breasts pressing against him as she breathes in his ear.

CARA

Hi, sailor. New in town?

Trying to recover, Cray smiles.

CRAY

Oh, good morning, Miss Doles. Uh, is Mr. McClatchy alone in there?

CARA

Yes. I came to tell you he wants to see you when you come in...Well you came in.

Cara casually leans in close again with her ample breasts bulging from her low-cut blouse poking practically in his face. The perfumed heat alone nearly floors Cray.

CRAY

Thanks.

Cray pushes back his chair and works his way out from beneath Cara who doesn't move.

BEAT

Standing at Mr. McClatchey's door, Cray timidly taps, and OPENS it.

INT. MCCLATCHY'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

JOHN MCCLATCHY, 54. Slightly over-weight and balding while vainly trying to comb his hair over the top with thickeners to conceal the fact. McClatchy wears a dark mustache. Too dark to be natural considering his complexion and the color of his hair.

Although Mr. McClatchy is quite well off, and will prove to be a vain man, his office is relatively plain. No paneled walnut walls. His one show of pretentiousness is a large desk and leather office chair, but they probably came from Office Depot. On his desk sits a computer, a telephone and a silver-framed photo of his wife. However, McClatchy does permit himself custom-made suits, shoes, shirts and ties.

Looking at McClatchy's attire, Cray immediately feels second-class.

CRAY (VO)

Wow...why did I have to wear this crummy old suit? Mr. McClatchy's clothes probably cost more than I make in two months. I know quality when I see it...Oh god, he's looking at that stain. Wait...he can't possibly see that little stain. I got it clean. I can only see it because I know it's there. He can't see it...can he?

McClatchy isn't even looking at Cray.

Now McClatchy deigns look up and acknowledge Creighton's presence.

MCCLATCHY

Good morning, Mr. Drummond. You're just the man I wanted to see.

Cray's chest pumps out and he smiles in anticipation. But McClatchy looks appraisingly at Cray.

MCCLATCHY (CONT'D)

That suit must be twenty years old, Mr. Drummond. McClatchy Accounting associates have to keep up, you know. Each McClatchy associate represents the entire company.

Now Cray is fidgeting, clearly uncomfortable and on the defensive.

CRAY

Oh...Keep up. Oh, of course, Mr. McClatchy. Well, I was uh running late today so I just grabbed any old thing out of the closet. I -- uh yes, well, I just wanted to say I really welcome the Griswold payroll. I realize it's going to be a challenge, sir, but I'm sure I can -- uh -- handle it, you don't -- uh, you know, sir, it's been two years now since I've had a raise, and I thought -- well, with this new account, you -- I --

MCCLATCHY

Hold it. Just hold it right there Mr. Drummond. McClatchys won't be bullied. You know I've never been open to demands. I --

CRAY

Oh no no, Mr. McClatchy. I'd never dream of making demands. It's --I just, I mean, it's just that everything has skyrocketed. Milk, eggs, uh bread...why --  
(chuckle)  
-- if we wanted a steak I'd have to take out a loan at the bank.

McClatchy does not smile.

MCCLATCHY

Mr. Drummond. I do understand, but these rising prices apply to all of us. Why right here in the office paper has gone up, janitorial service, the Internet, the telephone. Electricity...  
(leaning back in his chair)  
On a more personal note it affects me at home as well. I had to give up the Cuban cigars I love and oh...all the little things...like imported cognac. I may just have to give up smoking altogether.

McClatchy glances at the framed photo of Mrs. McClatchy.

MCCLATCHY (CONT'D)

Mrs. McClatchy here has been pestering me about a new Jaguar for six months now and -- well, I digress. The reason I wanted to see you this morning --

CRAY

(brightening)

Yes, well, as I was saying --

MCCLATCHY

Look Mr. Drummond. I realize and appreciate the work you put into acquiring the Griswold payroll, but taking into consideration the work you're already struggling to handle, and Mr. Kroger's clever strategy in securing the account, I've decided -- well when all's said and done, I have to give it to Mr. Kroger.

CRAY

Mr. Kroger? He secured the...but...but I've worked for months on the Griswold payroll account. I've done all the footwork. I --

Half rising, McClatchy holds up one hand cutting Cray off.

MCCLATCHY

Just you wait a minute Mr. Drummond. Now maybe you approached the company originally. I'll give you credit for trying. I'll give you that, but in the end Mr. Kroger stepped in and took Mr. Griswold to lunch in a very fine restaurant -- and at his own expense I might add. And he brought back a signed contract. Sometimes it's just a matter of timing and assertiveness. So, well, in the end I've decided I have to give the account to Mr. Kroger. It's only fair.

CRAY

But...



MCCLATCHY

Mr. Drummond, I'm convinced you're already just about at the top of your responsibilities. Besides, it was Mr. Kroger who came back with a signed contract. After all this time, he went out in one day and sealed the deal. That's real initiative. Mr. kroger jumped right in and got the job done. Frankly, it pains me to say this, but I've come to feel you seriously lack what I call assertiveness.

CRAY

(softly)

Assertiveness...

Now Cray's attitude is servile, pleading.

CRAY (CONT'D)

I...but Mr. McClatchy, even if what you say is true, I've certainly tried. I've given it my best shot. I've given, you don't know how many extra hours of service, just on that Griswold account.

MCCLATCHY

That's what I'm trying to tell you, Mr. Drummond. If you were really on the ball and handled your responsibilities more efficiently you wouldn't have to work late, burning up more expensive electricity.

CRAY

Yes, but well...I was trying to talk to you about my salary. I mean, Mr. McClatchy, I'm sure all your employees would go around with much happier faces if they only made a little more money, money they desperately need for today's expenses.

McClatchy's attitude becomes very superior as he smiles.

MCCLATCHY

Happy? My associates are happy. I see to that. Every time I pass one he or she smiles happily at me and

(MORE)

MCCLATCHY (cont'd)  
 it's clear they have no complaints.  
 Why just look at my secretary, Miss  
 Doles, out there. Always cheerful  
 and upbeat, full of energy. She  
 really sets the pace here at  
 McClatchy Accounting, and --

This last hits a sore point with Cray, whose face reddens in sudden anger. Without pausing to think he blurts:

CRAY  
 Maybe there's a reason for Miss  
 Doles to be so happy, sir. I'd  
 just like to know how many raises  
 she's received around here to --

McClatchy leaps to his feet, his face reddening in anger and he clenches his fists.

MCCLATCHY  
 Now you just hold it right there,  
 mister. We don't permit negative  
 remarks about our fellow associates  
 here at McClatchy Accounting, and  
 frankly I do not appreciate your  
 insinuations. Just because you're  
 an unhappy camper doesn't give you  
 the right to practically accuse me  
 of...

(beat)

Mr. Drummond, it grieves me to have  
 to to say this, but I believe it's  
 time for you to leave McClatchy  
 Accounting and go elsewhere to  
 disseminate your uncooperative and  
 non-productive attitude. I just  
 will not tolerate that sort of  
 behavior here at McClatchy  
 Accounting.

CRAY  
 But...Mr. McClatchy, are you trying  
 to say you -- I -- uh, you  
 mean...you're firing me?

McClatchy sits back down on his chair and pretends to have a renewed interest in his computer screen. He looks back at Cray as if to say, "Are you still here?".

MCCLATCHY  
 That's just what I'm saying my  
 friend. It's unfortunate, but  
 (MORE)

MCCLATCHY (cont'd)  
 that's the way things sometimes  
 work out. After a certain period of  
 good service, some associates  
 develop an undeserved desire to  
 rise higher in the company, and  
 once that happens...in all honesty,  
 anyone in this office can easily  
 carry on your workload...Yes, Mr.  
 Drummond, I'm afraid I have to ask  
 you to clear out your desk. I'll  
 see that your severance check comes  
 promptly in the mail. That will be  
 all, Mr. Drummond.

McClatchy tries to dismiss Cray by staring intently at his  
 computer screen.

Hopelessly, Cray stands and stares at McClatchy. After a  
 stunned moment, Cray turns and is about to open the door,  
 but it POPS OPEN and Cara Doles ENTERS. Scowling, Cray  
 brushes past her and EXITS slamming the door behind him.

CARA  
 My, aren't we in a state today? Is  
 something wrong?

MCCLATCHY  
 Mr. Drummond is no longer an  
 associate, Cara. Going around  
 making snide accusations. I won't  
 have it. Henceforth he's persona  
 not grata at McClatchy Accounting.

CARA  
 (confused)  
 Persona n --

MCCLATCHY  
 Don't worry about it. He's not  
 coming back.

He turns his wife's photo face down on the desk and smiles  
 lasciviously at Cara as he pulls a bottle of sherry from a  
 desk drawer and two small wine glasses.

MCCLATCHY (CONT'D)  
 That man has made a nervous wreck  
 out of me, woman. Lock that door  
 and get over here.

INT. MCCLATCHY MAIN OFFICE - DAY

At his desk, Cray has a carton into which he's piling his personal possessions. His briefcase sits on top of the desk.

FRANZ KROGER, 32, short pudgy pink-faced man. He APPEARS behind Cray's back.

KROGER

I am so sorry, my friend.

Cray turns to look at Kroger, but the anger has left his face.

KROGER (CONT'D)

I did not realize what was loose there. Mr. McClatchy chust lent me a credit card and told me he had arrangements made for me to take Mr. Griswold to lunch -- I was chust following orders, Mr. Drummond. I knew nothing of your previous work on that account. Mr. Griswold said he had talked to you before. I even told Mr. McClatchy it was all right if you had the account. I really did very little.

Kroger smiles sweetly. It's clear that he really likes Cray.

KROGER (CONT'D)

Ach, I still remember my first week here when you helped me to find my Nierentee at the pharmacy. It really helped me to ease with the kidney stones.

As he continues speaking, Kroger holds out his hand.

KROGER (CONT'D)

I am so sorry this happened Please accept my apologies, Mr. Drummond.

Unable to refuse, Cray takes Kroger's hand and forces a smile.

EXT. DRUMMOND PORCH - DAY

Cray, struggling with the large carton and his briefcase on top, stops at the front door of his home and deposits the load on the porch.

He tries to open the door and has to put everything he has into it.

INT. DRUMMOND ENTRY - DAY

Inside, as the door slowly OPENS, it pushes Rowlf back until finally Cray is able to ENTER. Rowlf lies where he ended up showing no signs of life. Cray turns and manages with some difficulty to get his property into the entry where he pushes it against the wall near the open staircase.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

As Cray ENTERS the kitchen, Celie, by the sink, has her back to him and MURMURS into the phone. As she rings off she hears Cray and turns. Her face is very sad.

CELIE  
You're early.

CRAY  
Yes...well, I've brought bad news.

CELIE  
Oh...you already --

Cray drops into a chair at the kitchen table.

CRAY  
Any coffee left?

CELIE  
I just made some.

Celie turns and pours a mug of coffee and brings it to Cray. He turns the mug in his hands, staring into the black liquid.

CELIE  
I'm so sorry honey. But these things happen to all of us, sooner or later. I remember --

CRAY  
You? When were you ever fired? I've never been fired in my life. Not even when I was delivering papers.

CELIE  
Fired? You got fired?

She drops down in a chair next to Cray.

CRAY

I thought you knew.

CELIE

No. Of course not. How could I know?

CRAY

Then what are you sorry about?

Celie reaches and take Cray's hand, squeezing. She recoils and stares at her husband.

CELIE

Cray! you're drenched in perfume. it's sickening.

CRAY

Honey, it's that Miss Doles, our official registered office tramp. You know that. She loves to rub up against every man in the place. I don't like it and I've told her so...well, I tried to.

CELIE

Well, why doesn't Mr. McClatchy do something about it?

CRAY

Good question. I think he does something all right. He calls her into his private office for 'dictation' almost every day, and dictates for half an hour. It makes me sick, but it's not my call. You started to say --

CELIE

(somewhat mollified)

I'm sorry, sweetheart. That was your mom on the phone. I'm so sorry.

CRAY

Sorry? Sorry about what? Something happen?

CELIE

It's your dad. I'm afraid he...

CRAY  
Dad? What? What?

CELIE  
He's gone, Cray. Just like that.

CRAY  
Gone? You mean like...gone?

CELIE  
We didn't know. Nobody ever told us, but the Bulldog had prostate cancer. I guess he was always so macho he couldn't stand for people to know. But today...

Cray sits stunned for a moment. Finally he takes a sip of his coffee.

CRAY  
Yeah, dad was in his seventies.  
(beat)  
What about mom?

Celie raises her shoulders and SIGHS.

CELIE  
I don't know. You know mom. She sounded pretty good on the phone.

CRAY  
We'd better go over there.

Celie rises.

CELIE  
I'll put on some street clothes.

INT. HARRY DRUMMOND APARTMENT - DAY

Celie and Cray are seated on a dated, but good couch in a fairly modern living room. Beyond the window/door behind the couch a small balcony is visible.

MARY DRUMMOND, 68. Mary looks, at first glance, like a sweet little old lady in a cookie commercial, but upon closer examination, she has a naughty, mischievous gleam in her eye.

Mary is seated in a recliner facing her son and his wife.

MARY

It happened just like that.

She snaps her fingers but no sound comes out. She tries again and gives up.

MARY (CONT'D)

He just got out of bed as usual and I heard a nasty thump and I got up and looked around and he was gone. I thought he went to the bathroom, you know? But then I came around and he was lying there on the floor.

CRAY

So you called 911?

MARY

Of course, but I'm not sure he was still alive. By the time the meat wagon got him to the hospital they pronounced him D.O.A.

Mary dabs beneath her glasses with a tissue.

Cray rises and goes to his mother, giving her shoulders a squeeze.

CELIE

D.O.A? Whats that?

CRAY

Oh, she picked up all that cop jargon from dad. It means a person is dead on arrival at the hospital.  
(to his mother)

I know you and dad argued about everything and in many ways it was like locking a Republican and a Democrat in a closet, but you were really soul mates. I know that. I've never seen two people so much in love.

He casts a guilty look at Celie.

CRAY (CONT'D)

Just like you and me.

Cray looks at a sideboard covered with framed photos. He walks over and picks one up and looks at it.



HARRY BULLDOG DRUMMOND IN HIS 40S. A DICK TRACY TYPE, SQUARE-JAWED SERIOUS-EYED MAN IN FULL DRESS POLICE UNIFORM.

Cray picks up another photo.

HARRY BULLDOG DRUMMOND IN HIS 50S. WEARING A LEATHER JACKET AND POSING IN FRONT OF AN OLD HIGH WING LIGHT AIRCRAFT ON A GRASSY AIRPORT.

CRAY

Was dad still flying?

MARY

Oh, sometimes. Not lately, but he never grew up. He was even talking about getting a newer plane. And files! He kept files on the computer of every case he ever handled. He said the department had a knack for losing files every so often. Very meticulous. I think maybe he was planning to write a memoir or something.

CELIE

Mom, we've got an extra bedroom. Why don't you come stay with us for a while...so you don't have to be up here all alone?

Mary considers this.

CRAY

Sure, Mom. Just for a while at least. We've got the funeral and everything to take care of. We can't all be running back and forth. Later, well, you could give up the apartment and stay with us permanently. Besides you don't want to be cooking for a party of one.

From the expression on Celie's face, this may be offering a bit more than she intended to offer.

INSERT: A SQUAT WHISKEY GLASS ON THE SIDE TABLE BY MARY'S RECLINER.

Cray notices the glass and at the same time leans closer and sniffs.

CRAY

Mom! Have you started drinking again?

MARY

Of course not. Oh...that. I just needed a little something to steady my nerves. I'll be all right.

CRAY

Well, I think you'd better come stay with us for a while, till you get adjusted. Besides, you can't drive anymore, right?

MARY

Oh, just because I forgot to have my license renewed...the Bulldog always drove anyway, but I can still drive.

CRAY

Come on. Just because you can drive doesn't mean you can drive. Celie, could you help mom get a few things together? We'll get her out of here for a few days.

Mary raises a hand to protest, but doesn't seem quite able to get up out of her recliner.

Celie heads for the bedroom and DISAPPEARS.

MARY

I'm not an invalid...not yet anyway.

CRAY

Of course not, mom. But it'll be better for all of us. I can't be running over here every five minutes, and the kid's will be thrilled.

MARY

I do love those little shits. Help me.

She holds out a hand and Cray helps her up out of the chair. A bit wobbly, she heads for the bedroom and DISAPPEARS.

Cray looks forlornly around.

UNDER THE SIDE TABLE, JUST OUT OF EASY SIGHT IS A FIFTH OF 100 PROOF STRAIGHT RYE WHISKEY, HALF FULL.

Cray spots the bottle and retrieves it along with the glass.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHENETTE - DAY

In the small kitchen, Cray empties both the bottle and the glass into the sink. He slips the bottle into a trashcan beneath the sink and stands looking aimlessly around. The kitchen hardly looks used.

CRAY

Wow...

INT. DRUMMOND BEDROOM - DAY

The Drummond bedroom is neat and clean. The bed has been made.

Celie goes to one of the two long closets and slides the door open. She is shocked at the array of clothing jammed into the closet.

MARY

That's my closet. The Bulldog's is the other one.

CELIE

But mom, all these -- look at these blouses. They still have the tags on them.

MARY

I know. Sometimes when I go into Nordstrom's or Macy's and see something I like, I have the bad habit of asking if they have any other colors. Well, they bring out all the different colors and sometimes I like them so much I just have to buy all of them.

CELIE

But you don't wear them?

MARY

Well...I know. It used to drive the Bulldog crazy, but when you're true soul mates, you have to forgive everything.

Celie shakes her head.

CELIE

Well, let's get a few things packed. Now that my mom's gone, you're the only mom we've got. We have to take care of you.

MARY

I'm a big girl. I can take care of myself.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHENETTE - DAY

Celie ENTERS the kitchen.

CELIE

We're almost ready. A meat wagon?

CRAY

Oh, don't pay any attention. Mom's picked up a lot of that cop jargon over the years. She didn't mean it as callous as it sounds.

Celie smiles, shaking her head.

INT. DRUMMOND ENTRY/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Celie, Mary and Cray along with a couple of suitcases and shopping bags, stand inside the entry. Rowlf lies just where the door moved him and they ignore him.

MARY

Did you remodel since the last time I was here Baby Boy?

CRAY

No, mom. You haven't been here since last Christmas. It's still the same.

MARY

It looks nice.

CELIE

I'll show you your room.

INT. DRUMMOND DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The family is gathered around the dining table. They pass around beef stew. There's a green salad, French bread, some pickles and a bottle of white wine. Everybody is digging in, save for Mary who only nibbles.

MARY

This is so nice. I'm not used to having dinner prepared for me, unless we go out. The Bulldog used to take me to The Steakout at least once a week. He loved that place. He was a part owner you know.

CRAY

The Steakout's good, but it's pricey.

HARRY

Yeah, since grandpa was part owner we should get a discount.

MARY

No, when those cops started it, the deal was everybody who comes in pays. But...

Mary looks barely able to hold her head up.

CRAY

Come on Mom. We'll get you up to bed. You need rest.

CELIE

Your room's all ready.

As Celie helps Mary out of the room, Harry looks at Brooke.

HARRY

I think she's snookered.

BROOKE

For once, you're making sense, short person.

CRAY

That's enough of that. Grandma's been through a terrible shock today. You might not know it to see grandpa and grandma together or they way they used to talk, but believe me, they were real soul

(MORE)

CRAY (cont'd)  
 mates. I bet that doesn't happen to  
 more than one in five hundred  
 thousand marriages.

BROOKE  
 Well, if I ever run into a soul  
 mate who's a hard-ass cop like  
 grandpa, I'll turn and run the  
 other way.

CRAY  
 If you're on the force, you have to  
 be a hard a...sometimes.

HARRY  
 Yeah, why didn't you become a  
 hard-ass cop, dad? I know grandpa  
 was disappointed in you.

CRAY  
 Did he tell you that?

HARRY  
 Sort of...not in so many words, but  
 I'm not as dumb as I look.

CRAY  
 Believe it or not, I did apply to  
 please your grandpa, but I didn't  
 follow through. My heart just  
 wasn't in it.

BROOKE  
 Aunt Essie is a hard-ass cop I bet.

CRAY  
 Yeah. I think she can be. Sometimes  
 I think she doesn't like anybody,  
 including us.

HARRY  
 I think you're right, dad.

CRAY  
 Well, sometimes...

Cray's voice drifts off as he rises and begins to clear the  
 table. The kids shove back their chairs and rise.

HARRY  
 I thought we were going to have ice  
 cream.

CRAY

There's ice cream in the freezer.  
Help yourself.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A dark green canopy covers the area around a grave where an open casket sits above the opening. Green carpeting has been spread around and plenty of folding chairs.

A good number of police officers in full dress uniform are in attendance together with many civilians. Some even look like tattooed ex-cons, and maybe they are.

At the head of the coffin a lectern has been placed, this surrounded by an abundance of flowers.

There is seating for the immediate family up by the lectern.

ESTELLE MENDENHALL, 40, Cray's elder divorcée sister. Slightly stocky, a uniformed police sergeant. A tight-lipped woman. But she doesn't look as sad as she looks imposed upon that she has to take the time to attend. Rather than the full dress the other officers wear, she is in her street uniform, vest and all the rig she carries on her belt, etc.

Just behind the lectern, an officer in full Clan dress with kiltie, etc. stands playing AMAZING GRACE on his bagpipe.

As a CHAPLAIN steps up to the lectern, the music stops. He looks around at the gathering and bows his head in silent prayer for a moment and then begins to speak:

CHAPLAIN

Good morning. May the memory of Detective First Class Harry Drummond never leave us. His friends and colleagues as well as many of those who he was forced to put behind bars, fondly -- perhaps sometimes not so fondly -- liked to call him Bulldog. Bulldog Drummond was a fitting name, because unlike the fictional Bulldog, our Bulldog Drummond spent nearly forty years out in the field doing his job, protecting our citizens and frequently doing community work as well. And like a bulldog, he never let go. And it is said that the Bulldog never forgot a face, and his arrest record bears that out.

(MORE)

CHAPLAIN (cont'd)

On behalf of the men and women of our entire law enforcement community and on behalf of the Bulldog's friends and family, we wish to say thank you, Bulldog. Thank you for making a difference. We know you are safe. We will miss you. We will not forget. Amen.

As the chaplain turns away, the BAGPIPE music RISES again and people rise and begin walking over to take one last look at the Bulldog who lies in his old police dress uniform, now too tight for his sturdy frame. His white-gloved hands rest on his chest with a bouquet of flowers as well.

As they do this, many offer condolences to the Drummond family.

INT. DRUMMOND DINING ROOM - DAY

The family sits glumly around. Estelle sits grim-faced and stares at her plate. The kids have changed into more comfortable clothing. The adults are sipping coffee.

MARY

I'm sorry Gracie didn't make it to the funeral. She texted me she'd be here.

BROOKE

Who's Gracie?

MARY

Oh, Gracie and I went to school together. We've known each other since the third grade, and we went to high school together.

(smiles)

We were quite a team in our day. We still keep in touch. And Maude, but she has to babysit a lot of kids. I don't see her much either. I don't know what delayed Gracie. She wanted to be here because...

ESTELLE

I have to go.



CRAY

I thought you were off duty. You hardly ate a bite Essie. The kids never see their aunt. You could stay for a while.

Brooke and Harry make "who gives a shit" faces.

HARRY

How much does all that stuff weigh, Aunt Essie?

ESTELLE

(looking imposed upon)  
About 30 pounds I think. Trust me, it's heavy.

HARRY

I like that gun. You ever get to shoot anybody?

Estelle emits a long drawn-out sigh and proceeds to head for the entry. She throws over her shoulder:

ESTELLE

I don't go around shooting people. I bust 'em and cuff 'em.

Estelle keeps WALKING.

Harry FOLLOWS.

HARRY

How come you have to wear those gloves?

ESTELLE

You try sticking your hand in some offender's dirty pocket and you may get one nasty surprise.

HARRY

Wow, like the Three Stooges. One of them always has a mousetrap in his pocket.

ESTELLE

(trying to walk on)  
Oh god.

HARRY

Are you a hard-ass like granpa?

ESTELLE  
 (stopping)  
 You want to be a cop, you have to  
 be a hard-ass.

HARRY  
 Wow. Was grandpa born that way?

ESTELLE  
 I don't know. But in his early days  
 he was a ghetto soldier and if you  
 can't get people's respect there,  
 you might as well quit and go home.  
 I gotta go.

Harry, in awe, turns to leave as Cray ENTERS.

INT. ENTRY - DAY

As usual, Rowlf lies right up against the door. Estelle  
 stands there grimly staring down at the dog.

Cray APPEARS from the dining room.

CRAY  
 Sorry about Rowlf. He's decided he  
 loves that spot.

ESTELLE  
 You let a damned dog run your  
 house?

Cray manages to force the door open wide enough for Estelle  
 to get through. She doesn't even look back to say good-bye.

Cray slowly closes the door, a sad hopeless expression on  
 his face.

DAY TURNS INTO NIGHT AND HOW IT'S THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

Everyone is seated at table. Celie is making pancakes and  
 link sausages.

MARY  
 Mmmm...smells good.

HARRY  
 It is good, Grandma. Mom's a first  
 rate cook. Grandma, what's a ghetto  
 soldier?

MARY

Oh, that's what your grandpa was before we met. When he was new on the force he had to patrol in some very rough neighborhoods. He was tough.

I used to be pretty good myself, but you know, with just the two of us bumming around the house, it didn't seem worth the trouble to do a lot of cooking. Besides, the Bulldog was mostly a meat and potatoes kind of guy. So...

Mary's cell phone RINGS. She pokes at it and listens.

MARY (CONT'D)

(to Cray)

Do you have time to take me on a little errand before you go to work?

HARRY

Dad doesn't have to work. He got fired.

Cray throws Harry a look.

MARY

My baby boy got himself fired? That doesn't sound right. You're a good boy, Crayfish.

CRAY

Mom!

MARY

Oops, mea culpa. I forgot. So...why did you get fired?

CRAY

It was just a misunderstanding. I guess I said something I shouldn't. But that bastard cheated me out of a fat contract I was going to handle, and with a substantial raise too. He'd already practically promised. And he lied. He outright lied to me. He said Mr. Kroger took Mr. Griswold to lunch at his own expense, and actually my stupid boss lent Mr. Kroger a credit card. He's a liar.

((beat))  
What sort of errand, Mom?

MARY  
It's Gracie. She's at the bus  
station.

Cray looks somewhat dismayed, but his mother is pleading with her eyes. He pushes back his chair.

CRAY  
I'll just go throw something on.

INT. DRUMMOND STAIRCASE - DAY

Harry follows right behind Cray. Halfway up the staircase he tugs at his father's sleeve.

HARRY  
Dad...Something I have to tell you.

CRAY  
(stopping)  
What?

HARRY  
Well, I feel guilty because all this time you've been thinking mom's pancake recipe was some kind of secret, but -- well, don't tell her I said anything, but they're really just out of a box.

Cray smiles gently and pats Harry on the shoulder.

CRAY  
Son, don't worry. I've known that all along. I just like to let her have her little secret, or whatever it is. That's what you do if you really love someone.

HARRY  
Oh...

Smiling to himself, Harry turns and heads back down the stairs.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

Cray reappears in jeans and a sweatshirt. He doesn't appear to have shaved. He looks at Mary.

CRAY  
Ready then?

INT. CRAY'S OLDER CHEVY - DAY

Cray is tooling down the street.

MARY  
Thanks for taking me. Gracie's such an old friend. I didn't want to ask her to take a taxi.

CRAY  
It's okay, mom.

INT. BUS STATION - DAY

GRACE (GRACIE) PREVOST, 68. A little overweight. A bit on the dowdy side but not too bad.

The women call out names and hug and twist around, and finally Mary turns to Cray.

MARY  
Baby Boy, you remember Gracie don't you? She used to come around when you were little, but then they moved to Phoenix or someplace and...

CRAY  
(trying to put on a cheerful face)  
Sure. Eh, long time no see.

GRACIE  
I'm sorry I missed the funeral. I stopped to talk to a couple of guys and missed my bus and...well, here I am now. I don't imagine the Bulldog complained.

INT. DRUMMOND ENTRY - DAY

The door is forced OPEN, shoving the still inert Rowlf out of the way and Cray, Mary and Gracie ENTER.

GRACIE

Nice place. Got anything to drink around here?

CRAY

Well...I think there's some beer in the fridge.

AN HOUR LATER

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

The adults including Celie are seated around the kitchen table. Several empty beer bottles are on the table. The old women have slightly shiny eyes. Celie is sipping coffee, and Cray still has a half-finished glass of beer before him. He looks dismal and tired.

GRACIE

I don't suppose you guys allow smoking in here.

CELIE

Well...

GRACIE

That's all right. I'll go outside pretty soon. By the way, I saw a bingo parlor on the way here. Think you could swing by and drop Mary and me off for a while? Something to do you know.

Cray SIGHS.

CRAY

Sure, of course. If that's what you guys want to do. I'll take you right after dinner.

MARY

Oh, you don't have to do anything. We can find something.

Cray doesn't notice Mary and Gracie exchanging looks.

CELIE

Oh no. I insist. I have dinner practically ready. You'll have plenty of time for bingo.

The women don't look thrilled, but realize they have to stay.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

It is evening now as Cray's old Chevy rolls along city streets.

MARY

That was really a delicious dinner, Baby Boy. I'm sorry I couldn't eat more. It's just...

CRAY

I know Mom. It's okay. I understand. It's just going to take some time.

Cray pulls up in front of a building garishly painted in red with a yellow trim and a BLINKING SIGN that reads: BINGO

JUST TWO DOORS DOWN IS A LIQUOR STORE.

The women get out of the back seat and Mary leans in on the open passenger window up front.

MARY

Now don't worry about us, Baby Boy. We can take care of each other. We used to play bingo till the cows came home.

CRAY

What time shall I come get you?

MARY

Oh...I'll call you. If it's late we'll take a taxi.

Cray watches uncomfortably as the two women ENTER the double doors. A couple of unsavory CHARACTERS stand idly outside near the door, smoking cigarettes.

CRAY

(calling)  
NO DRINKING!

If anyone hears, they pay no attention.

CRAY  
 (mumbling)  
 Thank god they don't allow drinking  
 in bingo parlors...I'm pretty sure  
 they don't...

INT. BINGO PARLOR - NIGHT

A very large room is filled with long tables, most occupied by OLDER WOMEN, but there are YOUNGER WOMEN, a very few YOUNGER MEN and a good number of OLDER MEN.

To one side is a snack bar attended by a couple of OLDER MEN. A popcorn machine pops away on the back bar. Many at the tables have sodas or coffee in front of them. Most also have a goodly number of bingo cards laid out. Although there is no smoking, the entire room smells of stale perfume, old clothes, etc.

Mary and Gracie wrinkle their noses.

GRACIE  
 Popcorn smells good but that's  
 about all. These places never  
 change do they?

MARY  
 (contentedly)  
 Never, and I like it like that. Get  
 us a table and a couple of Cokes.  
 I'll be right back.

Mary turns and heads for the EXIT.

Somewhere someone yells: BINGO!

AN HOUR LATER

The women sit back in disappointment. Both have empty Paper cups in front of them. Mary holds the cups one at a time down out of sight and pours. She hands one to Gracie.

MARY  
 Two-fifty for twenty cards! Things  
 have sure gone up since we were in  
 our prime.

GRACIE  
 Nothing has gone up around me. I  
 sag all over.

They LAUGH even louder than the general DIN of voices and the CALLER calling out.



CALLER, 60s. Very fat old black man with grizzled hair and a well-tuned bass voice:

CALLER  
FIFTY-THREE - G!

MARY  
Damn! And look at this card. I was set and...oh well, I used to have better luck. Let's drink to better luck ahead.

The women hear a soft smooth VOICE behind them.

VOICE  
Maybe you ladies would have better luck someplace else.

Mary and Gracie turn their heads to see:

GEORGIE LUNA, 40. A slim, sly-looking gent with slicked back hair and a pencil thin mustache. His casual suit is a bit flashy, but he looks neat and clean. He wears a big gold-tone knockoff Rolex and has cigars showing in his breast pocket.

MARY  
(in mock innocence)  
Why, whatever do you mean, sir?

GEORGIE  
Hi, I'm Georgie. Georgie Luna. Everybody 'round here knows me. I just happen to know a place in this very building where you ladies can get a lot more satisfaction for your money.

GRACIE  
Tell us more...Georgie.

GEORGIE  
Turn in your cards and follow me.

The girls have nothing at all to turn in. They finish their drinks, dump the paper cups and their cards into a wastebasket.

Two other WOMEN hit the basket at the same time to retrieve the cards.

Georgie wends his way among the tables to a door on the far right side of the parlor not far from the end of the snack bar. Mary and Gracie follow him through the door.

INT. LONG DARK HALL - NIGHT

Mary and Gracie follow Georgie down the hall for twenty paces. He stops and opens another door opening to:

INT. GAMBLING ROOM - NIGHT

The NOISE level is not too high, but high enough. Here it's more like a casino. Roulette, poker, blackjack, baccarat, pai gow, dice -- everything in the way of casino games etc. and even a couple of bingo machines. A real bar with two bartenders. The women stand in the doorway, look at each other and SMILE.

The room is filled with players. As in the bingo parlor itself, most of the players are older people, just like Mary and Gracie. As Georgie turns to leave, Mary slips him a twenty. He smiles his thanks and then as he turns to go, she pats him on the ass. This takes Georgie by surprise as he JUMPS and turns to give Mary a look, but he decides it's all in good fun. He waves good-bye and DISAPPEARS closing the door behind him.

DISSOLVE TO A MONTAGE OF DRINKING AND  
GAMBLING SHOTS

By now the girls are pretty far along in their drinking and having a ball. Both are seated at the five-card stud table when Mary looks at Gracie.

MARY

Wow. I haven't had this much fun since...Hell, I don't remember when. Me and old Bulldog were soul mates all right. I'll never deny that, but he could be a real hard ass, that's for sure. I bet this place wouldn't be here if the Bulldog was still on the force.

GRACIE

He hated illegal gambling. I remember that.

MARY

Well, a cop has to be tough. You never know what the next guy is going to try. But...

Mary begins to cry and wipes at her eyes beneath her glasses.

GRACIE

It'll be all right Mary. I had to go through this a year ago, but I'm still here.

MARY

He hated anything illegal. Well, we're doing all right. A few more rounds and we better get out of here. That Creighton can be one straight-laced old nanny.

(beat)

I'm sorry. It's just -- well, let's have a few more rounds.

GRACIE

Rounds? You mean games?

MARY

I mean rounds of these bloody marys.

GRACIE

(happily)

I hear you sister.

Mary waves to signal to the waitress, but at that moment, an outside door with an electric sign above it saying: EXIT BURSTS OPEN and COPS YELLING AND WAVING crowd in while players leap to their feet YELLING and SCURRYING in circles.

INT. DRUMMOND LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The front door OPENS and Cray manages to get over Rowlf and ENTERS.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Celie is standing nervously in the center of the room.

CRAY

They're not in the bingo parlor. I don't know where they could be.

CELIE

Oh...I'm getting seriously worried now. I mean, your mom...Where can they be? I don't think she's very responsible any more.

CRAY

She never was. I checked the entire parlor. I asked a couple of people but nobody noticed when they left.

CELIE

Where would they go at ten o'clock at night? Even if they went to a diner for a bit, your mom should have called by now.

CRAY

Yeah, and her phone must be turned off. I just don't --

Cray breaks off as his phone RINGS.

CRAY (CONT'D)

This must be her now. Hello. What? What? Oh...oh.

He listens some more before ringing off.

CELIE

What?

CRAY

I can't believe it. They've been arrested. My mom's been arrested.

CELIE

Why would they arrest your mom? Most of the people down there know her, at least they know who she is.

CRAY

They know the mom the Bulldog kept on a tight leash. I don't -- I've got to go down to headquarters and see if I can't straighten this out. You go on up to bed, sweetheart. It'll be all right.

INT. LOCKUP - NIGHT

In a large cell, a good number of FEMALE PRISONERS are milling about or sitting on steel benches. A MATRON leads Cray up to the cell. He looks over the crowd and sees his mother and Gracie. Both look pretty well lit and not in a bad mood at all.

CRAY  
 (calling)  
 Mom! Mom!

Both the women hear him despite the general MURMUR of the others. They elbow their way to the front of the cell.

MARY  
 I'm sorry, Baby Boy. This is all a big mistake. We went to play bingo, and evidently there's some sort of illegal gambling going on in back and...well, they burst in and rounded up everybody.

CRAY  
 I -- I'll see what I can do.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Cray, Mary and Gracie descend the steps.

CRAY  
 Boy, I had to do some serious talking. It helped that dad was a respected cop. They said you were drinking and gambling.

MARY  
 Drinking and gambling? in a bingo parlor? Why, that's illegal.

Cray opens the rear car door.

CRAY  
 Mom, I do smell liquor on you.

MARY  
 Oh, we had a drink before we went in, but...

Cray starts the engine.

GRACIE  
 Oh Cray, do you mind if we swing by the bus station so I can pick up my luggage?

CRAY  
 Oh...your luggage. Well, sure. We can do that.

EXT. BUS STATION - NIGHT

Accompanied by Gracie, Cray EXITS the station struggling with two heavy dated suitcases.

INT. CRAY'S OLDER CHEVY - NIGHT

Driving away from the bus station, Cray calls over his shoulder.

CRAY

Where do I drop you off...Gracie?

There is a painful silence.

MARY

I'm sorry, Baby Boy, I meant to ask you but I thought Gracie could just share my room for a few days while she's in town. Save a few bucks on hotels and besides, we won't have to be running back and forth.

GRACIE

I hope that's not going to be a problem. I mean, I --

CRAY

Oh, uh, I suppose not. You and mom don't get to see each other that often.

The women smile triumphantly at each other as Cray tools the vehicle down a dark street.

GRACIE

Oh, we're going right by the Greene house. Are they still there?

MARY

They sure are. I talked to Maude Greene just three days ago.

GRACIE

Maude's owed me some money for five years now. I could sure use it. Cray, could we just swing by there for a sec? It's only a few blocks from here.

With Mary nodding approval, Cray realizes he has little choice and turns the Chevy in the direction Gracie indicates. The women smile conspiratorially at one another.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mary and Gracie sit at the kitchen table while Celie makes coffee and Cray hovers near her, hoping she won't take this too badly.

CRAY

(whispering)

It's just for a few days, honey. It was a total surprise to me.

Celie smiles in understanding and pours coffee into mugs for the women.

After a few sips, Mary YAWNS and stretches.

INT. DRUMMOND SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bedroom has twin beds and adequate furniture. The women lie back on their beds watching TV and passing a joint back and forth, absently waving the smoke toward the open window.

MARY

You're a genius, Gracie. You can really think on your feet. Maude has been been very dependable for years now. I don't know how she gets away with it. The Bulldog busted her when he was working. But...

INT. DRUMMOND UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

The spare bedroom has no bathroom, so Mary has to use the hall bath. She EXITS the bedroom, carrying a heavy robe, and stops just outside the bathroom door. She pulls a half pint of whiskey from the pocket of the robe and takes a swift drink. She shakes her head, shudders and smiles in satisfaction.

INT. DRUMMOND SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

In the guest bedroom, in her turn Gracie takes a good swig of whiskey from the half pint and carrying her robe, EXITS.

INT. DRUMMOND MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Celie comes out of their bathroom.

CELIE

There's no hot water.

CRAY

Oh...I suppose the girls both took leisurely baths. It won't take long to heat up again.

CELIE

I suppose...

She flops back on the bed and picks up the remote.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

Celie is at the range making scrambled eggs, etc. Brooke and Harry are at the table with milk.

Cray enters, dressed in a suit and tie.

CRAY

Morning guys. Well, I'll just have a bite. I've got an interview with Windsor Accounting.

BROOKE

How long are they going to hang here?

CRAY

It's just -- just for...we just had the funeral. Gracie has to get back home, and with grandma, well...we'll see.

HARRY

I hope she stays here. She's a hoot.

Brooke makes a face.

CELIE

Here, honey.

She places a dish before Cray and a mug of coffee.



CELIE (CONT'D)  
This will give you strength.

EXT. DRUMMOND PORCH - DAY

Carrying his briefcase, Cray slips through the partially open door and calls back.

CRAY  
Hope I didn't disturb you Rowlf.

He stands for a moment, taking in a breath and then sees that his Chevy is missing.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

Cray ENTERS hurriedly into the kitchen.

CRAY  
My car! It's gone. Somebody stole my car.

CELIE  
Your car is gone? Who would steal an old clunker like that?

BROOKE  
Your mom would.

CRAY  
My mom! She doesn't even have a license to drive. No...she wouldn't...would --?

CELIE  
I haven't seen them so far this morning.

As Cray turns and EXITS the room, Brooke and Harry smile smugly at one another while Celie holds the frying pan above the range and looks bewildered.

INT. DRUMMOND UPSTAIRS HALL - DAY

Cray KNOCKS on the spare bedroom door. Getting no response, he KNOCKS HARD and still no response. Carefully, he opens the door a crack and peeks in. The beds are rumpled and the room is empty.

Cray GASPS. He runs to the hall bath, but the door is wide open and there is no one inside.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

Cray ENTERS.

CRAY  
They're gone!

BROOKE  
Did they take their sh-stuff with  
them?

CELIE  
Brooke! Gone? You mean they've gone  
in your car?

Cray raises his shoulders helplessly and doesn't know what  
to say or do.

HARRY  
I'd call the cops.

CELIE  
He can't call the cops on his own  
mother.

BROOKE  
Don't you have her cell phone? Text  
her or something.

CELIE  
Yes. Maybe you can call her.

INT. CRAY'S CHEVY - DAY

Mary is at the wheel and Gracie sits beside her. They're  
CRUISING down city streets.

GRACIE  
You do know Creighton is not going  
to take this well.

MARY  
Hey, he's my baby boy. I'm his  
mother.

GRACIE  
Well, first things first. Let's  
swing by --

MARY  
-- Maude's?

GRACIE  
You must be psychic!

INT. MAUDE GREENE'S HOME - DAY

An old living room that has never been remodeled or updated, messy but it's clean. The soft furniture is covered in thick plastic custom-made slipcovers.

KIDS FROM 3 TO 5 RUNNING AROUND LIKE MANIACS, YELLING AND PLAYING, IGNORING THE VISITORS.

The women are seated on the couch watching the kids run.

MAUDE GREENE 70, a sweet chubby black woman with short white hair and designer glasses. Maude ENTERS from the kitchen with a tray with some sort of mixed drinks. She sits down on an recliner opposite Mary and Gracie.

MAUDE  
Cain't smoke up in here.

She nods toward the kids.

MAUDE (CONT'D)  
The kids you know. I don't want to set no bad examples up in this house.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

Maude rises heavily to her feet and limps to OPEN the door.

LACY 24, YOUNG WOMAN, VERY SLENDER, ENTERS.

LACY  
Sorry I'm late, Missus Greene, but some boys they been hittin' on me so I had to get off the bus and wait for the nex' one.

MAUDE  
Oh, that's all right, Lacy. Now you're here, maybe I can get a bit of rest. There's sandwich stuff and drinks in the ice box. You just help yourself, and...watch those kids!

MARY  
You're free now, Maude? Why don't we go take our ride together? We  
(MORE)

MARY (cont'd)  
 can catch up on old times without  
 all the noise.

MAUDE  
 I'll just get my purse.

GRACIE  
 Just make sure it isn't empty!

EXT. WHITEY'S TAVERN - DAY

Whitey's Tavern is an old run-down joint that clearly hasn't changed a thing in many a year. A flashing Bud sign and a Miller sign in the small dirty windows plus a small flashing red OPEN sign at the small door window.

Nothing else to signify life. No other cars in the graveled parking lot as Mary's pulls up with Gracie and Maude.

MAUDE  
 My god. Whitey's Tavern. It's still  
 here?

MARY  
 It is, but I haven't been inside in  
 many a year.

GRACIE  
 I always liked this joint.

INT. WHITEY'S TAVERN - DAY

It could be night. Very dark inside with only a few dim lights behind the bar and a couple of shaded lights over two pool tables in b.g. On the left wall stands an ancient dusty juke box.

ARCHIE, 60s. Bald and overweight with a swollen red nose. He wears only a dingy undershirt with a belly that spills out over his raggedy jeans. The joint is empty and Archie is standing behind the bar watching football on an old TV mounted on the wall.

THE SCREEN ABRUPTLY CHANGES AS AN ANNOUNCER COMES ON.

ANNOUNCER  
 The national weather service has  
 just issued a storm warning. A  
 severe fast moving storm is headed  
 our way and the entire county is  
 (MORE)

ANNOUNCER (cont'd)  
 being cautioned to tie everything  
 down and be prepared for extremely  
 heavy rains within the next two to  
 four hours. We now return to our  
 regularly scheduled programming.

At this moment the women ENTER and Archie's attention is  
 drawn away from the TV as he looks up in surprise.

ARCHIE  
 My god. Can it be? Is this Hail  
 Mary and Maude and yes! Gracie too?  
 Can it be?

MARY  
 Archie! You still here. I thought  
 you were tending bar up in the  
 clouds by now.

ARCHIE  
 Hey, I'm not as old as you gals  
 are. Where the hell have you been?  
 it's been years.

MAUDE  
 (looking around)  
 My my, well we haven't missed much.  
 I see this place here hasn't  
 changed in thirty years.

GRACIE  
 I moved to Phoenix when I got  
 married. The old man's gone now,  
 but the house is free and clear,  
 so...

While the women talk, Archie is pouring four shots of  
 whiskey and places three bottles of beer on the bar.

MAUDE  
 I'm gettin' too old for that wild  
 life, Archie. Nowadays I stay home  
 and babysit the neighborhood kids  
 so their welfare mamas can get out  
 and do whatever it is they do when  
 they think nobody's watching.

Everybody SNICKERS at this.

ARCHIE  
 Yeah, I get that, but what about  
 Hail Mary? I thought you'd never  
 give up.

MARY

I thought you knew. I married the Bulldog.

ARCHIE

Bulldog Drummond? I 'member the night he busted you right here for some rowdy behavior or something.

MARY

Yes! Guess what? Even while he was cuffing me, we connected. We both realized at the same time that we were soul mates. Soon as I straightened the Bulldog out, we got hitched, but since then he's kept me on a pretty short leash.

ARCHIE

But you're out and about today.

MARY

Well, the Bulldog passed away a few days ago, Archie. We had a beautiful funeral. Lots of cops and bagpipes and everything. We're just trying to cope now.

ARCHIE

My condolences. The Bulldog was tough but fair...and honest. You don't see that every day. Well ladies, here's to better days or nights or something.

As all four lift their glasses and swallow, four husky BIKERS ENTER. Probably in their 50s. They look rough in leather and greasy jeans that have never been washed. All four have graying hair tied in pony-tails and graying beards of various lengths and mean-ass expressions on their faces. As they pass the bar, Archie and the group read the legends on the backs of their leather vests or jackets. Three have OUTLAWS on them, while the fourth reads: INLAWS.

The four at the bar roll their eyes at one another.

ARCHIE

Get comfortable gents and name your poison.

BIKER ONE

(calling)

FOUR BEERS!

MARY

We have to use the restroom. All I do is pee any more.

All three women slide off their stools and head toward the back past the pool tables where one door reads POINTERS and the other, SETTERS.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - DAY

The restroom is in deplorable shape. The once-white walls are a dirty amber. People have scratched names and worse on many surfaces. One toilet door doesn't hang straight and the sinks are filthy. Mary APPEARS from another stall.

MARY

If somebody sat on that seat they'd get gangrene. And it doesn't even flush.

Gracie GIGGLES and Maude proceeds to make up a fattie. Within a few moments the restroom is filled with smoke and the women are really getting with the program.

INT. WHITEY'S TAVERN - DAY

The three women ENTER the main room again. The four bikers all have beers and are shooting pool.

The women head for the bar where their beers still sit. Gracie lays a twenty on the bar.

GRACIE

How about another shot of that shit you poured when we came in? It's disgusting, but I'm getting used to it.

Mary lays another twenty on the bar. Maude ponies up another twenty.

MAUDE

Leave the bottle Archie.

MARY

And pour the boys back there a shot too, Archie. That beer's for sissies.

At least one of the bikers HEARS and scowls at the women. Archie without a word pours out EIGHT shots, placing the

bottle on the bar. He places one shot before each of the women, holds one up in a CHEERS motion and downs it without changing expression in the least. He picks up a small round plastic tray and places the other four glasses on it. He manages to get over to the pool table without falling or spilling anything.

BIKER ONE

What's this? We didn't order  
nothin' else...yet.

ARCHIE

It's on the ladies. Reckon they're  
in a good mood.

Some of the bikers pause and scowl at the women, sitting at the bar and smiling pleasantly.

BIKER TWO

Ladies? I don't see no fuckin'  
ladies. Alls I see are old rejects  
from the Mustang Ranch.

ARCHIE

Aw, that's no way to talk. The  
ladies are just being friendly.

During this interchange Mary has quietly poured another shot for her and Gracie and Maude.

BIKER ONE

I don't care how fuckin' friendly  
they are, we don't need no fuckin'  
charity.

He grabs one shot glass from the tray and pours it on the floor, throwing the glass in the general direction of the women where it bounces off the ancient asphalt tile.

By now Mary is on her somewhat shaky feet.

MARY

Did that bum say I'm no lady?

ARCHIE

I --

Biker Two cuts Archie off.

BIKER TWO

That's what I said you old bag and  
I gotta tell you something: I'm no  
bum. I don't beg. I don't borrow. I  
see something I want, I take.



As he just finishes this Mary launches her beer bottle striking Biker Two squarely on his gray-bearded chin spilling the remaining half bottle of beer down his open leather vest and through his dirty T-shirt.

Biker Two stands stunned for a beat, then starts rubbing his chin. Soaking in what has just happened, he charges toward the women with his pool cue, but Archie manages to stick his foot out and trip the biker who goes flying forward on his face at which time Maude has got off her stool and quickly limps over and slams her now empty beer bottle on the back of his graying head.

The other bikers are joining forces now. They rudely shove Archie aside and he falls helplessly back against the wall with the cue stick rack. Cue sticks all come tumbling down around him.

One of the bikers stumbles and falls against the old jukebox.

Immediately it lights up and starts blasting NANCY SINATRA SINGING "THESE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR WALKIN'".

MARY

Shit! These boots are made for  
RUNNIN'!

Before the bikers can slip-slip over the now wet asphalt tile, the women have EXITED full speed ahead.

ARCHIE

I didn't think that juke worked  
anymore.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The remaining three bikers EXIT the tavern just as Cray's Chevy peels out of the lot throwing gravel in their dirty faces. They stand GROWLING for a moment before shaking their heads and heading back into the tavern.

INT. WHITEY'S TAVERN - DAY

The music has STOPPED.

Pulling himself together, Archie wends his way back behind the bar while the fourth biker gets to his feet, scowls at Archie and holds up one hand.

## BIKER TWO

Now I'm ready for that drink,  
old-timer.

Archie picks up the three twenties, folds them carefully and shoves them into the pocket of his jeans. Then he grabs the whiskey bottle, pulls off the pouring spout and pours doubles for the bikers. He places them on the bar.

As the bikers pick up their glasses, Archie holds up the bottle in a toast and downs four ounces straight from the bottle. He replaces the pouring spout, BELCHES, and smiles. Biker Two has to smile a bit too.

## ARCHIE

God damn! Still the same girls we  
used to love...and fear. Still do.

Now, getting back into a better mood, the five men chat a bit MOS as Archie pours drinks, always including himself as well.

After a bit, they decide it's time to leave and waving good-bye, they head for the exit.

## BIKER ONE

Catch you next time Old-Timer.

As the doors swing shut behind them, Archie stares blearily at the now silent juke box. He pours himself another drink, downs it and gets a quarter from the till. He manages to stagger around and over to the jukebox where he leans heavily against it, inserting with difficulty the quarter into the slot, but nothing happens. The jukebox remains dark and silent.

INSERT: THE JUKEBOX PLUG IS LYING ON THE FLOOR BESIDE THE JUKEBOX.

His head sagging, Archie sees the jukebox cord. He realizes the jukebox is unplugged.

## ARCHIE

I must be drunker than I...

Archie stares bleakly at the unplugged cord for a moment and he his eyes close as he passes out leaning across the old jukebox.

EXT. NARROW HIGHWAY - DAY

The Chevy is cruising along while Gracie keeps looking back.

GRACIE

I don't see the enemy.

MAUDE

They better not be following behind us!

To the left Mary looks toward an airport with a gravel road leading up to an open and empty hangar.

MARY

Here we are, girls.

EXT. CHERRY TREE AIRPORT - DAY

This is a tiny old seldom-used grassy airport. Five or six older light aircraft stand about nearby, tied down to keep wind from moving them. There is no one about.

Mary pulls up near an older high wing airplane. The large old rickety hangar, partly composed of corrugated metal and partly dried out boards, looks more like huge barn than a hangar.

No doors left in the huge front opening. A wind sock hangs limply from a tall pole atop the sagging roof. The doors are wide open and no one is inside the messy interior.

MARY

Well here we are, girls. We'll be high in a minute.

GRACIE

We're already pretty high, Mary.

All three LAUGH at this.

MARY

Well, you'll be higher when we get up there and light up for real. That's the Bulldog's.

The three women EXIT the Chevy walk over to an old four seater airplane with just two wheels in front. They exert some effort to free the aircraft and manage with difficulty to pull themselves up and INSIDE.

INT. THE BULLDOG'S AIRCRAFT - DAY

GRACIE

Didn't the Bulldog keep this thing  
locked?

MARY

Never. Nobody bothers stuff out  
here. Besides, it's insured.

Gracie is going to take the front seat beside Mary but Maude pushes her shoulder.

MAUDE

This isn't the deep south up in  
here Gracie. It's your turn to sit  
in back.

All three LAUGH loudly as Gracie crawls into one of the two back seats and gets settled.

Mary piddles around with controls and suddenly gets the engine RUNNING. After a few moments, it begins to PURR and Mary smiles in confidence.

MARY (CONT'D)

(half singing)

OFF WE GO INTO THE WILD BLUE  
YONDER... These old babies fly  
themselves. Buckle up girls.

With everyone buckled, the plane taxis forward and begins to pick up speed.

GRACIE

I didn't even know you flew a  
plane.

MARY

Oh, it's not hard. I've flown with  
the Bulldog many a time. Just have  
to stay calm and not make any  
sudden moves.

GRACIE

You mean...you didn't take lessons?  
You just watched the Bulldog?

MARY

Hey, it's just like riding a bike.  
At least in daytime. I wouldn't try  
to fly on instruments.

Gracie and Maude obviously don't feel too comfortable with this news, but Maude begins fixing a joint for them as the plane takes to the air, wobbling slightly.

It slowly rises to some two thousand feet over open country around the airport. The cabin quickly clouds with smoke from the marijuana.

MARY (CONT'D)

See, nothing to it. Pass that over before it's all gone.

INT. DRUMMOND KITCHEN - DAY

Celie and Cray are alone in the kitchen now.

CELIE

Boy, I knew your mom was something of a free spirit, but to take your car...and you said she doesn't even have a license.

CRAY

I don't know what to do.

CELIE

By the way, what's with that name, Crayfish she called you.

CRAY

Oh lord...when I was in school, maybe the second or third grade, some of the kids started calling me Crayfish and I hated it. I didn't even know what a crayfish was, but I still hated it and now I hate it even more. And one of them called me that at our house once and got mom started. I thought I had got her to give it up, but...

He holds his phone in his hand.

CELIE

Well, it's not such a bad name.

CRAY

Yes it is. I'm sure her phone's off. Maybe I could borrow your car and go check her apartment. You think?

EXT. CELIE'S NEWER SUV - DAY

The SUV rolls out of the Drummond driveway, nearly colliding with a passing Cadillac. LOUD HONKING as the Caddy swerves and the SUV slams on the brakes.

Cray nervously wipes his brow with a handkerchief and tries again.

INT. CELIE'S SUV - DAY

At the wheel, Cray nervously MUMBLES to himself as he finally gets out of the driveway and heads off down the street.

INT. THE BULLDOG'S AIRCRAFT - DAY

GRACIE

Boy, remember when we were young and foolish? Everybody knew us, especially you. Every time we went into a bar, practically the whole room would turn to us and bow and scream HAIL MARY. You were the leader of the pack.

All three women LAUGH heartily through the cloud. Maude is already rolling another fattie.

MARY

Those were good times all right. But once I hooked up with the Bulldog, all that had to change...at least a little.

The aircraft engine SPUTTERS a bit but they pay no attention. Mary continues to fly, wobbling a bit while circling around not too far from the airport.

GRACIE

Well, everything in life is a compromise, sort of. I know when my Lennie was alive I had to give up a lot of the little things, but he could be a hell raiser too, so it sort of worked out. He was a strange one. When we'd go to a bar, he never sat on a stool. He'd stand there holding his mug.

MAUDE

Why he do that?

GRACIE

I asked him once and he said, bar fights break out all the time, and when one did, he didn't want to be caught sitting on his ass.

They all LAUGH at this.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

Saturday nights especially. We'd swing by the Topaze and the party began. I gotta tell you -- he had a temper though, that Lennie. He used to have an old Datsun 280 Z that he really loved and one day, in a parking lot, some guy asked him if that was his twenty-eight ounce and he just about lost it right then and there, but that guy could've whipped his butt so bad he'd have ended up in the hospital. Oh, Lennie was quite a boy!

The engine sputters again, this time more noticeably. Mary squints at the controls.

MARY

Shit, I don't think I brought my glasses. And I have to pee.

MAUDE

I have to pee all the time. The curse of old age. But I got me some disposable padded underwear, and I keep a backup in my purse.

GRACIE

Well, she may have to put them on, way we're going. I don't suppose you have any extra glasses. That engine is trying to tell us something. We better --

Mary leans closer to the control panel squinting. The cabin is so full of smoke that it would be hard for anyone to see even with glasses. Suddenly she jerks back.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The four bikers are leisurely riding along when Biker Two looks toward the airport and SPOTS Cray's Chevy.

BIKER TWO  
(pointing)  
Look! Isn't that the car those  
bitches ran off in?

Biker One nods with a grimace and swings left. The others follow. They pull up by the Chevy. Looking around they see no one. They pay no attention to the aircraft wobbling around above in the distance.

BIKER ONE  
I got an idea. Pucker, you grab  
that Chevy and take it into town  
someplace and park it. Sid, you  
follow and bring the Pucker back on  
your hog. Got it?

PUCKER  
Don't you want us to wreck it or  
something, boss?

BIKER ONE  
Hey, just because we're outlaws  
doesn't mean we're really outlaws.  
Well, not hardly anyway.

Pucker lets Sid hold his bike and he gets into the Chevy.

INT. CRAY'S CHEVY - DAY

Pucker smiles as he sees the key is still in the ignition. He fires up the engine and waves.

After a moment, the Chevy wheels out of the airport and heads back toward town with Sid close behind on his Harley.

BIKER ONE  
We'll take our hogs down by those  
bushes there and wait till they  
show up. I want to be here to watch  
when those so-called ladies get  
back. We'll scare the hell out of  
them.

Biker Two nods, smiling and the men begin moving the bikes to cover.



INT. THE BULLDOG'S AIRCRAFT - DAY

Mary keeps squinting at the controls, but can't really see.

MARY

Shit!

The sputtering worsens and Mary looks panicky.

GRACIE AND MAUDE TOGETHER

What?

MARY

I think we're out of gas.

GRACIE

You think!

MAUDE

Didn't you check the fuel before --

The aircraft shudders as the engine STOPS. For some reason it banks off to the right and then begins to behave erratically. It weaves up and down and Gracie starts YELLING.

GRACIE

Get the nose up, Mary! Keep the nose up. I don't think you've ever flown a plane before.

Mary ignores this. All three women are SCREAMING and Mary is frantically trying to get control of the aircraft as it wanders around up and down and back up again, but constantly working it's way toward the earth.

IN B.G. THE SKY IS DARKENING AND OCCASIONAL STREAKS OF DISTANT LIGHTENING FLASH.

GRACIE

There's the airport, Mary. Can we make it to the airport?

MARY

I -- I don't -- SCREAM!

The aircraft suddenly banks off to the left and takes another dive toward the ground, although it is drawing closer to the grassy airport. The fields around the airport don't look much worse than the airport but there are fences, telephone poles, a few trees.

The aircraft swoops lower and lower and Mary fights to keep the nose up as she gets it aimed for the airport. It's still flying too fast for a good landing.

The aircraft is now wobbling along just twenty feet above ground and heading for the empty hangar they see straight ahead of them.

GRACIE

Doesn't this damned thing have  
brakes?

MAUDE

I think planes have flaps.

GRACIE

Well, flap dammit!

EXT. REAR OF HANGAR - DAY

Biker One is standing just at the rear corner of the hangar as the plane comes straight in. He jumps back as Biker Two ARRIVES.

BIKER TWO

What --?

BIKER ONE

Watch. I think it's those stupid  
bitches flying in that plane.

(jumping back)

And I think they're coming right  
through. Sh-eeeet!

Both bikers move quickly to one outside rear corner of the hangar, but can't stop watching the plane's APPROACH.

INT. THE BULLDOG'S AIRCRAFT - DAY

The sky is getting darker.

Mary remains tight-lipped as she fights to maintain some sort of control. The plane dips lower and lower. Still traveling at some sixty miles an hour, the wheels touch the ground and then it bounces back up and hits again, this time harder.

The aircraft is headed straight for the open door of the hangar. Once again the wheels bounce off the ground.

Mary just manages to keep the nose from dipping into the turf. The craft has slowed, but still moving and its momentum rolls it right into the hangar.

INT. HANGAR - DAY

SCATTERED ABOUT TOWARD THE BACK OF THE HANGAR, SEVERAL RED 5-GALLON CANS STAND ABOUT.

The women sigh in relief as the aircraft gently comes to rest just inches short of the rear wall, but one wheel gently knocks over a red can of fuel.

EXT. HANGER - DAY

Seeing that the plane has stopped without breaking through the rickety back wall of the hangar, the bikers hurry over to the middle of the wall where they can peek between failing boards and corrugated paneling.

The bikers look at each other and LAUGH noiselessly as they look at the plane with the three women in it.

AT THE BIKERS' FEET GASOLINE IS SEEPING SLOWLY OUT FROM BENEATH THE HANGAR.

In their amusement the bikers don't notice the gasoline seeping out by their boots.

INT. THE BULLDOG'S AIRCRAFT - DAY

For a long moment the women sit there motionless, too shaken to move. Finally, with shaky hands, Mary pulls out her little flask and they all drink and then without getting out of the aircraft.

Maude rolls another fattie and they sit there filling the cabin with more smoke.

MARY

Well, here's another fine mess we got ourselves into, girls.

MAUDE

What do you mean, we, girl?

GRACIE

Well, it was kind of fun. Something different, and now that it's all over, we can laugh about it for

(MORE)

GRACIE (cont'd)  
 years to come. I think the plane's  
 all right too. Good landing, Ace.

The three women slowly EXIT the aircraft and head FORWARD toward the doorless hangar opening. Mary stops abruptly.

MARY  
 Oh...

GRACIE  
 What?

MARY  
 (pointing just to the left  
 outside.)  
 Cray's car! It was right there.

MAUDE  
 Oh oh...Maybe he caught up to us.  
 He'll be back.

GRACIE  
 Well, when he does get back, you're  
 going to be in deep shit. We didn't  
 know you took it without his  
 permission.

MAUDE  
 Yeah, we're innocent bystanders.

EXT. HANGAR - DAY

All three women are still standing in the hangar opening with their backs to the aircraft.

EXT. HANGAR -DAY

Snickering and making faces, Biker One CHORTLES and whips out two cigars. He hands one to Biker Two and lights them both up, dropping the match onto to the fuel-soaked ground.

INT. HANGAR - DAY

MAUDE  
 Well, at least the damned thing  
 didn't blow up as we walk away like  
 they always do in the movies.

At that moment a wisp of flame rises behind the women and then quickly grows into a ball of EXPLOSIVE fire. Looking back, the women duck and run like hell.

MAUDE (CONT'D)  
Lord! Have mercy!

EXT. HANGAR - DAY

Scorched and singed, with smoke rising from their heads, etc. both bikers run panic-stricken toward the grove where they left their bikes.

EXT. CHERRY TREE AIRPORT - DAY

Getting to the narrow highway and looking back to see the entire hangar in flames, Maude looks into the dark heavens and GROANS.

MAUDE  
Lord have mercy!

By now, the blackening skies have reached the airport.

MAUDE  
And...I think it's going to rain.

GRACIE  
Well, that may put out the fire.

In the distance lightening CRACKLES and HEAVY RAIN IMMEDIATELY begins to pound on the hapless women. They don't look back but despite the rain the hanger fire in b.g. still looks pretty active.

MAUDE  
Looks like we gonna have need for another Noah's Ark. This look like a deluge.

Wind is picking up and the rain is POUNDING now, getting more dense and furious.

The soaked women look back.

THE AIRPORT FIELD AROUND THE HANGAR IS PRACTICALLY A SWAMP AND WATER IS EVEN WORKING INTO THE HANGAR. BUT THE FIRE APPEARS TO BE DIMINISHING.

As the women head back in the direction of Whitey's Tavern, an old flatbed truck wobbles along from behind them. The windshield wipers aren't working, but evidently the the driver can see.

The driver pulls up alongside the women.

DWIGHT JARVIS, 40s. Dwight is a real unshaven hick, wearing an old tattered shirt and overalls, He has a ratty sort of cowboy hat over a shaggy mop of hair. He looks like he's already been beaten up and is missing some teeth and can't quite talk right. He rolls down the passenger side window and leans across.

DWIGHT

Mah, you leddies look purty wet.  
Whyncha hop in back unner the  
canopy. I'll giver a ride.

The women can barely hear Dwight in the downpour. But once the women figure out what Dwight's saying, they nod gratefully and help one another clamber up into the back of the truck.

INT. TRUCK BED - DAY

Inside the truck bed, beneath a filthy canvas canopy are a few cages of chickens and a stack of eggs in flats tied down with bungee cord. There is no glass in the rear truck window.

The women recoil at the smell but at least it's fairly dry there.

GRACIE

(speaking into the rear  
window)

Thanks, Mister --

DWIGHT

Dwat. Evrbody know me 'round here.  
I live just back there in  
Gruberville. I'm takin' these 'ere  
eggs to my sistah, Mim. Well, Mim  
she mah sister and mah cousin and  
mah auntie too. I never cud figger  
that out. But she nice and always  
got sumpn to drink. We'll git you  
all dried out.

ON THE PASSENGER SEAT A LARGE DOG, ABOUT ROWLF'S SIZE LIES SLEEPING.

GRACIE (CONT'D)  
 (to the girls)  
 Good lord. I never thought there  
 could be two Rowlf's on this same  
 planet.

Gracie and Mary struggle to their feet to see the dog.

MARY  
 Nice doggie. What's his name?

DWIGHT  
 He a her. I jes' callsr Girl. She  
 slip a lot.

Despite the smell, their discomfort not only from being wet but the dirty uncomfortable truck, the women LAUGH HEARTILY.

Just short of Whitey's Tavern Dwight veers off suddenly onto a narrow graveled road that leads back over a low hill.

Shortly the women, peering through the rear window and the windshield, see a ramshackle old house that doesn't appear ever to have been painted.

The house has a tumbledown porch across the front and the rain has begun to let up now.

Dwight pulls up in front and hops down out of the truck. He comes around to the rear.

DWIGHT  
 Hep me to git somma deezr eggs in  
 the house, and I'll fix yall summn  
 to drink and git you all dry. Mim  
 here, she gotta big furplace.

The three women help each other down out of the truck bed and Dwight hops up and begins handing down flats of eggs. When all three have a couple of flats, he lays out another couple and hops down. Evidently the chickens stay with the truck.

DWIGHT  
 Wachr stip on them there stips,  
 leddies.

Dwight carefully works his way up onto the porch and the women follow, stumbling once or twice and nearly falling, but they make it.

## INT. MIM'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

This room is square, it looks like it has never been painted. The walls have been covered with faded floral wallpaper that has been stapled to them rather than glued. The furniture looks bad and the only impressive thing in the room is a huge stone fireplace on the right wall. A grill, something like a BBQ grill sits above a low fire that glows in the fireplace. To one side hangs a very large BLACK STEEL FRYING PAN. (not cast iron)

As Dwight ENTERS and walks through the living room, he keeps calling out.

DWIGHT

MIM! Mim! Whrever is that woman?

Well, jes bring all dem eggs in're.

The women carrying their eggs follow Dwight into:

## INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen is about like everything else. An old-fashioned wood or coal-burning range sits against one wall, but looks very dusty. In the center of the room stands a large old table with dirty oilcloth on it, surrounded by eight or so mismatched wooden chairs. Standing on a high chest near one wall is an ancient TV SET.

Everybody deposits the eggs on the table.

DWIGHT

Les git backn t'other room. You git over by the furplace and we'll git you all dry and cozy.

The women follow Dwight back out of the kitchen.

## INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The women get close to the fireplace, shivering, and Dwight gets some hugs slabs of wood onto the embers. Quickly the fire brightens up and the women gratefully feel the heat.

DWIGHT

Cain't figgr dat Mim. Renny day like dis. Well, y'all hunry? I'll fix you a amlit jes like Mim do. I'll show ya. But firs' thin's firs'.



Dwight rummages in a nearby cabinet and comes out with a bottle without a label and four glasses. He pours drinks all around.

The women toast each other and swallow, making horrible faces, but Maude smiles broadly.

MAUDE

This stuff kind of grows on a person, doesn't it?

Dwight disappears into the kitchen and shortly reappears with about half a pound lump of butter on an old pie tin. He takes down the frying pan and places it on the grill, adding the butter. He disappears back into the kitchen and shortly reappears with a large crockery bowl. He's whipping furiously at it with a large wooden spoon.

Smiling wisely, Dwight looks at the pan and sees that the butter has melted nicely and is just beginning to sizzle. He carefully pours the contents, about a dozen or so scrambled eggs into the pan and sets the bowl aside. The women look at each other in wonder.

Trying to work carefully, Dwight works the spoon around the edges but continuously splashes egg out onto nearby surfaces making a mess of the entire omelet. Then in a mighty effort, using both hands, he attempts to flip this gigantic omelet which goes flying all over him and most of the fireplace.

At this moment there is a SCREAM and:

MIM, 46, a stocky woman with slattern looks and messy graying hair, a seamed outdoor square face, no makeup, narrow mean eyes. Mim's wearing overalls over a man's shirt and has on muddy low top work boots. Over all she wears an overly large and wet dark gray shawl sweater unevenly buttoned in front.

Mim is standing with her hands on her hips staring in disbelief at Dwight. Dwight just hangs his head and looks guilty while the three guests sit with empty glasses in their hands uncertain as to what to do.

MIM

What -- in -- the -- hell -- is going on here?

DWIGHT

Wall, Mim, these'r leddies got caught out inna storm. They all wet so they hep me with the eggs and I wena make'em an omlit...like you do.

MIM

If I made 'em like that, I couldn't afford the eggs you sell me, boy.

Her eyes shift to the three women sitting on the couch.

MIM

You out walkin' in the rain?

GRACIE

It wasn't raining when we started. We saw the fire and stopped to look.

MIM

Yah, Soon's that rain stopped I walked down that way a pace too.

(to Dwight)

Well, what're you standin' there fer, boy? Can't you see their glasses are empty?

(to the women)

That boy, he don't know his ass from a hole in a tree. I'll fix you one of my real omelets.

Mim moves over and nudges Dwight out of the way and he gets a bottle and begins refilling the women's glasses. He takes a swig from the bottle and hands it to Mim. She takes a healthy swig and begins wiping out the pan.

MIM

Go git me a dozen eggs in that big crock bowl and whip the shit out of 'em. And don't be gittin' no shells in it. Can you do that boy?

Nodding vigorously, Dwight heads for the kitchen.

MIM (CONT'D)

AND BRING ME SOME BUTTER!

After a moment Dwight runs back in with another half a pound-size lump of butter. Looks perhaps home-made. While he runs back to the kitchen, Mim throws the butter into the pan and begins moving it around over the fire. She tosses on a couple more chunks of wood.

The three women sit in silence watching all this and sipping. By now, the landing and all that is behind them and they're feeling no pain.

MAUDE

Eh, mind if we smoke up in your house?

MIM

If you got enathin' good, I'll join you.

MARY

Boy, I like this place. You have a nice place here.

During this time, they hear NOISES from the kitchen and then Dwight APPEARS carrying a large crock bowl. He takes it to Mim.

Now she dumps the contents into the frying pan and looks at Dwight.

MIM

Maybe the ladies will give you a hit and then you go fix up that there table in the kitchen, hear?

While Mim uses a large wooden spoon to fine tune the edges of this huge omelet, Dwight runs over and takes a hit on the fattie Maude has rolled. He turns and runs to the kitchen while Maude gets up and takes the joint over to Mim who stops long enough to take a couple of hits with a warmer expression growing in her eyes.

She continues to move the frying pan gently around until making certain it has loosened. She uses both hands to expertly flip the entire omelet without spilling a drop and it looks beautiful.

MIM

A'most ready now. Gimme another hit.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

With the huge frying pan taking up most of the kitchen table, all five sit around with cracked plates and devour omelet. The contents of the frying pan are nearly gone. Instead of coffee or whatever, a couple of bottles of whiskey sit on the table and everybody is enjoying their omelet washed down by slugs of straight whiskey.

GRACIE

Mmm...this is really good, Mim. Where did you ever learn to make such a big omelet?

MIM

Why, I thank you. Fack is, I ust to work in a restaurant where omelets was the spec'lty. Well, I couldn't hardly keep up, so I found me this very pan here and when the crowd came after the bars closed, I started makin'em in my pan so's I could serve six or more at a time. Heh heh. It went over good too, but my boss he din't like that and firet me.

(to Dwight)

Go turn on that there TV. Let's see if they got enathin' about that there fire.

Dwight jumps to his feet while wiping his mouth on his dirty sleeve and goes to the TV. He turns it on and waits a beat for it to start, and flips till he finds a news channel. At that moment a news reporter is speaking.

REPORTER, 35, well-groomed, wearing a dark suit.

REPORTER

...and just before today's record storm passed through, a fire broke out at the old seldom-used Cherry Tree Airport on Highway thirty-seven. Heavy damage fell upon the single airport hangar and the single aircraft inside. The aircraft was registered to the late Harry Drummond who many may recognize as retired police detective fondly called "Bulldog". Drummond loved his antique aircraft and had left it parked inside. The aircraft was determined to be burned beyond repair. The intense downpour that immediately followed the onset of the fire helped contain it, but at the same time destroyed any outside evidence of possible footprints left by intruders.

The reporter looks up at the camera and adds:  
On a sadder note, just outside the post office, one man was struck by lightening. He was taken to Methodist Hospital where he later died.

MIM  
 (through a mouthful of omelet)  
 Turn it off, boy. I can't take that  
 shit.

Dwight dutifully turns the TV off and comes back to the  
 table.

DWIGHT  
 I see my Aunt Mim na badass mood  
 today.

MIM  
 (naughty grin)  
 Well, mebbe she'll be your Kissin'  
 Cousin Mim later on. Depends.

DWIGHT  
 Well, betta git these here leddies  
 home 'for they catch colds.

Rising from the table the guests begin giving lots of thanks  
 and good-byes MOS as they head into living room and toward  
 the front door.

MARY MAUDE GRACIE  
 Thanks so much. Good-bye.

MIM  
 Y'all come back.

From the truck they hear chickens CACKLING.

INT. FLATBED TRUCK - DAY

It's getting late in the day as Dwight's truck pulls up  
 across from the Drummond house.

MARY  
 Well, I think Maude had a good time  
 today, don't you?

GRACIE  
 Yeah, if you're a thrill seeker.  
 She looked pretty beat.

MARY  
 If she isn't, those kids will  
 finish her off. We'd better leave  
 her alone for a couple of days

The women appear in the rear window.

GRACIE

Well, Dwight. We want to thank you for all your kindness and be sure to thank Mim again.

MARY

Yes indeed. I never saw anybody could whip up an omelet like that and never spill a drop.

DWIGHT

I cudda but when that there Mim come in she threw me off. I's fixin' to make it just right.

GRACIE

Well, maybe next time. Dwight. Thanks again.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Amidst NOISE of chickens CACKLING the women clamber down from the back of the truck and head across the street, waving back at Dwight who waves and then guns his engine.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The whole family is there including Estelle, looking grim.

CRAY

My god we were going crazy. Where have you girls been?

Everybody is gasping. Recoiling and turning their heads away and holding their noses.

MARY

Oh you remember Maude Greene's house?

GRACIE

The one we swung by to collect my money?

CRAY

(nodding)

But what did you do, fall into a pig sty?

MARY

Well, we were having a little lawn party when the storm came and we just got soaked...so we sought shelter in the back of a truck parked in the alley. Turned out to be full of chickens in cages but the storm was so bad...and by the time the storm passed, we smelled pretty ripe. I know that. We were going to go right up and take a long shower.

CRAY

But my car...where's my car?

Both women look confused.

CRAY

You don't remember where you left my car? I hate to say it, but I think you've both been drinking.

Mary suddenly sinks onto the couch and bursts into tears. Her body begins to shake and she lowers her head as she BURSTS INTO VIOLENT SOBBING AND CAN'T STOP.

Cray puts his hand on Mary's shoulder.

CRAY

Mom, I didn't mean --

Mary continues to SOB, her body shaking until finally she raises her head to look up at Cray.

MARY

I -- It's not that Baby Boy...I -- I think it all just caught up to me. I mean, the Bulldog. I can't believe he's gone like that. We were inseparable. Soul mates. Oh, we fought like crazy many a time, but we were like that old Taryton commercial: We'd rather fight than quit. And then we'd make up. Oh boy, did we --

CRAY

Mom! I think that information's above my pay grade.

Brooke snickers.

MARY

(sobbing)

But the Bulldog was a crusty old  
coot and I loved him. He loved me.  
We really were soul mates.  
Oh...Baby Boy, I just don't know  
what I'm going to do now.

Mary's shoulders shake as she sobs uncontrollably

Cray and Brooke both kneel down beside Mary and try to offer  
some comfort while trying not to recoil from the smell.

CRAY

Mom, I know, sometimes when  
something terrible happens, we just  
can't absorb it all at once. Some  
people take a month before it  
really hits. Why I read someplace,  
this guy's grandpa died when the  
guy was about five.

Mary looks at Cray through her tears. Interested now, she  
listens.

The others all stand around, listening too, not knowing what  
they can do.

CRAY (CONT'D)

Well, you know. A kid doesn't  
understand. But many years later  
when he was up in his room in his  
twenties, something made him think  
of his grandpa and all at once he  
burst into tears and cried like a  
baby for twenty minutes. He swore  
he never cried, never before or  
since, at least up to the time he  
wrote the piece.

Mary clenches Cray's hand.

MARY

Thank you, Baby Boy. Thanks. I feel  
better already.

HARRY

Yeah, we'll all get through  
this...together.

Mary smiles through her tears at Harry. Celie sits down on  
the other side of her and takes her hand.



In b.g. Estelle who has pretty much ignored her mother's grief, is on her cell phone. She rings off and looks at Mary now.

ESTELLE

(taking a cop stance)

Mom, there was a big fire at the airport today. Dad's plane burned up.

MARY

No! Oh, Dad's plane? That's gone too? He did love that plane. Oh...

ESTELLE

And there was a biker fight at Whitey's Tavern...with some women. All four of the bikers are in custody right now.

MARY

Whitey's Tavern! That's where I met your dad, Essie. You mean it's still there after all these years?

ESTELLE

We all know it's where you met dad. Boy do we know. Quite a string of coincidences for one day, wouldn't you say? Women fighting at Whitey's Tavern where you met dad, and dad's plane burning up a couple of miles down the road...

Estelle continues to stare pointedly at her mother and Gracie. Mary and Gracie try to look innocent and confused as if not understanding.

CRAY

But what about my Chevy?

ESTELLE

Okay. We got it. They located your Chevy parked downtown next to Latimer Park.

CRAY

Is it all right? Did somebody trash it?

ESTELLE

From what I got it's just fine. Maybe kids taking a joy ride.

(looking at the women)  
 And evidently the bikers started the fire at the airport. Some of our boys picked them up at another bar. Two were pretty badly scorched and had to be transported to the hospital for treatment. They were lucky. The rain probably saved their bacon.

MARY

Why in the world would they set a fire at the airport?

BROOKE

Maybe they're in the Mafia. Or hitmen for the Mafia.

Cray looks at Brooke in wonder.

ESTELLE

So officially your story pretty well checks out. Okay, some kids kited the Chevy from Ms. Greene's house and went for a joy ride while some unidentified women got into a brawl with bikers at Whitey's Tavern. The bartender swears he never saw any of them before. The bikers rode out and set the hangar on fire. And dad's plane just happened to be inside. Sounds plausible. I believe it. I'm going to believe it.

Estelle's expression says she thinks it's all a load of bull, but she isn't inclined to pursue the matter.

By now Mary is wiping at her eyes, and feeling a bit better.

GRACIE

Cray, if it isn't too much trouble, could we swing by the bus station in the morning so I can get back to Phoenix?

CRAY

Of course, Gracie.

CELIE

Mom, please, go upstairs and take a long hot shower. You can use our bathroom. Gracie, you can do the same in the hall bath.

## THE NEXT MORNING

INT. CRAY'S CHEVY - DAY

While Cray drives, the two women sit in back.

MARY

I can't believe anybody would fire my baby boy. Where was it you worked, Crayfish?

CRAY

God, I wish you wouldn't call me that, mom. The kids started that in the third grade and I thought I'd never get past it.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

Cray and Mary EXIT the station as to one side a passenger bus slowly pulls out of the covered drive.

Although they can't really see into the windows, Mary waves as the bus turns and moves off.

INT. CRAY'S CHEVY - DAY

CRAY

Gracie is nice. I'm glad she could be here when you needed her. Back to the Crayfish, you're the only person alive who still calls me that -- that name. Anyway, I was an accountant at McClatchy Accounting for ten years. Ten years...

MARY

I'll try to remember not to remember that name.

(beat)

McClatchy...oh sure. McClatchy Accounting. I remember, and when the old man died, his son took over.

CRAY

I guess. Sure. He always tried to give us the impression that he built the business from scratch.

MARY  
 Scratch hell!  
 (beat)  
 Oh Baby Boy, do you mind if we drop  
 by the apartment on the way home?

CRAY  
 Uh, of course mom.

At the next intersection, Cray turns and the vehicle  
 DISAPPEARS.

INT. MCCLATCHY ACCOUNTING OFFICE - DAY

The main door OPENS and Cray, accompanied by Mary and Celie,  
 ENTER.

As Cray leads the way between desks, many employees look up,  
 some in surprise, some smiling and waving on the down low,  
 etc.

The trio ARRIVE at Cara Doles's desk.

CARA  
 So you've got new girl friends, Mr.  
 Drummond. Does this mean it's all  
 over between us?

CRAY  
 Very funny, Cara. This is my mom,  
 Mrs Drummond to you, and my wife,  
 Mrs. Drummond too. Is Mr. McClatchy  
 alone?

CARA  
 He's alone, but --  
 (under her breath)  
 He called me Cara...

Cray is already opening the door to McClatchy's office.

John McClatchy is seated at his desk, just ringing off on  
 the phone. He looks up in total surprise. His eyes go from  
 Cray to the two women.

MCCLATCHY  
 Mr. Drummond. You should've  
 received your final check. I'm  
 certain it --

CRAY

Mr. McClatchy, didn't you know who my father was?

MCCLATCHY

Your father? I -- I should know, of course, but with so many associates, I --

CRAY

This is my mother, Mrs. Drummond. Her husband just died. The same day you fired me in fact. He happened to be a police officer for over twenty years. Everybody called him Bulldog Drummond because he never gave up and never forgot a face...or an offense.

McClatchy's face has paled and he looks nervous.

MCCLATCHY

Bulldog Dru...eh, won't you folks sit down?

All three pull up chairs and sit down.

MCCLATCHY (CONT'D)

I'm not, uh, sure where this is leading.

CRAY

You know, the Bulldog kept records on his home computer. Records of every case, every offender, everything he felt worth writing down. I don't know. Maybe he was going to write a memoir some day.

MARY

I think he did say something about that once or twice.

CRAY

Yes, and well, about fifteen years ago there was the matter of a local adult drugging a teen-age girl and having sex with her.

MCCLATCHY

(turning white)

A teen a --

CRAY

Some young fellow. I don't know. Now the Bulldog was a hard-ass. He was like that Javert in the Hugo novel, his motto was, "The law is the law." He would've seen the young man go up for a long stretch, but the man's father was a respected well-known accountant, with money, I might add. Somehow he persuaded the D.A. to get some sort of nolo contendere out of the offender and the D.A. mysteriously let the offender off with a warning. And in some similar mysterious fashion, the girl's parents decided to withdraw all their charges as they moved into their new home. Imagine that.

MCCLATCHY

I --

CRAY

Of course, that's old news. Still, if it came out today, I imagine it could play havoc with a person's social and business interests. People don't like to deal with people who pull shady stuff. Especially people who handle other people's accounts...their money. People take their money very seriously And -- of course the thought of an ugly divorce --

Rising, McClatchy holds up one hand.

MCCLATCHY

Wait. Wait just a minute, Mr. Drummond. All that's very interesting, I'm sure, but you never let me finish when I said I was sure your severance check should've reached you. I -- well, this isn't easy for me to say, but when I gave that account to Mr. Kroger, I made grave error.

Mary and Celie look at each other and Mary WINKS.

CRAY

You did?

MCCLATCHY

I'm afraid it was simply too much for him to handle and actually, I was just on the point of calling you to apologize for my hasty decision. Mr. Drummond, we'd like for you to come back and take over the Griswold payroll account and...well this is an important asset to the company and you certainly deserve the raise we discussed.

McClatchy looks off into space for a moment and then looks back at Cray.

MCCLATCHY (CONT'D)

Actually you've been a loyal and very reliable employee. I don't know what I was thinking. And I see now that I've been behind in the times. I believe a raise in the neighborhood of say...ten percent would be appropriate. The Griswold payroll together with some of our other important accounts will be a challenge well worth the extra money. And please...use some of it to get some new suits.

Really pumped by this experience, Cray looks at McClatchy.

CRAY

Ten percent? I thought you were planning on raising it about twenty-five percent.

MCCLATCHY

Twenty-fi -- well, well, yes. I think that's not an unrealistic figure. Twenty-five percent it is, Mr. Drummond.

CRAY

Great. Another thing I've been meaning to talk to you about, is the antique formality of this place. This isn't a court or congress, it's just another accounting office. From now on, I

(MORE)

CRAY (cont'd)  
 think we should drop all that  
 mister stuff and everybody will be  
 a lot more comfortable. From now on  
 you can call me Cray.

Cray smiles at his own audacity.

CRAY (CONT'D)  
 Hell, you can even call me  
 Crayfish. Well, I'll be here first  
 thing in the morning, John.

MCCLATCHY  
 Well...well, okay then...Crayfish.

McClatchy LAUGHS heartily at this.

Just turning his back on McClatchy, Cray stiffens, but then  
 relaxes and smiles.

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

As the group weaves its way through the office, Cray calls  
 out to different people he passes, calling them by their  
 first names.

CRAY  
 See you tomorrow, Cara. Catch you  
 tomorrow, Franz.

MARY  
 I'm so proud of you Baby Boy. You  
 really told that uptight bastard  
 off.

CRAY  
 I'm proud of you mom. You really  
 saved my bacon.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Standing in front of Cray's Chevy, he turns and hugs his  
 mother.

CRAY  
 Mom, you're a genius. I had no  
 idea.



MARY

When you began talking about McClatchy, it suddenly rang a bell, and there it was, right in the Bulldog's file. That Johnny McClatchy was a hell-raiser when he was younger.

Cray shakes his head in wonder as he gets the women into the back seat.

CRAY (VO)

Twenty-five percent!

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brooke, Harry and Estelle are waiting. Estelle and Brooke both look bored. Estelle looks at Celie.

ESTELLE

You got anything to drink? I mean like wine or something? I'm off duty now.

CELIE

Oh...sure, of course. I'll open a bottle.

Celie turns and heads for the kitchen. Mary heads for the staircase.

MARY

I just want to take a quick shower. I keep smelling chicken shit on me.

CRAY

Good idea, mom. Hurry back for the celebration.

ESTELLE

Celebration!

Celie ENTERS holding a glass of white wine. She hands it to Estelle who accepts it without even looking at Celie.

CRAY

Okay. Here's my master plan. People think a lot of things about mom. I know that. I've had some pretty shaky thoughts myself. Free spirit is perhaps the most kindly. I know she can get on a tear, what with drinking and pot and --

Everybody's giving Cray looks.

CRAY (CONT'D)

Yeah, I know. But today mom really saved the day. I got my job back, and new respect and a substantial raise, thanks to mom. Everybody is here, and -- no thanks to mom -- alive and well.

ESTELLE

About that time a car drove by and the occupants saw an aircraft with a dead prop approaching the airport. They thought it was going to crash.

CRAY

My god!

CELIE

You think Mom was actually trying to fly that plane? She doesn't even have a driver's license. I'm sure she's never had a real pilot's license.

ESTELLE

A licensed pilot checks his fuel levels and all that shit before taking off.

CRAY

Good point, sis. Well, here's the thing. Gracie and I were talking at the bus station, and she explained to me why people used to cry Hail Mary when she came into a lounge. So...

ESTELLE

Sounds like a lot of shit to me.

HARRY

(softly to Estelle)

We aren't supposed to say that word in the house.

ESTELLE

Well, that's okay for the house, but I'm a cop and I have to talk tough. If I bust an offender and interrogate him and he's trying to

(MORE)

ESTELLE (cont'd)  
 feed me a line and I say, Sir, I  
 find your story difficult to  
 believe and I suspect you're being  
 less than truthful, he'll laugh in  
 my face and run.

HARRY  
 Wow. What would you do?

ESTELLE  
 I'd have to put another hole in the  
 ass and take him down and cuff 'im.  
 But that would mean lots of reports  
 and all that shit plus suspension  
 during the investigation.

HARRY  
 Wow. Did grandpa talk that way too?

ESTELLE  
 (chuckling)  
Did he? Where do you think I  
 learned all that shit, Harry?  
 Compared to him, I'm a pussy.

HARRY  
 Dad said he didn't want to join the  
 force.

ESTELLE  
 Between you, me and the lamppost,  
 your dad's a wuss. They didn't  
 think he was assertive enough. But  
 maybe he's finally coming around.

Taking all this into his mind, Harry moves aside and stands  
 thinking about it.

Everybody is looking around at each other, waiting for Mary  
 to come back downstairs.

INT. MCCLATCHY'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

The door OPENS and Cara slips in. McClatchey is pacing the  
 floor, looking worried.

CARA  
 What do you want, honey?

McClatchy stops and looks up and then looks down.

MCCLATCHY

Something is wrong, Cara. I feel a tide...a tide rising up against me.

CARA

A...tide?

MCCLATCHEY

I don't know...but there are forces at work.

Cara holds out her arms and smiles seductively.

CARA

Well, you just come to mamma, baby and I'll make everything all better.

INT. DRUMMOND LIVING ROOM - DAY

It's only a little later. Celie ENTERS with a wine bottle and refills Estelle's glass.

Everybody hears a HORN HONKING.

Cray goes to the door, easing Rowlf back and opens it. There at the curb is Dwight's flatbed truck. Dwight hops down leaving the door hanging and waves to Cray.

DWIGHT

The girls heah?

CRAY

Uh, oh, the girls?

DWIGHT

They real nice leddies. I brungm sumpn. Comen hep me.

Cray descends the steps and walks to the curb. At the rear of the truck, Dwight hands Cray a 30-egg flat.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

Got ny hep 'round heah?

CRAY

(trying not to breathe)  
Help? Yeah, okay.

Cray carries the eggs up and into the house. A moment later He and Celie and Harry descend the steps, leaving the front door open.

At the rear of the truck, Dwight hands each a flat of eggs and as they turn toward the house, Dwight reaches up and pulls out a large cage with four chickens CACKLING away in it. He awkwardly gets a grip on it and heads toward the house.

INT. ENTRY - DAY

Rowlf suddenly opens his eyes and raises his head. A second later he's on his feet and brushes past Dwight who is ENTERING with the cage in his arms. Dwight sees Celie.

DWIGHT

Heah, leddy. You don't got to buy  
no more eggs. These heah real good  
layahs.

While Celie is trying to process this information, they both hear loud HOWLING and Celie moves to the door while Dwight deposits his cage on the entry floor.

Brooke evidently likes Dwight's looks, while Harry just stands and watches.

Cray comes running FORWARD too. He sees the cage and recoils at the odor.

CRAY

What's going on?

CELIE

It's Rowlf. Something's -- oh!

Dwight's dog, Girl has EXITED the truck and is running across the street to meet Rowlf. They connect at the curb in front of the Drummond house and begin smelling each other all over and rubbing against each other.

Dwight, Celie and Cray all stand in wonder and in b.g. Estelle is in the doorway, all staring in amazement.

CRAY

Well, I'll be damned. Maybe Rowlf  
has found his soul mate too.

All LAUGH, except for Estelle.

ESTELLE LOOKS EVEN SADDER THAN USUAL.

BROOKE

That Dwight's kind of cute, you  
know?

CRAY

Brooke! He's not cute and he's probably older than I am.

Brooke smiles to herself.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Everyone is back in the living room, including Rowlf and Girl and now the cage of CACKLING chickens.

CELIE

This is working out great. We're all together. Mom should be coming down any second now.

With everyone watching the staircase, they finally see Mary's slippered feet APPEAR.

As Mary gets to the bottom of the staircase, at a SIGNAL from Cray, all turn toward Mary and bow, holding out their arms in what almost amounts to a curtsy, while LOUDLY intoning:

EVERYONE

HAIL MARY, HAIL MARY!

Surprised and delighted, Mary bursts into tears again and cries:

MARY

You guys are the greatest! The greatest family in the world. I love you all!

Even Dwight has a glass (empty) in his grimy hand.

DWIGHT

Ah brungyall sm eggs an' layahs too. Ah bedda leave Girl heah too. She likes y'all mor'n me.

Celie hands Mary a glass of wine and even Estelle smiles, almost.

FADE TO BLACK

(ALL AT ONCE)

ESTELLE (VO)  
Now you got two lazy-assed dogs.

CRAY (VO)  
The Crayfish rules!

CELIE (VO)  
He sure does, sweetheart. I love  
you...and I love your mom too. I'll  
get some more wine for everybody.  
Not you Brooke!

Everybody continues talking at once as their VOICES FADE  
AWAY.

FADE OUT

UNDER CLOSING TITLES (?)

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The STEAKOUT is a low brick building. To either side of the  
entrance, a small window is barred as if a jail.

Just in f.g. a red fire hydrant stands at the curb.

HOST, JIM, 20S. Slim young man in FUNKY POLICE UNIFORM.

As the group: Cray and Celie, Brooke, Harry and Mary and  
Maude APPROACH, Jim smiles broadly.

JIM  
Hi Mary. We've got a large booth  
all ready for your family and...my  
sincere condolences.

MARY  
Thank you, Jim. With my family here  
to help, I'll be just fine.

Jim turns and picks up a couple of badges from a box and  
holds them out to the kids.

BROOKE  
Thanks, but those are for kids.

HARRY  
(taking one)  
I'm a kid.

Jim holds the door open as the group ENTERS.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEAKOUT RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Seated in a large booth, everyone studies the menu.

CRAY

I guess it's okay to load and  
unload at a fire hydrant, but --

MARY

Cray! I'll let you in on a little  
secret. We put the fire hydrant out  
at night so people won't block the  
street. It's just for loading and  
unloading.

CELIE

But...haven't the authorities ever  
complained?

MARY

If anybody ever noticed and said  
anything, I'm pretty sure a free  
dinner was so great they forgot all  
about it.

HARRY

Boy, talk about dirty cops.

BROOKE

Just so the cooks or waiters are  
clean.

HARRY

Wow, what a menu. What's a First  
Offender?

CELIE

The Alcatraz, grilled salmon...Mmm.

BROOKE

Mom, you'd like the Tehachapi, it's  
a filet mignon. You like that.

CRAY

Mom, is this place making money?

MARY

Sure. Well, it's starting to. A  
long time ago, the Bulldog and some  
of his colleagues got together,

(MORE)



MARY (cont'd)  
 formed a company and set this place  
 up. And the gimmick is, your waiter  
 is your cook. While we have our  
 salads, he cooks our steaks on the  
 grill.

MAUDE  
 Just like home cookin'.

HARRY  
 The Misdemeanor! Two hotdogs with  
 barbecue beans...yuck!

During this interval, their voices continue to fade away.

DISSOLVE TO:

BEHIND THE CLOSING TITLES

INT. STEAKOUT RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Everyone is enjoying dinner. The adults are drinking wine  
 and even Cray looks a lot more confident and happier than  
 he's ever looked before.

Suddenly Mary raises her head. She rises in her booth and  
 looks over the top. She turns and waves to their waiter.

WAITER, 23, probably a college student. Waiter hurries to  
 their table.

WAITER  
 Yes, Miss Mary?

MARY  
 Well first, don't call me Miss  
 Mary. Sounds like something bad at  
 the hospital, and how come you  
 forgot to mention the new special?

WAITER  
 Oh...I'm sorry. I didn't...I --  
 everybody was talking about the  
 steaks, the Folsum, The Alcatraz

MARY  
 But what about --?

WAITER  
 Oh yes, of course.  
 (clears his throat and  
 straightens)

Here at the Steakout, we feature another new specialy: The Special Steakout Omelet, a dinner for four or more.

MARY

Wow, that's more like it.

CRAY

What is he talking about?

MARY

Well, you know I have a little pull around here. I told the manager about Mim and her omelets and he got interested so next thing we all talked and now Dwight supplies the eggs and Mim works here in the evenings, and can Mim make an omelet!

Everybody RISES and looks over to the grill area where waiters grill steaks for their guests. Just past that, behind a glass, at another grill with a bright fire flaming up, stands Mim in a white chef's outfit with a tall toque on her head and a big smile on her face as she rolls out a perfect omelet onto a long platter.

A small crowd of GUESTS are gathered in front of Mim, watching in amazement as she works. As Mim rolls out the omelet, the onlookers clap and laugh.

The whole Drummond crew cheers and waves too in welcoming pleasure.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JAIL - DAY

A GUARD opens the cell door with the four bikers inside. He shoves a NEW PRISONER inside and slams the door, locking it.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Biker One and Biker Two are both looking sad and forlorn with bandages all over their scorched faces and hands, etc.

The other two bikers just sit looking dejected.

The new prisoner rubs his wrists and looks at the bandaged bikers.

NEW PRISONER

Wow, what happened to you guys? You  
get in a gang fight?

Biker Two OPENS his mouth to speak but Biker One quickly  
holds up one bandaged hand.

BIKER ONE

NOT - ONE - FUC - KING - WORD, BRO.  
Not one word!

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN

EXT. DRUMMOND FRONT PORCH - DAY

INSERT: EVERYBODY HAS A SOUL MATE SOMEWHERE

Rowlf PROUDLY stands by Girl who is lying on a mat with 4 or  
5 puppies.

FADE OUT

THE END