

THE MOUNTAIN KING

By
MICHAEL PREVETTE

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS-DAY

BEGIN MAIN TITLES SEQUENCE - VARIOUS SHOTS

The sky is blue and the clouds high and white. Rolling mountains and sheer cliffs.

A ribbon of highway cuts through the mountain greenery, and on the two lane blacktop, a MAN ON A MOTORCYCLE. Cruising along.

TORTURE ROOM

A man tied to a chair. He's in his late forties, average height and weight. His face a mass of bruises and blood.

Two MEN IN SHADOW surround the man in the chair (NOTE: these shadowed men will later be introduced as MUTT AND JEFF, so voices are consistent). One man PUNCHES the victim, BLOOD SPLATTERS.

MAN IN SHADOW 1

Okay asshole, you get it now? You get offered a sweetheart deal, you bite. Got it?

(no response. To his partner)

Now he's the strong, silent type, huh?

MAN IN SHADOW 2

He's dead I think is why.

THE MAN ON THE MOTORCYCLE

the bike hugs the curves of the mountain roads.

DARK BEDROOM

Where a PORTLY MAN and a HOOKER are going at it, fast and furious. The man stiffens, shudders, then relaxes, spent. The woman wraps her arms and legs around him as he heaves for breath.

She's trying not to giggle. One sputtering laugh gets out, though. She clamps her hand over her mouth but it's too late, the Portly Man heard it.

THE TORTURE ROOM

Another anonymous SHAPE is facing the battered man now. He's confronted on both sides.

The shape in front is holding a STUN GUN...

THE DARK BEDROOM

Where the portly man now has the hooker by the hair and she's rightfully scared. He draws back a fist and THUD.

THE TORTURE ROOM

The stun gun is jabbed into the mass of blood and tissue which was once a face, the gun ARCS and SIZZLES with SPARKING ELECTRICITY as the battered man SCREAMS.

MAN IN SHADOW 1

Hey, he ain't dead after all.

THE MOUNTAINS-DAY

Rounding a sharp bend, the motorcycle runs through a patch of loose gravel and SPINS out of control, SKIDDING across the highway, the driver TUMBLING into the dirt, ROLLING over and over as his bike SLAMS into a rock off the roadside.

THE TORTURE ROOM

The battered man sags in the chair, lifeless. The SHAPES moves out.

THE DARK BEDROOM

The hooker is softly crying, wiping blood from her mouth and nose. The Portly Man just chuckles.

THE MAN ON THE MOTORCYCLE

NICHOLAS GUNN, sits up. Slowly. Blood seeps from a cut on his forehead. Early thirties, roughly handsome. He unzips his leather jacket, shrugs it off. Uses his shirttail to wipe the blood from his forehead.

At length he gets up, hand to his side in pain. He moves over to the bike, rights it, checks it out.

The handlebars are bent. He grimaces, climbs on. Tries to pull the bent bars back into position. No luck. He kicks the starter, the engine COUGHS, SPUTTERS, dies out.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS-DAY

Gunn walks the bike down the road.

EXT. OUTSIDE TOWN

Approaching civilization now. A road sign reads "Welcome 3 MI". Almost there. Gunn pushes on.

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

VARIOUS SHOTS: A small town in the shadow of the mountains. Narrow main streets wind through the business district. Not quite Mayberry but not Chicago, either.

END MAIN TITLES SEQUENCE

INT. GARAGE-BATHROOM

In the dingy rest room, Gunn uses wet paper towels to wipe the dried blood from his forehead. Washes his face, tries to freshen up.

EXT. GARAGE-DAY

LARRY the mechanic gives the cycle a once over. Larry hems and haws as he inspects the damage.

Gunn exits the bathroom and walks over to Larry.

LARRY
Pinged her up real good.

GUNN
Yeah.

LARRY
How long you been ridin' a bike?

GUNN
It was an accident, pal.

LARRY
Yup.

He goes back to inspecting some of the broken spokes on the wheels. Gunn moves over to a soda machine for a cold drink. He has to bang the machine, which causes the Larry to raise his eyebrows.

LARRY(cont'd)
Gotta finesse her, man. Treat your machines right.

Gunn bangs the machine. No soda.

GUNN
You pop this thing open?

LARRY
Nope. Guy fills it up Mondays, gots the only key. Diner at the corner, you want to grab a bite, this'll take just a bit.

Gunn considers, then crosses the lot.

INT. DINER-DAY

Gunn enters the small, cozy diner. Plaid tablecloths and curtains at the windows, all the comforts of home.

Gunn enters the diner and moves to a table at a window.

A WAITRESS - JANET - moves from behind the counter and crosses to Gunn's table. Mid-late 40's, she shows some wear, but still very attractive in her polyester standard-issue non-flattering waitress dress. She carries a ready cup of coffee.

JANET

Hi there.

She sits the coffee down.

JANET (cont'd)

Want something to eat?

GUNN

Can you bring me a cold drink?

JANET

Oh. Sure. What would you like?

GUNN

Whatever. Just something cold.

She takes the coffee with her. Gunn looks around. The few diners mind their own business.

Through the window, Larry tinkers away at the bike.

Janet comes back with a glass of water, choked with ice.

GUNN (cont'd)

Thank you so much.

He drains the glass.

JANET

I'll get you a refill. You okay?

GUNN

Hmm?

She touches the abrasion on his head.

GUNN (cont'd)

Oh yeah. Had an accident.

JANET
I've got some iodine.

GUNN
That's OK. I cleaned it.

She looks at him warmly.

JANET
Hungry? We have a great roast beef sandwich.

GUNN
That'd be great, ah -
(reading the name tag over her ample bosom)
Janet. With mustard.

JANET
One Janet with mustard.
(smiles at him, a sweet flirting smile)
'Kay. Be right up. You know you'd better watch out. An old gal like me might take a liking to a guy like you. And put your eyes back in your head.

She winks. Gunn smiles back, she heads behind the counter, gives the order to the cook. Comes back with a pitcher of water and refills Gunn's glass.

GUNN
That's service.

JANET
We give great service. Welcome to Welcome.

Gunn chuckles. She's sincere.

GUNN
Welcome to Welcome. Nice.

JANET
New in town?

GUNN
Yeah, I'm traveling through, banged my bike up. It's at the garage.

She looks out the window, at the garage. Larry tinkers away.

JANET
Aw, not staying?

GUNN
No, just get my bike fixed, and I'm gone.
After lunch.

JANET
We serve lunch, too.

They smile. With no real reason to hang around, Janet winks and goes to serve another customer.

EXT. GARAGE-DAY

Gunn comes back to Larry, who nods in acknowledgement, then goes back to the bike.

GUNN
How's it looking?

LARRY
Know what they say about a watched pot?

Gunn moves away, takes in the surroundings:

A mom-and-pop market is across the street. A YOUNG WOMAN exits the market, arms full of groceries, and walks to her S.U.V. A BLACK FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE pulls up beside the woman, three figures riding inside.

Down the street at the diner, Janet stands outside, sipping on a water bottle. Sees Gunn. Smiles and waves, he reciprocates.

Gunn looks back to Larry. Gunn notices for the first time:

Larry is missing two fingers on his right hand.

Larry sees Gunn's interest.

LARRY (cont'd)
S' nothin'. Fan belt chewed 'em off.

GUNN
What do you think?

LARRY
Bars pretty bent up. Can't drive like that for long.

GUNN
Can you fix it?

LARRY
Nope.

End of conversation. He wipes his oily hands on a rag, spits on the cement, and turns to go back inside.

GUNN

Hey?

LARRY

Yeah?

During this, VOICES are steadily raised in the background, male and female. The male voices loud and insistent.

GUNN

Can anybody in town fix it?

LARRY

Lloyd Hawkins got a metal shop over to Hanson street. Right behind the jail, built 'em some new cells last year, he'd be the only one in Welcome who-

GUNN

OK, can he fix the bike?

LARRY

Lemme give him a call, he'll come over and-

SMASH! Both men turn at the sound and see:

Across the streets, three THUGS (WOLF, MUTT, AND JEFF) are harassing the woman. Her groceries are scattered on the street. One of the side windows on the S.U.V. has been shattered. Wolf holds a TIRE IRON.

Gunn turns to Larry. Larry ignores the commotion.

GUNN

There a cop around here?

Larry looks up, watches.

The men have the woman cornered against her car. Towering over her.

LARRY

Stay out of it, man.

Across the street, the shades are drawn on the front door of the market.

Gunn takes a step, but Larry grabs his arm.

LARRY (cont'd)
I'm tellin' you-

GUNN
Call the damn cops!

LARRY
Ain't my business. Yours neither. Trust
me, that's nothing but trouble over
there.

The thugs SMASH the rear window on the car. All three close
in on the woman. Now she's a bit afraid.

LARRY (cont'd)
You don't wanna do it.

GUNN
The hell I don't.

He marches across the street, taking his jacket off. The
thugs see him coming, and one steps out to greet him.

MUTT
(pointing a finger)
Right there, fella.

Everybody is watching Gunn now.

GUNN
Hi guys. Trouble?

WOLF
You don't know a thing about what's goin'
on here, mister. You just go on about
your business.

JEFF
This don't concern you.

Gunn smiles.

MUTT
The fuck you laughin' about?

GUNN
That's the exact same thing the guy
across the street said to me.

WOLF
Well then maybe you'd better take his
advice.

Gunn glares at them.

WOLF (cont'd)

Tough guy.

GUNN

No. I'm not a tough guy. Just wanna make sure nobody gets hurt. Right? We're all grown ups. You can just pay the lady for her window and-

WOLF

Fella, you must not be from around here.

GUNN

What am I missing?

Larry is moving to the end of his lot for a better look. Gunn looks at him. Other ONLOOKERS are gathering now.

GUNN (cont'd)

Somebody call the police!

Trying to make her way through the thugs, the woman speaks up.

WOMAN

Really, it's okay, I'm leaving, so it's-

WOLF

(grabbing her arm)

You ain't goin' nowhere, honey.

GUNN

Hands off.

Wolf takes Gunn's arm in an iron grip.

WOLF

(with a stupid grin)

Got both of you now.

Now the guys close in on Gunn.

JEFF

You got a death wish or-

In a flash, Gunn has WHIPPED his jacket up and out, the zipper on the garment SCRATCHING across JEFF's face, drawing blood. He brings his leg up in a LIGHTNING SWIFT KICK TO THE BALLS which doubles over the first guy, then WOLF steps in and PUNCHES Gunn full in the face. He goes down, and as the thug moves on him Gunn PISTONS his legs up SMASHING the goon in the face.

He does well against the three men, taking his licks but giving some as well. He manages to HEAVE one man up over his shoulder and onto the hood of the car, SHATTERING the windshield in the process.

Larry stands in the street, watching the melee.

After a brief but brutal fight, the numbers win out and the Thugs overpower Gunn, holding him down, PUNCHING and KICKING him mercilessly. The woman tries to step in but she's BACKHANDED and CRUMPLES to the ground.

The Thugs have Gunn encircled.

WOLF

Smart ass. Hate you guys with a big MOUTH!

He punctuates that by KICKING Gunn in the stomach.

JEFF

Shoulda minded your own BUSINESS!

Another kick in the gut.

WOMAN

Stop it!

JEFF

Shut up, bitch!

Gunn is dazed, bleeding, can't get the strength to move. The first thug gets real close, raising his STEEL-TOED BOOT up as:

MUTT

Eat THIS!

He SLAMS his foot straight down, there's a HEAVY THUD and:

BLACK SCREEN

FADE IN:

INT. JAIL CELL-DAY

Gunn is on a bunk, flat on his back. The jail is quiet. MOVEMENT, SOUNDS OFF-SCREEN. Gunn stirs. KEYS RATTLE. A LOCK OPENS.

Gunn sits up, wincing. The CELL DOOR CREAKS open. A MAN enters. Tall, imposing. Steel gray hair. Steel gray eyes too. Denim jeans and official jacket.

His hands rough, his movements precise, it all adds to a man to be reckoned with. SHERIFF DWAYNE LUCAS.

Gunn watches Lucas. He drags over a small wooden chair, sits. His eyes never leave Gunn.

LUCAS

Beautiful day outside, what ya say?.
About seventy-five for the high. Low
humidity this time of year. We stay
pretty mild up here. Pret-ty mild. Of
course, come the winter...

(trying to figure all this out,

Gunn just shakes his head)

Beautiful up here. You agree, Mr.
Nicholas Gunn?

Gunn reaches to his back pocket, and as he does Lucas holds up: Gunn's wallet. He tosses it.

LUCAS (cont'd)

Beautiful day. Sure would hate for
somebody to go and just fuck it up.
Now I kinda gots an idea what happened
out there on the street today. You fellas
got to playin', measuring dicks and
whatnot, then things get outta control.
Outta control, what ya say.

Gunn looks through the bars at the other cells: all empty.

LUCAS (cont'd)

(picking up on Gunn's gaze)

They ain't here. They're good fellas, got
families. Had 'em over to the annual
cookout last summer. Now you, my friend,
that's another story. Stranger in town.
Pickin' fights with local boys-

GUNN

It wasn't that way-

LUCAS

Don't tell me a story, boy. I know your
type. In fact, I know all about you. Who
you are. Where you came from. And what
you've done.

Silent stares.

LUCAS (cont'd)

Guess all that trouble you ran away from,
all that "wasn't that way", either.

GUNN

You don't know me, Sheriff. I'm not like that-

LUCAS

I know and understand more than you think I do, boy. I still have a few teeth left in my head. But I hate the paperwork that goes along with extradition, so I'm gonna surprise us both and ask you do both you and me a favor.

GUNN

Such as?

LUCAS

Such as just listening to what I have to say and then just doing as you're told. This is the way things are on my watch.

GUNN

What about the woman?

LUCAS

The woman?

(sighs)

I know her type, too. Don't worry about her. You got some, what ya say, bigger fish to fry.

GUNN

She was an innocent -

LUCAS

Ain't nobody 'round here innocent. Now, we're gonna cut you loose here shortly. Be in your best interest to leave town as soon as possible.

He waits for a reaction. None from Gunn. Lucas takes out a cheroot from his pocket and offers one to Gunn, who refuses.

LUCAS (cont'd)

So you can go. Quickly and quietly. I'll send you over to the doc, he'll patch you up and the county will handle the bills. Then you go. Welcome is a nice, quiet town. Let's keep it that way. I want you to be somebody else's problem, not mine.

GUNN

I don't suppose I get to say anything in my defense, Sheriff?

LUCAS

Ain't accused of any crime, son. You just needs to go.

EXT. GARAGE-DAY

Gunn limps across the lot towards his bike. Gunn checks out his cycle, looks over the sleeping bag and the various duffel bags, combing through his belongings.

Larry watches him.

LARRY

I told you.

GUNN

Yeah.

LARRY

Look, these guys, you need to be careful, you know?

His mangled hand is on Gunn's shoulder. Self-conscious, he removes it.

Gunn inspects the handlebars; they've been twisted back into place, but they're ugly and obviously in need in professional help.

Gingerly, he climbs on and kick-starts it. It RUMBLES into life, SPUTTERS, then catches.

Down the block, Lucas is watching as well.

Gunn puts the bike into gear and slowly pulls onto the street.

Lucas watches him go. The bike cruises around the corner and disappears. Lucas keeps on looking, even after the bike is gone.

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

Just outside of town, Gunn pulls the bike onto the shoulder of the road. He cuts the engine. Puts his head down on the handlebars.

He puts a hand at his side, it comes away wet with blood. He opens his shirt, a bandage on his ribs is soaked through.

He winces in pain again. Then, a MOTOR in the background. An APPROACHING CAR. Gunn watches the car as it approaches.

The rear window has plastic taped over it, the car from earlier, with the thugs and the woman .The car pulls up to a stop beside Gunn.

He waits as the woman gets out; SHARON HARPER. Younger than Gunn, dark-haired and tanned. Her clothes loose, baggy sweats. She smiles at Gunn.

SHARON

Hi.

GUNN

Hello.

SHARON

Remember me?

GUNN

How could I forget?

SHARON

Thank you.

GUNN

No problem.

SHARON

Where are you going?

GUNN

Out of town. On a rail.

SHARON

Huh?

GUNN

Doesn't matter where, as long as I leave.
The Sheriff made that clear.

SHARON

There's a surprise.

He winces again.

SHARON (cont'd)

You okay?

GUNN

Can you sue a witch doctor for
malpractice?

She moves closer, sees the blood.

SHARON

Jesus.

GUNN

It's okay.

SHARON

Let me get you into Boone, see a real doctor.

GUNN

No, it's fine.

He collapses.

EXT. SHARON'S HOUSE-DAY

Literally on the side of the mountain, the back deck on stilts. A spectacular house with a spectacular view.

INT. SHARON'S HOUSE-DAY

Gunn is on his back on a large, push sofa. Sharon sits beside him, mopping his forehead with a damp cloth. He wakes, flutters his eyes.

GUNN

I keep waking up in strange places.

SHARON

(as he tries to sit up)
Don't try to get up.

GUNN

(easing back down)
You got it.

SHARON

You'll be okay.

GUNN

Where's my bike?

SHARON

I called Larry at the garage, he picked it up, it got banged up again when you fainted.

GUNN

Fainted. Great.
(checking out the room)
Nice hospital.

SHARON

Closer to bring you here. But I did have Dr. Houston come by.

GUNN

Who?

SHARON

One of daddy's old friends. Says you'll be okay. Apparently too mean to die.

GUNN

I've been ordered out of town.

SHARON

Don't worry, you're safe, you don't have to be afraid of me.

GUNN

No, you're Florence Nightingale. My turn to thank you, I suppose.

SHARON

No problem.

Groggy, he lies back, wincing.

INT. SHARON'S HOUSE-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Sharon takes a loose shirt and shorts out of the dresser, places them on the bed. The door is ajar, she peeks out to check on Gunn:

He's still on the sofa. Eyes closed.

Sharon starts to shrug out of her sweats.

ON THE SOFA

Gunn wakes, eyes flutter open He sees:

SHARON

changing her clothes. She pulls her sweatshirt over her head.

GUNN

Looks away, awkward, not wanting to spy on her. Closes his eyes again.

EXT. SHARON'S HOUSE-DUSK

On the back deck, Sharon has grilled up burgers and steak fries. She watches as Gunn eats, starved.

SHARON

Good?

GUNN

(through a mouthful)

Mmmmm.

She watches him. Sips a beer. Smiles. He stops, mouth bursting with burger.

GUNN (cont'd)

What?

SHARON

I like to see a hungry man eat. Sorry it's nothing fancy, but most of my groceries are still on Main Street.

GUNN

It's great, don't worry.

She watches him eat. A DOG skips up the back stairs of the deck and nuzzles Sharon.

SHARON

(hugging the dog)

Max! Hey buddy.

The affectionate Lab jumps up, licks her face for attention. She laughs and plays with the dog, rubbing his chin, etc.

SHARON (cont'd)

Hungry, boy?

She opens her burger and takes the meat patty out, Max gobbles it up.

GUNN

Want some fries with that?

SHARON

You crazy? He doesn't eat fries, do ya boy?

More play with the dog. Max comes over to Gunn, begging.

GUNN

Sorry pal, you'll have to fight me for it.

SHARON

So, tell me, Mr. Gunn, what's your story?

GUNN
Just passin' through.

SHARON
To where?

GUNN
The next place.

SHARON
Well. Where are ya from?

GUNN
No place special.

He swallows, washes it down, finishes off the burger. Looks at her as she lights a cigarette. She offers him one, he lights up.

GUNN (cont'd)
Tell me your story, Sharon Harper.

SHARON
Oh, there's not much story. Just the lonely princess on the mountaintop. The ruler of all she sees. Waiting on a Prince Charming to come to her rescue.

GUNN
Doesn't the knight rescue the princess?

SHARON
Well. Any port in a storm.

GUNN
What does the beautiful princess need to be rescued from?

SHARON
Beautiful princess? Thank you.

A long look in each other's eyes.

GUNN
So. What does the beautiful princess need to be rescued from? What was that all about?

SHARON
In town? You don't wanna know.

GUNN
Internal bleeding gives me the right to ask.

SHARON

Come here.

She stands, moves to the deck rail. Looks out over the spectacular mountain vista. Fog moving in.

SHARON (cont'd)

See all this?

GUNN

What?

SHARON

All this. It's mine.

GUNN

All this?

SHARON

About as far as you can see.

He takes it in. Impressive.

SHARON (cont'd)

Daddy left it all to me. It's mine. The largest privately-owned stretch here in the high country. The last, too. Somebody else wants it. And the fucker will do anything to get it.

GUNN

Who?

She turns and looks out into the great wide open.

INT. SHARON'S HOUSE-NIGHT

The lights are out, just moonlight now. Sharon stands at the floor-to-ceiling glass doors. One door is open, the breeze ripples her hair. She sips beer from the bottle. Unbuttons her top blouse button.

She turns and looks back inside. Gunn is asleep on the sofa.

Looking back into the night. CRICKETS CHIRP out there. An OWL hoots. She takes it all in, running her hands through her hair. Takes the ice cold bottle and presses it to her forehead, her cheek. Rubs the bottle over the swell of her cleavage. She takes a slow drink.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON GUNN

Asleep on the sofa. His eyes flutter. He moans soft. Moves a bit. Shudders. Eyes slowly blink open and he looks down and:

Sharon is beside the sofa, face buried in Gunn's crotch as she gives him head.

Awake now, his eyes roll - is it a dream? - his hands move and take a handful of her hair and Sharon's head bobs up and down, nice, steady, really blowing Gunn's mind, so to speak.

She works on him until he moans in climax, looks down at last and Sharon is there, smiling up, rubbing her hands over his legs as she meets his gaze. Gunn sits up, takes her face, kisses her, hungry and horny and she pulls at her own shirt, ripping the fabric open and he's grabbing at her bra, both are animals now, kissing and biting and:

DISSOLVE TO:

LOVEMAKING MONTAGE

As Gunn and Sharon get it on: Gunn slips fingers under her bra straps as they lock around each other. Hot and hard, they grapple and pull and move into the bedroom as they undress each other, rolling on the bed as she climbs on top and the sex is hot and the curtains billow with the breeze and Sharon rides him, the rhythm builds and at last they climax as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHARON'S HOUSE-BEDROOM-NIGHT

Wrapped around each other in the bed. He traces his fingers across her cheek.

GUNN

My God.

SHARON

What?

He smiles. Kisses her.

SHARON (cont'd)

All better now?

GUNN

Much.

SHARON

You're mine, all mine. Nobody can take you from me.

She nibbles his neck, her hands all over him. Outside, Max BARKS. Again.

SHARON (cont'd)

Aw, Max.

Gunn sits up. The dog keeps barking. Gunn is alert and:

BANG! A GUNSHOT SHATTERS GLASS in the bedroom window. Gunn is on the alert in an instant, rolling on top of Sharon, hand over her mouth.

They wait. Gunn motions silence and raises up to look into the dark and BANG again, this time the shot BLASTS WOOD SPLINTERS from the wall and

Gunn rolls off the bed onto the floor, grabs his jeans, slides into them, grabs Sharon and pulls her onto the floor, pushes her under the bed.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Gunn crawls across the floor, grabs his cigarette lighter from the coffee table, crawls towards the kitchen.

Sharon watches Gunn, afraid. She wraps the bedsheet around her naked body.

Gunn opens the cabinet under the sink, reaches inside, finds what he wants - a can of bug spray.

EXT. SHARON'S HOUSE-NIGHT

As the front door eases open and Gunn eases out, not a sound, nerves on edge. He looks around into the night.

Max is barking at the night. Gunn rubs his head, quiets him down.

MOVEMENT in the woods edging the property. Gunn cuts his eyes to the source of the sound. Nothing to be seen.

RAPID GUNFIRE EXPLODES all around, and Gunn is on the move, LEAPING over the railing and into the brush as the BULLETS CHEW UP SPLINTERS from the woodwork and

MUZZLE FLASH can be seen in the dark and

Gunn is moving as the GUNFIRE stops and

Gunn is silent and still in the woods.

The SNIPER sights through his scope. A big man, in toboggan, heavy jacket. Comfortable with the rifle.

THROUGH THE RIFLE SCOPE

Night vision: everything is green, hazy. Moving side to side, no sign of Gunn.

THE DOG

starts BARKING AGAIN loud and

THE SNIPER

WHIRLS his rifle to the source of the sound and BAM! GUNSHOTS EXPLODE again and

GUNN dives for cover as

THE SNIPER

SPRAYS BULLETS around the area and

GUNN

creeps through the underbrush, careful, step by step.

The sniper keeps up watch.

There's the CLICK/HISS of flint striking and:

Gunn's homemade BLOWTORCH lights the night and the man's arm is set AFIRE. The sniper whirls around, dropping his gun, FLAMES FLAPPING from his arm, Gunn ducking under the arm and

Gunn moves for the weapon but the sniper is there, his BLAZING ARM a weapon as he JABS at Gunn, FLESH SIZZLING as Gunn SHOUTS in pain and the sniper KICKS Gunn in the gut and he goes down and

The sniper rips at his jacket, tearing at the burning fabric, and in a moment he's patted the flames out as Gunn is up and at him again and

The two men STRUGGLE, a quick, VIOLENT grapple, PUNCHES thrown, a rough brawl and finally the sniper falls to the ground and grabs his rifle, and the MUZZLE FLASH cuts through the dark, wild shots in Gunn's direction and

Gunn DIVES into the nearby brush as the BULLETS CHEW UP THE GROUND and

Then it's quiet. Almost. Gunn hears FOOTSTEPS IN THE BRUSH, fading away as the sniper escapes.

Gunn gasps for breath, down and out again. He clutches his side and painfully stands.

INT. SHARON'S HOUSE-NIGHT

In a long T-shirt, Sharon sits beside Gunn on the sofa.

SHARON

If they wanted you dead, you'd be dead.

GUNN

Well they came pretty fuckin' close. Too close for me. I was going to ask you what the hell is going on here, but I just need to take the Sheriff's advice and hit the road.

Gunn walks into the bedroom, Sharon right behind.

SHARON

So that's it?

GUNN

(as he packs his bags)
Yeah, pretty much. I wreck my bike, get beaten up, thrown in jail and shot at all in one day? Time to move on, I think.

SHARON

Don't forget me sucking your cock.

GUNN

Oh, I won't forget that, lady.

SHARON

(slapping at his chest)
You son of a bitch!

GUNN

Hey! Cut it out! Whatever the hell is happening here, you need to leave, too. Doesn't look like the most healthy place for you to settle down.

SHARON

I can't leave, this is all I have!

She plops down on the bed, angry, frustrated, crying.

SHARON (cont'd)

This is all I have. This house. The land. It's mine.

Gunn stops packing. Looks at her. Sits down beside her.

SHARON (cont'd)

They want me out. They want it all.
They've shot out windows before. Trying
to scare me, that's all. Like today.
Those big sons of bitches. Wanted to
scare me into selling out and leaving.

GUNN

Why don't you go?

She gets up. Moves to the french doors, opens them.

GUNN (cont'd)

You might not wanna stand there in the
open.

SHARON

It's all right. They've made their point
for tonight. Look out there.

Gunn joins her, they look out over the mountain.

SHARON (cont'd)

It's all I have left from Daddy. He would
never sell to that bastard. I won't
either.

GUNN

Who?

SHARON

Marcus Moore. He's the big cheese around
here, a real wheeler-dealer. He and my
daddy were in business together a long
time ago. He's been after me for the past
few years, after I got out of school.
Hotels, ski resorts, he wants to clear it
all and build. He's already the richest
man in the county. All this land, he'd
turn in into a playground for his rich
friends. I can see the neon now.

GUNN

If you sold it, you'd be rich.

SHARON

I do OK.

GUNN

You can always do better.

Quiet. Her hand on his arm.

SHARON

I'm sorry. I didn't want you to get involved in all this. It's not your problem.

GUNN

Well - what are you gonna do about it?

SHARON

I don't know. Stay here. Keep the blinds closed. Duck and cover.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE-DAY

Sharon and Gunn sits across from Lucas, who has been taking notes.

LUCAS

This is nothing more than a property dispute.

SHARON

Yeah, Marcus Moore is trying to force me off of my property.

LUCAS

Did you see Mr. Moore at your residence last night?

SHARON

No.

LUCAS

Then how do you-

SHARON

Those two bullies who attacked me yesterday-

LUCAS

Attacked?

SHARON

-work for Moore.

LUCAS

Missy, you know that for a fact?

SHARON

They're not too subtle about what they want, I've seen them together.

LUCAS

The company they keep isn't evidence of any wrong doing.

SHARON

You're just not going to do a damn-

GUNN

Let's cut through all this crap.

LUCAS

Yes. Let's.

GUNN

There is obviously some major harassment going on here, and this lady would like some protection from the local law enforcement.

LUCAS

What's your interest in all of this, Mr. Gunn?

GUNN

They took a shot at me, too.

LUCAS

When did this happen?

GUNN

Last night. We told you. They fired on Ms. Harper's house and I-

LUCAS

So you were in Ms. Harper's house last night when the alleged shots were fired.

GUNN

Um, yes. And there were no "alleged" shots, I've got muzzle burn-

LUCAS

You two were alone in the house together? Late last night?

SHARON

Yes, yes we were.

GUNN

Your point?

LUCAS

My point, boy, is I asked you yesterday to leave town to avoid any more trouble.

(MORE)

LUCAS (cont'd)

You didn't take my advice and here we are.

GUNN

I don't see where that has anything to do with anything else.

LUCAS

Tell you what. I'll send a Deputy up to, what ya say, take a look around and see what's what. I'll bet you had a couple of deer hunters with a keg in 'em, and that's all. But to keep the peace and so's no one can say I'm not doing my job, we'll look into it.

SHARON

That would be wonderful, Sheriff.

LUCAS

But ma'am, unless you have some hard evidence, I'd be very careful about who I accuse of running around and shooting and whatnot.

SHARON

Yes sir.

GUNN

Thank you, Sheriff.

Lucas grunts. Gunn and Sharon get up, Lucas right in the way. Face to face with Gunn. They stare. Neither one budges.

LUCAS

Pardon me. Mr. Gunn.

His eyes never leaving Gunn's, he steps to the side, they pass.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE-DAY

Gunn and Sharon walk to the car.

GUNN

Don't tell me he's not on somebody's payroll. What is up with this town? You know he's not gonna do a damn thing.

SHARON

Yeah, but he had to take the complaint. It's on paper.

GUNN
Paper burns, Sharon. It shreds.

SHARON
I'm so mad, I need a coffee, Come on.

GUNN
Let me go to the drug store, grab a pack
of cigarettes. Meet you there in five.

INT. DRUG STORE-DAY

Gunn walks in, heads to a display of tobaccos. Janet comes
up, purchases in hand.

JANET
Hello there, tall, dark and mysterious.

GUNN
Hi. How are you?

JANET
I'm good. Still in town I see?

GUNN
Yeah. How about that.

JANET
I saw what happened. On the street, with
those sons of bitches.

GUNN
You know those guys?

JANET
Yeah. Well, everybody knows those guys.
And Sharon, too.

GUNN
Oh?

JANET
Word gets around. Sharon, she's - well -
drama follows her, I think.

GUNN
Tell me about it.

She studies him.

JANET
You're staying with her, huh?

GUNN

What makes you say-

JANET

I didn't just fall off a truck, honey. She's pretty and all. But she's...complicated. Didn't you mama tell you not to get involved with complicated women?

GUNN

She might have mentioned it. And you?

JANET

Not me. What you see here is what you get.

GUNN

Is it?

JANET

For the most part. What you don't see, I'll show you later. I offered you lunch the other day. The offer still stands. Or maybe even dinner. Come on, don't tell me you're afraid of little ol' me?

Flirting, eyes batting, she backs away, smiling. Gunn watches her.

INT. DINER-DAY

Gunn and Sharon in a booth, coffee and pastry.

SHARON

I'm not gonna fold. Nobody is taking anything of mine, nobody can make me back down.

GUNN

This old-boy network in this place, these kind of things-

SHARON

If you want to be a pussy-

GUNN

You're not hearing me.

SHARON

I hear you fine.

Awkward silence, she's pissed.

GUNN

I've seen this kind of thing before.

SHARON

So you run.

GUNN

You just have to know when enough is enough, that's all.

Her eyes are on a TV set bolted to the wall.

On TV, news footage of a crime scene.

TV ANNOUNCER (v.o.)

...of local businessman Jim Bretherton was found late Tuesday evening in a culvert on the outskirts of Hanover county. Bretherton had been missing for two days-

SHARON

Shit, I want to hear this.

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

- was a major property holder in Hanover county, with interests from real estate to the proposed new shopping mall-

GUNN

Who's that guy?

SHARON

He knew my daddy. And Marcus Moore. They were in business together.

GUNN

For how long?

SHARON

Nobody stays in business with Marcus Moore for long.

INT. SHARON'S CAR-TRAVELING-DAY

As Sharon drives home.

SHARON

Dad and Marcus Moore had a business together years ago. Real estate of course.

(she suddenly brakes, backs up)
You need to see this. Really see what this is about.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD-DAY

The S.U.V. creeps up a small, rutted dirt road, drooping limbs brushing the chassis.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT-DAY

The S.U.V. pulls to the side of the road. Sharon and Gunn climb out.

SHARON

Come on.

He looks at the scenery, breath-taking.

SHARON

Dad did all the management stuff, Moore was the go-getter. They pretty much built this town. Then dad found out Moore was cooking the books, socking away thousands of dollars. Mom said it was pretty ugly.

GUNN

How old were you?

SHARON

I was a kid. She left not long after that. They weren't talking much by then anyway. All the land Moore bought with my dad, Moore fudged the paperwork, left Dad out to dry. The only thing he had left was what he left to me. And I'm gonna fuckin' keep it.

GUNN

I believe you, lady.

He pulls out a smoke, lights up.

SHARON

Be careful with that. Dry season. Make sure you don't get burned.

GUNN

I'm always looking out for that.

SHARON

Really?

GUNN

Really.

She moves to him, takes the cigarette, takes a long drag, then carefully stubs it out.

SHARON

Maybe you should be a bit more careful,
Mr. Gunn. Seems like you're getting in
over your head.

GUNN

I was trying to tell someone that exact
thing last night.

She kisses him. Soft. Then breaks away.

SHARON

Really?

GUNN

(taking her in his arms)
Really.

They kiss again. And again.

EXT. SHARON'S HOUSE-DUSK

Gunn and Sharon watch the sunset.

GUNN

Told you he wouldn't show.

SHARON

It was worth a try.

GUNN

Sharon, what are you gonna do? Sooner or
later, you're gonna get hurt. These guys
are gonna stop playing and move in for
the kill. So to speak. You can always
call the state attorney's office.

SHARON

Or I could drive over to Marcus Moore's
and blow his brains out.

Gunn looks at her. Wondering if she's joking.

EXT. MOORE'S ESTATE-NIGHT

Establishing shot. A large estate, sloping lawn, accent
lights illuminating the front lawn. Gated, with a pool around
back, luxury cars in the driveway.

Sharon and Gunn pull up, cut the engine.

GUNN

Now, promise me you won't blow his brains
out.

They climb from the S.U.V. and walk up the drive, SPLASHING SOUNDS from the pool around back. LAUGHTER.

Sharon and Gunn head towards the pool, when:

A BIG MAN steps out of the shadows. Wolf again.

WOLF
Goin' somewhere?

SHARON
Yeah. To see your shit load of a boss.

Wolf takes a step forward. Gunn intercepts.

GUNN
Hold on there, 'zilla.

WOLF
Wanna dance with me again?

Gunn places a hand on Wolf's arm, Wolf hisses and snatches his arm back, it hurts. Wolf steps back.

GUNN
Arm still tender? Put some salve on it,
good for burns.

WOLF
Blow me.

Sharon and Gunn pass.

Rounding the house, a small gathering is in place at the pool; a few lovely bikini ladies are splashing about, a few older, leather-skinned men are lounging, and presiding over it all is:

MARCUS MOORE

An intimidating man. In fact, the Portly Man from earlier. Wrapped in a terry cloth robe which doesn't quite cover his round belly. Beads of sweat on his forehead. His bulk isn't fat, it looks solid. He could slice you in half with that killer shark smile.

MOORE
Hello there. Come on in. Offer you a
drink?

Sharon is fuming. Gunn keeps a hand on her shoulder.

SHARON
No, thanks. I came to talk.

MOORE

Business never waits, does it. I like that.

SHARON

Marcus. That is such crap.

MOORE

How have you been, all alone up there on that mountain?

SHARON

We need to go inside and talk.

MOORE

I appreciate your urgency. Stop by my office tomorrow-

SHARON

(as she goes on, the pool people stop and listen)
Listen you fat bastard, you'd better leave me and my house the hell alone, or I'll drive right to the state's attorney's office in the morning, don't you think I won't.

MOORE

(in her face like a shot, and dead serious)
Little girl, you watch your mouth. You are way out of your league here. Follow me.

INT. MOORE'S ESTATE-STUDY-NIGHT

He ushers them inside the mahogany and leather room and shuts the double sliding doors. One wall of the room is taken by a number of plasma screens, all dark now.

MOORE

Have a seat.

He sits behind a huge desk. They stand.

MOORE (cont'd)

(seeing they won't sit)
Fine, then. What is so important that you can just waltz into my home and disrupt my private life?

SHARON

Disrupt your private life? You're kidding me? You shot into my home! My home!

MOORE

I did no such thing.

SHARON

You had one of your boys do it. Like they roughed me up on the street yesterday. I know it's you.

MOORE

You don't know all that you think you do. Don't mind if I take care of a few things as we talk? Business never waits and all.

He uses a remote control to light up the plasma screens. Each one shows a different internet porn site, some with live feeds of various acts.

MOORE (cont'd)

I was a bit late to join the dot com boom. But now I'm here with a vengeance.

(he uses a mouse and keyboard
to move through a site)

Never underestimate the basic needs of the people. Look at this. Nice. We do all this right here in town, you know.

GUNN

(checking out an on screen
girl)

Nice.

MOORE

You'd be amazed at the local talent, what with the college so close and all. My little computer nerds in a nice little office. Girls, too.

SHARON

Listen here, Marcus-

MOORE

No. You listen. I have given you every opportunity to make a tremendous deal on that land and my patience is wearing thin. My offer still stands. For now.

SHARON

You know what my answer is.

MOORE

Do you understand what you're turning down? Look at this.

A few more clicks and the screens now show a 3-D animation of a lavish mountaintop ski resort, surround with a retail village.

MOORE (cont'd)

Welcome is drying up. I have a group of investors ready to bankroll this resort and bring this area back to life. A world-class ski resort, shopping, four-star restaurants. Right here. Think of the traffic it'd bring in. Think of putting this place on the map.

SHARON

Think of the money you'd rake in. You don't need my land for this.

MOORE

Need it? No. But I want it, it'd make the plans so much easier. And much more profitable for all concerned.

SHARON

Not interested.

MOORE

I've been trying to deal with you for a long time. And I'm tired of waiting. I'm getting older and I tire of bullshit quickly.

SHARON

Smell yourself.

MOORE

You're just as stubborn as the man who raised you-

SHARON

You ruined my dad-

MOORE

-and just as selfish and weak.

SHARON

My dad-

MOORE

Lived in his own fantasy world, where the good guys still wore white hats. And everybody played by the book. You know what he used to say about this town?

SHARON

I'm sure you'll tell me.

MOORE

That standing on top of these mountains was as close to heaven as he was going to get. And he wanted everyone else to see it that way, too.

SHARON

And you destroyed him.

MOORE

No, he destroyed himself. He saw what he wanted, but wasn't willing to do what was necessary to make the next deal. He was afraid to be strong and do what was needed. So I moved on without him.

SHARON

You sucked all the money from the company and stole his land-

MOORE

He couldn't play along. He lost.

SHARON

I just don't believe you.

MOORE

We had a gentleman's agreement for that mountain-

SHARON

You're not a gentleman.

MOORE

-and I am going to enforce that agreement. I have offered you a fair deal-

SHARON

Fuck your deal-

MOORE

(THUNDERING as he rises and he's scary as hell when he's mad)

YOU WILL NOT TALK TO ME LIKE THAT! EVER!
NOT IN MY HOME!

Sharon is scared, she moves back.

MOORE (cont'd)

You better think carefully about what you want, little girl. And think about what some people are willing to do.

GUNN

Is that a threat?

MOORE

Keep your mouth shut, punk. Nobody was talking to you. This is just between friends here. Sharon, think about it. And let me know what I want to hear.

EXT. MOORE'S ESTATE-NIGHT

Moore sees them out, they walk past the pool and leave without a word. He's almost growling at them.

One of the girls from the pool climbs out, dripping wet, and oozes over.

BIKINI GIRL

Mark, come on in.
(her hands caress him)
Who was that?

MOORE

Just some trash.

EXT. SHARON'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Gunn sits on the porch, beer in hand. Looking at the mountains, the darkness. He looks through the french doors into the bedroom.

Sharon is asleep in bed.

Gunn looks back at the dark. Max the dog comes up for attention. Gunn rubs his head absently.

Sharon stirs. She sits up, sees Gunn on the porch. She wraps the sheet around her naked body and comes outside.

GUNN

You should be sleeping.

SHARON

You should be beside me.

She kisses him, a deep kiss. He studies her in the moonlight.

SHARON (cont'd)

Who are you? Are you going to rescue me?

GUNN
Who would rescue me?

INT. SHARON'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Family photos laid out on a table. A pre-teen Sharon with her dad. Picnics, playing in the snow, etc. Each picture is ragged, well-worn.

Sharon sorts through them, smiling at the memories.

In the bedroom, Gunn stirs. Wakes, climbs out of bed.

Sharon wipes a tear away. Gunn comes up behind her, a hand on her shoulder. She smiles. She takes a photo, hands it to him.

SHARON
Look. Daddy.

He looks at the picture. She looks at him. More tears now, she folds into his arms, crying on his shoulder.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD-DAY

Sharon's vehicle cruises down the mountain.

INSIDE THE S.U.V.

Gunn is alone, early morning sunlight making him squint.

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

Gunn pulls the S.U.V. into a parking space on the main street. Climbs out and looks around.

The garage. Closed. Gunn checks his watch.

INT. DINER-DAY

Gunn enters, the only customer.

GUNN
Hello?

He walks to the counter.

GUNN (cont'd)
Hello? Anybody here?

Silence. Then, a MUFFLED NOISE from the back of the diner. Gunn hesitates. He moves towards the door to the kitchen.

FOLLOWING WITH GUNN

He moves into the kitchen, and the MUFFLED SOUND again, from the pantry, it's a person, a MOAN, and he follows cautiously.

Opens the door to the pantry and

JANET

is there, on the pantry floor, her waitress uniform rumpled, hair mussed, a bit of blood at the corner of her mouth. She lies there in a mess of boxes and cans knocked from the shelves.

Gunn goes to her.

GUNN (cont'd)

Hey.

JANET

(eyes fluttering , focusing)
Get out of here.

GUNN

You're hurt.

JANET

Help me up.

He helps her up, she rests on a low table, settling back. Gunn checks her over.

GUNN

What happened?

JANET

Just go, don't worry about it.

GUNN

Come on, you OK?

JANET

Yeah, I'll live.

Her skirt is hiked up, showing quite a bit of leg, cleavage visible. Gunn notices, she doesn't.

JANET (cont'd)

Just go, all right? I'm OK, I promise.

He grabs a roll of paper towels, tears one off and dabs at the blood on her mouth.

JANET (cont'd)
I can do that.

GUNN
Hush. What, did somebody rob you?

JANET
No.

A look from her.

GUNN
Was it -

JANET
No. I'm OK. Just some personal business.

Gunn steps back. Dissatisfied.

JANET (cont'd)
Nick, I appreciate your concern. But just don't get involved.

He waits. She tries to be strong. Her lip trembles. Then she starts to cry.

JANET (cont'd)
Oh, fuck it.

She moves to him, arms going around his back.

JANET (cont'd)
Fuck him to hell.

GUNN
You want to call the police?

JANET
No. No, that won't do. He's just a lying bastard. What a mess. What a mess. How do I get myself into these things?

GUNN
Tell me what's happening.

JANET
My lousy ex-husband. He came by, pissed off and looking for trouble. He wanted -

GUNN
I can guess what he wanted.

JANET
Screw him, though.

She sobs a bit more, Gunn holds her.

JANET (cont'd)
He'll get his. He will. I'll get him, or -
or somebody else will.
(a moment as she sniffles)
You're very nice to be here.

GUNN
I came in for breakfast, and I heard you
back here.

JANET
Don't go yet, OK?

GUNN
OK.

JANET
What are you running from?

GUNN
I don't know what you mean.

JANET
I've done enough running myself. I can
see it on you. What did you leave behind?

GUNN
(quiet, distant)
Nothing.

JANET
What are you looking for?

GUNN
Nothing.

JANET
You're a horrible liar.

She hugs him harder. Then, she gingerly kisses his neck. Gunn
blinks.

JANET (cont'd)
Very nice to take care of me.

GUNN
Janet, I -

JANET
Shhh.

She kisses his neck again. Looks at him. Kisses his mouth.

JANET (cont'd)

Kiss me.

GUNN

Janet -

Her eyes into his. Her arms around his back. With her mussed hair, ruffled clothing, still very sexy.

JANET

I need someone to be nice to me.

She pulls her blouse open. Takes his hand and places it on her breast.

JANET (cont'd)

Be nice to me.

GUNN

Janet, I-I can't.

JANET

Yes you can. Why not?

GUNN

Well -

JANET

Because of Sharon? I saw you here yesterday. So are you two a thing?

Her hand down his thigh as she kisses his neck again. Heavy breathing from both of them.

GUNN

Janet -

She moves back. Looks at him.

JANET

You're really a decent guy, huh? Okay. I understand. But you're tempted, right?

GUNN

I'm flattered, I'm tempted, but-

JANET

It's okay.

(wiping away fresh tears)

It's just - my life is so screwed up. How did I get here, ya know? I just felt like, I just needed somebody.

GUNN

You'll be okay. Let's call the police.

JANET

No, don't. That'll only make it worse. He got his kicks, smacking me down. Surprised he didn't take his pictures this time. I'll be okay.

She buttons up, puts herself together.

GUNN

You sure?

JANET

Yeah. But don't forget. If you and Sharon don't work out. I'm here. Okay?

She smiles at him, smoothing her hair back, tugging her clothes back into place. She grabs his neck for another kiss.

JANET (cont'd)

I told you. Great service here.

A CUSTOMER shouts from the dining room:

CUSTOMER (O.S.)

Hello? Anybody here? Can I get an order?

Janet puts a finger to her lips, "Shhh", then wags her fingers in a small wave.

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

Gunn walks from around the back of the diner, onto Main Street. He crosses to the garage, it's still closed.

GUNN

Hey!

He bangs on the door. No answer. Looks in the window on the service bay door: his bike is parked in the bay.

GUNN (cont'd)

Larry?

Knocks on the door again. No answer.

INT. SHARON'S CAR-TRAVELING-DAY

Gunn behind the wheel. Deep in thought.

EXT. SHARON'S HOUSE-DAY

Gunn pulls up, climbs out, Sharon comes out the front door.

SHARON
Where's breakfast?

GUNN
They were closed.

SHARON
Closed?

GUNN
Well, not closed, but they had some
problems with the grill. Not serving yet.

SHARON
Well where the hell have you been?

GUNN
What do you mean?

SHARON
I mean I've been sitting here waiting for
you for an hour and you come back empty
handed!

GUNN
Don't get shitty with me, okay? I checked
on my bike, then tried to get some food,
okay? It takes a while to make the drive.

She bounds up to him, arms around him. Gunn stiffens.

SHARON
What?

GUNN
My back.

SHARON
I'll be gentle. I's sorry. Guess it was
the wrong side of bed or something.
Friends?
(she kisses, hugs him)
Come on, guess I can scrounge up
something.

GUNN
I'll be right behind you. Gonna smoke.

Sharon goes up the back deck, and into the kitchen. Gunn follows, leans on the railing, lights a smoke. He turns to look at Sharon.

She rummages through cabinets, getting a meal together.

Gunn exhales, looks out over the mountains. Looks down and sees:

Max the dog, lying on the ground by his food and water bowl.

Gunn does a take:

The water bowl is filled with GREEN FLUID.

GUNN (cont'd)

Shit.

He LEAPS over the rail, lands by the dog.

GUNN (cont'd)

Max?

The dog's breathing is shallow, foam around his mouth. The dog weakly licks at Gunn's hand.

Gunn picks up the water bowl, sniffs, sits it back.

GUNN (cont'd)

SHARON!

INT. VETERINARIAN OFFICE-DAY

Gunn and Sharon in hard plastic chairs, waiting by the reception desk.

The VET comes out. Sharon blinks back tears.

VET

I'm sorry, there's not much we can do. He ingested a lot of anti-freeze. We can make him comfortable, but -

He trails off.

SHARON

I want to see him.

VET

That's probably not the best idea-

She thinks. Cries harder, runs for the door.

EXT. VETERINARIAN OFFICE-DAY

Sharon runs from the building, sags against her vehicle, crying. Gunn comes after, stands by her, hands on her shoulders.

SHARON

That lousy fucker! I'll kill him. He killed my dog, he killed my Max!

He holds her as she cries.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE-DAY

Sharon and Gunn face Lucas in his office.

SHARON

I want him arrested now!

LUCAS

Ma'am, you need to understand -

SHARON

Understand shit, he poisoned my fucking dog, don't you get it? That's a crime! Arrest him!

LUCAS

Do you have any , what ya say, proof, that Mr. Moore had anything to do with this?

SHARON

You know it's him. You know it. Like the Deputy you never sent up to my place yesterday. You know it, and you're afraid of him. Or working for him.

LUCAS

Now. That's just enough.

Face-off. Hate in her eyes. His are steel.

SHARON

Yeah. This is enough.

She backs away, meeting his gaze all the way. Exits, Gunn behind her.

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

Gunn and Sharon sit in the parked vehicle.

SHARON

What do I do now? What can I do?

Down the street, Janet exits the diner, leans against the wall, lights a cigarette.

Gunn watches her.

SHARON (cont'd)

Is he gonna get away with this? Help me, Nick. Help me. Help me take care of him.

GUNN

Take care of him?

SHARON

Yes. Nick - I know you can help me. I can tell you've seen worse than this. And you know what I need. I can see it behind your eyes. Something there.

GUNN

No. You don't see what you think you do.

She moves in, hands on him.

SHARON

You can tell me. Whatever it is. I don't care what you've done.

(hands lingering on him, her mouth close)

It's Ok. I like it.

Janet waves at the two of them. Sharon sees.

SHARON (cont'd)

What's that?

GUNN

Hmm?

SHARON

You know her?

GUNN

She works at the diner.

SHARON

What's she waving at us for?

GUNN

You know her?

SHARON
 (almost hissing)
 Everybody knows her.

Janet walks up, leans down to the window on Sharon's side.

JANET
 Hey there.

SHARON
 Janet.

JANET
 Haven't seen you around in a while.

SHARON
 I've been here, just busy. The house and
 all.

JANET
 The grill is up now, you want something
 to eat.

SHARON
 No, we're fine.

GUNN
 That'd be great-

JANET (cont'd)
 Well. You two decide. We're cooking.

She walks away, turns back to wave, enters the diner.

EXT. GARAGE-DAY

The ENGINE BARKS AND ROARS as Gunn kick-starts his bike. He
 REVS the motor, runs his hands over the bars.

LARRY
 Best I can do with what we got here,
 right?

GUNN
 Feels great. It'll do. Nice doing
 business with you.

LARRY
 You leavin' town, then?

GUNN
 I've been trying, pal.

He looks back over at Sharon in the S.U.V. She smiles and
 waves.

LARRY

Don't look back, man.

He walks away, shaking his head.

Gunn rides the bike over to Sharon.

GUNN

You go on ahead. I'll follow, but I wanna blow it out a bit.

SHARON

(abrupt)

Yeah, go wild.

She pulls away. Gunn pauses. Can't figure her out. He revs the bike again.

At the end of the block, a DIRTY 70'S SEDAN, covered with mud, creeps from a parking space, and slowly moves up the street.

In the car are the two THUGS from earlier, MUTT & JEFF. Eyes on Gunn.

Sharon disappears into traffic, Gunn watches her go. Unaware of the car tailing him.

Moving into traffic, the sedan keeps pace behind Gunn's bike. Stoplights, down another avenue, still two car lengths behind.

Gunn turns a corner, down a side street. The car follows, then REVS and ZOOMS ahead of Gunn, SCREECHING to a halt in front of him, blocking his path.

Gunn stops the bike, wary. The thugs climb from the car.

Gunn starts to wheel the bike back to escape, but:

Mutt zips open his windbreaker, shows the gun he keeps there in a hog-leg.

Gunn stops. Considers.

MUTT

Don't even, okay? We need to have a talk.

GUNN

The hell we do.

MUTT

Got a message for you from the boss. Come here. Get off the bike.

GUNN

Leave it out in the open? Somebody could come by, take her away.

MUTT

Nah. They won't.

He walks past Gunn, on hand on his holster. He bends down, flicks a switchblade knife from another pocket, and slashes the front tire. Smiling back at Gunn, he slashes the back one, too.

MUTT (cont'd)

See? Ain't nobody taking it. Now. You listen. You need to be leaving. We don't want you around here anymore.

GUNN

Funny, I'm just starting to feel at home.

MUTT

Mr. Funny Man. Mr. Jokes Man.

(he moves in close to Gunn, the knife blade at Gunn's gut)

These are direct orders from Mr. Moore. Pack your shit and go. Don't go around sticking your dick places where it don't belong.

(he trails the knife down to Gunn's groin)

While you still got one.

GUNN

What is going on with you guys? Why do I make you nervous?

Mutt folds the knife, puts it away, almost nose to nose with Gunn now.

MUTT

Nervous? You, make us nervous?

He laughs, eyes never leaving Gunn. Then he feints a right punch so slightly, Gunn starts, quickly composes.

MUTT (cont'd)

You nervous now?

GUNN

Fellas, I'm telling you now, you're on the wrong side.

MUTT

You got it backwards, pal. Mr. Moore's looking out for your best interest. If not for him, you'd be bleeding to death in this alley right fucking now, hero. This is the last civil warning you get. Next time we talk, it'll be the last time we talk.

EXT. DINER-DAY

Gunn and Janet behind the diner, she smokes, looks around nervously.

JANET

Those guys are nothing but bad news. Don't mess with them.

GUNN

I'm trying not to. Every time I try to leave-

JANET

Yeah. This place is like that. What do you think I'm still doing here?

At the far end of the back alley, Sharon rounds the corner, storms towards them.

JANET (cont'd)

What now?

GUNN

(seeing Sharon)

Oh-

JANET

One of these days...

Sharon steps up, holding a manila folder. She tosses it at Gunn.

SHARON

What's this?

Janet take the folder, opens it : newspaper clippings. "Netwon County man held in shooting", other similar stories. Most feature photos of a younger man - definitely a younger Gunn.

JANET

Oh. Oh.

GUNN

Where did you get this?

SHARON

It was in my mailbox, just stuffed in there.

GUNN

From who?

SHARON

How do I know?

Janet looks through all the clippings. Gunn takes them from her.

JANET

Hey-

GUNN

This is crap. It doesn't matter.

SHARON

You killed somebody?

GUNN

What does it matter?

SHARON

I think it matters a lot if I have a murderer in my house.

GUNN

You didn't mind one in your bed.

SHARON

Fuck you!

She slaps his face, hard. She starts to swing again, but he grabs her arm.

GUNN

Don't. Just drop it. Drop it. It's in the past, it's all over with.

SHARON

Killing a guy, that's something you usually tell a person.

She looks at Janet, back at Gunn.

SHARON (cont'd)

Great. A killer and a slut. You deserve each other. I'm outta here.

She storms away.

JANET

What's going on with her?

GUNN

She's, ah, I don't know.

JANET

She's a little bitch.

(Gunn raises his eyebrows)

Always has been. Sorry.

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT-DAY

They enter the apartment, small but clean.

JANET

Make yourself at home. Want a drink?

GUNN

Do I ever.

She moves past him towards the kitchen but stops as they're face to face. She's close to him, her chest brushing his.

No words. But a look between them. Then, she finally starts to fix drinks.

As she goes through the cabinets, Gunn starts:

GUNN (cont'd)

Mitchell Blake. That was his name.

(Janet stops what she's doing,
turns to face him)

It all happened so fast. Sometimes I can barely remember any of it. Sometimes I remember every single detail. I did shoot him. That's in those papers, that's true. I killed him. I was twenty-two. He'd been seeing my mother for about five years. She liked guys like that. Loud, brash. Big and jokey all the time. He liked to party, they both did. After dad died, I guess she wanted to live a little. All those years, raising a family, working two jobs. He gambled a lot, when he won, he'd take her out, buy her stuff. Get her drunk, get her high. Before long, she was hooked on crack. My mom. On crack. He'd get her high, take her to wild parties, they'd, she'd - it was a mess from what I'd heard. Anyway she was hooked.

(MORE)

GUNN (cont'd)

Didn't take her long to fall apart after he left, either. He used her up, left for greener pastures. She was in too deep. I was at school. I couldn't be there every fucking day, ya know?

Janet sits beside him, a hand on his arm.

GUNN (cont'd)

I came home one day and found her. Just pissed her life away. He hooked her and he dumped her. She was a good mom. She was great. She loved us. She really did. But she got so screwed up so fast.

JANET

There wasn't anything you could have done.

GUNN

No? I don't know. Anyway. I buried her. Two days later, I got a gun and went looking for him. And I found him. And I shot him. And that's it. The whole sorry story came out in court, and I was bumped down to manslaughter. But I had never killed anybody before. I-I just, never thought -

Quiet. Her arm around his shoulder now.

GUNN (cont'd)

Time off for good behavior and all. And here I am. You wanted to know what I was running from. I wasn't supposed to leave the state without permission. But there was no reason for me to stay. I was sick of seeing people I care about getting hurt. And I didn't want to hurt anybody ever again.

Her hand on his cheek, turns his face to hers.

JANET

You're a mess.

Gently touches one of the bruises on his cheek.

JANET (cont'd)

Still hurt?

GUNN

Everything hurts.

They smile. A soulful look. They kiss.

GUNN (cont'd)

Janet-

JANET

I told you. I'd be here.

He kisses her. Deep and passionate, he RIPS her shirt open, she shivers in anticipation, they're both cranked up high.

JANET (cont'd)

Let's go.

GUNN

Where?

She kisses him again. Arms around him tight. He takes control this time, pulling her back onto him as he stretches out on the sofa. She opens his shirt, kisses his chest, soft, sweet, loving.

JANET

Away. Take me away from here.

GUNN

Janet, I-

JANET

What about her, huh? Kinda late to feel guilty, Nick. Tell me something. That first morning, when you found me in the diner. Did you climb out of her bed and come straight to me? Then went back to her like nothing happened?

GUNN

Nothing did happen.

JANET

Did you tell her you saw me? No? Then maybe you're not quite the white knight, huh? You think I didn't know, honey? It's all part of the game.

GUNN

What game?

JANET

What game? Or which game? Who's playing who in this town? Don't ever get caught between two women who want something. Or did mama forget to tell you that one?

She shrugs out of her shirt, snuggles to him.

JANET (cont'd)

Lover, you just never had a chance. From the moment we laid eyes on you.

She kisses him. So's so powerful, mature and sexy, Gunn melts, takes her, kisses back hard and

DISSOLVE TO:

THE SAME SCENE, LATER

As Gunn and Janet are entwined on the sofa.

GUNN

Where do you want to go?

JANET

Anywhere. I just need to go. My life's not working out.

GUNN

You've got a good job. Nice place.

JANET

Good job? Yeah. You know I used to be a showgirl? Atlantic City.

GUNN

Really?

JANET

For about three months. I was good. In one of the big shows.

GUNN

What happened.

JANET

I like to eat. I'm a big girl, you know.

He snuggles against her.

GUNN

Mmm-hmm.

JANET

No, I am. Big boned, big tits. I put on a little weight, I'm too big for the chorus.

GUNN

What did you do?

JANET

I'm not gonna starve myself to dance. I was a cigarette girl awhile. Then a cashier. I mean, I cashed in people's chips. Hundreds of thousands of dollars running through my hands.

GUNN

What brought you here?

JANET

Divorce from my first husband. Don't ask how many. We stayed here on a vacation once during ski season. So I came back. Bad choices, bad husbands, bad life. Then I met my second husband. Mr. Wonderful.

GUNN

It's not that bad, come on.

JANET

I've done some things I'm not proud of. I've seen so many bad things, made so many mistakes.

GUNN

Everyone has.

JANET

I feel so lost. Like it all passed me by. What about you? No home, on the run from whatever or whoever. You're lost too.

Looks into his eyes. He's distant. Then, he kisses her.

GUNN

I guess I am.

JANET

I always try to tell myself that what's important is how you live, and who you love.

She moves away, goes over to the stereo, clicks it on. She finds the right track on the CD she's playing. Patsy Cline, "Crazy".

She moves to him, eyes boring into his. She takes his hand, pulls him to his feet. Bites, nibbles his neck.

GUNN

I feel funny.

JANET

Why?

She kisses him, holds him close.

JANET (cont'd)

(slowly, sexy, dancing, singing
softly with the music)

Crazy...for thinking that my love could
hold you...I'm crazy for tryin', and
crazy for cryin', and I'm crazy for
loving you...

Fire in their eyes. They kiss again and slow dance to the music.

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

Gunn walks away from Janet's apartment building.

From her window, Janet watches him.

EXT. GARAGE-DAY

Larry wheels Gunn's bike out to him.

LARRY

Like new. Almost.

GUNN

Thanks, I appreciate it.

LARRY

Still trying to leave town?

GUNN

Trying.

He checks out the bike.

LARRY

Ah, listen, it's not really my business -

He stops. Gunn waits. Larry hems and haws.

GUNN

Larry -

LARRY

(looking off)
Oh hell.

Gunn follows his look:

Mutt and Jeff pull up in their filthy car, and step out.

Larry backs away. Gunn stands. Mutt and Jeff face him.

MUTT
 Hey you. Time's up.
 (no answer from Gunn)
 Let's roll.

Gunn watches them. Tensed.

MUTT (cont'd)
 I'm fuckin' talkin' to you.

GUNN
 Get out of here.

MUTT
 Huh?

GUNN
 Get out of here now.

MUTT
 (to Jeff, both amused)
 Get a load of this. Look here. You've
 been told the way things are. You get in
 the back, and we'll drive you out of
 town. Be a good girl and play along, or-

GUNN
 (stepping up into his face in a
 flash)
 Or what?

MUTT
 Or we'll drag your ass into the car.
 Maybe run you over wit' it a couple of
 times first, ya bent dick.

Face off.

MUTT (cont'd)
 Come on, bitch. Gimme your best shot.
 Huh? What you waitin' on, Christmas?
 (Gunn doesn't move, Mutt
 chuckles)
 Pussy. Guess you're getting so much
 you're turning into one.

GUNN
 You know, I am so tired of all this shit.
 You guys - who do you think you are?

MUTT

I'm not gonna stand here and have a conversation with you. I'm not gonna do it. And you just need to get-

GUNN JUMPS MUTT, PUTS HIM IN A HEADLOCK WITH ONE ARM TWISTED BEHIND HIS BACK, and it all happens in a blink, Mutt's head pressed down against the car hood.

GUNN

(in his ear)
What? What? What were you saying?
(he presses Mutts face into the hood, yanks his arm back)
Were you talking to me you piece of shit?

Jeff moves in, but Gunn twists Mutt's arm tight, Mutt YELPS in pain.

GUNN (cont'd)

Back off junior.

MUTT

Back off, back off, do what he says, he's breaking my God-damn arm!

Jeff backs off. Larry comes back out, wrench in hand, ready for action.

JEFF

This don't involve you, gimp. Go back to your mama.

(Larry stops, uncertain)
Or you want I should chop off a few more fingers?

GUNN

What? What was that?

LARRY

It's nothing, don't listen-

GUNN

They do that to you, Larry? They cut you?

MUTT

Don't you say a fuckin' word, ya God-damn pansy!

Gunn SLAMS Mutt's head into the car hood, BONE CRUNCHES, BLOOD FLOWS.

MUTT (cont'd)

Fuck you!

GUNN

They did that, Larry? They cut off your fingers?

Jeff moves towards Larry.

GUNN (cont'd)

Stop! Hold it right there or I'll pull your girlfriend's arm off!

MUTT

Shut your mouth! I'll kill ya! I'll kill ya! Ya prick, ya lousy cocksuck-

SLAM into the hood again and Jeff is on the move towards Gunn, pulling something from under his windbreaker and

Gunn leaves Mutt and is on Jeff as Jeff pulls a PISTOL out, and Gunn has a grip on his gun hand and he twists and Jeff drops the gun and they trade PUNCHES, fast and brutal, and

Mutt picks himself up in the background and

Gunn is kicking Jeff's ass pretty good, Larry looks on in awe and

Mutt is moving, hand in his pocket, and

LARRY

Nick! Watch out!

Mutt has his blade, flicks it out, and SLASHES it across Gunn's shoulder, who shouts in pain and

Gunn turns on Mutt, a KICK IN THE BALLS fast as hell and PUNCHES, right, left, Mutt is battered back, Gunn is on fire out of control and

Jeff picks himself up, Larry moves in and POUNDS THE WRENCH across his back - Jeff goes back down as

Gunn beats Mutt down, beats him bad, punches and kicks him and keeps kicking him as Mutt is down and

Larry watches, stunned by the fury erupting from Gunn and

Mutt is pleading for mercy now, and finally, Gunn backs off, Mutt's blood on him, eyes wide, catching his breath.

Mutt is a bloody mess on the ground.

Jeff is agonizing over his back, he too is scared of Gunn now. Gunn walks over and KICKS JEFF IN THE FACE for good measure. He stands back, chest heaving, eyes on fire.

GUNN

Go back to your fat ass boss and tell him
- I've had it with all this, you leave me
alone.

JEFF

Oh man, you're dead. You're a dead man.
I'm talking to a fucking dead man.

Jeff picks Mutt up, they limp to the car.

GUNN

Go tell him. Tell him I'm through. I'm
through, you understand?

JEFF

We'll see, tough guy. You ain't as smart
as you think you are, buddy. You're here
wasting time with us, say hello to that
crispy bitch of yours!

GUNN

What? Come here, you little-

The car revs, and Gunn grabs the wrench from Larry and THROWS THE WRENCH at the car, it CRACKS THE WINDSHIELD

They back out and SCREECH OUT down the street.

Gunn runs to his bike, KICKS it into life, and PEELS OUT of the lot and down the street.

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

On his bike, Gunn ROARS past, into the mountains.

ON THE MOUNTAIN ROADS

Gunn weaves around traffic, in no mood to slow down.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS-DAY

Gunn pulls off the main road, onto the utility road leading to Sharon' house, and he SKIDS TO A STOP.

He sees: SMOKE RISING FROM HIGHER ON THE MOUNTAIN.

Fearing the worst, he KICKS THE BIKE INTO GEAR AND TAKES OFF up the smaller road.

FOLLOWING GUNN UP THE ROAD

As he drives the bike at TOP SPEED and finally comes into the clearing and

SHARON'S HOUSE

is ON FIRE, MORE THAN HALF THE HOUSE ABLAZE.

Gunn LEAPS from the bike :

GUNN
(running to the house)
SHARON! SHARON!

No sign of her outside. FLAMES SHOOT from the windows, no way to see inside. Gunn edges to the front door, not as much fire here.

He tries the doorknob - SSSSS - too hot.

Dirty rags by the charcoal grill. Gunn grabs one, twists the doorknob again and

THERE'S A RUSH OF AIR AS THE DOOR OPENS, COMBUSTION FROM INSIDE AND FLAMES EXPLODE OUT THE FRONT DOOR IN A HUGE INFERNO, KNOCKING GUNN OFF HIS FEET.

He lands in the dirt, singed but OK. No way in through the front.

Around to the back of the house , Gunn moves up the stairs to the back porch, FLAMES here, too, but not quite as bad.

GUNN (cont'd)
Sharon!

He looks around, finds a deck chair, uses it to BASH his way inside, SMASHING THE FRENCH DOORS.

INSIDE THE BURNING HOUSE

Everything seems to shimmer from the heat, FLAMES are moving in, the front of the house engulfed.

RANDOM BURSTS OF FLAME break through walls, Gunn drops to all fours.

Moving through the bedroom, DENSE SMOKE NOW BUILDING UP.

In the living room, fire billows across the ceiling. TIMBERS CRACK AND FALL, FIRES AND SPARKS EVERYWHERE.

Gunn starts to call Sharon's name again, but breathes in smoke, coughs and gags, spitting and hacking.

SHARON (o.s.)
Help! Help!

He looks around - keeps moving along. Another cry for help - from down the hallway.

The hallway is black with smoke.

GUNN
Sharon!

SHARON
Nick! Help!

Down the hall, on his knees. Almost like nighttime.

SHARON (cont'd)
In the study! Hurry!

In the study, Sharon is on her back, UNDER A LARGE OAK BOOKCASE which has fallen on her. A good section of the wall, still attached to the shelves, makes it a huge obstacle.

SHARON (cont'd)
Nick! Help!

GUNN
Damn!

SHARON
There are two gas cans over there!

Two metal gas cans are in the corner. Fire all around them.
FIRE BREAKING THROUGH THE WALLS.

GUNN
Great. Can you move at all?

SHARON
No!

Gunn tries to lift the bookcase - too heavy.

CRACK from up above - the timbers are on fire and falling apart.

GUNN
Look out!

He leans down and covers Sharon's body with his as a FLAMING TIMBER CRASHES ONTO THE BOOKCASE.

Gunn takes the wooden shaft by the blackened end, uses it as leverage under the bookcase.

He strains with the effort, trying to hoist the bookcase.

SHARON
The floor is hot!

GUNN
Everything's hot!

An idea: he pulls the timber back out, uses it like a sledge hammer, POUNDING THE FLOOR.

GUNN (cont'd)
I think we can get through this!

The floorboards, hot and brittle, start to give way under the pounding.

GUNN (cont'd)
Cover your eyes!

Standing now, he SLAMS the floor around them again and again.

FLAMES COMPLETELY SURROUND THE GAS CANS.

POUNDING AT THE FLOOR AGAIN, suddenly, it COLLAPSES FROM UNDER THEM, Gunn, Sharon and the floor FALL INTO THE BASEMENT.

IN THE BASEMENT

SHARON, GUNN, AND THE FLOOR COME CRASHING DOWN.

Gunn gets up, gets to Sharon. They're both hurt, but can move.

GUNN (cont'd)
Come on.

An arm around her, they head for a staircase in the corner.

EXT. SHARON'S HOUSE-DAY

The basement door opens, Gunn and Sharon exit as from INSIDE THE HOUSE THE GAS CANS EXPLODE, BLOWING OUT THE WINDOWS FROM THE STUDY.

Gunn and Sharon collapse on the ground, she hugs him, he hugs back, tight.

GUNN
It's okay, we're okay.

She shakes her head, tears in her eyes. She kisses him.

EXT. SHARON'S HOUSE-LATER

A FIRE ENGINE hoses down the SMOULDERING RUINS of the house. Sharon is talking to LUCAS. She holds a cold compress to the back of her head. A PARAMEDIC tends to her.

SHARON

-they must have been there waiting for me. I heard a noise in the study, walked in there, that's the last I remember.

LUCAS

Good little goose egg you got there.

PARAMEDIC

Your bruises and cuts are pretty superficial, luckily you came out with no burns.

SHARON

Damn near singed my eyebrows off.

PARAMEDIC

Could've been a lot worse, ma'am.

SHARON

I know. Thanks.

LUCAS

What happened here?

GUNN

Friends dropped by unexpectedly. Don't ya hate when that happens?

They exchange silent glares. The paramedic packs up as a FIREMAN comes up.

FIREMAN

It's like Arson for Dummies in there. Any idea who did this?

GUNN

Yeah.

LUCAS

Excitement just follows you two around, don't it?

GUNN

They knocked her out, dumped a bookcase on her and torched the place, Sheriff.

SHARON

(moving to Lucas)

Arson and attempted murder. You gonna do anything about this? If not, just piss on those ashes over there, help us out.

EXT. JANET'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

Sharon's S.U.V. pulls into a parking space. Gunn and Sharon climb out, slowly.

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT-BATHROOM

Gunn stands at the bathroom mirror, naked. He looks his body over, the various scars, cuts, and burns he's gotten since he arrived.

He washes his face slowly, enjoying the cold water.

He looks at his reflection. He turns to move, his bad knee gives way and he stumbles. Holding the door, he limps out of the room.

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT-BEDROOM

Janet sits on the bed, Sharon in a bathrobe.

JANET

They'll fit, but be kinda loose.

SHARON

That's fine, thanks.

She opens the robe, naked underneath. Janet doesn't look away. Sharon doesn't expect her to.

Gunn enters, in his jeans, toweling his hair dry.

GUNN

(seeing Sharon undressed)

Sorry.

SHARON

(a look passes from her to Janet)

That's OK. Come on in. You've seen it before.

JANET

We're all grown ups.

Janet stands, and unbuttons her blouse.

Gunn senses something in the air. Watches.

Janet tosses her blouse on the bed, steps out of her sweatpants. Sharon, the robe still open to expose herself, says nothing.

Janet pulls a black bra from the dresser. Takes her bra off, no hurry. Sharon watches. Gunn doesn't exist at this moment.

Janet puts on the fresh bra. Sharon drops the robe, slips on a pair of panties. Then pulls on blue jeans.

Janet puts her blouse back on. Sharon pulls on a T-shirt.

Sharon walks past Gunn and into the kitchen.

Gunn is confused. He looks at Janet.

JANET (cont'd)
Want a drink?

She moves past him, leaving him there.

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT-LATER

Lights out. Gunn on the sofa. Restless. He gets up. Walks over to the spare bedroom.

IN THE BEDROOM

Sharon in bed. The door is open a crack. Gunn's shadow fills the doorway.

GUNN
Didn't want to bother you.

SHARON
I'm awake.

He sits on the bed beside her.

SHARON (cont'd)
Been a long day.

GUNN
Long week.

SHARON
Yeah. About this morning. I'm sorry. It's not my business and doesn't make any difference.

She sits up, holding the sheet to her chest.

GUNN
Don't worry about it.

SHARON

It all feels like it's just closing in on me, you know? It gets so hazy. Gives me headaches. It doesn't matter. Because I'll never be rid of him.

GUNN

You don't know that.

SHARON

I'm just so scared. You've been so good to help me. You must think this whole town messed up.

GUNN

That had crossed my mind.

She kisses him.

SHARON

Thank you, Nick. Things have been - crazy - since we met. But I'm glad we did. Maybe after all of this, maybe you and me, we can go somewhere.

(when he doesn't answer
immediately)

What? You're thinking about Janet, aren't you?

GUNN

I'm thinking about everything.

SHARON

I took you in. Remember? I brought you to my home. You and me, we can build a life. Her - her life has passed her by. It's you I need, Nick. It's me you need. Not her. Me.

Kisses again. Slow and passionate. She drops the sheet. Her arms go around him. They embrace, hands everywhere, wet kisses.

He pushes her back, kissing and touching, rolling over, pulling her on top of him. Very passionate now, her legs wrapped around his, heavy breathing.

The door swings wider open. Light shines on them. Janet stands there, wearing just a T-shirt.

They stop, looking at her. No words.

Janet walks in. Gunn sits up, waiting for the explosion.

Janet pulls the T-shirt over her head, tossing it to the side. Bare-breasted. She sits on the bed beside Gunn.

Sharon watches them.

Janet takes Gunn's hand, places it on her breast. Her eyes on Sharon, who shows no emotion. Janet looks at Gunn, a finger to her lips, be quiet.

Gunn looks at Sharon. Back at Janet. Janet kisses him, deep, slow, a hand knotted in his hair.

The kiss ends. Sharon sits up. She moves beside Gunn and cups his face, kissing him as Janet watches.

GUNN

Wait a minute, I...

SHARON

What?

Sharon pulls him down to the bed again, and Janet joins, both of them on him.

DISSOLVE TO:

GUNN AND SHARON AND JANET IN BED

all three together, touching and kissing, Gunn is not in control, the women definitely hold the upper hand as they both make love to him. Soft focus, slow motions, as their bodies twist and thrash and the women take turns riding Gunn, and the competition is obvious as the women vie for the chance to blow his mind - so to speak - he's overpowered by their bodies and their passions and as they finally overwhelm him we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

Gunn walking down the street, enters the corner market.

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT-DAY

Janet washing a few dishes, Sharon lounges. Janet finishes at the kitchen, turns, looks at Sharon.

Sharon returns the look. Hard to read, smouldering.

INT. MARKET-DAY

Gunn grabs a few items, shops idly.

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT-DAY

A knock at the door.

SHARON
I'll get it.

She moves to the door.

SHARON (cont'd)
Who is it?

VOICE (o.s.)
Open up.

She opens the door:

Wolf.

She backs up, gasps. He shoulders his way inside.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING-DAY

Gunn walks down the hallway, stops a few feet from Janet's door:

It's open, just a bit ajar.

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT-DAY

Lights off. The door slowly swings inward. Gunn cautious.

GUNN
Janet?

Nothing. He waits, no sounds from inside. Finally, he steps inside and THWACK:

CUT TO BLACK

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT-DAY

Lights on now. Gunn tied to a kitchen chair with electrical cord. He stirs. SHAPES move around him.

Mutt and Jeff. One of them places a breadbox sized object on a nearby table.

The door opens. Moore lumbers in. The thugs go from at ease to something like Attention.

Moore looks at Gunn. At the thugs. At Gunn. Moore leans back against a table.

Gunn looks up. Tense. Realizing this is serious stuff. Moore sighs heavily.

MOORE

Mr. Gunn. Nice name. You enjoy fucking the girl? Sharon? Hmm?

(no answer)

You like it? She good? Never can tell about the lookers, you know. Some just lie there like a bump on a log, some, well, some are Olympic material, get my drift? I may be old and fat, but believe me, Mr. Gunn, I still get it up. Funny how that's the one thing that still works. I can't climb stairs too good. I have to wear glasses to read the papers. Don't remember things like I used to. But that's the one thing that still works, I still get it up. Like mahogany. And still get it serviced. Had some off one of my bitches yesterday. She was a bit reluctant, but she gave it up. Eventually. And I have my little honey back at the ranch. One of my web girls. So I still get it up. Daily. How often you get it, Mr. Gunn? Maybe not every day, seeing as how you seem to be on the move a lot. But I'm guessing you take what you can get. But I guess Ms. Harper must not be fucking you very good, otherwise you wouldn't be FUCKING ME LIKE YOU ARE!

The last is a shout, Moore's fist SLAMMING into Gunn's face twice, like a wooden beam, BLOOD SPURTS from Gunn's nose. The thugs hold him down in the chair, but he's too stunned to protest much.

MOORE (cont'd)

Was it worth that? Hmm?

GUNN

(spitting out blood)

What was that for?

MOORE

That was for you sticking your nose in where it don't belong. This is for just pissing in my pool in general.

WHAM! Again he punches Gunn. Moore steps back, takes a handkerchief from his pocket, tosses it at Gunn.

MOORE (cont'd)
Clean yourself up.

Gunn is too dazed to use it, he just gropes at it weakly.

MOORE (cont'd)
I know who you are, Mr. Gunn. I know
where you came from. And I know why you
left there.

Moore turns, looks at the end of the table he leans against.
He reaches down and pulls something to him. It clunks and
rattles. A toolbox.

Gunn watches Moore open the toolbox and rummage around in the
contents. Moore nods to Mutt.

Mutt stands behind Gunn, suddenly grabs his head with meaty
hands. Gunn resists, but he's held tight. Jeff stuffs a
kitchen rag into Gunn's mouth, gagging him.

MOORE (cont'd)
Does your parole officer know where you
are? Huh? Probably not. I'll bet you left
the state without permission. Sure he'd
be real interested to know you're here.
Shot a man. Shot a man in cold blood,
they say.
(to Mutt & Jeff)
You know that?
(they shake their heads, "no")
Our Mr. Gunn here, quite a dangerous
fella. Shot a man dead. An unarmed man.
What's the song? Shot him to watch him
die?

Moore takes a HAMMER from the toolbox. Brings out a NAIL.

MOORE (cont'd)
Think you're a tough man, huh? Romantic,
the loner on a bike, seducing lonely
women, huh? The tough guy good looks and
that name will scare away the bad guys,
right?

He rolls his eyes, whistles low.

MOORE (cont'd)
Take it from me. There's always a bigger
fish.

He hefts the hammer. Sees Gunn watching the hammer. Smiles.
He POUNDS the nail down into the table with a single stroke.

MOORE (cont'd)

Yeah. Shit, got some wood right now, boy.

And in one LIGHTNING FAST MOVE he's SWUNG the HAMMER DOWN, SMASHING into Gunn's knee. Gunn's cries are muffled by the rag in his mouth.

MOORE (cont'd)

Come on. Didn't break nothing. Stop crying.

Gunn moans, straining at the cords binding him.

MOORE (cont'd)

(reaching down and yanking

Gunn's head up by the hair)

Let me explain how things run here, Mr. Gunn. This is my town. I own it. That nice house you came to visit? Mine. The theatre? Mine? The steakhouse off the interstate exit? Mine. If it's not mine now, it will be soon. Do you understand?

(yanks on Gunn's hair)

I like things my way and I will have my way. Those who interfere...well, don't interfere. I have business with Sharon. Not with you. Do you understand? Piss ants like you are a fucking dime a dozen. You think she really cares about you? You think the blonde cares about you? Yeah, I know about that, too. I know everything that happens here. I dictate what will happen here. Mr. Gunn, do you understand?

(lets go of Gunn's hair)

I've been much more accommodating than I need be. This will not end good for you, Mr. Gunn. This is your last cordial warning. Take it. You might need some time to rest. I'll give you that.

He looks at Jeff and nods. Jeff pulls out a STUN GUN and matter-of-factly ZAPS Gunn and as the STUN GUN ARCS:

CUT TO:

BLACK SCREEN

FADE IN:

EXT. GARAGE-DAY

Larry serves a customer at the gas pump.

Mutt & Jeff's car pulls up in the background. As Larry's customer leaves, Mutt and Jeff climb out, lock eyes with Larry, then haul Gunn out of the car and dump him on the pavement. Satisfied, they smirk and pull away as Larry comes over and kneels down.

Gunn looks like hell, dried blood on his face, clothes unkempt, wincing as Larry helps him sit up.

LARRY

Jesus, man.

INT. GARAGE-DAY

Larry at his desk in the small, cramped office.

LARRY

Don't know if I can help you.

GUNN

I'm sure you can. Think about it.

LARRY

Hey, I'd love to, don't get me wrong.

GUNN

Then do it. You don't have to know why, or what for, just help me.

Larry opens a desk drawer.

A SHINY, NICKEL PLATED REVOLVER

is in there. Using a grease rag, Larry picks it up.

LARRY

My security system. In case some of these local punks get smart late nights. Never had to use it so far. Brand spankin' new, right?

GUNN

Right. Got a file, or a sander?

LARRY

Why?

GUNN

Take the serial numbers off. Don't want it coming back to you.

LARRY

What are you gonna do?

GUNN
This won't involve you.

LARRY
Hell, I'm involved enough already.

GUNN
How?

LARRY
Well, you know. Those two women, man. As always.

GUNN
(carefully)
What two women?

LARRY
You know when you asked me about my fingers? Did those guys chop 'em off? Well, yeah they did. That Sharon, we hit it off pretty good couple years back. She wanted me to help her out.

GUNN
Help her out?

LARRY
Yeah. Gettin' Mr. Moore off her back. I mean, I'm just an old grease monkey, but I'm not stupid. You think she'd screw me if she didn't want something? I tried to help her best I could. But those damn robots Moore's got workin' for him. Got a pair of wire cutters, went to town.

GUNN
Shit.

LARRY
Shit is right. I learned my lesson. Between her and Mrs. Moore, damn.

GUNN
Mrs. Moore?

LARRY
Janet Moore. The blonde with the jugs.

GUNN
Janet is Marcus Moore's wife?

LARRY

Ex. Come on.

(sees Gunn's surprise)

Oh man. You been banging her and you didn't know?

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING-DAY

Gunn cross the lot again. Sitting in a parked Jeep is Wolf. He starts the engine. Backs out.

Gunn stands at the curb, waiting for traffic so he can cross the street.

The Jeep rolls across the lot, keeping distance behind Gunn. Gunn turns back, sees the Jeep.

Gunn moves across the lot slowly, still with a bad limp. The Jeep follows, slow behind as Gunn stays on the sidewalk.

Gunn turns back again, sees the Jeep, speeds up, a jog now. Not fast, but as fast as he can manage.

The Jeep accelerates, and Gunn breaks out into a limping RUN, from the sidewalk, past the garage, across another parking lot.

The Jeep rounds the nearest corner, and REVS engine as it enters the lot, taking the long way around the parked cars.

Gunn moves down the row of cars to the end of the lot, putting lots of ground behind him. He heads for an ALLEY off the corner of the lot.

The Jeep SCREECHES around a corner, heading for Gunn who's disappearing fast, he's down the alley now and

The Jeep JOLTS to a stop as Wolf JUMPS out and:

WOLF

C'mere!

He takes off after Gunn who

STUMBLES into a PILE OF GARBAGE and TRASH CANS and falls and

Wolf is in the alley now, really pumping it and

Gunn gets up, falters on his bad leg again and

Wolf is right there and he reaches out and GRABS Gunn's sleeve and

Gunn has a METAL TRASH CAN LID in his hand it swings around and SMASHES into Wolf, then SLAM again he's hit and he falls and

Gunn is up, hobbling down the alley again and

Wolf is up, RUNNING after him and

Gunn exits the alley, out onto another business street, down another sidewalk. He slows down, trying to blend in.

Wolf turns the corner now, sees Gunn, slows to a fast walk. His face is cut and bloodied from the scuffle, he draws a few looks.

Gunn keeps walking, knows Wolf is behind him and closing fast.

Gunn heads for the next storefront. Wolf behind him, grabs his arm, stops him.

WOLF (cont'd)
Where ya goin' pal?

GUNN
Get your hands off me.

WOLF
Don't make a scene.

GUNN
I was gonna tell you the same thing.
(Wolf puts a hand to his pocket)
You packin'? Funny. So am I.
(he pull his shirt up just a bit to show the gun butt)
You want a shoot-out right here? Come on, big boy. Do it. Draw on me.

Gunn's eyes are evil, ready. Wolf studies him.

WOLF
Just play along. Ya know I waste more time hauling your ass around this town.

GUNN
Where are the women? Sharon and Janet.

WOLF
What's it to you? You can get pussy anywhere.

Gunn LASHES OUT WITH A FIST, knocking Wolf against the store front.

IN THE STORE

A CLERK sees the commotion. Picks up the phone.

OUTSIDE THE STORE

Wolf is on the ground.

GUNN
Stay away from me.

WOLF
Oh man. Oh, man. I am gonna fuck you up.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE-DAY

Gunn enters, the Clerk rushes to him.

CLERK
Sir, Sir, you can't-

GUNN
That man out there assaulted me. Call the police.

Gunn moves into the store. The flustered Clerk watches as Wolf follows.

Gunn heads down the action alley. Wolf behind. Each trying to play it cool.

Gunn turns down a side isle. Wolf turns at the parallel isle.

Moving through the housewares, slow, each has one eye on the store, the other on their opponent.

Watching each other, they move down the rows of merchandise.

WOLF
This is stupid. Make it easy on yourself, okay?

GUNN
You just keep talking.

CUSTOMERS move out of their way as they navigate the store, cat-and-mouse style.

Both men look like hell, sweaty, disheveled, and with Wolf's bloody nose, it's hard to keep a low profile. Frightened shoppers scurry away.

Gunn heads down another isle, but it's a dead end, and Wolf is there, right behind him now.

WOLF
Nowhere to run, baby.

GUNN
Move.

WOLF
No.

GUNN
Let me by.

Wolf carefully takes his gun out, holding it down by his side.

WOLF
No.

GUNN
This won't end good.

WOLF
You're tellin' me. Now come with me, dick-head.

He motions with the pistol, and Gunn takes the lead out of the isle and comes face to face with:

Lucas. The police have arrived. Without missing a beat, Gunn throws his hands up. Wolf quickly puts his weapon away.

GUNN
Sheriff Thank God! Arrest that man!

LUCAS
What in-

GUNN
Arrest that man! He tried to run me down with his car, then chased me in here! He's got a gun, arrest him!

A crowd is gathering. Lucas does not want to play this, but there's no choice. He slowly takes his sidearm from the holster.

WOLF
Give me a break-

GUNN

That man tried to kill me! He's dangerous. Arrest him!

LUCAS

Both of you, freeze now. Hands up.

GUNN

Sheriff, it's not me, it's him.

WOLF

That lyin' sack of shit. He's got a gun, he showed it to me!

GUNN

That's not true!

CLERK

They had a fight outside!

Lucas is sweating. The crowd murmurs. They want action.

WOLF

Have him show ya! He's got the damn thing in his belt!

LUCAS

Show me.

Slowly, Gunn unbuttons his shirt, opens it. Nothing there.

LUCAS (cont'd)

Turn around.

Gunn turns. No gun hidden anywhere. Wolf sputters.

WOLF

Bullshit. He tossed it.

GUNN

He's got a gun! Have him show you!

LUCAS

(to Wolf)

Give it up.

Wolf doesn't budge. Furious.

LUCAS (cont'd)

Now.

Slowly Wolf pulls out his gun, holds it by the trigger guard.

LUCAS (cont'd)
On the floor.

Wolf does as told.

GUNN
See? Arrest him!

Wolf and Lucas share a look. Both want Gunn.

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE-DAY

Lucas takes the handcuffed Wolf and puts him in the waiting patrol car. The crowd watches from the window, more on the sidewalk.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE-DAY

In the housewares, Gunn picks up the revolver from behind a toaster. He flips the chamber open, it's empty. He digs the bullets from his pants pocket and reloads.

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE-DAY

The patrol car is idling at the curb as Gunn exits. Lucas
SOUNDS THE HORN and rolls the window down.

LUCAS
Mr. Gunn. Get in.

GUNN
Thanks, but I'm good. I'll walk.

LUCAS
Please. I want to thank you for your assistance. I'll give you a ride.

GUNN
Really. It's fine.

LUCAS
I insist.

Gunn looks around. Gets in.

INT. PATROL CAR-TRAVELLING-DAY

Wolf in the back, behind the wire screen. Gunn's mind at work.

LUCAS
I told you. Get out of town. Now look.

GUNN

That's all I've been trying to do.

LUCAS

Hard to see that.

GUNN

I'll go. Once I finish this shit.

WOLF

It's gonna be finished. Just not by you,
dick-head.

THE PATROL CAR

turns off the main street, into a dead-end alley. Away from
everything else.

IN THE CAR

Lucas stops, shifts into park,

GUNN

That's the second time you called me dick-
head.

WOLF

Dick. Head.

GUNN

What're you, in grade school?

Wolf pounds his fist against the wire mesh. He isn't
handcuffed anymore.

LUCAS

Both of you shut up. Now, Mr. Gunn, I am
not a bad man. Just trying to do a hard
job under bad conditions. I can't change
what's happening here, so I'm riding the
storm out. It's too late for me to be a
hero, Mr. Gunn. Don't you try. I'm
telling you, you can't win. Learn from my
mistakes.

GUNN

My heart bleeds for you.

WOLF

Gonna be bleeding in a minute!

LUCAS

Shut up!

And Gunn JAMS HIS FOOT ONTO THE GAS PEDAL AS HE YANKS THE CAR INTO DRIVE AND

The car ROCKETS forward and

Wolf brings up his pistol and

Lucas tries to get control of the car but

The CAR SLAMS INTO THE DEAD END BRICK WALL and

Lucas is HURLED FORWARD as the AIR BAG EXPLODES and

Wolf SHOOTS, the shot goes wild, SHATTERING THE WINDSHIELD and

Gunn has his revolver and FIRES THROUGH the screen, Wolf takes it in the face and he's dead and

Everything stops. The air bag deflates. The engine SPUTTERS out, ticking now as it cools.

Lucas settles back, bruised and stunned from the crash.

Gunn stares at Wolf and the mess which used to be his face.

Lucas stirs, and Gunn is aiming right at him.

GUNN

I'm walking. Wolf got loose, tried to kill you, you shot back, end of story. Like you said, don't try to be a hero.

LUCAS

I guess I under-estimated you, Mr. Gunn. You got a lotta balls, I'll give ya that. You need to, what ya say, get the hell outta Dodge.

GUNN

Great idea. Gotta wipe some shit off my shoes first.

Lucas weakly snatches Gunn's arm.

LUCAS

Boy. You shoulda got outta here when I told ya.

EXT. MOORE'S ESTATE-NIGHT

The house lit by the usual spotlights.

INT. MOORE'S ESTATE-NIGHT

Janet and Sharon wait in the study. They're bored, been there a while.

SHARON

This sucks. Where's Marcus? Who does he think he is?

JANET

The king of the mountain, top of the heap.

SHARON

Where's Nick? He'll get us out of here.

JANET

If he's smart, he's long gone.

SHARON

Why?

JANET

He's tired of all this crap. From Marcus, from you, me, everybody.

SHARON

Me? I didn't give him any crap. He's been helping me.

JANET

And how did he get messed up in this to begin with?

SHARON

He saw those two goons roughing me up and tried to help out.

JANET

And?

SHARON

He was hurt. I took him back to my place-
(sees the look that Janet is
giving her)
Oh fuck off.

JANET

Am I right?

SHARON

What business is it of yours? I see you dropped to your knees first chance you had.

JANET

You bitch-

She grabs a book from a nearby table and THROWS it, Sharon dodges it.

SHARON

Nice try.

The doors open. Mutt sticks his head in.

MUTT

What the hell's going on here?

SHARON

Shut your mouth. Where's Marcus?

MUTT

Mr. Moore's on his way. Don't be breakin' shit in here.

SHARON

Well you tell him to get here before his trophy wife is in pieces.

Mutt smiles, closes the door.

JANET

You were saying?

SHARON

I'm not gonna fight with you.

JANET

Too bad. I was really looking forward to kicking your ass.

SHARON

(on her feet)

Just keep your mouth shut.

JANET

Why have you been fighting Marcus all this time? Why not give in? Sell out? You'd be rich and you could go anywhere!

SHARON

I'm gonna just spread my legs and let him fuck me over? That's your game honey, not mine.

JANET

Watch it.

Janet stands now.

SHARON

That mountain is mine. My daddy left it to me. And that fat fuck is not going to get it. He may have bought out everyone else in this town, he may have his own personal hit squad and a blow job on the payroll, but he can't buy me.

JANET

Look at what's happened, don't you see? Look at everybody who's been hurt. Look at Nick-

SHARON

(closer to Janet)
Leave him out of it.

JANET

He's my last chance out of here, don't you understand?

SHARON

You're old, Janet! You're old and he doesn't want you.

JANET

You don't know what he wants, you're so wrapped up in what you want, you never see anybody else. Why not just give up? Take the money Marcus offers and go.

SHARON

Why should I?

JANET

You can't win against him.

SHARON

You make me sick, you cow, how could you let that disgusting pig inside you? You knew what he-

JANET

I didn't know! I didn't know what he was until it was too late! Look at this!

(a scar just under the hairline
on her forehead)

He did that! He did that! You think I liked that? Huh?

SHARON

Whores like you usually do like it rough-

And Janet is on her like a shot, FISTS FLYING she PUNCHES Sharon several times, knocking her to the floor.

JANET

Get up. Get up you bitch.

Sharon tastes the blood at the corner of her mouth.

JANET (cont'd)

Get up.

SHARON

You don't want to mess with me. I'm gonna kill you. I'm gonna beat your fucking brains in.

Sharon gets up, and LEAPS at Janet, and they tumble over the big desk, and onto the floor.

And the FIGHT is on: full of anger and frustration, they fight with no holds barred. Fists smacking into stomachs, open-handed SLAPS, handfuls of hair pulled.

The fight is BRUTAL, the women WRESTLE on the carpet, knock each other over furniture, only to get up and meet again in a flurry of KICKS AND PUNCHES and RIPPED CLOTHING.

Janet with her size advantage has the upper hand; she PULLS Sharon across the room by her hair, one hand knotted tight as the other fist delivers powerful PUNCHES.

As the fight goes on, Janet tires quicker, Sharon RIPS at her clothes, gets her in a headlock and SHREDS HER BLOUSE; and at length Sharon beats Janet down, KICKING her into submission.

Janet lies on the floor, hair mussed, nose bleeding, pulling the last pieces of fabric over her bra, trying to cover herself.

SHARON (cont'd)

Give up? Huh?

(spits on her)

I told you. I warned you. Cow. Think Nick wants you now? Nobody takes anything of mine, you hear? Not him, not you, nobody! You're pathetic. Pathetic!

She picks up a flower vase from the floor. Empties the rest of the flowers on the floor.

JANET

(weakly)

Stop it. Bitch. Fuck you.

SHARON

No, Janet, honey. Fuck you.

She SMASHES the vase over Janet's head.

EXT. MOORE'S ESTATE-NIGHT

In the dark, away from the floodlights, Gunn walks up, stopping before the sloping lawn.

Checking out the lawn, seeing no one, he strides across the lawn.

FOOTSTEPS from the pool area. Gunn ducks behind the bushes.

Jeff exits the gated pool area, moves to the wall surrounding the house. He unzips and takes a leak.

Gunn creeps out, he's there in a second, and has Jeff in a headlock, RAMMING his head into the block wall. Jeff falls to the grass, shakes his head to get his bearings back, then TACKLES Gunn by the legs, bringing him down.

His grip on Gunn's legs tightens, Gunn screams as Jeff works on the injured leg, POUNDING it without mercy.

The men FIGHT on the grass, ROLLING AND PUNCHING, Jeff picks up a weakened Gunn and HEAVES him across the lawn.

They wrestle and drag each other across the lawn, rolling into the SPRAY OF WATER from the irrigation system. Jeff pulls his gun out, Gunn instantly SLAPS it from his hand, the gun SPLASHING in the wet grass.

Both men scramble for the gun, pulling each other away from the gun, lunging for it, only to be pulled away again.

GUNN

Don't! Stop! Damn it!

Finally Gunn is able to wriggle across the grass and grabs the gun. He sits up, aims, and Jeff stops in his tracks.

GUNN (cont'd)

(in pain, way out of breath)
Please. Walk away. Don't do this.

Jeff looks at him and smiles.

JEFF

Jackass. You think I'm alone here? You think you can leave?

GUNN

Just get the hell out of here.

JEFF

(slowly moving towards Gunn)
You suck, pal. I don't think the boss
will mind if I take care of your ass
myself.

(his hand goes into a pocket)
He won't mind at all-

Gunn SQUEEZES THREE SHOTS and Jeff crumples into the grass,
dead.

Gunn slowly sits up, disgusted. He drops the gun. Picks it
up. Looks at Jeff's body.

Bloodied from the fight, Gunn wipes his face with his wet
shirt sleeve.

He opens the gate, stands by the pool. All is quiet.

In no hurry, he takes in the spread. Magnificent. The pool,
the lawns, the palatial house. Shakes his head. What a waste.

INT. MOORE'S ESTATE-NIGHT

The sliding door to the pool area opens, Gunn stands there.
Steps inside.

Still no sounds.

Moving to the side, down the hallway. His gun drawn. His
nerves tense, but ready.

IN THE KITCHEN

Dark. Fluorescent lights snap on with the switch. The kitchen
empty.

NOISE from another room. Soft. Hard to discern.

Gunn moves on.

IN THE ELECTRONICS ROOM

Pinball and video games flash and beep. A wide-screen TV
plays, the volume low. No one here.

A leather recliner chair with a side table. A mixed drink and
an ashtray. Gunn feels the leather chair.

Condensation on the glass.

IN THE GREAT ROOM

Empty. Gunn looks at the staircase to the second floor. No movements.

ANOTHER SOUND.

Gunn whips his head around. The double doors to the study. From there.

Cautiously, he moves to the doors.

An ear to the door. Muffled, but distinct, SHARON'S VOICE.

His hand on the door, gun ready, he slides the door open and:

MOORE (o.s.)
Come on in, Mr. Gunn.

No turning back, he pushes the doors open.

IN THE STUDY

Moore behind the desk, in charge. The room itself, debris of the women's battle everywhere. Sharon, ripped clothes and all, in a leather chair by the desk. Mutt leaning against a wall. In a heap on the floor, Janet.

MOORE (cont'd)
Come on. We don't have all night.

Mutt moves towards Gunn.

MOORE (cont'd)
Let him be. He's not going to shoot anybody, are you now? Huh?

GUNN
Don't be so sure. Send Mutt here to check his buddy outside.

MUTT
What? You son of-

MOORE
Shut your mouth. Maybe Mr. Gunn does have a spine after all. Take a seat, Gunn. No sense in anyone else getting hurt, right?
(Gunn slowly lowers his pistol)
Good boy. Maybe you're smart, too.

Gunn tucks the gun away. He moves to Janet.

GUNN

Honey?

She stirs. In pain. Blinks.

JANET

Nick?

GUNN

Who did this?

MOORE

If I may.

Moore clicks on the video wall again. Footage of the fight rolls. Gunn watches. Sharon smirks.

MOORE (cont'd)

I should just upload this tonight. Pay per view. Girls gone wild and all that.

GUNN

(to Sharon)

W-why?

SHARON

Why do you care so freakin' much?

GUNN

We need to talk now-

SHARON

Screw that, and screw you. By the way, thanks a hell of a lot for all your help. Big hero. My white knight. And in the end, here I am, dealing with it myself.

GUNN

I'm taking Janet out of here. You need to come with us-

SHARON

Oh yeah, go back to banging your old hag, why don't you? I think I left enough of her to make you happy.

GUNN

(kneeling to Janet)

Come on-

MOORE

Leave her alone. She stays with me.

GUNN

No she doesn't.

MOORE

Mr. Gunn. Don't be a prick. Haven't you learned your lesson yet, boy? She knows where the bread is buttered. Of course little missy here is no stranger to stardom, are ya?

(he works his keyboard)

Watch this.

Moore navigates to another web site. Clicks through various pictures, then loads a page full of thumbnail pictures of Janet. Bondage pictures. Janet in various outfits, bound and gagged. Being whipped, or whipping a slave.

MOORE (cont'd)

The camera loves her. A natural.

Gunn is confused.

MOORE (cont'd)

Have a seat.

(Gunn is getting edgy)

Well, suit yourself. We have some things to iron out here. Tonight we fix it all. Mr. Gunn you have a choice. You can leave here tonight and never look back, or you can leave in a box. No matter to me. You choose.

GUNN

Why not offer me a payoff?

MOORE

I may be rich, but I'm not made out of money. You count yourself lucky that I let you walk out of here in one piece, after the trouble you've caused.

(to Sharon)

My little hell cat here, well, we're about to settle our problems, too. Thanks for teaching that slut ex-wife of mine a lesson. We're closer than you think, you and I.

SHARON

I'm tired of hearing that.

MOORE

It's true. We seem to seek the same solutions to our problems. We like to act, not talk.

(MORE)

MOORE (cont'd)

You've been looking for a way to deal with me for the past few years, and I'm a big enough man to admit, that maybe part of this whole thing is my fault. You see, Sharon, all that land up there, could make us a mint. A ski lodge. Luxury hotel. Townhouses, a mini-mall. Parking decks. It'd be like a license to print money. Sure all the pretty trees will be gone, but hell, I'll buy you a painting.

SHARON

Get to the point.

MOORE

The point is, well, maybe if I'd been a little more up front about things, we wouldn't be where we are now. The man who raised you did leave that land to you. No court in the world could dispute that. But I have as much claim to that mountain as you do. It's mine too.

SHARON

No it's not-

MOORE

HUSH. Let me finish. The truth is, when you pass on, that land goes to me.

SHARON

No. No it doesn't.

MOORE

You have a will?

SHARON

No. But I'll draw one up.

MOORE

Fine. That's tomorrow. But between now and then, if you should, ah, die...then the land goes to me. To your next of kin. To your father.

SHARON

Wha-

She trails off. Not understanding.

MOORE

Your mom and I, ah, you know, were close.

SHARON

That's not true.

MOORE

Yes, it is, sweetie. Think about it. Why did your mom draw away from everybody? Why was it so quiet and strained in the house all that time?

SHARON

Shut up.

MOORE

Yeah, I had a deal goin' with the books, but that's not why Mr. Harper and I dissolved our partnership. I was nailing his wife. And not just fucking. I got your mom pregnant.

SHARON

Shut your mouth.

MOORE

Shit happens. You want a DNA sample? You're mine. So is the mountain.

Sharon stands. Trembling.

SHARON

That is such a load. You're amazing. I would never stoop so low.

GUNN

(he reaches for her)
Sharon-

SHARON

(bats his hand away)
Leave me alone! You! Take it back! Take it back!

MOORE

I can't take it back. It's done. I'm your daddy.

Sharon WAILS, a crying scream, pain and anger and denial, all pouring out. She hugs herself.

MOORE (cont'd)

It's OK, baby. It's OK.

GUNN
(slowly putting his arms around
her)
Shh, shh. Be quiet.

SHARON
(sobbing)
Why why why? Oh god, oh god, oh no no no.

Her arms are tight around Gunn. She cries loud and long. When she breaks away, she's taken the revolver from Gunn. Holds it at her side.

Moore sees this. Mutt even notices.

Sharon is shaking apart.

MOORE
Now, Sharon. Calm down. Let's talk it all
out.

SHARON
You bastard. Bastard.

Mutt moves in, but Moore motions him off.

MOORE
Sharon.

SHARON
Bastard. You ruined me. Ruined us.

GUNN
Sharon.

SHARON
Ruined my mom.

She brings the gun up, hand shaking, aiming at Moore.

Mutt steps up again, drawing his gun, but Gunn draws the gun he took from Jeff and stops him.

GUNN
Right there, hold it.

Stand off. Sharon aims at Moore, Mutt at Sharon, Gunn at Mutt.

MUTT
Drop the gun you little bitch.

GUNN

Shut up, asshole. Don't you freaking move an inch.

SHARON

(rage building in her)
Ruined my daddy. Ruined me. How could you?

MOORE

Put that down.

MUTT

(moving a step to her)
Yeah, put it down.

GUNN

(a step closer to Mutt)
Back off!

SHARON

(delirious now)
I don't believe it, I don't believe it.
Son of a bitch. Son of a bitch. Son OF A BITCH!

SCREAMING the last part, she SWINGS around, and FIRES ONCE, the shot BLOWING THE TOP OF Mutt's HEAD OFF and

Gunn recoils in shock as BLOOD SPRAYS and

Moore gets up from his desk and

SHARON (cont'd)

SIT DOWN SIT DOWN SIT DOWN!

And she PUMPS THREE SHOTS into Moore, BLOWING HIM BACK INTO HIS CHAIR, and ONE MORE SHOT BLOWS HIM OUT OF THE CHAIR and he falls to the floor, dead.

Gunn, covered in Mutt's blood, reaches out for her but she aims at his face dead center.

SHARON (cont'd)

DON'T! DON'T! BACK OFF! BACK OFF YOU MOTHERFUCKER! I'LL KILL YOU, TOO, I'LL FUCKING KILL YOU TOO!

And she means it. He backs off, the gun still in his face. She moves back, still aiming at Gunn, looking down, seeing Moore is dead, seeing Mutt is dead.

SHARON (cont'd)
Fucking kill you all! Kill every one of
you bastards!

She keeps the pistol aimed at Gunn, her hands shaking.

GUNN
Don't, don't!

She jerks the gun down, aiming at Janet, then back at Gunn.
She's trembling like a leaf, sobbing, moving in on Gunn now.

GUNN (cont'd)
Sharon, put it down, come on, put it down-

BANG! She fires and the bullet hits Gunn in the shoulder,
he's KNOCKED to the floor by the shot. He lays there,
bleeding, dazed.

Sharon stands over him. He looks at her, blinks groggily.

GUNN (cont'd)
Don't...

She looks at him. At Janet. At the dead bodies and blood in
the room. She smiles, sadly, her eyes still vacant.

BANG! The next shot just misses Gunn's head, slamming into
the carpeted floor. Gunn cringes, covers as she stands over
him.

Her arm is ramrod straight, aiming at Gunn. It begins to
waver, shake - she whimpers softly again, then folds into
herself and collapses in a heap on the floor.

Gunn eases up, sees the gun on the floor and bats it into a
corner. He sags back against the desk, drained.

EXT. MOORE'S ESTATE-DAYBREAK

The driveway is full of POLICE CARS, EMERGENCY VEHICLES, AND
TV VANS. Flashing lights in the early morning sunrise.

A PARAMEDIC helps Janet into a waiting ambulance, bandaged
and wrapped in a blanket, she's weak and shaky.

Gunn is being wheeled out on a stretcher, I.V. feeding into
his arm. Lucas stops the stretcher as they start to load Gunn
into the ambulance.

LUCAS
One crazy night, huh?

Gunn sleepily gives Lucas the finger.

EXT. WELCOME-DAY

A new day in town. Cloudy. Gloomy.

INT. JAIL CELL-DAY

Gunn in the cell again, on the bunk, back against the wall. He looks at his small window, just a bit of sunlight filtering through.

Lucas enters, stands in front of the cell. Studies Gunn. Smiles.

GUNN

Can I help you?

LUCAS

No, nope. Just thinking it all over. What a week it's been.

GUNN

Yeah. Just swell.

LUCAS

I spoke to your parole officer, a Mr. Smalls. He'll be here either this evening or first light. With a Federal Marshal.

GUNN

A Marshal huh? I rate that high?

LUCAS

Yeah, you're a star, Mr. Gunn. You broke the conditions of your parole. Crossed state lines. You shot a man in Marcus Moore's front yard.

GUNN

It was self defense, you know it. You feel different, you charge me with something.

LUCAS

Still it don't look good for you, Mr. Gunn, with a history of violence and all. And there's the matter of you breaking your early parole. You were on good behavior, no less.

GUNN

So how's Sharon?

LUCAS

Hard to say. She hasn't said much since she said "guilty" at the arraignment. Guess she just don't care anymore. But, she's got a good lawyer now. Lawyers can do wonders. She left quite a trail of, what ya say, carnage, behind her, didn't she?

GUNN

So what happens now?

LUCAS

What happens with what?

GUNN

The land. Sharon's mountain.

LUCAS

What do you care, boy? She was just yanking you off, too.

GUNN

That's what all this is about, Sheriff. Look how many people are dead because of it.

LUCAS

These mountains are full of unmarked graves, boy. Don't you worry yourself about it. I can always tell Mr. Smalls you were a troublemaker.

GUNN

You can't do a damn thing to me without throwing some light on yourself.

LUCAS

Moore was good for this town. He was just bad for the people in it. Ms. Harper, she'll probably see some time behind bars and the state will seize her property. It'll be up for auction before long I'd reckon. Lots of fellows have their eyes on the prize. The late Mr. Moore's partners have deep pockets, and they'll be waiting.

GUNN

So he gets the mountain after all.

LUCAS

Marcus Moore always got what he wanted.

(starts to leave, but turns
back)

Depending on how things go for you son,
if you find your way back this time next
year, I'll bet that lodge will be open by
then. I'll buy you a drink.

GUNN

Maybe I'll pass.

LUCAS

Maybe you should. Have a nice day.

He exits. Quiet. KEYS RATTLE in the outer door again, Janet
enters. They meet at the bars, manage a small kiss.

She's smiling. Her face shows a few bruises, one eye still
black and swollen but fading, her smile makes it worthwhile.

GUNN

Hey pretty lady.

JANET

Stop it.

GUNN

No, really. You're pretty.

JANET

You don't know me.

GUNN

Yeah, I do.

JANET

I've done bad things. You saw those
pictures on the internet?

GUNN

I know he made you do things-

JANET

He got me high, got me drunk, the prick.
I don't say I didn't know some-

GUNN

But you're not bad. Remember, it's how
you live. And who you love.

(she squeezes his hand)

Going back to work?

JANET
Eventually.

GUNN
How's it going?

JANET
Nobody mentions the bruises much. When somebody asks, I tell 'em. They like the idea of me in a catfight.

GUNN
I know I do.

She kisses him again.

JANET
You're so bad. I gotta go. Nick, I'm so sorry. You shouldn't be here. Like this.

GUNN
It's okay. I made my choices.

JANET
What's going to happen?

GUNN
They'll probably give me some more time for breaking parole. And whatever the Sheriff can add from all this mess.

JANET
I wish we could go away right now.

GUNN
Me too.

JANET
I'll talk to the Sheriff, to your parole officer, whoever. They can't lock you up again.

GUNN
I'll be fine. You were right, I was running for a long time. But I did find what I wanted.
(tears on her face now)
I'll come back. I will. I'll come get you. And we'll go someplace together.

JANET
(taking his hands)
Promise?

GUNN
I promise. You and me. We'll go off
together. We'll figure it out.

JANET
I like it cold.

GUNN
Okay. We'll go someplace cold. North.

She cries, hiding her face.

JANET
I, I don't deserve you.

GUNN
You deserve more than I could ever give
you.

He reaches out, strokes her cheek, wipes a tear away.

GUNN (cont'd)
Go back to work. Go be pretty, be good.
I'll see you.

One last awkward kiss through the bars. Then she turns away.

Lucas opens the door to the holding area, ushers Janet out.
She turns to wave one last time. Gunn smiles back.

Lucas reaches around, pulls the steel door shut with a CLANG
and

FADE OUT.