

LONG TIME GONE

by

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FADE IN:

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

A wet fingertip carefully applies saliva to black shoe leather. Rubs for a bright spit shine.

Metal DOORS OPEN. The SOUND of cold metal in cold metal: a turning KEY unlocking the cell.

JUBAL EARLY (40s) in denims, on the edge of his bunk. He polishes a black shoe. He looks up at a GUARD.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Jubal moves through the yard in his denims and polished black shoes, proceeding toward an exit on the other side of the prison.

A few prisoners move with him as he passes others and they say their goodbyes, careful not to step on his shoes.

Finally, Jubal nears the exit. The men stop and Jubal continues. They watch him and when he disappears the convicts turn fast to resume their activities.

INT. DISPERSING ROOM - DAY

A CLERK empties an envelope onto a table. From it falls a wallet, a cheap watch and a photograph.

Jubal, in an ill-fitting brown suit, picks up the watch. Puts it on. He picks up the photograph.

Looks at it for a moment: faded black and white headshot of a young woman with sad eyes and a thin smile.

He puts the photograph in his pocket. The clerk counts out eighty dollars in twenties for Jubal.

EXT. PRISON GATE - DAY

It opens. Jubal shakes hands with a guard and exits.

The gate closes.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

Jubal stands still. Silent. Only his eyes move. He looks around. Cautious.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Grey day. Mist. A black truck moves along a bleak, narrow road, the gloomy silhouette of the prison in the b.g.

INT. TRUCK (MOVING) - DAY

A GUARD drives, smoking a thin cigar. Jubal sits next to him like a small child, tense.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The truck moves into heavy morning mist. Into nothingness.

Out of the mist, a small bus, barred windows, comes toward the truck, passing it. A few faces look out the window.

INT. TRUCK (MOVING) - DAY

Jubal looking at the bus pass. He turns to watch it headed for the prison, disappearing in the mist.

He turns back to the front of the truck, catching a glimpse of the Guard's profile, his hat, his badge.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

On the edge of a small town. Some stores and a restaurant. A bowling alley. No activity. Dreary.

The truck stops. Sits a moment. The Guard gets out. He re-lights his cigar. Stretches. Jubal steps out.

A Greyhound bus stops before them. Doors open. The Guard stares at Jubal as Jubal moves up the steps of the bus.

GUARD

Don't come back.

Jubal turns toward the Guard as the bus doors swoop shut.

EXT. BUS TERMINAL - DAY

Doors open. Passengers move off the bus. Jubal moves past the driver at the door.

SUPER TITLE:

Nashville, Tennessee
1973

Jubal stops to drink from a water fountain. An arm jerks him aside and slams him against the wall.

Jubal is eye to eye with U.T. OSLIN (40s) a big man with a hard face.

U.T.
Welcome home, Jubal.

U.T. flashes a badge and a pleasant smile.

U.T.
U.T. Oslin. I'm your new
parole officer.

U.T. tucks the badge away, spins Jubal around, kicks his feet apart. Frisks him up and down, chest to ankles.

Passengers stop and stare. Jubal drops his head, ashamed.

U.T.
So? Fill me in.

JUBAL
On what?

U.T.
Your plans.

JUBAL
Shit, man, I just got out
this morning.

U.T. spins Jubal around. He scruffs up Jubal's shoes.

U.T.

Watch your language, convict,
and I am not your man.

U.T. stares at Jubal a moment. Then looks at his watch.

U.T.

I don't have a lot of time, I
have to be in court in thirty
minutes, but I want to tell you
how I operate: If something blows
up, I'm responsible to the
community. So I have to be on
top of things before they blow
up. Make sense?

JUBAL

Nothing's blown up.

U.T.

There's no sense in arguing,
because I'm not arguing.

JUBAL

Just 'cause I don't have plans
doesn't mean I'm gonna be
some kind of menace to society.

U.T.

You've been in prison most of
your adult life, a total of
thirteen years to be exact.
You've been convicted of burglary,
assault with a deadly weapon,
armed robbery --

JUBAL

Bad luck.

U.T.

When you've had bad luck for that
long, it ceases to believe it's
bad, let alone luck.
Do you want to know what I think?

JUBAL

I already know what you think.

U.T.

I think you have a terminal case
of dumb ass and should die the
death of a roach in Black Flag spray.

JUBAL

I knew it.

U.T.

Don't get smart with me.

JUBAL

I'm not. I'm just stating...

U.T.

That's it. Let's go...

U.T. takes him by the arm. Jubal pulls away.

JUBAL

Where you taking me?

U.T.

Halfway house.

JUBAL

Aw, man -- I just got out of jail.
I don't want some asshole
telling me lights out at eleven.

U.T.

What'd I tell you about that
language? You're going to
the halfway house.

JUBAL

Aw, man, sir, why?

U.T.

You do not have a place to stay...

JUBAL

I'll find a place.

U.T.

You do not have any employment
prospects.

JUBAL
I can find a job.

U.T. glares at Jubal.

JUBAL
Sir. I'm real sorry for the
attitude. Sir. Please, just
give me a chance, to prove...

U.T.
Prove what?

JUBAL
Prove I can change.

U.T. studies Jubal's face for a few seconds. Then:

U.T.
I'll make you a deal:
You find a place to live
today and a job by the end of
the week, I won't take you
to the halfway house.
Sound fair?

JUBAL
Yes, sir. That, that, it's
more than fair. Thank you.

U.T.
And ten percent of your take home
pay gets kicked backed to me.

Jubal considers this for a moment, not answering.

U.T.
Do you have a problem with that?

JUBAL
No, sir. Ten percent.

U.T. kicks at Jubal's black shoes.

U.T.
Take 'em off.

JUBAL

My shoes?

U.T.

That's right. Take 'em off.

JUBAL

Why?

U.T.

I ask the questions, convict.
Come on. Burning daylight here.

Jubal slowly kicks off both shoes. U.T. stares at his sock-covered feet.

U.T.

Socks too.

Jubal peels off both socks. U.T. stares at his bare feet.

U.T.

Call and leave your address with
my Miss DelVechio. Okay, that's
all for today, I'm due in court.

U.T. turns and starts out. He stops and faces Jubal.

U.T.

I hate to break it to you,
but you're not a free man.

EXT. BUS TERMINAL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Jubal on the street, confronted by the roar and rush of traffic. People moving about. A police car cruises past him. He watches it as it continues.

EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

Jubal walks. Eating a chili dog. Cup of coffee. He watches the action around him.

LATER

Growing darker. Jubal moving up the street. He holds a newspaper and a small bag. One shoe bothers him. He loosens it.

EXT. GARLAND HOTEL - DAY

A decaying building. Jubal moves to it. A "Vacancy" sign in the window.

INT. GARLAND HOTEL - ROOM - NIGHT

Jubal enters. A BLACK WOMAN with a baby in her arms waits at the door. Jubal looks around the room. A bed, a sink, a bureau, lamp on the table.

He crosses to the window. Opens it. Looks out at the fire escape. Satisfied, he moves to the Black Woman. Pays her \$18. She points down the hall.

BLACK WOMAN

Bathroom.

Jubal nods. She hands him the key and leaves. He closes the door. He stands with his key and his bag. Secure for the moment. Silent.

He turns and looks at himself in the mirror.

INT. GARLAND HOTEL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Jubal on a wall phone, calling. Opens newspaper -- runs down the employment section.

JUBAL

Miss DelVechio? Jubal Early.
A-2003. Tell Mr. Oslin I'm at
the Garland Hotel, 729 South
Church Street. Room 208.

(reads wall phone)

The number here is 647-8607.
Make sure he gets the message.
Thank you.

He hangs up.

INT. JUBAL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jubal, in his undershorts, gets into bed. He is restless. The bed is too soft. Finally, he gets up; puts on his pants and coat and wraps the blanket around him and sleeps on the floor.

The reverberating SOUND of cold metal in cold metal: a turning KEY locking each cell, unbroken, moving toward us, growing louder: CALACK, CALACK, CALACK.

ELECTRIC TYPEWRITER KEYS

striking a page, forming words:

The genuine joys of life are to be
gotten from useful effort; and to hunt
for pleasure is to lose it. Do your work
and pleasure will come to you. Health is
yours due and will flow to your naturally
if you do not get too anxious about it.

A little BELL rings.

INT. SMALL ROOM - DAY

Jubal at a small desk taking a typing test. He looks up. A polished, male TEMP AGENT (20s) stands in the door.

TEMP AGENT

Time's up.

The Temp Agent comes over and takes the paper out. He moves out of the room, speaking over his shoulder:

TEMP AGENT

I'll check it over. Be with you
in a minute.

INT. EMPLOYMENT OFFICE - DAY

Jubal seated next to the Temp Agent's desk. The young man pores over Jubal's application.

TEMP AGENT

You did great on the intelligence
test.

JUBAL

I could've told you that.

TEMP AGENT

Your score on the typing test was sixty-one.

JUBAL

How is that?

TEMP AGENT

I'm afraid it's a little low.

JUBAL

I'm not used to the electric.

The Agent looks at Jubal a moment, then:

TEMP AGENT

Ninety-nine percent of our typing positions use electric machines. Also, your application...I'm afraid you've left out your last place of employment and you forgot your social security number.

Jubal doesn't reply. Long, awkward silence.

TEMP AGENT

Were you self-employed or in the armed services?

Jubal looks at him. Looks down at his application and then some other papers on the desk.

Then at his name plate. MR. MERCER.

JUBAL

No, I worked at the state pen, Mr. Mercer.

MR. MERCER

In what capacity?

JUBAL

Inmate.

Mr. Mercer starts to reply, then stops.

He stares at Jubal.

MR. MERCER

Uh-huh...how long did you hold
that position?

JUBAL

Five years and three months.
No vacation.

MR. MERCER

What were you in for?

JUBAL

Armed robbery.

(hesitates)

There was an illness in the
family. My sister needed an
operation. Desperate measures
taken by a desperate man.

MR. MERCER

(suppressed smile;
knows he is conning)

That's terrible. Is she all right?

JUBAL

She died on the operating table.

MR. MERCER

And how are your mother and father?

JUBAL

Not good. But now I have to
think of myself. I know I don't
type well but I have good ideas.

MR. MERCER

Creative, huh?

Mr. Mercer looks at the sheet. Then back at Jubal.

JUBAL

Yes, sir, and like it said on the typing test, 'the genuine joys of life are to be gotten from useful effort.

MR. MERCER

What did you rob?

JUBAL

Liquor store.

Mr. Mercer looks down at his application.

MR. MERCER

I'll do the best I can.

JUBAL

I need a job.

Mr. Mercer looks at Jubal and knows he means it.

JUBAL

I really need a fucking job.

MR. MERCER

I will do the best I can.

Mr. Mercer shuffles papers, shrugging Jubal off.

JUBAL

And I'll be sure not to hold my breath.

EXT. EMPLOYMENT AGENCY - DAY

Jubal exits, proceeds along the crowded sidewalk. Mr. Mercer comes rushing out; catches up to and stops Jubal.

MR. MERCER

Why don't you go here?

He hands Jubal a card.

MR. MERCER

See what they say. It's not much. It's outdoors and it's two fifty an hour.

Jubal shakes Mr. Mercer's hand.

JUBAL

A job's a job.

EXT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - DAY

Monumental arch, 32 feet tall, 26 feet wide, with a wrought iron gate.

A 25-foot limestone wall surrounds the 64 luscious acres, trees and gardens on the perimeter.

Inside, confederate flags adorn lettered burial sections in a variety of shapes and sizes.

Hundreds of graves with marble headstones laid out in irregular sections between curvilinear avenues.

In the center, an 8-foot stone sculpture of a vigilant confederate soldier, rifle in hand, watches over the dead.

Jubal, in coveralls, pushes a manual mower in between the graves, trimming the edges in the glare of the noonday sun.

He stops to wipe sweat from his brow. Looks down at the lettering on a headstone: In Memory of W.E. Gibson.

BOGGS (O.S.)

Gibson fought in the infantry;
shot in the back by a Yankee.

Jubal turns to see Dean BOGGS (60s), a rotund man with a dignified air, wearing a white linen suit.

He offers his hand to Jubal. They shake.

BOGGS

Dean Boggs, president, Sons
Of Confederate Veterans.

JUBAL

Jubal Early.

BOGGS

Your ancestors fight in the war?

JUBAL

Which war is that?

BOGGS

War between the states, son.

JUBAL

The Civil War?

BOGGS

The Second American Revolution.
The war for Southern Liberty
and freedom.

JUBAL

My mamaw used to talk about an
uncle who fought for the South.
I don't know much about him.

BOGGS

Your uncle, I assure you,
personified, like the soldiers
buried here, the finest qualities
of America.

JUBAL

Yes, sir.

Jubal tinkers with mower.

BOGGS

I have a deep sense of loyalty
to these soldiers.

Boggs places a paternal hand on Jubal's elbow, leading him
ever so gently to a grave. Marker reads: Boggs RIP.

BOGGS

Especially my great grandfather,
who, as an officer in the cavalry,
gave his life in defense of
his country, fighting against
the tyranny of the North, and
of course the unconditional
surrender.

Jubal scans the vast cemetery, the curving rows of graves.

BOGGS

We honor their bravery, their
sacrifice, with this eternal
resting place. Cold drink?

INT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - MUSEUM - DAY

Jubal sips a cold bottle of pop in an ornate, sterling
museum of Southern antebellum history.

Boggs faces a wall map of Civil War battle sites, like a
general strategizing, hands folded behind his back.

BOGGS

I'm proud of our heritage,
our heritage of courage,
honor, chivalry, patriotism,
and of our duty to God and
country.

Boggs turns to Jubal.

BOGGS

Remember that as you work here.

JUBAL

I will, sir.

BOGGS

You seem like a good man, Jubal.
Now, the unemployment office
informs me that you are currently
on parole.

JUBAL

I've been down a crooked road,
sir, it's true.

BOGGS

Everybody hits some bumps.
It's not how you handle the
hills, it's how you handle
the valleys.

INT. GARLAND HOTEL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Jubal, filthy and sweating, moves to his door. It's open.

JUBAL'S ROOM

Jubal enters. U.T. is inside, snooping around.

U.T.

How are you?

JUBAL

I'm fine. Can I come in?

U.T.

It's your room.

Jubal enters. U.T. strolls around the room, frowning.

U.T.

This the best you could do?

JUBAL

Under the circumstances.

Jubal closes the door, but not completely. U.T. looks
around, moves to the window, looks out, closes the window.

U.T. moves to the sink and a jar of chocolate pudding.

U.T.

A little snack?

JUBAL

Just some pudding.

U.T. takes a pencil from his pocket, opens the jar and sticks the pencil inside the jar, into the pudding.

Jubal watches him. U.T. removes his pencil, finds a towel, wipes off the pudding and puts his pencil back in his pocket. Winks at Jubal.

U.T.

Just routine.

Silence. U.T. gives Jubal the once over. Finally:

U.T.

Looks like you been working.

JUBAL

At this cemetery. This fella from the employment office sent me over there and I got the job.

U.T.

What's it pay?

JUBAL

Minimum wage.

U.T.

You remember what we talked about?

JUBAL

Ten percent.

U.T.

You tell 'em about your record?

JUBAL

I didn't hide it.

U.T. closes the door. Points at Jubal's feet.

U.T.

Okay. Take 'em off.

JUBAL

Take what off?

U.T.
Your shoes, dummy.

JUBAL
Why?

U.T.
I'll ask the questions, convict.
How many times do I have to say it?
Now take off your shoes.

U.T. waits, but Jubal doesn't budge.

U.T.
We can do it here, or we can
do it in lockup. Which one
would you prefer?

Jubal hesitates for a few moments. Kicks off both shoes.

U.T.
Socks.

Jubal sits on the bed; peels off his slimy socks, revealing calloused feet, flaky skin and thick yellow toenails.

U.T. kneels before Jubal. He lifts Jubal's left foot and examines it, spreading the toes, rubbing, massaging.

U.T.
How's that feel?

JUBAL
Okay.

Then U.T. picks up the right foot and repeats the procedure, but slower. Much slower.

Uncomfortable, Jubal pull his foot to one side.

U.T.
Why're you so skittish?

JUBAL
No reason.

U.T.

Do you have something to hide?

JUBAL

No.

U.T.

No what?

JUBAL

No, sir.

U.T. picks up the right foot, again.

U.T.

Then let me do my job.

U.T. drools, spittle forming at the corners of his lips.

U.T.

What they got you doing at
the cemetery?

INT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - RESTROOM - DAY

Jubal, in coveralls, scrubs urinals with a brush. SHAKE EDWARDS (30s) enters. He wears a security guard uniform, carries a bag.

SHAKE

You working hard? Or hardly
working?

JUBAL

What's it look like, Shake?

Shake watches Jubal work.

SHAKE

Looks like you need a break.

Jubal stops working to see Shake break out an outfit and set it on top of the sink: two small balloons, measuring spoon, wad of cotton, short needle, small rubber hose.

SHAKE

Lock the door.

Jubal hesitates.

SHAKE

Lock the door. Dang.

Jubal locks the door. He turns to see Shake sit on a stool and heat the spoon with three matches out of a matchbook.

Shake sweats. He picks up the needle. Stabs a vein. Shoots up. The fix takes effect: eyes loll around.

Shake looks at Jubal. Holds out an extra balloon.

SHAKE

(sweet smile)

Good smack, man. You'll like it.

Jubal shakes his head: no. Looks out the window: dusk.

JUBAL

It's dark. Time to knock off.

SHAKE

It ain't dark yet.

JUBAL

It's getting there.

SHAKE

You afraid of the dark?

JUBAL

Just time to go home is all.

SHAKE

Me neither, but I am afraid of what people do with it, the dark.

EXT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - NIGHT

Shake, stoned, behind the wheel of a golf cart, smoking a cigarette as he watches the sun set.

Jubal emerges from the restroom, carrying a bucket; he hops into the passenger seat of the golf cart.

CEMETERY GROUNDS

Shake drives, fast, checking the perimeter as Jubal hangs on. They pass headstones and graves.

Shake comes to an abrupt halt before the flagpole. They get out and Shake lowers the Confederate flag.

Together, they fold it into a triangle.

INT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - MUSEUM - BOGGS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Shake, flag in hand, and Jubal enter. Shake places the flag on a shelf and proceeds to Boggs's desk.

SHAKE

Wanna see something cool?

Shake finds a key under the desk blotter and opens the top drawer. He opens the drawer and pulls out a small box. He opens the box. Inside, a glass eyeball with a green iris.

SHAKE

This belonged to Stonewall
Jackson. He only had one eye.

Shake takes out the eyeball and fondles it. He offers it to Jubal.

SHAKE

Wanna hold it?

Jubal waves it off. Shake shoves the eyeball in his pants pocket.

JUBAL

Whoa now...

SHAKE

I take it home some nights.

JUBAL

What for?

SHAKE

Freak the old lady out.

EXT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

Shake holds a huge ring of keys. He finds one and uses it to lock the wrought iron gate. Jubal stands nearby.

SHAKE

Wanna knock back a couple
of coke colas?

JUBAL

Nah. My head's splittin'.

SHAKE

Is that what's wrong with it?

Jubal strolls off, waving good-bye.

SHAKE

Well, don't do anything you
don't want me to hear about.

INT. GARLAND HOTEL - JUBAL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Silence. Jubal pulls a tab from a beer can. Jubal adds the tab to a chain hanging from the window. He lies in bed and stares at the photo of the young woman.

EXT. CITY PARK - NIGHT

Jubal sits on a park bench, smoking. He looks up; sees a young couple at the corner waiting for the light to change.

Suddenly the boy grabs the girl, lifts her up and carries her in his arms across the street. They laugh.

EXT. BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Jubal walks. His coat off. Looking for a particular bar.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

He finds it and enters.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

A dim, narrow room. A woman sits between two other men near the end of the bar. Jubal bellies up.

A white-shirted BARTENDER (20s) appears.

JUBAL
(barely audible)
Jack Daniels on the rocks.

BARTENDER
I didn't get it, pal.

JUBAL
(louder)
Jack Daniels on the rocks.

Jubal looks around as the Bartender, unfriendly, gets the order and puts it in front of Jubal, along with the check.

Jubal reaches into his pocket. Takes out some money, puts it on the cash register. Jubal picks up his drink.

Jubal takes a sip, looking at the Bartender, who is a few feet away, reading a newspaper.

JUBAL
Has QC Reeves been around lately?

BARTENDER
Never heard of him.

Jubal drinks. The Bartender looks at Jubal suspiciously, then back at the newspaper.

JUBAL
(soft)
Delbert Conroy?

BARTENDER
I can't hear you, pal.

JUBAL
I was wondering about Delbert Conroy.

BARTENDER
What about him?

JUBAL
Do you know him?

BARTENDER

Yeah.

JUBAL

When does he come in?

BARTENDER

I mix drinks and punch the cash register. I don't know when people come in.

Jubal polishes off his drink.

JUBAL

Can I leave a note?

The Bartender moves to take Jubal's glass.

BARTENDER

This ain't a post office, pal.

Jubal grabs the Bartender's hair and smashes his face against the bar.

JUBAL

You need to learn some fuckin' manners. Understand?

A hand snatches Jubal away. The hand belongs to SAM JOHNSON (30s). He wears a three-piece suit.

Sam drags an angry Jubal out of the bar.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Sam guides Jubal to the sidewalk. Jubal recognizes him.

JUBAL

Sam Johnson, holy hell.

Jubal checks out his fancy duds.

JUBAL

You sure have changed.

SAM

You ain't changed a bit.

Jubal shakes him off.

JUBAL
That piss-ant cocksucker.

Sam moves to a Cadillac parked at the curb. Opens the passenger door.

SAM
He's liable to call the law.
With you on parole, won't
be pretty.

Jubal catches his breath. Admires the Caddy.

JUBAL
That your car?

SAM
One of 'em.

Jubal slides into the seat. Sam closes the door.

INT. SAM'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Sam drives. Jubal runs his fingers across the velvet seat.

JUBAL
Looks like life's been good to
you since you got out.

SAM
While I was in the can, my aunt
Emma died. Left me some bread.

JUBAL
How's George doing?

SAM
He's still got a few screws loose.

JUBAL
Thought you would've tightened
'em up by now.

SAM

Tried. My dad, stubborn as a
goddamned mule.

JUBAL

Tell him I said hey.

SAM

Tell him yourself.

INT. STRIP JOINT - NIGHT

Dark, smoky. A high school girl prances on the stage to a funky soul song, wearing a scarf around her head and stumbling in high heels.

GEORGE JOHNSON (70s) blind, wearing dark sunglasses, sits at a table, teetering on the edge of a cane.

Sam and Jubal pull up seats.

SAM

Look who I found, pop.

Jubal slaps George on the back.

JUBAL

Hey, Georgy boy --
(looks at the girl)
What're you, some kind of
degenerate?

GEORGE

Our forms of salvation are ours
to choose, Jubal.

George raises his cane. Waitress comes over with three cans of beer and serves them to the three men.

George gives her some bills and she leaves. Sam raises a can, followed by Jubal and George.

SAM

Here's to salvation.

The three men drink.

SAM
(to Jubal)
Seen Sheena since you been out?

JUBAL
Nope.

SAM
She's still working at the
Dollar Store.

JUBAL
She likes it there I guess.

SAM
(to Jubal)
How you like working at a
cemetery?

JUBAL
How'd you know I work there?

SAM
Not much goes on in Nashville
I don't know about. You like it?

JUBAL
It's a living.

SAM
You call that a living?

JUBAL
My options are sort of limited.

SAM
That's what you think.

JUBAL
That is what I know.

SAM
You don't know shit.

JUBAL
That a fact?

SAM

'Cause I'm gonna open up your options.

GEORGE

Jubal, you remember Wanda Trotter?

SAM

Don't interrupt me, old man.

JUBAL

I remember Wanda.

GEORGE

She used to collect geraniums.
Had little black notebooks
crammed full of 'em.

SAM

Hey, who gives a shit?

GEORGE

You just don't want to listen
to nobody, mooncalf.

SAM

I've 'bout had it with your
goddamned mouth, old man.

GEORGE

Jam it.

SAM

Kiss my ass.

GEORGE

Make it bare.

Sam bites his lip, holding back. Looks at Jubal as if to say: See the shit I have to put up with? Then, to Jubal:

SAM

I got a job has your name all
over it.

JUBAL

I'm not interested.

SAM

Don't you even want to know
what it is?

JUBAL

Don't care what it is. I'm
not interested.

Jubal pauses to sip his beer. Then:

JUBAL

What is it?

Sam takes a coin from his jacket and flips it at Jubal, who catches it. Jubal peers at the coin: it's solid gold, inscribed with C.S.A. 20 dollars 1861.

SAM

Confederate gold.

JUBAL

Is this real?

SAM

Hell yeah, it's real, and
there's a lot more where
that came from.

JUBAL

Pawn shop?

SAM

Nope. It's all buried in the
Nashville Confederate Cemetery.

JUBAL

Where?

SAM

One of the graves. Been
there since 1865.

JUBAL

Sounds like bullshit.

SAM

No, this here is the gospel.

JUBAL

How do you know?

SAM

Little bird told me.

JUBAL

A little jail bird?

GEORGE

That cemetery's haunted.

SAM

Shut your hole, old man.
Yeah, Jubal, somebody in
jail told me. But that
don't make it bullshit.

JUBAL

Don't make it the gospel
either. I mean, why would
somebody bury gold? In a
graveyard?

GEORGE

A haunted graveyard.

SAM

Hiding it from Yankee troops.
Supposed to come back for it.
Got killed instead. Now it's
just sitting there.

JUBAL

Waiting.

SAM

For us.

JUBAL

How much gold we talking about?

SAM

Two million.

JUBAL

Dollars?

SAM

Do I have your attention?

JUBAL

Which grave?

SAM

Oh nooooooooo. I'm not divulging
that information till you agree.

JUBAL

Agree on what?

SAM

To dig it up.

GEORGE

But be careful. It's haunted.

SAM

(to George)

Nobody's talking to you so
just...

Sam stifles his anger, letting himself cool down.

JUBAL

That's the job: grave robbing?

SAM

If that's the way you want to
look at it.

JUBAL

Do you have a fence?

SAM

I'm moving it, myself.

JUBAL

What's my end?

SAM

Half.

JUBAL
A million dollars?

SAM
You didn't even need a calculator.

JUBAL
Why me?

SAM
Why you what?

JUBAL
Why am I so lucky? What did
I do to deserve all this
generosity?

SAM
You're a good thief.

JUBAL
You can't swing a dead cat in
this town without hitting a
good thief.

SAM
Not ones you can trust. What do
you think?

JUBAL
I think I'll pass.

SAM
A job like this been a
long time comin'.

JUBAL
And I'll be a long time gone if
I get popped.

SAM
You damned near killed a bartender
and you plan on carrying a lunch bucket?

JUBAL

I'm lucky to have that job.
My boss, he's been square
dealin' with me. I'm not gonna
stab him in the back. Find yourself
another thief.

Flips the coin back to Sam.

GEORGE

But, Jubal --

Jubal and Sam turn to George, waiting for his utterance.

GEORGE

She had so many geraniums --
too many to count, but I tried.

EXT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - DAY

Jubal gathers dead flowers from graves. The gardener, an
OLD WOMAN, tends the flowerbeds, pulling weeds.

Jubal wanders up to her.

JUBAL

Ma'am. Gonna be a hot one.

She glances up at the sun.

OLD WOMAN

It's a bad sun for sure.

JUBAL

How long you worked here?

OLD WOMAN

Twenty-two years come December.

JUBAL

You ever find anything out here?

OLD WOMAN

Peace, silence.

JUBAL

Anything valuable?

OLD WOMAN

Nothing more valuable than
peace and silence. I feel
close to these dead here,
with their stones and
finality of earth that binds
them together.

JUBAL

What I mean to say is, have
you ever found any artifacts
and whatnot, from the war,
something worth some money.

OLD WOMAN

Like gold?

JUBAL

Yes, ma'am, like gold. Ever
heard that story, about gold
buried here?

OLD WOMAN

It's been floating around
since Lincoln was killed --
that story. No truer today
than it was then. Strictly
for the tourists.

Shake rides up on a golf cart.

SHAKE

(to Jubal)

Boss wants to see you.

JUBAL

What for?

INT. CEMETERY MUSEUM - BOGGS'S OFFICE - DAY

Boggs at his polished desk, fly swatter in hand, swatting
flies. Shake stands behind him.

Jubal stands before the desk, anxious.

BOGGS

Have I done anything to upset
you, Jubal?

JUBAL

No, sir.

BOGGS

Because I'm trying to help
you. You understand that,
don't you? That I'm trying
to help you?

JUBAL

Yes, sir. I appreciate it.

Boggs opens the top desk drawer. He takes out the jewel
box and lifts the lid. Empty.

BOGGS

Then why did you steal from me?

Jubal shoots Shake a look: what the hell?

BOGGS

Answer me.

JUBAL

I did not steal from you, sir.

BOGGS

Do you know who did?

Jubal takes a few seconds to answer this question,
exchanging looks with Shake.

JUBAL

Can't say as I do.

BOGGS

What can you say?

JUBAL

I'm sorry.

BOGGS

Sorry for what?

JUBAL
Somebody stealing your glass eye.

BOGGS
How'd you know it was a glass
eye that was stolen?

JUBAL
Didn't you just say that?

BOGGS
No. I did not.

JUBAL
I could've swore...

BOGGS
Give me back my property.

JUBAL
I don't have it.

BOGGS
You're fired.

JUBAL
What?

BOGGS
You're fired. You've lost
your job.

JUBAL
You can't.

BOGGS
I want you out of here.

JUBAL
I've been a good worker.

BOGGS
You're nothing but a thief.
There's the door.

Jubal looks back and forth between Boggs and Shake.

He turns and leaves.

INT. GARLAND HOTEL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Jubal strolls along. He comes to a stop when he sees Sam Johnson waiting in front of his room.

SAM

How's the lunch bucket treating you?

JUBAL

It's treated me better.

Jubal opens the door and enters.

JUBAL'S ROOM

Sam follows him inside, closing the door.

SAM

What happened?

JUBAL

I got fired today.

SAM

For what?

JUBAL

For nothing.

SAM

What are you gonna do now?

JUBAL

Get another job.

Flips the coin at Jubal, who catches it.

JUBAL

There's a woman, been working at the cemetery forever, and she says there is no gold -- that it's all just a bunch of made-up horseshit.

SAM

Then we have that on our side:
nobody believes it.

JUBAL

Including me. Count me out.

SAM

Shit -- give me the real
reason you don't want this job.

JUBAL

Because I want a life here.

SAM

A life?

JUBAL

A place, in society.

SAM

You got no place in society.
You're on the outside lookin' in.
Who's your parole officer?

JUBAL

A Mr. U.T. Oslin.

SAM

Tough break.

JUBAL

Seems fair enough.

SAM

Especially if your feet hurt.

Jubal sits on the bed, defeated.

JUBAL

I don't know what you're
talking about.

SAM

Keep telling yourself that.

JUBAL

I will.

Sam looks out the window.

JUBAL

Hey, man, let me think about it.

SAM

Think about this, Jubal -- think about all the jobs you couldn't get 'cause you did time; think about all the things you can't buy 'cause no one will give you credit. Think of the sick feelin' you get in your guts every time you sign your name to a piece of paper, wondering if you slipped up, that maybe there's a warrant out for you that you didn't know about, for something that you even forgot you did. Think about that. And think about how your hands sweat whenever a cop passes you on a freeway or looks at you cross-eyed on the street. Think about all that, Jubal. Think about it and then tell about your goddamned place in society.

Jubal flips the coin in the air, over and over and over.

EXT. USED CAR LOT - DAY

Jubal flips the coin as he strolls onto the lot. He stops before an old Buick. Kicks the tires. PREACH, a black man in a loud sports jacket, wanders up and admires the Buick.

PREACH

She's a real cream puff, baby.
Only got fifty thousand miles.

JUBAL

What do you want for her, Preach?

Preach recognizes Jubal. Grabs his hand.

PREACH

Hey, hey, Jubal Early, my man,
always on top.

JUBAL

How's it hanging?

PREACH

Low and to the left, baby.
When'd they spring you?

Jubal circles the car.

JUBAL

Week ago.

PREACH

What were you gone, three?

JUBAL

Five.

PREACH

You lookin'? I got some debts
you can collect.

JUBAL

Don't have the time.

PREACH

Don't hand me that lunch
bucket shit.

JUBAL

I'm puttin' something together.

PREACH

That's what I'm here for. Just
tell me what you need, baby.

INT. PREACH'S OFFICE - DAY

Preach unwraps a white towel on the desk, exposing a snub-nosed .32.

Jubal picks up the gun. Fondles it.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Buick pulls up. Jubal gets out. Perfect image of a normal day on a small street. Private homes, apartment complexes.

DELBERT CONROY (30s) on his hands and knees, rolling out a new lawn before a two-story ranch house.

Jubal strolls up, stops; watches Delbert work. Delbert looks up, sees him. They stare at each other.

JUBAL

You dyed your hair, Delbert.

DELBERT

I don't see the point in looking old if you don't have to.

Delbert gets up, brushes off his pants and gives Jubal a big bear hug. Jubal steps back, getting a lay of the land.

JUBAL

Living the good life, huh?

DELBERT

Working at a travel agency.

JUBAL

Sounds interesting.

DELBERT

Pays the bills. How're you?

JUBAL

Oh, you know. Nice place.

Jubal smiles and nods. There is a long, silent moment between the two old friends. They exchange looks.

DELBERT

Let's do it.

JUBAL

Don't you wanna know what it is first?

DELBERT

I don't care. Let's do it.

(pause)

What is it?

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Jubal and Delbert amble along a vast display of shovels and picks, pricing and talking.

DELBERT

You hear about Clinton Baker?
Back in Brushy. Sold four lids
to a narc.

JUBAL

How about JB Douglas?

DELBERT

Don't know about him. Lumpy's
back in.

JUBAL

Buddy Maple?

DELBERT

Dead.

Jubal, surprised, stops appraising the shovels.

JUBAL

Jesus. What happened?

DELBERT

It was the worst thing to happen
around here in a long time.

JUBAL

Somebody kill him?

DELBERT

He killed hisself. He set down with a shotgun, and stuck it in his mouth and blowed his brains all over his mama's front porch, with her standing there in the kitchen fixin' to put supper on the table. I never seen so many flowers at a funeral as his had.

EXT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - DAY

Dead flowers on graves.

JUBAL (V.O.)

So that's the plan, depending on which grave we have to dig up.

DELBERT (V.O.)

What about security?

JUBAL (V.O.)

Just that junky shit bird. He leaves 'fore dark.

INT. CAR - DAY

Jubal behind the wheel, sipping a cold one. Delbert beside him, window open. They're adjacent to the rear of the cemetery, casing the area.

DELBERT

Alarms?

JUBAL

Nope.

DELBERT

Sam, he could just be blowing sunshine up your skirt.

JUBAL

He sounds pretty convinced there's gold in that thar cemetery.

DELBERT
Are you convinced?

JUBAL
Not hardly.

DELBERT
That makes two of us.

Jubal chuckles.

DELBERT
What?

JUBAL
George says it's haunted.

DELBERT
That's just the liquor talkin'.

JUBAL
This job beats the lunch bucket
I reckon.

Long silence.

JUBAL
Buddy Maple, I'll be damned.

DELBERT
Old Buddy. He took the easy
way out.

JUBAL
I wanted to do the same thing.

DELBERT
When?

JUBAL
The day Sheena divorced me.

DELBERT
She still works at the Dollar
Store you know.

JUBAL

Yeah, I know. I also know she didn't hurt for me like I did for her.

DELBERT

That's no reason to grease your self.

JUBAL

I was gonna use my daddy's shotgun. Her first, me second.

DELBERT

What stopped you?

JUBAL

I realized it wouldn't be nothing but a short article in some paper that strangers would read and shake their heads over, then turn to the sports page. Love goes wrong. It happens every day.

DELBERT

Speaking of shotguns, we need one for this job.

Jubal pulls the .32 out of the glovebox. Cocks it.

DELBERT

A shotgun, not a cap pistol.

JUBAL

What for?

DELBERT

You never know what you might come across, in the dark.

JUBAL

Like the booger man?

DELBERT

Just want to be prepared is all.

JUBAL
I'll get my daddy's.

DELBERT
Yeah, put it to some positive use.
Where you been keepin' that thing?

INT. DOLLAR STORE - DAY

SHEENA EARLY (30s) stands behind the Return desk. Jubal at the end of a long line, waiting, watching her deal with people, watching her smile.

As the line inches along, we recognize Sheena as the same woman in Jubal's photograph. She's older, more mature.

LATER

Jubal finally stands before her, smiling slightly. She doesn't smile.

SHEENA
When'd you get out?

JUBAL
Last week.

She keeps her eyes on slips of paper in front of her, keeping her hands busy with things on the counter.

She looks up. Pain marks her eyes so deep it's like a color, a glad sadness on seeing him this close.

JUBAL
You been gettin' along?
You all right?

SHEENA
I'm okay. How're you?

She folds her hands together on the desk, her painted nails red as blood. He looks at her hands and then at her face.

JUBAL
I'm all right. What time
you get off for lunch?

SHEENA

I don't know today.

Her eyes wander, then come back to rest uneasily on him.

SHEENA

Jean's sick and Sheila's having
a baby. I don't know when I'll
get to go.

He coughs, reaches for a cigarette and then stays his hand.

JUBAL

I thought I'd see if you
wanted to eat some lunch.
Thought you might want to
go to Minnie Pearl's.

SHEENA

I don't think there's any need
of that. Do you?

JUBAL

Wouldn't hurt. I'd just like
to buy you some lunch.

She pulls a pencil from beside her ear and opens a drawer
at her waist; closes the drawer and lays down the pencil.

SHEENA

I'm not going out with you
if that's what you want.

JUBAL

I didn't say that.

SHEENA

You're not gonna come in here
like you did that other time.
Mr. Harper'll call the police
if you ever do that again.

She leans toward him and whispers:

SHEENA

How do you think that made me feel? Everybody in here saw you. I've got a good job here.

JUBAL

I know you do. I'm proud of you.

SHEENA

Then let me do it.

JUBAL

You been out with anybody?

SHEENA

None of your business.

Somebody moves up behind Jubal. An elderly LADY, smiling and digging in her purse, shaking her head.

JUBAL

I need my daddy's shotgun.

SHEENA

What for?

JUBAL

Going huntin'.

SHEENA

Don't lie to me.

JUBAL

It's none of your business, Sheena Lee.

SHEENA

You're into something.

JUBAL

I'll swing by the house later.

SHEENA

Don't bother. I sold it.

Jubal raises his voice, angry:

JUBAL
Goddamn you!

SHEENA
Hush now.

JUBAL
It wasn't yours to sell.

SHEENA
Ought not to've left it.

JUBAL
My daddy gave me that gun.

SHEENA
I've got to get to work.
You have to leave now.

The elderly lady steps up beside Jubal.

JUBAL
I'm not going a damn place, not
till you tell me who you sold
my daddy's gun to.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Jubal, one hand on the wheel, steering, looking out the window.

EXT. GUN SHOP - NIGHT

Next to a sewing shop.

EXT. GUN SHOP/SEWING SHOP - NIGHT

Jubal strolls. He looks in the gun shop window. Sees alarm system box above the door.

Looks in to check the interior. Moves on past the sewing shop, looking in it as he goes.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Parked in an alley. Jubal's behind the wheel, adrenaline at work, checking his .32 snub nosed. Puts it in his belt.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Jubal opens the trunk. He picks up a tire iron, a screwdriver and a flashlight.

He leaves the trunk lowered but not locked. He moves back to the front seat of the car, replaces key in ignition.

EXT. SEWING SHOP - NIGHT

Jubal breaks in using the tire iron.

INT. SEWING SHOP - NIGHT

Jubal inside now. Lights from outside. Low to the floor, he feels the soft plaster of the wall. Digs into the wall with the tire iron, digging, digging --

LATER

Nearly through the wall. The floor covered with plaster. He stops once, wipes his neck and then back to work.

INT. GUN SHOP - NIGHT

Plaster behind the counter cracks. A piece of plaster falls out. One of Jubal's eyes looks in. His hand reaches through and pulls the lath and plaster away.

LATER

Jubal crawls through the hole into a caged area. He opens cage, moves to the rear door, keeping low.

Looks up, sees another alarm box over the door. He takes the crossbar from across the door, lays it carefully to the side of the door.

Moves back toward the cage, looking at rifles, shotguns in racks on the wall.

He reaches for an old, weather-beaten .12-gauge shotgun.

INT. SEWING SHOP - NIGHT

Jubal moving through the hole, pulling the shotgun.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Jubal puts the shotgun into the trunk of the car. Slams the trunk closed.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

He slides behind the wheel. Excited. Sweating. Turns the keys in the ignition. He pauses. Curses himself.

Slaps the wheel.

INT. GUN SHOP - NIGHT

Jubal crawls back through the hole. He takes several boxes of shotgun shells and stuffs them into his coat pocket.

People talking. A woman giggling. He freezes. Finally the voices fade.

He crawls toward the hole. Rises, bumping against a display case. An ALARM GOES OFF. He panics.

Runs to the rear door. Flings it open. ANOTHER ALARM GOES OFF. He moves outside.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

The ALARM CONTINUES as Jubal dashes to the car, throws the door open and jumps into the front seat.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Jubal starts the motor as the ALARM CONTINUES. In the distance, a POLICE SIREN. Jubal drives away.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Delbert, in his bathrobe, examines the shotgun, shucking the pump up and down. Jubal watches him.

DELBERT
How's Sheena look?

JUBAL

Even better than I remembered,
like leaving me has made her
more beautiful.

DELBERT

Least she kept your daddy's
shotgun. She could've sold it.

JUBAL

Sheena knows better than that.

DELBERT

Hungry?

EXT. DELBERT'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Delbert, wearing an apron, grills hamburgers over the spit.
Jubal, Sam and George sit at a picnic table nearby.

DELBERT

Who likes 'em well done?

No response.

DELBERT

Well, that's tough shit 'cause
they're all well done.

JUBAL

(to Sam)

We're locked into this deal.

SAM

Sure you don't want to back out?

JUBAL

We're sure.

SAM

If you do, now is the time to
say so. If you need...

JUBAL

All we need is a name.

Delbert brings over a platter of burgers and all the fixings: buns, mustard, ketchup.

The men, except for George, all dig in.

SAM

Once I give you this name,
ain't no turning back, hear?

DELBERT

Hell -- how many ways does
the man have to say it?

JUBAL

We do not want to turn back.

GEORGE

Where's your dog, Delbert?

DELBERT

Died last year.

GEORGE

I had a dog, Frank. Sam took
old Frank out in the pasture
and shot him with a .22 rifle.

SAM

Trying to conduct business here.

GEORGE

Shot him in the head.

SAM

(to Jubal and George)
That mangy mutt had rabies.

GEORGE

He used to come in, lay down
on my legs while I watched
"Dragnet." Happy as anything,
just sleep and sleep.

SAM

Used to shit all over the house.

GEORGE

Frank never did. He'd scratch
on the door till I let him out.

SAM

Now why you wanna tell that bald-
faced lie, old man?

GEORGE

Why you wanna be an asshole every
day of your life?

Sam moves to rise, as if he wants to slug his father; but
Delbert intervenes, nudging Sam back down on his seat.

DELBERT

Hold on you two, damn.

JUBAL

Sam, the name on the grave.

Sam settles down.

SAM

John S. Mosby.

Sam unfolds a large map, spreading it out on the table.
It's a detailed map of the cemetery.

He stabs the center of the map with one finger.

SAM

His grave's right beside the statue.

Jubal and Delbert examine the location.

DELBERT

Pretty far from the walls.

JUBAL

Actually, you can't get no
farther away than that.

SAM

I didn't say it was gonna
be easy.

JUBAL

Didn't say it was gonna be impossible either.

GEORGE

Delbert, Jubal tell you it's haunted?

SAM

Shut your hole, old man.

DELBERT

He told me, but I don't believe in ghosts.

GEORGE

Don't mean they don't exist.

SAM

(to Jubal)

If this caper was easy, it'd have no worth.

JUBAL

Easy for you to say: it's not your goddamn ass on the line.

SAM

If it was easy, it wouldn't be no fun.

JUBAL

I'm not doing this for fun.

DELBERT

Is John S. Mosby still in his grave?

GEORGE

He tends to wander the cemetery at night.

DELBERT

Doing what?

GEORGE

Searching.

DELBERT

You sound like you done lost
your mind, George.

SAM

Can't lose what you never had.
There's no body in the casket.

JUBAL

No corpse nor nothing?

SAM

Just six bags of gold coins.

JUBAL

Assuming we don't get pinched,
where y'all gonna be come dawn?

SAM

The store, out on 65.

JUBAL

When do we get paid?

SAM

Soon as I see the gold.

DELBERT

(to Jubal)

When you wanna make this happen?

JUBAL

Tonight.

GEORGE

Shot poor old Frank in the head.

EXT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - NIGHT

Shake locks the gate and leaves.

THE WALL

Jubal and Delbert, in dark clothes, carry duffel bags laden
with shovels and picks.

They press their backs against the wall, watching Shake drive away, passing the cemetery.

Jubal opens a bag, pulls out a rope with grappling hook. He tosses the hook over the wall and it catches.

He tugs on the rope, making sure it's secure. He throws the one bag over his shoulder and scales the wall.

Makes it to the top.

CEMETERY -- INSIDE THE WALL

He slowly lowers himself to the ground. Delbert quickly follows, dropping, with the bag, beside Jubal.

Jubal motions for Delbert to follow. They grab their bags and move toward the looming Confederate soldier statue, far away in the center of the cemetery.

They move quietly and swiftly among the headstones, lugging the bags, passing over the curved lanes.

They finally get within fifty feet of the statue. Jubal sees something and stops abruptly. Delbert pulls up behind him, breathing heavily but quietly.

They stare at the sight in wide-eyed disbelief: a woman in a long dress weeps over the grave of John S. Mosby.

Delbert starts to speak, but Jubal silences him.

JUBAL

Shit.

They turn and run, racing toward where they came from.

OUTSIDE THE WALL

Two duffel bags fly over the wall and land on the ground. Jubal climbs over using the rope, followed by Delbert. Jubal jerks the rope and hook free.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Jubal jumps behind the wheel. Delbert tosses the bags in the trunk; then hops in beside Jubal.

Jubal puts it in drive and takes off.

INT. SAM'S STORE - DAY

Sam slaps the counter.

SAM

A woman!?

Jubal and Delbert stand before the counter.

JUBAL

She must've got locked inside.

DELBERT

She was real sad.

SAM

Not half as sad as me.

JUBAL

We can't rob a grave with some chick standing on top of it.

DELBERT

Crying.

George emerges from behind a curtain, cane in hand, and wanders up to the register.

GEORGE

Where's the gold?

SAM

They didn't get it.

GEORGE

Y'all get scared?

SAM

They shit their britches.

DELBERT

There was a woman inside the cemetery. Could've fingered us.

GEORGE

That was Mosby's widow.

SAM

You are getting on my last
nerve, you feeble-minded..

Jubal interrupts, slapping George on the back.

JUBAL

Ghost or no ghost, we'll make
another run at it.

A car pulls up beside the pump outside. A young black
man's behind the wheel. He HONKS the horn.

GEORGE

Customer.

Sam looks outside, sees the man, who HONKS again.

SAM

Damn niggers. I hate them
bastards.

George coughs in disagreement. Another HONK from outside.

SAM

(to George)

Like you don't.

GEORGE

Can't say as I do. I like
some and I don't like others.

SAM

Since when?

Two more HONKS. George pops open a bag of pork rinds.

SAM

(to Jubal and Delbert)

Darkies today want you to
wait on 'em hand and foot.
Not like it used to be.

Black man outside grows tired of waiting and drives away.

GEORGE

That's not what they want.
I know what they want.

SAM

I can't wait to hear this shit.

GEORGE

Opportunity. It's opportunity
they want. That's all.

SAM

Opportunity for what?

GEORGE

To get along and make out, just
like anybody else.

Sam looks at Jubal and Delbert as if to ask: What is wrong
with this motherfucker?

DELBERT

Like Jubal was saying: we'll
make another run at it.

JUBAL

Next week.

DELBERT

That grave's not going nowhere.

Sam pulls a newspaper from underneath the counter, unfolds
it and points at a headline: Confederate hero's body to be
moved to Arlington National Cemetery.

JUBAL

Think they're after the gold?

SAM

I just don't know. What I do
know is we can't wait no week
to take another fucking run at
it. Forty-eight hours, that's
all we got.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Jubal and Delbert at a table in a barn-like building with only a few customers. All losers. One man in a cowboy hat and boots talks across a table to an empty seat.

DELBERT

There's got to be an easier way.
I damn near broke my back.

JUBAL

Getting' old sucks. Dyin'
your hair isn't a solution.

DELBERT

Hell, I know it. Too bad you
don't work there no more.

JUBAL

If I still worked there, we
wouldn't be having this
conversation.

DELBERT

All I'm saying is: being on the
inside makes things easier.
Or knowing somebody on the
inside.

EXT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - DAY

Shake Edwards smokes a cigarette as he watches two men dressed in grey Confederate uniforms decorate graves with flowers and wreathes.

The men fall in beside John S. Mosby's grave. They stand at attention and salute as a 12-gun salute explodes from the intercom system.

Finished, Shake lowers the Confederate flag as "Dixie" plays, solemn, sobering.

OUTSIDE - NIGHT

Shake locks the front gate. He climbs in his car.

EXT. SHAKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Two-bedroom stucco. Shake pulls into the garage.

INT. SHAKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A woman watches TV, a can of beer on the table by her side. Shake, who's been dozing, gets up, moves to the kitchen and the back door.

EXT. SHAKE'S BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Shake moves out. He starts toward the garage. Jubal moves out of the shadows and puts his hand over Shake's mouth, grabbing him from behind.

All in whispers:

JUBAL
Shhhhh.

SHAKE
Jesus.

JUBAL
Be cool.

SHAKE
What're you doing here?

Jubal breaks out his pistol.

JUBAL
I want you to drive me somewhere.

SHAKE
Aw, c'mon, man.

Jubal jabs the pistol into Shake's ribcage.

JUBAL
Hey, asshole, get in the car.

SHAKE
Okay, okay, just don't go crazy now, okay? Let me get my coat.

JUBAL
No coat, just like you are.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Radio plays soft country music. Shake drives, sweat on his forehead. Jubal sits beside him, pistol on his lap, his hand on it, holding it steady.

Jubal looks over at Shake, who grips the wheel, sweating.

CAR WINDSHIELD

Making into the wilderness, a narrow dirt road.

INSIDE CAR

Jubal aims the pistol at Shake.

JUBAL
Pull over.

SHAKE
What's wrong? What'd I do?

JUBAL
Pull over.

Shake pulls over and stops.

JUBAL
I got fired because of you.

SHAKE
What're you talkin' about?

JUBAL
The glass eye, dingle berry.

SHAKE
It ain't like I dropped dime
on you.

JUBAL
You let me take the fall to
save your own sorry ass.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Jubal gets out of the car, reaches in and pulls Shake out by his shirt collar.

Shake falls to the ground. Pistol in his face.

SHAKE

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

JUBAL

Gimme a reason not to kill you.

SHAKE

I've got an old lady and kids, man.

JUBAL

Not good enough.

SHAKE

What do you want from me?

JUBAL

Your keys to the cemetery.

SHAKE

Can't do it.

JUBAL

You can and you will.

SHAKE

I'll lose my job.

JUBAL

You'll lose more than your job
if you don't do what I say.

SHAKE

There's no gold.

JUBAL

Who said anything about gold?

SHAKE

It's just a big story.

JUBAL

The keys.

Cocks the pistol, pressing it against Shake's nose.

SHAKE

They're at the house. I'll
give 'em to you, but you're
doin' this all for nothin'.

INT. SHAKE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Shake slips into a small bedroom, followed by Jubal, who still holds the pistol.

SHAKE

Quiet. I don't wanna wake up
the old lady.

JUBAL

The keys.

Shake opens the dresser, tosses Jubal a set of keys.

SHAKE

Extra set.

As Jubal examines the keys, Shake breaks out a shaving kit. He sits on the bed, opening the kit on top of the dresser: two small balloons, measuring spoon, needle.

Jubal shakes his head: pathetic.

JUBAL

Don't tell anybody. Hate
to pay a visit to your wife
and kids.

SHAKE

I ain't saying shit, man.

Jubal watches Shake heat the spoon over three matches bent out of a matchbook. Jubal turns to leave.

SHAKE

Jubal.

Jubal turns around. Shake picks up the needle. Shoots up in his left arm. The fix takes effect. Shake smiles.

SHAKE

You're never gonna find what
you're looking for.

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - NIGHT

Delbert at a desk, in suit and tie, poring over folders of sunny beaches and waving palms.

Jubal enters, moves to the desk.

JUBAL

Tomorrow night, eight sharp,
I'll pick you up.

DELBERT

Where we gonna meet Sam?

JUBAL

His house, in Franklin. Leave
the shovels at home. We'll use
theirs.

Delbert rubs his chest, wincing.

JUBAL

You okay?

DELBERT

Heartburn. Tacos for lunch.

Delbert pulls a time card from his drawer, moves a stack of travel folders to one side, revealing a punch clock.

DELBERT

I like the type of folks who
come in here to think I'm
on straight salary.

JUBAL

What type of folks is that?

DELBERT

Rich folks. They're always
taking vacations.

JUBAL

Where to?

DELBERT

South of France. Wales. Naples.
Want some coffee?

JUBAL

I could drink a cup.

Delbert rises, moves to a full coffee pot, pours some into
a Styrofoam cup, hands it to Jubal.

DELBERT

I always keep a pot of coffee
on hot for the rich, in case
they ask to share a cup with me.

JUBAL

Do they?

DELBERT

The rich don't drink coffee in
the afternoon, or at night.
They favor Perrier and soda,
old, old bottles of wine.

Delbert pours himself a cup.

DELBERT

They don't compare prices
at the grocery store or
cut out coupons.

JUBAL

The rich have it pretty easy,
I reckon.

Delbert sits, fiddles with his time card; rubs his chest
again, in pain.

JUBAL

You sure you're okay?

DELBERT
Damn Mexican food.

JUBAL
You ought to know better.

Delbert sighs with relief.

DELBERT
There, that's better.

Delbert drops his head, forlorn.

JUBAL
Something else wrong?

Delbert lifts his head, eyes watering.

DELBERT
You ever wonder what will become
of us?

JUBAL
No.

DELBERT
Why not?

JUBAL
Because I know what will become
of us.

Jubal downs his coffee, rises, winks at Delbert and leaves.

INT. SALOON - NIGHT

Jubal at the bar. He sips a bottle of beer, looking out over the crowd, a loud rock band playing, couples drifting over the floor like smoke.

A MAN with a freaky face leans on the bar two stools down from Jubal. This man has no front teeth, chewed-up right ear, his left eye gouged out.

Their eyes meet briefly and then part, like two dogs sizing each other up.

Some of the tables have three, four women, some have couples and one table has a woman by herself.

Jubal sips on his beer, eyeing the creeping clock above the doorway. He finally goes over.

She looks up and sees him coming her way. He stops beside her chair.

JUBAL

Hi.

She smiles but doesn't say anything. He leans over and shouts over the music:

JUBAL

How you doin'?

She says something inaudible, like okay. She looks like she just wants Jubal to go away and leave her alone.

JUBAL

(shouting, in her ear)

Want to dance?

She shakes her head: no. Gives Jubal a sad look. Jubal flashes a friendly smile.

JUBAL

Hell, come on. I'm not going to bite you.

Jubal draws back a chair and puts one foot on it, resting an elbow on his knee.

JUBAL

Don't you like to dance?

She dabs at the ashtray with her cigarette.

WOMAN

Sure I like to dance. I just don't feel like it tonight.

JUBAL

Why not?

WOMAN

Don't take it personally.
Maybe some other night.

JUBAL

Sure.

He turns away, walks away a few steps and stops. Looks back at the woman. He goes back to the table.

JUBAL

You sure you don't want to dance?

She doesn't even look up.

WOMAN

Not now. Please leave me alone.

The music stops.

MENS ROOM

Jubal enters and steps up to a urinal clogged with shredded butts and old piss.

SALOON

Jubal emerges from the bathroom, into the noise and the smoke and the dark.

Someone touches his wrist as he goes by a table.

LORRAINE (O.S.)

Hey. How come you ain't asked
me to dance yet.

He looks at her. She has on a black dress and white stockings, dressed a little like a witch.

The flesh around her eyes is dark, bruised, and she holds a bottle in a brown paper sack with both hands.

JUBAL

I was fixin' too.

LORRAINE

My name's Lorraine. Set down.

She pulls a chair and he sits.

JUBAL

You come here a lot?

LORRAINE

I used to come here with my
sister all the time.

The band comes back, moving around on stage and talking
behind dead mikes.

JUBAL

That's a pretty good band.

LORRAINE

Yeah. If you like nigger music.
I wish they'd get a good country
band. I used to be a singer.

JUBAL

Really? Where?

She looks around. She shrugs.

LORRAINE

Just around.

JUBAL

I mean, professionally?

LORRAINE

I sung at the Franklin Mid-
South Fair and Dairy Show in
Nineteen sixty-seven. Had
a three piece band.

JUBAL

A hot ticket, huh?

LORRAINE

Best believe it.

EXT. SALOON - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Brand new Lincoln half hidden in the shadow of the building, neon lights shining on the hood and part of the front seat.

INT. LINCOLN - NIGHT

Where Jubal braces Lorraine up against the driver's door, her sweater and bra pushed above her breasts.

Jubal moans and kisses, trying to get her jeans down. She halfway tries to fight him off, constantly looking out over the parking lot.

He moans some more, kissing the side of her neck, tasting makeup on his tongue, bitter. He spits. Patooley.

Door swings open and a hand grabs Jubal by the britches.

EXT. SALOON - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The hand drags Jubal through the gravel, rolling him over. Jubal stares up into the freaky faced man from the bar.

Jubal jumps up, moving away, against a light pole. The man, shit-faced, staggers toward Jubal.

He swings at Jubal. Jubal ducks. He swings again. Jubal ducks again.

JUBAL

Hey, man. You're drunk.
Why don't you fuck off?

He swings again. He hits the light pole with his fist, breaking his hand.

He goes down on his knees, howling, holding his hand. Jubal just stands there, watching.

Lorraine screams:

LORRAINE (O.S.)

You bastard!

Jubal turns as Lorraine rushes to the man. She drops down to comfort him, cradling his hand.

JUBAL
Do you know this motherfucker?

LORRAINE
He's my husband.

JUBAL
Shit.

BARKEEP (O.S.)
Hands behind your head, buddy.

Jubal turns around. The BARKEEP holds a rifle on Jubal.

JUBAL
Hey, he started it.

BARKEEP
I ain't askin' again.

Barkeep aims at Jubal's face. Jubal folds his hands behind his head. Barkeep moves to Jubal. He slams the rifle's butt up against Jubal's head.

Jubal topples over --

Headlights show bugs dancing in the halos of light. Far away, the wail of sirens --

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

Jubal awakes on a bunk. A white man in skivvies and a black man in a rumpled suit and red tie, play cards. The regard Jubal as he comes awake; then they ignore him.

Jubal rises up and sits on the edge of the cot, his shoes still on his feet.

With his fingers searching carefully, he finds blood caked above his eye and a knot behind his ear.

He looks around. Green walls. A fountain above a commode. Other men sleep on other bunks throughout the cell.

BLACK MAN

(to Jubal)

You want to sit in on a hand?

JUBAL

Thanks. No, thanks.

What time is it?

BLACK MAN

Must be around six or so.

The door to the cell is solid steel, with a small rectangular hole large enough to admit trays of food.

Jubal gets up, goes over to it and bends down so that he can look out into the hall.

Nothing to see but another wall and nine or ten cases of beer stacked against it.

JUBAL

Hey, Jailer.

Steps sound in the hall. A man bends over and looks in.

JAILER

What you want?

JUBAL

I want to get out of here.

JAILER

No shit. I 'magine everybody in there'd like that. You gonna have to wait on your parole officer.

JUBAL

When will that be?

JAILER

Hell, I don't know.

JUBAL

What they got me charged with?

JAILER

Shit. A heap. Drunken
disorderly. Assault.
Resistin' arrest. Whole buncha
stuff. You gonna need you
a lawyer.

JUBAL

What I need is a doctor. I'm
sick. Kindly dizzy.

JAILER

Gonna have to wait.

JUBAL

I want to go to the doctor.
I think I have a concussion.

JAILER

I done told you you ain't
going nowhere.

JUBAL

I'm sick now. I need to see
a damn doctor.

JAILER

Go back to sleep.

The steps move away from the door.

INT. DELBERT'S HOME - NIGHT

Delbert, dressed in black, massaging his chest, struggling
to relieve the pain. He checks his wristwatch: 7:00. He
grabs the shotgun from the corner --

INT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Delbert drives, smoking, checking his wristwatch --

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

Jubal, on his bunk, eyes closed.

GUARD

Early!

INT. ATTORNEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Guard brings Jubal in. Guard exits. U.T. Oslin sits at one of the long tables. Jubal sits across from him.

U.T.
Never seem to learn your lesson.

JUBAL
I need to see a doctor.

U.T.
I'm taking you to the halfway house. You can see one after.

JUBAL
How long do I have to stay there?

U.T.
Till your trial.

INT. U.T.'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

U.T. drives. Jubal sits calmly beside him, staring at the passing freeway through the window.

U.T.
You want life to be like the movies, full of excitement. But life is not a movie. So you have to make adjustments. You don't have to be rich to get rid of your problems.

U.T. looks over at Jubal.

U.T.
It doesn't matter now, forget it.

JUBAL
Why is that?

U.T.
'Cause you'll probably never see the outside of a prison again.

Jubal doubles over.

U.T.
Take it easy.

JUBAL
I'm gonna throw up.

U.T.
Tell me another one.

JUBAL
No bullshit. Pull over.

U.T.
I'm on the freeway. You're
just gonna have to wait.

JUBAL
Can't.

Jubal jams his left foot against U.T.'s shoe, pressing the gas pedal to the floor, the car leaping forward.

U.T.
What're you doing?

JUBAL
Taking over.

Jubal locks his leg straight out, holding U.T.'s foot against the pedal.

EXT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

U.T. loses it, screaming:

U.T.
Stop! Oh Lord stop!

U.T. reaches for the ignition key. Jubal grabs his thumb and wrenches it back, then backhands him across the nose.

U.T. cries, peeing all over himself.

U.T.
Oh Lord!

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

The car swerves over a divider line.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Jubal takes his foot off U.T.'s shoe. Then brakes the car.
U.T. holds his bleeding nostrils.

U.T.
You broke my nose.

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

The car stops in the middle of the freeway, against the
center fence.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

U.T. whimpers. Jubal grabs his necktie.

U.T.
Please me let me go, Lord!

JUBAL
The Lord isn't listening
to you.

Jubal hits U.T. in the stomach. U.T. buckles. Jubal
reaches into his coat, comes out with handcuffs.

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Jubal drags U.T. out of the car by the tie, moves him
against the fence.

Jubal handcuffs U.T.'s right hand to the top of the fence,
and then jerks down his pants and underwear, leaving him
butt naked.

Jubal hops in the car, closes the door. Moves the car
forward, finding his way into traffic.

U.T., blood flowing down his face, struggles to cover his
scrotum, twisting and turning from passing cars, shrieking:

U.T.
Goddamn! Help me! Stop!

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Jubal driving along, weaving in and out of traffic.

EXT. NASHVILLE - NIGHT

The flickering lights of the skyline. Car moves off the freeway, and into the city.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Jubal walks away from U.T.'s car.

EXT. CONFEDERATE CEMETERY - NIGHT

Delbert waits in the shadow of a tree, holding the duffel bag over his shoulder. He checks his watch: 9:00.

EXT. REAR OF CEMETERY - NIGHT

Jubal runs along a wall. A breeze, steady and strong, wafts under tree limbs, leaves dancing on the wind.

THUNDER ROLLS. Jubal stops to look up: the sky splits its dark underbelly with flashes of lightning.

CEMETERY GATE

Delbert checks both directions for any sign of Jubal. It rains. Drops pepper his shoulders.

Out of the dark, Jubal arrives, out of breath. He stoops over as Delbert rubs his back.

DELBERT
I about give up on you.

Jubal rears up, leaning on Delbert.

JUBAL
You and me both.

Delbert gazes up at the wide dark night.

DELBERT

The sky's fixin' to fall.

Jubal breaks out the cemetery keys.

DELBERT

Which way you want to go in?

They move to the gate. Jubal unlocks it.

JUBAL

The front.

DELBERT

Where'd you get the keys?

JUBAL

That junky security guard.

DELBERT

He just up and give you the keys?

JUBAL

Took some convincing.

Jubal pushes on the iron, and it opens.

DELBERT

He could rat us out, Jubal.

JUBAL

He could, but he won't.

DELBERT

(rubbing his chest)

That's not cool. You should've told me.

JUBAL

Do you want to do this or not?

DELBERT

Yeah, but...

Jubal takes the duffel bag from Delbert.

JUBAL

Come on then.

CEMETERY ENTRANCE

They stroll through. Jubal closes the gate behind them. Locks it. They run to the caretaker's shed.

INT. CARETAKER'S SHED - NIGHT

Jubal enters, followed by Delbert. Jubal jumps into the driver's seat of a golf cart.

Shovels leans against the wall. Delbert grabs two and tosses them in the back of the golf cart.

Raindrops hit the roof of the shed, a smattering like a handful of shotgun pellets on a tin plate.

EXT. CARETAKER'S SHED - NIGHT

The thunder CRACKS closer and the rain rolls in beads from the edge of the roof.

Delbert swings open the shed doors. Jubal drives the golf cart out. Stops. Delbert hops on.

CEMETERY GROUNDS

As Jubal navigates the curved lanes, it rains harder and the earth seems to revel in it, the clouds moving into a steady black mass.

INT. GOLF CART (MOVING) - NIGHT

Jubal watches raindrops bounce off the hood, bleary lights water-streaked in the rain, shining on tombstones, soggy flags and stone faces of the dead.

EXT. GRAVE - NIGHT

Jubal pulls up and parks next to the monument. They jump out; grab the shovels.

They move to the edge of Mosby's grave and dig. Shovel blades sink into the wet dirt, casting it to one side or the other.

A SOUND forms in the distance: THUNDER building on THUNDER.

LATER

The heavens open -- pouring rain.

Jubal stands alone inside the grave, now six-feet deep, digging, lifting his weary arms against the heavy sludge.

Delbert stands at the top of the dark hole, near the edge, leaning on his shovel in the rain.

Jubal's shovel blade hits the dull THUD of wood. He leans back in the grave. At last. He raises his face to a sky that swirls, cloud heads moving above him.

THUNDERBOLT barks far off. Jubal scrapes mud from the coffin. Delbert jumps into the grave.

The two men heave the coffin up and out. Then claw their way out of the grave.

Delbert takes a flashlight from the golf cart. He shines it over the coffin. Ancient, moldy pine.

Jubal takes a shovel and pries the coffin open. A noise like a SIGHING rises up all around them.

Jubal pauses to listen. Delbert looks around, wondering.

Then Jubal cracks open the coffin -- flinging the top to one side.

Delbert steadies the flashlight beam --

The coffin is empty. No gold. Nothing.

DELBERT

Fuck me.

Jubal feels around the inside of the coffin in a hopeless, futile effort to locate the gold.

DELBERT

It ain't there.

Jubal takes the shovel and cracks the coffin into splinters, cussing, grunting.

He moans and groans in desperation:

DELBERT

Come on, man. It ain't in there.

JUBAL

How's it feel to get fucked
out of a million dollars?

DELBERT

I'm no worse off, Jubal.

Lightning moves in and it arcs down to the land.

A BOLT EXPLODES. Jubal pushes Delbert away, running --

Jubal dives to the ground --

Nearby, a tall pine tree illuminates in a bright flash of blue light -- a halo effect of electric fire -

Bark slides away in curved shells --

Resin boils in black bubbles --

Slides HISSING down the white pale length of the naked tree, all bent and smoking and its limbs in ruins --

Jubal's on his face, hands over his ears.

From the sky, a torrent of water settles over him and pours down into every inch of ground.

It pours down ceaselessly and it ROARS with a sound that drowns out every nuance of hearing Jubal might have left.

He stands up, in the rain, and staggers back to Delbert, who is face down in the mud, beside the open grave.

Jubal shakes his head, struggling to regain his hearing --

JUBAL

Delbert.

Delbert doesn't budge. Jubal drops down, rolls Delbert over. Delbert's eyes are wide open, in shock.

Jubal feels Delbert's pulse. Panicked, Jubal slaps Delbert's cheeks. Presses an ear to Delbert's heart.

He slams his fist into Delbert's chest; performs half-assed CPR on Delbert, to no avail. Delbert is dead.

Jubal cries. A voice from behind him:

SHAKE (O.S.)
All for nothing.

Jubal pivots around. Shake holds a pistol on him:

SHAKE
Give me one reason why I shouldn't
kill you.

Jubal notes the shotgun beside the grave, wondering if he can reach it in time.

Sound of tree limbs CRACKING. Shake and Jubal see a big man approaching from beyond the burnt tree.

Jubal waits as the big man grows closer and closer.

The big man, barefooted, stops at the foot of the yawning grave. He wears a thin shirt and a floppy hat.

Jubal and Shake just stare at the big man, who stares back with empty sockets.

Jubal snags the shotgun. Racks it. BLOWS a hole in Shake's chest. Shake flies backward, into the grave.

Jubal racks another round, aims at the big man.

The big man drifts away, thunder fading, lightning spearing down at other points, a dying message, God uneasy.

Jubal surveys the damage --

Shake's bloody body in the open, yawning grave. Mounds of mud. Shattered coffin.

Delbert, his best friend, on the soggy ground, dead.

Far down and away through the black night come the wail of SIRENS like lost souls in the night.

Jubal turns his head to the sound. Through the trees, faint blue flashes of light.

Jubal hops behind the wheel of the golf cart, twists the keys in the ignition. Nothing.

Jubal gets out and runs --

FRONT GATE

Jubal makes it to the gate. He unlocks it.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

He make it to Delbert's car, the SIRENS growing closer. He takes one last look at the cemetery walls, the dawn almost breaking through the tulip poplars.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - DAWN

George clicks on a television set. A picture comes on and it rolls, a church choir, singing.

George settles into a big comfy chair, lacing his fingers across his stomach. The choir stops. A Preacher comes on, quoting scripture from an open Bible.

Sam enters the room, sits on the couch.

SAM

They ought to be here soon.

Sam sees the Preacher on the TV.

SAM

What you want to listen to
this for?

GEORGE

Keeps me from gettin' nervous.

SAM

Don't know why. All that fucker wants is you to send him some money.

GEORGE

I don't send him no money.
I just listen to him preach.

SAM

Why don't you see if there's cartoons on?

GEORGE

They don't show 'em on Sundays.

SAM

They used to.

GEORGE

They don't no more.

SAM

Change the channel.

GEORGE

I want to listen to this.

SAM

I want to see if the goddamn cartoons is on.

Sam gets up and moves toward the television. He bends over the set, flipping through the channels: More preaching. More preaching. Bugs Bunny.

Sam settles back on the couch.

SAM

Told you.

George gets up and leaves the room. Sam laughs at the cartoons.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jubal drives the car along a gravel road, mud squishing under the tires. The woods thin and open up --

Green hills dotted with horses and cows --

Cultivated land gleams wetly under the weak sun trying to break through the clouds.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Jubal watches the passing view: tarpaper shacks and shabby mobile homes line the road, the yards full of junked autos and stacked firewood overgrown with weeds.

Pulpwood trucks with the windows smashed out. New brick homes. Carports cluttered with dogs and three wheelers and washing machines.

Jubal watches as he turns into a blacktop, the bottomland untilled and dark with water.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Car pulls into the yard of Sam's unpainted house, beside Sam's Caddy.

INT. CAR - DAY

Jubal pushes off the lights and sits. Lights a cigarette and kills the engine.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

A dim light shows inside the house.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Jubal gets out, goes across the yard and mounts the steps. He knocks on the door.

No sound, only the soft murmur of a radio playing. Jubal opens the screen door, sticks his head inside.

JUBAL
Sam? Hey, Sam?

No answer.

INT. SAM'S HOUSE - DAY

Jubal steps into the hall. He opens the door on the right. Dark, unoccupied.

He faces the closed door on the left. He knocks gently, opens it.

Snow from the television casts the room in a shadowy glow.

George sits in his big chair with a pistol in his hand and Sam dead at his feet.

Sam's blood comes out of his body and makes a dark ring on the floor around him.

George holds the pistol in one hand and a glass of something in the other.

Radio plays a country tune, softly.

GEORGE

Jubal?

Jubal eases away.

HALLWAY

He slides along, back into the kitchen --

KITCHEN

Jubal stands before the stove. On top, a large satchel.

He opens it. Inside, hundred dollar bills bundled in tight stacks. He takes one of the bundles out, flips through it.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Jubal drives, stunned, satchel on the seat next to him.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Car cruises up the two-lane blacktop.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - DAY

The car stops. Jubal gets out, yawning big and wide.

The ATTENDANT comes out.

ATTENDANT

Fillerup?

JUBAL

Yeah.

The Attendant puts in the gas.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Car continues.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Jubal drives. A country and western song on the radio.

Jubal looks at the rearview mirror. He sees the reflection of a highway patrol car.

Jubal turns down the radio.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The patrol car moves closer to Jubal's car. Then it pulls out and moves past it, continuing down the highway.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Jubal lights a cigarette. Turns up the radio.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Jubal drives on.

SERIES OF SHOTS

as the car heads north.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

A very flat empty landscape as far as the eye can see. The car disappears into heavy morning mist. Into nothingness.

FADE OUT.

THE END