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THE HUNTRESS

"Cadillac Dreams"

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY INDUSTRIAL STREET - DAY

A LOW-RIDER car, full-size body, teeny little wheels, SCREECHES around a corner and tears along the street laying rubber all the way.

Careening after it, then straightening out, is Dottie's car, DOTTIE at the wheel, BRANDI white-knuckling it beside her. They ROAR past CAMERA as:

The low-rider is cut off by a truck coming out of a loading dock driveway. The driver of the low-rider, who we will learn is Rudy RAMOS, an early 20 gangbanger type, slams on the brakes and whips the steering wheel to the side, and the car skids past the truck and flips over.

Dottie jams on the brakes, the tires smoking as her car slows but not quickly enough. WHAM! She and Brandi plow into the back of the low-rider, squishing their front end, just as Rudy squirms out the window and runs for the warehouse that the truck just left.

Shotguns in hand, Dottie and Brandi push open the doors of Dottie's car, continuing after their quarry as:

DOTTIE

Look at my car! That truck didn't even look before it pulled out!

BRANDI

Guess the driver didn't figure on some crazy skip trying to bang by at 80.

DOTTIE

I thought Ricky said this was going to be an easy one.

Dottie and Brandi keep their eyes on Rudy as he races past the men working the dock and vanishes inside its open door.

BRANDI

Like Dad always told us -- there are no easy ones, Mom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOTTIE

Another reason it's time we found something better to do for a living.

BRANDI

This is better than a living. It's a lifestyle.

DOTTIE

Honey, Ralph Thorson and "lifestyle" are two words even Martha Stewart wouldn't put in the same sentence.

They're at the loading dock now, and Brandi nods to her mother, continues alongside the building, toward the front. The workmen exchange impressed looks as, her gun at the ready, Dottie moves through the open doorway and into:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Aisle after aisle of shelves piled to the high ceiling with big boxes of electronics. Dottie sees Rudy hightailing it up the center aisle.

DOTTIE

Rudy Ramos! Hold it right there!

Rudy speeds up, and turns a corner. Dottie rushes after him. This second aisle looks exactly like the first -- except that there's no sign of Rudy at all.

Dottie hesitates, looking around -- and we hear a stir behind her, WIDENING TO SEE Rudy hanging from one of the shelves -- and pushing a pile of boxes at her.

Dottie ducks back, and the boxes CRASH to the floor before her, blocking the aisle. Rudy leaps down and starts sprinting up the aisle -- but suddenly we hear the GUNNING of a motor as a forklift bears down on him.

Rudy bangs into the lowered forks, tripping and falling, and with a WHINE the forklift raises upward to its full 12 foot height, Rudy dangling upside down, baggy pants caught. He swings back and forth, struggling wildly.

Finally, he breaks free and falls to the ground...and finds himself looking up at first one shotgun barrel, directly in front of him, then another, alongside it.

WIDENING, we SEE Dottie standing before him holding the first gun and Brandi leaning out from the cab of the forklift, which she's been driving, holding the second.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANDI  
End of the trail, dirtwad.

Dottie slaps a set of cuffs on Rudy, turns to Brandi.

DOTTIE  
I didn't know you could drive one of those.

BRANDI  
Remember that guy I used to date, the one Dad hated?

DOTTIE  
He hated them all, dear.

BRANDI  
Sure, but I'm talking Frankie, with the big ears? He taught me.

A FOREMAN comes puffing up to them.

FOREMAN  
What the hell's going on? You can't barge in here and --

BRANDI  
(showing I.D.)  
Bail Enforcement Agents, Bozo. Meaning we sure as hell can.

DOTTIE  
This man's a dangerous felon.

FOREMAN  
(suddenly interested)  
Yeah? What'd the son of a bitch do?

Dottie hesitates, takes out the paperwork on Rudy.

DOTTIE  
He's been accused of -- tagging.

BRANDI  
Hey, today's graffiti is tomorrow's mass murder. You know how these things grow.

And, as they propel Rudy back down the aisle --

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

An RTD BUS pulls away from a bus stop in front of the office, dropping off three passengers: Dottie, Brandi, and the handcuffed Rudy. Brandi yanks him across the parking lot and up the stairs.

RUDY

Don't you guys have any self-respect? I can't believe you made me use public transportation!

BRANDI

You're the jerk who made us take the bus, Rudy.

DOTTIE

If you hadn't wrecked my car --

RUDY

What? You couldn't call Budget? I woulda waited.

DOTTIE

Budget's out of our budget. Sorry.

RUDY

It's a matter of principle, is all. Losers ride the bus, dudes. Losers!

BRANDI

Yeah, and you're a real gold medalist, I know.

They've reached Ricky's office. Brandi doesn't bother to knock. She just propels Rudy into:

INT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

As usual, with one exception. RICKY's standing over the electric can opener, trying to get it to open a big can of coffee for the coffee maker, but all that happens is the can whirls around while the opener WHIRS. He looks up quickly.

RICKY

About time you showed up. It's two hours since you called and said you had him. What took so long?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOTTIE

How about a little old lady who slugged a guy for not giving up his seat and then faked a coronary to get mine?

BRANDI

Know how long the bus had to wait for that ambulance? 911 is definitely not all it's cracked up to be.

DOTTIE

Usually you're the one who keeps us waiting. Why all this personal concern for a spray can jockey, Ricky?

RUDY

Yeah, Ricky, why don't you tell her?

Ricky glares at Rudy and gives the opener one final useless try. Then, to Dottie and Brandi:

RICKY

This "spray can jockey" has a record longer than a Dallas Cowboy's. Tagging, petty theft, possession of stolen property -- and every time he's been arrested he's skipped.

BRANDI

So how come you keep shelling out the bail?

RUDY

Yeah, Ricky, tell her how come. Go on...

Ricky looks miserable. His voice is a whisper.

RICKY

Rudy's my cousin.

RUDY

On the good side of the family. As in I am so not a Guzman --

RICKY

Rudy --

Ricky's voice is a warning. Rudy's prepared to ignore it, but Dottie sees the storm coming.

DOTTIE

Family loyalty is a wonderful thing, right, Brandi?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRANDI

Seems to me that from Ricky any kind of loyalty would be more than wonderful. It'd be a miracle.

Rudy barks out a laugh, and Ricky gives him another hard look.

RICKY

You're not gonna think it's so funny if the "Guzman" blows off the "Ramos" and lets you stew in a cell this time.

RUDY

What?! You can't do that! I've got big things waiting one me!

RICKY

(he's had it)

I've heard that one before, cuz. Let's get you checked into your new home.

Ricky starts for the door with Rudy. Dottie and Brandi exchange gazes --

EXT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

Ricky is bringing Rudy down the stairs, Dottie and Brandi coming after.

DOTTIE

Just a sec, Ricky. We've got some settling up to do. A little matter of a five thousand dollar fee --

BRANDI

We need it, Ricky. You never know when the RTD's gonna raise its fares.

Ricky's in a hurry. Something he's keeping quiet about is bugging him.

RICKY

We'll talk about that later. Right now --

Too late. Ricky breaks off. His eyes are on a Cadillac sedan pulling into the lot. As it pulls into a space we SEE that Dottie too is staring at the car, which has every custom feature known to GM, and probably several that aren't. Gold trim, textured top, spoked wheels...the thing is beautiful.

No doubt about it: Dottie's in love, and Brandi sees it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANDI

Mom?

RICKY

(re the Cadillac; disgusted)  
Great...just great...

The front doors of the car open, and out come NELDA RAMOS, about 60, dressed so expensively that the very conservatism of her clothing becomes showy, and her daughter, ALVA, a couple of years older than Rudy.

NELDA

You! Ricky Guzman, you're the one responsible for all this!

RICKY

Aunt Nelda...how nice to see you. And Cousin Alva...

Ricky's voice is deferential. He's like a little boy in the presence of the most adult of adults. Dottie and Brandi exchange surprised glances. Alva starts to reply, but her mother cuts her off, pointing to Rudy's hands.

NELDA

Handcuffs? You put my son -- your own flesh and blood -- in handcuffs?

BRANDI

Rudy's your son?

NELDA

Do I know you?

Ricky speaks quietly and dutifully:

RICKY

Aunt Nelda, Cousin Alva, this is Dottie Thorson and her daughter Brandi. Associates of mine.

BRANDI

Actually, we're the ones who put him in those cuffs --

DOTTIE

(cutting her off)  
We've spent the morning with your son. He's quite the boy, isn't he?

RUDY

Now you're talking!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NELDA

Rudy has more potential in his little  
finger than some people --

(a look at Ricky)

-- have in their whole bodies.

(to Rudy)

But you just can't seem to keep out of  
trouble, can you?

RUDY

Aw, Mom...

ALVA

Mom, you don't know the pressure he's  
under. The neighborhood gangs --

Again Nelda cuts off her daughter.

NELDA

Where we live there shouldn't be any  
gangs! They can't afford it.

(beat)

It's Ricky. Ricky and his stupid  
business.

RICKY

I'm sorry, Aunt Nelda. Honest, I thought  
letting Rudy hang out at my office would  
be a deterrent.

NELDA

So much for your thoughts. But you have  
a living to make, no matter how  
distastefully. That's why I brought  
this.

Nelda indicates the custom Cadillac. Rudy pales.

RUDY

No, Mom, you wouldn't --

NELDA

Genius that you are, maybe you'll learn  
something if you're responsible for your  
own bail this time.

(to Ricky)

I want you to use his car as security.

DOTTIE

This is Rudy's car?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RUDY

Hey, I just got that a couple days ago.  
You can't be giving it to him!

RICKY

Aunt Nelda, I don't really need another  
car...

DOTTIE

I do. The way bodyshops work, even with  
minor damage mine might not be running  
till next year.

Dottie goes to the Cadillac, rubs her hand over its perfect  
finish. She tries to play it cagey -- and blows it  
completely.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

You owe me, Ricky. But I might be talked  
into taking this off your hands instead  
of cash.

RUDY

Nooo!

RICKY

Aunt Nelda, can we talk?

Ricky moves off with Rudy, Nelda, and Alva, and we see the  
three of them talking in b.g., with a lot of hand waving and  
an occasional raised voice, while:

BRANDI

Mom, are you crazy?

Dottie opens the drivers door, gets behind the wheel. She  
rubs her hand over the leather.

DOTTIE

Leather seats, power everything -- oh,  
look, GPS so we can never get lost --

BRANDI

Mom, it's a gas-guzzling, environment-  
eating pig!

DOTTIE

It's a Cadillac, Brandi.

BRANDI

Exactly!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DOTTIE

Don't you understand what this car means?  
All their lives, my parents wanted a  
Cadillac more than any car in the world.  
When I met your father and he was driving  
one, they knew he was the man for me.

BRANDI

I heard that story. Unfortunately it was  
repossessed the next day.

DOTTIE

This won't be.

The SOUND of Ricky and the others "discussing" the situation  
CRESCENDOS and then stops. Ricky approaches Dottie and  
Brandi, brandishing a pink slip, which he hands to Dottie.

RICKY

Ladies, I believe we have a deal.

Behind them, Nelda holds out Rudy's hands.

NELDA

Ricky! Take these horrible things off my  
boy's wrists immediately!

Ricky winces. Then, to Dottie and Brandi:

RICKY

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to escort  
my client to a bail hearing.

Getting some keys from his pocket, Ricky heads back to the  
others. Dottie turns to Brandi.

DOTTIE

And you think we have issues?

Off Brandi's look...

INT. TINY'S BAR - DAY

TINY's bringing in a crate of whiskey from the back room, to  
the bar, where Dottie and Brandi sit.

DOTTIE

...Did you see that radio? You can  
operate it from the steering wheel so you  
don't have to look away from the road.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TINY

Yep, I can see how that'd be a useful feature for the driving challenged. How's she handle?

BRANDI

Like a truck.

DOTTIE

But a comfortable truck. I didn't know Cadillacs were so heavy.

TINY

Keep you safe. The Harley Hog of luxury cars. Drive her in good health.

Tiny raises an unopened bottle as though in toast, and Dottie "clinks" an imaginary glass against it. Brandi looks disgusted as Dottie's and Tiny's eyes meet, but before anyone can say anything more:

CLAUDE (O.S.)

Tiny! Just the man we want to see!

CLAUDE (the Van Damme wannabe), JAKE BLUMENTHAL, and LITTLE LEO enter the bar, Claude sauntering as usual.

BRANDI

Why? You got paper on him?

JAKE

It's what he's got that counts.

LITTLE LEO

The beer, my man. Cases and cases of not-so-fine lager.

CLAUDE

Wholesale, mon amies. Rock bottom.

DOTTIE

What do you guys want all that beer for?

BRANDI

Maybe Jake's being Bar Mitzvahed.

JAKE

For your information, it's Camp-O-Rama time. And that means one Acme State of the Art Great Weekend starts tomorrow night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LITTLE LEO

Two glorious nights and days in the woods  
by the Truckee River, sleeping under the  
stars and being one with nature.

CLAUDE

Could be as many as a dozen bail  
enforcement agents, relaxing in the  
traditional manly way.

BRANDI

Sounds great. When do we leave?

JAKE

"We," kimosabee?

CLAUDE

Oh, my poor deluded Cherie...

Claude takes Brandi's hand, kisses it. Then, laughing, the  
men head for a table. Brandi shakes the cooties off her  
hand.

BRANDI

What'd I say?

TINY

Chill. You're not missing anything  
special. It's just a chance for us to  
unwind.

DOTTIE

"Us?" You're going too?

TINY

If there's one thing life's taught me,  
Dottie, it's to go with the flow --  
'cause it's bound to dry up.

DOTTIE

But why didn't you tell me?

TINY

You saying you tell me all your plans?

Tiny goes over to the table with the guys, leaving Dottie and  
Brandi behind.

BRANDI

How can they do this to us? Don't you  
and I need to unwind too?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DOTTIE

Not that way. Your father used to go "camping" with the boys every year. Till I figured out what was really going on.

BRANDI

Which was?

DOTTIE

They were in the woods, all right. But diamonds and clubs meant more than stars. One time when he was out of cash Ralph bet his wedding ring -- and lost.

BRANDI

But look what he got! He bonded with his brothers. This would be our chance to cement our place in the bounty hunting fraternity -- only we're not invited!

DOTTIE

We're not part of the bounty hunting fraternity, honey. It's just a way station -- to a better life.

BRANDI

And to you, what is a better life?

DOTTIE

I'll know it when I find it, Brandi. In the meantime I've just got to keep looking...

And, as Dottie thinks about it:

EXT. THORSON HOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLING PAST the custom Caddy in the driveway, TO the house, where a light shines in the open, junk-filled garage -- almost the only light on the dark street. Hey, it's late.

INT. THORSON HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dottie's hard at work, dragging boxes of junk in from the garage, trying to make enough room for her new car. As she lifts a box to put it into a big garbage can, its bottom falls out, and some souvenir China plates CRASH to the floor.

Brandi comes from the other room, dressed for bed, sees what's happened.

BRANDI

Mom? What're you doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOTTIE

Garages are supposed to hold cars, not junk, and now that I've got a car worth garaging...

BRANDI

(indicating a stack of boxes)  
This is all Dad's stuff. From the office.

DOTTIE

It's time, Brandi. Time to move on.

BRANDI

(pointedly)  
To Tiny?

DOTTIE

Maybe. Sometimes I think so. But then others...

Dottie trails off, starts picking up the shards. Brandi hunkers down beside her to help.

BRANDI

The box says "Family Vacations." We must've gone with Dad sometimes.

DOTTIE

Family vacations that include everybody are for functional families, dear.

BRANDI

I'll lay you odds Ricky isn't exactly invited to all his family's outings either.

(beat)

What bugs me is that today, around the Ramoses, he actually seemed ashamed of what he does.

DOTTIE

And that surprised you? Brandi, the bail bond business isn't exactly high society. And on the totem pole of life Ricky's ten notches above us.

Brandi stiffens. She knows where this is heading.

BRANDI

Okay, Mom, I get it. I don't need any more lectures --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOTTIE

You sure? I was about to roll into the one about how you should be paying more attention at school.

Dottie's tone is light, but Brandi isn't amused.

BRANDI

Why not go for the jugular and hit me with how screwed up I am with Farrell and his damn cop friends too?

(flinging the broken pieces  
into the trash)

The hell with family vacations! And the hell with fitting in!

DOTTIE

Brandi!

But Brandi whirls, stomps back into the house. Dottie starts after her, stops as, from O.S., we hear the SOUND of an ENGINE STARTING -- the Cadillac!

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Uh-oh --

EXT. THORSON HOUSE - NIGHT

Dottie races out of the garage to the driveway, where a shadowy figure sits in the driver's seat of the Caddy as it backs out.

DOTTIE

Hey -- stop! Stop, you sonofabitch --

Reaching the street, the car jerks to a stop as the driver takes it out of reverse. Dottie sprints to the driver's door, grabbing onto the handle, and the thief turns to gaze at her. We recognize his face immediately:

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Rudy?

Rudy hits the gas, and the Caddy surges forward with a ROAR, the door handle pulling from Dottie's grasp. Unbalanced, she goes sprawling on the street, looks up as:

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Rudy! That's my car now, Rudy! Damn you! It's mine!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE TO the Caddy, tires SQUEALING as it vanishes around the next corner...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. THORSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

An aggravated Dottie is pacing around the kitchen, talking on the phone. Behind her, Brandi is walking from the room with two DETECTIVES here to take down the report of the Cadillac's theft.

DOTTIE

What're you saying, Leonard? That my new car wasn't insured? We could buy a summer home with that premium!

(beat)

Oh...the binder...right...The car was stolen before the insurance could even go through...

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brandi turns to the Detectives as they move across the room to the front door.

BRANDI

I told her it wasn't a good idea to do all our business on the Internet. Victoria's Secret I can understand, but State Farm's phone isn't nearly as busy...

She opens door to show the two men out. JOEY MATTSSEN, a giant of a man wearing designer sweats, is just about to ring the bell.

JOEY

My car! What the hell did you do to my car?

The detectives exchange looks and continue outside, and Joey steps -- make that stomps -- into the room.

BRANDI

What zoo did you escape from, pal?

JOEY

Save it, babe. I've heard every four hundred pound gorilla joke there is. I'm a private trainer -- the best. Two hundred bucks an hour.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANDI

And with those rates you're going door to door in this neighborhood?

Joey holds a pink slip in front of her face but won't let her touch it.

JOEY

Some cops called. They said my Caddy'd been found -- and then lost again.  
(sarcastic)  
Way to go.

Dottie is entering the room, looks puzzled.

DOTTIE

Your Caddy? That was my car. Here.

Dottie pulls the pink slip from her purse, holds it up before Joey -- exactly the way he held it up to Brandi.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

I suppose yours had the custom paint--

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

The special differential, the optional rear seat package --

JOEY

The special differential, the optional rear seat package --

The two of them stop. Brandi tries to explain to Dottie.

BRANDI

The detectives told me they had a report. Sorry, Mom. Last night wasn't the first time Rudy stole that thing.

JOEY

Rudy? Rudy Ramos?

DOTTIE

You know him?

JOEY

He did some odd jobs for me. Trimmed some trees, washed the car --  
(breaking off)

I knew I couldn't trust him! Jealous little runt. He didn't just steal my car, he stole my -- my "me," you know? My way of showing the world I'm not just a musclehead, I'm a rich musclehead!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOTTIE  
Hold that thought, muscles.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Dottie comes back in, reaches for the phone.

INT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY - INTERCUT AS NEEDED

Ricky's plugging in a brand spanking new electric can opener, the just-opened box on his desk. He attaches the handle, grabs the can of coffee, starts trying to open it as the phone rings. He picks up the phone, continues screwing with the can opener (which never works properly) throughout the following conversation:

RICKY  
Bail Bonds --

DOTTIE  
Ricky, it's Dottie. And you still owe me five thousand dollars. Plus pain and suffering!

RICKY  
Five thou? Pain and suffering? What're you talking about?

DOTTIE  
Rudy's car wasn't Rudy's car! The pink slip was a fake!

RICKY  
A fake? What're you talking about? You saying he jobbed me? Me?

DOTTIE  
That's exactly what I'm saying --

INT. KITCHEN - DAY - CONTINUE TO INTERCUT AS NEEDED

Joey snatches the phone away from Dottie.

JOEY  
Listen, "Ricky," whoever you are, if you're involved with Rudy Ramos, then I'm holding you personally responsible --

RICKY  
Responsible for what? What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEY

What's going on is you're getting my car back! And you're delivering it to my door in its usual condition -- pristine. Otherwise I'll find you, and you'll see what it's like to wake up with a fifty pound dumbbell jammed down your throat!

Joey slams down the phone, looks at Dottie and Brandi proudly.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Guess I showed him!

BRANDI

That you're a loudmouth creep nobody in his right mind would lift a finger to help? Yep, you showed him that, all right.

DOTTIE

Now how about showing us something else? Like how fast you can get out of our house.

It's not a request. Joey starts to reply. Dottie opens her mouth too, lifting her finger in that way mothers have used to thousands of years to stop all arguments. Joey takes a step back, tries again. Again, Dottie's finger goes out. Joey gets the message, slinks from the room.

BRANDI

(all irony)

Smart guy.

Off their reluctant smiles:

INT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

Ricky has just hung up and is turning his attention back to the can opener as we hear a KNOCK on the door.

RICKY

C'mon in.

The door is already opening. A slim, well-dressed man we can call the FIRST BODYGUARD enters gracefully, followed by another man of the same type, who would be, yes, the SECOND BODYGUARD. The First Bodyguard goes to the chair Ricky keeps across from his desk, takes out a handkerchief and wipes it carefully, making sure there isn't a speck of dust.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICKY (CONT'D)

Make yourself at home, why don't you.

MAURICE (O.S.)

Their job is to make me feel at home.

A third man enters: MAURICE PAXTON, an immaculate African-American who looks like he just stepped out of the pages of "Vogue." You know the type: The male model so great-looking that his presence with the reigning supermodel gives the final validation to whatever it is she's selling.

Maurice regards the office with distaste, sits on the cleaned-up chair. The other two men stand. Ricky looks at his visitor wonderingly, thrusts out his hand.

RICKY

Ricky Guzman...

Maurice ignores Ricky's hand. The Second Bodyguard hands Ricky a business card.

RICKY (CONT'D)

"Maurice Paxton?" You? We've done some business before...

MAURICE

Only by proxy. I prefer to keep to myself.

Maurice wears gloves. Seeing the can opener, he takes them off, starts fussing with it.

RICKY

Well then, to what do I owe this honor? Guess you don't need me to get you out of jail. I mean, you're here so --

The First Bodyguard puts a finger to Ricky's lips, motioning for him to keep quiet. Maurice sighs.

MAURICE

Are you familiar with Shakespeare, Mr. Guzman? I love Shakespeare.

(as though onstage)

"He who steals my purse steals nothing. Tis trash. Twas mine, tis his, twill be mine again. But he who steals my good name --"

(stopping)

Your nephew, Rudy Ramos, has stolen something very important to me, Mr. Guzman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RICKY

You too? I don't know what I'm gonna do with that kid. I'll tell you, Maurice -- Mr. Paxton -- I'm at my wit's end --

Another finger to Ricky's lips. It touches harder and stays longer. Ricky shuts up.

MAURICE

On one level, what Rudy stole was trash. But on another, he has vandalized my reputation. After all, if he gets away with his crime, I'm not the man I'm supposed to be, am I?

Ricky starts to answer, realizes the question is rhetorical. So instead he just swallows and nods.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

And in my business, that could prove fatal. So, since you are an expert at finding people --

RICKY

You want me to find Rudy --

The Bodyguards glare. Again, Ricky stops.

MAURICE

I want you to find what he took from me. A certain Cadillac sedan. Otherwise...

Maurice gestures, and the two Bodyguards suddenly go into action. As messy as the office was before, it soon becomes a complete disaster, as their hands sweep out and they smash and stomp everything in sight. All the TVs, the stereos, even a mirror and the phone and the window for good measure.

It's like a whirlwind, taking only seconds, and when they're done the only thing left intact is the can opener Maurice has been playing with on Ricky's desk. Maurice puts the can of coffee into place, presses the lever, and the can opener works perfectly, the can whirling open.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

That's the problem with small appliances. They never work straight out of the box. There's always that extra adjustment that we have to make.

Maurice dons his gloves and rises, the Bodyguards following him from the scene of destruction, and, off Ricky's terror:

INT. THORSON HOUSE - FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

The DOORBELL RINGS, o.s., and BRANDI moves INTO SHOT.

BRANDI  
I'll get it.

The BELL RINGS again...not an endearing sound. Brandi reaches the door.

BRANDI (CONT'D)  
Knock it off, willya? If the bell starts sticking again, you're fixing it --  
(opening the door)  
Ricky?

Ricky stands in the doorway. RACK FOCUS to see an N.D. sedan pass by on the street behind him. RACK again as Ricky pushes past Brandi, into the house. He's carrying a bulging attache case.

BRANDI (CONT'D)  
(sarcastic)  
Hey, Ricky, c'mon in, take a load off.

Dottie walks in, half ready for bed, hair up in a towel.

DOTTIE  
Ricky?

Ricky's nervous as hell, but still filled with his usual bravado.

RICKY  
Hey, ladies, very good, very good.  
Ricky, Ricky, Ricky. You've made the I.D.

BRANDI  
That mean you're wanted? Can we cash you in?

RICKY  
Don't be ridiculous. Why would I be on the run? No sir, ladies, I've come to give you a golden opportunity. The chance of a lifetime.

DOTTIE  
You're selling "Disco Faves of the 80s" for KTEL?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICKY

Let's not go overboard. I'm taking pity on your never-ending financial plight.

BRANDI

Ricky, the only way you'd take pity is if that was an amount on a check.

RICKY

No, no, no, I mean it. I have a job for you. I want you to get Rudy's Cadillac back.

DOTTIE

Don't you mean you want us to get Rudy?

RICKY

For all I care, the farther my little cousin is, the better. I want the car.

BRANDI

How much is it worth to you?

Ricky hesitates, then opens the attache to pull out his big company checkbook. A toothbrush and some men's underwear spill out.

DOTTIE

You want to pay in toiletries?

Ricky fills out a check, hands it to Dottie.

RICKY

This is what I'm paying you. The boxers are for me.

DOTTIE

(takes a look)

Ten thousand dollars? Sounds good.

BRANDI

Maybe too good.

Ricky's been busy picking up his stuff. Now he looks up.

RICKY

Well...there is something else. Can I stay here? Just till you bring me the car?

DOTTIE

Mind telling us why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Ricky hesitates. Then, coming clean:

RICKY

There's no danger -- not to you -- but I'll be a lot better off if I just stay out of sight for awhile.

(beat)

It's that damn Caddy. If I don't come up with it, I'm...

(throat-slitting motion)

Courtesy of Maurice Paxton, a guy who makes Al Capone look like he could star in "Touched By An Angel."

BRANDI

What's the big deal with that stupid car anyway? Why's everybody want it so much?

RICKY

How's this for a Ricky Guzman news flash? I just plain don't know...

EXT. THORSON HOUSE - NIGHT

The same N.D. sedan cruises along the street, slowing in front of the house, and then continuing on.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brandi's gone off to bed, and Dottie's helping Ricky make up the couch so he can sleep on it. Nearby bottles show us that they've each had a couple of beers.

RICKY

Never bedded down on a lady's couch before -- without secretly wanting to get into her bed.

DOTTIE

I'll bet you were never as secret about it as you thought.

RICKY

A lot you know. Ask my friends. They call me the great stone face.

Dottie puts down a pillow from her bedroom. Ricky fluffs it up.

DOTTIE

You weren't exactly hiding your emotions yesterday, when you were talking to your Aunt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICKY

Aunt Nelda's always been a nutcracker. My uncle cut out on her first chance he got. When I was a kid I thought she hated me, and I couldn't figure out why.

(beat)

When I got older I realized it was my old man she couldn't stand. Didn't think he was good enough for my mother because he was a stone mason who worked with his hands instead of his brain.

Ricky's defenses are down. He's being real for a change. He plops down on the couch. Dottie sits at the other end.

RICKY (CONT'D)

I was "tainted" by his blood. Meaning I'm not good enough either -- no matter what I do.

DOTTIE

What about your mother? Is Nelda close to her?

RICKY

As close as my mother will let her be. The way Aunt Nelda looks at things, my mother's still a Ramos, no matter what.

DOTTIE

You know, when I married Ralph my family went ballistic. No way a man like that could be good enough for me.

(beat)

But they didn't see things quite the way your aunt does. I was the one they looked down on, for not having the "sense" to fall in love with a "better" man.

RICKY

You and Ralph were together a lot of years.

DOTTIE

I was in love. I knew what I was doing was right. If the family couldn't accept it, the hell with them.

RICKY

They ever come around?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOTTIE

Nope.

Ricky fluffs up the pillow again...just can't seem to get it right.

RICKY

So you're a black sheep, just like me.

DOTTIE

And it hurts. It still hurts. But I'm okay with it. Now.

RICKY

(thoughtfully)

Sure. Of course. Just like me.

But he's lying to himself, doesn't want to admit it. Quickly:

RICKY (CONT'D)

'Night, Dottie.

DOTTIE

'Night...

Dottie leaves the room. Ricky stretches out on the couch, squirming into the most comfortable position he can find...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A major disaster area, with every burner on the stove heating away under an overflowing pot, mixing bowls everywhere, and the table set perfectly for three.

Ricky, in his boxer shorts, is dancing from place to place, preparing the meal of a lifetime while singing and dancing along with a lively Spanish language song ("La Vida Loca" or whatever we can clear). No doubt about it: Last night's talk has put him into one mighty fine mood.

As Ricky does a whirling dance step, Dottie and Brandi rush into the kitchen in their robes, eyes widening at the sight.

BRANDI

What the hell -- ?

Ricky sees Brandi just in time to keep from smacking into her. He holds a pot and a spoon to her mouth.

RICKY

Good morning, ladies! Have a taste?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANDI

What is it?

RICKY

Sofrito! Think of it as the Puerto Rican national sauce.

Brandi waves off the spoon, goes to the coffee maker to join Dottie in taking a cup of coffee.

DOTTIE

Smells --

RICKY

Great, I know. Now sit down, sit down...

He directs them to their chairs, goes back to the counter.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Here we are...fine Island cuisine fit for a king and his queens.

He brings them some plates piled high.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Go on, go on...dig in...

DOTTIE

Could we have just a little clue about what we're digging into?

RICKY

Twice fried bananas, what else? I mean, you didn't have any plantains. Covered with adobe marinade. Tomato sauce, salted pork, ham, minced onion. Not to mention pepper, garlic, cilantro --

BRANDI

Garlic for breakfast?

RICKY

What better way for a passionate people to start the day?

Ricky starts to join them. The phone RINGS, and he jumps up, races to it.

RICKY (CONT'D)

The guy who invented Call Forwarding should have a holiday named after him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RICKY (CONT'D)

(into receiver)

Bail bonds...

BRANDI

Mom, do you believe this?  
He's taking over our house!

RICKY

Freef! What'd they get you  
for this time, man?

(beat)

You're kidding. How many  
convenience stores in one  
week?

DOTTIE

Ricky definitely has issues, honey. I'll  
talk to him after we've tasted his "fine  
Island cuisine."

Reluctantly, Brandi follows her mother's lead, and they both  
take a bite of their breakfasts...and react as though their  
heads are going to blow off. Ricky glances up from his  
conversation.

RICKY

Good, huh?

They hurry from the room. Ricky's a little puzzled, but he  
has to get back to business.

RICKY (CONT'D)

(into receiver)

A hundred grand's no problem. But I'm  
absolutely not taking a rack of sun  
visors as collateral...

EXT. THORSON HOUSE - DAY

Fully dressed, Dottie and Brandi put their shotguns into the  
backseat of Brandi's car and get inside.

DOTTIE

Okay, so I'll talk to him when we get  
back.

BRANDI

I don't think I ever wanted to be out of  
the house more than I want to be right  
now...

Brandi gets behind the wheel, STARTS THE ENGINE.

DOTTIE

The best way to find the car is to find  
Rudy. Let's see what Aunt Nelda can tell  
us --

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

And pick up some Egg McMuffins on the way.

They pull away. We HOLD as they disappear up the street and the N.D. sedan reappears, pulling up to the house from where it's been parked down the street. Two men get out -- Maurice's Bodyguards.

INT. THORSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The MUSIC is off, but the TV set is on, tuned to whatever gabby morning show we can clear. Ricky, also dressed now, comes in from the kitchen, pulling the phone cord as tightly as it'll go as he carries the phone to the couch and sits back, feet up on the coffee table.

Just as he gets comfortable, we hear a THUNK as a back door is kicked open and the Bodyguards burst inside. Ricky reaches for his lifeline -- the telephone receiver -- and the First Bodyguard grabs the cord and rips it out of the wall.

FIRST BODYGUARD

This is what you call finding the car?

Leaping to his feet, Ricky tries to back away, but the two men come closer.

RICKY

Wait, you guys, I can explain --

He wheels around, trying to sprint for the door, and the Second Bodyguard grabs him, slamming Ricky against the wall. The First Bodyguard moves in, and we TIGHTEN ON the TV, the LAUGHTER of the Studio Audience almost -- but not quite -- covering up the O.S. SOUND of body blows as we FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. NELDA RAMOS' DRESS SHOP - DAY

A boutique featuring upscale women's casual wear, both the clothing and the decor the epitome of conservative good taste -- just like Nelda herself, who is at the counter, talking on the phone.

Alva is showing a customer some outfits when the bell over the door rings and Dottie and Brandi enter and take the place in. Dottie's impressed. Brandi isn't.

DOTTIE

Look at this place. It's so...so...

BRANDI

Yesterday?

Dottie reaches out to a rack of capri's.

DOTTIE

How can you say that? These fashions are timeless.

BRANDI

I'll say. I've seen pictures of you in high school wearing the same things.

DOTTIE

But not with the same labels. Look at this. I never knew Versace made Bermuda shorts.

Alva leaves the customer to join them.

ALVA

Can I help you --  
(realizing)

Oh -- you're the ones with Rudy's car.

DOTTIE

Not exactly "with."

BRANDI

And not exactly "Rudy's."

Alva looks puzzled. In b.g. Nelda has hung up and is making her way to the others.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELDA

Mrs. Thorson! How good to see you.  
Shopping for a new fashion look?

BRANDI

If we were, would we be here?

Dottie shoots Brandi a look that Brandi of course ignores.

DOTTIE

Actually, Mrs. Ramos, we wanted to talk  
about Rudy.

BRANDI

You know the drill. Friends.  
Associates. Hangouts --

NELDA

(insulted)  
You make it sound quite -- official.

BRANDI

It is. You haven't seen him, have you?  
In the past couple of days?

ALVA

Is Rudy in trouble again? I've been so  
worried --

NELDA

(cutting her off)  
Your customer needs you, Alva.

Alva wants to stay, but her mother isn't about to put up with  
any arguments. As Alva moves back to the customer, Brandi  
moves with her.

BRANDI

I'm a customer too. If you've got  
something with a little more zing.

Alva looks back at Nelda, gives a little laugh.

ALVA

Here?  
(confidentially)  
I know a great place in the Mall...

DOTTIE AND NELDA

Nelda regards Dottie impatiently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NELDA

I really don't have much time. Expansion plans, you know. I've been talking with the country's largest franchising service.

DOTTIE

Starting your own little empire?

NELDA

If you omit the "little."

DOTTIE

(working her)

If anyone ever deserved her success it's you, Mrs. Ramos. I know how hard it is to establish a career while raising one child by yourself. And you've done it with two!

NELDA

I hope you don't think the business has consumed all my time. I've tried to be a good mother...

She stops, upset. After a beat of internal struggled:

NELDA (CONT'D)

I get so worried about Rudy. He doesn't seem to have any appreciation for the life I've given him.

(beat)

And his values -- the way hanging around with his Uncle Ricky...and that street gang...have twisted them...!

DOTTIE

I know what you mean, Nelda. Lack of appreciation? Tell me about it!

(even more concerned)

And this gang -- you wouldn't happen to know the names of any of the leaders?

Dottie puts her arm around Nelda's shoulder sympathetically, and, as Nelda starts to talk:

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY STREETS - DAY - SERIES OF QUICK SCENES - NO DIALOG

Showing Dottie and Brandi with Rudy's gangbanger friends, including:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNDER AN OVERPASS

Where two cars have stopped beside each other, the gangbanger driver of one leaning out his window to transact a little business with the gangbanger driver of the other. Drugs? Stolen goods? We don't know for sure -- just that something unlawful's going down.

Brandi's car pulls up, with Dottie and Brandi, and the two drivers, start to pull away -- and stop as Brandi zips forward, blocking their way. Helping, of course, is the fact that Dottie's up and out the passenger side, aiming her shotgun across the top of the car.

Brandi starts asking some questions. As the guys shake their heads:

ON THE STREET

A group of gangbanger girls mosey along -- and are met by Dottie and Brandi, on foot. Dottie starts asking questions, and one of the girls whips out a knife...but gets no farther than that as Brandi grabs her in an armlock. The knife drops. More questions. But all the girls can do is shake their heads as:

NEAR THE L.A. RIVER BASIN

A gangbanger lies back alongside the concrete channel, having a smoke, then gets up in alarm as he sees Dottie coming toward him. He breaks into a run, but his path is cut off by Brandi, in her car. Seeing the guy's smokes on the ground, Dottie picks them up and hands them to him, starts asking questions. The gangbanger lights up, looking relieved, but still the response is a headshake, and:

EXT. THORSON HOUSE - DAY

As Brandi's car pulls into the driveway, Dottie and Brandi getting out and heading up the front walk.

BRANDI

How many ways can you say, "We blew it, Brandi?" Outside of -- zip -- nada -- nothing --

DOTTIE

Don't forget "No comprende." Funny how I went all these years not knowing that was gangbanger for "Buzz off."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANDI

If I had a mother like Nelda I'd join a gang too. And look at Alva. Think how hard it must be for her, having to hide every thought of her own.

DOTTIE

Well, we certainly can't say that for you. But what's wrong with bettering yourself? Maybe I could open a little shop. I always liked antiques...

Dottie stops. Brandi's listening to something -- but not her. She follows her daughter's gaze to the front door. It's wide open.

BRANDI

Shouldn't we be hearing some music, courtesy of Ricky the Salsa King?

Dottie nods, and the two of them hurry forward to:

INT. THORSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

As Dottie and Brandi enter -- and stop, stunned, at the sight of the place. Wrecked. Shot up. Chairs overturned. The stuffing ripped out of the couch. TV blown out. The homeowner's worst nightmare. Dottie's worst nightmare.

DOTTIE

Oh my God...

BRANDI

One thing you can say for Ricky. He sure knows how to make a mess.

From O.S. comes the sound of someone CREAKING toward them from the hallway. It's a tense beat as Brandi pulls out her 9mm, springs forward --

BRANDI (CONT'D)

You're busted, jerko --

She stops. Her gun is screwed to Joey Mattsen's huge chest. He stares at it, terrified. His arms shoot up over his head.

JOEY

What the hell? You almost broke my chain! And that's real gold!

BRANDI

Where's Ricky? What'd you do to him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEY

Hey, I just got here. I came to check up on you -- and found all this.

Reluctantly, Brandi lowers the gun. She turns to Dottie, and sees that her mother is still standing there, stunned.

BRANDI

Mom...?

Now that the gun is no longer a threat, Joey is able to think more clearly -- and revert to his bullying ways.

JOEY

Waitaminnit...this mean you two geniuses still haven't found my car?

He flinches as Brandi whirls on him. Off her look -- which is far deadlier than any gun...

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY PARK - DAY

ANGLING WITH Brandi as she heads toward the kids' playground area -- swings, monkey bars, jungle gym. She's talking into the cell phone.

BRANDI

What the hell's wrong with you guys?  
Ricky Guzman's an officer of the court.  
You should be busting your butts to find him!

(beat)

Yeah, yeah, the age of miracles is over,  
I know. Do what you can.

She reaches the sandbox where Dottie sits, watching the kids play. LEONARD, who is dressed like the insurance agent he is, nods to Brandi as he moves away.

BRANDI (CONT'D)

(to Dottie)

How'd it go with our favorite insurance man?

DOTTIE

One thing's for sure -- Leonard and I are definitely getting to well acquainted. Want to know how little of the damage is actually covered by our homeowner's policy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANDI

Let me guess -- bullet hits take a separate rider, right?

DOTTIE

(nodding)

Maybe I've been too hard on Ralph. At least there were no home invasions when he was alive.

BRANDI

So how long you figure to be hiding out in the playground?

DOTTIE

I'm not hiding. It's my new office.

(at Brandi's look)

Honey, you saw the house. To me, that was -- I dunno -- the ultimate violation. Like our whole life was just raped.

A couple of little kids come running by them, yelling joyfully. One skids into Dottie, who moves quickly, with all the acquired skill of motherhood, and sweeps him up before any impact, swinging the boy around and setting him on his feet again to run off.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I'll be going home and facing reality soon enough. For now I just need to be someplace peaceful. And what could be better than the park I used to take you to everyday as a kid?

The CELL PHONE RINGS. Brandi flips it open.

BRANDI

Yeah?

INT. MAURICE'S CHOP SHOP - OFFICE - DAY - INTERCUT AS NEEDED

(NOTE: We don't know it's a chop shop yet, only that we're in a small but luxuriously paneled room.) The Second Bodyguard is wiping all the wooden surfaces with spray cleaner. The First Bodyguard is standing behind Ricky, who is shackled to a chair mouth covered by duct tape.

Maurice Paxton sits behind a desk with everything on it squared off and perfectly in place, talking into a speakerphone.

MAURICE

Ah, would this be Mrs. or Miss Thorson?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRANDI

It would be the only Thorson you're going to get. Who're you?

MAURICE

Consider me Ricky Guzman's host. He says that the two of you are in his employ...

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY PARK - DAY - CONTINUE TO INTERCUT AS NEEDED

Brandi motions for Dottie to come closer, holds the phone up so they can both hear.

BRANDI

You've got Ricky? How is he?

In response, Maurice gestures for the Bodyguard to remove the duct tape. It hurts like hell, and Ricky YELPS!

RICKY

Jeeze! What're you trying to do, rip my lips off --

Maurice gestures again, and a new piece of tape gets slapped over their captive, silencing him to a muffle. Dottie grabs the phone.

DOTTIE

If you've hurt him --

MAURICE

Mr. Guzman is in good health. He is destined, however, to have a major heart problem if you do not retrieve the Cadillac within eighteen hours.

(calmly)

That is to say he will be as heartless as his clients have often said. Literally.

(as Ricky groans in fear)

I'll be in touch.

Maurice clicks the connection closed.

BRANDI

Look at the bright side. Ricky -- no Ricky. It's kind of a win-win situation.

But Brandi's really all bravado, and Dottie knows it.

DOTTIE

We've got to find that car...

EXT. TINY'S BAR - DAY

As Dottie gets out of Brandi's car, Brandi pulling away.  
Dottie goes into:

INT. TINY'S BAR - DAY

As Dottie enters the seemingly deserted place.

DOTTIE

Tiny?

AHMED comes in from the back room, smiles to see her.

AHMED

May I be of assistance?

DOTTIE

Where's the big guy?

AHMED

It is my belief that he is halfway to the  
Truckee River...or less, if the reputed  
reliability of his motorcycle is true.

DOTTIE

(with a groan)

The camping trip! Of course.

(looking heavenward)

Tiny! How could you do this to me?

AHMED

I repeat. May I be of assistance?

He goes behind the bar, reaches down beneath it, taking out  
several small items.

AHMED (CONT'D)

Recently I have come into possession of  
some items in which you may find  
interest. A pearl-handled Derringer? An  
iron handle to lend authority to, say, a  
cane?

He raps the handle on the counter. Solid, all right.

DOTTIE

You used to offer me bargain jewelry.

AHMED

That was before I knew your true  
interest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOTTIE

Bounty hunting isn't my interest!  
(calming herself)  
Except that I do need some information.

AHMED

I live to serve.

DOTTIE

How about serving me up Maurice Paxton?

At the mention of the name, Ahmed looks nervous. Quickly, he shoves the gun and cane handle back under the counter.

AHMED

Maurice Paxton's flesh is unavailable, but his reputation is widely known. He started in an East Valley gang and has moved up steadily.

DOTTIE

How steadily?

AHMED

Whenever a body falls down a rung of the ladder, Maurice climbs over it. It is said that he causes the fall -- using young people from the local gangs for the dirty work.

DOTTIE

So he stays clean.

AHMED

Very. He always wears gloves. Maurice has a piece of every kind of action -- car theft, gambling, prostitutes, drugs. The betting is that he will be taking over from the big boys soon. If you are interested I can give you good odds.

DOTTIE

Tell me, Ahmed, why would one particular Cadillac -- terrific as it is -- mean so much to a man who can steal -- or even buy -- anything he wants?

AHMED

There is an old saying by which I have made a good living -- something about no accounting for taste.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOTTIE

I don't suppose there's somebody you can reach out to for something more specific?

AHMED

For Tiny's woman, I will do what I can. But it may take some time.

DOTTIE

I'm not Tiny's woman -- !

Dottie stops. Ahmed has already turned away, and is picking up the phone. She glances down at her watch.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

But I do happen to have seventeen tense hours. And no ride.

AHMED

Perhaps I will be able to help with both.

He starts dialing. Dottie can't help herself, looks at her watch again. Off her reaction...

INT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

MATCHING SHOT - BRANDI, on the phone at Ricky's desk, going through his drawers and files as, from the receiver:

LITTLE LEO'S VOICE

Hi, this is Little Leo's skiptracing and leg breaking service. I'm not available right now --

BRANDI

Leo, pick up! This is about Ricky! He needs us --

LITTLE LEO'S VOICE

-- Leave a message and I'll get back to you -- or maybe not.

BRANDI

(at the beep)

Leo! Say you didn't leave for the camping trip already! Say you're at the phone -- !

The only response is a CLICK as the machine hangs up. Brandi sighs in exasperation and punches in another number from Ricky's Rolodex. After a RING:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAUDE'S VOICE

Ah, you have reached the goal for which  
you have striven so long --

BRANDI

Claude? It's Brandi Thorson --

CLAUDE'S VOICE

Unfortunately, I am not at home for you  
to please, tease, and caress at this  
moment --

BRANDI

"Please, tease, and caress?" Claude, you  
are so a loser!

More exasperation. It's definitely building. Brandi seems  
ready to slam down the phone, then stops herself, and tries  
once more, getting:

JAKE'S VOICE

Blumenthal Bail Enforcement. I'm away on  
assignment, but if you'll leave your name  
and number --

CLICK. This is the last straw. Brandi SLAMS down the  
receiver so hard the phone echoes.

BRANDI

Bounty hunters! They're -- they're --

DOTTIE (O.S.)

Impossible?

Brandi looks up as Dottie enters the office with Ahmed.

BRANDI

(catching herself)  
Out of town. We won't be getting any  
help there.  
(to Ahmed)  
You standing in for Tiny?

AHMED

Only professionally.

DOTTIE

Ahmed's found us a lead.

BRANDI

What do we owe him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOTTIE

A civil tongue is all I can offer.

Brandi gets the message, shuts up. Ahmed takes center stage.

AHMED

An acquaintance of mine is quite the expert on L.A. car theft rings --

BRANDI

Meaning he's a hot-wire king?

DOTTIE

I'm trying to think of him as an aficionado.

AHMED

A few days ago a booster matching Rudy Ramos' description bragged to my friend about a Caddy he had lifted...

DOTTIE

He said it was his ticket to the Good Life, with enough money to get so far away even Maurice couldn't hurt him.

BRANDI

What's Maurice have to do with it?

DOTTIE

That's still in the to-be-determined file. The important thing is that Rudy had a buyer lined up somewhere up the coast. But where?

Brandi gets an idea. She goes through some of the papers she's been looking at, pulls out one.

BRANDI

Here it is. Last time Rudy was arrested was in Malibu, at some beach cafe.

DOTTIE

That's the coast all right. It's worth a shot.

The three of them start for the door. Ahmed stops Dottie.

AHMED

Excuse me. You are "going into action?"

DOTTIE

I guess you can say that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

AHMED

And your daughter has a car?

BRANDI

Unless your friend "boosted" it.

AHMED

Then I will be returning to the bar. To go with you could injure my reputation.

Ahmed hurries out ahead of them. Dottie shakes her head.

DOTTIE

Sometimes keeping a civil tongue is a very high price indeed.

As they leave the office:

EXT. MALIBU BEACH CAFE - DAY

Called "SUNDOWNERS" (or some other cleared name) and overlooking the ocean. The place is trendy and upscale, but at the far end of the parking lot, beyond the Yuppie-mobiles, is a group of Harleys owned by the meanest-looking bunch of bikers you ever saw. (They're so tough they don't even need leather, instead wearing Levi jackets emblazoned with the name "Amen Brothers," and we'll soon see why.)

We FIND Rudy amid the bikers, talking to their leader, SKYRIDER.

RUDY

Skyrider, dude, I'm telling you -- it's foolproof.

SKYRIDER

That's what the devil always says, when he works his corruption.

RUDY

Yeah, yeah, the devil, right. You're just trying to lower the price. That's what it's all about -- getting a better deal.

SKYRIDER

Even the best deal isn't going to be worth anything if we have to pay the ultimate retribution.

RUDY

"Retribution?"  
(a revelation)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUDY (CONT'D)

You're afraid, aren't you? It's not heaven you're worried about, it's Maurice. Fine, forget it. I'll find somebody else --

Rudy starts away...but the bikers all around him stay where they are. He's completely blocked.

SKYRIDER

There's nobody else, Ramos. "Vengeance is mine," says the Lord, but in your case it'll be up to Maurice.

(beat)

Once we've brought you to him, instead of incurring his wrath, we'll be partners. With profits to help our good works.

Rudy doesn't need to hear more. He throws himself forward, trying to break through the ring of bikers, and the two nearest guys grab him and wrestle him to the ground.

THE PARKING LOT ENTRANCE - DAY

Where Brandi is pulling in, Dottie beside her. They see the commotion, and Brandi steps on the gas --

BACK TO THE BIKERS

Rudy's thrashing around on the pavement, Skyrider moving in, about to kick him in the face. Brandi's car SCREECHES to them, and Dottie and Brandi burst out, shotguns aimed.

DOTTIE

Bail Enforcement Officers! Don't move!

Skyrider doesn't go through with the kick. He looks at the two women, startled -- and then we SEE three more bikers, women this time, move in on Dottie and Brandi from behind, grabbing at Dottie and Brandi and the guns.

Dottie's only got one attacker on her, and she whirls, pulling away, then body blocks one of the two who are on Brandi. Brandi yanks the shotgun back, cocks one barrel --

And stops as, taking in the name on the bikers' jackets:

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

It's all right, Brandi. These are the Amen Brothers.

(to Skyrider; lowering her gun)

You must be Sky -- Walker? Right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SKYRIDER  
(frowning)  
Skyrider. I know you?

DOTTIE  
You know a friend of mine. Tiny  
Bellows...

SKYRIDER  
(raising his hand up high)  
That Tiny?

BRANDI  
The giant economy size, yeah.

A suspenseful beat. Then Skyrider smiles.

SKYRIDER  
Tiny! All right! Talk about your wild  
rider!

Skyrider slaps hands with Dottie. Brandi lowers her shotgun now, and the other bikers join in happily, AD LIBBING their comments. The bikers holding Rudy haul him to his feet as, to Skyrider:

DOTTIE  
Tiny said you were a preacher. Still  
spreading the Good News?

SKYRIDER  
Wherever we can. 'Course, the real fun  
comes when we get to pound it into  
unbelieving heads.

Skyrider looks at Rudy meaningfully. Dottie takes a deep breath, tries to speak bravely.

DOTTIE  
Sorry, Skyrider, not him. He belongs to  
us.

SKYRIDER  
(not happy about this)  
And what would you sweet daughters of Eve  
want with that devil kin...?

Everyone looks at Dottie and Brandi. Taking advantage of the distraction, Rudy pulls out of the grip of the men holding him and leaps onto a bike, coming down and GUNNING it to a start all in one motion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A pop of the clutch, and the Harley ROARS and SCREECHES to life, barrelling forward. The bikers scatter, but, like two minds with a single thought, Dottie and Brandi both react at the same time, thrusting their guns outward, each into the spokes of a different wheel.

The bike goes over as though it hit a brick wall, taking Rudy with it. He lies there, pinned but relatively unhurt, looking up at them entreatingly.

RUDY

Get me outta here!

BRANDI

Why?

Skyrider likes that, grins approvingly.

SKYRIDER

Tiny always did know how to pick 'em.  
Sisters, whatever you're up to, he's all yours.

Dottie moves in close to Rudy.

DOTTIE

(getting in close to him)  
You heard the man, Rudy. Now where's the damn car?

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. MALIBU BEACH CAFE - PARKING LOT - DAY

Where Skyrider and the bikers are ROARING away. We FIND Dottie and Brandi at Brandi's car, Brandi putting the handcuffed Rudy into the back seat.

RUDY

Man, am I glad to see them go. Talk about your dangerous dudes.

DOTTIE

Not as dangerous as the "dude" that's got Ricky.

Brandi pulls out her 9mm, points it at Rudy.

BRANDI

Ever see what a 9mm hollow point does to a man, Rudy? The hole starts out small, but then it blossoms.

DOTTIE

Maurice is gonna fill Ricky full of those little holes. Unless you tell us where you've got that Cadillac stashed!

Rudy jerks his head away from the gun, turns on the two women angrily.

RUDY

Why should I care if Maurice kills Ricky? He doesn't care about me.

(mimicking Ricky exaggeratedly)

"Hey, you want my cousin's car? You got my cousin's car. He's just a jerk who doesn't count anyway!"

(harder)

Ricky makes like he's my friend, but he disses me as much as anybody. Him and my mother -- they betrayed me!

BRANDI

Rudy, you haven't begun to see "dissed."  
But you will, right now...

Brandi raises the gun as though about to clobber him with the butt. Dottie comes between them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOTTIE

That's it. Go. Get yourself a cafe au lait.

Brandi doesn't move. Dottie points her toward the cafe.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Go. Sit and watch the beautiful ocean. Mr. Ramos and I have some talking to do.

Brandi gets it, continues to the cafe. Dottie turns to Rudy, unlocks his cuffs. She points to the back seat of the car.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

Sit...  
(he doesn't move)  
Please.

The "please" gets him. Rudy sits.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

So you hate him, huh?

RUDY

Ricky? "Mr. Words," I used to call him when I was a kid. I'd ask him a "yes or no" question, and he'd give me a twenty minute story that added up to "maybe."

DOTTIE

Ah...just like you're doing right now. Know what I think? I think you two are more alike than you want to admit.

(beat)

Neither one of you feels like you belong in your family. And both of you have just a teeny problem with your mother.

RUDY

Yeah, she's always made Ricky feel like he wasn't good enough. I'd see it whenever they were together.

DOTTIE

And she makes you feel that way too, doesn't she?

RUDY

Hey, this is my mother you're talking about!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOTTIE

You said she betrayed you. But I've been where you are. Don't you kind of feel like you betrayed her?

RUDY

Bullshit! I didn't betray nobody. I'm just out there trying and trying --  
 (breaking off)  
 The thing with the Cadillac, it was a sure winner. It was gonna make me rich. Rich enough to bankroll that stupid chain of stores my mother wants so much...rich enough to make her love me...

Rudy trails off, realizing what he's said. Dottie reaches out to him, takes his head in her hands.

DOTTIE

You've got to love yourself, Rudy. And that'll be kind of tough, won't it, if you cause your cousin's death?

Rudy thinks...hard. Then:

RUDY

I can't tell you where the car is. But I can show you...

Off Dottie's relieved smile:

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY JUNKYARD - DAY

A veritable sea of cars, some together, some in pieces, stretching as far as they eye can see. Big dogs -- Rottweilers, Dobermans, whatever -- are chained at strategic intervals, looking like they're just waiting for the chance to get in a good chomp.

We FIND Dottie, Brandi, and Rudy atop a pile of rusted-out hulks. Rudy takes a deep breath, as though inhaling fresh mountain air.

RUDY

I love this place. It really brings back memories!

BRANDI

Really? Doesn't look much like a holding cell to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUDY

My grandfather owned a junkyard just like this. I used to play in it when I was little.

DOTTIE

Your mother's father was a junkman?

RUDY

He started with rags. That's where all my mother's clothes came from till Grampa moved up to scrap metal.

DOTTIE

(to Brandi)

At least now I understand Nelda a little better.

BRANDI

Too bad she doesn't.

Rudy is scrambling to the other side of the mound, where a ragged tarp completely covers a vehicle we can't see.

RUDY

Here!

Pulling off the tarp, he unveils -- the Cadillac, still shining in the sun.

BRANDI

I don't believe it. He actually came through.

DOTTIE

Most people will. Once you show them that they can.

RUDY

Listen, before you turn this thing over to Maurice, there's something you should know.

He gets down on the ground, reaching around under the rear bumper. Rudy's hands find what he's looking for, and we hear a CLICK as a section containing a closed compartment swings out from the frame.

BRANDI

Boy, these Cadillacs have everything. Even a special compartment where the old ladies can keep their blue hair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dottie opens the compartment, takes out a couple of baggies filled with white powder.

DOTTIE

This isn't exactly hair dye.

RUDY

There's compartments like that all around this thing. It adds up to about three million bucks in coke.

BRANDI

Three million dollars!

DOTTIE

No wonder the car didn't handle so well.

RUDY

Maurice wanted a drugmobile for a big deal set up for tomorrow. He needed something so fly that nobody'd think it could be muling.

(beat)

I figured that if anybody ever deserved a good car theft it was Joey.

DOTTIE

And then, after Maurice got it all tricked out and ready, you stole it from him.

RUDY

Three million bucks! Y'know, we could still do our own deal, split it two ways...

(at their hard looks)

Nah, I didn't think so.

DOTTIE

We've got to give it to Maurice. Know where to find him?

RUDY

Sure.

(realizing)

But he's got his own little army. And once we're there -- my uncle might not be the only one Maurice'll think he has to kill.

BRANDI

We can't go in alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DOTTIE

Who says we are?

And, as she pulls out her cell phone:

EXT. THORSON HOUSE - DAY

The front door opens, and Dottie comes out with Rudy, Brandi behind them. They start down the front walk.

RUDY

Sure you need me to come along? I can stay here and man the phone. You know, take messages from the guys.

DOTTIE

Rudy, if we get any messages from the guys, it's all over -- for Ricky and us.

BRANDI

And -- especially -- you.

Rudy winces. They continue to the two cars that are parked in the drive. At Brandi's car, Rudy stops, then gets in when she gestures impatiently. Brandi slips behind the wheel, STARTS THE ENGINE, while Dottie gets into the Cadillac and does the same.

Dottie pulls out of the driveway, starts down the street, Brandi and Rudy right behind her. Another car pulls up from the other direction -- an obvious rental...driven by Joey.

Joey looks out the windshield, seeing the Cadillac turn the corner. Face set, he starts to follow...

INT. MAURICE'S CHOP SHOP - OFFICE - DAY

Ricky's still shackled to the chair, his mouth duct-taped. He's frightened and miserable, all bravado gone. In front of him, the Second Bodyguard is eating a sandwich. Ricky looks at it longingly, and the Bodyguard reaches out as though to take the tape off his mouth -- and then changes his mind.

At his desk, Maurice is at the speakerphone, which is ringing and ringing. At last we hear a RECORDED VOICE:

CELL PHONE VOICE

The cellular customer you are calling is either out of the area or --

Maurice flicks off the phone, looks over at Ricky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAURICE

According to my watch -- which is tuned to the atomic clock at Denver -- the deadline is up. Your trusted allies have failed as badly as Macbeth.

Maurice turns to the Second Bodyguard.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Time to make good on my promise.

The Second Bodyguard nods knowingly, pulls a 9mm from his jacket. Ricky's sweating bullets, shaking his head and moaning, "no, no, no..."

Suddenly, the office door opens, and the First Bodyguard steps inside.

FIRST BODYGUARD

It's here -- the Cadillac!

Off Ricky's look:

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY INDUSTRIAL STREET - MAURICE'S CHOP SHOP - DAY

A street like the one in the TEASER, where, driving up slowly, is Dottie, with Brandi and Rudy behind her.

They're heading for a driveway that goes around behind the "Paxton Body Shop," which features a multitude of signs advertising quick service and excellent insurance settlements. (Maurice steals 'em and then the insurance companies end up paying a ransom.)

As the two cars move around to the large parking lot in the back of the shop, about a dozen gangbangers (younger than the bodyguards, and not as professional looking) pour out of the place, all packing heat, and all taking up positions so that Dottie, Brandi and Rudy are clearly going to be dead meat in any crossfire.

(NOTE: This sequence should be like the climax of a modern-day Sergio Leone Western, with lots of cuts of the various good and bad guys getting into position and reacting to each other, the tension increasing as:)

Dottie stops just inside the parking lot, Brandi's car staying behind her. The back door of the body shop opens again, and the First Bodyguard comes out, followed by Maurice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Maurice gestures to Dottie, and, bracing herself, she drives forward, stops in front of him. He motions for her to get out of the car, but Dottie shakes her head.

Maurice nods, gestures behind him, and the Second Bodyguard emerges with a tight hold on Ricky, whose legs and wrists are still shackled, duct tape still in place.

In the Caddy, Dottie turns off the engine, takes out the ignition key. Getting out, she stands before Maurice. He goes to a front wheel well, feels around until a compartment CLICKS out. Opening the compartment, he finds bags of coke just like those we saw. Satisfied, he holds his hand out to Dottie for the keys. She gestures to Ricky. Maurice nods to the Second Bodyguard, who pushes Ricky forward, and Dottie drops the keys in Maurice's hand.

Immediately, in a practiced move, Maurice grabs Dottie, while the First Bodyguard yanks Ricky back. Now they have Ricky, Dottie, and the Cadillac. Calling out from her car:

BRANDI

Mom!

DOTTIE

I'm okay, Brandi.

MAURICE

And she will remain that way as long as you do as you're told. Over here. Both of you!

Maurice's gunmen re-train their weapons on Brandi's car. Brandi and Rudy step out, Brandi holding her shotgun.

BRANDI

We knew you'd pull something like this.

MAURICE

Throw down your gun.

Dottie and the others are so outnumbered that Brandi doesn't have a chance with it anyway. But she holds onto the gun.

DOTTIE

No. You don't get it. We knew you'd pull this.

She puts her fingers to her lips and lets out a whistle. Nothing changes. Dottie looks upward, mouths a silent, "Please..."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

And the second part of a Sergio Leone scene occurs -- as none other than Claude appears on the rooftop of the nearest building, armed to the teeth. Then Little Leo appears at the driveway, two guns aimed. Then Jake, slipping out from between two cars in the lot, his guns at the ready as well. Other bounty hunters appear on more roofs and other nearby places. The odds now are almost even.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

What'll it be, Maurice? A bloodbath --  
or a fair exchange?

Maurice hesitates. Looks all around. We take our time, building the tension as he makes up his mind. He looks to his bodyguards, and we're expecting the signal to fire. But:

MAURICE

"The better part of valor -- " Take him,  
and get the hell out!

Dottie wastes no time. She grabs Ricky, hustles him toward Brandi's car. It looks like it's all over, we're in the clear --

JOEY (O.S.)

No! You can't have it! That's my car!

Joey comes running from the street, jumping at Maurice and trying to grab the keys.

BRANDI

Joey! Get away -- !

SERIES OF SHOTS

The warning is too late as, thanks to Joey, all hell breaks loose! One of the bad guys starts SHOOTING, and then everyone is.

Brandi rushes to help Dottie to the safety of the car, and even Rudy redeems himself by doing the same to hustle Ricky to safety.

The Bodyguards pull Joey off Maurice, the three of them getting down for cover.

A bullet HITS the Cadillac. ANOTHER. Joey stares as it takes more hits.

JOEY

My baby! No!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He runs to the car, trying to shield it with his big body. Another shot RICOCHETS just beside him. The Caddy's being reduced to junk, and this idiot's going to get himself killed. Until:

Tiny -- the ultimate backup man -- comes ROARING UP on his Harley, skidding to a stop and grabbing at Joey.

TINY  
Do you mind?!

JOEY  
You don't get it! This car's  
irreplaceable. I bought it from ARNOLD!

TINY  
Maybe he'll sell you his Hummer.

Tiny punches him, and Joey goes down. Quickly, Tiny throws him onto the back of his bike where Joey hangs on for dear life as Tiny SQUEALS away.

WIDENING, we SEE Brandi back out of the lot and ROAR off with Dottie, Ricky, and Rudy, Tiny speeding beside them. Claude, Jake, Little Leo, and the rest of the bounty hunters cover them with a FUSILLADE and then melt away from the action.

Only Maurice and his men remain, and as they stop shooting we hear another SOUND: POLICE SIRENS getting closer and closer. Maurice stands there, the keys to the Cadillac in his hand, the Caddy before him. Nowhere to go. No way to ditch the evidence in time.

The mobster is screwed...

EXT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

Dottie and Brandi pull up in Brandi's car, stopping to drop off Ricky and Rudy. As they pull away, Ricky starts for the door...and sees Nelda and Alva standing there waiting.

NELDA  
Rudy!

She rushes to her son and embraces him, then slaps his face.

RUDY  
Ma! What's that for?

NELDA  
Do you want the whole list, or can I just  
issue a general summary? It's for  
stealing, for running off, for -- for --  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NELDA (CONT'D)

(eyes resting on Ricky)  
For being just like him!

Ricky literally flinches, takes a step away -- and then stops himself, stepping forward again to face his aunt at last!

RICKY

You think there's something wrong with being like me? All my life you treated me like a loser, some low class lowlife polluting your air!

(harder)

But I'm better than that. I've succeeded at everything I've tried. I run a good, honest business that helps people in need. People in trouble, with nowhere to turn. I give them a chance to go on with their lives instead of rotting in an eight by six cell!

RUDY

You tell her, Cuz.

RICKY

Don't "Cuz" me, Rudy. For years your mother called me the "black sheep," but you're gonna be the real outcast, unless you straighten out. It's time to stand up for yourself, Mister. Against guys like Maurice. Against the gangs.

(glaring at Nelda)

Against her.

Ricky moves past them, to unlock his office door. Rudy, Nelda, and Alva gape.

NELDA

Ricky Guzman, that's enough out of you --

She gets no further as, for the first time in her life, Alva interrupts.

ALVA

Shut up!

(at their incredulous reaction)

Guzman! Ramos! Mother, those names don't mean a thing. Know who the real loser around here is? The junkman's daughter. YOU!

Alva turns and starts away, triumphant, her own person at last, the shocked Nelda hurrying after her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NELDA

Alva? Alva...!

Off the moment:

INT. TINY'S BAR - NIGHT

CLOSE ON A GROUP OF GLASSES, held high in toast, each holding a different booze of choice. (Boy, you can't get these bounty hunters to agree on hardly anything!)

JAKE (O.S.)

To our ladies of the evening -- for making our day!

Everyone CLINKS, and we WIDEN TO SEE Dottie and Brandi at the center of several tables pushed together, surrounded by Claude, Jake, Little Leo, and several of the other bounty hunters who were at the swap with Maurice.

DOTTIE

I'm not sure about this "ladies of the evening" thing, but I'm overwhelmed.

(genuinely moved)

Thank you all. For coming to our aid.

CLAUDE

No, mon cher, it's we who must thank you. Without your plan to save Ricky, we might all be looking for square jobs.

LITTLE LEO

It's worth missing out on a little five card stud to make sure I don't ever have to punch a time clock again.

JAKE

Just like the old days. All of us kicking butt together. What a gang!

He and the others start doing the macho guy hug thing with each other -- and including Dottie and Brandi.

Tiny has been at the bar, getting something we can't see. He moves to the group of tables, hands behind his back.

TINY

(to Dottie)

Pick one. Go on.

Dottie considers, points to Tiny's right hand. He frowns, makes a quick switch behind his back -- and holds it out his hand. In it is a perfect red rose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOTTIE  
 (taking it)  
 I need a glass of water to put it in.

TINY  
 No you don't. It goes -- there.

He points to her hair. Dottie pins the rose in place with a bobby pin. Tiny goes to Brandi, holds out his other hand. In it is the pearl-handled Derringer we saw before.

BRANDI  
 What's this?

TINY  
 (giving it to her)  
 A little reminder. Being a member of the bounty hunter fraternity is more than going away for the weekend with a bunch of gorillas trying to escape their wives.  
 (beat)  
 You were born into this club.

The bounty hunters AD LIB their approval: Good stuff like "You're one of us, kiddo!" and "Say hey!" Brandi starts to tear up.

BRANDI  
 It's good to be home...

The guys love this, pounding her on the back and slugging back more of their drinks. Tiny goes to the jukebox and makes a selection. A slow song starts, and he turns to Dottie.

TINY  
 May I have this dance?

We ANGLE WITH Dottie and Tiny as they start to dance. She's quiet, pensive.

TINY (CONT'D)  
 Dottie? You all right?

DOTTIE  
 I was just wondering. You think it'd be crazy if someday I opened, say, an antique shop?

TINY  
 Know anything about antiques?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DOTTIE  
I could learn.

TINY  
How about a flower shop?

DOTTIE  
What do I know about them?

TINY  
I'll tell you what you should know -- how  
beautiful that one is in your hair.

Tiny's face starts to fall...and Dottie can't have that. She  
adjusts her rose to a jaunty angle, presses herself close,  
giving herself to the music and her partner. Off their  
mutual smiles...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. RICKY'S OFFICE - DAY

Ricky's on the phone, opening a can of coffee with his new -- now fully working -- electric can opener and getting the electric coffee maker going as:

RICKY

...Freef, listen to me. You've gotta find a new line of work. This convenience store thing has no future...no, no stay away from truck stops too. Ever consider something -- you know -- legit?...Freef? Freef?

We HEAR THE BUZZING of a dead line. Ricky hangs up, looks over at the can opener with a satisfied smile, then to the coffee maker. His face goes pale.

RICKY (CONT'D)

No...

INCLUDE the coffee maker, happily CHUGGING away -- black sludge oozing down the outside and dripping to the floor, going everywhere but into the pot.

RICKY (CONT'D)

No...!

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW