

PENNY DREADFUL

by

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EXT. JAROM CITY, UTAH -- EVENING

Population 1,200. Just 25 miles from Salt Lake City, but it might as well be 1,000. Nothing but sagebrush and mountains as far as you can see. The West Desert.

There's a sliver of pink light on the horizon. An old pioneer mansion sits on the outskirts of town, falling into decay. Large and ominous-looking.

A car pulls up the gravel drive and DENNIS (30s) gets out. He takes a deep breath, collecting himself, then walks to the house.

BO (40), a big stone-faced redneck, stands out front smoking a cigarette.

BO

You Dennis?

DENNIS

Yes, sir.

Bo looks Dennis over, then flicks his cigarette.

INT. HYRUM'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Bo leads Dennis down a long hallway. GRETCHEN (19), a shy girl in conservative old-fashioned clothes, walks by. She keeps her eyes down as she passes the men.

Bo watches her go by but says nothing. When he gets to the room she just emerged from, he looks inside.

A small office. RANDY (30s), Bo's younger brother, stands inside. He's small and wiry but no less tough-looking than Bo.

BO

Where you been?

RANDY

Just got off work.

Bo goes to Randy and the two brothers argue quietly. Dennis watches from the hallway but can't hear what they're saying.

Bo grabs Randy's collar, and Randy pushes him off. Finally, the debate ends, and the two men walk back to Dennis.

RANDY (CONT'D)

This him?

BO

Yeah, that's him. Come on. Hyrum's waiting.

Randy flashes Dennis a menacing smile, then walks past. Dennis watches them go, hesitant, then follows after.

INT. HYRUM'S HOUSE -- EVENING

A dimly-lit room. Dennis sits, nervously tapping his fingers on the chair.

HYRUM (O.S.)

Holly says you're reliable. Are you reliable?

DENNIS

Yes, sir. Very reliable. I do what I'm told, and I keep my mouth shut. Things are a little tight for me right now, and I'm just looking for a chance to--

HYRUM (O.S.)

I ain't interested in your life story, son.

DENNIS

No, sir. Course not.

HYRUM (60s) sits in a large chair. He's lean and hard, his eyes show little hint of emotion. He wears long-sleeved, conservative clothing.

HYRUM

You know the girl?

DENNIS

Sure, I know her. Know my way around the school too. I used to be a janitor there. Didn't stay long, but long enough so I got pretty familiar with--

HYRUM

I ain't interested in your life story, son.

Dennis nods. Awkward silence.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

You sure you're up for this?

DENNIS

Yes, sir. You can trust me on that.

HYRUM

I don't trust you. I trust Holly. Holly says you're reliable.

DENNIS
Well, sir, I am.

Hyrum looks him over, then turns to Bo. Bo shrugs.

EXT. HYRUM'S HOUSE -- LATER

Dennis walks back to the car.

INT./EXT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Dennis climbs in. He looks back at the house.

HOLLY (O.S.)
What'd he say?

HOLLY (30s), hides in the backseat. She's a tough small-town beauty. A slight baby bump is the only sign that she's pregnant.

DENNIS
I'm in.

HOLLY
What's the plan?

DENNIS
Randy and I are gonna grab her on her way to school. Then take her up to the reservoir while Hyrum calls the dad.

HOLLY
Hyrum getting the money?

DENNIS
No, Bo's supposed to get it. Then we're meeting up afterwards. Hyrum's staying out of it as much as possible.

HOLLY
That's good. How much is the ransom?

DENNIS
Twenty thousand.

HOLLY
(pause)
He suspect anything?

DENNIS
I don't think so.

Holly opens her purse. She pulls out a small gun.

HOLLY

This is our last chance here, Dennis.
You get that money. You hear me?
Do not screw this up.

Dennis looks down at the gun. Then takes it.

EXT. ST. MARY'S ACADEMY -- MORNING

An old red-brick building on a tree-lined street. Cars pass. KIDS hurry to school. This is Salt Lake City. A quiet neighborhood but a far cry from the small town we just left.

INT./EXT. RANDY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Parked across the street, Dennis and Randy watch as several kids pass by dressed in private school uniforms.

RANDY

You see her?

DENNIS

Not yet.

They wait, watching.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

So when we see her, I just grab her?

RANDY

You just grab her.

DENNIS

Right.

They wait. Silence.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Why were you and Bo arguing?

RANDY

Don't know what you're talking about.

DENNIS

At Hyrum's. He seemed upset about something.

RANDY

Don't know what you're talking about.

Dennis starts to speak again but sees something and ducks.

A LITTLE GIRL (9) walks past.

RANDY (CONT'D)

What? Is that her?

DENNIS

I think so.

RANDY

You think so, or it is?

DENNIS

It is. She wears that same uniform.

RANDY

They all wear that same uniform!

DENNIS

No, that's her. I got her.

Dennis climbs out, then sticks his head back in.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

So I just grab her, right?

RANDY

Yes, Dennis, you just grab her!

DENNIS

Ok, I got it.

EXT. ST. MARY'S ACADEMY -- CONTINUOUS

Dennis walks after the Little Girl, closing in.

DENNIS

Uh...excuse me.

She turns around.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

You're Margot, right?

LITTLE GIRL

(hesitant)

Yeah. Why?

INT./EXT. RANDY'S CAR -- MORNING

They drive in silence, up a winding mountain road. The Little Girl looks out the window, confused.

LITTLE GIRL

Where are we going?

RANDY

You shut your mouth.

INT./EXT. RANDY'S CAR -- LATER

They pull to a stop next to a small reservoir. Bare hills surround them. Isolation.

LITTLE GIRL

I thought we were getting hamburgers.

RANDY

And I thought I told you to shut your mouth. You can sit there and keep quiet, or I can put you in the trunk. Which one's it gonna be?

The Little Girl stares back but says nothing.

DENNIS

We're just doing some business with your dad, then you can go home.

RANDY

Why don't you worry a little less about the kid and a little more about the task at hand. How's that sound?

DENNIS

Sounds fine.
(pause)
So...what do we do now?

RANDY

We let them know we got her.

Randy dials and holds his PHONE to his ear. Dennis sits back, trying to act calm.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

What's this?

They look back to see the Little Girl holding Holly's gun. Randy hangs up the phone. Dennis quickly checks his pockets.

RANDY

Is that your gun?

DENNIS

It's...the gun I borrowed. Yeah.

RANDY

No one told you to bring a gun?

DENNIS

It was just for backup.

RANDY

Let me ask you something, Dennis.

DENNIS

Don't say my name--

RANDY

Just let me ask you something. Are you stupid, or are you totally stupid?

DENNIS

What?

RANDY

I said, are you stupid, or are you totally stupid?

DENNIS

That...seems like kind of a trick question.

RANDY

Just get your gun from the little girl in the back seat!

Dennis reaches back, but she points the gun at him.

LITTLE GIRL

You said we were getting hamburgers.

DENNIS

(to Randy)

She's really hungry.

Randy shakes his head and pulls out his own gun.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

RANDY

The answer, by the way, is totally stupid.

Randy turns and puts his gun against the Little Girl's head.

RANDY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Put it down, you little shit.

DENNIS

Will you calm down!? We'll just get the kid a burger.

LITTLE GIRL

And a shake.

DENNIS

And a shake. We'll just get the kid a burger and a shake.

RANDY

Nobody's getting a shake!

BANG. Blood splatters across Dennis's face. Randy collapses on the steering wheel, a gaping hole in the side of his head.

Dennis turns to the Little Girl, shocked.

LITTLE GIRL

Uh-oh.

DENNIS

What did you do that for?

LITTLE GIRL

It was an accident.

DENNIS

You shot him in the face!

LITTLE GIRL

You're the one who's supposed to be watching me!

Dennis looks at Randy and starts to panic.

DENNIS

Damn it. Damn it. Damn it!

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

Dennis.

He looks back; she's pointing the gun at him again.

DENNIS

What are you doing?

LITTLE GIRL

I can't have any witnesses.

DENNIS

What?

LITTLE GIRL

I'm going to Harvard, Dennis. I can't have this on my record.

DENNIS

It was just an accident.

LITTLE GIRL

You think Harvard cares about accidents, Dennis? Harvard doesn't care about accidents.

DENNIS

I won't say anything.

LITTLE GIRL
It's too late for that, Dennis. I'm
sorry.

Her finger tightens on the trigger.

DENNIS
Wait, no, please.

Dennis cowers. Then...

LITTLE GIRL
Just kidding!

DENNIS
What?

LITTLE GIRL
You should see your face. I don't
even want to go to Harvard.

DENNIS
What is wrong with you!

LITTLE GIRL
(suddenly defensive)
I've got a chemical imbalance. It's
not polite to ask about it.

Randy's phone begins to RING: Toby Keith's "Whiskey Girl."
Dennis looks at it: HYRUM CALLING.

EXT. RESERVOIR -- CONTINUOUS

Dennis climbs out, freaking out.

DENNIS
Damn it, damn it, damn it!

The Little Girl gets out.

LITTLE GIRL
What's his name?

DENNIS
What?
(realizing)
Randy.

She looks at Randy through the blood-speckled glass.

LITTLE GIRL
Hey, Randy, let me ask you something.
Are you stupid, or are you totally
stupid?

She looks up at Dennis, smiling. Dennis is horrified.

EXT. HOLLY'S HOUSE -- DAY

Jarom City. A shabby little rental. Dennis collects himself, then knocks.

Hurried FOOTSTEPS. The door swings open and Holly emerges, a suitcase in her hand.

HOLLY

How'd it go? You get it?

DENNIS

Listen babe, I gotta tell you something, but you've got to promise--

HOLLY

Oh, you gotta be kidding me.

Holly notices the Little Girl standing at the bottom of the steps. Dennis doesn't know where to begin.

INT. HOLLY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM -- DAY

Holly storms around the room, unpacking her suitcases.

HOLLY

How did the gun accidentally go off?
Can you explain that to me?

DENNIS

I don't know. It just sorta happened.

HOLLY

Dumb son-of-a-bitch. I knew you were gonna screw this up?

DENNIS

I was just doing what you told me.
This whole thing was your idea.

HOLLY

So now this is my fault?

DENNIS

No, I didn't say--

HOLLY

All I knew was Hyrum had a big deal going down, and if we could get our hands on that money maybe we could get ourselves a fresh start. Guess that was just too much to ask.

She slings her purse over her shoulder and walks out.

DENNIS

Where are you going?

HOLLY
I gotta go to work!

DENNIS
I thought we were leaving town.

HOLLY
How are we supposed to leave now?
We ain't got no money.

EXT. HOLLY'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Holly hurries to her car. Dennis follows. The Little Girl comes out after them.

DENNIS
Holly, please don't go back there.

HOLLY
You think I like working there? You think I like that pole pressing on my bladder when I gotta pee every five minutes? We've got an unborn child coming, Dennis! Someone's got to provide for it.

DENNIS
What am I supposed to do with her?

HOLLY
She knows your name, Dennis. She knows where I live. You gotta get rid of her.

DENNIS
(horrified, whispering)
You mean like drown her in the bath or something?

Holly is speechless.

HOLLY
No, I don't mean like drown her in the bath or something. I mean take her home. 'Drown her in the bath?' That's the first thing that jumps into your head?

DENNIS
Can you at least give us a ride?

HOLLY
No, I can't give you a ride. I'm already late. Hyrum's gonna be suspicious.

Holly drives off. The Little Girl stands next to Dennis.

LITTLE GIRL
Dennis.

DENNIS
What?

LITTLE GIRL
Is Holly gonna have a baby?

DENNIS
Yeah. She's gonna have a baby.

LITTLE GIRL
A boy or girl?

DENNIS
I don't know.

LITTLE GIRL
I just hope it's a girl. Then we
can call her Jessica.

EXT. JAROM CITY -- DAY

Dennis walks down the road, the Little Girl in tow.

LITTLE GIRL
Where are we going?

DENNIS
To my mom's house. We need a car.

The muffled SOUNDS of "Whiskey Girl" come from somewhere.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
What's that?

The Little Girl pulls Randy's phone.

LITTLE GIRL
Who's Hyrum?

DENNIS
Why do you have Randy's phone!?

LITTLE GIRL
He doesn't need it anymore.

DENNIS
Don't answer it!

LITTLE GIRL
Does it look like I'm answering it?

DENNIS
Oh, man.

He turns and keeps walking. The Little Girl hurries after.

EXT. THE OASIS -- DAY

A ragged bar and strip joint off the two-lane desert highway. Holly pulls into the parking lot and gets out of her car.

INT. THE OASIS -- DAY

A few EARLY CUSTOMERS, but the place is mostly dead. Holly enters and makes straight for the back. Gretchen is sweeping.

GRETCHEN

Hey there, Holly.

HOLLY

Hey, Gretchen.

BECKY (O.S.)

You're late.

BECKY (50s), a hard, older woman dressed in the same conservative style as Gretchen, is standing behind the bar.

Holly stops, but just for a moment.

HOLLY

My car wouldn't start.

BECKY

Again?

HOLLY

That's what I said.

BECKY

Hyrum wants to see you.

Holly disappears into the back.

INT. THE OASIS, DRESSING ROOM -- DAY

Holly fastens stockings to her panties. She wears a faded blue corset and heels.

There's a KNOCK as Gretchen enters.

GRETCHEN

You seen Randy today by chance?

HOLLY

(stiffening slightly)

No, I sure haven't. Hyrum tell you to ask me that?

GRETCHEN

No, course not. I just got something real important I gotta tell him is all. Thought maybe you'd seen him.

HOLLY

Sorry. Not today.

GRETCHEN

(lingering)

Oh. I was just wondering because he was supposed to stop by, but he hasn't. Just had something important to tell him is all.

Her last few words are a little strained. Holly looks up and sees that she's fighting back tears.

HOLLY

Gretchen, what's the matter?

GRETCHEN

Oh Holly, I done something real bad.

INT. KATHLENE'S HOUSE -- DAY

Dennis's mom, KATHLENE, a frazzled woman in an oversized-sweater, pushes a noisy vacuum.

DENNIS

(yelling over noise)

It's just for an hour or two.

KATHLENE

I don't care if it's for a minute or two. You didn't put gas in it last time.

DENNIS

Isaac never puts gas in it.

KATHLENE

Isaac doesn't have a job on account of he's going to Afghanistan soon.

DENNIS

Isaac's not going to Afghanistan.

KATHLENE

He is so. Just as soon as he drops some weight.

DENNIS

Yeah, and how's that going? How many Mountain Dews he had today?

KATHLENE

He did pushups today is what he did.

DENNIS

Really? You saw him do these pushups?

KATHLENE

(whispering)

You're brother's going overseas to kill al-Qaeda, Mr. smarty-pants. And who knows whether he's even going to make it home alive. Maybe you could show some respect.

DENNIS

I see. So now it's a suicide mission.

ISAAC (late 20s), Dennis's over-weight younger brother, comes in. He has a box of fruit roll-ups in his hand.

ISAAC

Hey, Dennis.

DENNIS

What?

ISAAC

Did you eat one of my fruit rolls?

DENNIS

What? No.

ISAAC

Well, I was just wondering because one is missing, and I thought that was kinda weird.

DENNIS

Well, I didn't take it.

ISAAC

Hmmm. Because I wrote 'Isaac' right here on the box, and your name's not Isaac, so...hmmm.

DENNIS

I didn't eat your damn fruit roll, Isaac.

Kathlene kills the VACUUM.

KATHLENE

Hey! You watch the language in this house.

DENNIS

Can I please borrow the car? I'll
put some gas in it.

KATHLENE

No.

She starts up the VACUUM again.

INT. THE OASIS, DRESSING ROOM -- DAY

Holly comforts Gretchen.

HOLLY

I'm sorry, sweetheart. I wish I
knew what to tell you.

GRETCHEN

It's ok. I just gotta talk to Randy
is all.

HOLLY

I ain't so sure that's gonna happen.

GRETCHEN

What do you mean?

The door opens and Becky glares down at Holly.

BECKY

I told you Hyrum wanted to see you.

HOLLY

After my shift.

BECKY

He wants to see you now.

HOLLY

I'm about to go on.

BECKY

Well, then you better get your skinny
ass a-movin.'

INT. THE OASIS, OFFICE -- DAY

Holly enters the dark, cluttered office. She has her coat
on over her underwear.

Behind the desk sits Hyrum.

HOLLY

Becky said you wanted to see me.

HYRUM

Have a seat.

HOLLY
I'm about to go on.

HYRUM
Sit down.

She hesitates, keeping her eyes on Hyrum.

HOLLY
Fine. Tell Terry to leave.

TERRY, an odd-looking man in an over-sized suit, sits at a make-shift desk in the corner. His RIGHT HAND is dark and slightly withered.

HYRUM
Why?

HOLLY
Because he gives me the creeps.

HYRUM
And how's that?

HOLLY
He's always staring at my ass. The way he is right now.

Terry looks up from her ass to Hyrum, who nods for him to leave.

Terry closes a BLACK LEATHER BOOK and takes it with him.

When he's gone Holly sits.

HYRUM
Where's Dennis?

HOLLY
How am I supposed to know? I thought he was working for you.

HYRUM
He's with Randy. Randy's not answering his phone.

HOLLY
What's that got to do with me?

HYRUM
I thought you said your man was reliable.

HOLLY
He's not my man, and I never said he was reliable.

(MORE)

HOLLY (CONT'D)

I said he kept his mouth shut and was desperate and dumb enough to do whatever you told him.

HYRUM

When did you see him last?

HOLLY

I don't know, yesterday. Why, what do you got him doing?

Hyrum shifts in his chair but doesn't answer.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Well if that's all, there's some fat sons-of-bitches waiting for me to take my clothes off.

HYRUM

One more thing. How far along are you?

HOLLY

Two months.

Hyrum smiles, an unpleasant sight.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Four.

HYRUM

Gonna have to let you go.

HOLLY

The hell you are.

HYRUM

You're showing too much.

HOLLY

What about when Krissy's dad got dementia and she had to wipe his feces off all the house plants?

HYRUM

What about it?

HOLLY

She put on all that weight, but you didn't fire her.

HYRUM

It's not the weight. Men see a pregnant woman, and they start thinking of the consequences of their decisions. It's bad for business.

HOLLY
 You can't fire me. I got a baby
 coming. At least let me stand behind
 the bar and serve drinks.

HYRUM
 Becky tends bar, and she don't want
 you around Gretchen.

HOLLY
 Why the hell not?

HYRUM
 Says you're a bad influence.

A little desperation creeps into Holly's voice.

HOLLY
 Hyrum, I need this job. I ain't got
 nothing else.

HYRUM
 You could always reconsider my offer.
 (pause)
 If he ain't your man.

HOLLY
 You got enough wives around here as
 it is.

HYRUM
 I wouldn't mind about the kid. Hell,
 we do it fast maybe I'll even make
 it a twin.

HOLLY
 That ain't how twins work.

HYRUM
 Tell that to Jacob and Daryl.

On the wall is a picture of JACOB and DARYL, identical twins
 dressed in matching polygamist outfits.

HOLLY
 I think I'll pass.

HYRUM
 Suit yourself.

INT. THE OASIS -- DAY

Holly storms past Gretchen and Becky at the bar.

HOLLY
 You owe me two weeks pay.

EXT. THE OASIS -- DAY

Holly walks to her car. Gretchen follows her out.

GRETCHEN

Holly. Where you going?

HOLLY

Your husband just fired me.

GRETCHEN

Why? Because of the baby? Maybe I could talk to him for you.

HOLLY

He's already made up his mind.

GRETCHEN

Holly.

Her pleading voice stops Holly.

HOLLY

Listen, I'm sorry, Gretchen. But I got a world of problems of my own right now.

GRETCHEN

There's something else I didn't tell you. Something else I done. I'm worried Hyrum's gonna find out.
(holding back tears)
I just gotta talk to Randy.

Holly is torn. Becky steps out of the bar.

BECKY

Get on back to work now, Gretchen.

GRETCHEN

Holly, I'm scared.

BECKY

I ain't gonna ask you twice.

HOLLY

What time you get done tonight?

GRETCHEN

Nine o'clock.

HOLLY

Come by my place after. We'll sort this whole thing out. Alright?

GRETCHEN

Thank you.

She hugs Holly then hurries back inside. Becky stares at Holly a moment, then goes in.

INT. KATHLENE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN -- DAY

The phone RINGS. Kathlene answers.

KATHLENE

Hello.

HOLLY (O.S.)

Hey Kathlene, is Dennis there?

Kathlene stiffens.

KATHLENE

Yeah, he's here.

(yelling)

Dennis, your stripper girlfriend's on the telephone.

Dennis comes in.

DENNIS

Do you have to call her my stripper girlfriend?

KATHLENE

I'm sorry. She not your girlfriend?

She hands him the phone and leaves.

DENNIS

Hello?

HOLLY (O.S.)

You take the girl back yet?

DENNIS

Still...kinda working on that.

HOLLY (O.S.)

Well forget it. You gotta ransom her, Dennis. You gotta get that money from her daddy.

DENNIS

What? I can't do it by myself.

HOLLY (O.S.)

Hyrum just fired me. And he's looking for you.

DENNIS

What'd he say?

HOLLY (O.S.)

He said he can't get a hold of Randy,
and he's getting suspicious. You
gotta get outa town.

DENNIS

That's what I've been trying to tell
you. You gotta come get me.

HOLLY (O.S.)

We need money, Dennis. You gotta
ransom that girl, and you gotta do
it quick.

DENNIS

I don't know how to do it, Holly.
Besides, my mom won't let me borrow
the car.

HOLLY (O.S.)

I don't care how you do it, Dennis!
If you ever want to see me or your
baby again you better get that money!

She hangs up on him.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

Dennis.

He turns around and sees her standing there.

DENNIS

I told you to wait outside.

She dangles a set of keys.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Where'd you get those?

LITTLE GIRL

In her purse. Can I drive?

DENNIS

No, you can't drive. Is that a fruit
roll?

She takes a bite of something red and leathery.

LITTLE GIRL

No.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET -- DAY

A wealthy Salt Lake City block. Old, beautiful houses.
Dennis and the Little Girl pull up in Kathlene's car.

INT./EXT. KATHLENE'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Dennis eyes a BIG HOUSE just down the street.

LITTLE GIRL
Where are we?

DENNIS
What do you mean where are we? This
is where they said you lived.

LITTLE GIRL
But what about the hamburgers?

DENNIS
Just wait here five minutes. I'll
be right back.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Dennis steps out of the car. The Little Girl gets out too.

DENNIS
What are you doing?

LITTLE GIRL
I'm going with you.

DENNIS
You can't go with me.

LITTLE GIRL
Why not?

DENNIS
Because I can't ransom you back if
you're already there. That's not
how it works.

LITTLE GIRL
I don't care how it works, Dennis.
I'm hungry.

DENNIS
You just had a fruit roll.

LITTLE GIRL
I'm still hungry.

Dennis pulls out a few crumpled bills and hands them to her.

DENNIS
Just wait in the car, and then you
can buy yourself two hamburgers, ok.

He scoots her back in the car and turns toward the house.

LITTLE GIRL

Dennis.

DENNIS

What?

LITTLE GIRL

He's gonna be real mad at you.

DENNIS

You just let me worry about that.

INT./EXT. BO'S TRUCK -- MOMENTS LATER

Bo sits behind the wheel, waiting. He looks back at the Chambers house in his side mirror and is startled to see Dennis walking to the door.

BO

What the hell?

EXT. CHAMBERS HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Dennis knocks. MR. CHAMBERS (45) opens. He wears a tailored suit and has a tough, handsome face, a politicians's face.

DENNIS

Mr. Chambers?

MR. CHAMBERS

Can I help you?

DENNIS

(nervous)

Well sir, I work for Hyrum.

MR. CHAMBERS

Is that right?

DENNIS

Yes, sir. And he uh...he wants his money now.

MR. CHAMBERS

(closing the door)

I already told Hyrum what he can do with his threats.

DENNIS

Well sir, the thing is, we have your daughter Margot.

MR. CHAMBERS

Excuse me?

DENNIS

She's ok. We're not gonna hurt her.
All we want is the money. Just give
it to me, and we'll let her go.

Mr. Chambers stares at Dennis for a long moment.

MR. CHAMBERS

Better come inside.

INT. CHAMBERS HOUSE, BILLIARD ROOM -- DAY

Mr. Chambers shows Dennis in. It's an old, elegant house.
A large billiard table fills the room.

CODY (20s), good-looking kid with a small, muscled frame,
sinks his shot as Dennis enters.

MR. CHAMBERS

This is my son-in-law Cody. Cody,
this gentleman works for Hyrum.

CODY

What's he want?

MR. CHAMBERS

(to Dennis)
Better tell him.

Dennis is getting less comfortable by the second.

DENNIS

Hyrum's holding Margot until I get
his money.

Cody looks at Mr. Chambers but says nothing.

MR. CHAMBERS

Bring her in.

Cody leaves.

DENNIS

Wait, what? Who's he bringing in?

MR. CHAMBERS

My daughter. Margot. She's watching
cartoons in the next room.

DENNIS

What?

MR. CHAMBERS

She didn't go to school today. Had
a little bit of a stomach ache.

DENNIS

I don't understand. Do you have two daughters?

MR. CHAMBERS

My other daughter is married to Cody. She's twenty-three, and she's been here all morning taking care of her sister.

DENNIS

Wait, does Margot wear a uniform? Like a private school thing?

MR. CHAMBERS

All the girls at her school wear uniforms. They're compulsory.

Cody walks in with MARGOT CHAMBERS. She looks similar to the Little Girl, but far from identical.

MR. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)

Margot, do you know this man?

She shakes her head.

MR. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)

Have you ever seen him before?

Shakes her head again.

MR. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)

Thank you, sweetie. Go on up to your room and play now, will you?

She leaves. Mr. Chambers rolls the cue ball across the table. It hits three sides and lands quietly back in his hand.

MR. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)

I think it's time you explained your little joke, son. I'm not sure I find it amusing.

DENNIS

I must have made a mistake. Sorry. I'll just show myself out--

Mr. Chambers clutches the ball and smashes it across Dennis's face. Dennis falls on the table.

MR. CHAMBERS

If Hyrum thinks he can threaten my family he's got another thing coming.

Cody pulls Dennis up and holds him.

DENNIS
I'm sorry. It's just a big
misunderstanding.

Another shot to the face.

MR. CHAMBERS
You think you can kidnap my little
girl while I just stand by?

DENNIS
I thought I didn't kidnap her.

MR. CHAMBERS
No. You thought you did.

DENNIS
Yeah, but I didn't.

Another blow.

MR. CHAMBERS
You tell that bastard he's got nothing
on me. I ain't any more afraid of
him than I am a fly on a buck's balls.

DENNIS
You don't understand. I don't even
like the guy. I hate his guts.

A punch to the stomach; Cody lets Dennis fall to the floor.

MR. CHAMBERS
Tell Hyrum next time someone goes
missing, it's gonna be someone he
cares about. And it won't just be
an empty threat.

He kicks Dennis once for good measure.

MR. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)
Now get the hell off my carpet.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET -- DAY

Dennis marches away from the house, straight for the car.

Suddenly he's grabbed from behind and spun around. He finds
himself face-to-face with Bo.

DENNIS
Hey, Bo. What are you doing here?

BO
I'm *supposed* to be here! Hyrum's
been calling--where the hell've you
been?

DENNIS

Well...that's a good question...

He glances quickly over to Kathlene's car. The Little Girl hasn't seen them, and Bo hasn't seen her.

BO

Where's Randy?

DENNIS

That's who I'm looking for.

BO

What do you mean that's who you're looking for?

(realizing)

What the hell happened to your face?

Dennis smiles. His face is bumped and bruising.

INT. THE OASIS, OFFICE -- DAY

Dennis sits across from Hyrum. Bo hovers nearby.

BO

Bullshit! He's lying.

HYRUM

Bo doesn't like your story, Dennis.

BO

My brother ain't no backstabber.

DENNIS

I swear to you. That's what happened.

HYRUM

Let me explain something to you, Dennis. Something that might shed some light on the present situation. Do you know what's really important? In life I mean.

DENNIS

What?

Hyrum comes around and sits on the edge of his desk.

HYRUM

Family. Family is what's important. It's the only thing that matters. I love my family. I love my wives. I love all my children. I love my brother Terry. Come over here, Terry.

Terry picks up his black leather book and joins Hyrum.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

Terry is an inspiration to me. I don't know if you noticed, but Terry has a himself a hand of the withered nature. Now he could say, 'God cursed me with this withered appendage, so I'm just gonna give up and not make anything with my life.' But does he say that? Do you say that, Terry?

TERRY

No.

HYRUM

No. He doesn't say that. Because Terry is an inspiration. He doesn't let a little old thing like a withered hand hold him back. He can do anything you or I can do. Who put your pants on for you this morning, Terry?

TERRY

I did.

HYRUM

Who put on that shirt and buttoned up that vest?

TERRY

Me.

HYRUM

What did I tell you? My brother's a damn inspiration.

DENNIS

Wow. Can he tie his shoes?

Hyrum gives Dennis an icy stare.

HYRUM

Excuse me?

DENNIS

I just wondered if he can tie his shoes.

Silence.

HYRUM

No he can't tie his shoes! He uses a shoe horn. It takes two hands to tie a pair of shoes. Can you tie your fucking shoes with one hand!?

DENNIS

No. Sorry. I was just trying to go along with it.

HYRUM

Terry is an inspiration, Dennis. When he came to me six years ago and said, 'Hyrum, I'd like to become an accountant,' what do you think he did?

DENNIS

Became an accountant?

HYRUM

That's right. Despite having a withered hand, Terry became the best damn accountant in this county. And now he works for me, and I'm damn lucky to have him.

(calming himself)

Do you understand what I'm telling you, Dennis?

DENNIS

Not really.

HYRUM

My point is: family is important. So when you come in here with a story about Randy taking the girl and stealing my ransom money, naturally Randy's brother isn't gonna like it.

Bo watches Dennis, barely containing his rage.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

Naturally he's gonna want to rip your insides out and stomp on them. I understand that. And to be honest I'm about to let him do it, because your story doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me, Dennis. Now where's Randy?

DENNIS

I don't know.

HYRUM

Where's the girl, Dennis?

DENNIS

I told you. Randy beat me up and took her. Look at my face.

HYRUM

You were at her house!

DENNIS

I thought maybe he was going there
to get the money.

Bo's had enough. He knocks Dennis to the floor.

BO

Son-of-a-bitch is lying.

DENNIS

Will everyone please stop hitting
me!?

HYRUM

Tell you what I'm gonna do, Dennis.
I'm gonna call Randy one more time.

DENNIS

(panicked)

No. I already tried calling. He's
not gonna answer.

HYRUM

You just better hope he does.

Hyrum picks up the phone and dials.

Dennis holds his breath.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

Hello?

HYRUM

Who's this?

INT./EXT. KATHLENE'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

The Little Girl is still waiting for Dennis.

LITTLE GIRL

Who's this?

HYRUM (O.S.)

Is Randy there?

LITTLE GIRL

Um...not really.

HYRUM (O.S.)

Where is he?

LITTLE GIRL

He's in the bathroom.

HYRUM (O.S.)

Well, can you tell him he's wanted
on the telephone.

LITTLE GIRL

(pause)

No.

HYRUM (O.S.)

Excuse me?

LITTLE GIRL

I'm not going to do that.

HYRUM (O.S.)

Why not?

LITTLE GIRL

Because I don't want to.

INT. THE OASIS, OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Hyrum is taken aback.

HYRUM

Excuse me? What do you mean you don't...where are you?

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

I have to go now.

HYRUM

Margot, where are you!?

The line goes silent.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

Margot! Hello?

He slams the phone down. He looks at Dennis, then Bo.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

He's telling the truth.

BO

What!?

HYRUM

Randy's got the girl.

The news hits Bo hard. He takes a second to let it sink in.

BO

Where?

HYRUM

I don't know. Find out and bring them back here.

Bo hurries to the door.

HYRUM (CONT'D)
And take Dennis with you.

Bo looks down at Dennis, who forces a smile.

INT. RANDY'S HOUSE -- DAY

A dingy little place, mostly empty. The door is kicked open and Bo steps in, followed by Dennis.

BO
Randy?

DENNIS
Well, I guess he's not here.

Bo looks around.

BO
This is a waste of time. Randy wouldn't steal from Hyrum.

DENNIS
Well, I just hope you're right. I always liked Randy.

Bo scowls at Dennis, then disappears into the next room.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Listen Bo, maybe we should split up and look for him separate. Maybe we'll find him quicker if we divide and conquer, you know?

No reply.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Bo?

INT. RANDY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM -- DAY

Dennis finds Bo standing next to the bed. There's a suitcase on top.

Bo opens the case. It's packed to the brim.

DENNIS
That doesn't look good.

Bo looks at Dennis, then punches him in the gut, dropping him to the floor.

Bo steps over him, SLAMMING the front door on his way out.

INT. RANDY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN -- DAY

Dennis picks up the phone and dials.

HOLLY (O.S.)

Hello.

DENNIS

Hey babe, listen I need you--

HOLLY (O.S.)

You get the money?

DENNIS

Well, not exactly. There was a problem with the girl.

HOLLY

What do yo mean 'problem'? Where is she?

EXT. RANDY'S HOUSE -- DAY

Dennis waits on the curb. Holly drives up.

INT./EXT. HOLLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Dennis gets in. He notices the Little Girl in the back seat. She smiles.

HOLLY

You don't leave a child in a parked car, Dennis. That's how they suffocate. You don't know a damn thing about child-rearin' do you?

DENNIS

I left the window cracked.

HOLLY

(shaking her head)

I should have married Chip Conroy.

DENNIS

Holly, don't start with Chip.

HOLLY

Chip lives in Los Angeles. Owns his own business and everything. He doesn't have to kidnap little girls. But if he did you could bet he'd have the sense to get the right one!

DENNIS

I got confused. Margot wears that exact same uniform.

HOLLY

They all wear the same uniform, Dennis! That's why they're called uniforms.

He has no argument for that.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Chip and I were high school sweethearts. Shoulda got married, that's all.

DENNIS

Enough with Chip, Holly.

HOLLY

Even went to junior prom together. Had ourselves a swell time too.

DENNIS

Holly, Chip Conroy is gay.

HOLLY

(shocked)

Oh, what now, you're gonna go spreading fear and hatred in front of your unborn child?

DENNIS

No. I'm saying Chip liked boys. He wasn't gonna marry you.

HOLLY

Chip and I were high school sweethearts, Dennis. We went to junior prom together.

DENNIS

Chip married his high school sweetheart, Nate Wilson.

HOLLY

Chip didn't meet Nate until senior year. Chip and I went to junior prom. And you better believe we had ourselves a swell time!

Dennis laughs to himself, pure frustration.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Are you doubting my sex appeal?

DENNIS

No, I'm not doubting your sex ap--

HOLLY

I may be great with child, but don't you dare doubt my sex appeal.

(to Little Girl)

You hear that, princess. Never let a man doubt your sex appeal.

LITTLE GIRL

Oh, I won't.

HOLLY

There's a good girl.

DENNIS

Will you stop saying sex in front of her?

HOLLY

I'm talking about allure, Dennis.
I'm talking about the feminine wile.
I ain't talking about where babies
come from.

LITTLE GIRL

I already know where babies come
from.

HOLLY

She already knows where babies come
from.

Dennis is subdued.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET -- DAY

Kathlene's car is right where they left it. Holly pulls up.
Dennis and the Little Girl get out.

DENNIS

I know you're mad at me, but after I
drop her off we gotta figure this
out. Bo and Hyrum ain't gonna stay
fooled for long--

HOLLY

I don't want you around me or my
baby no more.

DENNIS

What?

HOLLY

You heard me. I don't ever want to
see you again.

DENNIS

Holly, don't say that. We're engaged.

HOLLY

We ain't engaged. If I was engaged
I'd have a ring on my finger. You
see a ring on my finger?

LITTLE GIRL

I don't see a ring.

Dennis scowls at the Little Girl.

DENNIS

I told you I was saving up so you could pick out any ring you wanted.

HOLLY

My baby needs a provider, Dennis. If you can't do it I'll find someone who can.

She drives off.

DENNIS

Holly!

Dennis and the Little Girl hurry to Kathlene's.

EXT. STREET -- DAY

One of the nicer areas in Jarom City. Holly steps out of her car and walks towards a small, well-kept house.

Dennis pulls up and jumps out after her.

DENNIS

Where are you going?

HOLLY

Get back in the car, Dennis.

DENNIS

Who lives here?

HOLLY

You think you're the only man I can get? I got plenty of men knocking down my door.

DENNIS

Holly, get back in the car.

She steps onto the porch and knocks loudly.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Holly.

HOLLY

You better get out of here, Dennis.

DENNIS

Holly.

HOLLY

Ain't gonna ask you again!

JACKSON (38), a doughy man with glasses, opens the door.
Dennis hides behind some bushes.

JACKSON

Hey there, Holly. What are you doing here?

HOLLY

(forcing a smile)

I decided it was time to finally take you up on your offer.

JACKSON

What offer?

HOLLY

Well, you know how you're always telling me about that cabin your family's got up at Bear Lake? And how you're always begging me to go up there with you? Well, here I am.

JACKSON

Are you pregnant?

HOLLY

I remember you said it had a swing that went out over the water. Too cold for that now, I guess. But I bet it's got a nice little fireplace we could cozy up next to.

JACKSON

Holly, I don't know what I said, but--

HOLLY

You said you wanted to marry me so you could have me all to yourself. You said you had dreams about me just about every night. Well, I'm here to make all those dreams come true.

JACKSON

Look, if I gave you the wrong impression I'm sorry. I may have been unclear about things.

HOLLY

You weren't unclear at all, Jackson. In fact you were pretty damn specific about the details of those dreams!

JACKSON

I need you to leave now, Holly.

Her desperation is starting to show.

HOLLY

I know you've been wanting me for a long time, and I promise you won't be disappointed. I know I can make it worth the wait.

JACKSON

You need to leave, Holly.

He shuts the door, leaving her alone on the porch.

Dennis steps out from hiding, unsure what to say.

DENNIS

That guy's an idiot. Don't pay him any attention. You don't want a creep like that around anyway.

She walks down the steps, toward her car. He follows her.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

I'll figure this out, Holly. You don't gotta worry about nothing. I know I screwed up, but I'll fix it--

She turns on him, her face full of rage.

HOLLY

Are you deaf or something? I told you I never wanted to see you again.

DENNIS

(reaching for her)

I swear to you I'll figure this out.

HOLLY

Don't you touch me. I told you to stay away from me, and I meant it.

DENNIS

Holly, just wait up a second.

She turns on him again, holding back tears.

HOLLY

I was all set and ready to leave you when I found out I was pregnant. The only reason I didn't is because I thought I needed you to take care of me. What was I thinking? You can't take care of anybody.

DENNIS

Yes I can. I can take care of you.
I'll take care of our baby.

HOLLY

You live with your mother, Dennis.
You ain't got no job. You ain't got
no car. You ain't got nothing.
Just who do you think you're fooling?
You ain't done a single worthwhile
thing in your whole damn life.

He watches her drive away.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)

She's really mad at you, huh?

Dennis turns. The Little Girl is standing next to him.

Ready to explode, Dennis storms off down the street, away
from the girl, away from the house, away from everything.

She follows after him.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

(no reply)

The car's over here.

(getting impatient)

Dennis!

He stops, marches back to her.

DENNIS

Why did you say you were Margot?

LITTLE GIRL

I don't know. I thought maybe you
were giving her a prize or something.

DENNIS

Why would I give her a prize?

LITTLE GIRL

I don't know. So do you want to
know my real name now?

DENNIS

No, I don't want to know your real
name.

LITTLE GIRL

Why not? We're best friends now.

DENNIS

We're not friends. I kidnapped you.

LITTLE GIRL
Yeah, and now we're best friends.

DENNIS
What is wrong with you?

LITTLE GIRL
I told you! I either have too many
chemicals or just not enough. I
can't remember which, so just stop
asking!

It's hopeless. Dennis blows past her, back to Kathlene's
car.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)
Where are you going?

DENNIS
The hell away from you, that's where.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)
Dennis!

He stops and turns around. She's pointing the GUN at him.

DENNIS
Why do you still have that!?

EXT. FAST FOOD JOINT -- DAY

Dennis and the Little Girl sit at a table next to the play
area. He looks miserable, she content.

LITTLE GIRL
Maybe we should get a hamburger for
Holly.

DENNIS
She doesn't want a hamburger.

LITTLE GIRL
How do you know? She has to eat for
two, Dennis.

DENNIS
She doesn't want a hamburger because
she hates me. Thanks to you.

LITTLE GIRL
She's just mad at you. Maybe if you
bring her something she won't be mad
anymore.

DENNIS
Maybe you don't know what you're
talking about.

LITTLE GIRL
 Maybe you don't know what you're
 talking about.

Dennis gives up. He puts his head on the table.

As he does the Little Girl sees something in the play area
 behind him.

DENNIS
 Can we please go now...

He lifts his head but she's gone. He looks back and sees
 her approaching TREVOR BANKS (10).

The Little Girl speaks to Trevor, but Dennis can't hear what
 they're saying.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
 Shit.

She points to Dennis and Trevor looks over.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
 Oh, that's great. That's perfect.

He looks around to see if anyone's watching. The Little
 Girl comes back and sits down.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
 Who was that?

LITTLE GIRL
 Trevor Banks. Yesterday at school
 he said he didn't want to be my
 boyfriend. Now he is my boyfriend.

DENNIS
 How'd you do that?

LITTLE GIRL
 I told him you'd shoot his mom if he
 didn't.

DENNIS
 Why would you say that!?

LITTLE GIRL
 Because his dad's already dead.

DENNIS
 No, I mean...

He looks back and sees Trevor in tears.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- DAY

Dennis hurries to his car. The Little Girl follows.

LITTLE GIRL
What was I supposed to do, Dennis?
He doubted my sex appeal.

DENNIS
Go away.

LITTLE GIRL
You forgot to get something for Holly.

Dennis fumbles with the keys, finally dropping them.

DENNIS
Why are you following me!?

LITTLE GIRL
I already told you. We're best
friends now.

DENNIS
Why me?

LITTLE GIRL
Because no one else likes me, Dennis.
There. Are you happy now?

DENNIS
I don't like you.

She stares back coolly and pulls the gun from her pocket.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
What are you going to do, shoot me?

LITTLE GIRL
Maybe.

Dennis puts the gun to his own forehead.

DENNIS
Shoot me. Please. Put me out of my
misery.

She looks at him a long moment.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
What are you waiting for?

She walks away, leaving him alone. Then...

She walks back and SHOOTs HIM in the foot. Dennis Falls to
the ground. Agony. She walks off again.

EXT. JAROM CITY HOSPITAL -- DAY

A small single-story hospital. Dennis comes out on crutches.

INT./EXT. KATHLENE'S CAR -- DAY

Dennis turns the key, but the car won't start. He tries again. Same result.

He looks at the gas gauge. EMPTY. He punches the steering wheel. Repeatedly.

DENNIS

Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit. SHIIIIIT!

He leans back, closing his eyes.

There's a KNOCK on his window. Cody stands there.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Oh man, come on.

INT./EXT. LINCOLN TOWN CAR -- EVENING

Salt Lake City. Cody pulls up to a large, columned government building. Dennis sits in the passenger seat.

DENNIS

What are we doing here?

CODY

My father-in-law doesn't like to do business at home. Get out.

INT. MR. CHAMBER'S OFFICE -- EVENING

Cody leads Dennis in. Mr. Chambers sits behind a large desk.

MR. CHAMBERS

Sit down.

DENNIS

Look, I already told you. It was just a big misunderstand--

Cody forces Dennis into a seat.

MR. CHAMBERS

Why do you hate Hyrum?

DENNIS

What?

MR. CHAMBERS

You said you hated him. I want to know why.

DENNIS

I don't know. Because he's an asshole. Do I need a reason?

MR. CHAMBERS

Yes.

DENNIS

My fiancée works at his bar. Is that a good enough reason?

MR. CHAMBERS

She's a stripper?

DENNIS

Yes, she's a stripper. And I don't like it, and I don't like him.

Mr. Chambers looks him over.

MR. CHAMBERS

I have something for you. Cody.

DENNIS

Look man, can you just give me a break? People have been kicking my ass all day.

Cody drops a heavy BRIEFCASE in Dennis's lap. Not what Dennis was expecting.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

What's that?

MR. CHAMBERS

Do you know why Hyrum wants that money?

DENNIS

He said you owed him and wouldn't pay.

MR. CHAMBERS

I don't owe Hyrum a damn thing. He's blackmailing me.

DENNIS

What?

MR. CHAMBERS

Why do you think so many men from Salt Lake go to The Oasis? We've got plenty of strip clubs right here in town.

DENNIS

Because strippers have to wear those nipple covers here. You want to see the real thing you have to go outside the city limits.

MR. CHAMBERS

It's because it's remote. This is a religious town. It doesn't do a man any good to be seen walking out of a place like that. And that goes double for an elected official, like myself. The Oasis offers a remote location and unfamiliar faces.

DENNIS

Ok.

MR. CHAMBERS

I wasn't exactly a regular, but I did visit on occasion.

(looking at Cody)

I'm not proud to admit that, but there it is.

(back to Dennis)

My last visit was three weeks ago. As I was leaving, said he wanted to show me something. He had a black, leather book. Have you seen it?

DENNIS

Yeah, his brother keeps it. He's Hyrum's accountant.

Mr. Chambers looks at his son-in-law.

MR. CHAMBERS

Do you know what's inside it?

DENNIS

I don't know. Accountant stuff?

MR. CHAMBERS

It contains records for a dozen or so of Hyrum's out-of-town clients. Dates, arrival and departure times, how much we spent. Things that can be checked.

DENNIS

Why would he have that?

MR. CHAMBERS

Because he realized he could make more money blackmailing us than by keeping us as customers.

DENNIS

So...what? You want me to give him the money now?

MR. CHAMBERS

No. That money is for you. If you bring me that book.

Dennis is surprised.

MR. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)

Open it.

Dennis opens the briefcase. There's a lot more than twenty thousand dollars inside.

DENNIS

How much is that?

MR. CHAMBERS

That's every cent of one hundred thousand dollars.

DENNIS

Hyrum told me it was twenty.

MR. CHAMBERS

(amused)

I'm sure he did.

DENNIS

I don't understand. If you wouldn't pay Hyrum, why pay me?

MR. CHAMBERS

I'm a state politician. And I'm going to be a lot more than that by the time I'm done. I'm a man with a lot to lose, and that makes Hyrum a man with a lot to gain. Even if I pay Hyrum, there's nothing stopping him from blackmailing me again. And again, and again. If I have the book he can't do that.

DENNIS

How do you know I won't just do the same thing?

MR. CHAMBERS

Because if you tried it I would take you into the mountains and put two bullets in the back of your head.

DENNIS

That's a pretty good reason.

MR. CHAMBERS

I made a mistake, and I'm willing to pay for it. But only once. What do you say?

Dennis looks at the money.

DENNIS

Alright. But I need one thing.

MR. CHAMBERS

What's that?

DENNIS

Can you give me a ride?

INT./EXT. BO'S TRUCK -- EVENING

Bo drives along a dirt road, searching. The reservoir is off to his left.

Something catches his eye and he stops, puts it in reverse.

EXT. RESERVOIR -- MOMENTS LATER

Bo pulls up behind Randy's car. He walks to Randy's window and looks inside.

Randy lies there, dead. Dried blood everywhere. Bo doesn't move, just stands there, looking at his brother.

EXT. THE OASIS -- EVENING

Holly exits the building and walks to her car.

DENNIS (O.S.)

(whispering)

Holly.

Dennis hobbles out from the shadows.

HOLLY

What are you doing here? You want to get yourself killed?

DENNIS

Aren't you going to ask what happened to my foot?

HOLLY

No, because whatever it is, I already know it's stupid.

DENNIS

What are you doing here?

HOLLY

I came to get my paycheck. I'm going back to my folks' place tomorrow.

DENNIS

Why?

HOLLY

Because I ain't got a whole lot of other options at this point.

DENNIS

Well, now you do. I've got a hundred grand coming my way.

Holly scoffs and walks away.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

I'm serious, Holly. I just gotta find Terry.

HOLLY

Terry's gone. He left with Hyrum.

DENNIS

Where were they going?

HOLLY

How the hell would I know? Just get out of town, will you? Hyrum don't know what's going on yet, but he ain't exactly happy about it.

DENNIS

I need a ride to Hyrum's place.

HOLLY

Are you listening to me? You gotta leave while you still can.

DENNIS

I gotta find Terry first.

HOLLY

I'm not going twenty minutes out of my way just so you can get yourself killed.

DENNIS

Look, if I screw this up I swear I'll never bother you again. But I gotta find Terry.

(pause)

I promise this is the last favor I'll ever ask you.

EXT. HYRUM'S HOUSE -- EVENING

Holly's car stops a few hundred feet away.

INT./EXT. HOLLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

They look at the large, foreboding house.

HOLLY

This is stupid, Dennis. What do you think you're gonna do here?

DENNIS

I need you to do something for me.

HOLLY

I thought that was your last favor.

DENNIS

If I don't make it, I need you to tell our baby I loved it.

(pause)

And maybe also that I died doing something great. Like saving some kids from drowning, or jumping real far on a motorcycle.

HOLLY

(pause)

Get out of my fucking car, Dennis.

EXT. HYRUM'S HOUSE, BACKYARD -- EVENING

Dennis creeps around back. He looks into a window and sees Hyrum and Terry.

Terry has the BOOK in his good hand.

Dennis goes for a closer look and sees that the Little Girl is there too.

DENNIS

What the hell?

THUMP. Dennis drops. Out Cold. Bo stands behind him, a heavy piece of wood in his hand.

EXT. HYRUM'S HOUSE, BACKYARD -- EVENING

Dennis comes to. He sits on a chair in the middle of a field. His arms and legs tied. Hyrum and Bo stare back at him.

HYRUM

You've got some talking to do, son.

Dennis spots the Little Girl off to the side.

BO

She was just walking down the side
of the road. All by her lonesome.
The uniform caught my eye.

DENNIS

What'd she say? Don't believe
anything she tells you.

HYRUM

She didn't say anything. Except
that she ain't never seen you before.

Dennis looks at the Little Girl. She stares back coolly.

DENNIS

What? Of course she's seen me.
Randy and I got her from school.

HYRUM

That ain't what she says.

DENNIS

You can't listen to her. She's crazy.
She's not even Margot.

Hyrum starts to laugh.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

She's not. We got the wrong little
girl. That's not Margot Chambers.

Hyrum's smile fades. He turns to the Little Girl.

HYRUM

What's your name little girl?

LITTLE GIRL

Margot Chambers.

DENNIS

She's lying to you. That is not
Margot.

HYRUM

Sounds like the right little girl to
me. It's time your story started
making some sense, Dennis.

Hyrum unscrews the lid of an OLD METAL GAS CAN.

DENNIS

What's that?

HYRUM

When Terry and I were kids we had this half brother from our dad's first wife. Big son of a bitch. He was always teasing Terry about his hand. Got a real kick out of making him cry.

He saunters over to Dennis.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

I used to beg him to stop, but it didn't ever do no good. I'd be begging, Terry'd be crying, but that mean old bastard just kept on laughing. All amused as hell. Just kept right on teasing my little brother on account of his abnormality. And then one day I figured out a way to make him stop.

Hyrum pours gas on Dennis's hand.

DENNIS

What are you doing?

HYRUM

I thought maybe if he had an abnormality of his own, he might not be so quick to laugh at the misfortunes of others.

DENNIS

Hyrum, what are you doing?

Dennis turns to the Little Girl and pleads.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Tell him I was with Randy when we picked you up. Tell him you recognize me.

Her expression doesn't change.

HYRUM

He had third degree burns, and his hand wasn't much use after that, but he never teased Terry again. Matter of fact, he never so much as looked Terry's direction from that day on.

DENNIS

Please, you can't do this. Hyrum, I'm begging you.

HYRUM

Still wanna stick to your story?

DENNIS

I don't know where Randy is.

Hyrum takes out a LIGHTER.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

(desperate)

No. Hyrum, listen to me. I've got a brother too. He's got an upside down penis.

Hyrum stops.

HYRUM

A what?

DENNIS

An upside down penis. He does. I swear.

HYRUM

You mean, like he's a fag?

DENNIS

No, not inside out. Upside down. Like a birth defect.

Hyrum looks around, confused.

HYRUM

Why are you telling me this, Dennis?

DENNIS

Because we're the same. We've both got brothers with abnormalities.

Hyrum looks at Dennis in disbelief.

HYRUM

Are you kidding me? Are you fucking kidding me? You're comparing Terry...you think the withered hand is the same as an upside down penis?

DENNIS

No. It's just...they both have medical conditions, so when you were telling that story...I just knew what you're talking about.

HYRUM

Terry has a withered hand because he was laying wrong in our mother's womb. An upside down penis? That's just bad genes, Dennis. You've got bad genes.

He strikes the LIGHTER.

DENNIS

Ok. Ok. I remember something. I remember Randy said something about going to the reservoir. Maybe he's still there?

BO

I already went to the reservoir. There wasn't no sign of Randy.

He looks at Bo, confused. Bo just stares back, calmly.

DENNIS

What? No. That's not possible.
(turns to girl)
It was her! She killed Randy. This whole thing is her fault.

The Little Girl scowls at Dennis.

HYRUM

Time's up son.

DENNIS

No, please!

Hyrum goes to light Dennis's hand when his phone RINGS. He looks at it.

HYRUM

Chambers. He got our message.

BO

What's he say?

HYRUM

He still ain't going to pay.
(looks to Little Girl)
Your old man's one cheap bastard.

He walks back to the house.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

Lock them up.

BO

Where are you going?

HYRUM

To call his bluff.

BO

What about him? I want to find out what he knows about Randy.

HYRUM

We've got all night to get it out of him.

DENNIS

Hyrum, I'm serious. You can't go there. You've got the wrong girl.

Bo hits him across the face, shutting him up.

EXT. HOLLY'S HOUSE -- EVENING

Gretchen steps onto the porch, glances around, then knocks.

No reply. She knocks again, panic on her face.

GRETCHEN

Holly.

INT. HYRUM'S HOUSE, OFFICE -- NIGHT

Bo pulls back a picture frame, revealing a small safe. He looks around to make sure no one is watching.

He turns the dial and opens it. It's empty.

BO

Son of a bitch.

INT. HYRUM'S HOUSE, CHILDREN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The room is bare except for a few necessities: a couple of beds, a chest of drawers, a small desk and chair.

Dennis sits on the floor, tied to one of the bed frames. The Little Girl sits on the bed opposite him. They stare at each other in silence.

DENNIS

Why'd you say you didn't know me?

LITTLE GIRL

You said you weren't going to tell anyone about Randy.

DENNIS

He was about to light my hand on fire. Why didn't you say something?

LITTLE GIRL

Because we said we weren't going to tell anyone about Randy!

DENNIS

He was going to light me on fire!

LITTLE GIRL

I don't care, Dennis. I wouldn't have said anything even if he was about to light *me* on fire.

DENNIS

I guess we'll never know, will we?

LITTLE GIRL

Yes we will. I just told you!

Stalemate. They stare at each other.

DENNIS

Will you please untie me?

LITTLE GIRL

No.

DENNIS

Why not?

LITTLE GIRL

You said you didn't like me.

DENNIS

Yeah, and then you shot me.

LITTLE GIRL

You hurt my feelings.

DENNIS

I didn't know you had any feelings!

She turns and faces the wall. Conversation over.

Dennis tries to wriggle his way out of the ropes.

LITTLE GIRL

Better not do that. He's coming back any second.

DENNIS

Then why don't you just untie me?

LITTLE GIRL

Not until you apologize.

DENNIS

I ain't going to apologize for something you already shot me about.

LITTLE GIRL

Fine. Then I'm not going to untie you.

DENNIS

Fine.

Dennis struggles violently, desperate to get free. He's beginning to make some headway when the door UNLOCKS.

Bo walks in and stares down at him.

BO

Who has the book?

DENNIS

What book?

BO

The little black leather book Randy stole from Hyrum. Who'd he try to sell it to?

DENNIS

Bo, I have no idea what you're talking about.

BO

You think I don't know what's going on?

DENNIS

(nervous)

What do you know?

BO

I know Randy had that Little Girl this mornng. And I know his bag was packed, all ready to go. But he wasn't planning on stealing no ransom. If Randy was going to steal from Hyrum there's an easier way to do it.

DENNIS

How?

BO

The book's gone. Randy stole it and tried to sell it to someone. And whoever he tried to sell it to killed him for it.

Dennis begins to laugh.

DENNIS

Man, you are way off. I mean you are way, way off.

BO

I found Randy at the reservoir.

DENNIS

Why didn't you tell Hyrum?

BO

No more playing dumb. Randy didn't steal that ransom. Or else why is the little girl still here?

DENNIS

I already told you why she's here.

BO

You think you're so damn smart, but I got you all figured out.

DENNIS

Well, I got you figured out. How about that? Mr. Chambers don't owe Hyrum any money. Hyrum's blackmailing him so he won't tell everyone he's been coming to Hyrum's strip club.

A sly smile crosses Bo's lips.

BO

Is that what he told you?

DENNIS

That's what I figured out.

BO

You think anybody's going to care if Frank Chambers went to a strip club? You think that's worth a hundred thousand dollars?

DENNIS

I think Hyrum thinks it is.

BO

You got it wrong. Chambers was one of Hyrum's special customers. And Hyrum's special customers get a little something extra for their money. Why don't you ask Holly about it.

DENNIS

What are you talking about?

BO

A stripper ain't a scandal. Your wife ain't gonna leave you over a stripper. But if some of those strippers are whoring it out to you on the side, well, that's something different. That's something you'd pay to keep quiet.

DENNIS

Bullshit.

BO

Ask Holly if she think's it's
bullshit. Your girlfriend ain't
just a cheap stripper, Dennis. She's
a cheap stripper and an even cheaper
whore.

Dennis lunges at Bo, but the ropes hold him back. Bo laughs.

Dennis struggles, finally getting one hand free, then the
other.

He dives at Bo, knocking him into the wall.

Bo throws him AGAINST THE DRESSER and onto the floor.

BO (CONT'D)

Look on the bright side. Maybe you
don't have to change all those diapers
after all. Could be you ain't even
the daddy.

Dennis swings wildly and misses. Bo punches him square in
the jaw, sending him back to the floor.

The two men stare at each other, steel-eyed and out of breath.
Bo smiles.

It's a lost cause. Dennis scrambles for the door, but Bo
catches him from behind.

He puts his arm around Dennis's throat and lifts him off his
feet.

BO (CONT'D)

Who killed Randy?

Dennis flails about, struggling for breath.

He kicks and punches behind him. Useless. Bo swings him
around like a ragdoll.

BO (CONT'D)

Who has the book, Dennis? Who killed
my brother?

Dennis gets his foot against a wall and kicks back with all
his strength.

The two men fall backward into the doorway, onto the floor.

But Bo won't release his choke hold.

Dennis looks up to see the Little Girl staring down at him.

DENNIS
 (struggling for air)
 Help me.

LITTLE GIRL
 Not...until...you...apologize.

Bo tightens his hold on Dennis.

DENNIS
 (barely audible)
 I'm sorry.

Dennis is about to go. His eyes begin rolling back.

The Little Girl grabs the door and SLAMS it as hard as she can, catching Bo's head between the door and the door frame.

SLAM. SLAM. SLAM. SLAM. SLAM.

Dennis wrestles free. He stands, gasping for air.

Silence.

They look down at Bo. He lies on the floor, eyes closed, a dark puddle forming around his head.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
 Is he dead?

The Little Girl leans in over Bo's face.

LITTLE GIRL
 I don't know.

Bo GASPS, his eyes suddenly WIDE.

Dennis jumps. The Little Girl gives the door one final SLAM.

Bo lies motionless again.

The Little Girl looks up and flashes a toothy grin.

EXT. HOLLY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Holly gets to her door and finds a note stuck in the crack.

She reads it: HOLLY, I CAME BY BUT I COULDN'T WAIT. - GRETCHEN

Holly looks at her watch: 9:28.

HOLLY
 Damn it.

She looks around, uncertain of what to do next.

INT. HYRUM'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Dennis and the Little Girl sneak their way through the house. Somewhere a phone begins to RING.

LITTLE GIRL
Dennis.

DENNIS
What?

LITTLE GIRL
Are you mad at Holly?

DENNIS
I don't want to talk about it.

LITTLE GIRL
Because of what Bo said?

DENNIS
I don't want to talk about it!

They pass a large room where SIXTEEN CHILDREN in conservative polygamist attire sit watching a black and white TV with no sound.

The phone RINGS and RINGS, but nobody seems to notice. They just stare at the silent TV.

LITTLE GIRL
What's wrong with them?

EXT. HYRUM'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

They get outside. Dennis hobbles back to the road as best he can without his crutches.

LITTLE GIRL
Where are you going?

DENNIS
I gotta find Terry.

LITTLE GIRL
I already know where he is.

Dennis stops.

EXT. HYRUM'S HOUSE, BACKYARD -- NIGHT

The Little Girl leads Dennis to a small run-down cabin.

DENNIS
You sure he's in there?

LITTLE GIRL
I saw him through the window.

Dennis grabs a stick, hits it against his palm, testing it.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)
What are you going to say?

DENNIS
I don't know. We just gotta be quiet.

Dennis knocks. Terry opens, a cigarette in his mouth.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Hey, Terry. I need your book.

Terry is shocked to see him. He looks at the stick in Dennis's hand, panics.

TERRY
AHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

DENNIS
Shut up.

LITTLE GIRL
(covering her ears)
He's not being quiet, Dennis.

DENNIS
Shut up, Terry.

LITTLE GIRL
Do something.

Dennis punches Terry, sending him sprawling back onto the floor.

INT. TERRY'S CABIN -- NIGHT

A one-room shack. There's a bed, a desk and a stove, but not much else.

Terry sits on the bed, staring silently at the floor. Dennis stands over him, still clutching his stick.

DENNIS
Where's your book, Terry?
(waits for reply)
Your little black book. Where is it? Bo said it's not in the safe.

Terry just stares at the ground.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Look, I'm sorry I hit you, man. But I really need that book.

LITTLE GIRL

Dennis.

DENNIS

Tell me where the book is, Terry!

LITTLE GIRL

Dennis.

DENNIS

What?

LITTLE GIRL

This isn't working.

DENNIS

How do you know?

LITTLE GIRL

Because he's not saying anything.
You need to make him talk.

DENNIS

That's what I'm trying to do.

LITTLE GIRL

No, you're just yelling at him.

DENNIS

What am I supposed to do?

LITTLE GIRL

(pause)

Light his hand on fire.

That gets Terry's attention.

DENNIS

What?

LITTLE GIRL

It worked when Hyrum did it to you.

DENNIS

Are you crazy? I'm not lighting his
hand on fire.

LITTLE GIRL

Then he's not going to say anything!

Dennis thinks it over.

DENNIS

You mean...his withered hand?

LITTLE GIRL

No, I don't mean his withered hand,
Dennis! His withered is already
messed up. Nobody cares about his
withered hand.

DENNIS

But he's only got one good hand.

LITTLE GIRL

That's the whole point, Dennis.

Dennis is sick at the thought of it.

INT. TERRY'S CABIN -- LATER

Terry is tied to a chair. He looks nervous but keeps silent.
Dennis nervously pours gas onto Terry's good hand.

LITTLE GIRL

There. Now ask him.

DENNIS

I'm not sure this is a good idea--

LITTLE GIRL

Just ask him, Dennis.

DENNIS

Where's your book?

Terry shakes his head.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

See, I told you this wasn't going to
work.

LITTLE GIRL

Ask him again.

DENNIS

Where's your book, Terry?

LITTLE GIRL

Ask him like you mean it.

DENNIS

Where's your book, Terry? I need to
find it.

LITTLE GIRL

Do you want to get back Holly or
not?

DENNIS

(yelling)

Where's the book, Terry! I swear I will light your goddamn hand on fire if you don't give me that book!

Terry is scared but doesn't say a word.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

It's no use.

The Little Girl shakes her head. She puts all her weight into Terry, knocking his chair on its side. She grabs the can and pours gas all over Terry's head.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing!?

LITTLE GIRL

Lighting Terry's head on fire. What does it look like?

Terry squirms, true fear in his eyes now.

DENNIS

You can't do that.

LITTLE GIRL

Watch me.

She grabs the matches and pulls one out.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)

Where's the book, Terry?

TERRY

I don't know.

LITTLE GIRL

Terry, where's the book?

TERRY

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

She lights the match.

DENNIS

Put that out. What is wrong with you?

LITTLE GIRL

Last chance, Terry.

TERRY

No. Please.

She holds the match with two fingers, ready to drop it.

LITTLE GIRL
Goodbye, Terry.

TERRY
(screaming, in tears)
It's in the bed! Under the mattress.
Please don't light my head on fire.

Dennis pulls the mattress up and finds the BLACK LEATHER BOOK.

DENNIS
Got it.

She blows out her match.

LITTLE GIRL
Was that so hard, Terry?

Dennis unties Terry.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)
What do we do now?

DENNIS
I've got to get this to Mr. Chambers.
I need to find a car.

Terry sits on the bed, rattled, his hair a wet mess. He pulls out another cigarette from his pocket and puts it in his mouth.

LITTLE GIRL
Um...Dennis.

DENNIS
I can't believe I actually did it.

LITTLE GIRL
Dennis!

DENNIS
What?

He looks at Terry who, hands shaking, is pulling out a match for his cigarette.

TERRY
Don't tell Hyrum I smoke.

DENNIS
No, Terry--

WHOOSH! Terry's head and good hand are ENGULFED IN FLAMES.

TERRY
 AHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

He races around, limbs flailing madly.

Dennis scours the room for something to put out the fire.
 He rips the blanket from the bed and TACKLES Terry.

When the last of the flames are smothered, Dennis stands.

Terry lies motionless beneath a heap of bedding.

LITTLE GIRL
 You think he's ok?

Dennis shoots her a look that says, 'OBVIOUSLY NOT!'

A faint WHIMPER comes from inside the heap.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)
 He's fine.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- NIGHT

Dennis and the Little Girl walk in silence, Hyrum's house
 shrinking in the distance.

LITTLE GIRL
 Dennis.

DENNIS
 What?

LITTLE GIRL
 I don't think you should be mad at
 Holly.

DENNIS
 I'm not mad at Holly I'm mad at you.

LITTLE GIRL
 Why are you mad at me?

DENNIS
 You lit that man's head on fire.

LITTLE GIRL
 He lit his own head on fire.

Before Dennis can argue, a pair of HEADLIGHTS appear.

DENNIS
 Shit.

They stand there, trapped in the beams. The car stops and a
 SHADOWY FIGURE emerges.

HOLLY
Dennis?

DENNIS
Holly?

She steps into the light.

HOLLY
What is she doing here? I thought
you took her home.

He's less apologetic now, more cool toward her.

DENNIS
It's a long story. What are you
doing here?

HOLLY
Trying to find Gretchen. I've been
calling the house, but nobody's
answering.

DENNIS
She ain't there.

INT./EXT. HOLLY'S CAR -- NIGHT

Driving. The Little Girl in the back seat. Holly looks at
the book in Dennis's hands.

HOLLY
What's that?

DENNIS
A hundred thousand dollars.

HOLLY
Looks like a book to me.

DENNIS
Well, nobody asked you, did they?

HOLLY
What the hell crawled up your ass?

DENNIS
Nothing.

He opens the book and begins thumbing through the pages.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
No. No, no, no. NO!

Holly slams on the brakes.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- NIGHT

Dennis climbs out of the car, flipping through the pages.
Holly gets out after him.

DENNIS
NO! NO! NO!

HOLLY
What is wrong with you?

He spikes the book on the ground and pulls his hair.

DENNIS
Shiiiiit!

HOLLY
Dennis!

Randy's familiar RING TONE comes from inside the car.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Is that Toby Keith?

The Little Girl steps out, phone in hand.

LITTLE GIRL
It's Hyrum.

HOLLY
She had a phone this whole time?

Dennis snatches the phone and answers it.

DENNIS
Hello!

HYRUM (O.S.)
You got the wrong girl, shithead.

DENNIS
I told you I got the wrong girl!

HYRUM (O.S.)
Do you have any idea how uncomfortable
it is trying to ransom back someone
who's asleep in the next room?

DENNIS
Actually, I do. Why did you say
that Terry was your accountant?

HYRUM (O.S.)
Because he is my accountant.

Dennis scoops up the book.

DENNIS

Oh, really? Because I'm looking at his accounting book, and there's nothing in here but a bunch of stickers and mazes.

The book does in fact contain stickers and hand-drawn mazes.

HYRUM (O.S.)

Why do you have Terry's book, Dennis?

DENNIS

What kind of idiot can't get through a fucking maze?

HYRUM (O.S.)

You watch your lip! It's probably a very difficult maze.

DENNIS

He drew it himself!

HYRUM (O.S.)

Alright, Dennis. So my brother is a little slow and yours has to sit down to piss so he doesn't spray himself in the face. Leave it.

DENNIS

Why do you pretend he's your accountant?

HYRUM (O.S.)

Because it makes him feel better about himself. He's got self-esteem issues. Why do you have his book?

Dennis is on the verge of tears.

HYRUM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Where's Terry? Dennis? Where's my brother?

SIRENS in the distance, then FLASHING LIGHTS.

HYRUM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Is that the police?

Dennis turns toward the sound.

HYRUM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Is that the police, Dennis?

DENNIS

No. It's an ambulance.

HYRUM (O.S.)

What do you mean ambulance? Why is there an ambulance?

In a fit of rage, Dennis hurls the phone into the darkness.

DENNIS

Ahhhhhhhhh!

He marches back to the car, slamming the door as he gets in.

HOLLY

What the hell's going on?

DENNIS

Oh nothing. Why do you ask?

INT. THE OASIS -- NIGHT

The place is closed for the night. The door UNLOCKS and Holly enters, followed by Dennis and the Little Girl.

HOLLY

Gretchen?

DENNIS

Holly, we shouldn't be here.

HOLLY

I told you I've got to find Gretchen.

DENNIS

She's not here. And we shouldn't be either.

HOLLY

Fine, then go.

DENNIS

You've got to come with me. It's not safe anymore.

HOLLY

Why? Because you stole Terry's coloring book?

DENNIS

It's not a coloring...just trust me Holly, we've got to leave town.

HOLLY

Not until I make sure Gretchen's alright.

She goes to the back, leaving Dennis and the Little Girl.

LITTLE GIRL
Is this a bar?

DENNIS
Yeah, it's a bar.

LITTLE GIRL
Why does Holly dance at a bar?

DENNIS
Because it's a dancing bar.

A SHRILL SCREAM.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Holly!

He runs toward the sound.

INT. THE OASIS, OFFICE -- NIGHT

Dennis and the Little Girl find Holly staring at the ground, both hands covering her mouth.

DENNIS
What's wrong?

Gretchen lies on the floor. Her head bashed in. Blood everywhere.

Dennis pulls Holly toward him, shielding her eyes.

LITTLE GIRL
What happened?

DENNIS
I don't know.

Dennis goes to examine the body. Stiff and lifeless.

HOLLY
He killed her. That son-of-a-bitch
killed her.

DENNIS
Who?

HOLLY
Hyrum.

DENNIS
Hyrum? Why would he do that?

HOLLY
She was fooling around with Randy.

DENNIS

Really?

HOLLY

They were fixin' to run away together.
She was worried Hyrum was going to
find out.

DENNIS

You think he would have killed her?

HOLLY

Who else would have done it?

DENNIS

I don't know. Mr. Chambers said
next time someone went missing it
would be someone Hyrum cared about.

HOLLY

She ain't missing, Dennis. She's
dead.

INT./EXT. HOLLY'S CAR -- NIGHT

They drive in silence. The Little Girl sits in back, her
eyes heavy.

LITTLE GIRL

Holly.

HOLLY

Yeah, sugar.

LITTLE GIRL

When I grow up I want to be a dancer
too.

Holly doesn't answer.

EXT. KATHLENE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Dennis and Holly walk to the door. Dennis carries the Little
Girl who is now fast asleep, her arms around his neck.

HOLLY

You think she'll be ok?

DENNIS

I think so. Until morning at least.

He tries the door. Locked. He knocks.

HOLLY

Kathlene's gonna be thrilled to see
me.

DENNIS

No, it's fine. She'll be fine.

Kathlene opens the door in her nightgown and curlers.

KATHLENE

Where's my car!?

DENNIS

Hey, Mom.

HOLLY

Hi, Kathlene.

She notices the Little Girl.

KATHLENE

Where'd you get a kid?

INT. KATHLENE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Holly sits on the couch watching the Little Girl sleep.
Dennis enters with two steaming mugs.

DENNIS

Is she out?

HOLLY

She's a million miles away.

He hands her one of the mugs.

DENNIS

It's hot chocolate. Sorry. My mom
doesn't drink coffee.

HOLLY

I know. It's ok.

They sip in silence.

DENNIS

Still going to your parents?

HOLLY

I think so. What about you?

DENNIS

I don't know. Wherever the bus takes
me I guess.

HOLLY

I'll drop you off at the stop.

Silence.

DENNIS

I know Hyrum's blackmailing some of his clients.

HOLLY

Is he? I didn't know.

DENNIS

Bo told me why.

Holly just watches the Little Girl.

HOLLY

Don't believe everything Bo tells you. Bo don't know his ass from his overalls.

She strokes the Little Girl's hair.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Sure she's gonna be alright?

DENNIS

Yeah. Isaac's gonna call the police. Tell them he found her.

HOLLY

I'll get the car started.

INT. KATHLENE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Kathlene sits at the table sipping from her own mug. Dennis hovers awkwardly in the doorway.

DENNIS

We're going now. Sorry again about the car.

KATHLENE

What the hell kind of trouble you got yourself into, son?

DENNIS

It's nothing. I'll see you soon. I promise.

KATHLENE

Say goodbye to your brother before you go.

DENNIS

I really gotta get going, Mom.

KATHLENE

You say goodbye to your brother!

(pause)

It may be the last time you see him.

DENNIS

Will you stop saying that. Isaac's gonna be fine.

KATHLENE

It ain't your brother I'm worried about.

INT. KATHLENE'S HOUSE, DENNIS AND ISAAC'S ROOM -- NIGHT

It looks like the room of two teenagers. There's a bunk bed and a desk. Banners and posters cover the walls.

Isaac sits listening to headphones. He pulls them off as Dennis enters.

DENNIS

We're leaving now.

ISAAC

Oh. Ok.

DENNIS

Thanks for watching the girl. Just give us an hour head start before you call, alright?

ISAAC

Ok.

DENNIS

Well, thanks.

Dennis turns to leave.

ISAAC

Dennis.

DENNIS

What?

Isaac holds out a jar of money, mostly coins and singles.

ISAAC

I wanted you to take this.

DENNIS

That's your savings, Isaac.

ISAAC

I wanted you to have it. I figure I won't need it much anyway, once I'm in Afghanistan.

DENNIS

Oh, Isaac...you're not going to Afghanistan.

ISAAC

Well, first of all, yes I am. But second of all, even if I wasn't, I'd still want you to have it.

DENNIS

Thank you.

Dennis reaches out, but Isaac pulls it back.

ISAAC

You just got to admit that you took that fruit roll.

DENNIS

Are you serious?

ISAAC

I won't be mad. I just want you to admit it was you.

DENNIS

I didn't eat your fruit roll, Isaac. I don't even like fruit rolls.

ISAAC

Well, now I know you're lying, because everybody likes fruit rolls.

DENNIS

You know what. Fine. I ate your fruit roll. I feel real bad about it.

ISAAC

Thank you for admitting that. Please just ask next time.

Isaac hands over the jar but pulls out a dollar.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

For the fruit roll you owe me.

INT./EXT. HOLLY'S CAR -- MORNING

Dawn on the horizon. Holly and Dennis drive in silence.

She pulls over to a battered overhanging bus stop.

They sit there, neither sure what to say.

DENNIS

You gonna be alright?

HOLLY

I'll be fine.

Silence.

DENNIS
I'm sorry about everything, Holly.

HOLLY
Me too.

He goes in to kiss her, but she turns away.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
I gotta get going.

DENNIS
Take care of the baby.

HOLLY
I will.

Holly's phone RINGS. She answers.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Hello. Yeah, he's here.

She hands the phone to Dennis.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
It's your brother.

DENNIS
(into phone)
It's only been twenty minutes, Isaac.

ISAAC (O.S.)
He took her, Dennis.

DENNIS
What?

EXT. KATHLENE'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Isaac is panicked.

ISAAC
Some big guy. He had a gun. He
just came in and took the girl.

INT./EXT. HOLLY'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Dennis looks at Holly.

DENNIS
Bo got the girl.

HOLLY
Shit.

ISAAC (O.S.)

He said he was gonna kill her unless you come. I didn't know what to do.

DENNIS

It's ok, Isaac. You did good. I'll take care of it.

ISAAC (O.S.)

Dennis.

DENNIS

What?

ISAAC (O.S.)

Did you tell him about my penis?

DENNIS

What? No, of course not.

ISAAC

Well, he knew about it somehow.

DENNIS

Hmmm. That's really weird. Listen I got to go, Isaac.

He hangs up.

HOLLY

What are you gonna do?

DENNIS

I don't know.

HOLLY

You can't go back there, Dennis. He'll kill you this time.

DENNIS

He's gonna kill her if I don't.

She shakes her head, sadly.

HOLLY

He's gonna kill her anyway. I'm serious, Dennis. You can't go back there.

DENNIS

I have to.

HOLLY

Fine. I'm going with you.

DENNIS

Holly, you can't.

HOLLY

Don't tell me what I can and can't
do, Dennis--

DENNIS

Holly, the baby. You can't go back
there with the baby.

Silence.

HOLLY

He's gonna kill you, Dennis.

DENNIS

I'll be ok. You just take care of
that kid is all.

EXT. HYRUM'S HOUSE -- MORNING

Dennis knocks on the door. No answer.

INT. HYRUM'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Dennis pushes the door open. It's dark, quiet inside.

DENNIS

Hello.

INT. HYRUM'S HOUSE, PARLOR -- MORNING

Dennis enters to find the family gathered around the body of
Gretchen. She's laid out on a table.

Becky, TWO WIVES we haven't seen, and all sixteen children
have their heads bowed as Hyrum offers a quiet supplication.
He finishes, and there's a solemn round of amens.

Hyrum sees Dennis. Becky herds the family out of the room.
As they leave Dennis sees the Little Girl sitting there.

DENNIS

You ok?

She doesn't answer.

HYRUM

Where's my book?

DENNIS

I don't know.

HYRUM

That's too bad for you.

INT. BARN -- MORNING

Hyrum slides the door open and lets Dennis and the Little Girl inside.

DENNIS
It's gonna be ok.

LITTLE GIRL
You left me.

DENNIS
I was trying to keep you safe.

LITTLE GIRL
Wow, great job, Dennis.

Hyrum pulls out a gun and begins loading it.

HYRUM
Did Frank Chambers kill Gretchen?

DENNIS
Holly thinks you did it.

HYRUM
Why the hell would I kill my own wife?

Dennis eyes him, not sure if he's telling the truth.

DENNIS
Let the girl go.

HYRUM
Nope.

DENNIS
She's just a kid.

HYRUM
That's on you. Matter of fact this whole thing's on you.

A truck RUMBLES to a stop outside. Hyrum looks out.

BO (O.S.)
The doctor wasn't happy about me taking him.

HYRUM
We'll have him back in a minute.
He's got something to do first.

Bo leads in Terry. His head and arm are covered in thick bandages.

DENNIS

Hyrum. That was just a big huge
accident is all that was--

HYRUM

(seething)

You shut your damn mouth! You already
spoke your last word.

He sets his gun down on a work bench next to Terry.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

Despite His infinite goodness, there
are some sins even our Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ cannot redeem a man
from. Some sins so abominable they
put the sinner out of salvation's
reach. In these such cases it becomes
necessary to spill the sinner's blood
as an act of charity. It allows the
sinner to pay for his wrongdoings,
bringing him back within the redeeming
circle, so that he is not caught up
in that eternal torment.

(pause)

I was going to do the honors myself,
but then I figured it's Terry that
has the real claim to it.

(to Terry)

You ready, brother?

Terry lets out a hideous, unintelligible affirmation.

He reaches for the gun, lifting it a few inches before it
slips between his hands landing back on the bench.

He tries again. Same result. Between his withered hand a
his bandaged one, he can't get a grip.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

There you go. Just grip it
there...just...

Another failed attempt. Terry begins sobbing.

HYRUM (CONT'D)

(comforting him)

That's alright now. You got nothing
to be ashamed of, you hear me?

Hyrum picks up the gun and turns to Dennis.

DENNIS

Hyrum, I swear to you, Terry lit
himself on fire. We were just trying
to scare him.

Hyrum walks closer.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Most of this isn't even my fault.
Hyrum, please.

Dennis cowers to his knees. Hyrum places the gun against his forehead.

The Little Girl tenses.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Chambers didn't kill Gretchen.

HYRUM
How do you know?

DENNIS
Because he hired me to steal your book. I thought Terry had it. Chambers isn't gonna kill someone over something he thought he was already getting.

Hyrum thinks it over.

HYRUM
Then who did?

DENNIS
I don't know. She was in some kind of trouble.

That gets Bo's attention.

HYRUM
What kind of trouble?

DENNIS
She was fooling around with Randy.

BO
You shut your damn mouth about my brother.

DENNIS
It's true. They were planning to leave together. I saw his suitcase.

BO
You lying son-of-a--

HYRUM
Let him talk.

DENNIS

Randy's dead. It was an accident.
His body's up at the reservoir.

HYRUM

Bo didn't find nothing at the
reservoir.

DENNIS

Yes he did.

BO

I didn't find shit.

DENNIS

He thought Randy was trying to double-
cross you. He didn't want you to
know about it.

BO

Boy, I've had enough of your lying.

Bo lifts his rifle, but Hyrum pushes it down.

HYRUM

Who killed Gretchen?

DENNIS

I don't know. Maybe Bo did.

BO

Why the hell would I kill Gretchen?

HOLLY (O.S.)

Because she was the one who took
that book.

Holly stands in the doorway.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

She thought they could use it to
start over. But when Randy didn't
show up she got scared.

(to Bo)

She went to you for help.

(noticing Terry)

What the hell happened to Terry?

Bo is caught off guard.

BO

I hated her and she knew it. I was
the one that tried to break them up.
Why would she come to me?

HOLLY

Because she was pregnant.

HYRUM

Gretchen couldn't get pregnant.

HOLLY

You mean you couldn't get her pregnant with your old man sperm.

(to Bo)

Gretchen came to you for help because she couldn't find Randy, and she was scared shitless. She thought you would help because that was your family she was carrying inside her.

BO

Bullshit. You're just trying to save your own ass.

DENNIS

See if he has the book.

Hyrum looks at Bo.

BO

How long have we known each other? I'm telling you, they're lying.

HYRUM

Maybe. But I have to be sure.

Hyrum takes a step forward. Bo clutches his rifle.

He reaches in his coat and pulls out the MISSING BOOK. It's identical to Terry's.

BO

I was gonna put it back first chance I got.

Hyrum looks back, a vacant look in his eye.

BO (CONT'D)

She was a no good whore, Hyrum. She seduced my brother and ran around behind your back. She deserved what she got.

Hyrum's expression doesn't change.

BO (CONT'D)

She was gonna sell this and use the money to run off with that bastard child in her stomach!

Rage, madness washes over Hyrum's face.

Both men raise their guns and SHOOT. Bo falls back but gets off one SHOT. Hyrum FIRES REPEATEDLY.

Bo falls to the ground, a gushing HOLE in his cheek.

Hyrum clutches his arm. When he pulls his hand away it's covered in blood.

The BOOK lies on the ground next to Bo. The Little Girl eyes it.

HYRUM

Get the hell out of my sight.

Dennis tries to pull Holly away, but she doesn't budge.

HOLLY

Bo may have killed Gretchen, but it's your fault she's dead.

DENNIS

Holly, let's go.

HYRUM

What did you say to me?

HOLLY

I said it's your fault she's dead.

DENNIS

Holly.

HOLLY

She was scared to death every day of her life. She was a good girl and you fucked her up. Randy was nice to her. He made her happy. She deserved to be happy.

(pause)

She sure as hell deserved better than a sick-in-the-head polygamist son-of-a-bitch like you.

Hyrum PUNCHES her in the stomach. She drops, curling into a ball on the ground.

Dennis is at her side in an instant.

DENNIS

Holly! Are you ok?

Hyrum bends down and points his gun at Holly. Dennis covers her with his body.

HYRUM

You think you can talk to me like that? If Bo didn't kill her I would have. Dirty whore.

DENNIS

Hyrum, no.

HYRUM

And you're no better than she was.
You got your own bastard kid inside
you. You even sure whose kid that
is? Huh? Answer me!

He pushes the gun into her stomach.

CLICK. Hyrum turns and sees the Little Girl pointing a gun
at his head.

LITTLE GIRL

If you think you're the first asshole
I've shot today, think again.

HYRUM

Who the hell is that?

DENNIS

We're not really sure.

Hyrum kneels there with a gun to his head, his own gun pointed
at Holly. A moment of decision.

The Little Girl stares down at him, unflinching, terrifying.

HYRUM

Hell with it.

Hyrum stands, picks up the BOOK and helps Terry outside.

Dennis looks Holly over, she isn't moving.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY -- DAY

Dennis paces. The Little Girl sits on the floor with her
back against the wall.

DOCTOR ANDERSON comes out.

DOCTOR ANDERSON

We're cautiously optimistic. So far
everything looks normal.

Dennis slackens, a weight relieved.

DOCTOR ANDERSON (CONT'D)

We're watching them closely, but the
baby doesn't seem to have suffered
any major trauma.

DENNIS

What about Holly?

DOCTOR ANDERSON
 She'll be ok. She just needs rest.
 I gave her a sedative to help her
 sleep. They're both very lucky.

DENNIS
 Thank you.

Dr. Anderson continues down the hall.

Dennis looks in at Holly sleeping peacefully in bed.

INT. HOSPITAL, ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Holly stirs as Dennis sits beside her. She opens her eyes.

DENNIS
 You came back.

HOLLY
 (groggy)
 Must have been out of my damn mind.

He looks at the monitors and wires connected to her.

DENNIS
 I wouldn't care who's baby it is. I
 would love it no matter what.

HOLLY
 It's your baby, dumbass.
 (pause)
 I did it once. What Bo said. But
 that was a long time ago.

DENNIS
 Well, even if it wasn't.

Her eyelids droop.

HOLLY
 They got me all drugged up.

DENNIS
 I know.

HOLLY
 Gotta sleep.

DENNIS
 I know.

EXT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY -- DAY

Dennis sits on the floor next to the Little Girl.

LITTLE GIRL
Is Holly going to be ok?

DENNIS
Yeah.

LITTLE GIRL
Good.

He looks at her.

DENNIS
You really do have something wrong
with your chemicals don't you?

LITTLE GIRL
Yeah.

DENNIS
I'm sorry.

LITTLE GIRL
It's ok. It doesn't hurt or anything.

He closes his eyes and leans his head back.

INT. HYRUM'S HOUSE, OFFICE -- DAY

Hyrum sits at his desk bandaging his wound. The little black book lies in front of him. He opens it.

Clean, neat columns of numbers and names. Pages and pages of them.

He gets to a page that's been ripped out. A look of horror crosses his face.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY -- DAY

The Little Girl looks at Dennis.

LITTLE GIRL
Dennis.

DENNIS
What?

LITTLE GIRL
I have something to show you.

DENNIS
What?

LITTLE GIRL
First you have to let me tell you my
real name.

DENNIS
What's your name?

LITTLE GIRL
You can't be mad when I tell you.

DENNIS
Fine. What is it?

She stares him in the eyes. Dead serious.

LITTLE GIRL
Margot Chambers.

DENNIS
(confused, terrified)
What?

She smiles.

LITTLE GIRL
Just kidding. It's Penny.

DENNIS
(out of fight)
What the hell is wrong with you?

Still smiling, she hands him a torn out page from Hyrum's book. At the top is written: FRANK CHAMBERS.

Dennis looks at her. She smiles.

EXT. DESERT ROAD -- DAY

The Lincoln Town Car waits on the side of the road. Holly's car pulls up behind it, and Dennis and Penny get out.

They walk to the Lincoln. Mr. Chambers and Cody step out. Cody has the briefcase in his hand.

MR. CHAMBERS
What'd you bring a little girl for?

DENNIS
Don't ask.

He pulls the paper out and hands it over.

MR. CHAMBERS
What's this?

DENNIS
Your page from Hyrum's book.

MR. CHAMBERS
Where's the rest of it?

DENNIS
That's all I could get. It's the
only part about you.

Mr. Chambers unfolds the note and looks it over.

MR. CHAMBERS
You have a lighter?

DENNIS
I don't smoke.

Penny holds up Terry's matches, smiling. Mr. Chambers looks
at Dennis, confused.

MR. CHAMBERS
What the hell's she have matches
for?

DENNIS
(exhausted)
You don't want to know.

Mr. Chambers takes the matches, sets fire to the paper,
watches as it slowly burns.

Then he turns and walks back to the Lincoln. Cody hands
Dennis the briefcase and follows after his father-in-law.

Dennis opens the case. The cash is inside.

MR. CHAMBERS (O.S.)
Dennis.

Dennis looks up. Mr. Chambers is climbing into the car.

MR. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)
I see you again I'll kill you.

Cody starts the car and the Lincoln speeds off.

INT./EXT. HOLLY'S CAR -- DAY

Dennis drives. Penny sits shotgun, her arms clutching the
briefcase.

PENNY
Dennis.

DENNIS
What?

PENNY
We're best friends now, aren't we?

He looks at her, then looks ahead again. He smiles for the
first time.

She smiles too.

PENNY (CONT'D)

I told you.

EXT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

Holly is pushed out in a wheelchair by a NURSE. Dennis stands next to her car, waiting.

DENNIS

How are you feeling?

HOLLY

Still got to pee every five minutes.
But I guess that's a good thing,
considering.

She stands up and walks over. He hands her the briefcase.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

What's this?

He shrugs. She opens it, sees the money inside.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Where'd you get this?

He shrugs again, then kisses her. She lets him, laughing.

INT./EXT. HOLLY'S CAR -- DAY

They get inside.

HOLLY

Where should we go?

DENNIS

Any old place you want.

They look at each other, sharing a moment.

PENNY (O.S.)

I think we should get food.

Holly looks back and sees Penny.

HOLLY

You didn't take her home?

DENNIS

She won't tell me where she lives.

HOLLY

You've got to take charge, Dennis.
You're the adult in the situation.

PENNY

I don't want to go home. I want to go with you and Dennis and baby Jessica.

HOLLY

(to Dennis)
Who's baby Jessica?

DENNIS

(whispering)
I told you. She's crazy.

HOLLY

Don't blame her, Dennis. She's got the Stockholms. You kidnapped her. It's your responsibility to make sure she gets home.

DENNIS

It ain't that simple.

HOLLY

(truing back)
Princess, we got to take you home now. Your parents are gonna be worried sick--

Penny is pointing the gun at her. Holly sits forward.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Why does she have my gun, Dennis?

Dennis locks eyes with Penny in the rear-view mirror.

DENNIS

I'm not supposed to say.

HOLLY

What do you mean you're not supposed to say?
(remembering)
And why was Terry all bandaged up like that?

Dennis doesn't answer. Holly looks out her window, giving up.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Words cannot express the wonderful time we had at that God-damned junior prom.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The car pulls out onto the highway.

PENNY (O.S.)

Dennis?

DENNIS (O.S.)

What?

PENNY (O.S.)

Where are we going?

DENNIS (O.S.)

I don't know.

PENNY (O.S.)

Dennis.

DENNIS (O.S.)

What?

PENNY (O.S.)

Can we get some burgers on the way
there?

DENNIS (O.S.)

Fine.

The car continues down the lonely desert highway.