

#2224

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT"

by

Stephen J. Cannell

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#2224

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT"

CAST

JUDGE MILTON C. HARDCASTLE  
MARK McCORMICK

WEED RANDALL  
JERRY LEE BARTH  
SANDY KNIGHT  
ALICIA  
DOREEN  
COLLEEN  
POP WITHERSPOON  
EDDIE "THE RABBIT" CANTRELL  
OLIVER "FIX" HENDERSON

BARTENDER  
LOUDSPEAKER  
MAN  
POLICE OFFICER  
BAILIFF  
PRISONER  
LANNY  
DR. MARSH  
SYBIL MONROE  
MANAGER  
NURSE

+2224

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"The Birthday Present"

SETS

EXTERIORS

SAN QUENTIN PRISON  
/HOSPITAL  
GULL'S WAY  
/GATE HOUSE  
/LAWN  
MARINA DEL REY APARTMENT  
STREET  
COURTHOUSE  
/PARKING LOT  
HOSPITAL  
/PARKING LOT  
THE SEE THRU (BAR)  
/ALLEY BEHIND BAR  
COAST HIGHWAY

INTERIORS

SAN QUENTIN PRISON  
/PRISONER REC. ROOM  
/SWITCHBOARD ROOM  
/CELL BLOCK  
/WEED RANDALL'S CELL  
/PRISON HOSPITAL ROOM  
/HEART MONITORING ROOM  
/WITHERSPOON'S ROOM  
/PRISON HOLDING ROOM  
SLEAZY BAR  
GULL'S WAY  
/HARDCASTLE'S BEDROOM  
/DINING ROOM  
/KITCHEN  
/GATE HOUSE  
/DEN  
MARINA DEL REY APARTMENT (SANDY KNIGHT'S APARTMENT)  
BARTH'S CAR  
COYOTE  
THE SEE THRU (BAR)  
COURTHOUSE  
/CORRIDOR  
/TRAILER  
/COURTROOM  
HONEY WAGON  
HOSPITAL  
/WAITING ROOM  
/HARDCASTLE'S ROOM  
SEA VIEW MOTEL  
/MOTEL ROOM FIVE

#2224

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SAN QUENTIN - ESTABLISHING - DAY 1

It sits like a grey stone fortress.

2 INT. PRISONER REC ROOM - ON WEED RANDALL 2

He is a lean, angry forty-five year old. He is maybe the smartest and most dangerous man in the joint. Other prisoners give him lots of room despite the fact that he is slight of build. The trouble with Weed Randall is if you push him, you have to bet the house. Everything with him is all or nothing. It borders on insanity. He moves to a phone on the far side of the room which is being used by another PRISONER.

WEED

Hey, c'mon, wrap it up.

The other prisoner looks at Weed, nods, says goodbye and exits the stall.

PRISONER

(to Weed)

Congratulations on today, Weed...

Weed looks at him with eyes that are coal chutes to a black soul. He sits in the phone stall and picks up the receiver.

WEED

(into phone)

Gimme a long distance line, Lanny.  
It's Weed Randall.

3 INT. SAN QUENTIN SWITCHBOARD ROOM - DAY 3

The equipment is old-fashioned, with phone jacks which were put in during the thirties and maintained by the prisoners to save money. LANNY is a young man with a tattoo who's working the day shift on the switchboard and having trouble keeping up with the calls. He's wearing a headset.

CONTINUED

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2.

3

CONTINUED

LANNY

Boy, I wish Pop was here. This switchboard is goin' nuts. You want this call on the account or are you gonna reverse the charges?

WEED'S VOICE

I'll pay mother. Let's go.

LANNY

No wonder Pop had a heartattack. This switchboard is a zoo. What's the number?

WEED

Area code 213, 555-5467.

LANNY

Comin' up.

He dials it, then plugs the lines and we:

CUT TO

4

INT. SLEAZY BAR - NIGHT

The phone RINGS and a BARTENDER picks it up. Two guys are listlessly playing pool in the b.g.

BARTENDER

The Taffy Catrack, Miller speakin'.

WEED

Lemme talk to Jerry Lee Barth.

BARTENDER

(to the room)

Hey, Jerry...phone.

He lays the phone down as JERRY LEE, a man with huge shoulders and a boyishly handsome face and hammock hands walks from the pool table in the b.g. over to the phone. His movements are surprisingly precise for a man of his bulk.

JERRY LEE

(picks up phone)

Yeah? Who is it?

3

4

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3.

5

INTERCUT:

WEED

5

Me.

Jerry Lee straightens slightly, his eyes glisten in the dim light.

JERRY

Congratulations, man.

WEED

For what? For doin' fifteen stinkin' years in this boneyard?

There is a long beat.

JERRY

When're they turnin' y'loose?

WEED

I got six more lockdowns an' a rollup.

A beat.

JERRY

You want I should head up there, pick you up on Tuesday?

WEED

I ain't sleepin' at all, no more. I got so many guys I gotta score on...y'know, my head won't stop. I got their faces taped up in my house.

He's not having a two-way conversation, and Jerry is probably used to it, but not to this intensity.

JERRY

I could bring Sybil. She's quit dancin' at the See-Thru. She's got a place in Santa Monica.

WEED

So you'll be here Tuesday?

JERRY

What about Sybil? You want I should bring her?

CONTINUED

5 CONTINUED

5

WEED  
(not listening)  
So many guys...

And he hangs up.

CUT TO

6 INT. CELL BLOCK - DAY

6

The prisoners are filing in for the lock down as a BUZZER rings. They enter their cells. Another BUZZER rings.

LOUDSPEAKER  
Prepare for lockdown.

The doors slide closed and lock all at once.

7 INT. WEED RANDALL'S CELL

7

Weed turns and moves to his bunk. As we PAN him, we see maybe fifteen or twenty photos and newspaper clippings taped to the wall...some are old clippings from his trial, some are snapshots. MOVE IN ON a faded picture of JUDGE MILTON C. HARDCASTLE. Play the beat, and:

CUT TO

8 EXT. GULL'S WAY - LATE AFTERNOON

8

MCCORMICK'S VOICE  
Why do I have t'wear a tie, Judge?

9 INT. HARDCASTLE'S BEDROOM - DAY - HARDCASTLE AND MCCORMICK

9

Hardcastle is putting on a tie while McCormick is standing in the doorway in a suit coat and blue jeans with a tie in his hand.

HARDCASTLE  
I don't ask ya t'do much, right?  
I don't ask ya t'cut the hedges  
straight, or complain when y'mangle  
the rose bushes. I ask you t'put  
on a tie one Tuesday night a month.  
Okay? So, do it.

CONTINUED

MCCORMICK

Why? Just 'cause Sandy is comin' over? I mean, you think he's gonna care if I don't wear a tie?

HARDCASTLE

I got my reasons. Okay, McCormick?  
(a beat)

Why don't you an' Sandy get along, huh? I mean, what's so wrong with Sandy Knight?

MCCORMICK

Well, we could start with his name. Who the hell is named Sandy Knight? It sounds like an Annette Funicello movie.

(a beat)

It bugs me that he's so perfect. An' then I don't like the kind of cop he is...

HARDCASTLE

He didn't ask for that job. Some guys get assigned to Public Affairs Division.

MCCORMICK

Oh yeah? Any guy with hair that great probably asked for the assignment. He's on TV more than Barbara Walters.

(mimicking)

We now switch to the scene where police information Officer Lt. Sandy Knight will tell us in glowing terms about the triple homicide while his perfectly-sprayed hair doesn't move in this forty-mile-an-hour wind storm.

Hardcastle glares at him.

HARDCASTLE

You were askin' what I want for my birthday. Okay, I'll tell ya something...an' it's real cheap...

MCCORMICK

I'm breathless with anticipation.

CONTINUED



9

CONTINUED - 2

HARDCASTLE

Get t'know Sandy. He's my best friend's son. When Arthur died, I said I'd look after him. I want you t'stop sitting at the end of the dinner table, flickin' wiseguy commentary over our heads.

MCCORMICK

How d'you wrap a present like that, Judge?

HARDCASTLE

In silence.

There is a long beat as they hold each other's glares and we:

CUT TO

10

EXT. GULL'S WAY - DAY

10

OVER this SHOT we will start the credits for "The Birthday Present" as a pristine Alfa Romeo, top down, comes up the driveway with SANDY KNIGHT behind the wheel. He is everything that was promised: A Redford look with blue eyes, blond hair, white teeth, lots of jaw, but not too much. He pulls up, gives the HORN a jaunty BEEP and gets out. He's dressed in a light grey tweed jacket, starched white shirt, cobalt blue tie, charcoal pants and loafers with tassles. Carrying a bottle of wine, he moves to the door and rings the BELL. Mark opens the door and he and Sandy look at one another for a beat. This has not been easy for either of them.

SANDY

Hi Mark.

MCCORMICK

Hi Sandy.

SANDY

How're things?

MCCORMICK

Not bad.

SANDY

Judge in?

CONTINUED

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7.

10

CONTINUED

10

Sure is.

MCCORMICK

Good deal.

SANDY

Right-o.

MCCORMICK

And he enters.

11

INT. HOUSE - DAY

11

We HEAR the Judge slamming around in the b.g. He's in sort of a bad mood. Not terrible, mind you, just a little more sour than customary.

HARDCASTLE

(calling)

Be right out, Sandy.

SANDY

(making small talk;  
to McCormick)

How're things in the yard?

MCCORMICK

Huh? Oh, well, very nice. Thanks for askin'. We're having more than our share of crab grass this year, but all in all, it's been awfully exciting...especially the baby tomatoes on the south patio.

SANDY

(missing the sarcasm)

I don't know how you do it, Mark. You have such a green thumb.

MCCORMICK

Well, my secret is to try not to step on the plants while I water'em.

No love lost here. They're both trying to hang in there for Milt.

CONTINUED

SANDY

Uh...look, what're you giving  
Milt for his birthday?

A big smile comes over Mark's face.

SANDY

I had an idea, but I need your  
help to pull it off.

Milt enters the hallway.

SANDY

(to McCormick)  
I'll tell you later.

HARDCASTLE

Hey, there you two are. How you  
doin', Sandy?

SANDY

Great, Milt. Bought you a bottle  
of Chateau Niff Dupope. It's  
only '73, but on a policeman's  
salary...

MCCORMICK

Only '73? What a shame. I could  
age it in the microwave before  
dinner.

Hardcastle shoots a sharp look at McCormick.

SANDY

Actually it's smoother than the  
'70. The '68 is fantastic, but  
they're getting hard to find.

McCormick starts to say something but Hardcastle glares  
at him, daring him to smart off.

MCCORMICK

Well, it's the thought that  
counts, Sandy.

McCormick looks at Hardcastle with an "Okay with you?"  
look. Hardcastle nods and we:

CUT TO

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

Hardcastle, McCormick and Sandy have finished their deserts and McCormick is clearing the table.

SANDY

I don't know, Milt...if I could just get back in the streets. This last year I feel more like a T.V. anchorman than a cop. I miss the action.

HARDCASTLE

Well, if you want, I could put in a word downtown...

SANDY

You know I don't like pulling strings, Milt. I'll work my way out of it on my own.

MCCORMICK

The Judge could make a call and have you outta that wine and cheese rat hole...get you back on Easy Street with the killers and the pimps an' the druggies...

Sandy looks at him for a beat.

SANDY

Lemme help clear the table.

HARDCASTLE

Come on, we'll all clear.

Sandy puts his hand up.

SANDY

Judge...you cooked. Mark and I will clean up. You go on in the living room an' take it easy.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah. Okay, good idea.

Milt is clearly disconcerted as he exits the dining room.

CONTINUED

SANDY

He seems kinda off his game.

McCORMICK

Some killer he sent up is comin' out in a couple a'days. He thinks this guy is poison. It's got him upset.

SANDY

Weed Randall?

McCormick nods.

SANDY

That's exactly what I wanted to talk to you about.

(motioning)

Come on.

He gets up, grabs his dishes and moves into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - McCORMICK AND SANDY

They're scraping the dishes, rinsing them and putting them in the dishwasher.

SANDY

(holding up a dish)

You missed a spot here...

McCORMICK

Let's live dangerously an' go with it, Sandy.

Sandy reaches for a wash cloth, hits the spot and puts it in the dishwasher. Everything this guy does is perfect.

SANDY

Lock, Milt has done everything for me. He sent me through college, paid all my bills, bought all my clothes and books...

McCORMICK

Yeah, yeah, I know...

CONTINUED

SANDY

I know he sent you to prison,  
Mark, but you did commit crimes...

McCormick hands him a plate.

McCORMICK

Look, Sandy, I'm tryin' real hard  
with you. Fact is, what I did or  
didn't do is really not something  
I wanna discuss while I watch you  
manicure these plates...

SANDY

I just think you should be a  
little more grateful.

McCORMICK

This may never have occurred to  
you, Sandy, but sometimes it  
takes more than nice manners  
and a bottle a'wine t'pay back  
a debt.

SANDY

Exactly, Mark. And that's why  
I wanted t'ask you to help me  
give Milt something really  
special.

(holds up a spoon)

This still has strawberry jam  
on it.

He hands it to Mark who puts it in his mouth, licks it  
off, hands it back to Sandy who looks at it, then throws  
it back in the soapy water.

SANDY

Weed Randall killed two people  
during a burglary...a man and  
wife. He mutilated them fifteen  
years ago. He's being released  
on Tuesday. Milt was the judge  
who sent him up.

McCormick looks at him for a beat.

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

I know Weed Randall.

SANDY

Well, yeah, sure...you've read about him in the newspapers, but that's not like knowing him.

McCORMICK

Hey, Sandy, I know him. I was in that same joint with him. He's a crazy, vicious space ranger. He kills for kicks. He iced a couple a'guys inside just to keep his scoreboard current, but they never hung those on him.

SANDY

During the trial Weed Randall wanted to try his own case. The court said no. He had an argument with his attorney. They fought openly in court. In the middle of the trial Weed's attorney, David Mathison, disappeared. He was found floating in Lake Susan a month later.

(a beat)

That murder was never pinned on Weed because he was in custody at the time. But he had it done.

Sandy and McCormick look at one another for a beat.

SANDY

What I need is for you to go into the basement and get into Hardcastle's files. I need to review that case. I need a place to start. I'm going to prove Weed killed his attorney. I'm gonna give the evidence to Milt for his birthday. I'm gonna keep Weed Randall in prison.

McCORMICK

You gonna be slipping this in between telecasts?

CONTINUED

SANDY

I'm taking two weeks leave.

McCormick looks at him for a beat, hands him another plate.

SANDY

(Re: plate)

You got this one good.

MCCORMICK

You figure on makin' a fifteen year old homicide against Weed Randall in two weeks?

SANDY

I could use some help. You wanna throw in?

MCCORMICK

(a beat)

You an' me, huh?

SANDY

I know you don't like me, Mark. I don't really care for you much, either, but you know Weed from inside...that could help. Maybe we could get an ex-con in there to rat him out.

(a beat)

How 'bout it?

McCormick looks at him for a beat.

MCCORMICK

It could get messy. Randall has some tough friends on the outside. What if they decide t'blow in and start wrinkling your clothes?

SANDY

What're you afraid of, Mark? You afraid I'll prove I'm better than you?

MCCORMICK

That's an egocentric remark, Sandy, and it doesn't suit a gentleman in tassled loafers.

CONTINUED



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14.

13

CONTINUED - 4

13

SANDY  
(after a beat)  
How 'bout it?

MCCORMICK  
(a shrug)  
Sure. Why not?

Sandy puts out a hand, McCormick shakes it. We MOVE IN on the handshake and:

CUT TO

14

EXT. MARINA DEL REY APARTMENT - NIGHT

14.

It is maybe one A.M. as the Coyote pulls in and stops. McCormick gets out of the car with a manila folder under his arm. He notices the pristine Alfa parked in a stall. He moves to the stairs and enters the apartment.

15

INT. APARTMENT HOUSE - CLOSE ON DOOR

15

This is the door to Sandy Knight's apartment. We HEAR strains of classical music coming from inside...Rachmaninoff or something. McCormick KNOCKS on the door, after a moment the door is opened by a beautiful (beautiful) girl in shorts and a tank top. She has long, black hair, coal-black eyes and a white smile. Her name is ALICIA.

ALICIA  
Hi there.

MCCORMICK  
Hi. I'm Mark.

He looks at her, letting a smile play on the corner of his mouth.

MCCORMICK  
That's not my best opening, but I've got to take a minute and get my heart re-started.

She smiles.

CONTINUED

15

CONTINUED

15

ALICIA

You're Sandy's friend. Come on in.

She steps aside and lets him enter.

16

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

16

Mark enters into a very, very tasteful apartment which overlooks the Marina. Although it's not ostentatious, it's classic in its design, color and choice of art work. After a beat, Sandy enters from the back room. He's wearing pleated pants, a shirt and tie and saddle shoes. He looks great. The combo is design-perfect. He smiles at Mark.

SANDY

Hi Mark.

(making introductions)

This is Alicia Dearborn...Mark McCormick. He's an old friend. Mark used to race sports cars on the Can Am circuit. He was very good.

McCORMICK

Uh...well, yeah. I was...but, well I think that while racing cars is adventurous and dangerous and some people tend to put you on a pedestal, it's really not something I like to base a relationship on.

Alicia slides her arm around Sandy's waist and looks up at him with admiration.

ALICIA

Sandy likes music and animals and walks in the park. When I'm with him, that's all the excitement I can deal with.

She smiles at him lovingly. On that, a blond who is equally beautiful, appears in the doorway behind McCormick. Her name is DOREEN.

CONTINUED

DOREEN

Alicia! Well, this is a bummer, isn't it? What are you doing in Sandy's apartment?

MCCORMICK

If I'm in the way here, I could come back later.

DOREEN

(to Alicia)

I thought you had the midnight flight to Denver.

ALICIA

(her arm around Sandy)

It was fogged out. I don't have a place to stay, and I don't really think I have to explain it to you, Doreen. Sandy can make his own choices.

DOREEN

I didn't say he couldn't.

ALICIA

If I want to stay here it's not Sandy's fault.

MCCORMICK

It's not?

DOREEN

Nobody said it was Sandy's fault. I know it's not Sandy's fault.

Sandy looks at both girls.

SANDY

Mark and I have to discuss some business. Would it be possible for you to go into the den?

DOREEN

Certainly Sandy.

ALICIA

I'm sorry. Of course, Sandy.

They turn and exit the room. McCormick watches this, amazed. After the girls exit:

MCCORMICK

This is a set-up, right? You did this to shake me up.

SANDY

They're both really neat girls, Mark. I want them to still be friends. I'd hate to come between them.

MCCORMICK

Hold the phone, Jackson. It's two a.m., and this place looks like the waiting room at Cosmo. Alicia is sleeping over, Doreen arrives, bullets start flying and you don't take any lead. Nobody even thinks it's your fault.

He looks at Sandy, non-plussed.

SANDY

I try and select girls who understand a mature relationship.

After a beat the door of the den opens and Alicia and Doreen exit. There appears to be no hostility.

DOREEN

We're going up to my apartment to have a snack. Call us when you and Mark are finished.

They leave.

MCCORMICK

I'm not going for it, Sandy. Nice try, but no sale.

SANDY

(smiles)

You got the file?

McCormick hands him the manila folder.

CONTINUED

MCCORMICK

I had to wait until Hardcastle went to bed. Then I had to sneak down there and pick the lock.

SANDY

(looks up)

You broke in the files? I didn't ask you to break in.

MCCORMICK

Let's you an' me get something straight right now...we're from different planets. I have to pick locks and climb through windows to get stuff done. If I date two girls at the same time, I have t'take out medical insurance. So, if we're going to work on this together, spare me the raised eyebrows and the sad smiles.

Sandy nods.

SANDY

Let's see what you've got.

He opens the folder and looks at it for a beat.

SANDY

(reading file)

Jerry Lee Barth. I already know about him. He's been hangin' around with Weed since high school. Sybil Monroe, the dancer at the See Thru Club. I already know about her. She used t'go with Randall.

He looks at Mark.

SANDY

That's all, huh?... I already had all of this, Mark.

CONTINUED

MCCORMICK

I'm really turning out to be a big disappointment, aren't I, Sandy?

SANDY

(charitably)

How could you have known that all of this was in the old case file? I mean...you tried. And that's what's important.

This is going to be a long, hard deal for McCormick. He grits his teeth.

MCCORMICK

(forging on)

I also gave it some thought on the way over here. Weed Randall gets into a beef with his attorney... wants t'get rid of him. Who would he call?

SANDY

I don't think there's any doubt. He called Jerry Lee Barth and Jerry Lee popped the cap on the attorney. It's proving it that's gonna be hard.

There is a long beat.

MCCORMICK

To do that, he had to make a call from inside the prison.

SANDY

So?

MCCORMICK

Well, I was in that joint, and they've got this ancient switch-board...you plug it in and key it down.

SANDY

So?

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

Well, a guy named Pop Witherspoon was the main switchboard operator. He was also the source of a lot of prison gossip 'cause he liked t'listen in. A guy like Weed Randall was somebody worth listening in on. He was big news behind that wall.

Sandy looks at McCormick for a beat.

SANDY

You think Pop Witherspoon might a'listened in on Weed Randall's call to Jerry Lee? He'd be a witness that could tie Weed to the murder.

McCORMICK

(nods)

It's not a sure thing. And, even if he did, it's gonna be hard t'get Pop t'talk. He's a pure con. Cooperation with the authorities is not high on his list of accomplishments.

SANDY

I think that's worth a try, Mark. We'll do it first thing in the morning.

There is a beat, then another girl sticks her head in. She is a red-head and equally ravishing. She's in a flight uniform and her name is COLLEEN.

COLLEEN

Hi, Sandy. My flight to Denver got fogged out. I was wondering if I could use your extra room.

McCORMICK

(to Sandy)

Trust me, Sandy, you got way too much air traffic here.

CONTINUED

16

CONTINUED - 6

16

SANDY

Yeah. Maybe you're right.

(a beat)

Look, Colleen, I'm gonna go stay  
at Mark's. Call me next trip.

He kisses her and she launches herself around his neck, kissing him passionately. Mark shifts his weight and clears his throat as we:

CUT TO

17

EXT. GULL'S WAY - EARLY MORNING

17

establishing.

18

INT. GATE HOUSE - MORNING

18

McCormick and Sandy are in the twin beds, sound asleep, when we HEAR the basketball hitting the backboard. Sandy sits up straight in bed.

SANDY

What the hell is that??

McCORMICK

(with his eyes closed)

It's Hardcastle hitting baskets.  
Happens every morning. You get so  
you don't hear it.

19

EXT. GATE HOUSE - MORNING - HARDCASTLE

19

He's shooting baskets. It's about twenty minutes later, the sun is up. The garage door opens and the Coyote pulls out with Mark at the wheel. Sandy comes out the front door of the gate house.

HARDCASTLE

Sandy, I thought you'd left  
last night.

SANDY

Mark and I went out, had some fun,  
decided to crash back here.

HARDCASTLE

You and Mark went out on the town?  
Well, no kiddin'. That's great.

(MORE)

CONTINUED



19

CONTINUED

19

HARDCASTLE (cont'd)  
 (to McCormick)  
 That's really neat-o, kid.

McCormick says nothing.

HARDCASTLE  
 Aren't you gonna say anything?

McCORMICK  
 This present is wrapped in silence,  
 remember, Judge?

He smiles at Hardcastle who smiles back. Sandy gets in the car.

SANDY  
 Let's go, Mark.

HARDCASTLE  
 Where you goin'?

McCORMICK  
 To see about your birthday  
 present.

They pull out the drive.

CUT TO

20

EXT. PRISON - DAY

20

The Coyote is parked out front.

21

INT. PRISON HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

21

We are on a heart monitor, TICKING and BLIPPING. As we open the scene, we HEAR the voice of POP WITHERSPOON.

WITHERSPOON'S VOICE  
 The screws in C-block never knew  
 all them cigarettes were comin'  
 in with the laundry starch. Ol'  
 Oliver Fix used t'call out every  
 Thursday...tell his girlfriend who  
 worked at the starch company t'seal  
 the cigs in the boxes.

CONTINUED

We PAN AROUND and find ourselves looking at old Pop Witherspoon, looking frail in the hospital bed. He is about seventy with a fringe of white hair. McCormick is in a chair beside the bed, Sandy is leaning against the wall.

MCCORMICK

I never knew that, Pop. All those years in there, I never knew how the extra smokes were gettin' in.

WITHERSPOON

Yeah, I could write a book. Everything went through my switchboard.

McCormick looks at Sandy who nods.

MCCORMICK

Listen, Pop, I need a favor, and it's a big one.

WITHERSPOON

Nothin' looks very big these days. I'm layin' here lookin' for a seat on the ark. They say my arteries are harder'n county blacktop. The ol' ticker is wired into this TV screen... gotta use a kickstarter on it every couple a'days. So, most things that used t'look like big problems don't no more.

MCCORMICK

Weed Randall is coming out on Tuesday. I think he killed his attorney during the trial fifteen years ago. Since he was in custody, he would have had to call somebody to get the job done. I need t'know if you might've listened in.

WITHERSPOON

Weed Randall is one dangerous, wild-eyed flier.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

21

CONTINUED - 2

21

WITHERSPOON (cont'd)

(a smile)

Everybody in the joint was real scared a' Weed... 'cept Weed don't look so tall when you're on y' tip-toes, tryin' t' look into God's eyes.

22

INT. HEART MONITORING ROOM - DAY

22

A MAN in a prison trustee uniform is listening to this over the speaker system connected to the patient's room.

WITHERSPOON'S VOICE

You get me a stenographer an' I'll make you a death bed statement, son.

(a beat)

Y'see, he called his friend, some boy named Jerry Lee...

23

INT. WITHERSPOON'S ROOM - DAY

23

Sandy takes out a tape recorder.

SANDY

I'm a Notary Public. I can take the statement.

McCORMICK

Of course, you would be.

(to Witherspoon)

Okay, go ahead.

WITHERSPOON

Well, this hadda be in March, fifteen years back... on a Friday, Weed he called out right during his trial. I listened in 'cause Weed was big news back then... trial on the front pages, an' all...

(a beat)

He called a man named Jerry Lee Barth, or Bart... something like that... an' he says, "I can't control this here mouthpiece you got me". He says, "Jerry, I'd like him to go away, permanently". I remember that was how he said it... go away permanently.

24

INT. HEART MONITORING ROOM

24

The man who has been listening to all of this picks up the phone.

MAN

Get Weed Randall. Tell 'im he's got big trouble with Pop Witherspoon.

25

EXT. PRISON HOSPITAL - LATER

25

McCormick and Sandy exit the hospital and get into the Coyote...as they do, we PAN to find a car parked up the street, about half a block away.

26

INT. CAR

: 26

Jerry Lee Barth is seated in the car with another man named EDDIE "THE RABBIT" CANTRELL. They watch the Coyote as it passes them.

JERRY LEE

Looks like I just got here in time. Go.

They pull out after the Coyote and follow it.

27

SERIES OF SHOTS - RUNBY - DAY

27

as the Coyote goes through town on its way back to Gull's Way.

28

INT. COYOTE - DAY - McCORMICK AND SANDY

28

Sandy is looking at the tape in his hand.

SANDY

We'll get this transcribed, I'll notarize it and then we'll give it to Milt for his birthday.

McCormick looks in his rearview mirror.

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

Sandy, you got a gun on you?

Sandy pulls out a chrome-plated, pearl-handled .38.

SANDY

Yeah.

McCORMICK

(Re: gun)

Your dress piece? Great for police weddings and funerals, right?

SANDY

It was a gift from a girlfriend, but it shoots real bullets.

McCORMICK

I think we may have picked up a tail.

Sandy re-focuses the rearview mirror.

SANDY

How long's he been back there?

McCORMICK

Couple a'minutes...maybe more. I don't know.

SANDY

Slow down an' turn right and park. I'll badge him and get his story.

McCORMICK

Don't you think we're better off making a run for it? There are no copies of that tape. We lose it now and Weed gets to walk.

SANDY

But I'm a cop. Cops don't run.

McCORMICK

Fools don't run. And cops shouldn't be fools, Sandy.

CONTINUED

#2224

27.

28 CONTINUED - 2 28

McCormick puts his foot on it and the chase is on.

29 SERIES OF SHOTS - THE CHASE 29

as the Coyote goes like spit.

30 INT. BARTH'S CAR 30

Jerry Lee Barth leans out the window and FIRES, putting a pattern in the Coyote's trunk. The chase continues as we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

#2224

28.

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

31 COYOTE RUNBY - DAY 31

The chase continues as Sandy leans out and FIRES two shots at the pursuing car.

32 INT. COYOTE 32

MCCORMICK

(shouts)

Get a plate.

SANDY

No plates.

Sandy FIRES two more shots and the pursuing sedan hits a curb, ramps, lands on all fours and skids sideways. "Rabbit" floors it, smoking it in a U, heading back the way he came.

33 INT. BARTH'S CAR 33

JERRY LEE

What're you doing? What're you doing? Turn it around!

EDDIE

You nuts, man? I'm gettin' outta here!

34 EXT. COYOTE 34

as it streaks across town.

CUT TO

35 EXT. GULLS WAY - LATE AFTERNOON 35

The Coyote pulls up the drive and parks. We HEAR gunfire coming from the back yard.

36 ANGLE - MCCORMICK AND SANDY 36

They look at one another and pile out of the car.

CONTINUED

SANDY

How could they know? How could they be here??

McCORMICK

You go right, I'll go left.

They run toward the SOUND of the gunfire.

as it FIRES five times. WIDEN to see that Judge Hardcastle, with earmuffs on, is firing at a target. McCormick and Sandy skid to a halt and look at him. He finishes, takes off the earmuffs and looks at them.

HARDCASTLE

Not bad, huh? Six in the ten ring.

He moves to the target and takes it down while Sandy and McCormick stand there, trying to get their adrenalin to stop flowing. After a beat they move to him.

McCORMICK

Judge, tomorrow's your birthday but Sandy and I would like to give you your present early.

HARDCASTLE

Huh? Gimme my present early? Why gimme my present early? Wait 'til tomorrow.

SANDY

Well, this present won't wait, Judge. It also may be you're gonna have t'order up a little protection for the guy we got it from.

Hardcastle looks at them suspiciously.

HARDCASTLE

What've you been up to?

Sandy hands him the tape.



37

CONTINUED

37

SANDY & McCORMICK  
Happy Birthday, Judge.

Hardcastle takes the cassette and looks at it for a beat.

CUT TO

38

INT. DEN - ON CASSETTE PLAYER

38

WITHERSPOON'S VOICE

....Jerry, I'd like him to go away permanently. I remember that was how he said it, "go away permanently".

WIDEN as Hardcastle shuts off the tape. He looks at McCormick and Sandy.

HARDCASTLE

No statute of limitations on murder. This witness can establish conspiracy to commit. It's a good case right now. All we gotta do is put Jerry Lee Barth at the scene of the crime to lock it.

(a beat)

This is the best birthday present you two could give me.

SANDY

I never could've done it without Mark.

McCormick shoots Sandy a hard look.

SANDY

Mark knew this old man. Mark figured out he might have listened in. All I did was come up with the original idea and go along for the ride.

McCORMICK

(annoyed)

It's the thought that counts, Sandy.

CONTINUED

Hardcastle sticks out his hand to McCormick.

HARDCASTLE

Thanks, kiddo.

Mark shakes his hand and smiles. Hardcastle turns to Sandy and puts out his hand.

HARDCASTLE

Your father would be proud of you, Sandy. He was the best cop I ever knew, but you're running a good strong second.

There's a beat as they all smile at one another.

HARDCASTLE

Okay, okay, now I get this to the D.A., file this fifteen year old homicide and take this ax murderer back into court. I'll call the D.A.

He moves out of the room and into his den to make the phone call, leaving McCormick and Sandy alone.

SANDY

I think we make a pretty damn good team, Mark.

McCormick just looks at him.

MCCORMICK

We gave Milt a present. Did you have to stand around, dividing up the credit?

SANDY

I think you did most of it, Mark. I think Milt should know that.

CONTINUED

MCCORMICK

Why? Why should he know it?  
I also picked the lock on his  
file. If he found that out,  
he'd hang me over the garage  
door from his basketball rim.

SANDY

I won't kid you. I thought  
that was wrong, Mark. Ob-  
viously I wasn't going to  
tell him. That's something  
you'll do when the time is  
right.

MCCORMICK

Don't hold your breath,  
buddy.

(a beat)

Well, at least it's over.

SANDY

Oh no...don't let a little  
luck go to your head. I  
took two weeks off. We only  
spent one day.

(a smile)

Just think what we might  
accomplish if we spent the  
whole two weeks.

Mark looks at him for a beat.

MCCORMICK

This is a bad dream.

SANDY

Look, I was thinking I  
could move in with you...  
we'll set up kind've a  
command post in the gate  
house...run the operation  
from there. Start trying

(MORE)

CONTINUED

SANDY (cont'd)  
to put Jerry Lee at Lake  
Susan.

MCCORMICK  
(horrified)  
You wanna move in with me, Sandy?

On that, Hardcastle enters.

HARDCASTLE  
Sandy's gonna move in with you?  
What a great idea.

MCCORMICK  
We were just discussing it, Judge.  
Nothing's firm yet.

HARDCASTLE  
The D.A. is gonna file. He's gonna  
put some protection on Witherspoon,  
but the doctor says he probably  
won't live to the trial. His heart  
is real bad. His statement is ad-  
missable, but we're gonna need more  
t'lock it up. We're gonna need  
some help putting Jerry Lee at the  
scene of the murder. It's a fifteen  
year old homicide. Some of that  
evidence is gonna be buried pretty  
deep.

SANDY  
My thought exactly. How 'bout it,  
Mark?

Mark slumps down on the sofa and looks at them for a beat.

MCCORMICK  
Well, this is really surpassing  
all my expectations.

Hardcastle slaps his hands in excitement.

HARDCASTLE  
Now we're cookin'.

CUT TO

39

EXT. GATE HOUSE - NIGHT

39

SANDY'S VOICE

That picture is too low, Mark.

40

INT. GATE HOUSE - NIGHT - MC CORMICK AND SANDY

40

Sandy is looking at a picture on the wall of Mark in a formula racing car.

McCORMICK

I like it there, Sandy.

SANDY

You raise it, you'll like it better. Y'see, that's real common, people hang pictures too low over sofas. You should always hang 'em at eye-level.

McCORMICK

I don't want it at eye-level. I like it there.

SANDY

Nonsense.

Sandy takes it off the wall, removes the push pin and re-hangs. Mark looks at it, unsure.

SANDY

It'll grow on you.

On that, we hear a loud WHOOP. Sandy pulls his chrome-plated revolver as the door explodes open and Hardcastle skids in wearing his bathrobe.

HARDCASTLE

They...they assigned me to the case!

McCORMICK

Huh?

HARDCASTLE

They're pullin' me out of retirement to try this case.

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

Can they do that?

HARDCASTLE

The Chief Justice of the State can do it. And he did it. Apparently all of the courtrooms are full. All the judges are booked. This case would have to wait three months. They're afraid Witherspoon might die, so, in order to expedite it, they're bringin' me back. Also because I adjudicated the first two murders...and this one is related.

They look at him for a long beat, then Sandy moves to him and shakes his hand solemnly.

SANDY

I'm proud to have had a part in this moment, Judge.

HARDCASTLE

The D.A. told Weed this afternoon. I'd a'loved t'have been there, seen his face.

McCORMICK

Well, you'll see it from the bench.

Hardcastle grins from ear-to-ear.

HARDCASTLE

Y'know, I never knew how much I missed it. I mean, I can hardly wait. Pre-trial hearing is tomorrow. Gonna wear my old Hawaiian shirt, my running shorts...get ol' Millie out. I can hardly wait.

SANDY

Millie?

McCORMICK

Millie is a .45 that hangs upside down under Milt's left arm. Not a pearl handle or a speck of chrome on her, right, Milt?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED - 2

HARDCASTLE

Now you're cookin'.

He starts to leave.

HARDCASTLE

Gotta read the prosecutor's indictment and the defense attorney's pre-trial briefs.

He glances at the re-hung picture.

HARDCASTLE

I'm glad y're-hung that, McCormick. It was too low.

And he's gone.

McCORMICK

Okay, okay, you're a better decorator...but I'm a better lock-pick.

There is a long beat.

SANDY

It's great seeing him that excited, isn't it, Mark?

McCORMICK

Yeah, yeah, it is. It was a good idea, Sandy.

They look at one another and we:

CUT TO

EXT. GULL'S WAY - LATER

It is much later. Jerry Lee Barth is parked outside.

INT. BARTH'S CAR

Barth is with the same man that was with him before, Eddie "The Rabbit" Cantrell.

JERRY LEE

You stay here. You take off on me, man, and I come after you an' do you myself.

CONTINUED

42

CONTINUED

42

EDDIE

This guy's a judge.

JERRY LEE

This guy's a puke. He put Weed away for fifteen years, now he's gonna try an' get me. Sybil's gonna call him in five minutes.

Jerry Lee gets out of the car carrying his scoped rifle and he moves into the estate.

43

EXT. GULL'S WAY

43

Jerry Lee moves along, looking for a place where he can see into the window of Hardcastle's room. All the lights are off. He takes up a prone-out position on the grass and sights through the scope.

44

INT. THE SEE-THRU - SYBIL

44

She's a very sexy hostess. She picks up a phone on the end of the bar and dials a number.

45

EXT. GULL'S WAY - NIGHT

45

We HEAR a phone ringing from inside the house, then a light goes on on the second floor. From outside, the phone can be heard RINGING in the still night.

46

INT. HARDCASTLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

46

He's putting on his robe as he moves to the phone.

47

EXT. HARDCASTLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

47

Jerry Lee sights in the lighted window as Hardcastle moves to the phone. Play the beat, and:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO



#2224

38.

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

48 EXT. GULLS WAY - MOMENTS LATER 48

Jerry Lee is still prone out on the grass, the PHONE is still ringing.

49 INT. HARDCASTLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 49

as he moves in front of the window to answer the phone.

50 EXT. GATE HOUSE - NIGHT 50

The garage door opens and McCormick exits. He has grease on his forehead and a wrench in his hand.

McCORMICK

Answer the phone, Hardcastle!

51 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE 51

In the window, as he picks up the phone.

52 ANGLE - JERRY LEE 52

He is sighting down on Hardcastle's back.

53 ANGLE - MC CORMICK 53

He spots Jerry Lee on the lawn about fifteen or twenty feet away.

McCORMICK

(yelling)

Hey!

Jerry FIRES, but not before wincing at the sound of McCormick's voice, causing the bullet to go off course, breaking the window and missing Hardcastle.

54 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE 54

Ducking, he knocks the lamp off the table, throwing the bedroom into darkness.

- 55 EXT. LAWN 55  
McCormick throws the wrench and misses. Jerry spins around and FIRES two shots at McCormick who dives out of the way. A potted plant shatters. Jerry Lee makes a run for the gate, FIRING as he goes.
- 56 INT. BEDROOM - HARDCASTLE 56  
FOLLOW as he grabs his .45 and takes the stairs two-at-a-time.
- 57 EXT. THE LAWN 57  
Hardcastle explodes out of the house just in time to spot Jerry Lee running out the front gate. He FIRES a shot which chips the side of the pedestal that holds the gate.
- 58 ANGLE - JERRY LEE 58  
He jumps in the car with the engine running and peels out.
- 59 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE 59  
He runs to the garage.
- HARDCASTLE  
McCormick! Let's go! Take off!
- Hardcastle jumps into the passenger seat of the Coyote. McCormick doesn't follow.
- HARDCASTLE  
He's getting away! Let's go... take off!
- McCormick goes to the bench and picks up a box with two lines hanging out of it. He hands it to Hardcastle.
- HARDCASTLE  
What the hell is that??
- MCCORMICK  
A high-point cross-fire injector.  
(beat)  
A carburetor to you.

CONTINUED

59

CONTINUED

59

Hardcastle gets out and opens the hood, slams it shut.

HARDCASTLE

Damn!

On that, we HEAR the Alfa Romeo start up. It passes the open garage and tears down the driveway with Sandy behind the wheel in pursuit of the Chevy. Hardcastle runs down the driveway after it as it fishtails out of the driveway, after the Chevy.

60

ANGLE - THE CHEVY

60

It goes the wrong way up a cul-de-sac. Eddie spins it around and comes back only to find the Alfa Romeo skidding sideways, blocking it. Sandy is out of the car and FIRING his chrome revolver.

61

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE

61

in his bathrobe, running to the end of the drive and into the street.

62

INT. GATEHOUSE - ON McCORMICK

62

frantically looking for a weapon. He moves to the gun rack... it's locked. He looks around and finally grabs an old walking stick from out of the umbrella rack, runs out of the gate house.

63

EXT. STREET

63

Sandy is in a gunfight with Jerry Lee and Eddie. He has them pinned down. Jerry Lee makes a run for one of the neighboring houses just as Hardcastle comes into view, huffing and puffing. He FIRES a couple of shots, misses, but drives Jerry back.

64

FOLLOW McCORMICK

64

As he is running through the backs of houses, jumping over fences. Heading toward the sound of the gun fire.

They close in on Jerry Lee and Eddie in a pincer movement. Hardcastle drops to one knee and FIRES, getting Jerry in the shoulder. Eddie throws down his gun and gives up just as McCormick jumps over a hedge in the middle of the block and runs up with the walking stick in his hand, held like a club.

SANDY

Thanks for trying, Mark, but the Judge and I have this pretty well under control.

MCCORMICK

Who are these guys?

Hardcastle moves up to Jerry Lee.

HARDCASTLE

How're you doin', Jerry? Seen Weed lately?

JERRY

I ain't sayin' nothin'. I want my attorney.

HARDCASTLE

Get a good one. You'll need lots a'help.

SANDY

Since you're not doing anything, Mark, why don't you call for a black and white.

Mark looks at him for a beat: "Thanks Buddy."

CUT TO

establishing.

INT. PRISON CELL - WEED RANDALL

Another man named OLIVER 'FIX' HENDERSON is in the cell with Randall.

FIX

I talked to my guy in the kitchen.

WEED

Yeah? How much?

FIX

Seventy cartons of cigarettes buys the package. He said to tell you he won't bargain. That's the price.

WEED

You tell him okay. But the package gets delivered to me in the courthouse.

FIX

We got a guy who's a janitor. He can get it to you in a law book. But I need the smokes up front, Weed, or my guy won't deliver.

Weed explodes across the cell, grabbing Fix by the shirt and pinning him against the wall.

WEED

(a hiss)

You piece a'puke! All a'you guys wanna see me hang, but Weed Randall has done his time. Weed Randall is comin' out.

Oliver looks at him for a long beat.

FIX

What do I tell him, Weed? He ain't gonna deliver without seventy cartons.

WEED

You work it out. I got trouble, man. Jerry Lee makes a bone head play on Hardcastle...this guy's gonna drop me down a well.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

WEED (cont'd)

I got a place up the coast. A motel. I'm all set with money for Mexico. You better pray I make it. If I end up back here, I'm comin' lookin' for you. Now, get outta here. Set it up.

He releases Fix who moves to the cell door.

FIX

Okay Weed. I'll take care of it.

Fix exits the cell. Weed moves to the collage of photos on his wall, rips Hardcastle's off and looks at it for a beat, then MOVE IN ON his fist as he crumples it.

CUT TO

There are two black and whites parked out front. Hardcastle McCormick and Sandy are at the pool, having breakfast. Hardcastle looks at them with real pride.

HARDCASTLE

What you did last night, Sandy, would've made your dad proud.

SANDY

I'm a police officer. I did what had to be done.

McCormick winces slightly.

HARDCASTLE

And Mark, if you hadn't yelled at that guy and thrown the wrench, I might a'been dead.

SANDY

It was heroic, Mark.

MCCORMICK

It wasn't heroic, Sandy. I heard a phone ringing, I walked out there like Daffy Duck, I got lucky, that's all.

CONTINUED

SANDY

Nonsense. You're the hero, in my book.

HARDCASTLE

It's a good two days work. Jerry Lee is in jail...Weed Randall is coming into my courtroom at nine-thirty...

(a beat)

I miss the smell of the courtroom. It has a special smell, y'know.

MCCORMICK

Lysol an' wood rot. I remember it well.

HARDCASTLE

I hope I get courtroom three... got the new panelling in there last year...the jury box is raised...perfect accoustics. No need t'use mikes. Great layout.

On that, a POLICE OFFICER moves to them.

POLICE OFFICER

Judge Hardcastle, I'm supposed t'take you to court.

HARDCASTLE

I'll drive.

POLICE OFFICER

Well, sir, I'm your security guard for the trail.

HARDCASTLE

Jerry Lee is Weed's only trigger man on the outside, an' he's doing time in County 'til he can be arraigned for attempted murder...

(a beat)

Don't worry about me. I've got all the protection I need, sittin' right here.

Sandy nods at the police officer. Hardcastle gets up and Sandy and McCormick follow.

CUT TO

69

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

69

establishing.

HARDCASTLE'S VOICE

Something about bein' back here,  
y'know... It's like bein' with  
an old friend.

70

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

70

Hardcastle looks into courtroom three. Sandy and McCormick  
are trailing behind him.

HARDCASTLE

Well, Judge McMartin is tryin'  
in here. Guess I'll be in six-  
teen.

McCORMICK

Boy, I used t'hate this building.  
Every time I was in here, they  
always made me wear the art deco  
bracelets that were connected by  
a little chain. An' I had guys  
sayin', "Shut up," an' "Sit down:"  
"You'll get to see your attorney  
in plenty of time"...stuff like  
that.

SANDY

Crime doesn't pay, right, Mark?

McCORMICK

(a la Batman)

That's right, Sandy, old chum.

HARDCASTLE

(a beat)

Just bein' back here, ready t'put  
on a trial, makes me feel ten  
years younger.

(a beat)

It was a helluva birthday present.

(a beat)

Did I say thanks?

CONTINUED



SANDY

At least ten times, Judge. Let's go find your courtroom.

A BAILIFF approaches.

BAILIFF

Oh, Judge Hardcastle, I was looking for you. Your trial is scheduled for room seventeen, in the Sutter Annex.

HARDCASTLE

The Sutter Annex? Boy, this place has grown.

CUT TO

it says SUTTER ANNEX. PULL BACK to see that it is on the side of a mobile trailer in the parking lot. Hardcastle looks at it with more than a little disdain.

MCCORMICK

The Old Sutter Annex. A classic structure where jurisprudence is practiced. No musty odor in there, I'll bet. Just the good, clean smell of freshly-sawed plywood.

Hardcastle moves into the trailer.

There are already several people in there. It is set up relatively nicely but it's still just a room on wheels.

BAILIFF

The trial will start in ten minutes. Your chambers are out back.

HARDCASTLE

I can hardly wait to see my chambers.

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

Probably the back seat of an old squad car.

SANDY

It's a temporary courtroom. They've been using them a lot the last few years, when we're overcrowded.

Hardcastle moves around. There is a picture of Chief Justice Warren hanging over the jury box.

HARDCASTLE

Boy, it ain't much. But it's a courtroom and justice can come outta this just as easily as anywhere else.

As they start to exit, McCormick looks at the picture of Justice Warren.

McCORMICK

That picture may be a little too low, don't you think, Sandy?

HARDCASTLE

You want my opinion the whole building is a little too low. Let's go.

They exit and we:

CUT TO

It is parked behind the mobile courtroom. One of the doors has a piece of tape on it with "Judge Milton C. Hardcastle" printed on it with Magic Marker.

HARDCASTLE

I think I retired just in time.

They move into the honey wagon.

INT. HONEY WAGON

Hardcastle has changed into his tennis shoes, his running shorts and Hawaiian shirt. He puts the gun on, then the robe over it.

McCORMICK (V.O.)

Here he comes from out of a nightmare. Milton C. Hardcastle, robed Justice.

HARDCASTLE

That's cute McCormick.

McCORMICK

Glad you like it.

HARDCASTLE

This is just a pre-trial hearing. They'll file motions and plead. Shouldn't take more'n ten minutes.

Hardcastle exits, leaving Sandy and McCormick behind.

McCORMICK

They should've given him a good courtroom. This stinks.

SANDY

You were cracking a lot of jokes for a guy who thinks it stinks.

McCORMICK

You don't understand me at all, Sandy, but when things upset me, I turn a little smart mouth. I'm workin' on it. Call it a character flaw.

SANDY

I like it that you can evaluate yourself, Mark.

McCORMICK

You do, huh? Want me to evaluate you?

SANDY

Not especially.

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

Your character flaw is you don't have any. Take it from me, Sandy, that can get real annoying.

SANDY

And you look for short cuts. You don't play by the rules, and that can get very annoying.

McCORMICK

I think we're coming together nicely. Let's get through this trial and then we can settle down to gritting our teeth one Tuesday night a month.

CUT TO

Weed Randall is led in. He's dressed in prison denims and he's carrying a large law book. He is seated at the defendant's table. He puts the law book in front of him. There are five or six witnesses in the courtroom, among them is Sybil, with her hair up, dressed in a tailored suit.

His eyes glint his hatred and stone-faced rage. His ATTORNEY sits next to him.

SAILIFF

All rise for the Honorable Milton C. Hardcastle.

The court rises, all except for Weed Randall who remains seated. Hardcastle enters, takes his place at the bench. The room sits when he does.

HARDCASTLE

The case pending before this court is State of California vs. Weed Joseph Randall. The charge is First Degree Homicide committed on David Matheson.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE (cont'd)

(a beat)

How does the Defendant plead?

Weed looks up at Hardcastle.

WEED

Weed Randall pleads that you people stop tryin' to rip him open. Weed Randall says that this courtroom an' all of you dismal failures are the figments of my imagination. Weed Randall says that I will outlast you all ...that I plead wisdom by reason of insanity. You're all crazy. I see the real picture, and it is black and white and your faces have all been erased!

HARDCASTLE

Going in for diminished capacity, are ya, Weed? Gonna try for some padded walls and a trip out to Bellevue?

WEED

Hardcastle, what a joke...a joke judge in a joke mobile courtroom. Want justice, Judge? I deliver it by the pound.

He slams his hand down on the book in front of him.

HARDCASTLE

If you refuse to plead, I will assign the plea of Not Guilty, and we will go on with the pre-trial motions.

WEED

(screaming)

You don't assign me spit, Jack! I am your keeper. I am the one who judges. I am truth and I am righteousness...and I am the man who walks at night!

CONTINUED

## HARDCASTLE

You are also a man who is going to be watching his own trial over closed circuit TV unless you get ahold of yourself. I will not let this courtroom be turned into a circus.

(a beat)

How do you plead?

## WEED

I plead that you are dead...that you will not live to see this trial concluded.

## HARDCASTLE

(leaning over the bench)

You're on.

(a beat)

The Court enters a plea of Not Guilty!

(a beat)

Prosecutor, present your indictment.

## WEED

Let me present my indictment.

He reaches into the book, pulls out a gun and FIRES it right at Hardcastle. Hardcastle slams back in his chair, badly wounded.

She stands up in the back and starts FIRING, getting the drop on everybody. They all duck. Weed jumps up and laughs.

## WEED

Weed Randall lives! And he's comin' out!

He turns and runs from the courtroom along with Sybil.

They run to Hardcastle.

79

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE, McCORMICK AND SANDY

79

Hardcastle's been hit in the chest.

HARDCASTLE

(softly)

This is no good, kiddo. I stopped  
it in a bad place.

McCORMICK

You're gonna be okay, Judge!  
You're gonna be okay.

SANDY

Get an ambulance!

80

EXT. PARKING LOT - WEED AND SYBIL

80

They jump into a Corvette and squeal out of the parking lot.  
Nobody chases them as they take off into the city.

81

INT. COURTROOM - HARDCASTLE, McCORMICK AND SANDY

81

They are kneeling over Hardcastle who is losing blood.

McCORMICK

Judge, no! Judge...listen...  
keep your eyes open, Judge.  
Please! Please!

SANDY

...He's dying. I think he's dying.

McCORMICK

Shut up, Sandy! You can't kill  
this guy! Nobody can kill this  
guy!

(a beat)

Please, God. Please!

And off his look of anguish we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

82

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

82

This is a large old building with a Baroque front.

83

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

83

McCormick and Sandy are pacing...looking at each other with equal looks of dismay.

SANDY

I shoulda known this could happen. I'm a cop...I shoulda seen it.

McCormick looks over at him.

McCORMICK

Knock it off, Sandy, okay? This ain't gonna help him.

There is a beat. Sandy looks down at his tassled loafers.

SANDY

My dad was shot by a guy he tried to pull over when I was only twelve years old. My dad stayed alive for almost two days in the hospital, and Milt promised my father he'd look after me...he'd make sure I got a good education...

(a beat)

But it was more than just a promise. It was a commitment. He became a father to me.

There is a long beat and McCormick looks up at him; that's what Hardcastle has been to him.

McCORMICK

Yeah, I know.

There is a long beat and they look at one another.

SANDY

We gotta do something, Mark...

McCormick looks up at him.

CONTINUED



MCCORMICK

All we can do is wait and pray.

SANDY

We can go find Weed Randall.

There is a long beat.

SANDY

And kill him.

McCormick shoots up and he looks at Sandy for a long beat.

MCCORMICK

I shoulda brought my camera. Where did that come from? Aren't you supposed to report crimes, not commit them?

SANDY

You never did know who the hell I was. All you ever saw was what you wanted to see.

MCCORMICK

What I saw was what you showed me. It was a very one-dimensional picture. I knew there had to be more. I just didn't expect a homicidal vigilante.

On that, a doctor moves out of the operating room stripping off gloves and heading down the corridor. He spots Mark and Sandy and comes over. His name is DR. QUINTON MARSH. He is carrying a brown paper bag.

DR. MARSH

Which one of you is McCormick?

MCCORMICK

Me.

He hands him a brown paper bag.

DR. MARSH

He wanted me to give this to you.

McCormick opens the bag and inside is Hardcastle's .45 and shoulder holster.

CONTINUED

MCCORMICK

Well, aren't you going to tell us?

DR. MARSH

Judge Hardcastle took a .38 hollow point in the right chest cavity. His right ventricle was pierced. I had to tie it off. He's lost a lot of blood. His vital signs are shaky. I've got him on a life support system. He's listed as critical...

There is a beat.

MCCORMICK

Is he going to live?

DR. MARSH

When they're critical it's not up to me...it's up to God.

(off their looks)

Let me put it to you this way. There is no way on earth that he should still be alive.

SANDY

He's going to die...isn't he?

There is a long beat.

SANDY

I want to know Doctor...don't give me any medical shuck and give... is he going to die?

There is a long beat.

DR. MARSH

Probably.

There is a long beat and then Sandy turns and exits the waiting room, leaving McCormick standing there holding Hardcastle's gun.

MCCORMICK

When can I see him?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED - 3

DR. MARSH

Not 'til he gets out of recovery...  
which will be probably twenty-four  
hours...if ever.

McCormick looks at Dr. Marsh.

McCORMICK

It's his birthday...today.

There is a long beat.

DR. MARSH

I didn't know...

McCORMICK

I don't think they make 'em that  
good any more.

DR. MARSH

(re: gun)

When he gave me that just before  
he went under, he said, "Give that  
to McCormick". Then he said some-  
thing I could barely make out,  
but it sounded like, "He's the  
only one who can lift it".

There is a long beat. McCormick looks at the gun and  
off that, we:

CUT TO

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

The pristine Alfa Romeo is roaring out of the lot.  
McCormick sprints to the car and flags Sandy down.  
Sandy stops and looks at McCormick.

McCORMICK

I need a ride home.

There is a beat and Sandy looks at him.

SANDY

Take a taxi.

McCORMICK

I want'a talk to you.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

There is a long beat and Sandy looks at him.

McCORMICK

I'll go with you. I'll try and catch this guy. I got an idea 'bout how to track him.

There is a beat.

SANDY

I hear a 'but' hangin' on the end of that.

McCORMICK

But, I don't want to kill him. We'll catch him and we'll bring him in or we'll call the cops... but we don't gun him down.

SANDY

He gave you his gun, Mark. Too bad a little of his guts didn't come along with it.

McCORMICK

You think Hardcastle would go out there and just shoot this guy? Didn't you ever listen to him? Who the hell are you, anyway?

SANDY

Sandy Knight, boy scout...Sandy Knight, choirboy...all my life nobody ever thought I could do anything but decorate a dance floor. Even the police put me in front of a camera.

(a beat)

Hardcastle did it all and he did it all for me...and I'm gonna get this guy...and I'm gonna watch him fall...

McCORMICK

At least be honest, Sandy. You aren't doing this for Hardcastle. You're doing it for yourself... you want'a be Sandy Knight...tough guy...

CONTINUED

84

CONTINUED - 2

84

There is a long beat and Sandy looks at him.

SANDY

You wanna get away from my car,  
Mark?

(a beat)

I'm not taking you anywhere.

There is a beat and Sandy looks up at him.

SANDY

He shoulda given me his gun. At  
least I know what to do with it.

MCCORMICK

Do ya?

Sandy puts his car in gear and ROARS out of the parking  
lot.

85

ANGLE - MCCORMICK

85

He sees him go, looks around the parking lot for a car.  
Finally, he spots a corvette. He moves to it, takes out  
a pen knife. He looks up at the hospital.

MCCORMICK

Sorry, Milt.

He pops the lock and opens the door, gets in and has it  
running in seconds. He takes off out of the hospital  
parking lot.

CUT TO

86

EXT. ALFA ROMEO - NIGHT

86

as Sandy goes down a city street and pulls up in front  
of a bar called, The See Thru. He parks and goes inside.

87

INT. THE SEE THRU

87

As Sandy moves into the bar and looks around, he finds  
the bartender at the far end of the bar. He badges the  
guy.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BARTENDER  
(re: the badge)  
Congratulations. I gave mine away  
when I was twelve.

Sandy looks at him.

SANDY  
You wanna come outside?

There is a beat. The Bartender looks at him.

SANDY  
Hey, come outside with me or I'll  
go through this dump and shovel  
some snow.

BARTENDER  
There's no cocaine in here. I  
run a clean bar.

SANDY  
You smarting off to me?

There is a beat and the Bartender looks over his shoulder.

BARTENDER  
Len...cover for me.

He starts around the front of the bar and Sandy stops him.

SANDY  
Uh, uh...out back.

There is a beat. The Bartender looks at him.

BARTENDER  
Hey, ain't I seen you on TV? Ain't  
you that Lt., does the storylines  
for the cops?

SANDY  
Out back, fella.

EXT. THE ALLEY BEHIND THE BAR - NIGHT

As the Bartender and Sandy exit the back of the bar.

CONTINUED

BARTENDER

What the hell's going on here?  
What is this? I ain't done nothing.

And the pearl-handled revolver goes out and is aimed at the Bartender.

SANDY

I'm gonna ask you one question...  
where's Sybil Monroe?

BARTENDER

Ain't I gonna get my rights read  
to me?

SANDY

If you're real lucky, you're gonna  
be alive to close up.

Sandy thumbs back the hammer and points the gun at him, then aims it to the right slightly and FIRES the gun. It chips the building, the bullet whines away.

BARTENDER

Jeeze, whatta you doing?

SANDY

I know you and Weed used to hang  
out...you're in his known associ-  
ates file when he was dating Sybil.  
Let's go. I'm losing it.

He thumbs the hammer back again.

BARTENDER

Okay, okay...it's a motel up the  
coast, the Sea View...he's waiting  
up there. I'm supposed to bring  
money.

Sandy looks at the guy for a long beat.

SANDY

Come on, you're gonna show me.

He pushes him out of the alley and we:

CUT TO

INT. PRISON HOLDING ROOM

Where prisoners talk to visitors. We are ON a TIGHT SHOT of Oliver 'Fix'. McCormick is talking to him over a low partition. 'Fix' has a worried look on his face.

McCORMICK

I talked to Herb Watson on the phone. He said seventy cartons of smokes hit this place yesterday... went to Billy Bates in the kitchen. Now the way I see it, the only guy who could have wired this deal from the inside is the Old Favor Maker, 'Fix' Henderson. Seventy cartons, it has to be something big, like maybe a gun in a law book delivered to the courthouse.

He looks at Fix for a long time.

FIX

I got a great alibi. I was doing fifteen to life when Hardcastle got it.

McCORMICK

Ever heard of accessory to murder? It's a neat little charge and it fits anybody who conspires to commit before or after the fact.

FIX

Accessories are like cuff links and tie pins, aren't they, Skid?

There is a long beat and McCormick looks at this hard old piece of gristle.

McCORMICK

Okay, Fix... gimme a price.

There is a beat and McCormick looks at him through the bars.

McCORMICK

As I remember, you deal in anything...put a price on it.

There is a beat and McCormick looks at Fix for a long beat.

CONTINUED



FIX

You want an exact location, I can't give you one, but I could point you in the right direction...

MCCORMICK

How much...?

FIX

You get my wife in here on a conjugal visit.

MCCORMICK

I don't know. If Hardcastle makes it, maybe I could...

FIX

Last time she came, she slipped me some uppers. She did thirty days for it. They said no more visits.

There is a beat and McCormick looks at him for a long beat.

MCCORMICK

Okay, I'll figure a way.

FIX

How?

MCCORMICK

I know some of Hardcastle's friends, cops and judges. I'll pull some strings...you got my word on it.

There is a long beat.

FIX

I don't usually deal on a handshake basis...

MCCORMICK

I need the info now or not at all. But I'll make you a promise. If Hardcastle dies, I'm gonna trace those cigarettes to you and you're gonna get another fifteen tagged on your sentence. Before you make parole, your wife'll look so old, you'll pay me to keep her out.

CONTINUED

There is a long beat. He looks at McCormick.

FIX

He's laying low in a motel up the Coast Highway. He's waiting for somebody to bring him some dough. Then he's gonna try for Mexico.

There is a beat and McCormick looks at him.

MCCORMICK

That isn't much.

FIX

Sybil used to have a red Mustang, sixty-five...rusted out. He had a picture of her in his cell in the car.

McCormick looks at him.

FIX

So you drive through some parking lots looking. I told ya that's all I got.

McCormick looks at him for a beat and then moves to the door.

FIX

Mark.

He stops.

FIX

I didn't know he was gonna ice the Judge...I don't wanna do no more time. I'm eligible next June.

MCCORMICK

It's a tough business. You take big risks when you play the game.

He turns and exits the room, leaving Fix there wondering, and we:

- CUT TO

90 EXT. COAST HIGHWAY - RUNBY - DAY 90

as the Coyote streaks PAST CAMERA. McCormick pulls into a motel parking lot, cruises it, looking for a Mustang. When he can't find it, he moves on.

91 ANGLE - SEA VIEW MOTEL - DAY 91

It is up the coast, looking over the ocean. The red Mustang is in the parking lot. As we watch, we see Sandy's Alfa Romeo pull into the lot and come to a stop. He gets out and moves to the office.

92 INT. MOTEL ROOM FIVE 92

Weed Randall is looking out the window at the Alfa.

WEED

I seen this guy before. Sybil  
get it out here.

On that, Sybil moves out from the bathroom. She has her hair up in a towel. She looks out as Sandy moves to the office.

SYBIL

Yeah, yeah, you know who that is...  
it's that cop...that guy who's on  
the TV all the time. He was in  
court when you shot Hardcastle.

On that, Weed looks at her hard.

WEED

Okay. I want ya to do just what  
I say.

There is a beat, and we:

CUT TO

93 EXT. COYOTE - RUNBY - DAY 93

as it streaks through another motel parking lot and goes on.

CUT TO

ANGLE - SANDY

He comes out of the manager's office. He looks around. Finally, he moves off toward one of the motel units. As he does, Sybil moves toward him from the ice machine.

SYBIL

Excuse me. Excuse me...

He turns and sees her.

SYBIL

You're a policeman. I saw you in court. I'm Sybil Monroe. I want to give myself up.

She moves toward Sandy, her hands in the air. He looks around, pulls his chrome-plated, pearl handled gun.

SYBIL

Please. Please save me from him. He's gone completely nuts.

There is a beat. He moves toward her and then Weed comes around the back of the building and sticks his gun right in Sandy's back.

WEED

You're not very good at this, kid.

Sandy has the gun still trained on Sybil.

SANDY

I can shoot her.

WEED

Suit yourself. I got tired of her fifteen years ago when she was much better looking.

On that, the Coyote roars into the parking lot. McCormick sees the scene and skids to a halt, takes Hardcastle's gun out. Weed glances at the Coyote which is ten feet away. He obviously doesn't recognize McCormick. McCormick puts the car in gear and guns it at Weed who jumps out of the way. McCormick skids it sideways and is out, crouched low over the hood, aiming Hardcastle's .45 at Weed.

CONTINUED

94

CONTINUED

94

SYBIL

(whining)

What're we gonna do, Weed? What're  
we gonna do...?

McCORMICK

Drop it...

Weed shoves Sandy toward McCormick. Sandy turns and  
rushes Weed. Weed points the gun at Sandy and starts  
to shoot him at point blank. Weed FIRES, Sandy goes  
down.

95

ANGLE - McCORMICK

95

He has no choice. He FIRES and blows Weed backwards.

96

ANGLE - WEED

96

He is laying against the door of the motel room. Sybil  
is wringing her hands. McCormick moves to Sandy. He  
is holding his shoulder. He looks up at McCormick.

SANDY

He was gonna kill me..

There is a beat. The MANAGER of the motel sticks his  
head out.

MANAGER

What's going on?

McCORMICK

Call the cops and two ambulances...

McCormick moves over to Weed Randall who is working his  
jaw in a strange way. McCormick looks down at him.

WEED

(a wheeze)

Funny...you look just like a guy  
I knew in the joint, Mike or Mark...  
or something. He was a real talker...  
a real funny guy.

And he lets his head slump sideways and he's gone.

97

ANGLE - McCORMICK

97

He looks down at Weed, then at the gun in his hand, then at Sandy.

McCORMICK

(lost)

What happens next?

There is a long beat. He looks down at Weed, and we:

CUT TO

98

CLOSE SHOT - MILTON C. HARDCASTLE

98

His eyes come open for a moment. He is looking at the ceiling. A NURSE runs in from the other room and looks at him.

NURSE

Doctor, Judge Hardcastle just opened his eyes.

She runs out and Hardcastle lies there, a slight smile on his face, as we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

FADE IN

99

INT. HARDCASTLE'S HOSPITAL ROOM

99

He is conscious and he is looking at McCormick. Sandy is not here.

HARDCASTLE

I'm too tough to die from one bullet.

There is a beat and Hardcastle looks at him.

HARDCASTLE

I heard how it went down...

McCORMICK

The Doctor says you're gonna be okay. He says lots of rest... lots of liquids...

HARDCASTLE

The old chicken soup cure...

(a beat)

Sandy turned sour on ya, didn't he?

There is a beat. McCormick looks at Hardcastle.

McCORMICK

Sandy? Nah...he did fine...

HARDCASTLE

The cops told me that he kidnapped the Bartender from some dump called The See Thru, had him in the trunk of the Alfa, was gonna murder Weed. He's downtown right now. They're gonna take his tin.

McCORMICK

He was worried about you. He wanted to go out there and score some points for you...

There is a beat. Hardcastle looks at him for a long beat.

HARDCASTLE

Y'know something, kiddo...you were a real long shot. I never figured  
(MORE)

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE (cont'd)  
you were gonna make the team, but  
you got what it takes.

McCORMICK  
What kinda medication they got  
you on, Judge...? You're beginning  
to sound sappy.

HARDCASTLE  
Now you listen, kid... 'cause I  
don't say this kinda stuff often.  
(a beat)  
I'm proud of ya... you made all the  
right choices.

There is a long beat.

McCORMICK  
(changing subject)  
Some birthday present, huh? Ended  
up getting you in intensive care.

HARDCASTLE  
(a smile)  
It's the thought that counts.

They smile at that. McCormick lays the .45 down on the  
bedside table.

McCORMICK  
I killed him, Judge... I killed  
Weed. It only took one bullet  
and a tenth of a second. I never  
killed anybody before... it feels  
bad.

(a beat)  
It's like I'm somehow worth less.

There is a long beat.

HARDCASTLE  
If you hadn't, Sandy would be  
dead. Sometimes the tough choices  
have to be made in split seconds.  
It's what being a cop's all about.

McCORMICK  
I'm not a cop.



CONTINUED - 2

Hardcastle looks at him for a long beat.

HARDCASTLE

Nope...you're not. But you're a pretty damn good friend and it's the best present of all 'cause it lasts.

There is a beat and McCormick looks at him.

HARDCASTLE

Now get the hell out of here.

McCormick gets up and leaves the room, closing the door behind him, as we:

FADE OUT

THE END