

REBEL AUTO

Written by

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EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - NIGHT

A man and a woman stand in the headlights of two immaculate muscle cars on a dark lonely stretch of highway.

RALPH PRIDDY (43) wears tight jeans, plaid shirt and boots. He has a weathered but honest face in need of a shave. His wife CAROL PRIDDY (37) wears a tight, peach-colored mini-skirt with black high heels and a doo-rag to support her coiffed, red hair. Carol is as curvy as Ralph is squared off and tall. They both look out of place, like a handsome bruiser and a glamorous, busty movie star from the 1950's.

They shake hands.

RALPH

In sickness and in health....

CAROL

To love and to cherish....

Ralph tries to pull her close for a kiss but Carol turns her cheek and checks her watch. Carol is all business. She breaks away and walks to her car.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Almost midnight, Ralph.

RALPH

(wryly)

Yeah. 'Till death do us part.

Carol slides into her sleek black '66 GTO. Ralph cranks his dark green '70 Plymouth Sport Fury. They both turn on their car radios, a quick glance to each other, then the open road.

Over the dial, radio static then the sound of CHURCH BELLS is the 'starting flag'. The midnight drag race begins. Ralph squeals out in front of Carol.

Following the church bells, a radio program begins.

RONNIE EARL

(over both car radios)

Live from Jackson penitentiary, this is your host Ronnie Earl on death row radio reaching out to whoever might be listening in the tri-county area with another broadcast of Midnight Murder Ballads. If you believe in Jesus Christ as the avenging angel of your sins as much as I do, I know you will love this first song....

Steel guitar kicks off a dark country & western ballad.

Carol, super-focused, gains speed and passes Ralph at 70 MPH. Ralph manages to get side by side Carol and begins to pass her at 80 MPH near the incline of a dangerous curve.

Suddenly and without warning, an OLD MAN ON A TRACTOR appears in Ralph's lane. Ralph hits his brakes and swerves to avoid a head-on collision. The Plymouth Fury leaves the road, climbs a clay hill and dies in red dust and gray monoxide.

A mile from the start, Carol's GTO crosses an abandoned railroad track as the winner. Carol quickly brakes and checks her rear view for Ralph. His Fury is nowhere in sight. Carol shakes her wavy red hair loose from the doo rag. It tumbles on her shoulders.

CAROL

Looks like I win this one, Ralph.

EXT. MUDHOLE IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

A rope tied to a tree snaps taut. We follow the rope to the rim of a 10 foot wide MUDHOLE where the rope disappears wriggling into a bottomless pit of muck and mire.

Suddenly and miraculously, a woman emerges from the swamphole completely covered in muck and slime, the rope entwined around her right forearm. JENNY CARTER (25) pulls the weight of her mud-encrusted body out the abyss and onto the mossy earth. Her left arm obscures a small, precious lump held protectively against her chest.

Jenny rises to her feet, gasping for air, never letting go the mud-covered fist-sized shape. Suddenly Jenny's attention turns to the sound of yelling in the distance.

Walking to the edge of a mossy, overhanging hill obscured by trees, Jenny witnesses Ralph and Carol in the distance arguing on the side of the road by Ralph's marooned Fury. The unintelligible argument ends. Jenny watches Ralph get in Carol's GTO (passenger side) and they leave down the highway.

Jenny, wild-eyed and exhausted, stands there like a backwoods 'Carrie' holding her prize. The sight of people, cars, and highway seem to return her to reality. Jenny relaxes, her mission completed. She takes a deep breath, the night air curling around her dirty blonde hair like smoke and flames.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - NIGHT

Carol drives her GTO. Ralph rides shotgun quietly staring out the window into the darkness.

CAROL
What do you think went wrong?

RALPH
Timing belt.

CAROL
You can get it fixed tomorrow.

RALPH
Carol, the race didn't count.

CAROL
I won, Ralph.

RALPH
Yeah, maybe you won - but not forever.

CAROL
We agreed on forever.

RALPH
You know the rules about third party interference. That makes the race and the argument that you "won" only good for a year.

CAROL
You are impossible. I need a drink.

RALPH
We agree on that, but we're not going to the Lounge.

CAROL
Ralph, the winner gets to pick where he or she wants to drink. Not to mention we can probably drink for free at the Lounge.

RALPH
I've made my opinion known.

CAROL
You can sit in the car.

Ralph shoots her a look. Carol throttles the GTO.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Mud trails down the peach fuzz of Jenny's beautiful body as she showers away the muck and slime from the mud hole.

Jenny places her small mysterious treasure into a hastily located shoebox while she talks to it.

JENNY

I guess it's the mud that kept you so well. You know your great grandma use to bottle that mud and sell it to country folk as a cure-all. Every Saturday granny would take a trip to town and sell her mud. She'd say, "Just rub a little on the back of your neck". Grandma never ever got sick and she lived to be real old. Then one day she was thinking about life and death. She thought the mud would make her young again. You know what she did? Grandma got down in the hole - and she never came back. The mud holes got a push and pull like a river. For all I know, grandma was holding on to you until I got there.

Jenny puts the finishing touch on the shoe box by wrapping it in duct tape.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jenny exits (with shoebox) and locks her motel room door.

Jenny climbs behind the wheel of her yellow 1968 Dodge Charger, parked just outside the door. The Charger has seen better days; caked with rust and dents and different color parts. It cranks loud and the muffler rattles but the damn thing still works.

Jenny drives away from the motel.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP

Radio blaring, Carol's GTO moves down the black top, passing an old billboard advertising "Town Bank". SHERIFF STANTON (52) is waiting and pulls out from behind the billboard in his cruiser, hitting the blue lights.

RALPH
 (checking the rear view)
 Your friend wants to talk.

CAROL
 Could just as soon outrun him.

RALPH
 Problem is, he knows where you
 live.

The GTO pulls off the road. The Sheriff's cruiser pulls in behind. Carol lowers the window as he walks up. Ralph turns down Ronnie Earl and his Midnight Murder Ballads.

SHERIFF
 You and Ralph must be settling
 another one of them arguments.

CAROL
 I thought this stretch of road was
 okay since it's been closed for the
 four lane.

SHERIFF
 If you want to kill yourselves out
 here, I reckon it's okay with me.
 But you got to slow this thing down
 before you hit the city limits.

Carol smiles and leans forward, making sure the Sheriff can see her all of her attributes.

CAROL
 You know we wouldn't break any
 rules in town. We got a business to
 think about. Sometimes you just
 gotta....let off a little steam.

SHERIFF
 (leaning in)
 What you got under that hood,
 anyway, Ms. Carol?

Ralph rolls his eyes. Carol plays it up.

CAROL
 My baby's got a fuel injected 327
 so it can do about 140 miles an
 hour. Ralph did some adjustments.

SHERIFF
 (puts a cigarillo in his
 mouth and lights it)
 (MORE)

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Whoa. I bet he did. You know that's faster than a human ought to be allowed to go, except in a rocket ship.

RALPH

I reckon she knows what she's doing, Sheriff. She won the race tonight, fair and square....

(Carol shoots Ralph a dirty look)

She left my Fury in the dust back down the road. I'd appreciate it if you'd keep an eye on it for me.

SHERIFF

Sure thing, Ralph. Y'all stay out of trouble now.

Carol smiles and takes off leaving the Sheriff standing there in a cloud of monoxide before he walks back to his car.

EXT. THE LOUNGE - NIGHT

Jenny sits behind the wheel of her rusted Charger in the parking lot of the juke joint dive bar. Jenny clutches the duct taped shoebox close to her heart and listens to "death row radio" as a murder ballad ends.

RONNIE EARL

I know that song may have touched the hearts of a lot of folks who don't understand the consequences of taking a human life. Take it from me, when you are on murder row, there ain't no song, there ain't no drug, that's going to take the place of our savior. I admit to all my sins of murder in the first degree and I give thanks to my lord and savior Jesus Christ for showing me the light.

Jenny closes her eyes and leans back into the head rest.

JENNY

Bullshit.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A 1972 Ford pick-up truck parks in front of a convenience store.

A long haired man riding shotgun (seen from behind) finds his favorite station on the dial then kisses his pretty blonde driver: Jenny.

RONNIE EARL

I wouldn't be doing this except for you and the baby.

JENNY

I know.

RONNIE EARL

You keep your mind on that tune and you keep that motor running.

JENNY

(nervous)

I will, Ronnie Earl.

Jenny appears some 5 years younger (20) and 6 months pregnant behind the wheel.

Ronnie Earl exits the car with a gun in his ass pocket (we never see his face). He walks inside the store. Jenny's hands clench the wheel of the Ford pick-up. Jenny's other hand holds a handgun by her side.

Jenny hears gunfire inside the store. She turns off the radio. Seconds seem like hours. Jenny becomes sweaty and nauseous and squeals out, spitting gravel and dirt, abandoning her boyfriend Ronnie Earl.

INT/EXT. DODGE CHARGER - CONTINUOUS

Jenny's eyes open wide. The flashback has ended.

Jenny checks her watch, places the shoebox into the glove compartment, and locks it shut.

Jenny locks up her rusted Charger and walks across the parking lot, putting on a work apron as she goes. She is more 'hard knocks' than Carol, but just as beautiful.

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

Jenny walks in the front door and greets DREKKS OTHELLO (28) the African-American bouncer, over six feet tall with a tight orange fro-hawk and leather jacket adorned with cheetah hide.

DREKKS OTHELLO

Look comin' here. I thought you said you had enough of this place.

JENNY

I did but that was yesterday.

DREKKS OTHELLO

You think anything has changed?

JENNY

Don't let any assholes in here and we'll all do just fine.

DREKKS OTHELLO

Then how we gonna make any money?

Waiting on Jenny at the bar is loud and belligerent WAYNE WILEY (48) a drunken lout who is the size of a linebacker and owner of an upscale car lot called Real Deal Auto.

JENNY

(mock sincerity)

Wayne, you started drinking without me? My feelings are hurt.

WAYNE

(drunken)

Honey, your ass is sweet but when it comes to drinking, I don't wait on nobody.

JENNY

I can tell.

WAYNE

I tell you what, get me another beer, darling then we'll talk about that piece of junk you got out there for a trade-in.

Jenny ignores Wayne, then sees Carol and an uncomfortable Ralph enter the Lounge. Drekks waves them through.

DREKKS OTHELLO

Boss says you're good.

CAROL

Thanks, Drekks.

DANNY (72) the long haired, battle-scarred, wheel-chair bound owner of The Lounge rolls up in front of Ralph and Carol.

DANNY

You come back to work for me, sweetheart?

RALPH
 (before Carol can speak)
 We just came in for a drink.

DANNY
 I wasn't talking to you, Ralph.

RALPH
 Leave my wife out of your business plans.

CAROL
 Ralph, please.

RALPH
 I've had enough for one night, and I'm not taking anything from him.

Ralph ignores Danny and heads for the jukebox.

DANNY
 Hey Ralph, nothing personal, I didn't like your father either.

CAROL
 Lay off Ralph, Danny. He lost a race tonight.

DANNY
 (under his breath)
 Yeah, I lost one a long time ago.

Ralph, under lit by the jukebox glow, drops in a quarter, punches some buttons and watches the record move into place.

Chuck Berry's NO PARTICULAR PLACE TO GO begins.

Danny rolls alongside Carol to the bar.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 We miss you around here, red.
 What's it been? Six months?

CAROL
 I just came here to have a drink and listen to music, okay, Danny?

DANNY
 I'll leave you alone,
 (smiles)
for now.

CHUCK BERRY

(singing)

"Riding along in my automobile. My
baby beside me at the wheel. I
stole a kiss at the turn of a mile.
My curiosity running wild. Cruising
and playing the radio, with no
particular place to go..."

Danny wheels off to the back office. Ralph rejoins Carol who adjusts her ample bra under her t-shirt and jacket. Carol lights a cigarette, carefully scratching her scalp with a drinking straw through perfect hair and dense hairspray..

RALPH

Did you get rid of your boyfriend?

CAROL

Ralph, you know Chuck Berry is my
ONLY boyfriend.

Carol closes her eyes and lip-sync's the second verse. For a hot ten seconds nothing exists but Carol and Chuck.

CAROL (CONT'D)

(in sync with Chuck)

"Riding along in my automobile. I
was anxious to tell her the way I
feel. So I told her softly and
sincere, And she leaned in
whispered in my ear. Cuddling more
and driving slow, with no
particular place to go..."

Jenny is hypnotized watching Carol's small self-contained groove. Suddenly Wayne Wiley forcibly grabs Jenny's arm.

WAYNE

Hey blonde, I'm talking to you!

Jenny wrenches her arm free with sudden attitude.

JENNY

Yeah, I heard. My name's not
blondie, asshole. I got other
customers.

Jenny escapes, walking to the opposite end of the bar leaving Wayne to fume over his beer.

JENNY (CONT'D)

What'll it be, folks?

RALPH
Three shots of whiskey.

JENNY
Three?

RALPH
One for you. I figure you deserve a
drink, having to listen to Wayne
Wiley.
(extending a hand)
What's your name?

JENNY
(shaking Ralph's hand)
Jenny. Jenny Carter.

RALPH
(point to Carol)
This is my wife, Carol.

Carol nods and smiles at Jenny and doesn't stop singing.

CAROL
(in sync with Chuck)
"Ridin' along in my calaboose.
Still trying to get her belt a-
loose. All the way home I held a
grudge. For the safety belt that
wouldn't budge. Cruising and
playing the radio, with no
particular place to go".

Jenny slides three shot glasses all around and fills them
full of whiskey. Ralph motions for Jenny to leave the bottle.

RALPH
Here's to the "calaboose".

CAROL
"To the calaboose."

JENNY"
"To the calaboose."

Ralph, Carol and Jenny down their shots. Wayne Wiley
straddles onto the stool beside Ralph, blocking Jenny's view.

WAYNE
Hey Ralph, you still got that
shitty little car lot over on that
dead end street?

RALPH
Grandpa Priddy opened it 50 years
ago and it's still going strong.

WAYNE

I'm surprised to hear you say that,
Ralph. Everybody knows you that
don't give a shit about that place.

(finishes his drink)

You know how many cars I sold
yesterday? You want to know?

Ralph is silent.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Well, I thought maybe you was doing
okay, ya know, money-wise, 'cause I
haven't seen your wife shaking her
tits in here for weeks.

Carol stops singing. Ralph can't laugh him off like Danny.

Ralph throws a punch that lands dead center of Wayne's big
square face. Then Ralph kicks Wayne's bar stool out from
under him. Wayne crashes to the floor as Ralph assumes the
pose of a skilled boxer.

Wayne is more surprised than hurt.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

(getting on his feet)

I guess I said the wrong thing.

Ralph gives Wayne an upper cut, busting his lip. Wayne feels
the blood trickle down his chin. Wayne grabs Ralph pushing
him across the floor, scattering rednecks and beers every
which way, until Ralph's back is rammed into the jukebox. The
Chuck Berry record skips and stops.

CAROL

Give me a beer.

JENNY

What kind?

CAROL

Brown bottle.

Ralph is skillful at dodging but Wayne is almost twice his
size, a real brute. When Wayne does land a blow, it's
devastating. Wayne follows with another and another until
Ralph sinks to the floor.

WAYNE

You some boxer, Ralph!

Carol shatters her beer bottle against the back of Wayne's
head. Wayne, agitated, turns and grabs Carol's arm.

BOOM! A shotgun blast goes off. The patrons look at Jenny behind the bar kicking out the empty shell casings. The shots have passed through a round cut hole in ceiling.

JENNY

Let that lady go and get out the door while you still can.

WAYNE

(letting go of Carol)
You ain't gonna shoot nobody.

JENNY

(reloading)
Say it again, asshole.

WAYNE

You scrawny bitch. You wouldn't be nothing without that gun.
(asking the crowd)
Am I right?

Jenny lays the gun on top of the bar. She flips up the bar lid entrance and comes around to face Wayne in a fighting pose. The comparison is ridiculous: David and Goliath.

JENNY

I don't need a gun to -

Jenny never finishes her sentence. Wayne lays her out with one punch. Jenny hits the floor beside Ralph.

Drekks the bouncer finally appears, putting a baseball bat around Wayne's neck so that he can't breath. Drekks drags him to the entrance , puts his army boot into Wayne's back, and propels the bruiser out the door like a rocket.

DREKKS OTHELLO

(to Wayne)
Don't come back in here EVER again.

Drekks slams the door and wipes his hands. Inside Jenny and Ralph get to their feet with the help of Carol and Drekks.

DREKKS OTHELLO (CONT'D)

Everybody all right?

JENNY

Hell no. Wiley hit me in the face.

Ralph gets this footing and stand. He pops his neck, shaking off the beating like a cold chill.

RALPH

What took you so long, Drekks?

DREKKS OTHELLO

Smoke break.

JENNY

Have you noticed that things always
go wrong when you take a goddamn
smoke break?

Drekks laughs. Carol sets her broken beer bottle up on the bar. Jenny tosses it in the garbage can.

Carol puts a shaky cigarette in her mouth and looks for a match. Jenny lifts a votive candle, under-lighting Carol's strong jaw and beautiful blue eyes. Carol draws in the nicotine and gets a close-up look at Jenny's bruised face.

CAROL

You gonna be okay?

JENNY

I heal fast.

CAROL

Well, I'm a nervous wreck.
(blowing smoke)

Funny, I don't remember the Lounge
being this violent.

Jenny makes awkward eye contact.

JENNY

You're pretty good with a beer
bottle.

CAROL

You should see me with a vodka
bottle.

(smiling)

Please can I have another?

Jenny hands her a cold brown bottle of beer.

JENNY

Back when you were dancing in here,
you probably kept the place calm.

CAROL

They're all a bunch of cavemen.
Even Ralph. He thinks with his
fists.

RALPH
I guess I wasn't thinking hard
enough.

Danny wheels out of his office and makes sure the jukebox is still in working order. Drekks sweeps up the broken glass.

DANNY
(mock sincerity)
Now see, folks, that's what I call
entertainment! Nobody got killed
and everybody had a good time! Now
everybody get the hell out of here
and go home! No last call!

The small crowd disperses out the front door. Jenny grabs her purse and clocks out. Carol hastily downs her beer and points Ralph out the door.

Danny watches Carol exit, his arm resting on the jukebox.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Don't forget to come back, red.

EXT. THE LOUNGE - NIGHT

Jenny, Ralph and Carol walk through the parking lot. Ralph and Carol are talking. Jenny is quiet.

CAROL
Ralph takes a punch pretty good,
don't ya, Ralph?

RALPH
Some more than others.

JENNY
Are you really a boxer, Ralph?

RALPH
I use to be. Of course that guy was
a little out of my weight class.

JENNY
Yeah, mine too.

Ralph and Carol laugh, but Jenny doesn't. Carol and Ralph arrive at her GTO. Jenny's Charger is parked nearby but something is wrong.

JENNY (CONT'D)
Oh no.

CAROL
What's a matter?

Ralph and Carol follow a SHOCKED Jenny to her car. The front right corner of the Charger has been rammed repeatedly by another vehicle. The right headlight is smashed and the crumpled fender is jammed into the right side tire.

Ralph walks around the car, inspecting the damage.

Jenny panics trying to open the damaged passenger door. She goes around and opens the driver side door, climbs in and tries to open the glove compartment but no luck. It is wedged completely shut by the impact.

JENNY
Jesus Christ. Shit!

RALPH
Hey, it's going to be okay.

JENNY
Whoever did this should have their
ass kicked!

CAROL
I understand. If anything happened
to my baby, I'd freak out too.

RALPH
I can swing by tomorrow with my
friend Purnell. He's our body shop
man.

JENNY
I don't have money for that.

RALPH
Who said it cost money?

Ralph hands Jenny a blood-splattered business card.

CAROL
You need a lift somewhere?

JENNY
I can't leave my car. I'll have to
stay here tonight.

RALPH
Stay here? You sure?

Jenny lifts her t-shirt just high enough that Ralph and Carol see a big handgun in a concealed holster against her belly.

JENNY

I'm sure. It's no worse than where
I'm staying back at the motel.

RALPH

Like I said, it'll be all right.

CAROL

Yeah, we'll figure it out.

JENNY

(half a smile)
I appreciate it.

Jenny watches as Ralph and Carol get in the GTO and take off.

Jenny lays down on the front seat of her Charger and looks at the blood splattered business card that reads "Rebel Auto". She unsnaps the holster and places her hand on top. Her gaze settles on the glove compartment door that will not open.

INT. REBEL AUTO - NIGHT

OPENING CREDITS MONTAGE: Framed photos in a darkly lit office: A family posing by old cars from the '50's. A black and white photo of a happy couple. The woman is pregnant. Another photo shows a 7 year old Ralph hugging his fathers pant leg but there is no mother. Color photos of Ralph as a teenager in boxing gloves, Ralph's arms around a very young teenage Carol, and more photos of Ralph boxing. A larger photo shows Ralph's dad handing Ralph and Carol two sets of keys at their wedding. A GTO and a Fury each have "just married" written on the back glass. Another photo shows Ralph and Carol pretending to box in front of their respective cars. Other photos show Ralph and Carol, older, in front of Rebel Auto.

Through the glass, the black '66 GTO pulls into the car lot.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - NIGHT

Carol and Ralph exit the GTO and walk past weathered signage on the half acre lot. A half dozen used cars are parked behind barb wire amidst scattered junk parts. A black tomcat is perched on the hood of a junker.

INT. REBEL AUTO - NIGHT

Carol enters first, walking through a waiting room now converted into a living room and kitchen.

Ralph takes a seat on the waiting room couch (now his bed) by a radio and an old gumball machine. He tunes into a boxing match in the 5th round. The signal is weak.

Carol uses Ralph's cigarette to light her own. Johnny "Metal" Garcia is being battered by his opponent.

Carol kicks her off her shoes, picks up a magazine, and gets comfy. She flips the pages but says nothing.

RALPH

Enough of the silent treatment.

CAROL

What do you want me to say?

RALPH

You're pissed.

CAROL

You offer to fix someone's car for a round of drinks. So yeah, I'm a little pissed.

(long breath)

I've had too much excitement for one night. I'm going to bed.

RALPH

(grabs her hand)

You love me?

CAROL

It's got nothing to do with love, Ralph. It's about survival.

RALPH

I thought we were surviving.

CAROL

(pulls from his grasp)

Ralph, we're living in the waiting room of your fathers used car lot. He would not want this for us.

RALPH

Maybe we should race about it.

CAROL

(exasperated)

Ralph, you want to go to a movie. I want to go bowling. We race. You want me to stop dancing. I don't want to stop dancing. We race.

Ralph gets up, shadow-boxing to the sounds coming over the radio.

RALPH

I want to have a kid and you don't want to have a kid. We race.

CAROL

And sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. For better or worse, it's how we settle things. But we don't have to race about a topic that we both agree on.

Ralph stops shadow-boxing.

RALPH

So the racing days are over?

CAROL

Ralph, the marriage is over.

Ralph is silent. Johnny 'Metal' Garcia takes blow after blow.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Let's just go our separate ways. That way you do what you wanna do, and I do what I wanna do.

RALPH

And what do you want to do?

CAROL

Go someplace in a magazine.

Carol goes into her bedroom and shuts her door (marked "front office"). Ralph, agitated, springs off the couch, addressing Carol through the door.

RALPH

Divorce costs as much as a new car. Otherwise everybody'd be doing it.

Carol suddenly opens her door. Ralph is standing right in her, so close they could kiss.

CAROL

(hopeful)

So it's just a matter of money?

RALPH

Right now it's the lack of money.

CAROL
Then let's just get the money.

RALPH
Whatever makes you happy.

Carol hugs Ralph but knows his feelings are hurt. She lifts his head, kisses her two fingers, and touches his lips.

CAROL
I'm sorry you lost the race tonight. I know having a family means a lot to you - but it's for the best. I hope you understand.

Carols shuts the door. Ralph raises his hand to speak but it becomes a fist of frustration and indecision. There is already a fist-sized hole in the wall nearby.

On the radio, Johnny "Metal" Garcia has knocked out another opponent. The bell rings and the crowd goes wild.

RALPH
At least somebody's a winner.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - MORNING

African-American PURNELL LEWIS (68) and his grandson TIM (7) pull their tow truck into the lot. Purnell blows the horn. Ralph emerges, shielding his eyes from the morning sun.

PURNELL
You must have been up all night listening to that match.

RALPH
Yep. I even caught a few punches myself last night.

PURNELL
Sounds like a story for the road. You're all right, aren't you?

RALPH
(smiles)
The damage is on the inside.

Little Tim leaps from the cab and comes around and starts jabbing and exchanging soft boxing blows with Ralph.

RALPH (CONT'D)
Uh oh! It's the Kid! It's the Kid!

PURNELL

Timothy, we got work to do today,
son. Ain't got no time to play.

TIM

Granddaddy you always got something
to do.

RALPH

Follow me, young Tim.

INT. REBEL AUTO - MORNING

Carol is slightly disheveled but gorgeous, black bra and
panties underneath an orange chiffon gown with pink poofy
high heeled shoes. She pours coffee in the waiting room.

Ralph enters with Tim and sets him down on the couch. Carol
is surprised and scrambles to put on a housecoat.

CAROL

Didn't know we were having company.

Ralph ignores Carol and pulls three Matchbox cars out of his
pocket. He hands them to Tim.

RALPH

I gotta go off and fix some cars
with your granddaddy.

TIM

I want to ride my bike.

RALPH

I know but can you wait and do that
when we get back? But right now, I
want you inside with Ms. Carol.

TIM

Try to be fast.

Ralph pours leftover coffee in a paper 'dixie cup.'

RALPH

Carol, you mind if Tim plays inside
while we're gone?

CAROL

Like the kid says, try and be fast.

RALPH
 (whispering to Carol)
 I know you hate kids, but just try
 and help me out here will you?

Ralph waves at Tim and leaves. Carol watches through the curtain on the door. She and Tim lock eyes in silence.

CAROL
 Repeat after me. 'Do not bother Ms.
 Carol unless Rebel Auto is burning
 to the ground'.

TIM
 (repeating)
 Do not bother Ms. Carol unless
 Rebel Auto is burning."

CAROL
 "...to the ground."

TIM
 "...to the ground."

CAROL
 Good kid.

Carol grabs her coffee and magazine, retreats to her "bedroom" and slams the door. Timothy begins to play.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - MORNING

Ralph and Purnell toil under the hood of his Plymouth Fury.

PURNELL
 See if she'll do anything.

Ralph slides in under the wheel and turns the ignition. The big engine turns over like a new car. Ralph revs the gas. It is LOUD.

RALPH
 (pointing thumbs up)
 Meet me at the Lounge!

Ralph heads back toward town. Purnell follows in his wrecker.

INT. REBEL AUTO - CONTINUOUS

Timothy plays with the toy cars. There is a knock on the door. He peers out the curtain then knocks on Carol's door.

TIM
Ms. Carol?

CAROL
(from the other side)
Is there a fire?

TIM
No, but the police are here.

Carol opens her door, slips on her high heels, and follows Timothy to the front door. Sheriff Stanton and another gentleman are waiting.

CAROL
Is something wrong?

SHERIFF
Mr. Johnson is from the bank.

CAROL
Who's Mr. Johnson?

MR. JOHNSON (49) is a small balding man in a gray business suit (his eyes are breast-level with Carol). He steps up from behind the Sheriff and hands Carol a handful of papers.

MR. JOHNSON
Carol Priddy? The bank has been sending you notices for the last year about your lack of loan payments to the bank.

CAROL
I don't know what you're talking about. My husband does all that stuff.

MR. JOHNSON
Is Mr. Priddy at home?

EXT. THE LOUNGE - DAY

Ralph and Purnell are working on Jenny's Charger. Jenny yawns as Purnell, hunkered down with a crowbar, tries to pry the right side front fender skirt out of the punctured tire.

PURNELL
Whoever hit you did it real good.

Ralph and Jenny shoot each other a 'knowing' glance.

Purnell puts all his weight into bending the metal out of the tire but the tool flies out of Purnell's hands and makes a loud CLANG on the hot asphalt.

PURNELL (CONT'D)
 (wiping sweat away)
 I can't do nothing here. We're
 gonna have tow it to Ralph's place.

Purnell circles around to his truck and begins the process of connecting the tow truck to the Charger.

JENNY
 Wait. I can't do that. What if
 somebody tries to steal it?

RALPH
 Don't worry. We'll lock it up in
 the back lot behind barb wire.
 It'll be safe.

JENNY
 I don't know. I need a car. The
 motel and the lounge are far apart.

RALPH
 Why don't we just swap cars?

JENNY
 (incredulous)
 What did you say?

RALPH
 I'll just trust you with my Fury
 for a couple of days. Gives me
 incentive to get your car fixed.

JENNY
 How are you going to get around?

RALPH
 Carol's GTO. We'll be fine.

Ralph opens the Plymouth door for her. Jenny is in shock.

RALPH (CONT'D)
 Go ahead. Get in and take off.

Jenny slides in on the leather seat. She grabs the wheel and turns the key. The engine comes alive under the massive hood.

JENNY
 Are you sure that my car will be
 safe at Rebel Auto?

RALPH

No one has ever broken into Rebel
Auto and taken a single thing.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - DAY

Carol, confused and angry, clutches bank papers and watches a
tow truck take off with one of Ralph's sale cars. Two more
tow trucks pull in. Drivers hop out and take more cars.

SHERIFF

By the time Mr. Johnson is finished
taking everything, you'll be locked
out. You might want to grab what
you can now.

Carol sees the wrecker crew hooking a chain to her precious
GTO. Carol realizes she needs help. Timothy is by her side.

CAROL

Timothy, find the big pink suitcase
in my room and put as much of my
stuff in there as you can, okay?

TIM

What kind of stuff?

CAROL

You know, clothes, make-up,
magazines....stuff I need.

TIM

Yes m'am!

Timothy takes off running. Carol immediately turns her
attention to the men hooking a chain to her GTO.

CAROL

Hey! That's not your car! Stop!

MR. JOHNSON

(to the workers)

Don't pay any attention to that
woman. Just keep working.

CAROL

That was a gift from my father-in-
law! It doesn't belong to your
goddamn bank!

MR. JOHNSON

Read the paperwork. It says
whatever is on the lot at the time
of removal.

Carol physically tries to undo the chain hooked beneath her
GTO. Mr. Johnson tries to stop Carol and she fights back.
The Sheriff has to physically restrain her.

SHERIFF

Carol, you need to calm down or I'm
going to put handcuffs on you.

CAROL

You're letting them take the only
thing that matters to me!

MR. JOHNSON

The foreclosure has been scheduled
for months. If you want an
appointment with the bank, I'm
right down the street.

Carol grabs Mr. Johnson in a headlock and forces him to the
ground. Sheriff Stanton manages to handcuff Carol in the
fray. Sheriff grabs her, wrists behind her back, and brings
her to a standing position.

SHERIFF

You're under arrest, Carol.

CAROL

(fighting the cuffs)
Shouldn't you be catching criminals
instead of fucking people over?

SHERIFF

Anything you say at this point, can
and will be held against you in a
court of law.....

The Sheriff shoves Carol into the backseat of his police
cruiser with the help of a Deputy.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Deputy, read this lady her rights.

DEPUTY

You have the right to remain
silent...

Carol tunes him out when she sees Timothy with her
overstuffed suitcase.

TIM

Ms. Carol, I couldn't get it to zip up all the way.

CAROL

(fighting back tears)

You did terrific, Tim. Just put it back inside before they lock the door.

TIM

Ms. Carol, did you get arrested?

CAROL

Yes, Tim. Tell the bank man you need to put the suitcase back in Rebel Auto, okay? Then you stay here and wait on Ralph and your granddaddy.

The deputy pushes Carol back in the car and slams the door. Tim does what he's told as Carol watches from the backseat. Mr. Johnson waits for Tim to walk out, then he tapes a foreclosure notice to the door and locks it.

The police cruiser takes off in one direction and the GTO in the other direction. Carol watches it go in the back glass. Timothy picks up his bicycle and begins to ride.

EXT. REAL DEAL USED CARS - DAY

Jenny drives Ralph's Fury. She pulls into a fancier, cleaner car lot selling top models. Wayne Wiley is talking to a potential customer until he realizes Jenny has arrived.

Wayne walks over to greet Jenny sitting behind the wheel.

JENNY

Hey there, Wayne Wiley.

WAYNE

(taken aback)

If I didn't know any better I'd say that was Ralph Priddy's car.

JENNY

Maybe it is, but that ain't what I came here to talk about.

WAYNE

(lowers his voice)

I don't want any trouble from you.

JENNY

Take it easy, Wayne. You don't understand. I like it rough.

WAYNE

(untrusting)

What are you talking about?

JENNY

You know what I'm talking about. I wouldn't necessarily want anybody to know it but I've developed a suddenliking to you.

WAYNE

(softening)

Have you, now?

JENNY

Meet me up the road at the old shirt factory. We'll go for a little drive...in my Fury.

WAYNE

You got a deal, little girl.
(grabs her arm tight, his tone changing)
But you better not be lying to me.

JENNY

(looks at his hand)

Why don't you save that for later?

Jenny takes off leaving Wayne alone to fantasize.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - DAY

Timothy is riding his bicycle in a slow circle in the parking lot. He stops when he hears his grandfathers tow truck coming in the distance.

Ralph and Purnell pull in. Ralph jumps out the shotgun side to find the back lot completely empty of sale cars. Purnell goes about the business of backing the dead weight of Jenny's Charger behind the fence. Ralph is completely dismayed.

RALPH

Tim, what happened? Where's Carol?

TIM

Some men came and took all the cars and then the police arrested Ms. Carol.

RALPH
Arrested Carol? Are you sure?

Ralph walks to the front entrance but he can't get in. Ralph tears a foreclosure notice off the door and reads it quickly.

TIM
Yeah. She kept hitting this guy from the bank and the Sheriff told her to stop, but she didn't.

The Sheriff's cruiser returns to the parking lot.

TIM (CONT'D)
Uh oh. Are they going to arrest you too, Ralph?

RALPH
(smiles at Tim)
This has all been just a great big misunderstanding. You go get in the truck, okay?

Ralph is worried. He sticks the notice in his back pocket and walks over to the cruiser.

Purnell's job is done. He lifts Tim up into the cab and shuts the door.

Ralph (from the cruiser) yells over to Purnell.

RALPH (CONT'D)
Can you make sure the gate is locked, Purnell? I'll be in touch.

Purnell shoots him a thumbs up.

TIM
Ralph said it was just a great big misunderstanding. What do you think, grandpa?

PURNELL
I think we better go home and eat dinner.

Tim pulls the matchbox cars out of his pocket, keeping an eye on Ralph inside the police cruiser as it heads away.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

The Plymouth Fury ROARS down the highway at 70 miles an hour. Jenny is allowing Wayne to feel her up while she drives.

WAYNE

Don't you worry about the cops?

JENNY

Not since they closed the main road.

WAYNE

Where we going anyway?

JENNY

My guess is we're both going to Hell but you'll be first.

Jenny pulls out her gun and places it against Wayne's head.

WAYNE

Are you trying to scare me?

JENNY

Get over against the door and roll the window down in case I hit a bump and the gun goes off. I don't want to leave a mess in Ralph's car.

WAYNE

Did Ralph put you up to this?

JENNY

(ignoring the question)
Remember when folks used this two-lane blacktop was the main highway?

Wayne is transfixed on the gun against his temple and the monotone of Jenny's voice.

JENNY (CONT'D)

I'm talking to you, asshole. Do you remember when this was the main highway?

WAYNE

Yeah. Yeah. Of course.

JENNY

There'd always be some accident in that big old curve up yonder. Folks got to calling it 'dead mans curve' after that Jan and Dean song.

WAYNE

(swallowing hard)
Yeah...

JENNY

Sing it with me...."Won't come
back from Dead Man's Curve"
....What's a matter, Wayne, you
don't know the lyrics?

WAYNE

No....

JENNY

Well, I'm going to have to slow
down a little to make the curve, or
we might both go to hell together.

WAYNE

I don't understand.

JENNY

Your best chance to survive is to
jump out in the curve when I slow
down. That's what I would do.

WAYNE

Jump out?

JENNY

Yeah, cause I'm just gonna speed up
again.

WAYNE

What if I don't want to jump out?

Jenny presses the gun into his forehead.

JENNY

Then I guess I'll have to take you
in the woods and shoot you in the
head, Wayne.

INT. JAILHOUSE - DAY

Carol squeezes her figure into a tight orange prisoner
jumpsuit. She hands her morning clothes (including 'poofy'
house shoes) to a very no-nonsense heavysset female attendant
who places everything into a cardboard box.

ATTENDANT

Your clothes will be returned when
you pay your bail. Is that clear?

CAROL

(nodding her head)
How much is my bail?

ATTENDANT

(looking at a clipboard)
Sheriff set the bail at\$500.
Payable by debit, cash or check.

Carol is stunned into gloomy silence. The attendant walks away. Carol looks at her new clothes with disgust, returning to sit on the cot. Carol hears footsteps in the hall.

RALPH

Carol?

Ralph arrives at the cell. Carol doesn't look at him or stand. Ralph breaks the silence.

RALPH (CONT'D)

I apologize for letting the bank
business get out of hand. The
foreclosure is clearly my fault.
I'm sorry. But getting arrested
like this....I'm not sure what you
were thinking, Carol.

CAROL

(hushed anger)
They took my baby. I figured if it
was going to be behind bars, then I
might as well be behind bars too.

RALPH

Of course you did.

CAROL

They would have taken your Fury if
it had been there. They wouldn't
have thought twice about it.

RALPH

Let's keep that on the down-low.

Carol steps up to Ralph, separated by iron bars.

CAROL

Here's what I want you do. I want
you to go see Danny. Tell him what
happened and get a loan for \$500.

RALPH

(shocked)
I suppose you could pay him by
getting your old job back?

CAROL

Maybe. Whatever it takes.

RALPH
(mocking her)
"Whatever it takes."
(anger rising)
I'm not asking that asshole for
nothing, you hear me?

CAROL
(anger rising)
Ralph, this is no time to be petty.
I'm stuck in a goddamn jail cell.

RALPH
(sarcasm)
Looks like we got an honest
disagreement and no way to race
about it.

Carol finally looks at Ralph with a vengeance.

CAROL
Is this funny to you?

RALPH
It's like I said, I take
responsibility for the foreclosure -
and the divorce and everything we
talked about, but you getting
arrested is your business. It's a
big world out there and you just
stepped into it.

CAROL
Ralph, We're still married. You
have to help me. "In sickness and
in health" and all that other
bullshit.

RALPH
Those words only matter when you
mean them and you told me they
didn't matter to you anymore.

CAROL
Are you saying you're going to let
me rot in here?

RALPH
(overwhelmed)
I'm saying I need to figure out
where I can get \$500. And while I'm
doing that, I'll see if I can get
your car back.

Carol goes back to the cot, sits, and stares at the wall. She knows exploding in anger is pointless.

CAROL

Good idea, Ralph. Get my baby back.
Then we'll worry about me.

Ralph puts his face up to the bars. He loves her but they are both stubborn and practical people.

RALPH

I'll try to come back with some
good news.

CAROL

You know where to find me.

Ralph walks away from the cell. Sheriff Stanton is nearby and has overheard the entire conversation.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - DAY

The Plymouth Fury squeals, taking the curve slow but hard, then Jenny begins to accelerate extremely fast, counting the rising speedometer needle in ten mile-an-hour chunks.

JENNY

50...60...70...You should have
jumped out when you had the chance.
I'm running out of numbers, Wayne.

Wayne can't take it anymore. He leaps from the car, his body rolling and tumbling down the two-lane blacktop.

Jenny hits the brakes, squeals to a stop and checks the rear-view mirror. Wayne is moving. He's still alive.

Driving in reverse SUPER FAST and using her rear view mirror, Jenny treats Wayne like a speed bump, running over his body.

INT. JAILHOUSE - DAY

The Sheriff walks up to Carol's cell. Carol is brooding on the side of her cot. The Sheriff lights up a cigarillo.

SHERIFF

I think I know what the problem is
between you and Ralph.

Carol is taken aback by the Sheriff's random remark.

CAROL

What makes you think I care?

SHERIFF

Oh, I know you don't care what people think. That's part of your problem.

CAROL

Well why don't you tell me what the problem is, Sheriff?

SHERIFF

Ralph's gonna let you stay in here awhile cause he's mad at you for winning that race last night.

CAROL

If that's what you care to think.

SHERIFF

Now, what y'all were racing about is your business.

CAROL

You're damn right, it is.

SHERIFF

A man like Ralph don't like to lose, especially to a woman.

CAROL

Why don't you stick to what you do best? Being a small town hick Nazi?

The Sheriff rolls the cigarillo sideways in his mouth, turns, and walks away down the corridor, chuckling to himself.

EXT/INT. BANK - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Johnson, the bank manager greets Ralph in his office at the bank. Mr. Johnson has a splint on his right wrist, which prevents him from shaking hands with Ralph.

MR. JOHNSON

Welcome Mr. Priddy. Now, listen, we don't want any trouble.

RALPH

There won't be any trouble if we get my wife's car back. The GTO.

MR. JOHNSON

Oh yes....your wife.

(strokes his injured
wrist)

I just can't do that. It's against
the rules.

RALPH

I race cars. I understand rules.

MR. JOHNSON

You race cars professionally?

RALPH

No. We do it out on the two-lane
blacktop. Just me and Carol.

MR. JOHNSON

Maybe you could make some money to
pay back what you owe the bank by
racing. Legally, that is.

RALPH

We don't race legal. We race to
settle disagreements, arguments,
....life decisions.

Mr. Johnson looks at Ralph with a blank expression.

MR. JOHNSON

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

RALPH

The bottom line is, what did you do
with my wife's GTO?

Mr. Johnson offers Ralph to take a seat.

MR. JOHNSON

It's in the impound lot with all
the other cars from Rebel Auto. The
money from the sale of these cars
will pay back what you owe the
bank. Along with the property, of
course. That's the only bottom line
that really matters.

RALPH

You can have the lot and everything
that's on it. But the GTO was a
gift from my father to Carol when
we were first married.

(MORE)

RALPH (CONT'D)

My dad passed away and left me the business. It's obvious I don't know how to run a used car lot - or even a marriage. This whole episode has made me realize that Carol and I don't belong together. We need to get a divorce. She's going to need that car back.

Mr. Johnson scribbles with a pen on bank stationary the whole time Ralph is talking.

MR. JOHNSON

Listen, I'm not a marriage counselor, I'm a loan officer and the vice president of this bank.

RALPH

If Carol doesn't have her GTO then she doesn't have a leg to stand on.

A light bulb goes off in Mr. Johnson's bald head.

MR. JOHNSON

(snapping his fingers)

You know, Mr. Priddy, on more than one occasion I caught your wife's floor show at the Lounge. Perhaps she could return to the stage and pick up some money there.

(smiling)

...so to speak.

Ralph takes an automatic dislike to Mr. Johnson. Ralph gets up and leans over the desk.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Is that a bad idea?

RALPH

Depends on who you talk to. And right now you're talking to me.

MR. JOHNSON

Now, Mr. Priddy, just calm down or I'll have to call Security.

Ralph backs away.

RALPH

No sense of me and Carol both being in jail. You'd like that, wouldn't you Mr. Johnson?

Ralph walks out of the office and shuts the door.

EXT. MUDHOLE IN THE WOODS - AFTERNOON

The trunk is open on the Fury. The scene is obscured and shaded by cedar trees that line the old two-lane black top. Distant sounds from the nearby 4 lane highway can be heard.

Jenny uses a large stick to push Wayne Wiley's body, headfirst, into the mud hole. Wayne's body disappears into the muck and mire accompanied by a strange sucking sound.

Task completed, Wayne's feet remain sticking out of the hole. Jenny, flummoxed and coated in sweat, gives an extra push as Wayne's feet sink down until all the evidence is gone.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - AFTERNOON

The sun is setting but it's still a hot August day. Ralph steps inside a phone booth on the corner next to Rebel Auto. He digs deep to find a coin to deposit in the slot and dials the rotary number.

The phone rings on the other end.

DREKKS OTHELLO
(over phone)
Lounge.

RALPH
Is Danny there?

DREKKS OTHELLO
(over phone)
Yeah, hold on a second.

Ralph hears a fumbling of the receiver on the other end.

DANNY
(over phone)
Yeah, this is Danny. How can I help you?

Ralph freezes and can't (or won't) speak.

DANNY (CONT'D)
(over phone)
Is this some kind of prank phone call? Hello? HELLO?

CLIK. Ralph hangs up the phone and rubs his temples.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - DUSK

Ralph tries the locked door again. He sees Jenny's Charger.

Ralph unlocks the fence gate and sits on the hood of the Charger, at a loss. A black cat leaps up on the hood beside Ralph. The cat arches his back as Ralph strokes his fur.

RALPH

Hey kitty. This loner needs some advice.

The cat meows at Ralph, probably wanting something to eat.

RALPH (CONT'D)

What's that? Rob the bank and leave town and find a place that fits my soul? Smart kitty.

The sun begins to set in the west.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Ralph's Fury is parked at the motel outside Jenny's door just off the two lane blacktop. The red MOTEL sign gives the noir world a pinkish hue.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jenny exits the bathroom in white panties and a t-shirt. She sits on the bed brushing her long blonde hair.

Jenny lays her head on polyester pillows and looks at the calendar on the nightstand. The first 7 days of August have been crossed out. She crosses out August 8th. August 14th has a big red X.

Jenny closes her eyes.

EXT. TOWN BANK - NIGHT

Ralph rides Tim's bicycle through the small deserted town. Ralph is twice as big as the bike so it's a comical image.

Ralph passes by the bank, gives it a glance, then makes a wide turn and comes back around and stops. He walks up to the bank with trepidation, looking through the large glass hand-lettered window that reads "Town Bank & Trust".

Ralph's reflection speaks.

RALPH'S REFLECTION

Hey Ralph. Why didn't you punch
that guys lights out when you had a
chance?

Ralph looks around. Is he being pranked? Ralph thinks he's
losing his mind and laughs to himself, answering back.

RALPH

I don't know. I wanted to real bad.

RALPH'S REFLECTION

That's what I thought. You're
losing your instincts. Like you've
lost everything else.

RALPH

Shut up.

RALPH'S REFLECTION

You lost your family business. Your
wife lost her car. Now you lost
your wife.

RALPH

That's bullshit!

RALPH REFLECTION

Then last night you lost the most
important race of your life.

In a blind rage, Ralph clenches his knuckles, lashing out at
his own image. His right fist SHATTERS the bank window. It
explodes upon impact, glass fragments reigning down on Ralph
who barely covers his eyes in time. Ralph steps back as he
flinches in pain. His hand is bruised and bleeding.

Ralph waits for the punishing sound of the alarm but nothing
happens. Ralph looks around and gets his courage up.

Ralph steps inside the dark bank lobby. He walks around the
counter where all the trays are open - but with no money.

After some time, Ralph steps outside the broken glass, grabs
up Tim's bicycle and rides away, checking over his shoulder.

The alarm never comes. The town is dead and no one cares.

EXT. JACKSON STATE PRISON - DAY

Jenny's rusted Charger pulls into the security area. The
guard sees that Jenny Carter's I.D. matches her face. She is
searched, then allowed through. Jenny is no longer pregnant.

INT. PRISON MEETING AREA

Jenny enters a bland florescent area where family members can speak to inmates over the phone while visible through glass. Her boyfriend Ronnie Earl is already seated. We only see him from behind. Jenny avoids looking directly at him.

RONNIE EARL

Jenny, you're looking good.

Jenny takes her time picking up the receiver.

JENNY

Hey Ronnie Earl.

RONNIE EARL

Where you been? I haven't seen you in years.

JENNY

I did my time. I been working...and listening to you on the radio. You're kinda famous around here.

RONNIE EARL

The guards tell me I got a face for radio.

JENNY

Oh. That's just...that's just terrible.

RONNIE EARL

We're all like a bunch of brothers.

JENNY

I'm surprised you're still alive.

RONNIE EARL

That's one of the things I wanted to tell you. I'm getting out of here in 2 weeks....on August 14th.

A ripple of shock and dismay courses through Jenny.

JENNY

I thought you were on death row?

RONNIE EARL

It's been five years. They're letting me out on good behavior.

JENNY
(quietly astonished)
Good....behavior?

RONNIE EARL
My radio show has brought more
inmates to the Lord Jesus Christ
than any preacher that's come in
these doors.

JENNY
So you can just....butcher a family
then play some songs on the radio
and all is forgiven? The jails must
more overcrowded than I thought.

RONNIE EARL
Are you doubting my sincerity when
it comes to the Lord Jesus?

JENNY
I doubt everyone's sincerity when
it comes to the Lord Jesus.

RONNIE EARL
(laughing)
You have a point. Nobody is
innocent. We're all capable of some
pretty horrible things, aren't we?

Ronnie Earl leans toward the glass, his long stringy hair
frames an intensely terrifying, disfigured face that is split
down the middle. Jenny is repulsed and looks away.

RONNIE EARL (CONT'D)
....Like the lie you told about our
baby dying.

JENNY
You're delusional. Our baby has
been dead and buried for years.

RONNIE EARL
People I know on the outside told
me you had him and gave him away
for adoption.

JENNY
That is a crazy, fucked up lie.

RONNIE EARL
I want to believe you, just show me
the proof when I get out of here.

JENNY

(incredulous)

What do you want me to do? Dig him up and show him to you?

RONNIE EARL

If you can't present me with the body of my son, then I'm going to kill you, on the spot, as the Lord is my witness.

Jenny drops the receiver and bows her head.

JENNY

Dear God. No.

Ronnie Earl raps on the glass. Jenny lifts her head as if he was guiding it. Ronnie Earl makes the peace sign and mouths the words.

RONNIE EARL

Two weeks.

An officer taps Ronnie Earl on the shoulder and points to his watch. Ronnie Earl is escorted from the room. Jenny hangs up the phone and begins a quiet panic.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT 2

Jenny wakes abruptly from her flashback. Someone is knocking on her motel room door. It's the same knock as Ronnie Earl when he tapped on the prison glass.

Jenny reaches for her gun and gets out of bed, putting her back against the door.

JENNY

Who is it?

RALPH

It's Ralph.

Jenny throws open the door, gun ready. Ralph steps inside rolling Tim's bicycle and maintaining his bruised hand.

JENNY

So now you're loaning me a bicycle?

RALPH

Very funny.

JENNY

What are you doing here?

RALPH
I need a drink.

JENNY
What's wrong with your hand?

RALPH
Smashed out a bank window.

A deputies car with siren blazing passes down the blacktop, close enough to give both Jenny and Ralph a sense of dread. Ralph closes the door.

JENNY
Been a long day, hasn't it?

RALPH
If you shoot me now I won't be able
to fix your car.

Jenny realizes she still has her gun drawn. She and Ralph are desperate and worn out but are capable of half-smiles. She throws the gun on the bed and attends to Ralph's hand.

Jenny's bedside radio plays church bells. It's midnight.

INT. JAIL HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

Church Bells. Carol sits up in her cot. An inmate in the next cell has tuned into Ronnie Earl's Midnight Murder ballads.

CAROL
Hey, turn up the radio.

PRISONER
Can't turn it up. Sheriff takes the
radio if it gets too loud.

Carol paces the cell like a nervous animal while Ronnie Earl does his introductory "Jesus" spiel.

PRISONER (CONT'D)
You a murderer?

CAROL
No, I'm a dancer.

PRISONER
This Ronnie Earl dude - he's a
murderer. Killed a family in a
convenience store. Sheriff first
put him in that very cell you're in
right now.

(MORE)

PRISONER (CONT'D)

Ever since they ain't been nothing
but murderers in that cell.

CAROL

No kidding?

PRISONER

No kidding. Check out the wall just
under the sink.

Carol looks under the sink. She finds the letters "R.E.
(heart) J.C.".

CAROL

"Ronnie Earl loves Jesus Christ".

Carol runs her fingers over the initials and listens to the
staticky, muted sounds of R.E. and Midnight Murder Ballads.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Isn't that something?

SHERIFF

When you go out and kill people
wholesale, Jesus is the only friend
you got.

Sheriff Stanton stands outside the cell watching her the
whole time as the radio continues to play. Carol quickly
stands up and brushes herself off.

CAROL

Are we playing the radio too loud?

SHERIFF

Naw, you just something to look at.

CAROL

Never seen a stripper in an orange
suit before?

Sheriff Stanton lights up his cigarillo.

SHERIFF

Not really. I don't get to arrest
as many 'strippers' as I should.

CAROL

They're just trying to make a
living like anybody else.

Sheriff lights a second cigarillo off of his and offers it
through the bars. Carol walks over and takes it.

SHERIFF

I wanted to apologize for getting rough with you today. Normally, women don't resist arrest.

CAROL

So what you need, Sheriff? Your dick sucked?

SHERIFF

I reckon just about always.

CAROL

Why don't you ask one of your little deputies.

Sheriff Stanton chuckles at her nerve.

SHERIFF

I got a question for you. How do you feel about stretching them long legs of yours by putting on a little strip tease show for the inmates.

CAROL

Is that legal?

SHERIFF

If I say it is.

CAROL

Give you a chance to look at my tits too, I imagine.

SHERIFF

Sure. Think of it as a USO tour for a bunch of rednecks who need to let off a little steam - and I'd be your Bob Hope.

CAROL

What are you offering?

SHERIFF

How about bail?

CAROL

All of it?

SHERIFF

All I got to do is burn the paper it was written on.

Carol leans up against the wall, enjoys her cigarillo, and weighs her options.

CAROL

Well don't just stand there. Go get my stuff.

The Sheriff smiles a big shit-eating grin.

EXT. MAIN STREET/ TOWN BANK - NIGHT

From an alley, the Fury pulls out on main street and cruises slowly by the Town Bank. It's after midnight and the streets are empty and silent. The radio plays murder ballads low.

Jenny (driving) and Ralph (riding shotgun) see that the bank window has been covered in yellow police tape.

RALPH

You believe me now?

JENNY

I always believed you, Ralph.

Ralph takes a sip of whiskey.

RALPH

The moment I broke that window, all these thoughts came into my head. A way to get out of town, a way to pay for a divorce. A way to be free.

JENNY

So what's your plan?

RALPH

I'm gonna rob that bank like it robbed me. I want you to help me. Carol too.

Jenny, in turn, takes a drink from the whiskey bottle.

JENNY

You been thinking about this, huh?

RALPH

You got guns and we got cars.

JENNY

Have you forgotten that Carol is in jail?

RALPH

Once I get her out, she'll have
nothing to lose. You'll see.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - NIGHT

Ralph and Jenny hit the blacktop in the Fury. Midnight Murder
Ballads continues to play at low volume on the car radio.

JENNY

If you want me to, I could ask
Danny about the money.

RALPH

It's like I told Carol. I don't
want to ask him for nothing.

JENNY

If Danny knew Carol was in jail, he
would want to help.

Ralph is silent. He takes another slug of whiskey.

RALPH

Carol was cheating on me with
Danny.

Jenny laughs and reaches for the bottle.

RALPH (CONT'D)

Go ahead and laugh if you want.

JENNY

You gotta admit, Ralph, that's
kinda crazy.

Jenny finishes the bottle.

RALPH

It's the truth. She was never home.
She just acted different the whole
time she worked at the Lounge.

JENNY

So what happened?

RALPH

I told her she'd have to stop
dancing but she refused. She told
me I was being delusional. So we
raced....and I won.

JENNY

Danny told me you didn't want her dancing at the club.

RALPH

Now you know why.

Ralph uses his bandaged hand to throw the empty whiskey bottle out the car window at the Jackson County sign. It shatters as the Fury races past.

JENNY

Hey. Be careful with your hand. Kind of a miracle that nothing was hurt too bad.

RALPH

I need a miracle all right. I don't know what I'm going to do. The bank took everything.

JENNY

Everything?

RALPH

Yeah. Every single car.

Ralph's words send a chill down Jenny's spine.

JENNY

What about my Charger?

RALPH

Jenny, the bank doesn't even know it's there.

JENNY

How do you know they didn't come back and take it already?

Jenny turns the Fury around and heads back toward town.

INT. JAILHOUSE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Carol walks down the corridor in her earlier wardrobe, escorted by the Sheriff and two deputies. The noise of the prisoners gets louder as they approach the rec room doors.

She rifles through her purse full of cassette tapes.

SHERIFF

What are you looking for?

CAROL
My favorite song.

They arrive at the double doors that lead into the jailhouse rec room. Carol hears the inmates making a big noise.

Carol finds a cassette and hands it to the Sheriff.

CAROL (CONT'D)
Side 2. 1st song.

SHERIFF
You wait here.

CAROL
Oh...can you grab me some duct tape.

SHERIFF
What the hell for?

CAROL
Cover up my nipples.

SHERIFF
(looking at the deputies)
I guess you better go get some goddamn duct tape, boys.

The Sheriff goes through the door to the absolute jeers of the inmates. Carol waits and collects her nerves.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - NIGHT

The Fury pulls into Rebel Auto and stops. Jenny gets out and Ralph follows. The Charger is safely locked behind the fence.

RALPH
Thar she blows.

JENNY
(sigh of relief)
Okay. I had to see for myself.

RALPH
It'll be fixed and on the highway before they even know it's here.

JENNY
Tomorrow, right?

RALPH
I'll give it my best shot.

Jenny strokes his face.

JENNY

I got faith in you, Ralph.

Jenny leans in and kisses Ralph on the cheek. Impulsively his bandaged hand brings her face in closer to his.

Ralph and Jenny begin to kiss.

INT. JAIL / REC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

All the deputies are lined up across the back wall.

The Sheriff gets up on the little ragtag stage in front of microphone. About fifty inmates are seated in a concrete room which looks like a yellow and orange high school lunch room with dirt coated white tables.

SHERIFF

All right y'all. Shut up.

(louder)

I said SHUT UP.

The crowd stops mingling and looks at the Sheriff.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Y'all been bitching and complaining that I don't do nothing for you.

Well you'd be right.

The inmates yell obscenities at the Sheriff.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

That's fine. Go ahead. Y'all are all gonna be shipped off to Jackson soon enough. But before you go, I thought I'd give us all a little memory to take with you....

The rancor of the men is LOUD. They hate the Sheriff's guts and they are letting it be known.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Let her in, boys. Guard her good.

The Rec Room doors open wide. Carol is still trying to get duct tape to cover her other breast. She quickly straightens up and walks in the door, flanked by a deputy on either side.

Shock and awe. The prisoners lower their voices to a murmur. Is this a vision from God? It can't be happening. Carol gives a nervous smile as the deputies lead her up on stage.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

If you didn't catch Carol's act across the county line, then you are in luck tonight. I've asked her to perform one song. I know y'all don't have any money to stuff in her panties and that's just fine. Cause if anyone so much as lays one finger on Ms. Carol here, my deputies will beat you within an inch of your life.

PRISONER

(somewhere in the room)
Might be worth it.

The inmates breaks out laughing. Carol laughs then realizes the reality might not be that funny. The Sheriff goes over and stands by a stereo bought at a thrift store decades before. The inmates hold their breath for the show to start.

SHERIFF

You ready?

CAROL

Side 2. First song.

SHERIFF

Yep.

CAROL

Make it loud.

The Sheriff puts in the cassette and hits PLAY. Pre-song tape hiss emits from a set of old (duct-taped) speakers.

CAROL (CONT'D)

You know, some women dance cause they're putting their kids through school. Some dance to support their drug habit. Me? I just love Chuck Berry.

The opening riff to Chuck Berry's "CAROL" begins.

CAROL (CONT'D)

"Oh Carol, don't let him steal your heart away. I'm gonna learn to dance if it takes me all night and day."

Carol prowls the stage letting the men get to know her. They loosen up immediately. Some begin to clap along.

Carol is more of a classic burlesque dancer than she is a "stripper" (or a singer) but she lip-syncs the words. It's been six months but it all come back.

CAROL (CONT'D)

"Climb into my machine so we can
cruise on out. I know a swinging'
little joint where we can jump and
shout.
It's not too far back off the
highway, not so long a ride
You park your car out in the open,
you can walk inside."

Stepping off the stage to the rhythm of the song, Carol drapes her gown over the men in classic style without any thought to harm. The feeling of 50 men wanting to consume her as much as they want to escape entices Carol and turns her on. The rush is thrilling. The Sheriff observes all.

Carol climbs up on a table as the men vie for the best spot to watch her take off the few pieces of clothing she has left. Her every move is calculated. Carol is a professional, tip-toeing through a den of snakes.

CAROL (CONT'D)

"A little cutie takes your hat and
you can thank her, ma'am.
Every time you make the scene you
find the joint is jammed."

Carol shakes her ass in an inmates face. He reaches out to touch her but she scolds him, shaking a finger in his face. He won't take "no" for an answer and grabs at Carol's chiffon gown, ripping it from her body. She covers her breasts as to not give away the "big" ending.

CAROL (CONT'D)

"And if you want to hear some music
like the boys are playing
Hold tight, pat your foot, don't
let 'em carry it away.
"Don't let the heat overcome you
when they play so loud."

The deputies close in fast with billy clubs and come down hard on the prisoner. For a moment there is sheer anarchy.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Oh, don't the music intrigue you
when they get a crowd. You can't
dance, I know you wish you could. I
got my eyes on you baby, 'cause you
dance so good."

Carol has been taught to keep dancing, living in the moment. Blood splatters on her pink, poofy high heeled shoes.

Sex, violence, blood, comedy - it's all here at her feet. The room has turned into a violent scene of fisticuffs: Inmates throwing chairs and the deputies trying to maintain order.

CAROL (CONT'D)

"Oh Carol! Don't let him steal your heart away. I've got to learn to dance if it takes you all night and day."

The dance and song ENDS with Carol proudly presenting her big lovely breasts, nipples covered discreetly by duct tape. She spins her breasts as if they were tasseled propellers and almost loses her footing, laughing.

Sheriff Stanton yells at the deputies.

SHERIFF

Get her out of here!

Two deputies pick Carol up off her feet and out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. REBEL AUTO - NIGHT

BANG! Wood and metal splinter as Ralph's boot smashes the padlock on the door of Rebel Auto. Jenny joins him inside the door, laughing, and drunk.

He picks Jenny up and throws her down on the waiting room couch. Jenny unbuttons her blouse. The key to the Charger dangles around her neck on a small chain. Ralph unbuckles his belt. There is no doubting what they intend to do next. Jenny spreads her legs and Ralph crawls in between.

The family photographs on the wall and Carol's hastily placed suitcase bear witness to their love-making.

INT. JAILHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CLANG. The deputy closes the jail doors.

Carol, out of breath but exhilarated, checks out the tear in her chiffon robe before placing it back in the cardboard box inside the tiny cell.

Sheriff Stanton suddenly appears.

SHERIFF

Henry, they need you back down
there in the rec room.

Carol overhears the exchange. The deputy waddles off. Sheriff Stanton opens her jail door and steps inside with a transistor radio playing the bottom hour of Midnight Murder Ballads.

The space in the cell becomes more claustrophobic. Carol is half naked and trying to cover herself.

CAROL

Do you mind? I'm trying to put my
clothes back on, what few I have.

SHERIFF

I don't mind.

Carol realizes the Sheriff isn't going anywhere. She drops the pretense and dresses in front of him.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

That was some performance. You damn
near caused a riot.

CAROL

Good. I wanted to make sure I
covered my bail.

The Sheriff hands Carol the Chuck Berry cassette. When Carol reaches for it, the Sheriff grabs her arm.

CAROL (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing?

SHERIFF

You just about covered it.

Carol punches the Sheriff in the face and busts his lip.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

(chuckles)

You redheads are like wild horses.

They tangle for a second but the Sheriff overpowers her, throwing her on the cot.

CAROL

Why are you doing this?!

SHERIFF

This might be the closest I ever
get to heaven....even if I have to
force my way in.

Carol screams for help. He slaps her hard and she falls onto
the concrete floor.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Don't make me cut your tongue out.

Stanton grabs his radio and turns up Ronnie Earl's Midnight
Murder Ballads. Carol has lost everything and now she's out
of strength and about to lose even more.

Sheriff Stanton rapes Carol.

Visual flashes INTERCUT with shots of Ralph and Jenny making
love at Rebel Auto. The sounds of steel guitar and country
crooning about death and prison obscure Carol's muffled
screams and Jenny's orgasm.

FLASHBACK 1

The sun rises over the hills near the Jailhouse. The sunlight
flickers.

It is not real. It is an artificial beam projecting light
through the emulsion of hand-held grainy super 8 film.

Ralph and Carol are younger and it's their wedding day. A
dozen people throw rice as the couple run outside Rebel Auto
to find the GTO and the Fury, each with "Just Married"
scrawled on the back glass. Ralph's dad hands them each a set
of keys. Carol flips a coin to see which car they will take.

Before we see heads or tails, the film burns out.

INT. JAILHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Carol, recovering in shock, tears dried on her face, lays on
her cot, folding a piece of paper in three halves.

The sound of a billy club on the bars sends her into a quiet
panic. She hurriedly stuffs the carefully folded paper into a
nearby envelope with "Promised Land" written on the front and
places it in her orange jumpsuit pocket.

ATTENDANT

Carol Priddy. Your bail has been
covered. Please come with me.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Other office workers go about their business. Carol sits in a cubicle in her orange uniform.

ATTENDANT

That's all the clothes you have?

Numb, Carol shakes her head.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

(knowing more than she's
letting on)

I'll see about getting you some
street clothes.

CAROL

He raped me.

(repeating to make sure
the Attendant hears it)

He...raped....me.

Carol reaches in her orange pocket and pulls out the envelope marked "Promised Land". She offers it to the Attendant.

CAROL (CONT'D)

I saved the evidence. What I could.
It's inside this envelope.

The Attendant stops typing and stares at the envelope in Carol's outstretched hand.

ATTENDANT

I'll go get you those clothes now.

The Attendant steps away. Carol realizes that no one cares.

Carol returns the envelope to her pocket. She begins to whisper the words to "Promised Land" The words give her strength.

CAROL

(crying softly)

"I left my home in Norfolk
Virginia, California on my mind.
I straddled that Greyhound
And rode into Raleigh and on across
Caroline..."

EXT. REBEL AUTO - MORNING

The sun rises over the cedar trees lining the two-lane blacktop next to Rebel Auto.

Carol's narrative voice continues.

CAROL

(V.O.)

"We had motor trouble that turn into a struggle halfway across Alabam'. And that hound broke down and left us all stranded in downtown Birmingham...."

INT. REBEL AUTO - CONTINUOUS

Jenny lies next to Ralph on the waiting room couch, reading the foreclosure notice. Ralph is still trying to sleep.

JENNY

"You are hereby notified that unless you pay within 30 days from the date thereof, to the undersigned holder and owner of the said Agreement at the office address of Town Bank which is listed below, the sum of fifty thousand dollars."

Ralph, half-awake, grabs the flyer from Jenny's hands, wads it up, and chunks it across the room. The paper-wad bounces off Carol's hot pink suitcase.

Jenny gets up and stretches. Ralph watches her body sway in panties and t-shirt through the windowed sunlight.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Looks to me like we're both trespassing.

RALPH

Just make yourself at home.

Jenny contemplates Ralph's easy-going nature and walks over to look at family pictures on the wall.

JENNY

I really don't know you at all. Considering how well I know you.

RALPH

What do you wanna know?

Jenny points to a picture of a Ralph at 21, striking a pose in athletic gear and boxing gloves. He had a name then.

JENNY

"Rebel Ralph". You really were a boxer.

RALPH

I was. Until I killed a guy.

JENNY

(surprised)

You killed a guy in the ring?

Ralph, shirtless, gets up and reaches for his jeans.

RALPH

If you're going to kill someone, I recommend you do it in a ring, with a lot of witnesses. The whole town was there.

(reliving the moment)

It was an accident, of course, but that was the end of my career. So I came back here to help my dad.

Jenny follows the photographs like a sequential story. Ralph makes coffee. Jenny finds a teenage picture of Carol looking mature but vulnerable in Ralph's oversized leather jacket.

JENNY

Then you met Carol.

RALPH

Carol totaled her daddy's car when she was sixteen. He brought her in here to buy another one. I was twenty-two when I laid eyes on her. We got married a year later.

Jenny begins to laugh.

RALPH (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

JENNY

Last night all you could talk was robbing that bank. "I'm gonna rob that bank like it robbed me."

RALPH

You're making fun of me?

JENNY

Ralph, the only experience you got with crime is killing somebody legal....and robbing the cradle.

RALPH
 (first sip of coffee)
 Don't forget trespassing.

JENNY
 What were you and Carol racing
 about the night before last.

RALPH
 The night you and I met?
 (breathes deep)
 I want a son. Plain and simple.
 Teach him how to fix the engine on
 an old car, maybe throw a punch if
 he needs to. Someone to give my
 name to. But Carol doesn't want
 kids. She never has. So I lost that
 race.

JENNY
 Is that why you put a hole in the
 wall?

RALPH
 Carol put that hole in the wall
 after she couldn't dance at the
 Lounge anymore. She had her hand in
 a cast for weeks.

JENNY
 Carol doesn't like to lose.

RALPH
 Who does?

Ralph sits his coffee down and grabs a cardboard box and
 dumps it's contents on the floor. He begins to take the
 framed pictures off the wall and places them in the box.

RALPH (CONT'D)
 I'm taking these pictures with me,
 before the bank gets them.

Jenny helps him until all the pictures fit snugly into the
 cardboard box. Ralph turns to Jenny and runs his fingers
 through her blonde hair.

Jenny grabs Ralph's bandaged hand and kisses it. Jenny leads
 Ralph toward Carol's room. They stop in the doorway beside
 the hole in the wall.

RALPH (CONT'D)
 What are you doing?

JENNY

You want a son, don't you?

INT. CAROL'S ROOM - REBEL AUTO

Jenny opens the door that reads "front office" revealing Carol's hot pink bedroom walls and bedding. Jenny leads Ralph to Carol's bed.

The room looks like a train wreck from when Tim tried to pack Carol's suitcase. Carol's white king-size bed takes up most of the space.

Jenny sits on the bed as Ralph stands, shirtless, in front of her.

RALPH

This is Carol's room. It doesn't feel right to be in here.

JENNY

Punching out windows and killing people and planning bank robberies don't feel right either, Ralph.

Jenny unbuckles Ralph's belt.

INT. REBEL AUTO - CONTINUOUS

Carol opens the door to Rebel Auto. She is bruised and disheveled and dressed in ill-fitting men's work clothes.

Carol spots her hot pink suitcase, places it on the waiting room couch and begins to rifle through it. Suddenly Carol hears sounds coming from her bedroom.

Carol walks to the doorway.

INT. CAROL'S ROOM - REBEL AUTO

Carol hasn't slept or eaten. She is a rape victim - and now she finds another woman making love to her estranged husband in her own bedroom.

CAROL

(to Jenny)

Is this how you're paying back Ralph?

RALPH

Oh shit.

Ralph and Jenny separate. Jenny freezes on the bed.

CAROL
 (in shock)
 Sorry, I know you hate surprises,
 Ralph.

RALPH
 How did you get out of jail?

Ralph reaches for his pants. Carol does an 'about-face'.

CAROL
 With no help from you, I can assure
 you that. I just came back for my
 suitcase. That's all.

INT. REBEL AUTO - WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ralph follows Carol into the waiting room. Jenny stops short
 at Carol's bedroom door. Carol grabs her hot pink suitcase.

CAROL
 (slow burn)
 Ya know I gotta say, whether you're
 getting it on in my private bedroom
 or your fathers business office,
 it's still a tacky move, Ralph.

RALPH
 Carol, I -

Carol shushes him as she stops in the open doorway leading
 outside. There's one more thing she has to get off chest.

CAROL
 (fuming)
 Since this might be the last time I
 ever see you, Ralph, there's
 something I should tell you. I
 wasn't having an affair with my
 boss Danny. I was having an affair
 with his bartender.

RALPH
 (in shock, to Jenny)
 What? Is that true?

JENNY
 Really, Carol? Did you have to
 bring that up right now?

CAROL

Go on, tell him. Tell him how you're really just pretending to be straight to get what you want.

JENNY

Shut up. You're the crazy bitch that left me. Over something as stupid as inconvenience.

CAROL

I had to quit the club.
(pointing at Ralph)
You can thank him for that. But I see you already have.

Carol pulls her hot pink suitcase through the door as she heads for the highway. Ralph's primary concern is Carol.

RALPH

Carol! Wait.

JENNY

I think you need to let her go.

From the doorway, Ralph watches Carol reach the edge of the black top. She sticks out her thumb to hitchhike.

RALPH

Carol! Come back here! Please.

Within seconds, a truck pulls over and Carol hops in.

Ralph comes back inside the doorway and shuts the door. Jenny is getting dressed. Ralph is not angry, he stares into space.

RALPH (CONT'D)

When our marriage started falling apart, me and Carol raced about whether we could see other people. I wanted to have an open marriage. She didn't. She won that race...but then I guess she met you.

JENNY

She didn't want to hurt your feelings, Ralph. I don't either.

RALPH

How long were you seeing each other?

JENNY

Valentines through April Fools.

Ralph, lost in thought, continues to stare out at the highway where Carol use to be only moments ago.

RALPH

Considering what an asshole I've been, I have no right to be hurt.

JENNY

Ralph, I know I've made things worse and I'm sorry.

Jenny hands Ralph the keys to the Fury. He rejects them.

RALPH

We need to stay focused.

PURNELL'S HOUSE - DAY

Carol is dropped off in front of a quaint little orange house with white trim. She climbs the weathered steps and knocks on the door. The heat is now almost unbearable to Carol's body and mind.

Purnell answers the door.

PURNELL

Carol. You doing all right?

CAROL

(exhausted)

Do you still have that backyard pool?

PURNELL

Yes.

Carol walks past Purnell like a zombie.

INT. PURNELLS HOUSE - DAY

Carol walks through the house. We see Purnell's collection of boxing memorabilia and pictures. One framed photo from years ago has Purnell training Ralph to be a boxer.

PURNELL

Carol? You going to be all right?

CAROL

(exhausted)

I just need to get cooled off.

Purnell follows her, concerned for her.

EXT. PURNELLS HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Carol walks out into the backyard, and climbs up the pool ladder. Purnell is trying his best to warn her before she hops in.

PURNELL

Carol, don't....that pool water is kinda dirty.

Carol deep-dives wearing her hand-me-down jail clothes. Her hands scrape the bottom of the pool kicking up a cloud of watery dust. A baptism of algae.

It is exhilarating.

Carol spots another figure in the pool with her. Under the green water there is another shape swimming towards Carol.

It is Tim.

Tim comes right up to Carol's nose and makes a face at her under the water. Carol smiles, losing her breath. Both surface at the same time. Carol laughs and Tim hugs her.

Purnell sees them through the kitchen window and shakes his head. He steps away leaving them to their fun.

For the moment, the event has taken Carol's mind off of a extremely horrible day.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - DAY

Ralph has removed the right front wheel 'fender skirt' from the Charger and is replacing the old punctured tire which lays nearby. Everything takes extra effort with a bandaged hand. A chain connects the car to a concrete pillar.

Ralph climbs in next to Jenny, chewing gum, with her feet up against the glove compartment. After many tries, the car cranks, but dies, missing on several cylinders. Ralph is persistent and the Charger cranks again.

RALPH

Hold on to something.

Ralph puts the Charger in reverse and GUNS IT. The car (and front end) loudly KERANNG and the chain tightens. Ralph gives it more gas until the back tires are smoking on the pavement. Jenny can hear the metal uncoil inside the front end of the car. The pillar that holds the chain does not budge.

Ralph lets off the gas and points at the glove compartment.

RALPH (CONT'D)
Go ahead. Try and open it.

Jenny turns the latch on the glove compartment. It pops open. Jenny reaches for the shoebox covered in duct tape and holds it close to her heart.

RALPH (CONT'D)
What is that?

JENNY
Something from my childhood....

Jenny returns the shoe box quickly to the glove compartment and gently closes the door until the latch clicks.

JENNY (CONT'D)
Thank you so much.

RALPH
Don't thank me yet.

JENNY
Car's not worth saving, is it?

RALPH
'Fraid not.

JENNY
In a couple of days, it won't really matter that much.

Jenny locks the glove compartment door with the key that she keeps around her neck.

INT. PURNELLS HOUSE - SIDEROOM - DAY

Carol steps out of the hot bath and dries with a towel. The time spent in the tub has had a soothing effect. Carol looks in the mirror and realizes she doesn't like the 'old Carol'.

Carol sits down in front of the mirror with a pair of scissors and cuts her hair. SNIP.

INT. PURNELLS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Purnell is making lunch with Tim. Carol walks in with her new look: shaggy, short red hair, wearing tight jeans, boots, and a form-fitting "Purnells Gym" t-shirt that she has found.

TIM

Ms. Carol, why did you cut your hair?

CAROL

Wanted to try something new.

PURNELL

I bet you Carol is too tired and hungry to answer questions.

(addressing Carol)

I hope you found everything all right. I made some lunch.

CAROL

(heartfelt)

Thank you. I'm not really hungry. First I have to ask you something.

PURNELL

Sure thing. What do you need?

CAROL

Can I borrow your tow truck for a couple of hours?

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

The Lounge is quiet. Sheriff Stanton sits at the bar talking with Danny. Drekks is bartender. He hands the Sheriff a shot.

SHERIFF

Your girl Carol spent last night in jail.

DANNY

(shocked)

For what?

SHERIFF

The bank showed up to foreclose on Rebel Auto. Carol wasn't too happy about it, no sir. She got the vice president in a headlock.

DANNY

She's not there now is she?

The Sheriff downs his shot and looks at the empty glass.

SHERIFF

Nah. I decided to tear up the bail request and let her go.

(MORE)

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Now that's on me. Point being,
Ralph wouldn't cover the bail.

DANNY

I suppose Ralph has other things on
his mind.

Jenny walks into the Lounge. Sheriff Stanton and Danny's
conversation abruptly ends. Drekks puts a cigarette in his
mouth and hands Jenny her work apron. She quickly puts it on
and ties it in the back, stepping behind the bar.

JENNY

It's not illegal to be a little
late, is it?

DANNY

Sheriff wants to talk to you about
Wayne Wiley.

Jenny avoids eye contact and busies herself at the bar.

JENNY

What about him?

SHERIFF

He's been missing for 24 hours. His
wife filed a report.

JENNY

She should be celebrating. He's not
allowed in here. That's all I know.

Jenny pours a shot of whiskey and kills it.

SHERIFF

I hear you and Ralph Priddy had a
real brawl in here night before
last with Wayne.

JENNY

For the record, Wayne started the
fight, then proceeded to beat the
shit out of me and Ralph Priddy.

SHERIFF

What are you doing in Ralph's car?

JENNY

What is this, an interrogation?

SHERIFF

Call it whatever you want.

JENNY

I'm borrowing Ralph's car while he fixes mine. Simple as that.

SHERIFF

Eye witnesses saw Ralph Priddy's Plymouth Fury yesterday at Real Deal Auto. Was that you in the car, or Ralph?

JENNY

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

DANNY

You want another drink, Sheriff?

Sheriff wipes his brow and puts on his hat.

SHERIFF

Naw, I better not. Some dang fool broke the front window out of the bank last night and I gotta go file a report.

Sheriff Stanton gives Jenny a second look and leaves the Lounge.

JENNY

You'd think he was trying to frame Ralph with something.

DANNY

Jenny, not everybody loves Ralph as much as you do.

JENNY

And no one hates him as much as you do, Danny.

Danny takes a deep breath and looks around. There's no one in the place except for Drekks who plays songs on the jukebox.

DANNY

Ralph's daddy sold me a used car a long time ago. A Mercury ragtop. Blood red and chrome. I've always had a thing for RED. I took that curve outside of town a little too fast. You know the one.

(Jenny nods her head)

The brakes went out.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

The car left my hands, flipped a couple of times. I was thrown clear, but not far enough. Car landed on my legs.

JENNY

I'm sorry about that, Danny.

DANNY

Yeah, well, being sorry don't change nothing.

JENNY

You can't hate Ralph for something his father did.

DANNY

He's a Priddy, ain't he? And that makes him guilty.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - AFTERNOON

Carol, wipes her sweat away with heavy work gloves then unspools the chain and heavy hook from the tow truck as she walks toward the Charger behind the open fence gate.

Carol slides under the Charger and couples the hooks around the front suspension of the massive yellow rusted body.

Carol throws the lever that pulls the Charger toward the tow truck. It fights every inch, but it's no match for the truck.

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Jenny is waiting on customers when the phone rings.

JENNY

Lounge.

PRISON OPERATOR

This is the operator at the Jackson State Penitentiary. We have an inmate Ronnie Earl Black who wishes to speak to Jenny Carter.

JENNY

That's me.

PRISON OPERATOR

You'll have 5 minutes before you are disconnected.

JENNY
(yelling to Drekks)
Drekks! Can you cover the bar,
please?

Jenny stretches the phone cord as long as it will go down to the opposite end of the bar as Drekks fills in behind her.

RONNIE EARL
(over phone)
Jenny?

JENNY
I'm at work. I can't talk for long.

RONNIE EARL
(over phone)
You wanted me to call you.

JENNY
(fast and nervous)
You'll find the baby inside a
shoebox that's inside the glove
compartment of an old model yellow
Dodge Charger.

RONNIE EARL
Slow down. Inside a shoebox?

JENNY
Yes. My room got broken into at the
motel and I just figured this was a
safer place. The shoebox is inside
my old Dodge Charger. It's parked
at a vacant car lot called Rebel
Auto.

RONNIE EARL
(over phone)
Will there be people there?

JENNY
No. The place is out of business.
As long as you can get around the
fence, you won't have any problems.
The keys are on top of the drivers
side wheel.

RONNIE EARL
(over phone)
You know I'll be needing a car.

JENNY
 (over phone)
 This one don't run. It's just a
 secure place, like a lock box.

INT. AUTOMOBILE SALVAGE YARD - AFTERNOON

The enormous hardened steel jaws of the crusher jaws open to accommodate Jenny's yellow Charger. The metal jaws begin to close, and the crusher rocks softly side to side as it brings its full force to bear. The Charger emits high-pitched noises and then - POP! - The windshield blows.

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

RONNIE EARL
 (over phone)
 Where you gonna be?

JENNY
 I'll be gone. Far away.

JENNY (CONT'D)
 Will you promise me one thing?

RONNIE EARL
 (over phone)
 Maybe.

EXT. AUTOMOBILE SALVAGE YARD - CONTINUOUS

Pop! pop! - The headlight and tail lights explode. In a matter of seconds, the Charger is less than 2 foot tall. The crusher releases the hunk of metal that was once the Charger and drops it to the ground.

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

JENNY
 I want you to bury the baby
 someplace nice and peaceful and
 never talk to me again.

RONNIE EARL
 If you give me the peace of mind I
 want then I guess I got no reason
 but to leave you alone.

JENNY
 Then you'll bury him?

RONNIE EARL
 (over phone)
 Yes.

JENNY
 Then we agree.
 (a beat)
 Goodbye Ronnie Earl.

Jenny hangs up the phone.

INT. AUTOMOBILE SALVAGE YARD OFFICE - AFTERNOON

An older lady behind the desk counts cash money into Carol's hands.

SALVAGE LADY
 100...200...300. \$300 and a
 receipt. Thank you very much.

Carol takes out a hundred dollar bill and puts the rest of the money into an envelope provided by the Salvage Yard.

CAROL
 Thank you.

SALVAGE LADY
 We also like to give a little piece
 of the car as a souvenir.

Carol accepts a tiny piece of yellow metal from the Charger. It's burnished around the edges and made into a necklace.

SALVAGE LADY (CONT'D)
 Thank you, you come back now.

Carol smiles at the lady and puts it around her neck.

INT. PURNELLS HOUSE - DUSK

Purnell and Tim are eating supper when the screen door slams shut.

CAROL
 Hello! Anybody home?

TIM
 We're in the kitchen!

Carol walks in the kitchen, looking like she's been through a bit of a workout. She tosses the tow truck keys to Purnell.

CAROL
Thank you for loaning me your
truck.

PURNELL
How did it handle?

CAROL
Just fine.

PURNELL
Pull up a chair and eat with us.

CAROL
I think I will.
(hands Purnell an
envelope)
This is for you.

Carol goes to wash her hands in the sink while Purnell opens
the envelope and much to his astonishment, finds cash.

PURNELL
....\$200!

TIM
Grandpa. We're rich!

PURNELL
Good lord, where'd you get all this
money?

CAROL
Can't say. It's a secret. I hope it
covers everything we owe you.

PURNELL
Thank you, Carol, but don't you
need some of this?

CAROL
I got enough to get out of town.

PURNELL
Get out of town? Where you going?

CAROL
Haven't decided yet.
(taking a bite of food)
Would you mind dropping me off at
the bus station? After we eat, of
course. I'm starving.
(looking at Tim)
How about you? You hungry?

TIM

Yes m'am.

Purnell smiles but wonders what's going on. The phone rings.

PURNELL

(gets up from the table)
Could be business. Excuse me.

INT. PURNELLS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Purnell walks into the next room to answer the phone. Ralph is on the other end. Carol and Tim eat in the background.

RALPH

(over phone)
Purnell. Hey, it's Ralph.

PURNELL

(talking low)
Ralph? Where you been?

EXT/INT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Ralph talks to Purnell in the familiar phone booth.

RALPH

Oh, you know me, ducking and dodging and keeping low.

PURNELL

I hear ya, Ralph.

RALPH

Say, uh, I'm just wondering if you seen my wife?

PURNELL

(over phone)
Carol is over here right now eating supper with me and Timothy.

RALPH

(lets out a deep breath)
Good. We had a rough morning, so...I'm glad she's somewhere safe.

PURNELL

(over phone)
Ralph, she wants me to take her to the bus station.

RALPH
 (concerned)
 When?

PURNELL
 (over phone)
 Soon as we eat.

RALPH
 Appreciate you telling me that,
 Purnell. Listen, don't tell her I
 called. All right?

Ralph hangs up the phone.

EXT. FARMERS HOUSE - NIGHT

Sheriff Stanton sits on the front porch of the Farmer who earlier ran Ralph off the road. His wife brings the Sheriff a glass of tea. Whippoorwills and crickets make night noises.

SHERIFF
 Thank you, m'am.

FARMER
 To answer your question, it was
 that same big old Plymouth Fury.

FARMERS WIFE
 Loud as you know what.

SHERIFF
 And you are sure about what
 happened?

FARMER
 This little woman no bigger than a
 stick put what looked like a dead
 body in the back of the trunk.

FARMERS WIFE
 Could have been a sack of potatoes.

FARMER
 I know what I saw.

SHERIFF
 But you couldn't see who it was?

FARMER
 No sir, I was way out in the field
 working on the tractor.

SHERIFF

What did she do once she got the
body in the trunk?

FARMER

She took off like a bat out of hell
back around the curve heading east.

SHERIFF

Could you make out the hair color
on this woman?

FARMER

She had long, blonde hair.

The Sheriff sips his tea and lets it all sink in.

EXT. BUS STATION - NIGHT

Purnell, Carol, and Tim pull up to the Bus Station in the tow
truck. Carol give hugs to Purnell and Tim, then opens the
door and steps down onto the sidewalk with her suitcase.

PURNELL

You write us or call us anytime.

TIM

Yeah, call me on grandpa's phone,
Ms. Carol.

CAROL

I will, I promise. Give me one more
big hug.

Carol leans in the truck and Tim reciprocates.

INT. BUS STATION - NIGHT

Carol walks in the station as the tow truck departs. She
sparkles in the blinding florescent glare despite a day of
absolute hell.

Carol steps up to the counter.

TICKET LADY

Can I help you?

CAROL

(nervous)

Yes, I had planned to write down the lyrics to "Promised Land", you know, the Chuck Berry song, on a piece of paper like, laid out with all the city names for choices - but then I used the envelope for something else.

TICKET LADY

Ma'm, do you know where you would like to go?

CAROL

Yes, I'd like to go to California.

TICKET LADY

Where in California?

CAROL

He doesn't say.

TICKET LADY

Excuse me?

CAROL

Chuck Berry. He just wants to get there, one way or the other. At one point, he takes a plane. He calls it a "sweet chariot". I know I don't have that much money. But I'm thinking a bus could be like a chariot, you know.

It's been a long day for the Ticket Lady and a line is now forming behind Carol. She doesn't have time for crazy folks.

TICKET LADY

M'am, I need a destination.

CAROL

How about Hollywood?

TICKET LADY

Los Angeles. That's going to cost you \$400.

Carol quickly sings the song in her head.

CAROL
"Somebody help me get out of
Louisiana, just help me get to
Houston Town..."
How about Houston, Texas?

TICKET LADY
That will be \$200.

Carol realizes her dreams are limited by her economics.

CAROL
How far can a person go on a
hundred dollars?

LADY
Somewhere in Mississippi.

Carol looks truly depressed. She steps away from the counter.

CAROL
Momma always said Mississippi was
the "promised land".

INT. BUS STATION - WAITING AREA. NIGHT

Ralph walks in the bus station and spots a down and out Carol
(with short hair) sitting by her hot pink suitcase.

RALPH
I almost didn't recognize you.

Carol grabs her pink suitcase and pink purse and up and runs
from Ralph as he tries to talk to her.

RALPH (CONT'D)
Carol. Wait. We have to talk.

CAROL
No, we don't. Stop following me or
I'll have you arrested.

RALPH
I got your GTO.

Carol stops in her tracks.

EXT. BUS STATION - NIGHT

Ralph and Carol walk outside. The GTO sits in the corner of
the parking lot where the street lights fall off to shadows.

Carol can't believe it. She is on cloud 9.

CAROL
Ralph, why did you do this?

RALPH
I realized the only way to say I'm
sorry about this morning is to
become an outlaw and steal your car
back.

CAROL
(she touches the car)
You did good, Ralph. And I gotta
admit, I hit you over the head with
that thing about me and Jenny.

RALPH
Speak of the devil, I brought
someone along.

Jenny steps out of the shadows.

JENNY
Hey Carol.

CAROL
(bristles)
What is she doing here?

RALPH
We all need to work together.

CAROL
Why do we need to work together?

RALPH
Tomorrow morning, bright and early,
we're going to rob the Town Bank.

CAROL
(laughing)
Oh my god, Ralph! You're just full
of surprises!

RALPH
I figure let's all leave town with
a little money in our pocket.

CAROL
Why would I want to rob that bank?
I could drive off right now and
you'd never see me again.

RALPH

Carol, just listen. You've got enough money for a full tank of gas and a few meals, and then what?

CAROL

(offended)

Don't worry about me. I'M A DANCER. I can figure this shit out.

RALPH

Yeah, and I'm a boxer and the only thing I've figured out is that you have to have money. Today, tomorrow, day after tomorrow.

CAROL

I'm going to leave you here with your girlfriend before I get angry and ruin my last memory of you.

Carol digs into her hot pink plastic purse for car keys.

RALPH

Carol. Tomorrow when Mr. Johnson realizes this car is missing from the impound lot, he's going to send the Sheriff after you. So you can burn your one tank of gas and crank your Chuck Berry tunes until a state trooper pulls you over, or you can go out in a blaze of glory.

Carol opens the door and slides behind the wheel of her "baby". She tries to ignore Ralph but it's no good.

CAROL

(a deep breath)

50/50. That's what I want.

RALPH

(looking at Jenny)

We kinda figured three ways.

CAROL

That is not fair.

RALPH

Jenny has guns.

CAROL

And she's got you. Why do you even need me?

RALPH
Because I care about you.

Carol cranks the GTO and hears it purrs LOUD.

CAROL
I don't like the deal, Ralph.

Carol takes off in the GTO and leaves Ralph and Jenny in the parking lot. He walks over to Jenny beside the Fury.

JENNY
What got into her?

RALPH
She doesn't like the three way split.

Suddenly Ralph hears the roar of the GTO returning to the parking lot. Carol pulls up shotgun side to Ralph and Jenny.

RALPH (CONT'D)
(leaning in)
You forget something?

CAROL
Yeah. Hey Jenny.

JENNY
Yeah?

CAROL
I'll race you for the split. If I win, 50/50. If you win, three ways.

Jenny looks over at Ralph.

RALPH
You know, it is almost midnight.

Out the driver side door, Carol offers her hand to Jenny, who cautiously shakes it. Carol pulls Jenny towards her for what seems like a kiss.

CAROL
(whispers)
I hope you drive cars better than you eat pussy.

Carol lets go Jenny's hand and takes off, squealing out of the parking lot. Ralph taps Jenny out of a trance. They hop in the Fury with Jenny driving.

INT. COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICE - NIGHT

The Sheriff gets a call in his office.

DANNY

(over the phone)

Sheriff, just thought you'd want to know, Jenny up and quit tonight. Ralph was here and they left together.

SHERIFF

What about Carol?

DANNY

Haven't seen her.

SHERIFF

Let me know if you do.

Sheriff Stanton rises from his desk and finds his hat. The other deputies mull about with not much to do.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Boys, I think it's time to do a little stakeout.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP

The Fury pulls up alongside Carol in her GTO. A faint dividing line separates the two heaving behemoths. It is now Carol vs. Jenny with Ralph along for the ride. Carol blows Jenny a kiss.

JENNY

So how does this work?

RALPH

We wait for the beginning of Midnight Murder Ballads. When you hear those church bells, that's your starting signal. First person to cross the railroad tracks is the winner. And you gotta be careful of dead man's curve.

Jenny turns to speak but Ralph puts his finger to his lips then points to the open road, black as night. The station break ends. Midnight is upon them.

Silence - then church bells.

Like wild animals, both cars leap, squeal, and spin to gain traction on the old highway. Carol immediately takes the lead.

At one point Jenny brushes the side of the Fury against the chrome siding of the GTO. Carol is outraged. Jenny and Ralph take the lead.

Each car slows down just enough to make it around deadman's curve. Familiar territory to all of them. In the half-mile stretch toward the railroad tracks, Carol passes Jenny. Victory across the tracks seems easy now.

BLANG!!! Carol suddenly hears the TRAIN WHISTLE to her right. Never in all the races has a train been coming this fast and this damn close down the rails, a deadly midnight special.

Carol fears her car will be struck by the train. She brakes allowing Jenny to pass her. The Fury bounds upward across the tracks. For a moment the Fury is airborne with the trains headlamps in Ralph's face.

The car clears the tracks as the locomotive sparks the bumper on the back of the Fury. Jenny makes it to the other side, braking, spinning and facing the train as it rumbles by.

Jenny is the winner. Ralph gets out to inspect the damage.

Carol gets out of the GTO and stares through the spaces in the fast moving train to see if she can glimpse anything on the other side.

Jenny steps into view. Although separated by the thunderous, locomotive, Carol and Jenny lock eyes.

Jenny sticks her tongue between her middle fingers and simulates cunnilingus, laughing outrageously at Carol.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

A low fog surrounds the Motel making the red sign look more beautiful and eerie as the Fury and the GTO pull into the parking spaces in front of Jenny's front door.

INT. FURY - NIGHT

JENNY

(in a good mood)

Just give me a minute to get my things and then we'll be gone.

RALPH

Sure.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jenny hops out and heads for her door. Ralph shoots a glance over to Carol in her car.

CAROL

(over to Ralph)

Where we going again?

RALPH

Some secret place that only Jenny knows about.

Carol rolls her eyes and impatiently taps her fingers on the steering wheel, lost in thought, twisting the Charger necklace chain around her neck into a knot.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jenny enters and crosses the room in front of her bed to switch on the lamp. The existing red neon light reveals the muscular form of someone with long hair sitting in the chair.

RONNIE EARL

Don't turn on the light.

JENNY

(complete shock)

What the hell? Ronnie Earl?

RONNIE EARL

Did I surprise you, little girl?

JENNY

I - I thought you weren't getting out for four more days.

RONNIE EARL

(holding up her calendar)

I see you got August 14th in big red letters.

JENNY

You escaped?

RONNIE EARL

(laughing)

They saw fit to let me go early. I wasn't going to argue with them.

JENNY
(lying and afraid)
Why are you here now?

RONNIE EARL
I went by Rebel Auto to get my son,
just like you said. But there
is no Dodge Charger. I got angry
cause I thought maybe you changed
the plans and didn't let me know.

JENNY
No Dodge Charger?

A dozen replies race through Jenny's mind. Her hand lowers downward toward her belly toward the small holster but the gun is not there.

JENNY (CONT'D)
....You're right. I decided to
bring the baby here.

RONNIE EARL
I thought you said it wasn't safe
here.

JENNY
I changed my mind. The shoebox is
hidden in the bathroom. Just let me
go get it, okay?

Jenny forces a wide smile and backs into the bathroom door, entering, and closing it behind her.

INT. BATHROOM - MOTEL - NIGHT

Jenny closes the door, opens the top drawer of the vanity, and grabs her handgun.

Quietly, she stands by the bathroom door, one hand on the door knob, the other hand poised to fire the gun.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jenny opens the door, swinging the gun toward Ronnie Earl.

The chair is empty.

Jenny feels the choke hold from behind her. Ronnie Earl picks Jenny up off the floor and shakes her until she lets go the gun.

Jenny fights back, flailing her arms and legs, kicking the tv off the stand and knocking over a large lamp that sparks when it shatters on the floor.

EXT. MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Ralph hears and looks over to Carol who also acknowledges the noise. Ralph leaves the Fury and steps up to the door.

INT. MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Bathed in red light, Ralph kicks the door open and sees Ronnie Earl strangling Jenny. Ronnie Earl tosses the lifeless body of Jenny onto the bed and meets Ralph head-on.

Ralph and Ronnie Earl come to blows: a life or death struggle in the limited space of the red lit room. Ralph sees the hideous face of Ronnie Earl, split down the middle and parted like the Red Sea but he is too busy trying to stay alive.

Fighting to breath, Jenny regains conscious and slides off the bed. Ralph is using all his strength to block a choke hold from Ronnie Earl. Ralph spins Ronnie Earl around.

Jenny holds her gun in both hands, shooting Ronnie Earl twice in the stomach. Ralph lets go as Ronnie Earl clutches his stomach, staggers, and heads out the front door - just as Carol comes into view.

Ronnie Earl collapses in a heap on top of Carol. She cannot support his immense frame, letting him tumble, lifeless, inside the open door of Jenny's motel room.

CAROL

What the fuck?

RALPH

Jenny, who is this guy you just killed?

JENNY

My old boyfriend.

CAROL

Your WHAT?

CUT TO:

INT. FURY TRUNK - NIGHT

Darkness. Then the trunk lid is lifted as Jenny, Ralph and Carol throw the enormous dead weight of Ronnie Earl into the back of the Fury.

Jenny addresses the small crowd that has gathered.

JENNY

Don't worry folks, we're going to take him to the hospital right now!

Jenny addresses Ralph and Jenny in no uncertain terms.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Follow me. Now.

The onlookers watch as Ralph and Jenny hop inside the Fury then peel out onto the two-lane blacktop. Carol follows.

INT. FURY - NIGHT

RALPH

You need to talk and talk fast. Who is the guy in the trunk?

JENNY

Ronnie Earl. Midnight Murder Ballads. Your favorite radio host.

RALPH

(takes a second)
What was he doing in your room?!

JENNY

(finally snapping)
Just shut up and I'll explain everything! First I have to check on my car.

RALPH

You just killed a guy and you're worried about that damn car?

Then Ralph sees down the highway.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - NIGHT

The Fury and the GTO suddenly slow down as they approach Rebel Auto in the distance. It's in flames, burning to the ground.

A volunteer fire truck fights the fire but it's too late. Several police cars are parked along the road, including Sheriff Stanton.

RALPH

How could this be happening?

JENNY

I bet Ronnie Earl set it on fire when he couldn't find my Charger.

RALPH

Stop. We can't go any further. Carol is behind us in a stolen car.

The Fury stops and does a u-turn. Carol follows suit.

EXT. REBEL AUTO - NIGHT

The blaze is reaching it's peak. The Sheriff gets as close as he can to the building, trying to peer in.

The Fire Captain pulls him back.

FIRE CAPTAIN

You gotta get back, Sheriff. It's too dangerous right now.

SHERIFF

Was anybody in there?

FIRE CAPTAIN

Too soon to say but the door was wide open.

A deputy comes up to the Sheriff.

DEPUTY

Sheriff, we got a report of a disturbance at the motel. A man might have been killed.

SHERIFF

Jesus Christ.

The Sheriff hops in his cruiser, hits the blue lights and heads toward the motel, followed by his Deputy.

Rebel Auto has burned to the ground.

EXT. MUDHOLE - NIGHT

Ronnie Earl's feet are pushed into mud hole with the help of a big stick being held by Jenny.

JENNY

That's everything I have to say.
Ronnie Earl, my baby, the Charger.
I'm - I'm sorry for dragging you
both into it.

Ralph and an astonished Carol sit nearby.

RALPH

So you didn't care about the car.
You were using it to hide
your...dead baby?

Carol can't be silent any longer.

CAROL

Ralph, I just want you to know that
despite my little fling with Jenny,
I didn't know about any of this. If
I did, I would have warned you to
stay away from her.

Carol rises and walks over to Jenny by the mudhole.

CAROL (CONT'D)

(spiteful and angry)
I can't believe I let you touch me.

JENNY

You loved every minute of it.

RALPH

Shut the hell up, both of you.

CAROL

We shouldn't have anything to do
with her, Ralph. She's playing us.

JENNY

I'm the one who almost got murdered
tonight. And I saved our asses by
riding the world of this psycho. We
should be celebrating.

RALPH

I don't know if I'd go that far.

CAROL

Yeah, this is a fucked up situation you've pulled us into. Every cop in the county is looking for us.

JENNY

You think we're popular right now, wait'll we rob that bank tomorrow.

RALPH

The last thing they'll expect is a bank robbery. And by the time they hear about it, we'll be gone - with money in our pockets.

Jenny snaps a fresh clip into her handgun.

JENNY

Or we'll be dead and it won't matter. Because I can assure you, they won't take me alive.

CAROL

I'm not killing anybody.

JENNY

None of this would have happened if Ronnie Earl had just found the baby in the car and went on his way. I'd still like to know what happened to my car.

CAROL

I'd like to know why any sort of human being would keep a dead baby in the glove compartment.

The anger escalates.

JENNY

How many times do I have to tell you, it was there to save my life.

CAROL

How was I supposed to know that?

Silence. Jenny and Ralph both look at Carol.

JENNY

What do you mean by that?

CAROL

I took your goddamn car, Jenny.

JENNY

I knew it! I knew you took it!

CAROL

That's what you get for sleeping
with my husband.

JENNY

I want it back.

CAROL

You want it back? Here.

Carol yanks off the junkyard necklace and flings it at Jenny who catches it.

CAROL (CONT'D)

That's all that's left of it.

Jenny examines the necklace. Remnants of yellow paint from the Charger rub off on Jenny's finger tips.

JENNY

Tomorrow I'm going to take your
share of the money because you're
going to be dead.

Jenny tackles Carol to the ground and they begin to fight. Ralph does his best to separate them, but it's no use. Jenny grabs a handful of Carol's red hair and forces her head into the mudhole then holds it there as Carol chokes and gags. Carol flips around, grabs Jenny, and pulls her into the muck. Jenny begins to panic as Carol tries to force her under.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Stop! Please! Ralph, get me out!

SHERIFF

Mud wrasslin'. That's my favorite.

The Sheriff steps out of the darkness, gun drawn.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Ralph you better do what the little
lady says, before it's too late.

Ralph grabs the big stick and helps Jenny out of the death trap. Carol rises to her feet. Her hatred for the Sheriff is barely containable.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

I guess you girls are gonna mess up the backseat of my car covered in all that shit, but I figure it's worth it to get all you assholes behind bars, once and for all.

There is yet another rustling of the leaves.

From a nearby darkened grove, Drekks Othello steps out of the wilderness holding Danny in both his rippled arms - while Danny holds a shotgun pointed at the Sheriff's back.

DANNY

I wouldn't be so sure about that, Sheriff.

CAROL

(elated)
My guardian angel.

DANNY

Darlin' I care more about you than life itself.

CAROL

(half-smiling)
I know you do, Danny.

SHERIFF

You gotta be kidding me.

DANNY

I ain't bullshittin'. Drop it.

The Sheriff drops his gun.

SHERIFF

Have you lost your mind? You'll be going to jail with the rest of them.

DANNY

I got a room full of people at the Lounge tonight and they'll all say I was there all night.

SHERIFF

I bet they will. But I never figured you for an accessory.

DANNY

I never figured you for a rapist.

RALPH

What are you talking about, Danny?

Carol steps up into the wider circle and speaks.

CAROL

The Sheriff raped me for my bail money.

RALPH

(shocked)

He what?

CAROL

How do you think I got out of jail, Ralph? And I had to tell somebody, so I told Danny.

On impulse, Ralph takes the big stick from Jenny's hands and makes a move for the Sheriff.

SHERIFF

If you so much as touch me with that stick, I'll add assault to all the other charges.

RALPH

What other charges?

SHERIFF

The bank robbery you're planning, arson, two murders. I just saw y'all dump that body in this hole. And I got witnesses that saw Jenny kill Wayne Wiley. Hell, he's probably in this hole.

JENNY

You'll be saying hello to him soon enough. Put him in the mud hole, Ralph. Let's kill him.

Ralph nails the Sheriff with the stick, sending him backwards into the mud hole. SPLOOSH! The Sheriff struggles, but Ralph plants the stick firmly in his collar bone, and with the help of Danny, Drekks and Jenny pushes him down into the mud.

CAROL

(freaking out)

Stop it! Just fucking stop it! God-damn, I think I'm losing my mind!

Carol cringes and breaks down. She's seen enough.

Ralph, Jenny, Danny and Drekks stop and look to Carol who walks toward the mudhole slowly as if in a trance. She takes the stick from Ralph and speaks to no one in particular.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Ralph, and Jenny know it's not the first time I was raped. First time I was sixteen. I didn't tell anybody about what happened. Weeks passed and I was learning how to drive and I saw the bastard on the street. I ran over him in my daddy's car - then I backed over him to make sure he was dead.

Jenny looks knowingly at Carol and bites her lower lip.

CAROL (CONT'D)

So I killed somebody once and I'm not going to do it again. Murdering somebody makes you hate the whole human race because you know they're judging you. So It's not worth it. Sheriff, even if it is worth it. I want you to go to jail just like I did.

SHERIFF

(sneering from the mudhole)

On what proof?

CAROL

(disgusted at the memory)

I saved your blood, and other disgusting things in an envelope.

Carol takes the big stick and puts it on the Sheriff's shoulder and pushes against it. He sinks inches in the mire.

SHERIFF

You want me to look the other way while you and your gang get away with murder and plan a bank robbery?

CAROL

Just because we're guilty, doesn't mean you're not. But I'm willing to keep my mouth shut - if you are.

SHERIFF

Then what happens to me?

CAROL

We'll find some place to put you for a day or so, cause that's all we need. Ralph, you got any ideas?

RALPH

I'd just as soon leave him tied up in the trunk of his car. Won't be long before someone finds him.

CAROL

What do you say, Sheriff?

Carol bares down on the big stick. The Sheriff's head is about to go under.

SHERIFF

Deal! It's a deal!

Carol allows the Sheriff to grab onto the stick and he pulls himself out. Ralph busies himself with putting handcuffs on the Sheriff while Jenny keeps her boot on his head.

Carol walks over to Danny and Drekks.

DREKKS OTHELLO

We know where the police cruiser is parked. We can go get it.

CAROL

I appreciate y'all sticking your neck out like this.

DANNY

You can thank Drekks. He's my legs.

DREKKS OTHELLO

What are you gonna do when I leave town, old man?

DANNY

(smiling)

Hell, I might go with you.

CAROL

Can you imagine leaving this place once and for all? Well, that's what I'm doing tomorrow.

DREKKS OTHELLO

You got this, red.

CAROL

Thank you, Danny. Thank you Drekks.
For everything.

Carol puts her hand on Drekks shoulder and strokes Danny's unshaven face. Their eyes connect with an undying gratitude.

DANNY

We'll go get that cop car for ya'.

Carol watches Drekks carry Danny off into the dark woods. She sees Ralph and Jenny handcuffing a wet and slippery Sheriff.

Carol realizes she still holds the big stick like some pagan priestess, covered in mud. Carol is autonomous but alone.

With one powerful move, Carol plants the stick in the ground.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN BANK - MAIN STREET - MORNING

The Plymouth Fury and the GTO pull up in front of the Town Bank. Ralph and Jenny watch Carol go in the bank first.

RALPH

(V.O.)

The night I stepped through the broken glass and snooped around the places where the tellers like to keep their money, the one thing I didn't see at all were those red buttons with the long wires that signal the cops when there's been a robbery.

INT. TOWN BANK - LOBBY

Carol is dressed in a black mini-skirt with a horizontal striped blouse and a small leather jacket with boots still covered in mud. Looking like a more weathered version of Elvis in "Jailhouse Rock," she strides through the lobby turning heads.

Carol steps up to Mr. Johnson's closed office door and knocks.

RALPH

(V.O.)

Given the time I had that night, I went searching, cause if you're going to rob a bank, you've just got to know where all the red buttons are, so you can distract the people that might be pushing them.

Mr. Johnson opens his office door and stares right at Carol's breasts.

CAROL

Hello, Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON

Carol Priddy. What are you doing here?

CAROL

I came to talk to you about a loan.

MR. JOHNSON

How much you need?

CAROL

How much you got?

Carol politely forces her way into Mr. Johnson's office and closes the door.

RALPH

(V.O.)

Then other people can go about their job without too much distraction, if you know what I mean.

Ralph and Jenny enter the bank, take a look around, and with 'an air of calm', pull their handguns.

JENNY

All right you assholes, this is a bank robbery. Everybody get down on the floor and don't say a fucking word!

TWO CUSTOMERS and THREE BANK TELLERS and ONE SECURITY GUARD at first greet the command with stunned silence. Jenny goes up to the security guard, takes his gun, and places her gun at his head, point blank.

JENNY (CONT'D)
Are y'all having trouble hearing
me? DOWN ON THE FLOOR NOW!

Everyone lays down on the floor. Ralph walks around the counter, stepping over the three tellers and sees the open money drawers.

Ralph begins to scoop up the cash into a bag.

EXT. TOWN BANK - MAIN STREET - MORNING

Ralph and Jenny exit the bank and hop in their car.

RALPH
What's taking Carol so long?

JENNY
Give her another 10 seconds and we
gotta go, you hear me Ralph?

Ralph looks back to the bank, still covered in yellow police tape.

INT. MR. JOHNSON'S OFFICE.

Carol suddenly opens Mr. Johnson's door, completely disheveled and clutching the red button connected to several wires that she has ripped out from under his desk. She makes a bee-line for the door, stepping over the two customers.

A male bank teller rises from the floor, peering over the counter at Carol as she is walking by.

CAROL
Mr. Johnson pushed all the right
buttons....except for this one.

Carol flings the red button connected to wires at the male bank teller, who barely catches it as he flinches in fear. Carol departs the building.

Mr. Johnson steps outside his door as fast as he can. He is re-adjusting his pants and his tie, and there are traces of lipstick on his face.

MR. JOHNSON
Are y'all just gonna lay there?
We've been ROBBED!

EXT. TOWN BANK - MAIN STREET

The Fury and the GTO speed away from the bank.

EXT. MUDHOLE - MORNING

The Sheriff's police cruiser is parked about 50 feet from the mud hole. The driver side door is open and the police radio is on.

POLICE RADIO

Sheriff Stanton, if you are hearing this, please respond. There are reports of a robbery at Town Bank. We are sending cars over there now. It could be an active situation. If you are hearing this, Sheriff Stanton. Please advise....

Inside the trunk, the Sheriff begins to kick and yell at the top of his voice to no avail.

At the mudhole, something is happening. It bubbles up like oatmeal cooking on a stove. Something is alive and stirring the mud from beneath the surface. Something vengeful.

Like a classic horror film, a muck-encrusted hand appears out of the slime and plants itself firmly near the edge of the mud. The hand finds the familiar rope anchored to the tree.

As the police radio continues to report the bank robbery, from a distance, RONNIE EARL pulls himself from the mudhole. At first the inhuman circumstances have weakened him, but he rises like his resurrected Lord, teetering - but not falling, quickly regaining his senses.

He looks down at his bloody belly wounds, impacted with mud that has stopped the bleeding. Miraculously, it would seem, the "immortal cure all" that Jenny's grandma predicted.

The police radio is muffled, but detectable. It gives an addled Ronnie Earl a sense of direction, a sense of purpose. As the mud drops from his massive frame, his mind begins to clear. Ronnie Earl staggers like the Frankenstein Monster toward the police cruiser.

POLICE RADIO (CONT'D)

"Sheriff Stanton, if you can hear this report, we are confirming the robbery of Town Bank. Be advised that witnesses report suspects are driving a dark green 1970 Plymouth Fury and a black 1966 GTO."

Along with the radio report, Ronnie Earl hears the muffled cries and kicking from inside the trunk of the cruiser.

Ronnie Earl pops the trunk and finds the Sheriff handcuffed and feet-tied laying in a fetal position. Both men are covered in mud.

SHERIFF

Boy, get me out of this thing right now! You hear me? Don't just stand there! Do something!

Ronnie Earl's massive hands wrap around the Sheriff's throat and strangles the life out of him. As the Sheriff gurgles his last breath, Ronnie Earl is now distracted by the sound of loud automobiles racing down the nearby blacktop.

POLICE RADIO

"....Sorry to say, we have momentarily lost the trail on the two cars but we expect the suspects husband and wife Ralph and Carol Priddy and accomplice Jenny Carter will not get very far.

Ronnie Earl, wiping the mud from his vision, rushes to the side of the hill and sees the Plymouth Fury and the GTO speed off into the distance.

RONNIE EARL

...Jenny Carter.

INT. FURY - TWO LANE BLACKTOP - MORNING

JENNY

Holy shit. It won't be long and we'll be out of the county.

RALPH

And headed for Canada. You know they made all the Plymouth Fury's in Canada? That's where all the parts are. That's where the freedom is.

Ralph looks back at Carol who is right behind them.

RALPH (CONT'D)

But first we'll have to find a place and divy up the money with Carol.

INT. GTO - CONTINUOUS

Carol takes a deep breath and plugs in her Chuck Berry cassette. She fumbles for a cigarette and pushes in the lighter on the dashboard.

That's when she sees him.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

The Sheriff's police cruiser comes bounding down the highway at enormous speed, with the trunk lid bouncing up and down with the dead Sheriff still inside the trunk with a mud-encrusted Ronnie Earl behind the wheel.

Ronnie Earl turns on the blue lights and hits the siren for the full effect. Beside him on the seat, the Sheriff's shotgun.

Carol has to gun the GTO in order to maintain distance from Ronnie Earl, as she struggles to see in the rear view, just how and who could it be in the Sheriff's car.

INT. FURY - TWO LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

Ralph turns to get a look as well.

JENNY

How the hell could the Sheriff get
out of the trunk?

RALPH

Just drive....fast.

The Fury and the GTO leap ahead of the police cruiser. In turn, Ronnie Earl puts the pedal to the metal and bumps Carol from behind. The GTO swerves at 100 miles an hour and Carol has to slow down to keep control of the car.

That's when Ronnie Earl pulls up beside her and Carol sees him for the first time. Before Carol can even scream, Ronnie Earl levels the shotgun at Carol and the passenger side windows explodes. Carol is splintered with glass.

Carol panics and slows just enough so that Ronnie Earl races ahead toward Ralph and Jenny in the Fury.

The Fury is doing over 100 miles an hour but the police cruiser pulls up beside it, just long enough for Jenny to get a good look at it's driver.

INT. FURY - TWO LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

JENNY

Holy fuck! It's Ronnie Earl!

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

Ronnie Earl guns the police car, passes the Fury, then in a suicidal, unexpected move, brakes and turns hard. There is no way for the Fury to avoid 'T-Boning' the middle to front end of the police cruiser.

WHOOOM! The front end of the Fury is crushed and spins around in the road, flipping in the air and landing on it's hard shell top.

Carol has a few moments to react and narrowly avoids the impact of the back end of the cruiser. The GTO skids through smoke and broken glass and comes to rest on the side of the road, still running.

The cruiser has been smashed and spun counter-clockwise. The already-dead body of Sheriff Stanton has been thrown from the open trunk and lays sprawled on the blacktop some distance from the initial impact.

Ronnie Earl rubs the back of his neck, recovering from the horrible smash-up. He kicks the door open and stands, getting his bearings straight.

Carol gets out of her car and watches the mud-caked behemoth walk toward the overturned Fury. She scans the blacktop for Ralph. The family pictures are scattered all over the road.

Jenny, upside down and trapped behind the steering wheel of the car, panics at Ronnie Earl's approach. She is a sitting duck. She sees her gun on the ceiling of the car but cannot reach it in time.

Ronnie Earl pulls Jenny out through the shattered driver side window and drags her into the middle of the highway where he holds her by the throat.

RONNIE EARL

Where's...my...son?

JENNY

(pointing to Carol)

That woman...took him...stole the car....with him inside.

RONNIE EARL

Remember what I told you?

JENNY
 (breaking down)
 I tried, Ronnie Earl, my god, I
 really tried.

RONNIE EARL
 I said if you can't give me my son,
 then I'm going to kill you.

Jenny's tears stop and her resolve suddenly returns.

JENNY
 Then do it.

Ronnie Earl puts his hand on top of Jenny's head and his other hand on her jaw. In four succinct moves, he rotates her head south (SNAP), east (CRACKLE), north (POP) and returns her head facing him. Every bone in her neck has been audibly twisted and shattered. Her eyes grow cold. Ronnie Earl drops Jenny to the ground dead.

Carol screams, backing up against the car and SPILLING the contents of her purse. She leans down to pick things up; her make-up, her hundred dollars, the envelope marked "Promised Land".

Ronnie Earl turns to look at Carol. Their eyes meet. Carol sees his long hair framing the cleft face. She is frozen in terror, crouched by her belongings on the pavement.

Ronnie Earl walks toward her with his shotgun. She knows better than to run. In seconds, he is standing right in front of Carol, blocking out the morning sun.

Carol's hands begin to shake.

RONNIE EARL
 What's your name?

CAROL
Carol.

Ronnie Earl notices the envelope marked "Promised Land". He points to it with his shotgun barrel.

RONNIE EARL
 "Promised Land." Is this yours?

CAROL
Yes.

Carol is looking down, but Ronnie Earl takes the shotgun barrel and lifts her chin.

RONNIE EARL
Open your mouth.

Ronnie Earl forces the twin barrels of his shotgun into Carol's mouth, wedging it in tightly inside the corners of her lips. Carol begins to whimper and sob.

RONNIE EARL (CONT'D)
Do you wanna go to the promised
land, Carol?

Carol is a raw nerve ending. Carol swallows hard, moving her head back and forth for "no."

RONNIE EARL (CONT'D)
Sorry, I thought that's where you
were headed when I blew out your
glass and ran you off the road.

The brutality and intensity of the moment is told in close-up. Carol cries a stream of tears onto the gun barrel.

Ronnie Earl continues his one-way conversation.

RONNIE EARL (CONT'D)
You know that I'm gonna have to
take your sweet little ride in
exchange for your life. Does that
sound like a fair deal?

Carol shakes her head up and down for "yes."

Ronnie Earl garish face splits into a smile. He pulls the gun from Carol's mouth and walks around to the driver side of the GTO and hops in.

Carol watches as Ronnie Earl squeals out and is gone.

Carol puts her head in both hands and gets it together. Then a barely audible but familiar voice is heard nearby.

RALPH
Carol?

Carol stands up, surveying the dead from the living.

CAROL
Ralph. Ralph!

Carol runs down the middle of the blacktop, avoiding the bodies of Jenny and the dead Sheriff, to where Ralph has been thrown from the Fury, amidst the shattered family pictures.

Carol puts her arms around her bleeding and broken husband. Ralph is conscious but barely coherent.

RALPH

Where....is everybody?

CAROL

Oh my god. It doesn't matter. Just listen to my voice, okay?

RALPH

Okay....

Ralph begins to cough up blood. Carol tries to help him but realizes that Ralph is bleeding internally.

She puts on a good face.

CAROL

Listen, there's something you need to know. You were right, Ralph, the race didn't count.

RALPH

What race?

CAROL

Remember the old man on the tractor. You called it "third party interference".

RALPH

...I lost that race and you lost your mind. What does it matter?

CAROL

I've been thinking about things. Big things. Bigger than going to jail - or even dying, Ralph. I've been thinking about me and you, and how we would have been so much stronger, if I - I wasn't so blind.

Carol turns her head to the East. Police sirens. In a quiet panic, Carol begins to carefully pull off Ralph's pants.

RALPH

(losing consciousness)

Hey, what the hell are you doing?

CAROL

I want to have your baby.

RALPH
I just can't....

CAROL
It's our last chance. The cops will
be here soon.

Carol pulls off her leather jacket, hikes her skirt, and
climbs up on top of Ralph to have sex.

CAROL (CONT'D)
I'll try to go easy on you but it
might hurt, okay?

RALPH
We're gonna do it in the middle of
the road?

The sirens are getting closer. The sound of a police
helicopter can now be heard.

CAROL
Hear the cops, Ralph?

RALPH
Yeah, I hear them.

CAROL
Don't let it make you nervous, okay
honey? Just focus. Just focus...

Carol takes his hands and puts them against her breasts.

RALPH
I - I don't have any feeling in my
hands.

CAROL
You have feelings below the waist?

RALPH
Yeah....

CAROL
Then that's all that matters.

Blood comes from the corners of Ralph's mouth as he tries to
laugh. Carol smiles and laughs with him.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP

Three police cruisers bearing two officers each are side by side driving fast and getting closer to the massive carnage (and love making).

INT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

The Deputy's radio cuts in.

RADIO

(over audible helicopter blades)

We have an officer down and a female blonde caucasian that appears to be dead on the road. A third suspect in a black GTO has fled the scene of the wreckage. He is about 5 miles heading west down the blacktop toward the highway 9.

DEPUTY 2

(over radio)

Shannon, did you hear that? He must be talking about Sheriff Stanton.

DEPUTY ON RADIO

I copy that.

DEPUTY

(a beat)

The police helicopter says that the GTO has left the scene. Let's have you and Edward stay on that GTO.

DEPUTY 2

(over radio)

Roger that.

HELICOPTER RADIO

Deputy, that's not all. Be advised, we have eyes on a male and female that are apparently having sex in the middle of the road.

The Deputy looks to his partner in disbelief.

DEPUTY

Roger that.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

Four police cars are nearing the scene as fast as they can. The first two lead cruisers don't slow down. They pursue the long gone GTO.

The second set of police cruisers slow down to stop before the devastation.

EXT. TWO LANE BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

Two police cruisers speed by Ralph and Carol at 70 miles an hour in pursuit of the GTO just as Ralph and Carol reach orgasm. Ralph, his eyes closed, lets out a sigh and turns his head. He has nothing left.

The two police officers exit the cruiser, guns drawn, and walk up slowly behind Carol, who is panting and sitting atop Ralph, stretched out on the pavement.

DEPUTY

Get those hands up in the air. Very slowly. You're both under arrest.

Carol comes back down to earth after her orgasm. Eyes closed, she raises both arms in the air like a free spirit.

CAROL

(happy thats it over)
Did you hear that Ralph? We're getting arrested together.

Ralph does not move, react or respond. Carol opens her eyes and sees his lifeless face.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Ralph? RALPH!!

Carol lays down on top of Ralph, embracing him, and crying. The two deputies pull Carol away from Ralph's dead body.

This time Carol has no energy to fight.

CAROL (CONT'D)

You did it, Ralph. You made it out of town.

From the helicopter view looking down, in the wake of the destruction, the Deputies handcuff Carol as they drag her away from Ralph toward the police cruiser.

The screen goes BLACK.

THE END.

INT. WOMENS PRISON - DAY (POST-CREDIT SCENE)

Deep within the confines of a gray and gloomy complex of cells and corridors, prison mid-wives assist the birth of Carol Priddy's baby.

It is a boy.

Carol is elated, and asks to hold the baby, but the mid-wives have rules and regulations. Carol can hold the baby later. Right now, it must be taken to a different room in a different part of the prison.

Carol screams for them to let her hold him.

A mid-wife steps outside the cell with the crying newborn and the others soon join her. They close the cell doors, leaving Carol with one mid-wife.

The others take the baby boy away from the cell, down the long corridor, and toward the light.