

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN

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Adapted Screenplay by
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Based on the Novel by
CORMAC MCCARTHY

FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

Snow is falling in a gusting wind. The voice of an old man:

VOICE OVER

I was sheriff of this county when I was twenty-five. Hard to believe. Grandfather was a lawman. Father too. Me and him was sheriff at the same time, him in Plano and me here. I think he was pretty proud of that. I know I was.

EXT. WEST TEXAS LANDSCAPE - DAWN/DAY

We dissolve to another West Texas landscape. Sun is rising.

VOICE OVER

Some of the old-time sheriffs never even wore a gun. A lot of folks find that hard to believe. Jim Scarborough never carried one. That's the younger Jim. Gaston Boykins wouldn't wear one. Up in Comanche County.

We dissolve through more landscapes, bringing us to full day. None of them show people or human habitation.

VOICE OVER

I always liked to hear about the old-timers. Never missed a chance to do so. Nigger Hoskins over in Bastrop County knowed everybody's phone number off by heart. You can't help but compare yourself against the old-timers. Can't help but wonder how they would've operated these times. There was this boy I sent to the gas chamber at Huntsville here a while back. My arrest and my testimony. He killed a fourteen-year-old girl. Papers said it was a crime of passion but he told me there wasn't any passion to it.

EXT. WEST TEXAS ROAD - DAY

The last landscape, hard sunbaked prairie, is surveyed in a long slow pan.

VOICE OVER

Told me that he'd been planning to kill somebody for about as long as he could remember. Said that if they turned him out he'd do it again.

The pan has brought into frame the flashing light bars of a police car stopped on the shoulder. A young sheriff's deputy is opening the rear door on the far side of the car.

VOICE OVER

Said he knew he was going to hell. Be there in about fifteen minutes. I don't know what to make of that. I surely don't.

Close on a pair of hands manacled behind someone's back. A hand enters to take the prisoner by one arm.

VOICE OVER

The crime you see now, it's hard to even take its measure. It's not that I'm afraid of it.

Back to the shot over the light bars: the deputy, with a hand on top of the prisoner's head to help him clear the door frame, eases the prisoner into the backseat. All we see of the prisoner is his dark hair disappearing into the car.

VOICE OVER

I always knew you had to be willing to die to even do this job -- not to be glorious. But I don't want to push my chips forward and go out and meet something I don't understand.

The deputy closes the back door. He opens the front passenger door and reaches down for something--apparently heavy--at his feet.

VOICE OVER

You can say it's my job to fight it but I don't know what it is anymore.

The deputy swings the heavy object into the front passenger seat. Matching inside the car: it looks like an oxygen tank with a petcock at the top and tubing running off it.

VOICE OVER

...More than that, I don't want to know. A man would have to put his soul at hazard.

The deputy slams the door.

On the door slam we cut to Texas highway racing under the lens, the landscape flat to the horizon. The siren whoops.

VOICE OVER

...He would have to say, okay, I'll be part of this world.

INT. SHERIFF LAMAR'S OFFICE - DAY

THE DEPUTY

Seated in the sheriff's office, on the phone. The prisoner stands in the background. Focus is too soft for us to see his features but his posture shows that his arms are still behind his back.

DEPUTY

Yessir, just walked in the door. Sheriff he had some sort of a thing on him like one of them oxygen tanks for emphysema or somethin'. And a hose from it run down his sleeve...

Behind him we see the prisoner seat himself on the floor without making a sound and scoot his manacled hands out under his legs. Hands in front of him now, he stands.

DEPUTY

...Well you got me, sir. You can see it when you get in...

The prisoner approaches. As he nears the deputy's back he grows sharper but begins to crop out of the top of the frame.

DEPUTY

...Yessir I got it covered.

As the deputy reaches forward to hang up, the prisoner is raising his hands out of frame just behind him. The manacled hands drop back into frame in front of the deputy's throat and jerk back and up.

Wider: the prisoner's momentum brings both men crashing backward to the floor, face-up, deputy on top.

The deputy reaches up to try to get his hands under the strangling chain.

The prisoner brings pressure. His wrists whiten around the manacles.

The deputy's legs writhe and stamp. He moves in a clumsy circle, crabbing around the pivot-point of the other man's back arched against the floor.

The deputy's flailing legs kick over a wastebasket, send spinning the castored chair, slam at the desk.

Blood creeps around the friction points where the cuffs bite the prisoner's wrists. Blood is being spit by the deputy.

The prisoner feels with his thumb at the deputy's neck and averts his own face. A yank of the chain ruptures the carotid artery. It jets blood.

The blood hits the office wall, drumming hollowly.

INT. SHERIFF LAMAR'S BATHROOM - DAY

The prisoner walks in, runs the water, and puts his wrists, now freed, under it.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Close on the air tank. One hand, a towel wrapped at the wrist, reaches in to hoist it.

EXT. ROAD - LATE DAY

Road rushes under the lens. Point-of-view through a windshield of taillights ahead, the only pair in sight.

A siren bloop.

The car pulls over. A four-door Ford sedan.

The police car pulls over behind.

The prisoner -- his name is Anton Chigurh -- gets out of the police car and slings the tank over his shoulder. He walks up the road to the man cranking down his window, groping for his wallet.

MAN

What's this about?

CHIGURH

Step out of the car please, sir.

The motorist squints at the man with the strange apparatus.

MAN

Huh? What is...

CHIGURH

I need you to step out of the car,
sir.

The man opens his door and emerges.

MAN

Am I...

Chigurh reaches up to the man's forehead with the end of the tube connected to the air tank.

CHIGURH

Would you hold still please, sir.

A hard pneumatic sound. The man flops back against the car. Blood trickles from a hole in the middle of his forehead.

Chigurh waits for the body to slide down the car and crumple, clearing the front door. He opens it and hoists the air tank over into the front seat.

EXT. ARID PLAIN - DAY

Seen through an extreme telephoto lens. Heat shimmer rises from the desert floor.

A pan of the horizon discovers a distant herd of antelope. The animals are grazing.

Reverse on a man in blue jeans and cowboy boots sitting on his heels, elbows on knees, peering through a pair of binoculars. A heavy-barreled rifle is slung across his back. This is Moss.

He lowers the binoculars, slowly unslings the rifle and looks through its sight.

The view through the sight swims for a moment to refind the herd. One animal is staring directly at us, its motion arrested as if it's heard or seen something.

Close on Moss's eyes, one at the sight, the other closed.

He mutters:

MOSS

Hold still.

He opens the free eye and rolls his head off the sight to give himself stereo.

Close on the hatch-marked range dial on the sight. Moss delicately thumbs it.

He eases the one eye back onto the sight.

Point-of-view through the sight: Moss adjusts to bring the cross-hairs back down to the staring animal.

Moss's finger tightens on the trigger.

Shot: gunbuck swishes the point-of-view upward.

Moss fights it back down.

The point-of-view through the sight finds the beast again, still staring at us.

The sound of the gunshot rings out across the barial.

Short beat.

The bullet hits the antelope: not a kill. The animal recoils and runs, packing one leg.

The other animals are off with it.

MOSS

Shit.

He stands and jacks out the spent casing which jangles against the rocks. He stoops for it and puts it in his shirt pocket.

EXT. ARID PLAIN - LATER

Moss is on foot, rifle again slung over his shoulder, binoculars around his neck. He is looking at the ground.

An intermittent trail of blood.

Moss's pace is brisk. Distances are long.

He suddenly stops, staring.

On the ground is the fresh trail of blood, the glistening drops already dry at the periphery. But this trail is crossed by another trail of blood. Drier.

Moss looks one way along this older trail:

His point-of-view: flatlands. Scrub. No movement.

He looks the other way.

A distant range of mountains. No movement.

He stoops to examine the trail.

He paces it 'til he finds a print clear enough to give him the animal's orientation.

He stands and looks again toward the distant mountains. He brings up the binoculars.

His point-of-view: landscape, swimming into focus, heat waves exaggerated by the compression of the lens.

Panning, looking for the animal.

Movement, very distant. The animal is brought into focus: a black tailless dog, huge head, limping badly, phantasmal by virtue of the rippling heat waves and the silence.

Moss lowers the glass. A moment of thought as he gazes off.

He turns and heads in the direction from which the dog came.

EXT. RISE NEAR BASIN - MINUTES LATER

Moss tops a rise. He scans the landscape below.

Not much to see except-distant glints, off something not native to the environment.

Moss brings up the binoculars.

Parked vehicles: three of them, squat, Broncos or other off-road trucks with fat tires, winches in the bed and racks of roof lights.

On the ground near the trucks dark shapes lie still.

EXT. BASIN - MINUTES LATER

Moss is walking cautiously up to the site, unslung rifle at the ready.

Flies drone.

He circles two dead bodies lying in the grass, covered with blood. A gut-shot dog of the same kind we saw limping toward the mountains lies beside them. A sawed-off shotgun with a pistol stock lies in the grass.

The tires and most of the window glass are shot out of the first pickup Moss approaches.

He opens the door and looks inside.

The driver is dead, leaning over the wheel. Moss shuts the door.

He opens the door of the second truck.

The driver, sitting upright, still in shoulder harness, is staring at him.

Moss stumbles back, raising the rifle.

The man does not move. The front of his shirt is covered with blood.

MAN

Agua.

Moss stares at him

MAN

...Agua. Por Dios.

MOSS

Ain't got no water.

On the seat next to the man is an HK machine pistol. Moss looks at it. He looks back at the man. The man is still staring at him. Without lowering his eyes Moss reaches in and takes the pistol.

Moss straightens up out of the truck and slings the rifle back over his shoulder. He snaps the clip off the machine pistol, checks it and snaps it back on.

Moss crosses to the back of the truck and lifts the tarp that covers the truck bed.

A load of brick-sized brown parcels each wrapped in plastic.

He throws the tarp back over the load and crosses back to the open cab door.

MAN

Agua.

MOSS

I told you I ain't got no agua. You speak English?

A blank look.

MOSS

...Where's the last guy?

The injured man stares, unresponsive. Moss persists:

MOSS

Ultimo hombre. Last man standing,
must've been one. Where'd he go?

MAN

...Agua.

Moss turns to scan the horizon. He looks at the tire tracks
extending back from the truck. He thinks for a beat.

MOSS

(to himself)
I reckon I'd go out the way I came
in...

He starts off.

Through the truck's open door:

MAN

La puerta... Hay lobos...

MOSS

(walking off)
Ain't no lobos.

EXT. FLATLAND NEAR THE BASIN - LATER

Moss stops to look out at a new prospect. Flatland, no cover.

He raises the binoculars.

MOSS

If you stopped... to watch your
backtrack... you're gonna shoot my
dumb ass.

He doesn't see anything. He lowers the glass, thinking.

He raises the glass again.

MOSS

...But. If you stopped... you stopped
in shade.

He sets off.

EXT. NEAR THE ROCK SHELF - DAY

A POINT-OF-VIEW

Through the binoculars, some time later. One lone shelf of
rock throws shade toward us. Heat shimmers in between.

Hard sun makes the rock shadow impenetrable. But there is a booted foot sticking into the sun toe-up like the nub on a sundial.

Moss lowers the binoculars.

He looks at his watch.

11:30.

He sits down.

FAST FADE

EXT. NEAR THE ROCK SHELF - DAY

THE WATCH

12:30.

Moss lowers the wristwatch and raises the binoculars again.

The shadow has shifted. The foot hasn't moved.

Moss gets up and walks toward it.

EXT. ROCK SHELF - MINUTES LATER

Moss arrives at the rock shelf.

The man's body is tipped to one side. His nose is in the dirt but his eyes are open, as if he is examining something quite small on the ground.

One hand holds a .45 automatic.

Next to the body is a boxy leather document case.

Moss looks at the man. He takes the gun, looks at it, sticks it in his belt.

He drags the document case away from the body and opens it.

Bank-wrapped hundreds fill it. Each packet is stamped "\$10,000."

Moss stares. He reaches in to rifle the stacks, either to confirm that the bag is full or to estimate the amount.

He stands, looks around, looks back the way he came.

EXT. CATTLEGUARD ROAD - DAY

HIS TRUCK

Moss's pickup is parked by a cattleguard off a paved but little-used road.

Moss is just arriving. He throws in the document case, the rifle and the machine pistol, climbs into the cab and slams the door.

EXT. DESERT AIRE TRAILER PARK - TWILIGHT

Moss's truck pulls into a trailer park that sits alongside the highway on the outskirts of Sanderson, Texas. An old sign with a neon palm tree identifies the park as the Desert Aire.

Moss gets out of the truck next to a double-wide. Lights glow inside. He takes the case and machine pistol, gets down on his back next to the trailer and scoots underneath it.

His point-of-view: plywood and plastic pipes. He pulls some insulation aside and crams the machine pistol up under the pipes.

INT. TRAILER - NIGHT

Moss enters carrying the document case. A twentysomething woman in cutoff jeans and a halter top watches TV. This is Carla Jean.

CARLA JEAN

What's in the satchel?

MOSS

It's full a money.

CARLA JEAN

That'll be the day.

Moss is crossing to a back bedroom. Before he disappears inside Carla Jean sees the pistol stuck in the back of his waistband.

CARLA JEAN

...Where'd you get the pistol?

MOSS

At the gettin' place.

He emerges without the case or the gun and crosses to the refrigerator. He takes a beer from the refrigerator and peels its pulltab.

CARLA JEAN
Did you buy that gun?

MOSS
No. I found it.

CARLA JEAN
Llewelyn!

MOSS
What? Quit hollerin'.

He walks back sipping the beer and sprawls on the couch.

CARLA JEAN
What'd you give for that thing?

MOSS
You don't need to know everthing,
Carla Jean.

CARLA JEAN
I need to know that.

MOSS
You keep running that mouth I'm gonna
take you in the back and screw you.

CARLA JEAN
Big talk.

MOSS
Just keep it up.

CARLA JEAN
Fine. I don't wanna know. I don't
even wanna know where you been all
day.

MOSS
That'll work.

INT. TRAILER BEDROOM - NIGHT

We are drifting down toward Moss as he lies in bed next to
Carla Jean. He lies still, eyes closed, but he is shaking
his head. As the camera stops he opens his eyes, grimacing.

MOSS
All right.

He looks at the bedside clock.

Its LED display: 1:06.

He swings his legs off the bed, looks back at Carla Jean, and pulls the blanket up over her shoulder.

INT. TRAILER KITCHEN - NIGHT

Close on a gallon jug as Moss hold it under the tap, filling it with water.

Carla Jean appears in the doorway, looking sleepy.

CARLA JEAN

Llewelyn.

MOSS

Yeah.

CARLA JEAN

What're you doin', baby?

MOSS

Goin' out.

CARLA JEAN

Goin' where?

MOSS

Somethin' I forgot to do. I'll be back.

CARLA JEAN

What're you goin' to do?

Moss turns from the sink, screwing the top onto the jug.

MOSS

I'm fixin' to do somethin' dumbern hell but I'm goin' anyways.

He starts toward the front door.

MOSS

...If I don't come back tell Mother I love her.

CARLA JEAN

Your mother's dead, Llewelyn.

MOSS

Well then I'll tell her myself.

INT. TRUCK/EXT. CATTLEGUARD ROAD - NIGHT

A MAP

A detailed topographical survey map, illuminated by a flashlight.

Moss is studying it in the cab of his truck.

After a beat he folds the map.

He checks the .45 taken off the corpse with the money.

Wider: the pickup truck parked outside the cattle guard. After a beat, the truck drives over the grate onto the unpaved part of the road, jogging up the uneven terrain.

Through the windshield, the view is pitch black except for the boulders and scrub picked out by the crazily bouncing headlights.

EXT. BASIN - NIGHT

DOOR SLAM

We are close on the water jug slapping against Moss's leg as we pull him through the darkness. The shape of his parked truck is just visible behind him, silhouetted on the crest by the glow of the moon already set.

Walking across the basin to the near truck Moss freezes, noticing:

Its driver's-side door: closed.

Moss scans the horizon. Its only blemish remains his own pickup.

He jogs the few remaining paces to the pickup. He sets down the gallon jug. Softly:

MOSS

Hello?...

No answer.

He opens the door.

The man's body is still held upright by the shoulder harness but his head, flayed by buckshot, is tipped away.

Moss glances at the bed of the truck.

Empty.

He again looks at the horizon.

Now another pickup stands in silhouette next to his own.
Two men are there.

Moss covers behind the dead man's truck. He eases his head out for another look.

Only one man visible now.

Sounds hard to identify. Something airy. Up on the crest his pickup rocks and settles. Its tires are being slashed.

The other pickup's engine coughs to life. Headlights and roof lights go on.

Moss again covers behind the vehicle.

A search-spot sweeps back and forth across the basin tableau of bodies and trucks. After a few trips back and forth something happens to the spot: its weaving light begins to bounce. We can hear the jouncing suspension of the pickup as it trundles down the incline.

But the light tells the perspective of the slowly approaching truck. Moss stays in the lee of his sheltering vehicle as he runs, doubled over, directly away from the light, keeping to the shadow that wipes on and off.

A gunshot. Its impact kicks up dirt just ahead of Moss to his right.

Moss turns to see:

Two jogging men flanking the truck like infantry escorting a tank. One has just halted to fire; the other is now raising his gun.

Moss tacks and sprints and rolls under a second abandoned pickup to his left. Another shot sounds and misses.

Bullets plunk into the metal of the truck body. One bullet skips off the dirt in front of the truck and pings up into the undercarriage.

Moss is elbowing out the far side, next to a body lying by the truck's passenger door.

The firing has stopped: Moss steals a look over the hood:

The pursuing pickup is slowing so that the two gunmen can swing onto the running boards.

The truck accelerates and as it veers around the first abandoned pickup its lights swing off Moss's cover truck.

Moss sprints off, doubled over, at a perpendicular to his previous path. He hits the ground, pressing himself into the earth, head between his forearms.

He elbows away as the truck bears on his former cover.

EXT. RIVER GORGE - DAWN

He tops the small rise and straightens and flat-out runs. We hear the pickup's engine racing and see, behind Moss, its spot sweeping backlight across the crest.

Moss is running towards the declivity of a river gorge. Sky there is pink from unrisen sun.

Moss bears on the gorge, panting.

The pickup bounces up into view on the crest behind him, roof lights blazing. It is pointed off at an angle. Its spotlight sweeps the river plain.

It finds Moss. The truck reorients as it bounces down in pursuit. A muzzle flash precedes the dull whump of the shotgun.

Moss races on toward the river. Another shotgun whump. Moss stumbles, turns to look behind him.

The truck, gaining ground. A man stands up out of the sunroof, one hand on top of the cab, the other holding a shotgun.

Moss is almost to the steep riverbank. Another whump of the shotgun.

Shot catches Moss on the right shoulder. It tears the back of his shirt away and sends him over the crest of the river bank.

Moss airborne, ass over elbows, hits near the bottom of the sandy slope with a loud fhump.

He rolls to a stop and looks up.

We hear a skidding squeal and see dirt and dust float over the lip of the ridge, thrown by the truck's hard stop.

As Moss pulls off his boots we hear voices from the men in the truck.

There is the clank of its tailgate being dropped and sounds of activity on the hollow metal of its bed.

Moss tucks his boots into his belt and runs splashing into the fast-moving water. A look back:

Something shakes the scrub down the steep slope.

Moss backpedals deeper.

Bursting out of the scrub at the foot of the slope: a huge black dog with a large head and clipped ears. It bounds toward Moss.

Moss turns and half stumbles, half dives into the river. Underwater a very dull whump followed by the fizz of buckshot.

Moss breaks the surface of the water, gasping, and looks back:

Figures on the ridge. Below, the dog hitting the water.

Another gunshot from the bank. Where it hits we don't know. River current and Moss's strokes speed him away.

EXT. RIVER BEND - DAWN

He sweeps around a bend. He finds his feet under him and staggers onto a sandbar and then splashes through some outwash to the far bank.

The pursuing dog's head bobs rhythmically in the water.

Moss pulls the gun from his belt. He takes the clip out and ejects the chamber round.

The dog finds his stumpy legs much closer to the sandbar: his massive head dips and waggles as he lurches out of his swim. He emerges from the river and bounds across the sand.

Moss shakes the gun and blows into the barrel.

The dog splashes through the riverwash that separates him from the human.

Moss reinserts the clip. He chambers a round as the dog runs snarling and as the dog leaps he fires.

Moss fires twice more quickly, not waiting to see whether the first round told.

The dog lands, stopped but not dead. It jerks and gurgles.

MOSS

Goddamnit.

He is looking out at the river. His boots are drifting by.

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

Moss has climbed the far bank and found a seat on a rock. It is now full day. Moss has taken off his shirt and has his neck craned round and his back upper arm twisted toward him. Where the buckshot hit, his arm is purpled and pinpricked. He meticulously picks shirt fiber out from where buckshot packed it into the flesh.

He finishes. He rips swatches from his shirt. He starts wrapping his bare feet as he gazes off.

His point-of-view: a lot of landscape, a highway in the distance. An eighteen-wheeler shimmies along in the heat.

EXT. GAS STATION/GROCERY - SHEFFIELD - DAY

At an isolated dusty crossroad. It is twilight. The Ford sedan that Chigurh stopped is parked alongside the pump.

INT. GAS STATION/GROCERY - DAY

Chigurh stands at the counter across from the elderly proprietor. He holds up a bag of cashews.

CHIGURH

How much?

PROPRIETOR

Sixty-nine cent.

CHIGURH

This. And the gas.

PROPRIETOR

Y'all getting any rain up your way?

CHIGURH

What way would that be?

PROPRIETOR

I seen you was from Dallas.

Chigurh tears open the bag of cashews and pours a few into his hand.

CHIGURH

What business is it of yours where I'm from, friendo?

PROPRIETOR

I didn't mean nothin' by it.

CHIGURH
Didn't mean nothin'.

PROPRIETOR
I was just passin' the time.

CHIGURH
I guess that passes for manners in
your cracker view of things.

A beat.

PROPRIETOR
Well sir I apologize. If you don't
wanna accept that I don't know what
else I can do for you.

Chigurh stands chewing cashews, staring while the old man
works the register and puts change on the counter.

PROPRIETOR
...Will there be somethin' else?

CHIGURH
I don't know. Will there?

Beat.

The proprietor turns and coughs. Chigurh stares.

PROPRIETOR
Is somethin' wrong?

CHIGURH
With what?

PROPRIETOR
With anything?

CHIGURH
Is that what you're asking me? Is
there something wrong with anything?

The proprietor looks at him, uncomfortable, looks away.

PROPRIETOR
Will there be anything else?

CHIGURH
You already asked me that.

PROPRIETOR
Well... I need to see about closin'.

CHIGURH
See about closing.

PROPRIETOR
Yessir.

CHIGURH
What time do you close?

PROPRIETOR
Now. We close now.

CHIGURH
Now is not a time. What time do you close.

PROPRIETOR
Generally around dark. At dark.

Chigurh stares, slowly chewing.

CHIGURH
You don't know what you're talking about, do you?

PROPRIETOR
Sir?

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

Chigurh chews.

CHIGURH
...What time do you go to bed.

PROPRIETOR
Sir?

CHIGURH
You're a bit deaf, aren't you? I said what time do you go to bed.

PROPRIETOR
Well...

A pause.

PROPRIETOR
...I'd say around nine-thirty. Somewhere around nine-thirty.

CHIGURH

I could come back then.

PROPRIETOR

Why would you be comin' back? We'll be closed.

CHIGURH

You said that.

He continues to stare, chewing.

PROPRIETOR

Well... I need to close now --

CHIGURH

You live in that house behind the store?

PROPRIETOR

Yes I do.

CHIGURH

You've lived here all your life?

A beat.

PROPRIETOR

This was my wife's father's place. Originally.

CHIGURH

You married into it.

PROPRIETOR

We lived in Temple Texas for many years. Raised a family there. In Temple. We come out here about four years ago.

CHIGURH

You married into it.

PROPRIETOR

...If that's the way you wanna put it.

CHIGURH

I don't have some way to put it. That's the way it is.

He finishes the cashews and wads the packet and sets it on the counter where it begins to slowly unkink. The proprietor's eyes have tracked the packet. Chigurh's eyes stay on the proprietor.

CHIGURH

...What's the most you've ever lost on a coin toss?

PROPRIETOR

Sir?

CHIGURH

The most. You ever lost. On a coin toss.

PROPRIETOR

I don't know. I couldn't say.

Chigurh is digging in his pocket. A quarter: he tosses it. He slaps it onto his forearm but keeps it covered.

CHIGURH

Call it.

PROPRIETOR

Call it?

CHIGURH

Yes.

PROPRIETOR

For what?

CHIGURH

Just call it.

PROPRIETOR

Well -- we need to know what it is we're callin' for here.

CHIGURH

You need to call it. I can't call it for you. It wouldn't be fair. It wouldn't even be right.

PROPRIETOR

I didn't put nothin' up.

CHIGURH

Yes you did. You been putting it up your whole life. You just didn't know it. You know what date is on this coin?

PROPRIETOR

No.

CHIGURH

Nineteen fifty-eight. It's been traveling twenty-two years to get here. And now it's here. And it's either heads or tails, and you have to say. Call it.

A long beat.

PROPRIETOR

Look... I got to know what I stand to win.

CHIGURH

Everything.

PROPRIETOR

How's that?

CHIGURH

You stand to win everything. Call it.

PROPRIETOR

All right. Heads then.

Chigurh takes his hand away from the coin and turns his arm to look at it.

CHIGURH

Well done.

He hands it across.

CHIGURH

...Don't put it in your pocket.

PROPRIETOR

Sir?

CHIGURH

Don't put it in your pocket. It's your lucky quarter.

PROPRIETOR

...Where you want me to put it?

CHIGURH

Anywhere not in your pocket. Or it'll
get mixed in with the others and
become just a coin. Which it is.

He turns and goes.

The proprietor watches him.

EXT. DESERT AIRE - NIGHT

It is full night.

Moss is pushing open the door to his trailer. We see Carla
Jean inside.

CARLA JEAN

Llewelyn? What the hell?

Moss enters and the door closes.

INT. MOSS' TRAILER - LATER

Carla Jean is finishing bandaging his arm.

MOSS

Odessa.

CARLA JEAN

Why would we go to Odessa?

MOSS

Not we, you. Stay with your mother.

CARLA JEAN

Well -- how come?

MOSS

Right now it's midnight Sunday. When the courthouse opens
nine hours from now someone's gonna be callin in the vehicle
number off the inspection plate on my truck. And around nine-
thirty they'll show up here.

CARLA JEAN

So... for how long do we have to...

MOSS

Baby, at what point would you quit
botherin' to look for your two million
dollars?

Carla Jean stares, thinking.

CARLA JEAN

What'm I supposed to tell Mama?

MOSS

Try standin' in the door and hollerin:
Mama I'm home.

CARLA JEAN

Llewelyn --

MOSS

C'mon, pack your things. Anything
you leave you ain't gonna see again.

Carla Jean begins peevishly tossing things into a bag:

CARLA JEAN

Well thanks for fallin' all over and
apologizing.

MOSS

Things happened. I can't take 'em
back.

EXT. CATTLEGUARD ROAD - NIGHT

POINT-OF-VIEW THROUGH WINDSHIELD

It is night. No other vehicles on this paved road.

Our car turns off and rattles over a cattleguard.

Parked on the other side is a Ramcharger. Its passenger door
starts to open.

Outside: Chigurh emerges from his Ford.

The man emerging from the truck wears a Western-cut suit.

MAN

Mind ridin' bitch?

EXT. BASIN - NIGHT

THE RAMCHARGER

Bouncing through ungraded terrain.

It stops and discharges the three men--the driver and his
partner, both in suits, from either side, and then Chigurh
from the middle seat.

They have pulled over at Moss's truck.

CHIGURH
This his truck?

He is opening the door and looking at the plate riveted inside.

MAN
Mm-hm.

CHIGURH
Screwgie.

The man reaches into a pocket and hands over a screwdriver. As Chigurh works it under the plate:

CHIGURH
...Who slashed his tires?

DRIVER
Wudden us.

EXT. BASIN - NIGHT

A flashlight beam picks out the dog carcass.

DRIVER
That's a dead dog.

CHIGURH
Thank you.

Chigurh plays the flashlight around the scene. Dead bodies on the ground.

CHIGURH
...Where's the transponder?

MAN
In the truck. I'll get it.

DRIVER
These are some ripe petunias.

Chigurh gives his flashlight to the driver.

CHIGURH
Hold this please.

He bends down and takes a 9 mm. Glock off of one of the dead bodies and checks the clip. The other man is returning from the truck. He hands Chigurh a small electronic receiver.

CHIGURH
...You getting anything on this?

MAN

Not a bleep.

CHIGURH

All right...

Chigurh stands and holds his hand out for his flashlight.

The driver hands it to him. Chigurh shines it in his face and shoots him through the forehead. As the man falls Chigurh pans the light to the other man who has watched his partner drop. He looks up, puzzled, and is shot as well.

EXT. BELL'S RANCH - MORNING

A horse trailer is backed up to a small stable with its gate down.

Sheriff Bell, sixties, in uniform, slaps a horse on the ass and gives it a "Hyah!" to send it clattering up the ramp and into the trailer.

His wife, Loretta, appears. She wears a heavy robe and holds a coffee mug.

LORETTA

I thought it was a car afire.

BELL

It is a car afire. But Wendell said there was something back country too.

LORETTA

When is the county gonna start payin' a rental on my horse.

BELL

Hyah!

He is sending a second horse up into the trailer.

BELL

...I love you more'n more, ever day.

LORETTA

(unmoved)
That's very nice.

Sheriff Bell puts up the gate and pins it. She watches.

LORETTA

...Be careful.

BELL

I always am.

LORETTA

Don't get hurt.

BELL

I never do.

LORETTA

Don't hurt no one.

BELL

Well. If you say so.

EXT. CATTLEGUARD ROAD - DAY

The pickup with horse trailer rattles up next to a parked squad car. Just beyond the cattle guard the Ford sedan is blazing. Sheriff Bell gets out of the truck and joins his deputy, Wendell, looking at the car. After a beat of staring:

BELL

You wouldn't think a car would burn like that.

WENDELL

Yessir. We should a brought wieners.

Sheriff Bell takes his hat off and mops his brow.

BELL

Does that look to you like about a '77 Ford, Wendell?

WENDELL

It could be.

BELL

I'd say it is. Not a doubt in my mind.

WENDELL

The old boy shot by the highway?

BELL

Yessir, his vehicle. Man killed Lamar's deputy, took his car, killed someone on the highway, swapped for his car, and now here it is and he's swapped again for god knows what.

WENDELL

That's very linear Sheriff.

Bell stares at the fire.

BELL

Well. Old age flattens a man.

WENDELL

Yessir. But then there's this other.
He nods up the ridge away from the
highway.

BELL

Uh-huh.

He walks back toward the trailer.

BELL

...You ride Winston.

WENDELL

You sure?

BELL

Oh, I'm more than sure. Anything
happens to Loretta's horse I can
tell you right now you don't wanna
be the party that was aboard.

EXT. BASIN - DAY

The two men on horseback pick their way through the scrub
approaching Moss's truck. Sheriff Bell is studying the ground.

BELL

It's the same tire tread comin back
as goin'. Made about the same time.
You can see the sipes real clear.

Wendell is standing in the stirrups, looking up the ridge.

WENDELL

Truck's just yonder. Somebodies pried
the inspection plate off the door.

Bell looks up, circling the truck.

BELL

I know this truck. Belongs to a feller
named Moss.

WENDELL

Llewelyn Moss?

BELL
That's the boy.

WENDELL
You figure him for a dope runner?

Bell sits his horse looking at the slashed tires.

BELL
I don't know but I kindly doubt it.

BASIN - DAY

BY THE BODIES

The two lawmen are dismounting.

WENDELL
Hell's bells, they even shot the
dog.

They walk towards the near truck.

WENDELL
...Well this is just a deal gone
wrong.

Sheriff Bell stoops to look at casings.

BELL
Yes, appears to have been a glitch
or two.

WENDELL
What calibers you got there, Sheriff?

BELL
Nine millimeter. Couple of .45 ACP's.

He stands, looking at the truck.

BELL
...Somebody unloaded on this thing
with a shotgun.

WENDELL
Mm.

Bell opens the door of the truck. Looks at the dead driver.

WENDELL
...How come do you reckon the coyotes
ain't been at 'em?

BELL

I don't know...

He shuts the door softly with two hands.

BELL

...Supposedly they won't eat a Mexican.

Wendell is looking at the two corpses close together, wearing suits.

WENDELL

These boys appear to be managerial.

Bell walks back toward the bed of the truck as Wendell appraises:

WENDELL

...I think we're lookin' at more'n one fracas.

A gesture toward the scattered bodies.

WENDELL

...Wild West over there...

A nod down at the two men in suits with head wounds.

WENDELL

...Execution here.

Bell, at the back of the truck, wets a finger and runs it against the bed and looks at it.

BELL

That Mexican brown dope.

Wendell strolls among the bodies.

WENDELL

These boys is all swole up. So this was earlier: gettin set to trade. Then, whoa, differences... You know: might not of even been no money.

BELL

That's possible.

WENDELL

But you don't believe it.

BELL

No. Probably I don't.

WENDELL

It's a mess, ain't it Sheriff?

Bell is remounting.

BELL

If it ain't it'll do til a mess gets here.

EXT. MOSS' TRAILER - DAY

AIR TANK

We follow it being toted along a gravel path and up three shallow steps to a trailer door.

A hand rises to knock. Tubing runs out of the sleeve and into the fist clenched to knock. The door rattles under the knock. A short beat.

The hand opens to press the nozzle at the end of the tube against the lock cylinder. A sharp report.

INSIDE

A cylinder of brass from the door slams into the far wall denting it and drops to the floor and rolls.

Reverse on the door. Daylight shows through the lock.

The door swings slowly in and Chigurh, hard backlit, enters.

He sets the tank down by the door. He looks around.

He ambles in. He opens a door.

The bedroom, a messy aftermath of hasty packing.

The main room. Mail is stacked on the counter that separates a kitchen area.

Chigurh flips unhurriedly through the pieces. One of them is a phone bill. He puts it in his pocket.

He goes to the refrigerator. He opens it. He looks for a still beat. He decides.

He reaches out a quart of milk. He goes to the main room sofa and sits. He pinches the spout open and drinks.

He looks at himself in the dead gray-green screen of the facing television.

INT. DESERT AIRE OFFICE - DAY

Chigurh enters. Old plywood paneling, gunmetal desk, litter of papers. A window air-conditioner works hard.

A fifty-year-old woman with a cast-iron hairdo sits behind the desk.

WOMAN

Yessir?

CHIGURH

I'm looking for Llewelyn Moss.

WOMAN

Did you go up to his trailer?

CHIGURH

Yes I did.

WOMAN

Well I'd say he's at work. Do you want to leave a message?

CHIGURH

Where does he work?

WOMAN

I can't say.

CHIGURH

Where does he work?

WOMAN

Sir I ain't at liberty to give out no information about our residents.

Chigurh looks around the office. He looks at the woman.

CHIGURH

Where does he work?

WOMAN

Did you not hear me? We can't give out no information.

A toilet flushes somewhere. A door unlatches. Footsteps in back.

Chigurh reacts to the noise. He looks at the woman. He turns and opens the door and leaves.

INT. TRAILWAYS BUS - DAY

Some of the passengers are getting out. Moss is up in the aisle reaching a bag down from the overhead rack. He lifts the document case from the floor where Carla Jean still sits next to the window.

CARLA JEAN
Why all the way to Del Rio?

MOSS
I'm gonna borrow a car. From Eldon.

Carla Jean nods at the document case.

CARLA JEAN
You can't afford one?

MOSS
Don't wanna register it. I'll call you in a couple days.

CARLA JEAN
Promise?

MOSS
Yes I do.

CARLA JEAN
I got a bad feelin', Llewelyn.

MOSS
Well I got a good one. So they ought to even out. Quit worrying about everthing.

CARLA JEAN
Mama's gonna raise hell.

MOSS
Uh-huh.

CARLA JEAN
She is just gonna cuss you up'n down.

MOSS
You should be used to that.

CARLA JEAN
I'm used to lots of things, I work at Wal-Mart.

MOSS

Not any more, Carla Jean. You're retired.

CARLA JEAN

Llewelyn?

MOSS

Yes ma'am?

CARLA JEAN

You are comin back, ain't ya?

MOSS

I shall return.

EXT. MOSS'S TRAILER - DAY

Wendell is knocking at its door. Sheriff Bell stands one step behind him.

WENDELL

Sheriff's Department!

No answer.

BELL

Look at the lock.

They both look. A beat.

WENDELL

We goin' in?

BELL

Gun out and up.

Wendell unholsters his gun but hesitates.

WENDELL

What about yours?

BELL

I'm hidin' behind you.

Wendell eases the door open.

WENDELL

Sheriff's Department!

INT. MOSS' TRAILER - DAY

The men cautiously enter, Wendell leading.

WENDELL

...Nobody here.

He lowers his gun and starts to holster it.

BELL

No reason not to stay safe.

Wendell keeps the gun out.

WENDELL

No sir.

He goes to the bedroom door as Sheriff Bell, seeing the lock cylinder on the floor, stoops and hefts it.

He looks up at the wall opposite the door: the small dent.

Wendell pulls his head out of the bedroom.

WENDELL

...I believe they've done lit a shuck.

BELL

Believe you're right.

WENDELL

That from the lock?

Sheriff Bell stands and wanders, looking around.

BELL

Probably must be.

WENDELL

So when was he here?

BELL

I don't know. Oh.

He is at the counter staring at something.

BELL

...Now that's aggravating.

WENDELL

Sheriff?

Sheriff Bell points at the carton of milk.

BELL

Still sweating.

Wendell is agitated.

WENDELL

Whoa! Sheriff!

Sheriff Bell unhurriedly opens a cabinet. He looks closes it, opens another.

WENDELL

...Sheriff, we just missed him! We gotta circulate this! On the radio!

Sheriff Bell takes a glass from the cabinet.

BELL

Well, okay...

He pours milk into the glass.

BELL

...What do we circulate?

He sits on the sofa and takes a sip from the milk.

BELL

...Lookin' for a man who has recently drunk milk?

Wendell stares at him.

WENDELL

Sheriff, that's aggravating.

BELL

I'm ahead of you there.

Wendell gazes around the trailer, shaking his head.

WENDELL

You think this boy Moss has got any notion of the sorts of sons of bitches that are huntin' him?

BELL

I don't know. He ought to...

Sheriff Bell takes another sip.

BELL

...He seen the same things I seen and it made an impression on me.

EXT. BUS STATION CAB STAND - DEL RIO - DAY

Moss emerges from the station and goes to a cab.

As he sits in:

MOSS
Take me to a motel.

CABBIE
You got one in mind?

MOSS
Just someplace cheap.

INT. DEL RIO MOTEL LOBBY - DAY

RATE CARD

The rates for Charlie Goodnight's Del Rio Motor Court are under its address of Highway 84 East and an ovalled AAA logo:

Single Person	\$24.00
Double Bed/Couple	\$27.00
2 Double Bed/Couple	\$28.00
2 Double Bed/3 People	\$32.00

Voices play off:

WOMAN
You tell me the option.

MOSS
The what?

WOMAN
The option.

Wider shows that we are in a motel lobby. A woman faces Moss across a Formica counter top She has handed him the framed rate card.

WOMAN
...You pick the option with the applicable rate.

MOSS
I'm just one person. Don't matter the size of the bed.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Wide on the room. Twin-bed headboards are fixed to the wall but only the far one has a bed parked beneath it. Moss sits on the bed, phone to his ear. It rings a couple times.

He gives up, hangs up, rises.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Moss stands in front of the mirror, twisted around to examine the buckshot wound. He shrugs his shirt back on.

Holding on the mirror we see him walk back into the main room and stop, looking around. He looks slowly up to the ceiling.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON A SCREW

Being unscrewed. Wider shows us Moss, standing on the bed, unscrewing the vent on an overhead airduct.

He gets down off the bed, unzips his duffle bag and takes the document case out of it. He opens the case, takes out a packet of bills, counts out some money and puts it in his pocket. He refastens the case.

He goes to the window and cuts off a length of the curtain cord. He ties the curtain cord to the handle of the document case. He goes to the closet, leaving the case on the bed.

He reaches into the empty closet, lifts the coat rail off its supports and lets the hangers slide off onto the floor.

INT. LOOKING DOWN THE AIRDUCT - DAY

The duct hums with a low, airy compressor sound. The galvanized metal stretches away to a distant elbow. The document case is plunked down in the foreground and then gently pushed down the length of the tube by the coat pole. The free end of the cord trails off the handle for retrieval.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

THE DUFFLE

Moss unzips it and pulls out the machine pistol and the .45 that he took off the dead man. He lifts the mattress and stashes the machine pistol underneath. He checks the chamber of the .45 and stuffs it in his belt.

INT. MOTEL ROOM/EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

THE WINDOW

Moss pulls back one curtain to look out at the lot.

Nothing there disturbs him.

He closes the curtains, crossing one over the other.

He goes out the door, shutting it softly behind him.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - DAY

PHONE BILL

A pencil taps at a Del Rio number that repeats on the bill. We hear phone-filtered rings.

The rings are cut off by the clatter of a hang-up. The pencil moves to an Odessa number, the only other repeat on the short list of toll calls.

We cut up to Chigurh as he finishes dialing, in the booth of a roadside diner. Dusk.

Phone-filtered rings. Connection; a woman's voice:

WOMAN

Hello?

CHIGURH

Is Llewelyn there?

WOMAN

Llewelyn?! No he ain't.

CHIGURH

You expect him?

The woman's voice is old, querulous:

WOMAN

Now why would I expect him? Who is this?

Chigurh stares for a short beat, then prongs the phone.

INT. A SMALL GENERAL STORE - DAY

Moss is standing in front of a rack of cowboy boots at the back of the store. He looks up at an approaching salesman, a bow-legged old man in a white shirt.

SALESMAN

Hep you?

MOSS

I need the Larry Mahan's in black,
size 11.

SALESMAN

Okay.

MOSS

You sell socks?

SALESMAN

Just white.

He gathers up a brown paper bag from a pharmacy.

MOSS

White is all I wear. You got a
bathroom?

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Moss is sitting on the toilet taking off socks with bloody
soles. Sneakers sit on the floor. The pharmacy bag sits next
to them.

He sprays disinfectant on his feet. He takes out bandages.

INT. SHOE STORE - DAY

Moss is returning. The bowlegged salesman stands in the aisle
holding aloft a pair of boots.

SALESMAN

Ain't got Larries in black but I got
'em in osta-rich. Break in easy.

INT. CAB/EXT. DEL RIO MOTEL - NIGHT

It is rolling to a stop in front of Charlie Goodnight's Del
Rio Motor Hotel.

Moss fishes for his wallet but stops, looking.

Parked in the street in front of the motel is an offroad
truck with roof lights.

MOSS

Don't stop. Just ride me up past the
rooms.

DRIVER

What room?

MOSS

Just drive me around. I want to see
if someone's here.

The cab rolls slowly up the lot.

MOSS

...Keep going.

His pivoting point-of-view of his room. The window shows a
part between the curtains.

MOSS

...Keep going. Don't stop.

DRIVER

I don't want to get in some kind of
a jackpot here, buddy.

MOSS

It's all right.

DRIVER

Why don't I set you down here and we
won't argue about it.

MOSS

I want you to take me to another
motel.

DRIVER

Let's just call it square.

Moss reaches a hundred-dollar bill up to the driver.

MOSS

You're already in a jackpot. I'm
trying to get you out of it. Now
take me to a motel.

The driver reaches up for the bill then turns the cab out of
the parking lot onto the hiway. Moss turns to look at the
receding lights of the motel.

EXT. THROUGHWAY INTERCHANGE - NIGHT

PAVEMENT

Rushing under the lens, lit by headlights.

From high up we see a throughway interchange as Chigurh's Ramcharger takes the right fork of the highway under a green sign for Del Rio.

INT. THE RAMCHARGER - NIGHT

Chigurh looks down at the passenger seat. On it lies the transponder, powered on but silent. Next to it is a machine pistol with a can-shaped silencer sweated onto the barrel.

The transponder beeps once.

Chigurh looks up. We are approaching a steel bridge. The headlights pick up a large black bird perched on the aluminum bridge rail.

The passenger window hums down.

Chigurh picks up the pistol and levels the barrel across the window frame.

The truck bumps onto the bridge, its tires skipping over the seams in the asphalt. As it draws even the bird spreads its wings and Chigurh fires—a muted thump like a whoosh of air.

From high overhead: the bullet hits the guardrail making it hum as the Ramcharger recedes and the bird lifts into the darkness, heavily flapping its wings.

INT. CAFE - MORNING

Morning. Bell sits drinking coffee. Wendell stands in the aisle handing something over.

WENDELL

He labs from Austin on the man by
the highway.

Bell takes the papers and starts to look at them.

BELL

What was the bullet?

WENDELL

Wasn't no bullet.

This brings Bell's look up.

BELL

Wasn't no bullet?

WENDELL

Yessir. Wasn't none.

BELL

Well, Wendell, with all due respect,
that don't make a whole lot of sense.

WENDELL

No sir.

BELL

You said entrance wound in the
forehead, no exit wound.

WENDELL

Yes sir.

BELL

Are you telling me he shot this boy
in the head and then went fishin'
around in there with a pocket knife?

WENDELL

Sir, I don't want to picture that.

BELL

Well I don't either!

A beat during which both men picture it, ended by an arriving
waitress.

WAITRESS

Can I freshen that there for you
Sheriff?

The Sheriff's distressed look swings on to her.

BELL

Yes Noreen you better had. Thank
you.

WENDELL

The Rangers and DEA are heading out
to the desert this morning. You gonna
join 'em?

BELL

I don't know. Any new bodies
accumulated out there?

WENDELL

No sir.

BELL

Well then I guess I can skip it.
Heavens to Betsy, Wendell, you already
put me off my breakfast.

EXT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - DAY

Moss pushes off from the wall he was leaning against: someone inside the glass double doors is stooping to unlock them.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - GUN COUNTER - DAY

The clerk is handing a shotgun across the counter.

CLERK

Twelve gauge. You need shells? Moss looks the gun over.

MOSS

Uh-huh. Double ought.

CLERK

They'll give you a wallop.

He pushes the shells across.

MOSS

You have camping supplies?

ANOTHER COUNTER

A clerk stares at Moss.

CLERK

Tent poles.

MOSS

Uh-huh.

CLERK

You already have the tent?

MOSS

Somethin' like that.

CLERK

Well you give me the model number of the tent I can order you the poles.

MOSS

Never mind. I want a tent.

CLERK

What kind of tent?

MOSS

The kind with the most poles.

CLERK

Well I guess that'd be our ten-foot backyard Per-Gola. You can stand up in it. Well, some people could stand up in it. Six foot clearance at the ridge. You might just could.

MOSS

Let me have that one. Where's the nearest hardware store?

INT. MOSS' NEW MOTEL ROOM - DAY

He has the shotgun wedged in an open drawer and is sawing off its barrel with a hacksaw.

MINUTES LATER

Moss sits on the bed dressing the barrel with a file.

He puts down the file, looks at the barrel. He slides the forearm back and forward again and lets the hammer down with his thumb. He looks the gun over, appraising, and then opens the box of shells and starts feeding in the heavy waxed loads.

INT. FIRST MOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Moss enters carrying a new duffle bag. The same woman is behind the counter.

MOSS

Could I get another room.

WOMAN

You want to change rooms?

MOSS

No, I want to keep my room, and get another one.

WOMAN

Another additional.

MOSS

Uh-huh. You got a map of the rooms?

She inclines her head to look under the counter.

WOMAN

Yeah we had a sorta one.

She finds a brochure and hands it across. It shows a car from the fifties parked in front of the hotel in hard sunlight.

Moss unfolds the brochure and studies.

MOSS

What about one forty-two.

WOMAN

You can have the one next to yours if you want. One twenty. It ain't took.

MOSS

No, one forty-two.

WOMAN

That's got two double beds.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

An arcing point of view on the window of Moss's old room. The curtain still slightly open.

A reverse shows Moss crossing the lot from the office carrying his long nylon duffle bag, studying the room. He looks further down the street.

The truck with the roof lights is still parked there.

INT. 2ND MOTEL ROOM

Two double beds. Moss is listening at the wall. He goes to the bed and unzips the duffle bag and pulls out the sawed-off shotgun. He lays it on the bed. He pulls the tent poles and some duct tape out of the duffle.

INT. CHIGURH'S TRUCK/TWO LANE HIGHWAY - LATE DAY

CHIGURH

Driving slowly down the street with frequent glances down at the receiver on the seat next to him. The receiver lights ups and bleeps one time.

Chigurh slows and looks around at the buildings that line the two-lane highway.

INT. 2ND MOTEL ROOM - LATE DAY

Moss is standing on a desk chair unscrewing the plate from the overhead airduct. He lays it aside and raises a flashlight and peers into the airduct.

INT. MOTEL DUCT - LATE DAY

Down the length of the duct we see an elbow junction ten feet away. The end of the document case is just visible sticking out into the elbow.

CHIGURH

The receiver is beeping slowly as the car creeps along. Up at a distant intersection is Charlie Goodnight's Del Rio Motel.

INT. 2ND MOTEL ROOM

Moss rips off a length of duct tape. He wraps it around two tent poles placed end-to-end but an inch apart, not butting. He gives the tape several winds.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - LATE DAY

CHIGURH

He is slowly driving the parking lot, the receiver now in his lap.

The beeping frequency peaks and then starts to fall off. Chigurh puts the truck in reverse and eases back to the peak.

His point-of-view: window with parted curtains.

INT. 2ND MOTEL ROOM - LATE DAY

Moss experiments with the tape-joint, angling then straightening the two poles. Satisfied, he starts taping on a third length of pole.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Chigurh stands across the counter from the clerk who looks at him, waiting.

He is frowning at the rate card.

INT. CHIGURH'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

DOOR

It swings slowly in toward us. Chigurh stands in the doorway. The room-number bangle hangs off the key in the knob.

He stares in for a beat.

He enters slowly and reaches up for the light switch. He doesn't turn it on. He drops his hand. He reaches up again, feeling it.

He looks around the room. He takes the key and closes the door behind him.

MOSS

Moss pulls three wire hangers off the closet rack. He takes them to the bureau and picks up a sidecutter.

CHIGURH

He walks over to the bathroom.

He turns on its light, looks.

He leaves the door open. He goes to a closet, opens it, looks.

He goes to the door of the room but doesn't open it. He stands with his back against it and looks at the room.

The bathroom door.

The closet door.

Chigurh goes to the bed and sits to take off his boots.

MOSS

Moss snips the last of the wire hangers' hooks off with the sidecutter. He wraps the three hooks with duct tape to make a sturdier one.

He wraps more tape to attach this hook to the end of the three-link pole.

CHIGURH

From a bag he withdraws a twelve-gauge automatic shotgun fitted with a silencer big around as a beer can.

He checks the loads.

He picks up the regularly beeping receiver, turns it off, and slips it into his pocket.

He hoists the air tank.

MOSS

He is standing on the chair below the airduct, stooping to pick up the jury-rigged pole leaning nearby. He straightens and feeds the length of the pole into the duct, using the joints to angle it in.

INT. MOTEL DUCT - NIGHT

Inside the duct: he watches the pole play in, illuminated by the flashlight he has left resting inside.

EXT. MOTEL WALKWAY - NIGHT

STOCKINGED FEET

We track on the feet padding down the exterior walkway.

INT. MOTEL DUCT - NIGHT

MOSS

Peering along the airduct, both hands up next to one ear awkwardly maneuvering the pole.

He lays the far, hooked end over the protruding corner of the document case. He pulls.

The pole slides off the case.

EXT./INT. 1ST MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CHIGURH

He stands at the door of Moss's first room. He eases an ear against it.

He steps back.

He punches out the lock cylinder with the airgun and kicks in the door, raising the shotgun.

A Mexican in a guayabera reclines on one of the two double beds.

He is scrabbling for a machine pistol on the nightstand.

Chigurh fires three times quickly. The damped blasts have the low resonance of chugs into a bottle.

MOSS

Head still in the airduct, frozen, listening.

EXT./INT. 1ST MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CHIGURH

Also frozen, back against the wall outside the room, to one side of the open door.

After a beat he steps back into the open doorway leveling the gun.

Inside the room: no movement. Much of the man on the bed is spattered against the chewed-up headboard.

The bathroom door is ajar, its light on.

A long beat.

Movement in the wedge of light.

Immediately, chugs from the shotgun chew up bathroom door and nearby wallboard.

A cry from inside. A brief chatter of machine pistol.

INT. MOTEL DUCT - NIGHT

MOSS'S POV

Along the air vent.

The machine-pistol chatter crosses the cut.

We hear bullets snap through metal. The sound brings on indirect light as holes are punched in the duct somewhere around the bend.

Moss holds still as the galvanized metal faintly thunders. The flashlight resting on it wobbles.

EXT./INT. 1ST MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CHIGURH

Gun leveled, at the open door.

Again, no movement.

He advances into the room, gun pointing at the bathroom door. As he advances he swings the gun briefly over at the closet door and fires. The splintered-in door reveals no occupant.

Chigurh angles around the double bed to get a view of that wedge of bathroom floor visible through its door. Blood is pooling out from the right.

Chigurh fires at the baseboard to the right of the door.

INT. MOTEL DUCT - NIGHT

Moss makes another attempt to hook the bag. The hook takes.

Moss drags the case inches out into the duct's bend before the hook slides off again.

INT. 1ST MOTEL ROOM BATHROOM - NIGHT

CHIGURH

He uses the shotgun barrel to push open what's left of the bathroom door.

The mirror over the facing sink gives a view of most of the hidden side of the bedroom/ bathroom party wall. Partial view of a man pressed against the wall, standing in the tub in the corner. From his posture and the one visible hand he seems unarmed.

Chigurh enters the bathroom.

The cornered man is unhurt but terrified. He holds up his hands.

MAN

No me mate.

The man on the floor is quite dead. A machine pistol lies in one out-flung hand.

Chigurh looks back up at the survivor.

CHIGURH

How'd you find it?

MAN

No me mate.

Chigurh walks unhurriedly to the tub. The man watches him, hands up, vibrating.

Chigurh reaches with his free hand and pulls the shower curtain most of the way round, hiding the man. He angles the nose of the shotgun in and fires.

MOSS

The hook again snags a strap on the case. Moss pulls, carefully.

INT. 1ST MOTEL ROOM - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Chigurh emerges from the bathroom. His socks are sodden with gore. He sits on the bed and peels them off. He rubs the bottom of each foot with the ankle of each sock and drops the socks to the floor.

He rises and opens three bureau drawers, which are empty, and leaves them open.

He pulls open what remains of the closet door. Empty.

He looks under the bed.

He stands, looks around.

He looks up. His look lingers.

Close on the airduct grille: it is dusty. Rub-marks have made four dark bands across the dusty slats. Chigurh's fingers rise into frame and meet the grille, roughly aligning with the finger marks in the dust.

Close on a screwhead: a dime enters and engages the screw and starts turning it.

INT. MOTEL DUCT - NIGHT

From inside the duct: fingers reach through the grille and Chigurh's hand pushes it up into the duct, then angles it and withdraws it. Faintly, under the distant airy drone of the compressor, we hear the grate clatter to the floor.

The back of Chigurh's head appears. He aims a flashlight away down the far length of the duct. A beat.

He pivots to face us.

His point-of-view: the length of the duct, empty, with a drag-mark through the middle of the dust.

Back to Chigurh. His look holds.

He ducks out.

INT. 1ST MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

In the room: Chigurh steps down from the chair and pulls the receiver from his pocket and turns it on.

It beeps once.

Silence.

Frowning, looking down at the receiver, Chigurh makes a slow sweep with it. The silence holds--snapped off by car steady as we cut to:

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Moss, with his duffle bag and document case, sits in the passenger seat of an old station wagon. The driver is an elderly man in a yoked shirt.

After a beat, eyes fixed on the road, the old man shakes his head.

OLD MAN

Shouldn't be doin' that. Even a young man like you.

Moss gives him a look. A beat.

MOSS

Doin' what. The old man gazes at the road.

OLD MAN

Hitchhikin'.

He shakes his head again. Silent driving. The old man murmurs:

OLD MAN

Dangerous.

EXT. DOWNTOWN HOUSTON - DAY

BOOMING UP

We are looking out as a foreground building slips by and we rise to get an ever-higher perspective on downtown Houston, hazy under a noon sun.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A man standing behind a large desk--behind him, floor-to-ceiling windows--has no small talk for Carson Wells, the man entering.

MAN

You know Anton Chigurh by sight, is that correct?

Carson Wells sits in front of the desk, his manner affable. He rests a booted foot across one knee.

WELLS

Yessir, that's correct. I know 'em when I see 'em.

MAN

When did you last see him.

WELLS

November the 28th, last year.

MAN

You seem pretty sure of the date. Did I ask you to sit?

WELLS

No sir but you struck me as a man who wouldn't want to waste a chair. I remember dates. Names. Numbers. I saw him on November 28th.

The man gazes. He nods.

MAN

We got a loose cannon here. And we're out a bunch of money, and the other party is out his product.

WELLS

Yessir. I understand that.

The man looks at him, appraising. He nods again and slides a bank card across the table.

MAN

This account will only give up twelve hundred dollars in any twenty-four hour period. That's up from a thousand.

Wells rises to take the card and then reseats himself.

WELLS

Yessir.

MAN

If your expenses run higher I hope you'll trust us for it.

WELLS

Okay.

MAN

How well do you know Chigurh.

WELLS

Well enough.

MAN

That's not an answer.

WELLS

What do you want to know?

MAN

I'd just like to know your opinion of him. In general. Just how dangerous is he?

Wells shrugs.

WELLS

Compared to what? The bubonic plague? He's bad enough that you called me. He's a psychopathic killer but so what? There's plenty of them around.

A beat.

MAN

He killed three men in a motel in Del Rio yesterday. And two others at that colossal goatfuck out in the desert.

WELLS

Okay. We can stop that.

MAN

You seem pretty sure of yourself. You've led something of a charmed life haven't you Mr. Wells?

Wells rises.

WELLS

In all honesty I can't say that charm has had a whole lot to do with it.

He thumps once at his chest.

WELLS

...I'm wondering...

MAN

Yes?

WELLS

Can I get my parking ticket validated?

The man gazes.

MAN

...An attempt at humor, I suppose.

WELLS

I'm sorry.

MAN

Goodbye, Mr. Wells.

EXT. EAGLE PASS TOWN SQUARE - DUSK

Moss is getting out of the station wagon with his duffle and document case.

It is a town square. Among the old buildings is the Hotel Eagle, identified by a neon above the front door.

INT. HOTEL EAGLE LOBBY - NIGHT

Moss enters. Behind the front desk an older man sits reading Ring magazine. He has a hand-rolled cigarette.

MOSS

One room, one night.

CLERK

That's twenty-six dollars.

MOSS

You on all night?

CLERK

Yessir, be here til ten tomorrow morning.

Moss pushes a hundred along with smaller bills across the desk.

MOSS

For you. I ain't asking you to do anything illegal.

The clerk looks at the hundred-dollar bill without reaching.

CLERK

I'm waitin' to hear your description of that.

MOSS

There's somebody lookin' for me. Not police. Just call me if anyone else checks in tonight.

INT. SECOND-FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Moss is mounting the stairs from the lobby. The carpeted hallway is lined by transom-topped doors. Moss goes to a door halfway down on his left.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Moss enters a room with old oak furniture and high ceilings. He sets the document case next to the bed.

He unzips the duffel and takes out the shotgun which he lays on the bed, and then goes to the window. He parts the curtain to look down.

The street is empty. Mexican music floats up faintly from a bar somewhere not far away.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

The room is dark. The music is gone.

We are looking straight down on Moss lying, clothed, on the bed. We are booming straight down toward him.

After a beat he shakes his head. He opens his eyes, grimacing.

MOSS

There just ain't no way.

He sits up and turns on the bedside lamp.

The shot gun and document case are on the floor by the bed. Moss swings the document case onto the bed and unclasps it and upends the money onto the bed. He feels the bottom of the case, squeezing it with one hand inside and one hand out, looking for a false bottom. He eyeballs the case, turning it over and around.

He starts riffling money packets.

He finds one that binds. It has hundreds on the outside but ones inside with the centers cut out. In the hollow is a sending unit the size of a Zippo lighter.

He holds the sender, staring at it.

A long beat.

From somewhere, a dull chug. The sound is hard to read—a compressor going on, a door thud, maybe something else.

The sound has brought Moss's look up. He sits listening. No further sound.

Moss reaches to uncradle the rotary phone by the bed. He dials 0.

We hear ringing filtered through the handset. Also, faintly, offset, we hear the ring direct from downstairs.

After five rings Moss cradles the phone.

He goes to the door, reaches for the knob, but hesitates.

He gets down on his hands and knees and listens at the crack under the door.

An open airy sound like a seashell put to your ear.

Moss rises and turns to the bed. He piles money back into the document case but freezes suddenly—for no reason we can see.

A long beat on his motionless back. We gradually become aware of a faint high-frequency beeping, barely audible. Its source is indeterminate.

Moss clasps the document case, picks up his shotgun and eases himself to a sitting position on the bed, facing the door.

He looks at the line of light under it.

The beeps approach, though still not loud. A long wait.

At length a soft shadow appears in the line of light below the door. It lingers there. The beeping-stops.

A beat. Now the soft shadow becomes more focused. It resolves into two columns of dark: feet planted before the door.

Moss raises his shotgun toward the door.

A long beat.

Moss adjusts his grip on the shotgun and his finger tightens on the trigger.

The shadow moves, unhurriedly, rightward. The band of light beneath the door is once again unshadowed.

Quiet. Moss stares.

The band of light under the door.

Moss stares.

Silently, the light goes out.

Something for Moss to think about. He stares.

The hallway behind the door is now dark. The door is defined only from his side, by streetlight-spill through the window.

Moss stares. He shifts, starts to rise, doesn't. A beat.

A report -- not a gunshot, but a stamping sound, followed by a pneumatic hiss.

It brings a dull impact and Moss recoils, hit.

He winces, feeling his chest.

The door is shuddering creakily in.

It is all strange. Moss gropes in his lap and picks something up. The lock cylinder.

The creaking door comes to rest, ajar.

Moss fires. The shotgun blast roars in the confined space and for an instant turns the room orange. The chewed-up door wobbles back against the jamb and creakily bounces in again. Moss has already risen and is hoisting the document case.

FROM OUTSIDE HIS WINDOW

Moss finishes draping his shotgun by its strap across his back and climbs out onto the ledge with the document case. He swings the document case out and drops it.

The bracketing for the hotel's sign gives Moss a handhold. He grabs it as inside the room the door is kicked open. Moss swings down as, with a muted thump, orange muzzleflash strobes the room.

Moss drops.

EXT. HOTEL EAGLE SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Moss lands and grabs the document case and straightens. He is at the hotel entrance, standing in the light coming through the etched glass of the double doors.

He looks at his own shadow thrown onto the street. He plunges through the doors into the lobby as a gun thumps and crackling shot chews the sidewalk.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Moss hurries across the lobby. A glance to one side:

A booted foot sticks out from behind the front desk.

Moss slows approaching the stairway. He risks a look around the stairway wall.

Ascending balusters fade off into the blackness of the second-story hallway.

Moss sags. He looks back across the lobby at the front door.

He unhitches his shotgun. He remains still for a moment holding the shotgun, back against the protected side of the wall.

He quickly swings out and with shotgun aimed up the stairs he crosses to the back lobby.

He quietly pushes open the back door.

EXT. SERVICE ALLEY - NIGHT

OUTSIDE

Moss emerges into a shallow service alley, dark and dirty.

He is at a run when we hear soft tock and a garbage can in front of him snaps and wobbles.

He turns looking up, backpedaling. Another tock accompanies a muzzleflash in a dark second-story window.

Moss fires his shotgun: loud. Chips fly off the brickface and the window shatters.

Moss rounds the alley corner. He stops and squats.

EXT. DOWNTOWN EAGLE PASS STREET - NIGHT

Wide: dark, deserted downtown Eagle Pass, Moss a lone figure resting at a corner.

Close on Moss panting. He takes stock, painfully feeling at his upper chest where the lock hit, then touching gingerly at his side, beneath the ribs, newly bloody. He sighs.

He listens. No noise. He gets to his feet with the document case in one hand and shotgun in the other. He waits a beat, back against the wall.

He swings out and fires the shotgun into the alley and then spins back and runs a short block and rounds the next corner and stops to rest.

EXT. EAGLE PASS STREET - NIGHT

He waits for his breath to slow. He brings up the shotgun and readies himself.

He swings out to look back around the corner.

The street is empty.

He waits, at the ready for whatever might emerge from the alley mouth a short block away.

Long beat. Stillness.

A panicky thought brings his look and the shotgun swinging back around: the man could round the block the other way.

Empty street.

Two empty streets: Moss doesn't know which way to cover, which way to go.

He stands looking each way, trying to devise a plan. No basis for a plan.

Quiet hesitation.

Now, a sound: engine noise.

An old pickup rounds a corner two blocks up. It rattles toward him.

Moss lowers the shotgun. He keeps it to the hidden side of his body.

The pickup dutifully stops at a flashing red traffic light.

It comes on through the intersection.

Moss strides out into the street. He swings the shotgun up and gives the driver a raised palm to halt.

INT. PICKUP/EXT. EAGLE PASS STREET - NIGHT

The truck stops and Moss opens the passenger door and swings the case in and climbs in after.

The driver, an older man, gapes at him, frightened.

MOSS

I'm not going to hurt you. I need
you to --

The windshield stars.

A quick second round pushes part of the windshield in.

Rounds come in without pause, cracking sheet metal, blowing the cab's rear window into the truckbed, twisting the rear-view.

A round seems to have caught the driver in the throat: a gurgling scream as he claws at his windpipe, blowing out blood.

Moss, quicker to react, has already ducked below the dash.

A snap of the driver's head and a new freshet of blood from a shot to the head. The screams turn to low gurgles.

Moss, jammed almost in to the driver's lap, frantically gropes for the shift.

He throws the pickup into drive and stamps at the accelerator, driving blind as bullets continue to pour in.

He raises his head enough to see his side-view. It shows sluing, bouncing, empty street, rough guide for steering.

A tremendous jounce up onto the curb then off it, the driver's body swaying in its restraint.

The passenger side window shatters: we are passing the gunman.

Now Moss sits up to steer looking out front. Behind him through the shot-out back window the dark street is suddenly punctured by muzzleflash. It comes, for the first time, with a report: the low chug of the muted shotgun.

Rattle of shot against sheet metal.

Moss floors the gas to roar into a turn. The street sweeping out of view behind him produces one more chugging muzzleflash.

EXT. EAGLE PASS STREET - NIGHT

The pickup bounces but Moss, sitting fully up, can now steer.

He goes half the length of the block and then yanks the wheel hard, braking. The pickup smashes a parked car and jacks around to a halt.

Moss emerges from the pickup with his shotgun and goes to the sidewalk and backtracks. He covers behind a parked car.

He sits leaning back against the car, waiting.

His point-of-view: his own reflection in the facing storefront, a lot of the driver's blood on him.

He sinks lower.

A long beat.

Footsteps. They approach without hurry.

A gritty boot turn at the corner. The footsteps come closer still.

They pass and recede toward the pickup.

We cut to Chigurh approaching the pickup, shotgun held at ease across his body.

He slows.

Moss: he hears the slowing steps. He tightens his grip on his shotgun and tenses.

Chigurh: slowing further, he sees:

Bloody boot prints outside the passenger door.

Moss rises.

Chigurh is turning.

He dives as, behind him, Moss fires.

Shot peppers two parked cars -- the one Moss rammed and the one behind.

Chigurh dived between them: hit or not?

Moss advances down the middle of the street. He angles his head: anything under the cars?

He fires twice. Buckshot claws up the pavement and the car bodies and tires, and the cars sink hissing to their rims.

Moss crosses to the far curb, still advancing. No one behind the cars.

He looks up and down the street.

Nothing to see.

He goes to the pickup truck, driver's side. He opens the door and reaches over the driver's corpse for his lap belt.

EXT. EAGLE PASS BORDER AREA - NIGHT

Deserted.

The pickup truck rattles into frame.

Moss emerges. He hoists out the case. He leaves the shotgun.

It is very quiet.

He looks around.

The Rio Grande bridge.

Moss walks unsteadily toward it, pressing his free hand to his side.

A thought stops him. He turns.

His bloody boot prints point at him like comic book clues.

His shoulders sag.

EXT. RIO GRANDE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Minutes later. Moss heads down the right-hand walkway in stockinged feet, boots tucked into his belt.

He turns and looks back toward the U.S. side.

Empty walkway.

He proceeds on. Three youths are approaching from the Mexican side. Fart types, they are laughing and walking unsteadily.

As they approach they gape at Moss, covered with blood.

The lead boy, holding a beer, wears a light coat.

MOSS

I'll give you five hundred bucks for
your shirt and your coat.

The three boys stare at him.

At length:

YOUTH

Let's see the money.

Moss unpeels bills from a moist wad. The top one is bloody.

SECOND YOUTH

...Were you in a car accident?

MOSS

Yeah.

YOUTH

Okay, lemme have the money.

MOSS

It's right here. Give me the coat.

YOUTH

Lemme hold the money.

Moss does.

MOSS

Gimme the clothes.

The youth starts to peel them.

MOSS

...And let me have your beer.

YOUTH

...How much?

SECOND YOUTH

Brian. Give him the beer.

MINUTES LATER

The boys are receding. Moss pours the beer over his head, rubbing blood away.

He opens his shirt. He inspects the wounds in his midriff, entrance and exit. Pulsing blood laps weakly out. He shrugs off his shirt, wraps it around his waist and knots it.

He starts to put on the new shirt. Something stops him. He pauses.

He vomits into the roadbed.

He straightens slowly and puts on the new shirt.

He looks out.

He is not yet over the river: wind stirs the cane on the bank.

He looks up: Chain-link fence encloses the walkway to a height of about twelve feet, curling inward at the top.

He looks down the walkway. The three boys are distant figures.

He looks up the walkway.

A few paces up a light pole stanchion stands flush to the guardrail that separates road and walkway.

He goes to the stanchion and uses it to hoist himself onto the guardrail, his free hand holding the case.

Standing on top of the curved metal rail and holding the post for balance, he kneebends down and up and heaves the case.

It sails clear of the chain-link fence. A short beat and we hear a thump.

Moss pants for a moment, recovering from the strain of the toss. He eases himself off the guardrail and goes to the fence and looks at the bank below. One gnarled tree stands out in the cane. The case, wherever it landed, is not visible.

EXT. GUARDSHACK MEXICAN SIDE - NIGHT

There is a lighted guardshack at the end of the walkway. Inside, a uniformed guard.

Moss walks unsteadily up. He tilts the beer bottle in salute at the guard.

The guard impassively lets him proceed.

EXT. MEXICAN SQUARE - DAWN

BLACK

In black, an insanely cheerful mariachi song.

Fade in on the mariachis. We are looking steeply up at them, dutch-angled. They beam down at us, energetically thumping their oversized guitars and bajo sextos.

We boom woozily up and start to un-dutch.

Reverse on Moss struggling to a sitting position on the park bench where he'd been lying. A public square.

Back to the mariachis. Beaming, singing.

Their smiles gradually fade.

The playing falls off to silence.

In the silence, birds chirp. The musicians are looking quizzically down.

Moss's arm swings up in the foreground, extending a bloody hundred-dollar bill.

On Moss. His coat has swung open to expose his bloody midriff. His look up is glazed.

MOSS

Doctor.

The mariachis stare. Moss waggles the bill.

MOSS

...Medico. Por favor.

INT. RAMCHARGER/EXT. WAL-MART - DAY

We are close on a patch of its front seat. Day. The pickup is parked. The piece of upholstery we are looking at has blood soaked into it.

On the sound of the door opening we cut wider. We are in the parking lot of a Wal-Mart. Chigurh, climbing in, tosses a brown paper bag onto the passenger side. He has a dark towel wrapped around one leg. As he slides behind the wheel the wrapped part of his leg slides over the bloodstain.

INT. RAMCHARGER/EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

TRAVELING POINT OF VIEW

A small-town main street. We are driving past a pharmacy.

Chigurh, looking.

He parks.

He takes a scissors from the Wal-Mart bag and a box of cotton. He opens the box and cuts a little disc out of the cardboard.

He takes a new shirt out of the bag and begins to cut through one sleeve.

EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

SHOOTING PAST A PARKED CAR

Chigurh limps toward us. He holds a coat hanger bent straight with the balled-up shirtsleeve hooked at one end.

Chigurh arrives, looks up and down the street.

He unscrews the gas cap, feeds the coat hanger in to soak the shirt, pulls it back out. He tapes the cardboard disc over the open gas tank. He unhooks the wet shirtsleeve and jams it up over the disk. He lights it and exits.

INSIDE THE PHARMACY - DAY

A beat pulling Chigurh limping up the aisle, and then the car explodes out front. The plate glass storefront blows in.

The few people inside rush out; Chigurh doesn't react.

The pharmacy counter in back is deserted. Chigurh lifts a hinged piece of counter to enter and starts looking through the stock.

He pulls out a packet of syringes, Hydrocodone tablets, penicillin.

INT. SMALL TOWN MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Chigurh dumps the pharmaceuticals into the bathroom sink.

In the room outside he sits on the bed and takes off his boots. He unknots the towel from around his leg and stands and unbuttons his pants and starts cutting from the crotch down with a heavy scissors. One thigh is a mess of clotted blood and torn fabric.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - DAY

BATH

Chigurh lowers himself into bath water that quickly turns pink. He laves water over his bloody thigh. There is a dark red hole, one half inch across, pulsing blood into the bath water. Torn pieces of fabric from his pants are embedded in the bleeding skin.

A SHAVING MIRROR

We are looking at the wound in a magnifying mirror. Forceps enter and pluck a tiny piece of blood-soaked fabric from the skin.

RUNNING WATER

A bathroom tap. The forceps enter. They are rinsed, shaken off.

Wider: Chigurh sits on the closed toilet with the mirror sitting on the edge of the tub, angled toward the wound. Chigurh works on cleaning it.

INT. SMALL TOWN MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The main room. The TV is on now. Chigurh enters from the bathroom with his leg bandaged. He sits on the bed and tears open the packaging of a syringe.

He plunges it into an ampule of penicillin.

He injects himself.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Sheriff Bell sits writing in a large leatherette checkbook. He projects:

BELL

Anything on those vehicles yet?

A raised female voice from the front office:

VOICE

Sheriff I found out everything there was to find. Those vehicles are titled and registered to deceased people.

Molly, the secretary, appears at the doorway.

VOICE

...The owner of that Blazer died twenty years ago. Did you want me to see what I could find out about the Mexican ones?

BELL

No. Lord no.

He holds out the checkbook.

BELL

...This month's checks.

MOLLY

That DEA agent called again. You don't want to talk to him?

BELL

I'm goin' to try and keep from it as much as I can.

MOLLY

He's goin' back out there and he wanted to know if you wanted to go with him.

Sheriff Bell is putting things away.

BELL

Well that's cordial of him. I guess he can go wherever he wants. He's a certified agent of the United States Government.

He rises.

BELL

...Could I get you to call Loretta and tell her I've gone to Odessa? goin' to visit with Carla Jean Moss.

MOLLY

Yes Sheriff.

BELL

I'll call Loretta when I get there. I'd call now but she'll want me to come home and I just might.

MOLLY

You want me to wait til you've quit the building?

BELL

Yes I do. You don't want to lie without what it's absolutely necessary.

Molly trails him into the front office.

BELL

...What is it that Torbert says? About truth and justice?

MOLLY

We dedicate ourselves daily anew. Something like that.

BELL
I think I'm goin' to commence
dedicatin' myself twice daily. It
may come to three times before it's
over...

A loud truck-by from the street outside. Sheriff Bell's eyes
track the passing vehicle.

BELL
...What the hell?

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sanderson outskirts.

Sheriff Bell passes a flatbed truck with a flapping tarp and
briefly blurps his siren to pull it over. He parks on the
shoulder in front of the truck and then walks back to the
driver who watches his approach, chewing gum with blithe
unconcern.

DRIVER
Sheriff.

BELL
Have you looked at your load lately?

A MINUTE LATER

Both men are at the back of the truck.

BELL
That's a damned outrage.

DRIVER
Oh. One of the tiedowns worked lose.

Bell whips the tarp back to expose eight corpses wrapped
blue sheeting bound with tape.

BELL
How many did you leave with?

The driver is still smiling.

DRIVER
I ain't lost none of 'em, Sheriff.

BELL
Couldn't you all of took a van out
there?

DRIVER

Didn't have no van with four-wheel drive.

Sheriff Bell pulls the tarp down and ties it. The driver watches without helping.

DRIVER

...You going to write me up for improperly secured load?

Sheriff Bell cinches the knot tight.

BELL

You get your ass out of here.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Moss, in bed, stirs at an off screen voice:

VOICE

I'm guessin'... this is not the future you pictured for yourself when you first clapped eyes on that money.

Moss blearily focuses on:

A fancy crocodile boot.

His look rises from the boot, crossed on his visitor's knee, up to the man's face.

Carson Wells smiles at him from the bedside chair.

WELLS

...Don't worry. I'm not the man that's after you.

MOSS

I know, I've seen him. Sort of.

Wells is surprised.

WELLS

You've seen him. And you're not dead.

He nods, impressed.

WELLS

...But that won't last.

MOSS

What is he supposed to be, the ultimate bad-ass?

WELLS

I don't think that's how I would describe him.

MOSS

How would you describe him?

WELLS

I guess I'd say... that he doesn't have a sense of humor. His name is Chigurh.

MOSS

Sugar?

WELLS

Chigurh. Anton Chigurh. You know how he found you?

MOSS

I know how he found me.

WELLS

It's called a transponder.

MOSS

I know what it is. He won't find me again.

WELLS

Not that way.

MOSS

Not any way.

WELLS

Took me about three hours.

MOSS

I been immobile.

WELLS

No. You don't understand.

Wells sits back and studies Moss.

WELLS

...What do you do?

MOSS

I'm retired.

WELLS

What did you do?

MOSS

I'm a welder.

WELLS

Acetylene? Mig? Tig?

MOSS

Any of it. If it can be welded I can weld it.

WELLS

Cast iron?

MOSS

Yes.

WELLS

I don't mean braze.

MOSS

I didn't say braze.

WELLS

Pot metal?

MOSS

What did I say?

WELLS

Were you in Nam?

MOSS

Yeah. I was in Nam.

WELLS

So was I.

MOSS

So what does that make me? Your buddy?

Wells sits smiling at him.

A beat.

WELLS

Look. You need to give me the money. I've got no other reason to protect you.

MOSS

Too late. I spent it -- about a million and a half on whores and whiskey and the rest of it I just sort of blew it in.

Wells' smile stays in place.

WELLS

How do you know he's not on his way to Odessa?

Moss stares at him. A beat.

MOSS

Why would he go to Odessa?

WELLS

To kill your wife.

Another beat.

MOSS

Maybe he should be worried. About me.

WELLS

He isn't. You're not cut out for this. You're just a guy that happened to find those vehicles.

Moss doesn't respond.

WELLS

...You didn't take the product, did you?

MOSS

What product.

WELLS

The heroin. You don't have it.

MOSS

No I don't have it.

WELLS

No. You don't.

He rises.

WELLS

...I'm across the river. At the Hotel Eagle. Carson Wells. Call me when you've had enough. I can even let you keep a little of the money.

MOSS

If I was cuttin' deals, why wouldn't I go deal with this guy Chigurh?

WELLS

No no. No. You don't understand. You can't make a deal with him. Even if you gave him the money he'd still kill you. He's a peculiar man. You could even say that he has principles. Principles that transcend money or drugs or anything like that. He's not like you. He's not even like me.

MOSS

He don't talk as much as you, I give him points for that.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - ODESSA - DAY

Sheriff Bell rises from a booth, taking off his hat.

BELL

Carla Jean, I thank you for comin'.

She sits. He sits.

CARLA JEAN

Don't know why I did. I told you, I don't know where he is.

BELL

You ain't heard from him?

CARLA JEAN

No I ain't.

BELL

Nothin'?

CARLA JEAN

Not word one.

BELL

Would you tell me if you had?

CARLA JEAN

Well, I don't know. He don't need any trouble from you.

BELL

It's not me he's in trouble with.

CARLA JEAN

Who's he in trouble with then?

BELL

Some pretty bad people.

CARLA JEAN

Llewelyn can take care of hisself.

BELL

These people will kill him, Carla Jean. They won't quit.

CARLA JEAN

He won't neither. He never has.

BELL

I wish I could say that was in his favor. But I have to say I don't think it is.

CARLA JEAN

He can take all comers.

Bell looks at her. After a beat:

BELL

You know Charlie Walser? Has the place east of Sanderson?

She shakes her head, shrugs.

BELL

...Well you know how they used to slaughter beeves, hit 'em with a maul right here to stun 'em...

Indicates between his own eyes.

BELL

...and then truss 'em up and slit their throats? Well here Charlie has one trussed up and all set to drain him and the beef comes to. It starts thrashing around, six hundred pounds of very pissed-off livestock if you'll pardon my... Charlie grabs his gun there to shoot the damn thing in the head but what with the swingin' and twistin' it's a glance-shot and ricochets around and comes back hits Charlie in the shoulder. You go see Charlie, he still can't reach up with his right hand for his hat... Point bein', even in the contest between man and cow the issue is not certain.

He takes a sip of coffee, leaving room for Carla Jean to argue if inclined.

She does not.

Sheriff Bell hands a card across.

BELL

...When Llewelyn calls, just tell him I can make him safe.

She takes the card. Sheriff Bell sips.

BELL

...Course, they slaughter beeves different now. Use a air gun. Shoots out a rod, about this far into the brain...

He holds thumb and forefinger a couple inches apart.

BELL

...Sucks back in. Animal never knows what hit him.

Another beat. Carla Jean stares at him.

CARLA JEAN

Why you tellin' me that, Sheriff?

BELL

I don't know. My mind wanders.

EXT. RIO GRANDE BRIDGE - AFTERNOON

Late Day.

Carson Wells grabs a light pole stanchion to hoist himself onto the guardrail. He stands atop it, eyeing the chain-link fence across the walkway.

He climbs down and crosses to the fence and looks down:

The brown, sluggish water of the Rio Grande.

LOOKING DOWN THE WALKWAY

Carson Wells enters frame and recedes down the walkway. When he draws even with the next stanchion he looks down through the fence:

Cane on the riverbank, and one gnarled tree.

INT. HOTEL EAGLE LOBBY - NIGHT

Twilight. Carson Wells enters the hotel and crosses the lobby.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Carson Wells appears around the corner and we pull him as he mounts the stairs. When he is about halfway up a figure -- focus does not hold him -- rounds the corner behind and silently follows, holding a fat-barreled shotgun loosely at his side.

After a few steps Carson Wells stops, frowning, cued by we don't know what. Focus drops back as he turns. Chigurh raises the shotgun.

CHIGURH

Hello Carson. Let's go to your room.

2ND HOTEL EAGLE ROOM - NIGHT

Chigurh sits into a chair drawn up to face the armchair where Carson Wells sits.

WELLS

We don't have to do this. I'm a daytrader. I could just go home.

CHIGURH

Why would I let you do that?

WELLS

I know where the money is.

CHIGURH

If you knew, you would have it with you.

WELLS

I need dark. To get it. I know where it is.

CHIGURH

I know something better.

WELLS

What's that.

CHIGURH

I know where it's going to be.

WELLS

And where is that.

CHIGURH

It will be brought to me and placed at my feet.

Wells wipes his mouth with his hand.

WELLS

You don't know to a certainty. Twenty minutes it could be here.

CHIGURH

I do know to a certainty. And you know what's going to happen now. You should admit your situation. There would be more dignity in it.

WELLS

You go to hell.

A beat.

CHIGURH

Let me ask you something. If the rule you followed brought you to this, of what use was the rule?

Another beat.

WELLS

Do you have any idea how goddamn crazy you are?

CHIGURH
You mean the nature of this
conversation?

WELLS
I mean the nature of you.

Chigurh looks at him equably. Wells holds his look.

WELLS
...You can have the money. Anton.

The phone rings.

Wells looks at the phone. Chigurh hasn't moved.

Wells looks at Chigurh, waiting for a decision.

The low chug of the shotgun.

Aside from his finger on the trigger, Chigurh hasn't moved.
He sits staring at Wells's remains for a beat.

Now his look swings onto the phone. He watches it ring twice
more.

He picks it up and listens without speaking.

After a beat:

MOSS'S VOICE
...Hello?

CHIGURH
Yes?

Another beat.

MOSS'S VOICE
Is Carson Wells there.

A longer beat.

CHIGURH
Not in the sense that you mean.

Moss doesn't answer. Chigurh gives him a beat, and then:

CHIGURH
...You need to come see me.

MEXICAN HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

We intercut Moss, in his hospital robe, at a public phone on the ward. He stands tensed with the phone to his ear. Finally:

MOSS

Who is this.

CHIGURH

You know who it is.

A beat.

CHIGURH

...You need to talk to me.

MOSS

I don't need to talk to you.

CHIGURH

I think that you do. Do you know where I'm going?

MOSS

Why would I care where you're going.

CHIGURH

Do you know where I'm going?

No answer.

INT. 2ND HOTEL EAGLE ROOM - NIGHT

Chigurh cocks his head, noticing something on the floor. He adjusts to sit back and raise his boots onto the bed.

On the floor where his feet were, blood is pooling out from Wells's chair.

CHIGURH

...I know where you are.

MOSS

Yeah? Where am I?

CHIGURH

You're in the hospital across the river. But that's not where I'm going. Do you know where I'm going?

MOSS

Yeah. I know where you're going.

CHIGURH

All right.

MOSS

You know she won't be there.

CHIGURH

It doesn't make any difference where she is.

MOSS

So what're you goin' up there for.

A beat.

CHIGURH

You know how this is going to turn out, don't you?

MOSS

No. Do you?

CHIGURH

Yes, I do. I think you do too. So this is what I'll offer. You bring me the money and I'll let her go. Otherwise she's accountable. The same as you. That's the best deal you're going to get. I won't tell you you can save yourself because you can't.

MOSS

Yeah I'm goin' to bring you somethin' all right. I've decided to make you a special project of mine. You ain't goin' to have to look for me at all.

Moss slams the phone onto its hook, then slams it twice more for good measure.

Chigurh, in the hotel room, cradles his phone.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Sheriff Bell sits at his usual booth, but with an unaccustomed look: reading glasses. He has been looking at a newspaper but is now peering over his glasses up at Wendell who apparently interrupted his reading.

BELL

The motel in Del Rio?

Wendell nods.

WENDELL

Yessir. None of the three had ID on 'em but they're tellin' me all three is Mexicans. Was Mexicans.

BELL

There's a question. Whether they stopped bein'. And when.

WENDELL

Yessir.

BELL

Now, Wendell, did you inquire about the cylinder lock?

WENDELL

Yessir. It was punched out.

BELL

Okay.

WENDELL

You gonna drive out there?

BELL

No, that's the only thing I would've looked for. And it sounds like these boys died of natural causes.

WENDELL

How's that, Sheriff?

BELL

Natural to the line of work they was in.

WENDELL

Yessir.

BELL

My lord, Wendell, it's just all-out war. I don't know any other word for it. Who are these folks? I don't know...

He rattles the paper.

BELL

...Here last week they found this couple out in California they would rent out rooms to old people and then kill em and bury em in the yard and cash their social security checks. They'd torture em first, I don't know why. Maybe their television set was broke. And this went on until, and here I quote...

He looks through his glasses at the paper.

BELL

..."Neighbors were alerted when a man ran from the premises wearing only a dog collar." You can't make up such a thing as that. I dare you to even try.

He peers over his glasses at Wendell who respectfully shakes his head and tsks.

Sheriff Bell rattles the paper again.

BELL

...But that's what it took, you'll notice. Get someone's attention. Diggin graves in the back yard didn't bring any.

Wendell bites back a smile. Sheriff Bell gazes at him over his glasses for a long beat, deadpan.

BELL

...That's all right. I laugh myself sometimes.

He goes back to the paper.

BELL

...There ain't a whole lot else you can do.

EXT. BORDER SHACK - DAY

Moss, a coat thrown over his hospital robe, is standing before a uniformed INS official on the Rio Grande bridge.

The official, who looks like a marine drill instructor, is chewing. He chews for a long beat, staring at Moss.

He finally spits tobacco juice and pats his lower lip with a handkerchief.

OFFICIAL

Who do you think gets through this gate into the United States of America?

MOSS

I don't know. American citizens.

OFFICIAL

Some American citizens. Who do you think decides?

MOSS

You do, I reckon.

OFFICIAL

That is correct. And how do I decide?

MOSS

I don't know.

OFFICIAL

I ask questions. If I get sensible answers then they get to go to America. If I don't get sensible answers they don't. Is there anything about that that you don't understand?

MOSS

No sir.

OFFICIAL

Then I ask you again how you come to be out here with no clothes.

MOSS

I got an overcoat on.

OFFICIAL

Are you jackin' with me?

MOSS

No sir.

OFFICIAL

Don't jack with me.

MOSS

Yes sir.

OFFICIAL

Are you in the service?

MOSS
No sir. I'm a veteran.

OFFICIAL
Nam?

MOSS
Yes sir. Two tours.

OFFICIAL
What outfit.

MOSS
Twelfth Infantry Batallion. August
seventh nineteen and sixty-six to
July second nineteen and sixty-eight.

The official stares at him, chewing, sour.

OFFICIAL
Wilson!

GUARD
Yessir.

OFFICIAL
Get someone to help this man. He
needs to get into town.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

The clerk who earlier sold him the boots:

CLERK
How those Larries holdin' up?

Moss is walking up in his boots and overcoat and hospital
robe.

MOSS
Good. I need everything else.

CLERK
Okay.

MOSS
You get a lot of people come in here
with no clothes on?

CLERK
No sir, it's unusual.

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

We are looking across the Rio Grande. Moss appears over the near edge of the river bank, newly clothed, and holding the document case.

As he reaches the top of the bank he frowns and twists his neck, responding to an irritation. He feels around with his free hand inside the back of the shirt collar. A sharp yank.

His hand comes away with a small tag.

INT. GREYHOUND STATION - DEL RIO - DAY

The document case is resting on a small foreground counter.

Moss is at a pay phone, one hand holding the phone to his ear, the other resting on the case.

The voice on the phone is old, female, and querulous:

VOICE

She don't want to talk to you.

MOSS

Yes she does. Put her on.

VOICE

Do you know what time it is?

MOSS

I don't care what time it is. Don't you hang up this phone.

VOICE

I told her what was going to happen, didn't I. Chapter and verse. I said: This is what will come to pass. And now it has come to pass --

Scuffling sounds, a sharp "Mama!", and then, into the phone:

CARLA JEAN

Llewelyn?

MOSS

Hey.

CARLA JEAN

What should I do?

MOSS

You know what's goin' on?

CARLA JEAN

I don't know, I had the sheriff here
from Terrell County --

MOSS

What did you tell him?

CARLA JEAN

What did I know to tell him. You're
hurt, ain't you?

MOSS

What makes you say that?

CARLA JEAN

I can hear it in your voice.

MOTHER

(distant)

There is falseness in his voice!

MOSS

Meet me at the Heart of Texas motel
in El Paso. I'm gonna give you the
money and put you on a plane.

CARLA JEAN

Llewelyn, I ain't gonna leave you in
the lurch.

MOSS

No. This works better. With you gone
and I don't have the money, he can't
touch me. But I can sure touch him.
After I find him I'll come and join
you.

CARLA JEAN

Find who? What am I supposed to do
with Mother?

MOSS

She'll be all right.

CARLA JEAN

She'll be all right?

MOTHER

(distant)

Be all right! I've got the cancer!

MOSS

I don't think anybody'll bother her.

OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

A LOCK CYLINDER

It blows in. The hole shows a brightly lit cinderblock wall behind.

The door swings open and the air tank is swung in and deposited on carpet.

Wider: Chigurh enters the carpeted hallway from the cinderblock stairwell, holding the tricked-out shotgun.

The hallway is white wallboard, doors opening off it at long intervals. Chigurh stands still and listens. Nothing but the hum of ventilation.

He walks quietly to the one open door twenty feet away.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

He enters.

The man who hired Carson Wells is behind his desk, in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows. He looks up from papers, slipping off his reading glasses. On seeing the shotgun he opens a desk drawer and starts to rise.

Chung -- the shotgun blast knocks him back. Shot pits but doesn't break the window.

A man in a suit rises and turns from the chair opposite the desk, very slowly, as if to advertise that he is not a threat.

Chigurh ignores him and rounds the desk to look at the man gurgling on the floor.

After a beat, still looking down at the man he has shot:

CHIGURH

Who are you?

A long beat.

MAN AT CHAIR

...Me?

CHIGURH

Yes.

MAN AT CHAIR

Nobody. Accounting.

Chigurh finally looks up at him.

CHIGURH

He gave Acosta's people a receiver.

MAN AT CHAIR

He feels... he felt... the more people looking...

CHIGURH

That's foolish. You pick the one right tool.

Chigurh inclines his head toward the pocked glass of the picture window.

CHIGURH

...For instance. I used birshot. So as not to blow the window.

MAN AT CHAIR

I see.

He still has not moved, one hand still touching the armrest.

MAN AT CHAIR

...Are you going to shoot me?

Chigurh looks at him.

CHIGURH

That depends. Do you see me?

The man stares at him for a beat.

MAN AT CHAIR

No.

INT. CAB - ODESSA - DAY

EYES IN A REAR-VIEW MIRROR

Eyes in a weathered face shift back and forth between road and mirror, where they give nodding acknowledgment to the passenger.

MOTHER'S VOICE

And I always seen this is what it would come to. Three years ago I pre-
visioned it.

Wider shows Carla Jean and her mother in the back of the moving cab.

CARLA JEAN

It ain't even three years we been married.

MOTHER

Three years ago I said them very words. No and Good.

DRIVER

Yes ma'am.

MOTHER

Now here we are. Ninety degree heat. I got the cancer. And look at this. Not even a home to go to.

DRIVER

Yes ma'am.

MOTHER

We're goin' to El Paso Texas. You know how many people I know in El Paso Texas?

DRIVER

No ma'am.

She holds up thumb and forefinger curled to make an 0.

MOTHER

That's how many. Ninety degree heat.

EXT. BUS STATION - ODESSA - DAY

The cab is stopped outside the depot. Carla Jean and her mother and the driver are at the trunk struggling over bags.

CARLA JEAN

I got it Mama.

MOTHER

I didn't see my Prednizone.

CARLA JEAN

I put it in, Mama.

MOTHER

Well I didn't see it.

CARLA JEAN

Well I put it in. That one. You just set there. I'll get tickets and a cart for the bags.

As Carla Jean goes to the station a man emerges from a car pulled up behind. He is a well-dressed Mexican of early middle age.

MEXICAN

Do you need help with the bags, madam?

MOTHER

Well thank god there's one gentleman left in West Texas. Yes thank you. I am old and I am not well.

MEXICAN

Which bus are you taking?

MOTHER

We're going to El Paso, don't ask me why. Discombobulated by a no-account son-in-law. Thank you. You don't often see a Mexican in a suit.

MEXICAN

You go to El Paso? I know it. Where are you staying?

INT. BUS STATION - DAY

Carla Jean is at a phone booth.

After a short wait, a pickup and a filtered:

SHERIFF BELL

Carla Jean, how are you.

CARLA JEAN

Sheriff, was that a true story about Charlie Walser?

BELL

Who's Charlie Walser. Oh! Well, I, uh... True story? I couldn't swear to ever detail but... it's certainly true that it is a story.

CARLA JEAN

Yeah, right. Sheriff, can you give me your word on somethin'?

SHERIFF BELL'S OFFICE - DAY

We intercut Sheriff Bell in his office.

BELL

Yes ma'am?

CARLA JEAN

If I tell you where Llewelyn's headed,
you promise it'll be just you goes
and talks with him -- you and nobody
else?

BELL

Yes ma'am, I do.

CARLA JEAN

Llewelyn would never ask for help.
He never thinks he needs any.

BELL

Carla Jean, I will not harm your
man. And he needs help, whether he
knows it or not.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

CHIGURH

A driving point-of-view approaching Chigurh, who leans against
his Ramcharger, its hood up, stopped on the shoulder on the
opposite side of the road.

Reverse shows a man in an El Camino. Chickens in stacked
cages squawk and flutter in the bed.

The man slows and rolls his window down to lean out.

MAN

What's the problem there, neighbor.

MINUTES LATER

The man has pulled his vehicle over nose-to-nose with
Chigurh's. He is rummaging in the car behind the seat. His
voice comes out muffled:

MAN

Yeah, that'll suck some power. Over
time.

CHIGURH

You from around here?

The man emerges with jumper cables.

MAN

Alpine. Born 'n bred. Here ya go.

He hands one pair of leads to Chigurh.

CHIGURH

What airport would you use.

MAN

Huh? Airport or airstrip?

CHIGURH

Airport.

MAN

Well -- where ya goin'?

CHIGURH

I don't know.

MAN

Just lightin' out for the territories,
huh. Brother, I been there... Well...

He takes off his hat and draws a sleeve across his brow,
thinking.

MAN

...There's airstrips.

He turns with his pair of leads to clamp them onto his
battery. On his back:

MAN

...The airport is El Paso. You want
some place specific you might could
be better off just drivin' to Dallas.
Not have to connect.

He turns back around to face Chigurh who stands there, still
holding his pair of leads.

MAN

...You gonna clamp them, buddy?

Chigurh is looking at him blandly.

CHIGURH

Can you get those chicken crates out
of the bed.

The man stares at him.

MAN

What're you talkin' about?

EXT. CAR WASH - DAY

COIN SLOT

Quarters are fed in. Wider as Chigurh unholsters the wand at a self-service car wash.

He sprays the spatter-pattern rust-colored stain off the roof of the cab of the El Camino.

Water drums as he sprays chicken feathers out of the bed.

EXT. MOTEL - EL PASO - DAY

Moss is turning the key in his room door, a new vinyl gun bag slung over his shoulder.

At the cut the roar of a plane climbing overhead recedes. Out of it, a voice:

WOMAN

Hey Mr. Sporting Goods.

Moss looks.

A woman sunbathes at the central court swimming pool. A lot of hard light.

MOSS

Hey yourself.

The woman is pretty in a roadhouse-veteran sort of way. Her voice carries a flat echo, slapping off the surface of the pool.

WOMAN

You a sport?

Moss slings the bag into the room onto the bed and then turn and leans against a veranda post.

MOSS

That's me.

WOMAN

I got beers in my room.

Moss holds up his left hand to show the ring.

MOSS

Waitin' for my wife.

WOMAN

Oh. That's who you keep lookin' out the window for?

MOSS

Half.

WOMAN

What else then?

MOSS

Lookin' for what's comin'.

WOMAN

Yeah but no one ever sees that. I like a man that'll tell you he's married.

MOSS

Then you'll like me.

WOMAN

I do like you.

A beat. Lapping water.

WOMAN

...Beer. That's what's comin', I'll bring the ice chest out here. You can stay married.

Building jet roar from another climbing plane.

MOSS

Ma'am I know what beer leads to.

The woman laughs. Before the plane overwhelms it:

WOMAN

Beer leads to more beer.

INT. SHERIFF BELL'S CRUISER - DAY

SHERIFF BELL

Driving.

As he drives he refers to one side of the road, a commercial strip, looking for something. We hear the fading roar of a large airplane.

The tock tock of distant gunfire brings his look around. A beat. Another tock. The chatter of machine-gun fire. Another single shot.

Sheriff Bell stamps the accelerator and hits his siren.

EXT. MOTEL STREET - DAY

Point-of-view racing toward the motel: a pickup with a rack of roof lights roars out. Tire squeals, machine-gun chatter and dog barks. The truck turns toward us, then slews around and speeds away, fishtailing.

EXT. MOTEL COURTYARD - DAY

Point-of-view turning into the central court: a man is crawling on his belly along the veranda toward the street.

Sheriff Bell skids to a halt and gets out. We hear screams, a child crying.

Sheriff Bell jogs toward the crawling man, one hand on his holstered gun.

Behind the man on the veranda is his abandoned machine pistol. He is a Mexican in a guyabera.

Sheriff Bell yells at a scared face in a cracked door:

BELL

Call police.

He is still jogging. A glance to the side:

Rough point-of-view of a woman's body, belly-down at the lip of the pool, head and upper torso in the water.

Rough point-of-view forward: an open room door. Booted feet stick out.

Sheriff Bell arrives. Moss is face-up, mostly inside the room. The new gun bag is next to him. The gun is in hand. He is still.

Voices. Sheriff Bell glances off.

BELL

...Call your local law enforcement.
I'm not on their radio.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Night. The entrance is blocked by police vehicles.

People stand around in knots. Sheriff Bell is talking to the local sheriff. A door slam attracts his look.

Carla Jean has gotten out of the far side of a cab. On the near side the driver is leaning in to help her mother out. After a couple of rocking attempts she has enough inertia to come to her feet outside the vehicle.

Carla Jean is advancing slowly toward Sheriff Bell, taking in the scene.

Sheriff Bell steps toward her.

Her eyes track his hand as he raises it to his hat. He takes it off.

BELL

Carla Jean...

CARLA JEAN

No.

INT. HOSPITAL/MORGUE - NIGHT

Looking down a long corridor flanked by a wall of stainless steel drawers. At the far end stands Bell, hat in hand, staring down into an open drawer just in front of him. A long beat.

EXT. HOSPITAL / MORGUE - NIGHT

The local sheriff, Roscoe Giddins, stands smoking under the port cochere in front of the hospital. Sheriff Bell emerges from the building.

A long beat.

BELL

I don't know who she is.

He puts his hat back on.

ROSCOE

I thought maybe she was with your boy there.

BELL

No ID in her room?

ROSCOE

Not hardly nothin' in her room. And that establishment was no stickler on registration. Well...

The two men start walking.

ROSCOE
...County'll bury her. Here Lies
Female, Unknown. Her Number Was Up.

A walking beat.

ROSCOE
...Buy you a cup of coffee before
you drive home?

COFFEE SHOP - EL PASO - NIGHT

Roscoe and Sheriff Bell face each other over coffee.

BELL
No money in his room there?

ROSCOE
Couple hundred on his person. Those
hombres would've taken the stash.

BELL
I suppose. Though they was leavin'
in a hurry.

ROSCOE
It's all the goddamned money, Ed
Tom. The money and the drugs. It's
just goddamned beyond everything.
What is it mean? What is it leading
to?

BELL
Yes.

ROSCOE
If you'd a told me twenty years ago
I'd see children walkin' the streets
of our Texas towns with green hair
and bones in their noses I just flat
out wouldn't of believed you.

BELL
Signs and wonders. But I think once
you stop hearin' sir and madam the
rest is soon to follow.

ROSCOE
It's the tide. It's the dismal tide.
It is not the one thing.

BELL

Not the one thing. I used to think I could at least some way put things right. I don't feel that way no more.

A beat.

BELL

...I don't know what I do feel like.

ROSCOE

Try "old" on for size.

BELL

Yessir. It may be that. In a nutshell.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The two men are walking out.

ROSCOE

None of that explains your man though.

BELL

Uh-huh.

ROSCOE

He is just a goddamn homicidal lunatic, Ed Tom.

BELL

I'm not sure he's a lunatic.

ROSCOE

Well what would you call him.

BELL

I don't know. Sometimes I think he's pretty much a ghost.

ROSCOE

He's real all right.

BELL

Oh yes.

ROSCOE

All that at the Eagle Hotel. It's beyond everything.

BELL

Yes, he has some hard bark on him.

ROSCOE

That don't hardly say it. He shoots the desk clerk one day, and walks right back in the next and shoots a retired army colonel.

They have reached Sheriff Bell's cruiser and he sits in.

BELL

Hard to believe.

ROSCOE

Strolls right back into a crime scene. Who would do such a thing? How do you defend against it?

Roscoe closes the door for Sheriff Bell.

ROSCOE

...Good trip Ed Tom. I'm sorry we couldn't help your boy.

He is walking away.

Sheriff Bell sits thinking in the cruiser. He makes no move for the ignition.

A long beat.

EXT. MOTEL

Now very late, empty of onlookers and emergency vehicles.

Sheriff Bell's cruiser pulls up just inside the courtyard. He cuts his engine.

Sheriff Bell sits looking at the motel.

Very quiet. After a long beat he gets out of the car. He pushes its door shut quietly, with two hands.

He looks up the veranda.

The one door, most of the way up, has yellow tape across it. Its loose ends wave in a light breeze.

Sheriff Bell looks up the street.

Nothing much to attract his attention.

EXT. MOTEL VERANDA

Sheriff Bell steps up onto the veranda. He takes slow, quiet steps.

We intercut his point-of-view, nearing the door marked by police tape.

As he draws close to the door he slows.

The yellow tape is about chest high. Above it is the lock cylinder. It has been punched hollow.

Sheriff Bell stands staring at the lock.

Very quiet. The chick, chick, of the tape-ends against the door frame.

Still.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

INSIDE

Chigurh is still also. Just on the other side of the door, he stands holding his shotgun.

From inside, the tap of the breeze-blown tape is dulled but perceptible. It counts out beats.

Chigurh is also looking at the lock cylinder.

The curved brass of its hollow interior holds a reflection of the motel room exterior. Lights and shapes. The curvature distorts to unrecognizability what is reflected, but we see the color of Sheriff Bell's uniform.

The reflection is very still. Then, slow movement.

OUTSIDE

Sheriff Bell finishes bringing his hand to his holstered gun. It rests there.

Still once again.

His point-of-view of the lock. The reflection from here, darker, is hard to read.

INSIDE

Chigurh, still.

OUTSIDE

Sheriff Bell, his hand on his holstered gun. A long beat.

His hand drops.

He extends one booted toe. He nudges the door inward.

As the lock cylinder slowly recedes, reflected shapes scramble inside it and slide up its curve. Before the door is fully open we cut around:

FROM INSIDE

The door finishes creaking open. Sheriff Bell is a silhouette in the doorway.

A still beat.

At length Sheriff Bell ducks under the chest-high police tape to enter.

The worn carpet has a large dark stain that glistens near the door. Sheriff Bell steps over it, advancing slowly. The room is dimly lit shapes.

There is a bathroom door in the depth of the room. Sheriff Bell advances toward it. He stops in front of it.

He toes the door. It creaks slowly open.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM

The bathroom, with no spill light from outside, is pitch black.

Sheriff Bell reaches slowly up with one hand. He gropes at the inside wall.

The light goes on: bright. White tile. Sheriff Bell squints. A beat.

He takes a step in.

He looks at the small window.

He looks at the window's swivel-catch, locked.

INT. MAIN ROOM

Sheriff Bell emerges from the bathroom. He sits heavily onto the bed.

He looks around, not for anything in particular. His look catches on something low, just in front of him:

A ventilation duct near the baseboard. Its opening is exposed; its grille lies on the floor before it.

Sheriff Bell stares.

At length he leans forward. He nudges the grille aside. On the floor, a couple of screws. A coin.

EXT. WEST TEXAS CABIN - DAY

A CAT

Licking itself on a plank floor, stiffened leg pointing out.

It suddenly stops and looks up, ears perked.

A frozen beat, and then it bolts.

The camera booms up to frame the barren west Texas landscape outside the window of this isolated cabin. A pickup truck is approaching, trailing dust. The cat reenters frame outside, running across the rutted gravel in front of the house as the pickup slows.

INT. WEST TEXAS CABIN - KITCHEN - DAY

Ellis, an old man in a wheelchair, has one clouded eye.

ELLIS

Min back!

Sheriff Bell enters.

BELL

How'd you know I was here.

ELLIS

Who else'd be in your truck.

BELL

You heard it?

ELLIS

How's that?

BELL

You heard my -- you havin' fun with me?

ELLIS

What give you that idea. I seen one of the cats heard it.

BELL

But -- how'd you know it was mine?

ELLIS

I deduced it. Once you walked in.

Sheriff Bell stares at him.

BELL

How many a those things you got now?

ELLIS

Cats? Several. Wal. Depends what you mean by got. Some are half-wild, and some are just outlaws.

BELL

How you been, Ellis?

ELLIS

You lookin' at it. I got to say you look older.

BELL

I am older.

ELLIS

Got a letter from your wife. She writes pretty regular, tells me the family news.

BELL

Didn't know there was any.

ELLIS

She just told me you was quittin'. Sit down.

Sheriff Bell lifts an electric percolator off the counter.

BELL

Want a cup?

ELLIS

'Predate it.

BELL

How fresh is this coffee?

ELLIS

I generally make a fresh pot ever week even if there's some left over.

Sheriff Bell pours some.

BELL

That man that shot you died in prison.

ELLIS

In Angola. Yeah.

BELL

What would you a done if he'd been released?

ELLIS

I don't know. Nothin'. Wouldn't be no point to it.

BELL

I'm kindly surprised to hear you say that.

ELLIS

All the time you spend tryin' to get back what's been took from you there's more goin' out the door. After a while you just try and get a tourniquet on it.

He taps a cigarette ash into a mason jar lid on the table in front of him.

ELLIS

...Your granddad never asked me to sign on as deputy. I done that my own self. Loretta says you're quittin'.

BELL

Yes, you've circled round.

ELLIS

How come're you doin that?

BELL

I don't know. I feel overmatched.

A beat.

BELL

...I always thought when I got older God would sort of come into my life in some way. He didn't. I don't blame him. If I was him I'd have the same opinion about me that he does.

ELLIS

You don't know what he thinks.

BELL

Yes I do.

A beat.

ELLIS

I sent Uncle Mac's badge and his old thumbbaster to the Rangers. For their museum there. Your daddy ever tell you how Uncle Mac come to his reward?

Sheriff Bell shrugs.

ELLIS

...Shot down on his own porch there in Hudspeth County. There was seven or eight of 'em come to the house. Wantin' this and wantin' that. Mac went back in and got his shotgun but they was way ahead of him. Shot him down in his own doorway. Aunt Ella run out and tried to stop the bleedin'. Him tryin to get hold of the shotgun again. They just set there on their horses watchin' him die. Finally one of 'em says somethin' in Injun and they all turned and left out. Well Mac knew the score even if Aunt Ella didn't. Shot through the left lung and that was that. As they say.

BELL

When did he die?

ELLIS

Nineteen zero and nine.

BELL

No, I mean was it right away or in the night or when was it.

ELLIS

Believe it was that night. She buried him the next mornin'. Diggin' in that hard caliche.

A beat.

ELLIS

...What you got ain't nothin' new.
This country is hard on people. Hard
and crazy. Got the devil in it yet
folks never seem to hold it to
account.

BELL

Most don't.

ELLIS

You're discouraged.

BELL

I'm... discouraged.

ELLIS

You can't stop what's comin. Ain't
all waitin' on you.

The two men look at each other. Ellis shakes his head.

ELLIS

...That's vanity.

After a beat, a fast fade.

EXT. GRAVESITE - ODESSA - DAY

In black we hear the chink-chink-chink of chain being played
out and the hum of a motor.

We cut to a dark foreground shape being lowered in sync with
the clinking sound. As it drops it clears a tombstone
Progressively revealed:

The name, Agnes Kracik.

Her dates: 1922-1980.

The inscription: Beloved Mother.

Off that we cut to Carla Jean, standing by in a black dress
and dark veil.

EXT. A SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

A parched square of grass in front of the house. A rusty
station wagon pulls into the driveway and stops. Carla Jean
gets out.

INT. KITCHEN

Carla Jean enters and puts on the kettle. She opens the cupboard looking for something.

KITCHEN - LATER

Carla Jean sits at the kitchen table drinking tea. She looks out the window.

Across the street kids are running through a sprinkler that chugs in the yard.

INT. BEDROOM

BEDROOM DOOR

The door opens and Carla Jean enters holding her hat and veil. She throws the light switch and stops, hand frozen, looking into the room.

After a beat:

CARLA JEAN

I knew this wasn't done with.

Chigurh sits at the far end of the room in the late-afternoon shadows.

CHIGURH

No.

CARLA JEAN

I ain't got the money.

CHIGURH

No.

CARLA JEAN

What little I had is long gone and they's bill aplenty to pay yet. I buried my mother today. I ain't paid for that neither.

CHIGURH

I wouldn't worry about it.

CARLA JEAN

...I need to sit down.

Chigurh nods at the bed and Carla Jean sits down, hugging her hat and veil.

CARLA JEAN
...You got no cause to hurt me.

CHIGURH
No. But I gave my word.

CARLA JEAN
You gave your word?

CHIGURH
To your husband.

CARLA JEAN
That don't make sense. You gave your
word to my husband to kill me?

CHIGURH
Your husband had the opportunity to
remove you from harm's way. Instead,
he used you to try to save himself.

CARLA JEAN
Not like that. Not like you say.

CHIGURH
I don't say anything. Except it was
foreseen.

A beat.

CARLA JEAN
I knowed you was crazy when I saw
you settin' there. I knowed exactly
what was in store for me.

CHIGURH
Yes. Things fall into place.

EXT. HOUSE

Minutes later.

A beat.

The front door swings open and Chigurh emerges.

He pauses with one hand on the jamb and looks at the sole of
each boot in turn.

He goes to the pickup in the driveway.

INT. PICKUP/EXT. INTERSECTION - A MINUTE LATER

He is driving.

His point-of-view: coming upon an empty intersection, his light green.

Back to Chigurh.

He just starts to turn his head to the right.

A huge crash.

EXT. INTERSECTION

Chigurh's pickup has been T-boned by an old crate of a pickup. Both vehicles slide to a halt amid broken glass in the middle of the intersection.

The windshield of the truck that ran the light is mostly gone. The driver is draped dead on the wheel.

After a beat the door of Chigurh's truck is pushed open. He staggers out, heavily favoring one leg where the jeans are shredded and bloody at the thigh. One arm is also bloody and hangs limp. Blood runs down his face from a scalp wound.

He staggers to a lawn and sits.

He looks up.

Two teenage boys have come out of somewhere. They goggle at him.

BOY 1

Mister there's a bone stickin' out
of your arm.

CHIGURH

I'm all right. Let me just sit here
a minute.

BOY 2

There's an ambulance comin. Man over
yonder went to call.

CHIGURH

All right.

BOY 1

Are you all right? You got a bone
stickin' out of your arm.

CHIGURH

What will you take for that shirt?

The two boys look at each other. They look back.

BOY 2

What shirt?

CHIGURH

Any damn shirt. I need something to wrap around my head and I need a sling for this arm.

Boy 2 unbuttons his shirt.

BOY 2

Hell mister, I'll give you my shirt.

Chigurh uses his teeth to clamp the shirt and rips it and wraps a swatch around his head. He twists the rest of the shirt into a sling and puts the limp arm in.

BOY 1

Look at that fuckin' bone.

CHIGURH

Tie this for me.

The two boys look at each other.

CHIGURH

...Just tie it.

Boy 2, the one now wearing a T-shirt, ties it.

Chigurh pulls a bill clip from his pocket and draws a bill out with his teeth. He holds it out to the boy.

BOY 2

Hell mister, I don't mind helpin' somebody out. That's a lot of money.

CHIGURH

Take it. Take it and you didn't see me. I was already gone.

BOY 2

Yessir.

Wide on Chigurh limping off.

We can just hear the boys, small:

BOY 1
Part of that's mine.

BOY 2
You still got your damn shirt.

BOY 1
That ain't what it was for.

BOY 2
Maybe, but I'm still out a shirt.

INT. BELL'S KITCHEN - DAY

Loretta pours Sheriff Bell and then herself morning coffee.

BELL
Maybe I'll go ridin.

LORETTA
Okay.

BELL
What do you think.

LORETTA
I can't plan your day.

BELL
I mean, would you care to join me.

LORETTA
Lord no. I'm not retired.

A beat.

Sheriff Bell sips his coffee.

BELL
Maybe I'll help here then.

A beat.

Loretta takes a sip.

LORETTA
Better not.

They both sip.

LORETTA
...How'd you sleep?

BELL

I don't know. Had dreams.

LORETTA

Well you got time for 'em now.
Anything interesting?

BELL

Well they always is to the party
concerned.

LORETTA

Ed Tom, I'll be polite.

BELL

Okay. Two of 'em. Both had my father.
It's peculiar. I'm older now'n he
ever was by twenty years. So in a
sense he's the younger man. Anyway,
first one I don't remember so well
but it was about meetin' him in town
somewheres and he give me some money
and I think I lost it. The second
one, it was like we was both back in
older times and I was on horseback
goin' through the mountains of a
night.

EXT. SNOWY MOUNTAIN PASS - NIGHT

We cut to night, and snow. It is the image that the movie
began with. Continuing in voice over:

VOICE OVER

...goin' through this pass in the
mountains. It was cold and snowin',
hard ridin'. Hard country. He rode
past me and kept on goin'. Never
said nothin' goin' by. He just rode
on past and he had his blanket wrapped
around him and his head down...

The rider passes as described, horses' hooves drumming and
scattering divots of earth and snow.

VOICE OVER

...and when he rode past I seen he was carryin' fire in a horn the way people used to do and I could see the horn from the light inside of it. About the color of the moon. And in the dream I knew that he was goin' on ahead and that he was fixin' to make a fire somewhere out there in all that dark and all that cold, and I knew that whenever I got there he would be there. Out there up ahead.

The rider recedes and the image fades, the horn bearing fire going last.

THE END