

B IS FOR BLOOD

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INT. CAVE - NIGHT

A cartoon cowboy smiles on a package of bubblegum.

Dozens of these packages, in various states of decay, lie in the muck of a damp cave floor, next to:

JOHN COOK, 50s, business casual, GAGGED AND ZIP-TIED to an old wooden chair. Terrified and confused, he watches:

FENRIS, 40s, mud-spattered trench coat and fedora, eyes cold but whistling a happy tune as he sets a camera on a tripod.

Opening a pack of "Cowboy Chew" gum, he pinches some of the squiggly pink strips and munches them.

Making eye contact with John, Fenris blows a bubble. The slow INFLATING SOUND raises the tension as the bound victim stares into the eyes of his captor, waiting for what's next.

POP.

Fenris touches the camera and a recording plays of SABRA GUTCH, 50s, grey skirt suit, manicured and all smiles.

SABRA

Greetings John! My name's Sabra.
I'd like to talk to you about your
health insurance.

John's brow furrows. This is clearly not what he expected.

SABRA

Minus co-pay, Tri-Health covered
your recent MRI, which revealed
something concerning.
(holds up photos)
Apparently you had a pre-existing
condition of... being someone else?

PHOTO: John, brown hair, hospital gown, eyes closed.

PHOTO: John, blond hair, mustache, testifying at a trial.

Watching this, John's eyes go wide with renewed TERROR.

Sabra's expression shifts a grim, knowing smile.

SABRA

My associate has ear issues, so
he'll hit record and go where he
can't hear the screams. Bye-bye!

John's attention is drawn to GNAWED BONES on the cave floor.

John BEGS through his gag, struggling against his bonds.

Fenris gives a polite smile, and tips his hat.

FENRIS

Representatives will be here
shortly to terminate your policy,
but everyone at Tri-Health wishes
you and yours a very fine day...

INT. INSURANCE OFFICE - DAY

Expensive Chelsea boots walk down a lane of office cubicles.
Sabra, now in a black suit, smiles magnanimously around.

SABRA

You know what sells health
insurance, Harold?

Behind her shuffles HAROLD MUNCH, 20s, thin, ill-fitting
suit, a weasel both overconfident and desperate to impress.

HAROLD

Of course. Fear of death.

SABRA

Fear of suffering. Keep that in
mind if you're going to work here.

Sabra points at a wall banner. Giant hands shelter little
people below the slogan: "PROTECTING FAMILY AT ALL COSTS"

Harold looks at the banner with disdain.

HAROLD

All due respect aunt Sabra, I don't
wanna be a salesman.

SABRA

Your father said as much. Which is
why I'm introducing you to one of
our 'special' insurance agents...

Sabra stops at a door marked PRIVATE, and punches in a code.

INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

Sabra enters a well-appointed executive office, blinds drawn.

Harold follows her gaze along a trail of muddy boot-prints to
a chair where Fenris sits, in front of a mahogany desk.

Sabra settles into her executive chair, waving Harold to sit.

As he does, Harold observes a TV playing footage of the cave and John Cook struggling against his zip-ties.

SABRA

Fenris has worked for the family on
and off since the Vegas days.

Fenris takes out a wad of chewed gum and SQUISHES it into an ashtray next to a framed photo of Sabra outside a casino.

HAROLD

Why'd we get out of gambling?

SABRA

Who says we got out of gambling? A
premium is just a bet against the
house. And this is a better racket.
Not everyone walks into a casino -
but they all need health insurance.

On the TV, RATS swarm the bound man and he SCREAMS IN AGONY.

CUT TO:

A rat-gnawed HUMAN SKULL is set on a red velvet pillow below a nameplate: JOHN COOK - AKA - CHARLES WINTHROP

In a windowless room, Sabra and Harold stand amid oak shelves holding rows of skulls and pillows. A large plaque reads:

SILENCE IS A TRUE FRIEND WHO NEVER BETRAYS ~Confucius

SABRA

We also mine medical data for side
projects, like finding this scum.

Harold's eyes get an eager gleam as he's distracted by a display case with a collection of guns and silencers.

HAROLD

This is what I'm talkin' about! I
want to be a professional.

SABRA

Perhaps you can shadow Fenris on
his next job. A true pro, he always
closes the, ah, sale.

Fenris POPS his gum, giving the stink-eye to a cabinet set apart with only one empty pillow: FRANK O'FAOLAIN - AKA - ?

Sabra GRUNTS, looking displeased as well.

SABRA

Frank can't hide forever. He's a mortal man - aging, getting sick, needing medicine. He'll pop up somewhere, and when he does, rest assured, he's going to suffer...

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY

FRANK O'FAOLAIN, 70s, flannel and jeans, strong features diminished by age and illness, lies unconscious on a gurney.

EMT #1, male, 20s, slouched in the driver's seat, gingerly touches a recently acquired BLACK EYE.

EMT #2, female, 20s, alert in the passenger seat, parses through the contents of an overstuffed wallet.

She frowns as she unfolds an old water-stained Social Security card and compares it to a Driver's License:

License: FRANK SMITH

SS Card: FRANK O'FAOLAIN

Unsure, EMT #2 shows them to her partner, but he shrugs.

EMT #2 grabs the radio mic and brings it to her mouth.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

The ambulance has seen better days, missing one siren light, graffiti reading: 'Emergency \$ervices'. It crosses a desert landscape of piñon trees, sagebrush, and rusty windmills.

A sign: LOS HUESOS 3 MILES | ALBUQUERQUE: 319 MILES

The ambulance passes a coyote skull baking in the hot sun.

TITLE CARD: B IS FOR BLOOD

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

A cute, smiling, cartoon blood drop is on a wall with other hand-drawn visual aids in a rural kindergarten classroom.

At the teacher's desk is BOWIE, 30s, wiry build, well-worn shirt and tie, carefully writing. He exudes gentle warmth as BOY, 8, stands by the desk eagerly watching.

INSCRIPTION: NEVER STOP DRAWING! YOUR PAL, MR. SMITH

Bowie finishes and closes the cover of a children's book entitled THE ADVENTURES OF SAMURAI SPARROW, by B. SMITH.

The kid covets the book and sprints off.

Watching him with a smile, Bowie raises a cup of red punch.

ANGRY MAN (O.S.)
So. You're the killer.

Bowie freezes mid-sip, his smile locked in place.

He slowly sets the cup down and adjusts his cuff to hide a tattoo. The warmth gone, his now-piercing gaze looks up at:

ANGRY MAN, 50s, brown suit, red face, glaring.

He SLAMS a paper down on the desk.

CRAYON DRAWING: A playground of burning children. Angry Man, depicted as a dragon, is stabbed in the mouth by a knight, Bowie, who yells "YOU'LL BE POOPING TEETH IN YOUR GRAVE!"

Seeing this image, Bowie's tension melts into a smile.

ANGRY MAN
This is funny to you, asshole?!
I'll have your fucking job!

Bowie's brow furrows, and he points behind the man at:

Streamers, empty cups, and a half-eaten cake in the shape of a typewriter. A banner reads: WE'LL MISS YOU, MR. SMITH!

ANGRY MAN
Well... this drawing is demented!
Give it an "F", write a note saying
my kid is disturbed, and I'll go
get him on Ritalin or whatever.

Bowie uncaps a pen. On the drawing, he carefully writes: A+

Angry Man stares daggers. He grabs a cup of punch and dumps it on Bowie's newly printed books, drenching them in red.

STOMPING FOOTSTEPS recede. Bowie sighs, and starts wiping the books off, putting them away in his battered briefcase.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A glowing RED CROSS flickers over a shabby rural hospital.

The ambulance cruises into the lot, but slows for:

A COYOTE, trotting across the cracked asphalt lot, carrying a medical blood bag clamped in its mouth.

The ambulance backs into a loading bay, the entrance ringed with barbed wire and a sign: DO NOT LEAVE GATE OPEN!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Frank's gurney is rolled by the EMTs into a hospital room.

NURSE, 50s, pink scrubs with cartoon dogs, goes to a dry erase board to fill in: PATIENT'S NAME _____

She pauses, fretting over the TWO IDs clipped to the chart.

INT. HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE - DAY

DESDEMONA WHITLOCK, 50s, skirt suit, hawk eyes, sits in a tidy office where everything is at perfect right angles.

Nurse timidly enters, holding up Frank's two IDs.

Desdemona makes an 'uh-oh' face, and grabs her phone.

EXT. MEETING HALL - DAY

Outside a shabby old meeting hall, a faded marquee reads:

WED 5PM - CRIMINALS ANONYMOUS - NO JUDGEMENT, NO WEAPONS

INT. MEETING HALL - DAY

A MOTLEY CREW OF GRIZZLED EX-CONS sit in fold-out chairs. A woman in her 60s, OLD TIMER, flannel shirt and tattoos, smiles as she holds up a chip embossed with: '25 YEARS'

OLD TIMER

How many of you watched westerns as a kid, thinking you'd grow up to be the sheriff or the bounty hunter - not the one they're looking for?

CHUCKLES. Bowie, seated, raises his hand with everyone else.

OLD TIMER

It's a stressful life. Even if you never get caught - but for those folks we won't do a show of hands.

LAUGHS - except Bowie, who forces a smile and looks askance.

OLD TIMER

If you get into the life with kin,
hard to get out. You can quit crime
but can't quit family, am I right?

SMILES. Bowie, thousand-yard stare, just nods.

OLD TIMER

But one day at a time, a new life
is available to all of us...

Checking his watch, Bowie taps his foot and eyes the door.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Afternoon sun shines on EMMA, 30s, tattooed chic bohemian,
Scottish accent, a mix of playful snark and gentle kindness.

She expertly plays flute while MOVER #1 and #2 pack boxes.

They pull a series of framed photos of Emma off the wall:

PHOTO: As a child in Scotland, playing recorder.

PHOTO: At a college recital, playing oboe.

PHOTO: In a classroom of kids, playing bagpipes.

CRASH! MOVER #1 stands by broken glass and a torn sketch.

DRAWING: Emma at home, playing flute, a big heart around her.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Emma carefully tapes the ripped drawing while the voice of
MS. FERGUSON, 50s, Scottish accent, is on speaker phone.

MS. FERGUSON (O.S.)

You said the same about the boy who
went away for bare knuckle boxing.

EMMA

I know, Mum, but-

MS. FERGUSON (O.S.)

And that greasy gambler fellow-

EMMA

Okay, fair, but-

MS. FERGUSON (O.S.)

And the jewel thief, rest his soul-

EMMA

Well, I'm no saint either, mother!
Remember, I stabbed that one lad
with a pair of scissors?

MS. FERGUSON (O.S.)

Aye. When you were eight. And that
lad was a bully and a prick.

EMMA

He was sweet, just misunderstood-

MS. FERGUSON (O.S.)

You only see what you want to see,
Emma Ferguson. And you can't love
someone if you don't first open
your eyes to what they really are.

EMMA

Should you be doling out advice?
Considering who you married.

MS. FERGUSON (O.S.)

Well, the acorn doesn't fall far-

EMMA

Bowie's different, Mum. He's a good
guy, truly now.

Unbeknownst to Emma, Bowie watches through the patio screen door with an expression of gratitude and admiration.

MS. FERGUSON (O.S.)

Then I look forward to an 'I told
you so' when this all unravels. And
mark my words - it will.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

Frank's IDs lay on the passenger seat of an aging squad car.

DUGAL, 20s, deputy uniform, perpetually looking like he just woke from a nap, is hunched behind the wheel.

He skids to a halt outside a dilapidated adobe building marked: LOS HUESOS SHERIFF'S DEPT. Another police car is there, vandalized so SHERIFF now reads "SHERIFF", in quotes.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

Dugal marches by a vacant front desk, passing cobwebby interrogation rooms and rusty lockers.

Outside a door marked SHERIFF leans a pile of placards:

HUDSON FOR SHERIFF! WHO BETTER TO PROTECT PROPERTY RIGHTS
THAN A REAL ESTATE AGENT

Dugal opens the door to reveal: JILL HUDSON, 30s, crisp new uniform, earnest and forthright, sitting behind an old desk.

Dugal presents Frank's two IDs.

Hudson stands and takes them, getting a ponderous look.

Dugal eyes her chair, which has three BULLET HOLES in it.

DUGAL

Don't that give you the creeps?

Hudson glances, unfazed, and raises the two IDs up.

HUDSON

Dugal, how many hands did these
pass through before they got to me?

DUGAL

Uh, mine... the hospital admin's
right hand... her left, barely...
Let's say three-and-a-half?

That's not exactly what Hudson meant, but she lets it go and
flips through a dusty Rolodex to: GLEN COBB ~ MARSHAL SERVICE

As Hudson dials, Dugal looks at her quizzically.

HUDSON

Just in case your math is off...

INT. GRIMY BASEMENT - DAY

BZZZ - a rickety old fax machine comes to life in a grimy
basement, causing a RAT to scurry into the shadows.

BLACK GLOVED HANDS take the printout of Frank's two IDs.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

Arms linked, Bowie and Emma watch the moving truck recede.

BOWIE

I recognized one of those movers.
50/50 odds we see our stuff again.

EMMA

Well it's a good thing I've got all
I need right here.

Emma leans in for a kiss - but pulls back.

EMMA

Oh! How'd the meeting go?

Bowie holds up a chip embossed with '4 YEARS'.

EMMA

I'm so proud of you.

BOWIE

Eh. It's hard to murder for money
when your heart is full of love-

Emma cringes and Bowie immediately winces in regret.

EMMA

If we could just not have it right
out there like that, the 'M' word-

BOWIE

The... artists' meeting... went
well. Glad to be switching mediums.

EMMA

Good. Yes.

BOWIE

I'll tell your mom I used to paint.
Went through a Red Period.

Emma is torn between anxiety and laughter.

EMMA

Maybe skirt this subject with Mum.

BOWIE

Anything else I should avoid?

CUT TO:

Emma and Bowie load suitcases into a rental car.

EMMA

Don't bring up bagpipes.

BOWIE

Just play for me once and I'll
never ask again! Your students-

EMMA
Have no idea how cliché it is. Oh!
Don't bring up my nose ring.

BOWIE
Is your mom a fan?

EMMA
No, she also hates it and I don't
need you two forming an alliance.

BOWIE
I never said I hate it. But hey, if
it makes your mom like me more-

Emma SLAMS the hatchback. Bowie takes the hint to move on.

BOWIE
So. Is that it? We're free?

EMMA
Yes. No! The crawlspace thing.

Bowie gives her a sharp look.

CUT TO:

A COBWEBBY OLD FOOTLOCKER sits by an open crawlspace door.

BOWIE
I need to... dispose of this.

Bowie hefts it on his shoulder and heads for the street.

EMMA
What's in it?

Bowie gives her a look of: do-you-really-want-to-know?

EMMA
Never mind! But... B? This is all
truly behind you, right?

BOWIE
It's truly behind me. I promise.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

A black car creeps up to a sign: WELCOME TO LOS HUESOS

A man in a trench coat and FEDORA is behind the wheel. Beside him is a PISTOL and a pouch of COWBOY CHEW gum.

Black gloved hands raise a paper map of the town, with a red circle around a spot marked: SMITH / O'FAOLAIN(?) RESIDENCE

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - DAY

Pine trees cast late afternoon shadows on townhomes. Bowie walks toward one with a scruffy lawn and a rusty old VW bug.

WHUNK! A crab apple bounces off Bowie's chest.

REMMY SMITH, 30s, flannel shirt and patched jeans, leans on a splintered rake under an overgrown crab apple tree.

REMMY

What happened to that legendary
O'Faolain speed?

BOWIE

Hey Remmy. Aren't you allergic to
crab apples?

REMMY

Eggs too but I can still throw 'em.

Walking with a limp, Remmy opens a rickety garage door to reveal piles of boxes, clothes, and dusty old furniture.

REMMY

Selling this stuff, nick by nack.

Bowie eyes a family portrait: A young Frank, slicked-back hair, suit, stands surrounded by three boys and three girls.

BOWIE

How's Dad doing?

REMMY

Liver's mostly gone, but he's
hangin' in. You should go see him.

BOWIE

He knows why I don't visit.

Bowie opens the trunk, revealing a trove of weapons: knives, pistols, nunchucks, a sawed-off shotgun.

Remmy lifts a THROWING STAR and grins.

REMMY

Dad tried to train me like you all,
but I only got decent at these.
Hey! A piece for my collection.

Remmy hefts a penknife engraved with: FRANK O'FAOLAIN

BOWIE

Remmy, unlike most of our family,
you never fucked me over directly.

A hug. Remmy seems too cool for it, but then wipes his eyes.

As Bowie walks out, Remmy punches a button on the wall.

REMMY

Remember this game?

The garage door lowers in front of Bowie, who smiles.

BOWIE

Oh no. The tomb is collapsing.
Whatever will I do.

Bowie watches it lower until it's almost closed.

BOOM. Remmy peers amid the stacked junk, but Bowie is gone.

REMMY

There's that O'Faolain speed...

INT. GARAGE ATTIC - DAY

On a ladder to the garage attic, Remmy puffs an inhaler.

He flips on a light, revealing: a space lined with rifles,
shotguns, and pistols. A vintage Tommy Gun collects dust.

Remmy limps past all this to an ornate cabinet.

Unlocking it, he puts the little knife carefully inside.

Remmy notices something through a ventilation grate: Fedora,
standing at the mailbox, furtively going through the mail.

REMMY

Hey shitbird! What are you doin'?

The man drops the mail and hurries off.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Walking from the townhome, Bowie pauses to stare at a break
in a fence where a trail leads to the wilderness beyond.

Tires creep forward as a car approaches Bowie.

EMMA (O.S.)
Need a ride, stranger?

Smiling at Emma in the rental car, Bowie looks to the trail.

BOWIE
Wanna see something real quick?

EXT. CLIFF EDGE - DAY

On a gorgeous valley overlook, Bowie and Emma stand at the cliff edge, drinking in the air and calm.

From the trees SOMEONE watches them - and slowly approaches.

FOOTSTEPS crunch, and Bowie tenses. He whirls to see:

Sheriff Hudson walking up.

HUDSON
Been a while since we snuck out here to drink beers.

BOWIE
An age! What's up, Hudson?

HUDSON
Heard you met a girl, leaving town.

Bowie smiles bashfully and glances at Emma, who waves.

HUDSON
I need a word in private, Bowie.

Frowning at her tone, Bowie steps to the side with Hudson.

HUDSON
School gave you a send-off, I saw.

Bowie thinks about that and gets an 'uh-oh' expression.

BOWIE
Is this about that angry dad?

HUDSON
He did file a report, but I seem to have already misplaced it.

Bowie looks relieved, but Hudson shakes her head.

HUDSON
Don't thank me yet. I came with news: your dad's in the hospital.

Bowie nods solemnly, but seems unsurprised.

BOWIE

Been on that path a while now. If you're trying to get me to stay-

HUDSON

I think you should leave right now.

Bowie looks confused - until Hudson hands him the two IDs.

Looking at the folded-up Social Security card, Bowie sighs.

HUDSON

At least eight people saw it. And you know how gossip is around here.

BOWIE

So he might be having visitors.

HUDSON

Left messages with the Marshal, but that protection is long gone, yeah?

Bowie nods. Hudson tips her hat back, processing that.

HUDSON

Well. That's my problem I guess.

BOWIE

Jill, no offense, but you're not prepared for who might be coming. I heard you didn't even want to be Sheriff, just ran for publicity-

HUDSON

Whether or not that rumor is true, fact is I am Sheriff now.

Hudson stares at Bowie defiantly - then softens as she glances at Emma, still standing on the cliff edge.

HUDSON

Bowie, you're the happiest I ever seen you. Please go - before the shit gets here.

INT. CAR - DAY

Emma drives the rental car, Bowie in the passenger seat.

EMMA

Two nights of snogging and room
service sound amazing. Excited for
our pre-flight staycation?

Bowie fidgets with the folded SS card, his face troubled.

EMMA

I know you're scared to meet Mum,
but I said we'd do a video chat-

Bowie nods absently, staring out the window.

EMMA

Book fair tomorrow should be fun?
All those smiling kids.

Bowie picks up his phone and dials a number.

REMMY (O.S.)

Hudson already talked to me. And I
agree with her, you should git.

BOWIE

I am. What about you?

REMMY (O.S.)

Can't see Dad yet. He's stable, ish-

BOWIE

No. I mean you're not going to do
something foolish, right Remmy?

INT. GARAGE - DAY

On the garage wall is a chalk outline of a man in a fedora.

Remmy squints and awkwardly hurls a throwing star at it.

DING! The star feebly tumbles to the garage floor.

BOWIE (O.S.)

Dad made his bed a long time ago.
And you're not bulletproof.

REMMY

I know that, sheesh.

DING! Another throwing star bounces and tumbles away.

BOWIE (O.S.)

We don't even know for sure if
anyone is coming.

REMMY

So stop worryin', mother hen. You
got a new life ahead. Safe travels.

Remmy hangs up. With a look of determination, he limps over
to collect the scattered stars for another try.

INT. CAR - DAY

Staring out the car window, Bowie mutters under his breath.

BOWIE

He's gonna get himself killed...

EMMA

I'm sorry, what?

Bowie blinks, realizing he spoke out loud.

EMMA

What's going on, B?

Bowie tries to figure out how much to say - then abruptly
points through the windshield at something just ahead:

Two skid marks on the road, and a puddle of BLOOD.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Emma is by the parked car as Bowie follows a blood trail.

Huddled in the sagebrush is a COYOTE, wounded and panting.

EXT. ANIMAL RESCUE - DAY

Outside a funky old mobile home at the end of a gravel road,
a hand-painted sign says: WILD ANIMAL RESCUE

Emma waits in the car as Bowie talks to HANNAH, 30s,
overalls, straw hat. She looks at Bowie appreciatively.

HANNAH

You done good. People got low
opinions of Coyotes, but it don't
mean they oughta suffer.

Staring at the blood on his hands, Bowie decides something.

BOWIE

Give me a ride back to town?

HANNAH

Sure, but what about your lady-

HOLLERING from the trailer, and Hannah hurries inside.

Bowie walks to the car and Emma rolls her window down.

BOWIE

Can I meet you at the hotel?

Emma looks confused, and Bowie chooses his words carefully.

BOWIE

I haven't talked about my dad much.

EMMA

I know you're estranged-

BOWIE

His nickname was 'The Coyote'.

EMMA

Was he a professional wrestler?

BOWIE

He was a... painter.

Emma blanches.

BOWIE

People who know about his paintings found out he's in the hospital.

EMMA

Oh god... But B, that's a law enforcement thing, right?

BOWIE

They're involved. I just need to make sure it's handled before I go.

EMMA

When you say 'handled'-

BOWIE

Rally the family, hire security... My hands will stay clean, promise.

Bowie raises his hands, forgetting they're covered in blood.

Emma stares at them, clearly not loving any of this.

With a pleading look, Bowie makes a gesture with his hands.

EMMA

Sign language for 'Lies'...?

BOWIE

I thought it was 'Trust'!? Didn't I see you teach your students-

EMMA

I'm kidding. Okay, go. But - when that plane leaves in 48 hours, I'll be on it. With or without you.

BOWIE

With any luck I'll see you tonight.

Bowie leans in, but Emma leans back.

EMMA

You get a kiss when it's done.

Bowie watches Emma drive away as Hannah comes back out.

HANNAH

Hubby needed help with an IV. That coyote might pull through yet.

Bowie looks at the animal skulls mounted around the place.

BOWIE

Hannah, if this is an animal rescue, what's with all the skulls?

HANNAH

Well. The 'rescue' part don't always work out.

DISSOLVE FROM SKULL TO:

Frank's head, asleep on a hospital bed pillow, as Bowie sits beside him working in a sketchbook.

DRAWING: the sleeping Frank, looking small and vulnerable.

DR. FISHER, 60s, her eyes kind but tired, steps in.

DR. FISHER

I'm Dr. Fisher. Frank's ammonia levels crept up again. Delirium ensued, hence the altercation.

Bowie, confused, follows the doctor's gaze to the nurse's station where EMT #1 waves and points to his BLACK EYE.

EMT #1
Never saw it coming! Old man's got
some freakish fast-twitch muscles.

BOWIE
Runs in the family. I'm so sorry.

EMT #1 waves it off and returns to chatting up Nurse.

BOWIE
Doc, how long does Frank have?

DR. FISHER
If he doesn't respond to treatment?
A week at most, probably less.

BOWIE
Will he wake up again?

DR. FISHER
I can't say for sure.

BOWIE
Can he be moved?

DR. FISHER
I wouldn't advise it. If you remove
his NG tube, he'll likely aspirate.

BOWIE
That means, what? Overheat, or-

DR. FISHER
Die choking on his own vomit.

BOWIE
Nope. Okay. Not moving him.

The doctor looks around furtively, then WHISPERS.

DR. FISHER
I can ensure he passes peacefully,
however I should warn you-

DESDEMONA (O.S.)
Doctor, are you needed somewhere?

At the doorway is the administrator Desdemona, whose hawk-eyes watch the doctor hurry out, before turning to Bowie.

INT. ADMIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Bowie stands by Desdemona's desk, reading a cost breakdown.

BOWIE

He let his insurance lapse?

DESDEMONA

And I don't want to scare you, but if he becomes a hospice case, it's within our rights to discharge him-

BOWIE

The doc said he shouldn't be moved-

DESDEMONA

She doesn't decide that - I do. Frank's belongings are in a box by his bed, save one item of concern.

Desdemona unlocks a drawer, pulls out a baggie and hands it to Bowie: inside is a one-shot DERRINGER PISTOL.

BOWIE

Does this hospital have security?

DESDEMONA

An orderly, but no guards. We don't see trouble like the big city does.

Bowie does his best to smile at her reassurance.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

In the box of belongings by Frank's bed, Bowie rests the pistol on top of the clothes, then replaces the lid.

He looks at his unconscious father.

BOWIE

Let's hope it won't come in handy.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - DAY

As Bowie crosses the hospital lobby, the EMTs walk by.

EMT #2

Put a moat around the hospital?

EMT #1

Coyotes can't swim! Plus we could charge for a ferry crossing...

The banter doesn't catch Bowie's ear but something else does.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
My friend Frank in ICU. Where...

Fedora, carrying flowers, walks in the pointed direction.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

In the hospital back parking lot, a door BURSTS open.

Shoving Fedora outside, Bowie deftly pulls the man's buttoned coat off his shoulders and down, pinning his arms.

The thin weasel, Harold Gutch, wrestles feebly in anger.

HAROLD
Watch it, son! You're messing with
a professional-

BOWIE
Pros don't get snuck up on.

Bowie digs in the coat and removes a small pistol.

BOWIE
Pros don't carry while scouting.

Bowie pulls out a pack of COWBOY CHEW gum - Apple Flavor.

BOWIE
Pros chew Watermelon - discontinued
because a nootropic additive was
getting kids high.

Harold frowns, clearly not knowing some or all of this.
Released, he turns and spits his gum at Bowie's feet.

HAROLD
Fine! I'm just a gofer, sent
because nobody believed the great
Frank O'Faolain was lying in a
podunk hospital like a snail out of
his shell. But lo and behold!

Looking up at Frank's window, he raises his cell for a photo-

SLAP! Bowie smacks the phone down and CRUSHES it underfoot.

HAROLD
Maybe shoulda done that in the
hall, before I texted my boss.

BOWIE
Who do you work for?

HAROLD

I'd fret less on that and more on this hospital being about as secure as a wet paper bag.

BOWIE

Dad's on his way out. Why bother-

HAROLD

Orders are clear: Frank O'Faolain must suffer! If he has one breath left, he's gonna use it to scream.

BOWIE

The Marshal may see otherwise. Plus every one of Frank's kids is a pro. If we see you again, you'll be...
(searches for a threat)
Pooping teeth in your grave.

Harold finds the threat odd, but something about Bowie's look gives him chills, and he scurries away.

Shaking off the ill-fitting tough-guy act, Bowie exhales.

INT. SABRA'S OFFICE - DAY

In the windowless room with shelves of skulls, Sabra holds her phone and flips through Harold's photos of the hospital.

HAROLD (O.S.)

The Marshal might be a problem, but local law enforcement is a joke.

Sabra flips past photos of the shabby Sheriff's department.

HAROLD (O.S.)

Also, O'Faolain had a litter, and it sounds like he trained them up.

More photos: the townhome, the portrait of Frank and kids.

SABRA

Fenris loves bonuses. Get a room in town, it's about to get lively.

Hanging up, Sabra looks to the cabinet set apart, with the lone pillow waiting for Frank O'Faolain's skull.

Above is a framed mugshot of a man in a MUSTARD SUIT, 30s.

SABRA

We've got him, brother...

INT. TOWNHOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

In a decaying living room, Remmy sits on a frayed couch staring in bewilderment at Frank's Social Security card.

REMMY

Why'd he keep this?

BOWIE

Why'd he make a coyote mask and run around like a psychotic Robin Hood? All I know is he may need money for hospice. How's the family account?

REMMY

Bone dry.

BOWIE

What about those platinum coins?

REMMY

A handful left, for emergencies. Guess this fuckin' qualifies. I'll hunt down the safe deposit key.

BOWIE

I'll try to find the Marshal's private number, see if he can help with the non-financial problem.

REMMY

The one involving people with long memories and loaded guns?

Bowie grimaces at the phrasing, but nods.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

A filing cabinet is open, its guts all over the attic floor. Bowie sits amid the papers, phone next to him, on speaker.

COBB (O.S.)

Last we spoke, you'd just broke the jaw of a kid who bullied that cripple brother of yours.

BOWIE

Good memory. Still not sure why I didn't go to juvie for that.

COBB (O.S.)

It served your dad's witness protection better to keep you out.

BOWIE

Ah. Well, on that note-

COBB

Yeah, I got Hudson's messages.

BOWIE

Why didn't you call her back?

INT. CAR - DAY

GLEN COBB, 60s, fighting shape going soft under a sport coat, drives an aging sedan. By his smirk, this conversation is a meal he's been waiting to eat all day.

COBB

First off, your father opted out of his protection in a huff years ago. It's a voluntary program, so the Marshals are no longer bound.

(pause)

Second, while under our protection we suspected Frank of engaging in armed robbery and contract killing as 'The Coyote'. We couldn't prove anything because he's such a slick bastard, but nothing pisses us off more than babysitting a suspected active criminal. So, the Marshals sure as shit won't volunteer now.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Bummed but unsurprised by this news, Bowie's gears turn.

BOWIE

What about Hudson? Surely they can't leave a Sheriff high and dry-

COBB (O.S.)

She beat out a very qualified man for that job. Lotta folks in law enforcement would love to see her fall right on her pretty face.

Bowie drums his fingers. He goes for broke.

BOWIE

You always looked out for us kids-

COBB (O.S.)
 I'm retired. Which also means I'm
 free to say I think Frank was a
 dick, and a bad father, and he
 deserves what's on the way.

BOWIE
 Do you know who's coming?

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Down a lonely desert highway, a BLACK TOWNCAR cruises.

A photocopy of Frank's IDs sit by an open case, where a
 gloved hand sorts through gleaming TORTURE IMPLEMENTS.

COBB (O.S.)
 Rumor is, it's an insurance family,
 ergo deep pockets and no scruples.

EXT. DESERT DIRT ROAD - DAY

On a lonely dirt road, a PICKUP TRUCK leaves a dust trail.

By a photocopy of Frank's IDs lies a gleaming .357 Magnum and
 a case with a CHEMICAL HAZARD sticker on it.

COBB (O.S.)
 They put out an open contract, so
 several creepy crawlies may emerge.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DUSK

A mud spattered BROWN SUV speeds down a desert highway.

A copy of Frank's IDs is next to a pouch of COWBOY CHEW.

COBB (O.S.)
 Besides freelancers, I bet the
 family sends one of their own-

At the wheel, Fenris hums the Tri-Health insurance jingle.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Bowie sits staring at a yellowed map on the attic wall, roads
 leading to the isolated town of Los Huesos in the center.

COBB (O.S.)

Born under protection, you kids may be off the radar. But if Frank talks under torture, revenge may spill onto your siblings.

BOWIE

They can take care of themselves.

COBB (O.S.)

Even Remmy? And what about Emma?

BOWIE

How do you know about her?

COBB (O.S.)

I'm private sector now, do a little detective work. Shame if Frank's past puts Emma in the crosshairs-

Bowie stands, his voice rising.

BOWIE

That won't happen, because Dad's going to pass away peacefully.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Cobb looks strangely satisfied by this turn.

COBB

I respect your conviction, but you can't do it alone. I could wrangle help, for a price. If, say, you had information to trade-

CLICK. The call dies, but Cobb smiles to himself.

COBB

Rude. Almost like you're daring me to come poke around.

Cobb drives by a sign: LOS HUESOS - 115 MILES

In the passenger seat is a copy of Frank's IDs, a revolver, and a reward poster: WANTED - JOHN DOE AKA THE COYOTE \$50,000

The sketch depicts a man in a Coyote mask.

DISSOLVE TO:

A COYOTE MASK is displayed inside the ornate attic cabinet, alongside a trench coat, black gloves, and the penknife.

Remmy stands admiring his collection. He picks up the blade.

REMMY
Dull, sadly.

Bowie, furiously rummaging through boxes, looks over.

BOWIE
You should burn that shit, Remmy.

REMMY
No way José! This is history.

BOWIE
You sure the deposit key is here?

REMMY
Oh. Darn it, you know what?

Remmy takes a keyring from his pocket and singles out a key.

Bowie swallows his exasperation and takes it.

BOWIE
I'll get coins, you get siblings-

Remmy sees Bowie's sketchbook, open on the floor.

DRAWING: Frank in bed, now with a FORCE FIELD around him.

REMMY
Sure glad you're here, Bowie.

BOWIE
Don't get used to it. I'm out after we rally the family to handle this.

REMMY
You do remember what family you're talking about, right?

EXT. SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

BANG BANG BANG! Hudson fires her revolver at a target in a rickety outdoor shooting range, littered with tumbleweeds.

Holstering her gun, a pulley system made from a motor on an old bicycle frame slowly retrieves the target.

TARGET: Not a single bullet hole is inside the silhouette.

DERISIVE LAUGHS from HUNTER #1 and #2, 40s, dressed in camo and foam trucker caps, standing down the firing line.

VAL (O.S.)

Excuse me.

VAL, 30s, confident, athletic, tight braid and expensive suit, stands in front of a black 4x4 with tinted windows.

VAL

Where can I get ammo in this town?

HUDSON

Shop called Sports Bag, on Main.

Val nods, then looks at Hudson's target full of misses.

VAL

Spread like that is usually lack of breath control. Exhale and hold it.

Hudson nods in thanks, but Hunter #1 GUFFAWS skeptically.

Val takes her sunglasses off and looks at him.

VAL

Gosh, what kinda gun you got there?

HUNTER #1

AR-15, 16 inch, mid-length.

VAL

Wowsers. Can I try it out?

The two men trade looks and decide it'll be amusing.

Taking the gun, Val gives her head a shake, dropping her bangs to cover one eye. She puts her other eye to the sight.

BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG

Running the clip out, Val hands the gun back and yawns.

The target returns, and spelled out in bullet holes is:

THIS GUN IS FOR NOOBS

The hunters look at Val differently now, and so does Hudson—but her eyes contain a sliver of fear.

As Val walks to her truck, Hudson slyly snaps a photo.

RING! Hudson quickly turns away to answer.

BOWIE (O.S.)

I spoke to Cobb. He's retired, and unoptimistic about the new Marshal.

HUDSON

State troopers don't seem to be in a hurry to get back to me, either.

BOWIE (O.S.)

Can you post Dugal at the hospital?

HUDSON

He's the only Deputy I got. I need him back in one piece.

BOWIE (O.S.)

Just being cautious while I sort this out. Trouble isn't here yet.

Hudson watches Val's truck ROAR off down the road.

HUDSON

I hope you're right.

(pause)

What's your plan? And it better still involve you leaving.

BOWIE (O.S.)

Um. Maybe you should keep some plausible deniability for now?

Hudson isn't thrilled about this, but accepts it.

HUDSON

I'll ring the active Marshal again.

INT. VACATION CABIN - DAY

In a modern hunting-style cabin, a telephone RINGS.

Ignoring it is a MARSHAL, 50s, uniform on but sleeves rolled up, a jeweler's loupe on his eye as he ties a fishing fly.

DING DONG - the doorbell causes Marshal to GRUNT in annoyance, and he reluctantly sets his fly down.

The Marshal opens the door to reveal Harold, looking nervous.

HAROLD

Hi. I'm with, uh, Tri-Health. Got a minute to talk about insurance?

MARSHAL

Bud, this is a private road.

HAROLD

Um, well, the gate was-

MARSHAL

Scram or I bust ya for trespassin'.

SLAM! The Marshal stomps back to his fly fishing workbench.

THUNK! A crossbow bolt pins his hand to the desk.

He CRIES OUT, then scrabbles for his holstered gun.

THUNK! Another bolt pins his hand to his leg.

Fenris marches into the room, nocking another arrow.

THUNK! A bolt in the Marshal's throat, blood spurting.

As the Marshall bleeds out in a gurgling mess, Fenris casually examines a ghillie suit hanging on the wall.

FENRIS

Never pass up quality insurance.
Peace of mind comes from knowing
you're ready for the unexpected...

Harold, looking nauseous at the scene, has to turn away.

EXT. CREDIT UNION - DAY

The door of a sleepy little credit union opens, and Bowie exits carrying an old sock bulging with something.

He dumps out a handful of gleaming PLATINUM COINS.

COLT (O.S.)

Serendipity, bro!

Confused, Bowie approaches a parked ramshackle Honda. A plume of vape smoke clears to reveal COLT, 20s, grubby, smarmy.

He holds up a photocopied set of bank blueprints.

COLT (O.S.)

I'm casing this place. Low hanging
fruit! Outdated security, one guard-

Bowie grabs the blueprints away, crumpling them.

BOWIE

Family meeting at the house. Go!

Colt gives a salty look, but drives off under Bowie's gaze.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Heavy mag tires creep into the townhouse parking lot.

It's the black 4x4, doing a slow roll past: Remmy's VW bug, a beat-up Saturn, Colt's Honda, and a beefy old Harley.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Val walks stealthily up to the townhouse front door.

ARGUING comes from inside, and Val leans in to listen.

She pulls a black 9mm pistol, and is checking the clip when:

CREAK - the door opens, revealing Bowie.

Val freezes, and the two stare at each other for a moment.

VAL

Bowie.

BOWIE

Val. What's with the gun?

VAL

It's a family meeting, isn't it?

Joking-not-joking, Val smiles as she shoulder-holsters the gun, pats Bowie on the arm and heads inside.

INT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

STAR, 30s, buzz cut, leather jacket and tattoos, sips a beer at one end of the couch, as far as possible from LABRYS, 30s, long pink nails, sweatshirt, jeans, taking pulls on a flask.

STAR

Dad always liked you more-

LABRYS

You might not even be his kid!

STAR

That shit again! Sing a new song-

Remmy sits on the brick hearth, watching with amusement while Colt slouches in a chair, playing a game on his phone.

Val goes to the rustic wet bar and starts making a drink.

BOWIE

Val's here, we can get started.

Labrys SNORTS and puts on a fake German accent.

LABRYS

Oh, ve are so lucky, Valther PPK,
international woman of mystery, has
graced us with her presence.

Val smiles and raises her drink in salute.

VAL

Labrys, always a displeasure.

STAR

So what's this all about?

Everyone shushes, and eyes go to Bowie.

BOWIE

Dad's in the ICU. Probably the end.

LABRYS

You brought us here for that? Good
fucking riddance.

BOWIE

His identity got out.

Everyone sits upright. Even Colt looks up from his game.

STAR

Maybe it's been long enough? And
nobody will care, or come looking-

VAL

Job's already posted in my circles.

LABRYS

And you didn't think to alert us?!

VAL

Well as you like to remind me, I'm
only a half-sister. So I half-
thought about alerting you.

Labrys looks ready to hulk-out, but Bowie interjects.

BOWIE

How long before a threat gets here?

VAL

A day? Two on the outside.

Star grabs her motorcycle helmet and heads for the door.

BOWIE

Star, wait-

STAR

And gamble they're satisfied with just Dad? What if he talks?

VAL

There are some family skeletons.

Val gives a pointed glance to Bowie, who looks away.

STAR

The smart move? Trade Dad to save ourselves. But I'm not risking it, and I suggest y'all leave town too.

Star exits. Bowie looks around at the remaining siblings.

VAL

No strong feelings. Pay my rate and I'll help, otherwise I'll bow out.

COLT

Whatever, they can come at me.

LABRYS

Maybe we could pay them off? To leave us alone at least.

(eyes a ceramic bust)

Speaking of which, what's going on with this house? Are we selling it?

COLT

Money, really? At a time like this?

LABRYS

You're playing on your phone!

BOWIE

The house will sell, but we need money now. I got the Britannias-

Remmy holds up the bulging sock of coins.

LABRYS

Ooh, I don't have anything to remember Grandma by. I want one-

REMMY

To sell for cash tomorrow?

LABRYS

Fuck off! You live here rent free.

BOWIE

The coins are spoken for. It's the threat we need to-

COLT

Good luck, y'all.

Colt slings his backpack and walks out. Val stands.

BOWIE

Val, wait, a minute in private?

LABRYS

Just to be clear, Grandma's coins are not being used to hire Val!

REMMY

That ain't up to you, Labrys-

LABRYS

You wanna limp with both legs?

INT. TOWNHOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

The YELLS of Remmy and Labrys are muffled by the closed kitchen door as Val scribbles a number on a napkin.

VAL

This is my going rate.

Agape at the figure, Bowie looks at Val entreatingly.

VAL

Why don't you handle this? You used to take out hired guns like you were playing flag football.

BOWIE

I'm a children's book author now.

VAL

Oh? Cool! I still got that drawing, the guy with saw blades for hands-

BOWIE

Val, please, focus. Dad-

RING! Bowie's phone lights up, and he answers.

HANNAH (O.S.)

The coyote's hangin' in, but he
needs plasma, which ain't cheap-

Val waves at Bowie and heads for the door.

BOWIE

Val, wait. Hannah? I'll cover it-

CRASH - from the living room. Bowie and Val exchange looks.

Bowie slides the door open to reveal Remmy on the ground,
clutching his head, by the shattered ceramic bust.

REMMY

She got the fuckin' coins-

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Labrys's car recedes as Bowie rushes toward the VW bug.

VAL

That shitmobile won't catch her.

Bowie looks hopefully at Val's 4x4 as she climbs into it.

VAL

Get in a high-speed chase with my
deranged sister who keeps an uzi in
the glove box? I'll pass.

Bowie watches Val's truck roar off into the gathering gloom.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

A first aid kit is out. Bowie uses scissors to snip a bandage
on Remmy's head while he looks at the number on Val's napkin.

REMMY

Geez Louise! What about a friends
and family discount?

REMMY

Doubtful. She hasn't forgiven Dad
for basically raising her as a boy-

RING! Bowie sees the caller and tries to answer upbeat.

BOWIE

Hey! How's the hotel room?

INT. CITY HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

In an upscale hotel room, Emma looks out the window at sparkling city lights as a jet takes off into the sky.

EMMA

The bed is curiously large. Almost like it's designed for two people.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Bowie takes a breath, bracing for another big ask.

BOWIE

I need another twenty-four hours.

EMMA (O.S.)

What about the book fair tomorrow?

BOWIE

I'll just eat the registration fee.

EMMA (O.S.)

Don't be silly. I'll do it. But you promise, everything is...

BOWIE

Still got my 4-year chip.

EMMA (O.S.)

Good. Because if you betray my trust, there will be consequences. I did stab a lad in third grade with a pair of scissors, you know.

BOWIE

Consequences noted. I'm missing our nighttime routine. It's too quiet-

FLUTE MUSIC emits from the phone, and Bowie closes his eyes.

INT. CITY HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Emma sits by the window, playing her flute to the phone.

DISSOLVE TO:

Bowie lies in a sleeping bag on a fold-out cot, wedged between rows of junk. He works in his sketchbook.

DRAWING: In addition to the force field around Frank, now Val stands there protectively, holding silenced pistols.

Remmy opens the door, peeks in and sees the drawing.

REMMY

Cool! How we gonna pay her?

BOWIE

I still have to draw that part.

REMMY

Hey, remember Val sayin' that bit about Dad and family skeletons?

Bowie gets an uncomfortable expression, but nods.

REMMY

I got a theory: when Dad was too old to do jobs but still needed to support us, what if he secretly passed the Coyote mask on to Val?

Bowie indulges Remmy with a 'hmm' and turns out the light.

DREAM / FLASHBACK - EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Headlights illuminate swirling dust motes as a Cadillac creeps down a desert road past a ruined old mining shack.

WHEEL MAN, 50s, drives. YOUNG BOWIE, tweens, in back. Frank O'Faolain, 50s, passenger seat, sips from a flask and SINGS.

FRANK

...put him in a longboat 'til he's sober, put him in a (hiccup)-

THUMPING comes from the trunk. Wheel Man looks stressed.

WHEEL MAN

We shouldn't have brought the kid.

FRANK

Nonsense! Eventually gotta learn what his old man does for a living.

WHEEL MAN

When he's older, Frank. Let him eat cereal and watch cartoons-

FRANK

Pff! He needs to know how the bread and butter... sausage gets made...

The headlights shine on a SKULL-SHAPED ROCK, tumbled off a cliff in eons past. Nearby is a forgotten mining cemetery, a handful of unreadable grave markers buried in the weeds.

Wheel Man gets out and goes to the trunk.

Frank leans over the back seat, locking eyes with Bowie. He puts a hand on the boy's forearm, gripping it for emphasis.

FRANK

Bowie, you gotta protect family at all costs. You hear me?

Wheel Man leads the man in the Mustard Suit, bound hands, hood over his head, toward a freshly dug open grave.

MUSTARD SUIT

Fuck you, O'Faolain! You couldn't hide forever. Now you're fucked!

Wheel Man gets back in the car to find Frank rooting around.

FRANK

Where's my mask... just had it...

In the back seat, Bowie sees the Coyote mask on the floor.

MUSTARD SUIT

O'Faolain! We're gonna kill you and your wife, and barbecue your dog!

WHEEL MAN

Frank, you're too drunk-

FRANK

Fine, you do it! I'm getting old anyway. Passing the torch, señor.

WHEEL MAN

I'm just a wheel man, Frank-

FRANK

Do the Coyote's jobs, and we'll split the money 40/70, 'cause I still own the brand or whatever-

While the two men argue, Bowie quietly gets out of the car.

MUSTARD SUIT

We're gonna sell your kids into slavery! Except the cripple, who we'll drown in the river! His little lungs will fill with water-

SHIK! The man's chest is pierced by a knife - held by Bowie.

SHIK SHIK SHIK! Bowie stabs him several more times, and the man falls back into the open grave.

Covered in blood, Bowie's coyote mask stares with dark eyes.

Javier is mortified, but Frank proudly raises his flask.

FRANK

Kid's a chop off the old blick...

Bowie looks down at the lifeless body in the grave.

He pulls the hood off to reveal: EMMA'S FACE.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Bowie SNAPS awake to find himself on the cot in the cluttered garage. Early morning light creeps in the window.

Bowie's eyes are drawn to the ladder leading to the attic.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

The ornate cabinet door, ajar, reveals a sliver of darkness.

Bowie stands in front of it, staring with apprehension.

Spotting a padlock in the dust at his feet, Bowie closes the cabinet and secures the lock with a SNIK.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Bowie is separating a pile of antiques from the rest of the junk when Remmy limps in and hands him a burrito.

Bowie looks curiously at the red tinfoil wrapping.

REMMY

Red for danger. Once they fucked up
and put egg in mine - landed me in
the hospital for two days.

Remmy looks at his burrito wrapped in silver foil and sighs.

REMMY

For the chance to eat burritos with
Dad one more time, I'd trade this
whole house and all the junk in it.

BOWIE
 Except maybe this pile? I'm
 hoping Val will work in trade.

REMMY
 Oh! I got a 'nuther solution.

Remmy pulls out the crumpled photocopy of bank blueprints.

BOWIE
 Colt's half-baked scheme? No way.

REMMY
 You don't have to do it. I will.

BOWIE
 Remmy, you're-

REMMY
 A disabled runt, only fit to get
 groceries and do laundry? I can
 hold a gun and a bag. Plus, you
 were Dad's wheelman all those years
 he was the Coyote. It's perfect!

Bowie doesn't correct Remmy's history, but looks uneasy.

EXT. CREDIT UNION - DAY

Parked across from the credit union is the VW, Bowie at the
 wheel. Remmy wears a ski mask and awkwardly holds a pistol.

REMMY
 What do I put the money in?

Looking in the back, Bowie grabs his briefcase. He dumps his
 children's books out and hands it over.

REMMY
 Great. Okay. I'm goin'.

Bowie fiddles with his 4-year chip. Remmy hits his inhaler.

REMMY
 Need a sec. Ain't scared, just...

Bowie realizes Remmy is crying.

BOWIE
 Buddy, you don't have to do this-

REMMY

I do! Or Dad's gonna die screamin'.
Eyes gouged, fingernails ripped
out, rats chewing his face off...

Remmy's words affect Bowie, and he makes a decision.

He pulls the mask off Remmy's head, and dons it himself.

REMMY

What about your chip?

BOWIE

Technically it's for violent crime,
so I've got some wiggle room. Take
the wheel, I'll be back in five.

INT. CREDIT UNION FOYER - DAY

As Bowie steps into the ATM foyer, he's greeted by MUZAK.

His momentum ceases when he realizes it's a FLUTE playing.

Bowie, frozen, listens for a long conflicted moment.

INT. CREDIT UNION - DAY

At the teller window CLERK, 30s, skirt suit, sucking a
lollipop from a jar of customer treats, looks up to see:

Bowie, coat bulging, mask and gun nowhere to be seen.

CLERK

Howdy! What can I do for you today?

Bowie glances back to make sure Remmy can't see inside.

BOWIE

I need to make a withdrawal from my
savings account, please.

EXT. PUMICE MINES - DAY

At an old pumice mine used for makeshift target practice,
Val, aviators and assault rifle, sees the VW clatter up.

Bowie exits with the briefcase. Remmy waves and drives away.

BOWIE

Val, why don't you practice at the
range like a normal person?

VAL
 You can't fire full-auto weapons
 there. Or throw grenades.
 (takes the case)
 You've retained my services. Let's-

RING! Looking at the caller, Bowie signals he must take it.

BOWIE
 Hey Emma! How's the book fair?

INT. CITY CONFERENCE HALL - DAY

A scrappy little convention hall. In a row of booths, Emma sits at a card table with a stack of Bowie's books.

EMMA
 I'm learning a lot. Namely, at a
 booth in artist's alley, people
 expect to find the artist.

BOWIE (O.S.)
 You're a hero-

EMMA
 I saw a withdrawal?

BOWIE (O.S.)
 Oh. I hired private security.
 Didn't touch our joint account.

EMMA
 But, all your savings-

BANG BANG BANG! Emma looks at her phone in alarm.

EXT. PUMICE MINES - DAY

Val's full-auto rifle annihilates a row of bottles.

BOWIE
 Can we talk later?

EMMA (O.S.)
 I told Mum we'd facetime at eight-

BOWIE
 I'll 100% be done by then. OK?

Ending the call, Bowie glares at Val.

Val aims at a human skull sitting in the pumice. BANG!

BOWIE
Whose skull is that?

VAL
Nobody you know. We should get moving if we're gonna neutralize these objectives.

BOWIE
I hear a 'we' in there-

Val picks up the briefcase of money.

VAL
Robbing banks is a gateway drug. You'll be doing hits in no time.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Val drives the 4x4 aggressively up a winding forest road. Bowie, passenger seat, clutches a grab handle.

BOWIE
...so I didn't rob it. Even if I had, the gun wasn't loaded-

VAL
Legally, it's still threatening with a dangerous weapon. Even if you used a nerf gun! Such bullshit.

Val opens the moon roof. Bowie looks up, wondering why.

VAL
To be clear, if I had to kill someone with a nerf gun I could. Once did a guy with a pool noodle.

Val takes a particularly tight turn. Bowie looks queasy.

BOWIE
Could you slow down a bit?

VAL
Can't ruin the element of surprise.

Bowie looks at Val questioningly - just as she CRANKS the wheel, skidding the truck off-road into the forest.

Ahead is a campfire, a tent with camouflage netting, and a series of flight cases stacked next to a pickup truck.

A surprised TATE WILSON, 30s, flannel and jeans, scrambles to grab a gun from a holster hanging on a camp chair.

SKIDDDDD the truck stops, and Val smoothly pops out of the moon roof, dual-wielding pistols.

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM - Tate goes down in a bloody heap.

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Bowie, dazed, joins Val as she stands over the body.

VAL

Tate Wilson. I swear, survivalists do jobs just as an excuse to camp.

Nearby is a telescope on a tripod, and Bowie peers in to see it's aimed at the distant hospital, and Frank's room.

VAL

Spotted Tate this morning from the pumice mine. Small fry, but still.

Val opens flight cases: guns, ammo, bottles of acid.

BOWIE

Doesn't look so small fry.

VAL

Sulfuric acid? Pedestrian... Ooh!

Inside another case is a half-mannequin with rubber skin.

VAL

Target dummy that bleeds when you shoot it! They make one model that even has battery operated gyros, it'll twitch and writhe around-

Bowie stares at Val.

VAL

Sorry, got excited. Here, help me-

Val rolls Tate's body in the tent. Bowie is distracted by:

TWO camp chairs by the fire.

Bowie yanks Val behind the 4x4 as-

BANG BANG BANG! Gunfire erupts from the trees.

VAL

Aw, a little helper. That you, Jan?

From behind a tree glowers pale-faced JAN YATES, 30s, wearing long johns and a hunting cap, holding a .357.

JAN

Caught me pissin', you lucky skank!

VAL

I'd say you're the lucky one, Jan.
Unlike Tate, you get to walk away.

JAN

Frank O'Faolain must suffer!

VAL

Jan, I'm giving you a chance here-

BANG! A hole appears on the 4x4, and Val turns to ice.

VAL

Never mind. Now I'm gonna grind
your bones to make my bread.

This puts the fear into Jan, and she sprints into the woods.

Val leaps out and gives chase.

Jan jumps logs and dodges trees, firing wildly behind her.

Like a wolf on the hunt, Val keeps easy pace, her shots exploding bark and branches around the retreating woman.

Jan, panting, stops behind a tree to reload.

Cautiously peering out, she sees only eerily quiet forest.

CLICK - Jan sighs, drops her gun and turns to see Val standing behind her, pistol raised and smirking.

JAN

Damn O'Faolain speed. But it won't
matter when Fenris gets here.

Val's tough demeanor falters, and Jan smirks.

JAN

That's right, Fenris is coming.
Frank could've stopped him - but
the Coyote's fast asleep, ain't he.

Val looks back in the direction of camp - and Bowie.

VAL
That he is...

JAN
If there's any way to wake that
dog, better do it - or else it'll
be you lyin' dead in the woods...

Jan LUNGES for a GUN in her boot-

BOOM! Val fires, and Jan tumbles into the pine needles.

Val stares at the body, her gaze dark and ponderous.

EXT. LAVA ROCK CLIFFS - DAY

Val and Bowie drag the tent-wrapped bodies to a set of broken
ancient lava cliffs, overlooking a sparkling ribbon of river.

At a fissure, they heave the bodies down with a wet CRUNCH.

Val offers a bottle of acid to Bowie, but he waves it off.

VAL
Getting soft in your retirement?

BOWIE
I never loved this part.

Val dumps a bottle in and smoke billows out.

VAL
You gotta miss some of it, though.
The toys, the adrenaline...?

BOWIE
I suppose I miss the feeling of
sticking it to the bullies.

VAL
You always did go after remorseless
sociopaths the law couldn't touch.

BOWIE
Those jobs paid the most anyway.

Val looks sidelong at Bowie, liking where this is going.

VAL
Coming for Dad is a man named
Fenris. The worst of the worst.

BOWIE

Then it's good we hired you.

Val's grin fades. She pours a second bottle of acid.

BOWIE

Glad we didn't pay you with
grandma's coins, though. She'd be
spinning in her grave over this.

VAL

She won't get much peace from
whatever Labrys does with them.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Platinum coins are stacked on a coffee table in a shabby
mobile home. On the couch, Labrys sips a beer and texts.

LABRYS

Fuck off, don't lowball me. You can
get more than 1200 each...

KNOCK Labrys gets up to open the door, revealing Harold.

HAROLD

Hi, I'm with Tri-Health insurance.

Labrys's eyes narrow. She sniffs the air.

LABRYS

Is that Watermelon Cowboy Chew?

Harold's eyes widen in guilty surprise.

Labrys SLAMS the door and slides a deadbolt.

LABRYS

I got platinum coins here - yours
if you'll take me off your list!

Labrys pulls an UZI from under the couch, checks the clip.

HAROLD (O.S.)

I'm just here to discuss coverage-

BRATATTATATAT - Labrys sprays the door full of bullet holes.

Silence. Labrys crawls forward to peer through a hole.

Nobody there, she turns back to see:

Fenris, standing above her, gloves holding the heavy old TV.

SMASH! Blood and brains spray everywhere.

Unfazed, Fenris studies a pine-needle wreath on the wall.

FENRIS

Here at Tri-Health we're not just
about the bottom line. Loyalty will
always trump the almighty dollar...

EXT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL - DAY

Outside an old hotel with a flickering neon sign, Bowie sits
in the 4x4 and uses the camp telescope to peer into a room.

BOWIE

I see a gun. How did you know?

From the speaker on Bowie's phone, Val whispers back.

VAL (O.S.)

This town has one hotel, and not
everyone loves camping.

BOWIE

He's getting out of the shower.

VAL (O.S.)

Perfect. Going in.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

Val, black gloves, silenced pistol, exits a stairwell.

She moves silently down the hall, checking room numbers.

At #230, she snaps a small cylinder over the peephole.

POV: The device reverses the peephole, allowing Val a view of
a twin bed, a minibar, and a GUN on a small table.

Val KNOCKS, raising her voice sweetly.

VAL

Housekeeping.

As a man approaches, rubbing his hair with a towel, Val
positions her pistol to get a shot.

Glimpsing a face, Val sighs and lowers her gun.

The door opens to reveal MARCUS FLEECE, 40s, a beefy lunk.

MARCUS

Val?

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Marcus drops ice cubes in minibar drinks and hands one to Val, seated at the table. Bowie stands by, looking uneasy.

MARCUS

How you been since the Iceland job?

VAL

Same old. It's a man's world, I'm just killing in it. Cheers.

MARCUS

So, what, you two workin' together?

Bowie shakes his head vigorously.

VAL

He's a children's book author now.

Marcus gives Bowie a skeptical look.

BOWIE

I am! And I teach kindergarten.

MARCUS

Oh, is that Kool-aid on your shoe?

Bowie looks down to see there's blood on his sneaker.

VAL

Marcus, the job required suffering, right? What'd you bring for that?

Marcus opens a black case filled with torture devices.

VAL

Pilliwinks! Nice.

MARCUS

Thanks! What'd Tate bring?

VAL

Sulfuric.

MARCUS

So pedestrian. Well shit, now what? I don't want to play against you.

VAL
What'll it take to walk away?

Marcus scribbles on hotel stationery. Bowie looks ill.

BOWIE
For that much, you should help us.

MARCUS
And go against Fenris? Fuck that.
Val had a run in, she gets me.

Val looks away, taking a big gulp of her drink.

MARCUS
Oh! And cover the room? Booked two
days, maybe I'll enjoy the pool.

Bowie closes his eyes, trying to work something out.

BOWIE
Will you take platinum coins?

INT. TRAILER - DAY

A DUSTY RING on the wall, where the pine wreath was hung.

Bowie stares at it curiously as Hudson stands in the bullet-ridden doorway, gazing at Labrys's dead body.

HUDSON
I'm sorry, Bowie. Can't imagine
what you're feeling.

Bowie looks at Hudson, then down at Labrys.

BOWIE
Honestly? Mostly relief.
(pause)
She's not suffering. I don't have
to worry about her anymore. And
unfortunately, like most of my
family I didn't like her very much.

Hudson looks at Bowie, her expression cryptic.

BOWIE
I'm a monster, right? Just say it.

HUDSON
When my aunt died, I threw a party.

BOWIE
You mean a wake?

HUDSON
I mean a party. I'm lookin' at you
strange because more than ever, I
don't get why you ain't left town.

Bowie looks helplessly at her, then down at the carpet.

BOWIE
Any chance you didn't find anything
on the floor here?

Hudson eyes the scattered platinum coins, and sighs.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Bowie enters to find Val scrolling hospital blueprints.

VAL
This place is a security void.
Where's Remmy?

BOWIE
Chapel. Saying a prayer for Labrys.

Val rolls her eyes, then looks at a page Bowie's holding.

VAL
How'd it go with Desdemona?

BOWIE
Feels like I just lost a poker
game. Marcus took all our chips, if
the hospital doubles down-

Remmy hurries in, looking spooked.

REMMY
Marshal Cobb! Talkin' to a nurse.

The three look at each other, collective gears turning.

VAL
Thanks to us having different moms,
Cobb may not know I exist. I'd
prefer to keep it that way.

REMMY
Don't look at me - I steer clear
since my frisbee hit his car and he
yelled so bad I peed my pants.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Bowie stands alone, arms crossed, as Cobb saunters up.

COBB
Long time no see. Pops awake?

BOWIE
No, and he may never be again.

COBB
Perhaps I'll just hang out awhile-

Cobb steps toward the door, but Bowie blocks him.

COBB
Guardin' over him, huh? Can't blame
you, considering who's coming. If
you'd just trade some information,
I could have a crew here, pronto.
Bounty hunters, tough hombres-

Cobb turns his phone to show a photo of FOUR HUNTERS, 40s,
camo and face masks, holding rifles next to a dead deer.

Bowie's expression shows he's not interested in the offer.

Cobb shrugs, tucks his business card into Bowie's crossed
arms, then saunters back down the hall whistling.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Watching at the window, Bowie makes sure Cobb's sedan drives
away while Remmy and Val examine the business card.

REMMY
You think Cobb would really help?

BOWIE
Help arrest Dad and drag him out of
here choking on his puke? Yes.

Val looks at Frank lying unconscious in the bed.

VAL
We better hope the old man croaks
before Cobb finds Skull Rock...

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - DAY

A skull-shaped rock is marked in the remote desert on an old
map in a crooked frame, hanging on the Sheriff station wall.

Cobb sits in a creaky chair across from Hudson at her desk.

HUDSON
Marshal service. The real deal.

COBB
Sheriff ain't?

HUDSON
So far nobody uses that word
without 'real estate', 'newly
elected', or 'young' before it.

COBB
Still a peck above a private dick!
Here to declare myself, as a
courtesy, since I'm in your hood.

From his briefcase Cobb takes out 'The Coyote' reward flyer.

COBB
Got a hunch a hospitalized Mr.
Smith may help shed some light.

HUDSON
Last I heard he's unconscious,
maybe a few days to live.

COBB
No convictions after death, but if
I get proof enough to close the
case, reward'll still pay out.

Hudson shifts uncomfortably in her seat.

HUDSON
I should probably let you know that
I grew up with Frank's son-

COBB
Bowie? No interest in him at all.

HUDSON
Still, not sure I can help.

Hudson hands the flyer back, and Cobb chews on that.

COBB
Trouble's coming, and Bowie may not
escape its gravity well. If I solve
my case, I could be motivated to
convince higher powers to step in.

That seems to change things for Hudson a little.

HUDSON
How could I help? In theory.

COBB
Nurse said in Frank's delirium he ranted about a 'Skull Rock'...?

HUDSON
Don't ring a bell. But we got some weird old maps filed away here.

COBB
I'd be much obliged. Anything I can do in return, just name it.

Hudson looks askance, then lowers her voice.

HUDSON
Could I pick your brain a little? Between you and me, I didn't run for the publicity. As a kid I always wanted to be Sheriff.

Cobb's smile says: this is going to work out just fine.

INT. HOSPITAL ELEVATOR - DAY

Bowie and Remmy drag black cases into the hospital elevator.

REMMY
Dunno why Val needs all this. Remember that job where the Coyote took out half a dozen guys at the reservoir? A knife against six guns, cut through 'em like butter.

BOWIE
Maybe Val's done with all that.

REMMY
Piss-poor timing, if so. 'Specially if we all end up dead as a result.

Bowie frowns at this as the doors open with a DING!

He and Remmy drag the cases out of the elevator to find Val interrogating Nurse, who appears about to cry.

VAL
Just one elevator and the stairs, correct? No other ways up here.

NURSE

N-no...

VAL

No there is, or no there isn't?

Bowie smiles apologetically at Nurse and pulls Val aside.

BOWIE

Keeping Dad from suffering is the goal. Kinda works against that if you give his nurse a heart attack.

Barely listening, Val's attention is drawn to the metal hospital door next to them. She taps on it with a THUNK.

VAL

Good doors. These'll stop bullets, for a while anyway. Windows are a liability, though. Nurse!

Almost having crept away, Nurse jumps like a startled deer.

VAL

Any rooms without windows?

Nurse shakes her head and Val frowns, thinking.

VAL

Bowie, when you caught Harold, he pointed up at this room, correct?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sitting guard duty by Frank, Dugal reads a paperback.

BOWIE

Dugal, this is Val. She's-

Val gives Bowie a stern look.

BOWIE

Uh, private security we hired.

Dugal nods to Val, who stares out at the surrounding woods.

VAL

Torture needs privacy, so taking Frank out of here is Fenris's play. We gotta flush him out before that.

Val grabs Dugal, chair and all, and slides him over.

VAL

This could work... Clear shot from the forest. Nice juicy target.

Dugal looks nervously over his shoulder, out the window.

VAL

Dugal, I need you to strip.

Dugal blinks with concern and confusion.

CUT TO:

In the chair by the window sits the target dummy from Tate Wilson's camp, now dressed in Dugal's deputy uniform.

Under the hat Remmy prods the squishy fake-blood-filled face.

REMMY

What's gonna happen exactly?

Val looks at the forest and makes a gun with her hand.

VAL

POP! Blood spurts, deputy falls. Fenris waits, sees no commotion, leaves cover. We'll be with Dad in another room - ready to snipe.

BOWIE

A sniper rifle in a hospital room? You're sedating the nurse, I hope.

It's sarcasm, but Val likes the idea - making Bowie frown.

VAL

Fine! I'll be on the roof. You'll be in Dad's room guarding him-

Val offers a pistol to Bowie, but he won't take it.

BOWIE

We'll guard together. If the dummy pops you'll have time to go up-

Val hides the gun as Desdemona enters with Dr. Fisher.

DESDEMONA

We've run out of effective treatments for Frank. Tomorrow we'll need to discuss discharge.

BOWIE

I thought he shouldn't be moved?

Dr. Fisher clandestinely nods to Bowie in solidarity.

DESDEMONA

This isn't a hospice. But we'll discuss it further in the morning.

She exits. Before following, Dr. Fisher slips Bowie a note.

DR. FISHER

If you get backed into a corner.

Bowie unfolds the note to reveal three letters: "QIO". Confused, he turns for elaboration but the doctor is gone.

Fighting down worry, Bowie looks at the dummy deputy.

BOWIE

Val, would this work on you?

VAL

Eh. I'd fake an emergency and sneak in on an ambulance. But I don't think Fenris is that creative - or knows I'm here to ambush him.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL ROOM - DAY

In a hotel room, Harold sits at a table, phone on speaker.

HAROLD

She's offering to tell us all about who's guarding Frank in exchange for the demands I sent over.

A handwritten list is on the table next to a motorcycle helmet. Seated is Star Smith, looking cagey.

SABRA (O.S.)

Here's my counter-offer: sell her family out, and in return she gets free health insurance for life.

Star leans back in her chair, considering.

INT. FENRIS'S SUV - DAY

On a forest road, Colt's car is smashed into a tree, riddled with bullet holes. Colt's headless body is at the wheel.

SUV parked nearby, tailgate open, Fenris hums and collects pine cones from the forest floor.

CHIME! Checking his phone, IMAGES OF VAL arrive.

FENRIS

We have the utmost confidence we
can offer a more comprehensive
package than our competition...

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

CRICKETS CHIRP in the dark forest surrounding the hospital.
In a window: the dummy deputy casts a convincing silhouette.

INT. FRANK'S OLD HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

A pneumatic pressure cuff makes the dummy occasionally tilt,
and the hospital bed is stuffed with pillows to mimic Frank.

A pet cam is in the corner, its glass eye watching the room.

INT. FRANK'S NEW HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The video feeds to a tablet which Val watches vigilantly,
dressed in all black, silenced gun in her lap.

Remmy, by the window, takes a sly peek out the curtains.

Bowie sits reading a punch-stained children's book to Frank.

BOWIE

...the adventurers strode down the
sodden path. Stars appeared, and-

A CLATTER somewhere in the hospital makes everyone tense up.

Val cracks the door to see Nurse picking up vials.

Everyone relaxes again, breathing a sigh of relief.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

In the dark woods, a DRAGGING sound as something heavy is
hailed through the underbrush - then comes to a stop.

Fenris's silhouette surveys the hospital through the trees.

INT. WINDOWLESS ROOM - NIGHT

CHIME! A photo of the hospital exterior arrives on a phone.

Sabra looks at it and smiles. She's sitting in a chair by Frank's empty skull pillow, a bottle of champagne on ice.

She smiles up at the photo of the man in the Mustard Suit.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Mustard Suit's photo rests on a stack of mug shots.

COBB

Coyote victims all, I'd bet my hat.

The photos sit atop a large old map splayed on Hudson's desk, along with a magnifying glass and a tequila bottle. Cobb, drink barely touched, refills Hudson's empty tumbler.

HUDSON

Even if we find the graves, won't the DNA be ruined by now?

COBB

Sun and air are the worst enemies, but they're sparse six feet down. No, that mustard jacket'll still have Coyote cooties on it.

HUDSON

Was he really as bad as they say?

COBB

A beast. He'd bring a knife to a gunfight, still nail you. Even howled to give you fair warning.

HUDSON

Just showing off?

COBB

Leveraging fear. Scared people make mistakes, lose their grip. It's why protection rackets work. Terrify folks, then exploit 'em.

Hudson flips through mugshots, squinting through her buzz.

HUDSON

Are these all criminals?

COBB

A pro comes to your door, usually you did something to get him there. Coyote probably whacked more psychos than law did that decade.

HUDSON

Then why you want justice so bad?

COBB

Justice? I want that fifty grand!
Oh, I used to dote on justice, but
laws change, shifting like desert
sand. The only constant: whoever
has the gold makes the rules.

HUDSON

Sounds like real estate.

COBB

Wouldn't know, never owned a house.
Frank sure had a nice one though,
the prick. Way I grew up, you want
comfort? Gotta pay your dues...

The resentment and anger in Cobb's voice is palpable.

HUDSON

Guess I won't argue with you then.

COBB

Good. Because if you did, or I
thought you were shielding Frank -
I'd blow your fuckin' brains out.

Cobb pins Hudson with a fierce gaze. Then he LAUGHS.

COBB

Kidding! Now seriously, Hudson,
think back. A cave, or a fort?
Playin' cowboys and indians-

Relieved the tense moment is over, Hudson looks at the map.

HUDSON

Naw, I could never keep up. Those
Smith kids were all badasses.

Cobb grunts in acknowledgement and pours her another drink.

COBB

True enough. At one point I thought
Frank passed the Coyote on, but
none of the kids quite fit the M.O.

HUDSON

Not even Walther? Frank really
trained that boy to be tough.

Cobb spills tequila on the map and looks up.

COBB
Who's Walther?

HUDSON
The half-brother. Moved to Eastern
Europe with his mom early on. Here-

Hudson wobbles to a computer, more drunk than she realized.
She finds a photo of YOUNG VAL, buzz cut, and Cobb eyes it.

COBB
Got that photo you snapped of the
private security Bowie hired?

On her phone, Hudson gets the photo of Val at the gun range.
Cobb holds it up next to the photo on the computer.

HUDSON
Funny, they got similar freckles.

COBB
And you say Val is a crack shot.

Cobb glances at the Coyote reward flyer.

COBB
Maybe good with a knife, too.

Cobb grins, and finally takes a nice big swig of tequila.

INT. FRANK'S NEW HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Remmy's eye peeks out the curtains to survey the woods, but
seeing nothing out of the ordinary he gives a wide YAWN.

REMMY
I still sleepwalk, so if I doze off
ya'll may have to wrangle me.

Val, blowing a bubble, tosses Remmy the bag of Cowboy Chew.

Remmy catches it, sniffs the contents, and tries some.

REMMY
Zowie! I'd be ready to kick ass if
I wasn't a walkin' bag of flaws.

VAL
Don't sell yourself short.
Weaknesses can be strengths.

REMMY

Oh, my allergies gonna be useful?

VAL

Dyslexia saved my life once.

REMMY

How did I not know you're dyslexic?

VAL

I didn't broadcast. Hard enough fitting Dad's image of Walther PPK, invincible secret agent.

REMMY

Guess there was no hidin' I didn't hit his hopes for Remington 700.

VAL

Bowie, you live up to your name?

Val smirks, but Bowie looks wistfully at Frank.

BOWIE

If he'd valued my drawings, I'd gladly have been named 'Sharpie'.

VAL

But you mostly used pencil, so he'd have named you 'Number 2'.

Bowie rolls his eyes, but Remmy finds this hilarious.

REMMY

"Bath time, Number 2 - you stink!"

Remmy CACKLES. Val can't help but smile.

VAL

"Stop brown-nosing, Number 2!"

Both LAUGH. Bowie's trying not to join in, but cracks.

BOWIE

"Honey, get the thermometer - Number 2 is flushed."

It's idiotic but breaks the tension, and they all LAUGH.

REMMY

Joking aside, Dad was proud, Bowie. You took his credo to heart, protecting family at all costs.

Bowie looks at Remmy to thank him, but glazes over.

BOWIE

Costs were steep. And I'm not sure
the final bill is here yet.

Bowie looks at his phone: 3 missed calls from Emma.

VAL

Сво́я рубáшка б́лиже к тéлу.

Remmy and Bowie look to Val.

VAL

Loosely, it means: if others' needs
cost you your own, stop paying.

BOWIE

I probably would, if I knew how.

VAL

The way is actually simple.

Val hefts her pistol.

BOWIE

If you mean hire a hit on myself, I
can't afford your rate.

VAL

Pro bono. But I don't mean you.

Val points her gun at the sleeping Frank.

Bowie sits up, tense. Remmy laughs nervously.

REMMY

She's just fuckin' around, Bowie-

BOWIE

She took the safety off, Remmy.

VAL

I pull the trigger, this is over.
Fenris goes home. We go home. Done.

REMMY

Dad deserves to die with dignity-

VAL

A liar and a drunk, who steered us
all into violent crime? Please, go
on about what he deserves, exactly.

Bowie's conflicted feelings battle - but he shakes his head.

BOWIE

Val, this isn't the way.

VAL

There is another way but it's been waiting on you. Maybe it's time.

(pause)

OK, one of two things happens next: I shoot Dad - or - the Coyote shows up, leaps across the room like a goddamn ninja, and stops me.

REMMY

Huh? Ain't you the Coyote, Val?

VAL

Dad did pass it on, but not to me.

REMMY

Bowie? Pff! He ain't that fast.

Val aims at Frank's head and looks up at a wall clock.

VAL

Bowie's got thirty seconds to decide, then maybe we'll find out.

Bowie stares at Val, gun still on Frank.

Remmy glances back and forth between them, sweating.

On the wall clock, the second hand creeps to its zenith.

Val looks to Frank, her finger on the trigger-

A BLUR, and Bowie is across the room.

Val looks at her empty hand, the gun now in Bowie's.

VAL

Welcome back.

Bowie glares and hands the gun to Remmy, who is gobsmacked.

REMMY

YOU were the one who took out six guns at the reservoir? And who did the hit on The Hangman? And who-

As Remmy rambles, Bowie builds pressure like a volcano.

BOWIE

You know why I was so good, Remmy?!

Bowie picks up the book he was reading to Frank.

BOWIE

My new life? Not new. Just curled up in a frightened ball while I fought to keep you all safe and fed and bailed out of jail. After a while, I wished I was dead. Then one day I thought: what if I got killed on a job? Isn't that literally paying all costs to protect family? So I went from rifle, to pistol, to knife, to a fucking penknife, assuming surely someone would put me out of my misery. But it never happened! Then the Coyote legend started scaring everyone so bad, I probably could've done jobs with just a pen!

VAL

Which is exactly who we need-

BOWIE

Well he's not here.

VAL

We just saw him! The wild animal is-

BOWIE

Domesticated. I draw children's books. I have a girlfriend. And she'll never, ever see the Coyote.

VAL

Show her, you might be surprised-

BOWIE

Kill someone in front of Emma to test her stomach for it? I'll get right on that. Good talk, Val.

Bowie strides out, leaving Remmy looking darkly at Val.

VAL

Fenris is out there! Right now, planning how to make us all stop breathing so he can get to Dad.

REMMY

But he ain't as good as you, right?

VAL

The last time he and I met? Better.

Val lifts her shirt to reveal a HORRIFIC ABDOMINAL SCAR.

Remmy stares at it with new understanding - and fear.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Bowie paces the hospital hall, stopping in front of a vending machine to stare at a package of sour gummy bears.

Taking a photo, Bowie texts: OUR FAVORITE :) WISH YOU WERE

Bowie stops, deletes the message, then dials Emma's number.

EMMA (VM)

This is Emma, I'm not around, leave
a message after the sound.

(flute music plays)

Bowie opens his mouth, but can't find words. He hangs up.

He sets his phone to sleep mode, and shuffles down the hall.

INT. CITY HOTEL - NIGHT

Watching TV alone in the hotel bed, Emma reaches past a pile of room service dishes to check her phone.

Seeing Bowie's call but no message, she dials.

BOWIE (VM)

Leave it long, leave it quick, just
leave a message for Mr. B Smith.

Tossing her phone aside, Emma turns off the TV, and curls up.

INT. FRANK'S NEW ROOM - NIGHT

Dozing in his chair by Frank, Bowie jerks awake, blinking.

He looks around to see that Remmy and Val are gone.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Bowie makes his way down a dark hallway to Frank's old room.

A low WHISTLING SOUND builds as he approaches the door.

INT. FRANK'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

Wind whistles through a BULLET HOLE in the window. The dummy is on the floor in a pool of fake blood.

Bowie takes his phone out to see a one-word text: ROOF

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOF - NIGHT

Emerging onto the roof via a stairwell, Bowie crouches low to keep from being seen as he approaches:

Val, lying flat with a high-powered rifle on a tripod.

BOWIE

See him?

Val shakes her head, keeping her eye on the scope.

Bowie cautiously peers over the lip of the building. He scans the woods but doesn't see anything, until-

BOWIE

Three o'clock.

Val swings the scope to see: movement behind a tree.

BIP BIP BIP

Tree bark explodes like popcorn - then BLOOD spurts.

In the shadowy brush beyond the tree, erratic thrashing.

VAL

Winged, at least.

BOWIE

You sure? It's not one of those target dummies with the servos-

VAL

Oh please. You saw the fake blood downstairs? Doesn't stand scrutiny.

Offering him the scope, Bowie peers at the spattered tree.

VAL

Real blood, I'd bet my life on it.

BOWIE

You're about to, if you're going down there to finish him off.

Val looks at Bowie like he's insane.

VAL
I'll sit here until dawn. He'll
either bleed out, or-

BOWIE
Hey, where's Remmy?

VAL
He's not in the room?

BOWIE
I thought he was with you.

Val looks back down at the woods, concern growing.
She takes out a silenced pistol and checks the clip.

VAL
Stay on this, just in case.

BOWIE
What? Val, I'm not-

Val hurries off. Bowie reluctantly cradles the rifle.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Val stalks through the trees, pistol up, earbud in.
Ahead, a faint RUSTLING of pine needles pulls her forward.

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOF - NIGHT

Spotting Val, Bowie swings the scope to scan the trees, until
something in the deep shadows catches his eye.

BOWIE
I see a camo net. Duffle bag, some
cases, a sheet of rubber-

VAL (O.S.)
Staging area. Stay on Fenris.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The RUSTLING nears and Val stalks forward, gun raised.
Val spots the camo netting, but from her vantage, the rubber
is clearly: the stripped-off flesh of a target dummy.

Val tenses but can't grok what it means, until she sees:
 THE BLOODY BODY OF STAR SMITH, writhing mechanically.
 Panic. Val backs up, hissing into her mic.

VAL
 Decoy!

BOWIE (O.S.)
 You said real blood-

VAL
 The psycho jammed the animatronics
 into Star's dead body!

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Bowie looks panicked and confused.

BOWIE
 Val, get out of there-

VAL
 I am! Shoot anything that moves!

Bowie sweeps the scope back and forth, but sees nothing.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Val spins to scan the area between her and the hospital.

VAL
 Fenris must be inside. Take the
 rifle, cover the stairs, I'll...

Above, perched in a tree, sits Fenris. Wearing a ghillie suit modified with pine needles and cones, he looks like part of the tree - except for the pistol in his hand.

As Val passes below, Fenris carefully lines up his shot.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Bowie's mic CRACKLES, and he looks up to see Val fall.

He chokes back a cry. Bowie scopes around, searching, until:

A faint GLINT of light, from a phone screen, up in a tree-

BIP BIP BIP BIP BIP BIP BIP BIP

As Bowie fires, pine needles and branches cascade down - followed by the tumbling shape of a man in a ghillie suit.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Beside the lifeless Val, Bowie kneels in grief.

Nearby on the ground: a ghillie suit hood, but no Fenris.

A WHIR prompts Bowie to grab Val's gun and walk forward.

Flopping around, Star's jumbled body is hooked to a car battery. Bowie kicks the connection apart, then looks away.

A GLINT in the dirt, and Bowie picks up a cell phone.

Turning it on, he sees a photo of the inert Val taken from above in the tree - and texted to an UNKNOWN number.

Bowie calls.

SABRA (O.S.)

Fenris?

BOWIE

I'm holding his bloody phone, so you do the math.

SABRA (O.S.)

By plane or train, car or bus, more will come. Frank. Must. Suffer.

BOWIE

He'll pass soon anyway. He's a broken, harmless old man-

SABRA (O.S.)

Please hold while I transfer you to a Denial Nurse...

Bowie looks confused, and Sabra CHUCKLES.

SABRA (O.S.)

An insider term for someone whose entire job is to deny claims. No matter how dire or justified your need, we're allowed to reply with cryptic phrases like "not medically necessary". My personal favorite?

(pause)

"Criteria not met."

The call ends, leaving Bowie alone in the shadowy woods.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Yawning, Remmy shuffles into the room and sees nobody there.

BZZ - Remmy's phone vibrates on the floor, and he grabs it.

BOWIE (O.S.)
Remmy? Where are you?

REMMY
Sleepwalked I guess, woke up two
rooms down. Where's Val?

EXT. RIO GRANDE RIVER - DAY

On a riverbank, Bowie and Remmy load Val's body into an old canoe. Remmy's eyes are red. Bowie is ashen and exhausted.

Fenris's black duffle bag sits on the riverbank. Bowie pulls a pistol out and puts it in the canoe at Val's feet.

REMMY
Val wanted to be sent off with the
weapon of her slain enemy.

BOWIE
This isn't my wheelhouse anymore-

REMMY
That's painfully clear! How the
hell'd you manage to rob the bank
to pay Val in the first place?

BOWIE
I didn't! I withdrew my savings.

REMMY
You couldn't even rob the bank?!
You're as pathetic as me! Worse -
at least I got a disability to
blame! Why'd you even come back to
town in the first place?!

Bowie just stares at Remmy helplessly.

REMMY
Hope you got a new plan for Dad,
'cause you're all out of siblings!

Remmy sobs and limps away down a trail. Bowie's phone rings.

BOWIE
Hannah, I could use some good news.

HANNAH (O.S.)

It's touch and go. We can do more,
but we're talking real dinero-

BOWIE

Put it on my credit card. I can't
handle anything else dying today.

HANNAH

Anything 'else'...?

EXT. PUMICE MINES - DAY

Sedan parked nearby, Cobb is at Val's makeshift shooting
range. He's examining a spent shell when his phone rings.

BOWIE (O.S.)

I tell you where bodies are buried,
you get protection here tonight?

COBB

Possible. Depends on terms.

BOWIE (O.S.)

I want a memorandum stating Frank
stays in his bed, protected and
undisturbed, until he passes.

COBB

Desdemona may be a hurdle there-

BOWIE (O.S.)

That's my problem. Yes or no?

Cobb picks up the skull with the bullet hole in it.

COBB

Let's talk about the Coyote. Did
Val take over for your dad?

BOWIE (O.S.)

No idea. You'd have to ask her.

COBB

Plan to do just that. I want
assurance you won't tip her off.

EXT. RIO GRANDE RIVER - DAY

Bowie sits on a rock watching Val's canoe drift away.

BOWIE (O.S.)
Put it in writing if you like.

COBB
OK. Gonna need up-front cash for
expenses, plane tickets-

Opening the case he gave Val, Bowie eyes what is left.

BOWIE (O.S.)
I'll give you what I have.

COBB (O.S.)
Tonight means by plane, and the men
can't fly with guns.

BOWIE
We've got an arsenal in the attic.

COBB (O.S.)
All registered, of course.

BOWIE
Hassle Remmy and you'll regret it.

COBB (O.S.)
Alright, deal. But things may get
hairy, so keep him out of the way.
And what about that girl of yours?

BOWIE
Emma's safe, far away from here.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Hudson, hungover, ice pack on her head, reclines in her
chair. She looks up to see Emma standing at the office door.

EMMA
Sheriff, be straight with me?

HUDSON
Do my best.

EMMA
I couldn't help notice our travel
plans were going fine until you two
spoke out on the cliff.

HUDSON
There's nothing going on between
Bowie and I, if that's what you're-

EMMA

Did you ask him for help?

HUDSON

The opposite, told him to leave. I gather you couldn't sway him?

EMMA

Didn't try. I could never ask him to choose.

HUDSON

So you know it's family.

EMMA

But until now he seemed desperate to escape them - so why won't he?

HUDSON

Figure you'd know, if anyone. Or is that something else you don't ask?

Emma squirms under Hudson's scrutiny.

HUDSON

Maybe you oughta. If you got Bowie to open up about his past, maybe-

Emma SLAMS her hand on the desk, startling them both.

Emma's fierce expression passes, and she gets a blank stare.

EMMA

Crime took someone from me. I...
Sorry. Please forget I was here.

Emma heads for the door, but pauses when Hudson speaks.

HUDSON

I know about puttin' blinders on. I owe Bowie a lot, which is why as Sheriff I have to keep pretending I don't know he's one of the most dangerous people in town. Or was, until he met you. Which is why I think you two communicating a little more might be your best hope - and his.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL ROOM - DAY

On a hotel bed, a black flight case is open, displaying various bottles of drugs, vials, and pills.

Fenris injects his leg with a syringe and begins suturing one of his wounds while humming the Tri-Health jingle.

Harold, chain-smoking, nervously whispers into his phone.

HAROLD

The guy is like a machine.

SABRA (O.S.)

His dispassion is truly a marvel.

HAROLD

It ain't right. What's his deal?

SABRA (O.S.)

Nobody knows. He was fairly normal until a disappearance in the fall of 1981. He returned like this.

Oblivious to the conversation, Fenris talks to himself.

FENRIS

Life sometimes throws curveballs
but we're on your side, even when
you venture out-of-network...

Eyeing the blood-soaked bed, Harold lights another cigarette.

HAROLD

I need a gun to replace what Bowie
took. In case I gotta step up.

SABRA (O.S.)

Harold, for you, pro status is many
billing cycles away. But fear not,
backup arrangements have been made.

INT. SABRA'S OFFICE - DAY

Sabra looks from behind her desk to the silhouettes of FIVE ARMED MEN in suits, standing at attention in her office.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Bowie sets the briefcase of money on the desk in front of Hudson. Looking less hungover, she tilts back in her chair.

HUDSON

Val is actually Walther, yeah?

Bowie's sharp look tells Hudson enough.

HUDSON

I may have accidentally helped Cobb connect the dots.

BOWIE

Wondered why he was barking up that tree. So, you two are buddies now?

The accusatory tone is not lost on Hudson, and she bristles.

HUDSON

Need all the friends in law I can get. Besides you seem to trust him.

Hudson pushes Cobb's MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING at Bowie.

BOWIE

If I could trust him, I wouldn't have needed this. Watch your back.

Bowie grabs a pen and starts scanning the map.

Hudson turns, puts the money in a safe, and spins the lock.

HUDSON

None of my business, but Emma was-

Hudson turns back to see Bowie is gone.

On the map, in the remote desert, a SKULL is now drawn.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

In the remote desert Hudson drives while Cobb read the map.

They pass a rusty, bullet-hole riddled car, and then the ruined mining shack - now covered in graffiti.

Hudson makes a WORRIED SOUND, and Cobb looks at her.

HUDSON

Bored teens partying. They do worse mischief than grave robbing.

COBB

Aw. Have to be damn industrious to dig up every scrap of evidence.

The car stops, kicking dust up to swirl around Skull Rock.

Cobb and Hudson share a must-be-the-place look, and get out.

The dust clears to reveal the weed-choked mining cemetery. Some plots have been dug up, but many are intact.

HUDSON

Graves alright, but they look mighty old. Sure this is the place?

Cobb, grinning wide, jerks his thumb at:

A makeshift target-practice dummy, made from a skeleton, hay, and the tattered MUSTARD SUIT JACKET.

COBB

Not bad detective work? For a greedy old P.I. anyway.

Hudson shakes her head, clearly impressed.

HUDSON

Good enough you should consider doting on justice again someday.

A half-joke, but it affects Cobb. His face turns thoughtful.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Bowie sits by Frank's bed, sketching in his book.

DRAWING: Added to Frank's defense are Cobb and armed hombres.

Remmy stands behind Bowie, watching him work, as DR. CARSON, 40s, bright cheerful tie and smug smile, strides in.

DR. CARSON

I'm Dr. Carson. Let's talk about getting Frank discharged today!

BOWIE

Dr. Fisher said if we moved him, he'd die choking on his vomit-

DR. CARSON

Eh, not a bad way to go.

Bowie and Remmy look at the man like he's insane.

DR. CARSON

Hey, beats variceal bleeding. Plus-
(leans in)
Insurance companies hate repeat admissions for the same treatment. Doesn't look good on reports! So even without hospice, moving him-

BOWIE
Isn't. Happening. Period.

Dr. Carson's cheerful bedside manner evaporates.

DR. CARSON
Desdemona?

She appears immediately, as though anticipating this.

DESDEMONA
Bowie, we'll help you make
arrangements for transport-

REMMY
This man needs a day more fuckin'
peace and you can't do that because
of what? Money? Rules? Fuck you!

Remmy's outburst causes Dr. Carson to take a step back.

DESDEMONA
Please calm down, or I'll have to-

REMMY
Suck it! You and this shitmarmot!
We wanna talk to Dr. Fisher!

Remmy waves his arms wildly and chases them into the hall.

Bowie, preoccupied, pulls out the cryptic note Dr. Fisher
gave him last time they spoke. It still simply reads: QIO

Having no idea, he does a web search on his phone.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

A beefy ORDERLY, 30s, bald, has Remmy in a submission hold.

REMMY
Oh NOW you have muscle! The fuck
were you when WE needed help?!

DESDEMONA
Nurse? Get Frank ready to go-

Bowie emerges from the room, reading from his phone.

BOWIE
I'm hereby petitioning QIO to have
Frank's discharge evaluated.

The hallway gets quiet. Dr. Carson's face reddens.

DESDEMONA

Pointless. The agency will evaluate
and sees it's cut and dry. Frank
will still be discharged-

BOWIE

But it says the petition process
takes 24 hours - and the patient
gets to stay put in the meantime?

By the sour expressions on their faces, Bowie is correct.

Unnoticed by anyone, Emma appears at the end of the hall.

DR. CARSON

I have real patients to attend to.

As Dr. Carson exits, Desdemona sighs in resignation.

REMMY

Ha! How's that crow taste?!

DESDEMONA

You're still being escorted out.

REMMY

Throw me in a dumpster for all I
care! To your shame and chagrin,
Bowie'll see Dad dies peaceful- OW!

BOWIE

Hey, be careful with him-

Orderly shoves Bowie back, sending him onto his ass.

Emma sees this and tenses, while Remmy CACKLES.

REMMY

Ohhh, now you're fucked! My
brother's gonna pull your face off
and wear it like a beanie!

Bowie, adrenaline pumping, stares knives at Orderly.

Still unnoticed, Emma gets ready to cover her eyes.

After a long moment, Bowie exhales and unclenches his fists.

Orderly snorts dismissively, and drags Remmy off.

Bowie, still sitting, is surprised to see Emma offer a hand.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Following Emma in, Bowie observes her bag on the hotel bed.

EMMA

Figured we needed a place to talk -
or have break-up sex.

Bowie gives her an alarmed look.

EMMA

I was getting a wee bit annoyed.

Emma pats the bed, and Bowie slumps down next to her.

BOWIE

I should've told you more.

EMMA

But then you would've had to pierce
the fog of euphemisms I demand.

BOWIE

I envy your ability to self-care.

EMMA

It's great except for the fact that
all my relationships seem to end in
a shock that sends me running.

Bowie doesn't like the sound of this.

BOWIE

Can we get ahead of that? Val
suggested I do some performative
vigilante justice for you.

Emma makes an exaggerated grimace, and they both LAUGH.

EMMA

Once we're safely away, how about
we just have a long, honest talk?
You can tell me every awful detail.

Bowie nods - but his eyes get a thousand-yard stare.

EMMA

Is there something I can do right
now to make you feel better?

Bowie looks at Emma's bag.

BOWIE

Got your bagpipes?

EMMA

Nice try. I do have my flute? If-

RING! An UNKNOWN CALLER, Bowie puts it on speaker.

DESDEMONA (O.S.)

We didn't have this conversation.

Her words and tone make Bowie sit up straight.

DESDEMONA (O.S.)

To shield your dad for the next 24 hours, the QIO must be in effect by end of business today - 6pm.

Bowie looks at the hotel clock: 5:30

DESDEMONA (O.S.)

You can email, but it requires a scanned signature. It's a long tedious form so I wouldn't dally.

BOWIE

Why are you helping me?

INT. DESDEMONA'S OFFICE - DAY

At her desk, Desdemona glances at a SECURITY CAMERA in the hall, then turns away to face the window.

DESDEMONA (O.S.)

I wasn't always an admin. You're kind to nurses, showed restraint with the orderly... But business is business. Send that damn email, or I'll be forced to discharge Frank.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Bowie ends the call and looks at Emma.

EMMA

Down the hall we passed a business center, I think I saw a scanner?

Bowie musters the energy to stand and head for the door.

EMMA

I'll see about changing our flight-

BOWIE

No. We can get a twin-prop to the city and still make the redeye.

Emma gives him an uncertain look.

BOWIE

Our new life starts on time. I just gotta cut the last bit of red tape.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL BUSINESS CENTER - DAY

In the tiny hotel business center, Bowie sits at the lone computer with a boxy old CRT monitor and dusty keyboard.

Filling out the long form, he glances at the clock: 5:45

BOWIE

Type faster, Bowie...

Someone walks by the door, and Bowie does a double take.

Stepping into the hall he sees Marcus, wearing a bulky wool coat and carrying a black case.

BOWIE

Aren't you staying the weekend?

Marcus turns, looking surprised and shifty.

Bowie looks at the case and puts two-and-two together.

BOWIE

Pilliwinks?

Marcus's expression: busted.

BOWIE

But I paid your rate-

MARCUS

The client tripled it.

BOWIE

Val is your friend-

MARCUS

Was. Word is Fenris aced her.

BOWIE

Have a heart, Marcus.

MARCUS
Business is business.

Bowie's expression makes it clear: he can't let this happen.

Marcus WHIPS a silenced gun from his coat.

POP! Drywall behind Bowie erupts.

A BLUR as Bowie leaps and SLAMS Marcus against the wall.

The gun slides down the hall.

Bowie grabs the case but Marcus holds on, wrestling over it.

BOWIE
Just walk away!

MARCUS
You walk away!

BOWIE
He's my dad!

MARCU
He's a rat!

BOWIE
He's dying anyway!

MARCUS
Frank O'Faolain must suffer!

Bowie elbows Marcus's gut, knocking the wind out of him.

Yanking the case away, Bowie scrambles into the business center and SLAMS the door.

No lock, Bowie props a chair against the knob.

From outside a KICK makes the door shiver, but it holds.

MARCUS (O.S.)
Give me the case and you can live!

Bowie looks at the time: 5:50

BOWIE
I just have to send an email! Then
we can resolve this-

Bowie starts hurriedly typing again.

POK POK POK - silenced bullet holes appear in the door.

Bowie yanks the keyboard free and flattens against the wall.

WHAM! The chair falls down as Marcus body-checks the door.

Now ajar, Marcus steps through, leading with his gun.

CHOP! Bowie hacks his wrist with the keyboard.

Marcus drops the gun as keyboard keys scatter the carpet.

Marcus body-checks Bowie and he falls, the gun under him.

WHAM! Marcus punches Bowie in the face, hard.

Dazed, Bowie blinks, slumping back.

Marcus stands, grabs the heavy CRT computer monitor, and lifts it over his head, ready to smash down...

POK! A bullet hole opens in his chest.

Bowie has the silenced pistol in his hand.

Marcus sways for a moment, then falls.

Bowie abandons the gun, scrambling to catch the CRT monitor.

He does, barely, and sets it back on the desk.

Bowie picks up the scattered keyboard keys and pops them back in place, one by one, with bloody fingers.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

In the hallway, FLUTE MUSIC comes from inside Emma's room.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK - a gloved hand raps on the door.

The music stops, and a moment later Emma opens up.

Fenris stands there.

EMMA

Hi! Can I help you?

His cold eyes stare at Emma for a long, quiet moment.

FENRIS

Your music is really pretty. But
certain frequencies hurt my ears.
Could you possibly keep it down?

EMMA

Oh gosh! This place is such a ghost town, I didn't realize - of course.

Fenris tips his hat, then shuffles back to his room.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

In a hotel vending machine, a pack of gummy bears tumbles. Emma opens them as she heads for the business center. Approaching the closed door she halts, noticing the holes. Cautiously leaning down, she peers through one.

INT. LOS HUESOS HOTEL BUSINESS CENTER - DAY

Bowie types away, Marcus's dead body lying beside him. Sensing something, Bowie turns and goes to the door. Nobody's there - but a candy bag has been dropped by the door, gummy bears spilled haphazardly on the carpet. Bowie looks up in a panic, then at the clock: 5:55. Torn, he lets out a SOUND OF PRIMAL FRUSTRATION.

EXT. LAVA ROCKS - DAY

At the fissures, Remmy and Bowie toss the body with a CRUNCH.

REMMY

One less jerk to fret about. Email on time. I'd call that two for two.

BOWIE

I'd call it two for three.

Looking haunted, Bowie holds the pistol in a handkerchief. He tosses it down with a CLUNK. Remmy fidgets.

REMMY

Burritos? After this I mean.

Bowie gives a weary smile, then picks up an acid bottle.

BOWIE

These fumes will wreck your asthma. Go home, I'll meet you there.

Remmy gives Bowie a thumbs-up, then limps away.

Bowie takes out his 4-year chip, and tosses it into the hole.

He pours a bottle of acid down, and watches smoke billow.

EXT. SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

BANG BANG BANG! Hudson unloads her revolver on a target, then turns to see Cobb leaning out the window of his sedan.

Hudson lights up with conspiratorial excitement.

HUDSON

Hey! What's our next move?

COBB

Can you pull Dugal from the hospital? My boys are flying in, we'll guard Frank until he passes.

HUDSON

But, Dugal and I can help-

COBB

Could get messy. Best you two hunker down until it blows over. I got a few warrants you can file.

HUDSON

Paperwork? Come on. Two more guns is two more guns, right?

Cobb sucks his teeth, internally debating something.

COBB

Hudson, forgive me, I'm gonna say the quiet part out loud - Dugal's yellow and you're green. At best, you'd be a nuisance, at worst-
(eyes her figure)
A distraction. Plus, you can't shoot worth a damn.

The target arrives: all shots are wildly off except one.

Cobb drives off, leaving Hudson in a cloud of dust.

EXT. FENCES END - DAY

Bowie goes through the hole in the fence and approaches the cliff edge - where he sees Emma sitting alone.

Bowie sits. Emma has sunglasses on, eyes inscrutable.

EMMA

I see you're painting again.

Bowie might laugh if he wasn't about to cry.

EMMA

Was it self defense?

BOWIE

Yes... No. I intervened.

Emma processes this. When she speaks, she sounds numb.

EMMA

If it's consolation, no one I've dated has heard me play bagpipes. It feels truly stupidly vulnerable, and I pick guys I'll never trust enough. Probably so I don't get as hurt when this moment arrives.

Bowie grimaces, searching for words.

BOWIE

Get on that twin-prop. Once this is all over, I'll follow. We can talk, and see if there's a way forward?

Emma looks at him, and it's not a hopeful expression.

BOWIE

I'm not asking for any guarantees. Just a conversation-

BZZZ - Bowie looks at his phone. It's the hospital.

EMMA

Good luck with your Dad.

BOWIE

Wait. I-

Emma walks away, leaving Bowie alone on the cliff.

INT. FRANK'S NEW ROOM - DAY

Bowie shuffles down the hospital hall, deep in thought.

CLARA WENDER (O.S.)

Bowie Smith?

Bowie looks up to see CLARA WENDER, 50s, prim, fast talker, holding a clipboard and a small cardboard box.

CLARA WENDER

Clara Wender, QIO liaison. Rest assured, your father absolutely will not be moved, even if I have to block his doorway myself. Also, a friendly reminder, the upcoming election has healthcare bills!

From her box she offers a ballpoint emblazoned with: VOTE!

BOWIE

Dad would appreciate your efforts.

CLARA WENDER

Oh he does. I just spoke with him.

Baffled, Bowie leans over to peek in the room.

Frank sits in bed reading the stained copy of Bowie's children's book. The man looks half-dead, his voice a quiet rasp, but when he looks up at Bowie his eyes are sharp.

FRANK

Hey kid.

BOWIE

Hey... uh... how you feeling?

FRANK

My most sober in thirty years. And like if I fall asleep I won't wake again, which I gather is likely.

Dugal walks in with a piece of paper.

DUGAL

Since he's up, nurse said do this-

Dugal hands Bowie an ADVANCED HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVE.

FRANK

Dugal? I wanna taste something.

DUGAL

Doc said food might block your bowels, and-

FRANK

Kill me? No stopping that now.

Dugal reluctantly heads off, and Frank turns to Bowie.

FRANK

He said you been wrangling protection. How's that going?

BOWIE

Not great. Cobb's our last bet.

FRANK

Hmph. His gang of psychos teased Remmy as a kid. I mused about taking them all out, but I guess now I'm glad I didn't.

(squints)

Ammonia is doing a number on my memory. Was Val here?

BOWIE

She was... she got called away.

Emotions stirring, Bowie studies the Advanced Directive.

BOWIE

You need to state your wishes.

FRANK

No words at my funeral. And have the band play Amazing Grace?

BOWIE

There's no money for a band at your funeral. Besides, I meant this-

Frank squints at the page and checks 'Do Not Resuscitate'.

FRANK

Could people hum it at my funeral?

This grates. Bowie fights the annoyance down.

FRANK

Why so uptight? Everything's fine-

BOWIE

Because I made it fine! Otherwise you'd be dying by thumb screws, acid, or choking on your own vomit!

Frank is taken aback. After a beat, he nods somberly.

FRANK

How'd they find me, anyway?

Bowie pulls out the folded Social Security card.

BOWIE
Why the hell did you keep this?

FRANK
You kidding? Open it up.

Bowie unfolds it, revealing on the back a child's drawing of Frank, and scratchy text: 'hapy fathers day, lov bowie'

This takes the wind right out of Bowie's anger. As he stares at the card, his eyes get watery.

FRANK
Born with a pencil in your hand.

BOWIE
Ha. You sound like Emma.

FRANK
She around? Love to meet her. Dugal said you got a nice new life ahead.

If the father's day card cracked the dam, this makes it burst. Bowie puts his face in his hands.

INT. RURAL AIRPORT - DAY

In a dinky rural airport lounge, Cobb blows on a cup of vending machine coffee as a twin-prop plane lands outside.

AN ONGOING CHIME makes Cobb look around for the source.

Sitting in a corner with her suitcase, exhausted and sad, Emma stares at a ringing video chat call from: MUM

COBB
Pardon me, is your name Emma?

Looking up, her expression tells Cobb he's correct.

COBB
Retired Marshal Cobb, at your service.

EMMA
Oh, sure. Bowie mentioned you.

COBB
Don't mean to pry, but looks like you're flying alone. This whole thing puttin' a strain?

Emma nods, and looks back to her ringing phone.

EMMA

Currently I'm building the courage to endure an "Emma, I told you so. You only see what you want to see."

COBB

Heh, been accused of that myself. Except I see the worst, job hazard. I hate that saying 'walk a mile in someone's shoes', but it helped me.

Cobb seems genuinely trying to connect, and Emma looks up.

COBB

Oh, sometimes a book's cover is true. I been around real bad guys. But in my opinion, Bowie ain't one of 'em. If you get the chance, maybe give him another look.

Cobb tips his hat and walks off, leaving Emma in thought.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Frank munches crackers with an expression of consternation.

FRANK

Why aren't you at the airport?

BOWIE

Because this isn't over! Protect family at all costs, right?

FRANK

Who taught you that shit?

Bowie glares, but Frank seems genuinely confused.

BOWIE

Someone I admired as a kid.

FRANK

Sounds like a damaged fool. A kid'll grow up feeling unworthy of love unless they light themselves on fire to keep other people warm.

This skewers Bowie.

FRANK

I know, because my dad pushed that shit on me. It's why I made the Coyote. I ever tell you that story?

FRANK (CONT'D)

When your mom got sick, caregiving wasn't covered, so I took a second job shoveling manure. One day I was working in the hot sun and a coyote trotted up. He made the strangest sound, like a laugh. And it felt he was doing it at me. But why?

(pause)

I imagined what he saw, and it hit: There I was, hot, filthy, slaving away - to buy something for your mom that the coyote had gratis. Freedom from suffering was his right. Not something he had to earn, pay for, or buy a policy to protect. Hell, I chose our new life to escape paying mob protection, yet there I was all over again, shoveling shit to trade for safety. No wonder the coyote was laughing!

(pause)

Then I started laughing. Because I realized: I could be a coyote too.

Frank's grin holds outlaw mischief, and pride.

BOWIE

Ever figure out that weird sound?

FRANK

Oh, he dropped dead right after. Poisoned, some asshole rancher.

Frank gives a wan smile.

FRANK

Alas. By the time I gave you his mask, I'd lost what was behind it. Your mom gone, I drank to forget.

Frank looks down at his withered, sallow hands.

He reaches out to clasp Bowie's arm.

FRANK

You're worthy, as you are. You don't have to protect me to earn a shot at happiness. Just take it.

Frank holds out Bowie's children's book.

Bowie accepts it, the words settling like a weight.

Frank finishes his last cracker, and tosses the wrapper.

FRANK

An okay last meal I guess, but it
was no breakfast burrito.

Bowie slaps his forehead and Frank looks up.

BOWIE

Remmy wished he could eat with you-

FRANK

For that, I'll stay awake.

Bowie jumps up - then has a troubling thought.

BOWIE

Cobb's not here yet-

FRANK

The spirit of the Coyote guards me!
But son, after Cobb gets here, go.
I need one last shot at redemption.
Let me die knowing I helped you
stick it to that old damaged fool.

With a tender but conflicted look, Bowie nods.

BOWIE

Whatever happens, someone will hum
Amazing Grace at your funeral.

Bowie rushes out. Frank's smile fades and he blinks sleepily.

INT. RURAL AIRPORT - DAY

Into the little airport strides FLOSS, 50s, tall, leather
jacket and jeans, carrying a military duffel bag.

FLOSS

Witness protection was a head-spin.

GORP, 40s, stout, trench coat, lugs a rolling suitcase.

GORP

Amen! One minute you're chasing a
guy, next you're protecting him.
Then you feed him to the lions.

MOOK, 40s, lean, track suit, sunglasses, carries a gym bag.

MOOK

Those were the good old days!

The three men line up in front of Cobb, who grins.

COBB
Howdy hunters. Where's Q?

FLOSS
Lurking at the back to spy on
everyone, as usual.

Up walks Q, 50s, pale, coat and hat, warily scanning around.

Q
Insurance men on the plane. Two
agents, an executive, a lobbyist.

Smiles slide into tense glances.

COBB
I guess the job starts now.

Spines straighten, shoulders go back, and gazes harden.

From the gangway strolls Sabra Gutch followed by LEO, 50s,
suit, briefcase cuffed to his wrist. They're flanked by
AGENTS #1 and #2, 20s, shifty-looking, long coats.

Harold slinks from the lounge, followed by Fenris. The
insurance folk stand in a knot, chatting in low voices.

Cobb strides up, his guys in a tight phalanx behind him.

Fenris nudges Sabra, who turns. She smiles broadly.

SABRA
Hello! I'm Sabra Gutch. Who do I
have the pleasure of speaking to?

COBB
Just consider us representatives of
the rule of law, safeguarding the
citizens of Los Huesos.

As Cobb's men puff up to maximum size, Sabra nods to Leo.

LEO
Then consider me a representative
of the insurance industry, lobbying
to... relax some regulations?

Leo opens his case to show a small fortune in stacked cash.

The men ogle and exchange glances, but Cobb is conflicted.
After staring at it with longing, he tears his gaze away.

COBB

We are technically mercenaries. And that's an awful lot of scratch. Trouble is, this ain't just about money - it's about justice.

His voice has a commanding gravitas, and his men all nod.

Cobb takes the folded Coyote flyer out of his coat pocket.

COBB

So unless you happen to have one Val Smith in your case there, we'll have to respectfully decline.

Sabra raises her phone to show Val dead in the forest.

Cobb stares, deflating. He sighs and crumples the flyer.

SABRA

How's our offer looking now?

Cobb turns to his men questioningly, who shrug and nod.

FLOSS

Just to be clear - we came to protect Frank, but now we're feeding him to the lions?

MOOK

Just like the good old days!

SABRA

Welcome to the Tri-Health family!

HAROLD

Hate to ruin the love-fest but what about Bowie? He won't like this turn, and he's proven tenacious.

Cobb sucks his teeth - and has an idea on that.

CUT TO:

Emma, still waiting for her flight, is on a call.

EMMA

Wow, Mum. When you said acorn-

A hand takes Emma's phone as the group of men surround her.

COBB

Sorry, Emma. It appears you're gonna miss your flight...

EXT. BURRITO SHACK - DAY

At the food shack window BURRITO GAL, 50s, turns to Bowie.

BURRITO GAL
Card won't run. Got another?

Bowie closes his eyes, yearning to sink into the ground.

BOWIE
Just cancel the order. Sorry.

BURRITO GAL
No egg - gotta be Remmy, right?
Heard his dad's passing. Gimme a
few, I'll sneak this in, gratis.

Nodding gratefully, Bowie sits and opens his sketchbook.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Cobb oversees as the men carry guns down from the attic. Q guards Emma. Remmy, arms pinned by Floss, is furious.

COBB
Remmy, what's with the struggle?
Bowie said to help ourselves.

REMMY
That was when he thought you were
protecting Dad, you shitmonkeys!

The men LAUGH as Gorp carries down the Tommy Gun.

GORP
Look at this beauty!

As he shows it off, Remmy SPITS on him.

ALL THE GUYS
Oooooohhhh.

Gorp PUNCHES Remmy in the gut and he GROANS.

COBB
Careful - historically, if he gets
upset enough, he pees himself.

FLOSS
Damn. Now you told us, we gotta
ring the bell, right?

WHAM! Floss gets in a vicious punch, doubling Remmy over.

EMMA

Stop it! Leave him alone!

Ignored, Emma gets more red-faced as the beating continues.

MOOK

Harold, you want in on this?

Harold, inspecting a pistol, shakes his head.

Mook lands a particularly hard hit, and Remmy SPITS BLOOD.

For Emma, the red curtain of rage descends.

From a pegboard of tools, she grabs the first thing she can.

THUNK! Scissors jab Mook's shoulder, and stick there.

MOOK

Owww!

Laughter turns to stunned silence. Emma, as surprised as anyone by her actions, blinks like an owl.

COBB

Damn it Q, grab her.

Emma is yanked back, her arms pinned as Cobb approaches.

COBB

I was content to leave you be, but
no longer. Any clue where Bowie is?
Save us being on guard for him.

EMMA

Get. Fucked.

From the pegboard of tools, Cobb grabs needle-nose pliers.

COBB

When I said I walked a mile in the
bad guy's shoes? You might want to
start reflecting on that.

CLICK - he deftly grabs Emma's nose ring, and holds it.

Emma's eyes widen. Cobb grins at her.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

A SCREAM from the garage, followed by the guys LAUGHING.

EXT. BURRITO SHACK - MORNING

Waiting for the order, Bowie sketches. His phone rings.

HANNAH (O.S.)
Bowie. The coyote's dead.

Putting his pencil down, Bowie heaves a sad, bemused sigh.

BOWIE
I was just drawing his spirit.

HANNAH (O.S.)
Huh?

BOWIE
Nothing. Thanks for trying, Hannah.

BURRITO GAL
Order up!

Bowie grabs the three burritos, one wrapped in red tinfoil.

INT. ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

Desdemona looks up to see a terrified Nurse at her door.

INT. ELEVATOR HALLWAY - DAY

Desdemona waits by the elevator flanked by Orderly.

The doors open to reveal Cobb, Sabra, and the men, all armed to the teeth. Fenris holds the Tommy Gun.

SABRA
I understand you have a patient
you're eager to discharge? Well,
Tri-Health is here to help!

DESDEMONA
Leave, or be escorted off premises.

Orderly looks at the guns, then looks at Desdemona.

INT. ADMIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Desdemona, Nurse, and Orderly, hands zip-tied, are herded in.
Agent #1 settles in to guard, while the others march toward:
Clara Wender, arms akimbo, standing in Frank's doorway.

CLARA WENDER

By order of QIO, this man shall not be moved.

SABRA

We at Tri-Health deeply value the work of QIO. I'd like to personally reward your service, and ask you to take a surely much-needed vacation.

Leo hands Clara a cash bundle. She stares at it, aghast.

CLARA WENDER

A bribe, madam? Emblematic of our current dystopia! Medicine and money should be mutually exclusive-

SABRA

Hey, if it ain't broke-

CLARA WENDER

Anyone who says the current system works is either wealthy or hasn't gotten that sick yet. Nay, I shall stand here as a symbol for the values this country was built on! Freedom, equality, democracy-

BLAM! Clara's forehead explodes, and her body tumbles down.

Cobb, revolver smoking, picks up the dropped money bundle.

COBB

Don't forget capitalism.
(to the guys)
Any witnesses besides us?

Everyone looks around, followed by a shaking of heads.

COBB

Gorp, police this body.

Gorp drags the dead Clara toward a storage closet, kicking along her clipboard and box of pens as he goes.

Sabra watches with a wistful expression, and Cobb notices.

COBB

Sorry, was that out of line?

SABRA

No. It's just, since I got into this business, corpses look like piles of uncollected premiums.

COBB

What are the chances she's insured
with you guys?

SABRA

That's looking on the bright side!

Smiling, Sabra steps over the blood and opens Frank's door.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

Frank is unconscious again. Dr. Carson stands by his bed,
looking around in apprehension at Sabra and the armed men.

SABRA

And if we move him, he'll aspirate?

DR. CARSON

A quick death, minimal suffering-

SABRA

Can't have that! I guess we'll do
this here. Fenris, get your gear.

Sabra produces from her handbag the framed mugshot of the man
in the Mustard Suit, and sets it by Frank's bedside.

She pulls out a dusty minicassette player and leans in to
hold it by the ear of the sleeping Frank.

A CRACKLY OLD ANSWERING MACHINE MESSAGE plays.

MUSTARD SUIT (RECORDING)

...Sabra, you ain't gonna believe
this, but while pumping gas just
now I think I saw Frank fucking
O'Faolain! I'm gonna follow him to
make sure. If you don't hear from
me again, I'm probably buried in
the desert somewhere, haha...

Sabra stares at the sleeping Frank while it plays, her eyes
filled with malice - and impending satisfaction.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - DAY

Carrying the burritos, Bowie sees the Sheriff's parked car.

Hurrying forward he meets a distressed Hudson by the garage.

Remmy is inside, chewing gum and pacing, his eyes wild.

REMMY
They commandeered the guns!

BOWIE
I know, Remmy. To protect Dad-
Hudson shakes her head ominously.

REMMY
Insurance men were with them!
Bowie's eyes widen in fear and confusion.

HUDSON
That isn't all, Bowie...

CUT TO:

A puddle of blood on the garage floor.
Bowie reaches into it and picks up Emma's nose ring.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

Nose caked with dried blood, Emma is cuffed to the sink cabinet, looking scared but defiant as Cobb guards her.

Fenris opens cases of torture implements around the bed of Frank, still sleeping, while Sabra looks down on him.

SABRA
In return for protection, one of
the token payments we asked of
Frank was to sing at my brother's
birthday every year...
(affectionately)
Hell of a pair of lungs on the guy.

Seeing the gleaming torture implements, a mild uncertainty appears in Sabra's eyes.

COBB
Speaking of your brother, holding
onto this doesn't do me any good
now. You might as well see it.

PHOTO: Mustard Suit's skeleton target dummy at Skull Rock.

Sabra ices over.

Sabra SLAMS her fist on Frank's chest - but he doesn't stir.

SABRA

Sure would like to hear these lungs
scream. Got anything to wake him?

Fenris looks thoughtful, then rummages in his cases.

Cobb's phone RINGS. Seeing the caller, he signals Q.

Q claps a hand over Emma's mouth.

COBB

Hi Bowie, what's up?

(listens)

Uh, visiting hours are over, buddy.
Kinda delicate situation. I don't
think you can afford to come here,
if you know what I mean.

Cobb listens. The call ends, leaving him looking confused.

SABRA

What did he say to that?

COBB

'Criteria not met'...?

Sabra gets it, and she doesn't like it.

COBB

(into radio)

Boys? We may have incoming...

Cobb looks out the window and nods down to:

Mook, handgun bulging in his coat, holds a walkie and smokes
a cigarette while watching the hospital entrance.

He turns and nods at:

Q, shotgun, guarding the parking lot. He nods at:

Floss, pistols, by the Ambulance docking bay. He in turn
looks up at a video camera, seen by:

Gorp, sitting at the security monitors, staring at several
views of the hospital and grounds.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

Stone-faced, Bowie hands Remmy the burritos and sketchbook.

Bowie takes the gum pouch, and packs a wad.

BOWIE
Give me the key.

REMMY
Which key?

BOWIE
You know which key.

Remmy gulps. He fishes his keyring out and hands it over.

Bowie climbs the attic ladder.

HUDSON
He knows there's no guns...?

REMMY
Don't need guns.

In response to Hudson's look, Remmy turns the sketchbook.

DRAWING: Above Frank's bed now looms a giant spectral version of The Coyote, jaws open, teeth bared.

INT. ATTIC. DAY

Bowie unlocks the ornate cabinet and grabs the items inside.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

SPARKS. At the workbench, Bowie sharpens the knife.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

Bowie emerges in the coat, gloves, and mask, knife in hand.

HUDSON
Bowie, I feel partly responsible
for all this. I want to help.

Bowie hands the gum pouch to Hudson and Remmy looks envious.

REMMY
Hey, remember what Val said? She'd
have snuck in on an ambulance.
Hudson - shoot me in the foot!

Hudson looks at Remmy like he's crazy.

REMMY

It don't work anyway! Come on, Val
said weaknesses can be an asset...

Remmy trails off and looks down at the bag of burritos.

HUDSON

Bowie, what's the plan? Are we-
(chews gum, blinks)
Wow. They let kids have this stuff?
OK. Are we charging in or... uh...

Bowie follows Hudson's confused gaze.

Remmy is wolfing down a burrito - the one with the RED FOIL.

Behind the coyote mask, Bowie gives a heavy sigh.

Remmy's face turns red, his breath constricting.

REMMY

Hudson... better get on... radio...

Mouth hanging open, Hudson brings up her walkie.

The half-eaten burrito hits the ground with a THUD.

CUT TO:

The ambulance, lights flashing, careens down a rural road.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

A SYRINGE sticks a vein in a withered, sallow arm.

Fenris presses the plunger home, pushing drugs into Frank.

Setting the syringe aside, Fenris grabs PLIERS and clamps
them onto one of Frank's fingernails.

SABRA

Eyelid? Maybe that'll wake him up.

Releasing the nail, Fenris clamps carefully on an eyelid.

Fenris gets ready to pull - then winces.

The silence in the room gives way to a SIREN.

Everyone looks out the window at the approaching ambulance.

Fenris and Sabra share a glance.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - DAY

Sabra, Fenris, Agent #1 and #2 rush the hall.

Sabra punches the button, then impatiently points.

Booted feet tromp down the staircase to the ambulance bay.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Oblivious of the new orders, Mook jokes into his walkie.

MOOK

Why do cowboys always fail math?

When no reaction comes, Mook frowns, clicking his walkie.

MOOK

Check? Check? Damn it.

He puts his gun away and starts fussing with the walkie.

EXT. HOSPITAL LOADING BAY - DAY

The ambulance slowly backs up toward the loading bay.

Guns are aimed at the approaching vehicle.

Most men are crouched, but Fenris stands, Tommy Gun ready.

FENRIS

When you find yourself in the most
vulnerable of moments, rest
assured, we've got you covered...

The ambulance doors swing open to reveal:

Remmy, oxygen mask, being helped by EMT #1 and EMT #2.

They freeze, staring wide-eyed at the men with guns.

No Bowie to be seen, Sabra and Fenris look at each other.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Mook's walkie CRACKLES to life. He smiles, raising it.

MOOK

Why do cowboys always fail math?

WHOOSH - a blur slides by, startling him.

Mook turns to see Bowie, feet planted from a leap.

MOOK

Where the hell did you come fro-

Mook sees Bowie is holding a small knife - with blood on it.

A trail of red drops leads back to...

Mook opens his coat, revealing a LONG GASH across his belly.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cobb and Harold are focused on the hallway and radio, leaving Emma the only one by the window, watching:

Below, in front of the hospital, Mook falls in a heap, his GUSHING BLOOD PAINTING THE SIDEWALK RED.

Picking up the dead man's walkie, Bowie raises it to the Coyote mask - but pauses to look up at the window.

Seeing Emma there, he freezes.

Emma blinks, processing a jumble of feelings.

Deciding something, she does sign language for: Trust

Bowie tilts his head back and HOWLS.

MONTAGE: The sound echoes through hospital, emanating from the walkies in the hands of the startled men.

Cobb pushes Emma out of the way to look, but Bowie is gone.

From a pocket, Cobb un-crumple his Coyote reward flyer and stares at it with newfound understanding - and fear.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Floss exits the stairwell, looking amused.

FLOSS

Anyone hear Wolfman Jack just now?

Gorp steps out of the security camera room, looking scared.

GORP

You idiot! It's the Coyote!

Sabra strides from the elevator, flanked by Fenris.

SABRA

It's one man with a pocket knife.
We're nine strong with guns, and we
know he's coming. The actuarial
tables are wildly in our favor.

At the security room, Sabra checks the monitors: Leo, Q and the others patrol, and Bowie is nowhere to be seen.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cobb checks his two pistols, spinning the chambers on each.
He observes Emma's defiant look.

COBB

Don't get excited. My men can
handle this.

Emma looks out the window again, and shakes her head.

EMMA

I'm not sure they're men anymore.
I think they're just red tape...

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Patrolling, guns out, Agent #1 and #2 surprise each other.
Briefly spooked, they chuckle and turn-
A BLUR - and both men's throats SPRAY BLOOD.

INT. HOSPITAL STAIRWELL - DAY

Floss peeks around a corner and sees, down the hall, the two men lying dead in a widening pool of red.

FLOSS

(into walkie)
Thing 1 and Thing 2 are down. I'm-

WHOOSH Bowie slides behind him, slicing his thigh.

Femoral artery cut, BLOOD SPRAYS, and Floss staggers down.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Q sees Bowie sprint by a junction and FIRES, exploding a glass divider by the nurse's station.

Seeing Bowie's bloody bootprints, Q creeps after them.
They lead into a room, and Q thinks he's got the drop.
He lunges in - but the prints lead out another door...
Sensing trouble, Q spins, raising his weapon-
CLATTER as the gun falls, along with his SEVERED FINGERS.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

Cobb, staring at the closed door, hears Q's far off SCREAM.

COBB
(into walkie)
Q...? Floss...?

INT. SECURITY ROOM - DAY

Sabra stares at the monitors, each depicting a different gory scene of men lying dead or twitching in agony.

INT. ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

The hospital staff, huddled together, watch the door open to reveal: the terrifying figure in the mask, covered in blood.

The staff cower, ready for the end.

SNIK SNIK SNIK - zip ties are cut apart.

As Desdemona ushers the others out, she nods to The Coyote.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - DAY

On a monitor, Sabra watches the staff leaving the office.
Down the hall, Gorp warily patrols by the janitorial closet.

SABRA
(whispers into walkie)
Gorp, he's close. Let him charge,
then open the door in his face.
You'll be covered. We'll nail him.

Sabra turns off the radio and looks at Fenris.

SABRA
Shoot them both if you have to.

Fenris settles in to aim the Tommy Gun down the hall.

INT. HALLWAY DAY - DAY

Gorp spins around, scanning the corridors - and freezes.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cobb is listening to the radio closely and grinning.

GORP (O.S.)
I see Bowie... get ready...

Emma overhears this exchange and looks worried.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Bowie lopes down the hallway at the terrified Gorp.

GORP
I don't like this plan anymore...

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cobb listens to the radio, Sabra's voice whispering.

SABRA (O.S.)
Three... Two...

Emma puts her fingers to her lips and WHISTLES.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Hearing the sound, Bowie tries to check his run, but slides-

Gorp flings the closet door open, cringing behind it.

BRRAATATATATAT Fenris lets go with the Tommy Gun.

POP POP POP - Gorp is hit, spurting blood, and falls.

Bowie scrambles into the closet, pulling the door closed.

Sabra grins at Bowie's knife lying on the hallway floor.

She and Leo fall in behind Fenris as he marches forward, pouring a fusillade of bullets at the metal closet door.

INT. STORAGE CLOSET - DAY

Bullets dent the door over and over, but no breach yet.

Bowie looks around at janitorial supplies: toilet paper, a mop, drain cleaner - but nothing resembling a weapon.

Eyeing Clara's corpse, Bowie picks up her box of VOTE! pens.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Fenris marches forward, continuing to fire the Tommy Gun.

The metal is compromised, and dents become bullet holes.

BLOOD seeps out from under the door.

Ceasing fire, Fenris cautiously opens the door, as Sabra and Leo peer around him to see:

Bowie isn't there - just the corpse of Clara propped against the shelves, riddled with bullet holes, blood dripping.

A HOWL. Everyone looks around, terrified.

CUT TO:

Above the closet door, Bowie is crouched in a knot, feet braced on the wall and the door molding.

He swings down and JABS a pen into Fenris's eye.

Fenris falls back, mouth open in shock, blood spurting.

Sabra dodges into the stairwell, abandoning Leo.

He turns to see Bowie now standing down the hall, eying him.

LEO

Whoa! Unarmed. Want money? Here-

He sets the case down, prattling on while doing the combo.

LEO

Money's not dangerous, right? It's just a tool. People say take the money out of the system, but I'm like, how would you even do that-

A PISTOL is under the cash - and Leo whips it out. BANG!

CUT TO:

WHUMP - Leo falls dead on the floor, with VOTE! pens sticking out of his chest like porcupine quills.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Removing the mask, Bowie approaches Frank's closed door.

COBB (O.S.)

Fee-fi-fo-fum, I smell the blood of
a children's book author who does
not want to rush in here. Easy now.

CREAK - Bowie opens the door slowly.

Cobb sits against the far wall, holding two guns: one trained on Frank in bed, and one on Emma in the corner.

COBB

Getting slow in your retirement?

A wound on Bowie's thigh bleeds freely.

Grimacing, he takes a step forward - but freezes.

A GUN AT BOWIE'S CHEEK as Harold steps from behind the door.

HAROLD

Ha! What is it the pros say? You're
gonna poop teeth in your grave.

Cobb looks at Harold oddly, then turns to Bowie.

COBB

You could cross this room in one
freakish move and kill me, but you
risk a dead-man's pull on one or
both triggers, leaving these two
gut-shot and screaming. Safer would
be to jump to Emma or Frank and
take the bullet - but you can't
shield both. This is all assuming
Harold doesn't blow your face off
first. Checkmate, boy. Stand down
and let me take you in.

BOWIE

I don't believe Emma or Dad would
be safe if I did. Thankfully, your
math is off - you have to point one
of those guns at Harold.

COBB

Why would I do that?

BOWIE

Because I'm about to tell him you had Hudson put out warrants for all the family here, and she's outside ready to make arrests.

Harold's eyes flicker angrily to Cobb.

HAROLD

Once a pig always a pig, surprising no one. Which is why the family wasn't gonna let a retired Marshal witness all this and walk away.

COBB

Who's gonna enforce that now - you? And see Bowie, I ain't the bad guy here. They want Frank to suffer-

HAROLD

Bullshit! Bowie, who do you think leaked Frank's ID in the first place? After the Sheriff faxed it to Cobb, he thought he could make a few bucks rolling it over to us.

Bowie's glares. Busted, Cobb just shrugs and chuckles.

BOWIE

Harold, help me and you can walk. I promise - one pro to another.

Bowie's words impact Harold. He considers.

COBB

Fine. Bowie wants me dead. Harold wants me dead. While we're flipping cards over, I think princess here also wants me dead. Might even take a stab, if there were scissors in that cabinet behind her.

EMMA

There are, I saw them. Nice sharp ones for cutting bandages.

Cobb eyes the distance between him and Emma, and frowns.

COBB

You Jane the Ripper alla' sudden?

EMMA

Let's say I'm dabbling in collage.

Bowie would smile if the situation wasn't so tense.

COBB

So, I'm beset on all sides. Doesn't change a thing. Here's what happens next: we all stare at each other, tense, until Bowie makes his move. While Emma scrabbles for her damn scissors, I point a gun at Harold and blow his dumb ass away. Then Bowie arrives in my sights, still aimed at his loved one-

BOWIE

But you don't know which-

COBB

OF COURSE I FUCKING DO!

(pause)

We all know where you're going because we just spent three days watching you blow your life up to get there. Lord knows why! The day he entered protection, I knew Frank was trash who didn't deserve a new life. Maybe you'll take his bullet because, deep down, you know you don't deserve a new life either.

Bowie's gaze falters - but just for a moment.

BOWIE

People got low opinions of Coyotes, but it don't mean they oughta suffer.

Cobb sees in Bowie's eyes that he's not backing down. The talking over, tension ratchets in the room.

Cobb again glances at the distance between him and Emma.

Harold looks at his gun on Bowie, then to Cobb's gun.

Emma looks at Cobb's gun, then to Frank, then to Bowie.

Cobb grips his gun.

Harold grips his gun.

Bowie grips the bloody pen.

Emma's fingers are on the drawer behind her.

The tension reaches critical mass...

WHOOSH - Bowie leaps forward, and TIME SLOWS DOWN.

BANG - Harold fires at the empty space Bowie just vacated.

WHOOSH - Cobb swings his gun from Emma to aim at Harold.

RATTLE - Emma turns from Cobb, scrabbling for the scissors.

WHOOSH - Harold swings his gun to aim at Cobb.

TICK TOCK - Bowie continues his move across the room.

BANG BANG - Cobb and Harold fire at each other.

BOOSH - Harold is hit.

WHOOSH - Emma, scissors in hand, turns and thrusts.

SLORCH - she STABS, but the path to Cobb is interrupted by the scissors plunging into: Bowie's abdomen.

Emma looks up in shock. Bowie has slid in between her and Cobb, his arms out, shielding her with his body.

It would be a tender moment, if not for:

WHOOSH - over Bowie's shoulder, Emma sees Cobb's gun swing away from the falling Harold, to aim at Bowie's back.

Emma's reaction tells Bowie what's about to happen. He grimaces, closing his eyes.

BANG!

Emma winces, then forces her eyes open to see-

Bowie's eyes, confused. He looks down and opens his coat to see there's no bullet hole, and no blood.

Bowie and Emma both turn to look to see:

Cobb has a bullet hole in his forehead.

Frank, looking like death itself, holds the smoking derringer, yanked from the now-open box by his bed.

He turns to Emma and Bowie and grins weakly.

Stunned, Bowie searches for what to say.

BOWIE

Emma? Meet my dad...

Overwhelmed by the situation, she just gives a little wave.

Frank looks at the blood on Emma's hand, then the scissors.

He looks at Bowie.

BOWIE

I like her.

A surreal but funny moment, Emma LAUGHS, and Bowie does too - which triggers a wince of pain.

EMMA

Oh god! Careful-

BOWIE

At least we're in a hospital-

FENRIS (O.S.)

BUT YOU DON'T HAVE ANY INSURANCE!!

Emma, Frank and Bowie all turn to see:

Fenris, pen still sticking out of his bloody eye socket, leans against the doorway and gives a ghastly smile.

FENRIS

Which is why I'd like to talk to you... about our group rates...

He raises the Tommy Gun.

BOOM!

Fenris falls over in a lifeless heap.

In the hall, revolver smoking, Hudson appears.

Chewing a big wad of gum, she turns and gives a wide-eyed look of holy-shit-did-I-just-do-that.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Standing in the hallway is an imposing MARSHAL BRINKS, 60s, handlebar mustache - and a skeptical look on his face.

Dwarfed by his size, Hudson looks defiantly up at him.

BRINKS

No offense, newly-elected Sheriff, but your opinions aren't exactly-

HUDSON

Retired Marshal Cobb was convinced.

She holds up Cobb's crinkled reward flyer, now bloodstained.

Incredulous, Brinks points into the room where Frank lies - now wearing the full Coyote getup, including the mask.

BRINKS

You're telling me a dyin'
septuagenarian ran around like a
ninja and killed all these men?

EMT #1, at the nurses station, points at his black eye.

EMT #1

Had some crazy fast-twitch muscles.

Hudson holds up a baggie with the monogrammed knife.

HUDSON

Murder weapon has his name on it.

Brinks grunts in annoyance, but he's running out of steam.

BRINKS

Christ. OK! Take him into custody-

DESDEMONA

Sorry, government QIO.

Desdemona, lurking nearby, holds Clara's bloodstained paper.

Brinks, heaving a sigh of surrender, heads for the elevator.

Hudson suppresses a smile, then looks at the bagged knife.

HUDSON

If Frank passes, the evidence...?

BRINKS

Abatement ab initio - no conviction
after death. Pitch it, good will
it, or wear it for Halloween...

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The sun sets, giving the hospital room a golden glow.

Sitting by Frank, Bowie holds his battered children's book, blood stains now added to the punch and grime.

BOWIE

...and the stars in Orion's belt
sparkled in the night, leading the
adventurers from familiar lands to
the strange new country ahead...

Frank's breathing gets slower and slower, and finally stops.

Bowie closes the book, and sits in silence.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Bowie stands in a black suit as he HUMS AMAZING GRACE.

Remmy, black suit, hair combed for a change, HUMS with him.

BAGPIPES. Emma, black dress, plays while Hudson joins the
group at an open grave near the Animal Rescue trailer.

Hannah, in black overalls, with the deceased coyote in her
arms, approaches the hole and gently lowers the animal in -
next to an URN with 'Frank O'Faolain' engraved on it.

Bowie steps to the grave and puts in his drawing of Frank.

Hudson puts in the folded coat, knife, and Coyote mask.

Remmy limps over and puts in a foil-wrapped burrito.

REMMY

For the road. See ya, Dad.

They linger a moment more, then head for cars parked nearby.

REMMY

I was thinking, instead of selling
the house, maybe I'll fix it up?

BOWIE

Remington, you can do whatever you
want. We'll come visit.

Hugging Remmy, Bowie looks affectionately at Hudson.

BOWIE

Sheriff.

Hudson hugs him, then gives Bowie and Emma a stern look.

HUDSON

Now for god's sake, will you two
please get the hell out of my town?

INT. INSURANCE OFFICE PRIVATE CHAMBER - DAY

Harold stands by the cabinet of skulls and pillows, arm in a sling, while Sabra puts masking tape over Frank's nameplate.

HAROLD
Thanks again for springin' me.

SABRA
Of course. Family at all costs.

On the masking tape, Sabra writes: BOWIE SMITH - AKA - ?

HAROLD
You really think you'll find him?

BOSS
He's a mortal man. Aging, getting sick, needing medicine. And everyone needs health insurance!

HAROLD
But... he moved to the UK. Don't they have universal healthcare?

Sabra blinks. Her smirk melts into a frown.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Bowie and Emma sit on a twin-engine airplane, pre-flight. The two lean in to kiss, when Emma's phone lights up: MUM

BOWIE
I'm ready, let's do this-

EMMA
Wait, I meant to tell you-

Too late, Bowie has answered. The face of MS. FERGUSON, 60s, black turtleneck, fierce gaze, peers out from the phone.

BOWIE
Hello, Ms. Ferguson.

MS. FERGUSON
Emma tells me you were a painter.

BOWIE
Oh. Yes. But now I draw children's-

MS. FERGUSON
How many paintings did you have to do in order to protect your father?

Bowie's eyes widen, and Emma anxiously mouths 'sorry'.
Looking back at Ms. Ferguson, Bowie considers a response.

BOWIE

Eight.

MS. FERGUSON

Hm. Well, Emma's father was a painter. If it's truly behind you, I know from experience that with time, love, and a lot of therapy... The relationship is still doomed. But, I'll have the kettle on when you get here. Safe travels.

Dazed, Bowie turns to Emma. After a long look, they kiss.

Bowie pulls out a bag of gummy bears and his sketchbook, and Emma snuggles in sleepily against his shoulder.

EXT. RIO GRANDE RIVER - DAY

An old canoe drifts down river past a rural town. Chickens scatter as two latino BOYS, 13, stop playing to look.

Boy #1 throws a rock at the boat and hits it with a THUNK.

WHOOSH - Val, ghostly pale, caked in dried blood, sits up.

COUGHING, she looks around in confusion. Seeing the startled boys, she feebly CROAKS out words in broken Spanish.

VAL

Necesito... medico...

BOY #1

Doctor?

VAL

Si! Doctor! But I don't have money-
(tense)
Wait - Estados Unidos?

BOY #1

Mexico.

VAL

Oh thank god...

Val slumps with relief into the canoe as the boys wade to it.

FADE OUT