

No Country for Old Men

Adaptation by

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Based on the Novel by Cormac McCarthy

This draft: November 28, 2005

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FADE IN:
MOUNTAINS NIGHT

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

Voice Over

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Back to the shot over the lightbars: the deputy, with a hand on top of the prisoner's head to help him clear the doorframe; eases the prisoner into the back seat. All we see of the prisoner is his dark hair disappearing into the car.

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

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

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

The deputy swings the heavy object into the front passenger seat.

Matching inside the car: it looks like an oxygen tank with a petcock at the top and tubing running off it.

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

The deputy slams the door.

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

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

THE DEPUTY

Seated in the sheriff's office, on the phone.

The prisoner stands in the background. Focus is too soft for us to see

his features but his posture shows that his arms are still behind his back.

Deputy
Yessir, just walked in the door. Sheriff
he had some sort of

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a thing on him like one of them oxygen
tanks for emphysema or something. And a
hose from it run down his sleeve...

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

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

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

...Yessir I got it covered.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BATHROOM

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

THE OFFICE

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

NIGHT

Road rushes under the lens.

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

A siren bloop.

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

The police car pulls over behind.

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

Man
What's this about?

Chigurh
Step out of the car please, sir.

The motorist squints at the man with the strange apparatus.

Man
Huh? What is...

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

The man opens the door and emerges.

Man
Am I...

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

Chigurh
Would you hold still please, sir.

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

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

ARID PLAIN

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

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

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

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

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

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

He mutters:

Moss
Hold still.

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

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

He eases the one eye onto the sight.

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

Moss's finger tightens on the trigger.

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

Moss fights it back down.

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

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The sound of the gunshot rings out across the barial.

Short beat.

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

The other animals are off with it.

Moss

Shit.

He stands and jacks out the spent casing which jangles against the rocks.

He stoops for it and puts it in his shirt pocket.

LATER

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

An intermittent trail of blood.

Moss's pace is brisk. Distances are long.

He suddenly stops, staring.

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

Drier.

Moss looks one way along this older trail:

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

He looks the other way.

A distant range of mountains. No movement.

He stoops to examine the trail.

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

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

His point-of-view: landscape, swimming into focus, heatwaves exaggerated by the

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compression of the lens.

Panning, looking for the animal.

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

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

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

MINUTES LATER

Moss tops a rise. He scans the landscape below.

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

Moss brings up the binoculars.

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

On the ground near the trucks dark shapes lie still.

MINUTES LATER

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

Flies drone.

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

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

He opens the door and looks inside.

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

He opens the door of the second truck.

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

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Moss stumbles back, raising the rifle.

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

Man

Agua.

Moss stares at him.

...Agua. Por Dios.

Moss

Ain't got no water.

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

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

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

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

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

Man

Agua.

Moss

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

A blank look.

...Where's the last guy?

The injured man stares, unresponsive. Moss persists:

Ultimo hombre. Last man standing, must've been one.

Man
...Agua.

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

He thinks a beat.

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

He stares off.

Through the truck's open door:

Man
La puerta... Hay lobos...

Moss
(walking off)
Ain't no lobos.

LATER

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

He raises the binoculars.

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

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

He raises the glass again.

...But. If you stopped... you stopped

in shade.

He sets off.

A POINT-OF-VIEW

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

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

Moss lowers the binoculars.

He looks at his watch.

11.30

He sits down.

FAST FADE

THE WATCH

12:30

Moss lowers the wristwatch and raises the binoculars again.

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

Moss gets up and walks toward it.

MINUTES LATER

Moss arrives at the rock shelf.

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

One hand holds a .45 automatic.

Next to the body is a boxy leather document case.

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

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

Bankwrapped hundreds fill it. Each packet stamped "\$10,000."

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

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

HIS TRUCK

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

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

TWILIGHT

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

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

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

INSIDE THE TRAILER

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

Carla Jean
What's in the satchel?

Moss
It's full of money.

Carla Jean
That'll be the day.

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

...Where'd you get the pistol?

Moss
At the gettin place.

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

Carla Jean
Did you buy that gun?

Moss
No. I found it.

Carla Jean
Llewelyn!

Moss
What? Quit hollerin.

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

Carla Jean
What'd you give for that thing

Moss
You don't need to know everything, Carla Jean.

Carla Jean
I need to know that.

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

Carla Jean
Big talk.

Moss

Just keep it up.

Carla Jean
Fine. I don't wanna know. I don't even
wanna know where you been all day.

Moss
That'll work.

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TRAILER BEDROOM NIGHT

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

Moss
All right.

He looks at the bedside clock.

Its LED display: 1:06

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

TRAILER KITCHEN

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

Carla Jean appears in the doorway, looking sleepy.

Carla Jean
Llewelyn.

Moss
Yeah.

Carla Jean
What're you doin, baby?

Moss
Goin out.

Carla Jean
Goin where?

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

Carla Jean
What're you goin to do?

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

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

He starts toward the front door.

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

Carla Jean
Your mother's dead, Llewelyn.

Moss
Well than I'll tell her myself.

A MAP

A detailed topographical survey map, illuminated by a flashlight.

Moss is studying it in the cab of his truck.

After a beat he folds the map.

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

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

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

DOOR SLAM

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

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

Its driver's-side door: closed.

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

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

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Moss
Hello?

No answer.

He opens the door.

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

Moss glances at the bad of the truck.

Empty.

He again looks at the horizon.

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

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

Only one man visible now.

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

The other pickup's engine coughs to life. Headlight and rooflights go on.

Moss again covers behind the vehicle.

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

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

off.

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

Moss turns to see:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Moss bears on the gorge, panting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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over the crest of the river bank.

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

He rolls to a stop and looks up.

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

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

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

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

Something shakes the scrub down the steep slope.

Moss backpedals deeper.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Moss shakes the gun and blows into the barrel.

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

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

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

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

Moss
Goddamnit.

He is looking out at the river.

His boots are drifting by.

LATER

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

He finishes. He rips swatches from his shirt.

He starts wrapping his bare feet as he gazes off.

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

GAS STATION / GROCERY SHEFFIELD

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

INSIDE

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

Chigurh
How much?

Proprietor
Sixty-nine cent.

Chigurh
This. And the gas.

Proprietor
Y'all getting any rain up your way?

Chigurh
What way would that be?

Proprietor
I seen you was from Dallas.

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

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

Proprietor
I didn't mean nothin by it.

Chigurh
Didn't mean nothin.

Proprietor
I was just passin the time.

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

A beat.

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

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

...Will there be somethin else?

Chigurh
I don't know. Will there?

Beat.

The proprietor turns and coughs. Chigurh stares.

Proprietor
Is somethin wrong?

Chigurh
With what?

Proprietor
With anything?

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

The proprietor looks at him, uncomfortable, looks away.

Proprietor
Will there be anything else?

Chigurh
You already asked me that.

Proprietor
Well... I need to see about closin.

Chigurh
See about closing.

Proprietor
Yessir.

Chigurh
What time do you close?

Proprietor
Now. We close now.

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

Proprietor
Generally around dark. At dark.

Chigurh stares, slowly chewing.

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

Proprietor
Sir?

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

Chigurh chews.

...What time do you go to bed.

Proprietor
Sir?

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

Proprietor
Well...

A pause.

...I'd say around nine-thirty. Some-
where around nine-thirty.

Chigurh
I could come back then.

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

Chigurh
You said that.

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He continues to stare, chewing.

Proprietor
Well... I need to close now -

Chigurh
You live in that house behind the store?

Proprietor
Yes I do.

Chigurh
You've lived here all your life?

A beat.

Proprietor
This was my wife's father's place. Ori-
ginally.

Chigurh
You married into it.

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

Chigurh
You married into it.

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

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

the way it is.

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

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

Proprietor
Sir?

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

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

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

Chigurh
Call it.

Proprietor
Call it?

Chigurh
Yes.

Proprietor
For what?

Chigurh
Just call it.

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

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

Proprietor
I didn't put nothin up.

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

Proprietor
No.

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

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A long beat.

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

Chigurh
Everything.

Proprietor
How's that?

Chigurh
You stand to win everything. Call it.

Proprietor
All right. Heads then.

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

Chigurh
Well done.

He hands it across.

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

Proprietor
Sir?

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

Proprietor
...Where you want me to put it?

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

He turns and goes.

The proprietor watches him.

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DESERT AIRE

It is full night.

Moss is pushing open the door to his trailer. Carla Jean is visible in-
side.

Carla Jean
Llewelyn? What the hell?

Moss enters and the door closes.

LATER

Carla Jean is finishing bandaging his arm.

Moss
Odessa.

Carla Jean
Why would we go to Odessa?

Moss

Not we, you. Stay with your mother.

Carla Jean
Well - how come?

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

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

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

Carla Jean stares, thinking.

Carla Jean
What'm I supposed to tell Mama?

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

Carla Jean
Llewelyn -

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

Carla Jean begins peevishly tossing things into a bag:

Carla Jean
Well thanks for fallin all over and
apologizing.

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

POINT-OF-VIEW THROUGH WINDSHILED

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

Our car turns off and rattles over a cattleguard.

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

Outside: Chigurh emerges from his Ford.

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

Man
Mind ridin' bitch?

THE RAMCHARGER

Bouncing through ungraded terrain.

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

They have pulled over at Moss's truck.

27

Chigurh
This his truck?

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

Man
Mm-Mm.

Chigurh
Screwgie.

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

...Who slashed the tires?

Driver
Wudden us.

BASIN

A flashlight beam picks up the dog carcass.

Driver
That's a dead dog.

Chigurh
Thank you.

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

...Where's the transponder?

Man
In the truck. I'll get it.

Driver
These are some ripe petunias.

Chigurh gives his flashlight to the driver.

Chigurh
Hold this please.

28

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

... You getting anything on this?

Man
Not a bleep.

Chigurh
All right...

Chigurh stands and holds his hand out for his flashlight.

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

is shot as well.

DAWN

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

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

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

Loretta
I thought it was a car afire.

Bell
It is a car afire. But Wnedell said
there was something backcountry too.

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

Bell
Hyah!

He is sending a second horse up into the trailer.

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

29

Loretta
(unmoved)
That's very nice.

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

...Be careful.

Bell
I always am.

Loretta
Don't get hurt.

Bell
I never do.

Loretta
Don't hurt no one.

Bell
Well. If you say so.

THE ROAD BY THE CATTLEGUARD

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

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

Wendell
Yessir. We should a brought weeners.

Sheriff Bell takes his hat off and mops his brow.

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

Wendell
It could be.

Bell

30

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

Wendell
The old boy shot on the highway?

Bell
Yessir, his vehicle. Man killed Lamar's deputy, took his, car, killed someone on the highway, swapped for his car,

and now here it is and he's swapped
again for god knows what.

Wendell
That's very linear Sheriff.

Bell stares at the fire.

Bell
Well. Old age flattens a man.

Wendell
Yessir. But then there's this other.

He nods up the ridge away from the highway.

Bell
Uh-huh.

He walks toward the trailer.

...You ride Winston.

Wendell
You sure?

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

THE DESERT

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

31

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

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

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

Bell looks up, circling the truck.

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

Wendell
Llewelyn Moss?

Bell
That's the boy.

Wendell
You figure him for a doperunner?

Bell sits his horse looking at the slashed tires.

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

BY THE BODIES

The tow lawmen are dismounting.

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

They walk toward the near truck.

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

Sheriff Bell stoops to look at casings.

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

Wendell
What calibers you got there, Sheriff?

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

He stands, looking at the truck.

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

Wendell
Mm.

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

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

Bell
I don't know...

He shuts the door softly with two hands.

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

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

Wendell
These boys appear to be managerial.

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

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

A gesture toward the scattered bodies.

...Wild West over there...

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

...Execution there.

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

33

Bell
That Mexican brown dope.

Wendell strolls among the bodies.

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

Bell
That's possible.

Wendell
But you don't believe it.

Bell
No. Probably I don't.

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

Bell is remounting.

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

AIR TANK

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

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

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

A sharp report.

INSIDE

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

34

Reverse on the door. Daylight shows through the lock.

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

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

He ambles in. He opens a door.

The bedroom, a messy aftermath of hasty packing.

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

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

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

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

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

DESERT AIRE OFFICE

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

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

Woman

Yessir?

Chigurh

I'm looking for Llewelyn Moss.

Woman

Did you go up to his trailer?

Chigurh
Yes I did.

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

35

Chigurh
Where does he work?

Woman
I can't say.

Chigurh
Where does he work?

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

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

Chigurh
Where does he work?

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

A toilet flashes somewhere. A door unlatches; Footsteps in back.

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

INT TRAILWAYS BUS

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

Carla Jean
Why all the way to Del Rio?

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

Carla Jean nods at the document case.

Carla Jean
You can't afford one?

36

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

Carla Jean
Promise?

Moss
Yes I do.

Carla Jean
I got a bad feelin, Llewelyn.

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

Carla Jean
Mama's gonna raise hell.

Moss
Uh-huh.

Carla Jean
She is just gonna cuss you up'n down.

Moss
You should be used to that.

Carla Jean
I'm used to lots of things, I work at
Wal-Mart.

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

Carla Jean
Llewelyn?

Moss
Yes ma'am?

Carla Jean
You are comin back, ain't ya?

Moss
I shall return.

37

MOSS'S TRAILER

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

Wendell
Sheriff's Department!

No answer.

Bell
Look at the lock.

They both look. A beat.

Wendell
We goin in?

Bell
Gun out and up.

Wendell unholsters his gun but hesitates.

Wendell
What about yours?

Bell
I'm hidin behind you.

Wendell eases the door open.

Wendell
Sheriff's Department!

The men cautiously enter, Wendell leading.

...Nobody here.

He lowers his gun and starts to holster it.

Bell
No reason not to stay safe.

Wendell keeps the gun out.

38

Wendell
No sir.

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

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

Wendell pulls his head out of the bedroom.

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

Bell
Believe you're right.

Wendell
That from the lock?

Sheriff Bell stands and wanders, looking around.

Bell
Probably must be.

Wendell
So when was he here?

Bell
I don't know. Oh.

He is at the counter staring at something;

...Now that's aggravating.

Wendell
Sheriff?

Sheriff Bell points at the carton of milk.

Bell
Still sweating.

Wendell is agitated.

Wendell

39

Whoa! Sheriff!

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

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

Sheriff Bell takes a glass from the cabinet.

Bell
Well okay...

He pours milk into the glass.

...What do we circulate?

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

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

Wendell stares at him.

Wendell
Sheriff, that's aggravating.

Bell
I'm ahead of you there.

Wendell gazes around the trailer, shaking his head.

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

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

Sheriff Bell takes another sip.

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

BUS STATION CABSTAND DEL RIO

40

Moss emerges from the station and goes to a cab.

As he sits in:

Moss
Take me to a motel.

Cabbie
You got one in mind?

Moss
Just someplace cheap.

RATE CARD

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

Single Person \$24.00

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

Voices play off:

 Woman
You tell me the option.

 Moss
The what?

 Woman
The option.

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

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

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

41

MOTEL ROOM

Wide on the room. Twin-bed headboards are fixed to the wall but only the far one has a bed parked beneath it.

Moss sits on the bed, phone to his ear.

It rings a couple times.

He gives up, hands up, rises.

BATHROOM

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

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

CLOSE ON A SCREW

Being unscrewed.

Wider shows us Moss, standing on the bed, unscrewing the vent on an over-head airduct.

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

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

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

LOOKING DOWN THE AIRDUCT

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

42

trails off the handle for retrieval.

THE DUFFLE

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

THE WINDOW

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

Nothing there disturbs him.

He closes the curtains, crossing one over the other.

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

size 11.

Salesman
Okay.

Moss
You sell socks?

Salesman
Just white.

He gathers up a brown paper bag from a pharmacy.

Moss
White is all I wear. You got a bath-
room?

BATHROOM

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

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

SHOE STORE

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

44

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

CAB

Night.

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

Moss fishes for his wallet but stops, looking.

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

rooflights.

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

Driver
What room?

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

The cab rolls slowly up the lot.

...Keep going.

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

...Keep going. Don't stop.

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

Moss
It's all right.

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

Moss
I want you to take me to another
motel.

45

Driver
Let's just call it square.

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

Moss
You're already in a jackpot. I'm try-

ing to get you out of it. Now take me
to a motel.

The driver reaches up for the bill then turns the cab out of the parking lot onto the hiway.

Moss turns to look at the receding lights of the motel.

PAVEMENT

Rushing under the lens, lit by headlights.

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

INSIDE THE RAMCHARGER

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

The transponder beeps once.

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

The passenger window hums down.

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

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

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

46

CAFÉ

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

Wendell
The labs from Austin on the man by the
highway.

Bell takes the papers and stars to look at them.

Bell
What was the bullet?

Wendell
Wasn't no bullet.

This brings Bell's look up.

Bell
Wasn't no bullet?

Wendell
Yessir. Wasn't none.

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

Wendell
No sir.

Bell
You said entrance wound in the fore-
head, no exit wound.

Wendell
Yes sir.

Bell
Are you telling m he shot this boy
in the head and then went fishing
around in there with a pocket knife?

Wendell
Sir, I don't want to picture that.

Bell
Well I don't either!

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

Waitress
Can I freshen that there for you
Sheriff?

The Sheriff's distressed look swings on to her.

Bell
Yes Noreen you better had. Thank
you.

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

Bell
I don't know. Any new bodies accumu-
lated out there?

Wendell
No sir.

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

EXTERIOR SPORTING GOODS STORE

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

GUN COUNTER

The clerk is handing a shotgun across the counter.

Clerk
Twelve gauge. You need shells?

Moss looks the gun over.

Moss
Uh-huh. Double ought.

Clerk

They'll give you a wallop.

He pushes the shells across.

Moss
You have camping supplies?

ANOTHER COUNTER

A clerk stares at Moss.

Clerk
Tent poles.

Moss
Uh-huh.

Clerk
You already have the tent?

Moss
Somethin like that.

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

Moss
Never mind. I want a tent.

Clerk
What kind of tent?

Moss
The kind with the most poles.

Clerk
Well I guess that'd be our ten-foot
back-yard Per-Cola. You can stand up
in it. Well, some people could stand
up in it. It's got a six foot clearance
at the ridge. You might just could.

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

49

MOSS'S NEW MOTEL ROOM

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

MINUTES LATER

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

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

FIRST MOTEL LOBBY

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

Moss
Could I get another room.

Woman
You want to change rooms?

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

Woman
Another additional.

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

She inclines her head to look under the counter.

Woman

Yeah we had a sorta one.

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

Moss unfolds the brochure and studies.

50

Moss
What about one forty-two.

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

Moss
No, one forty-two.

Woman
That's got two double beds.

PARKING LOT

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

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

The truck with the rooflights is still parked there.

MOTEL ROOM

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

CHIGURH

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

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

MOTEL ROOM

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

51

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

CHIGURH

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

MOTEL ROOM

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

CHIGURH

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

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

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

MOTEL ROOM

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

LOBBY

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

He is frowning at the rate card.

ROOM DOOR

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

He stares in for a beat.

52

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

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

MOSS

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

CHIIGURH

He walks over to the bathroom.

He turn on its lights, looks.

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

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

The bathroom door.

The closet door.

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

MOSS

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

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

CHIGURH

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

He checks the loads.

53

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

He hoists the air tank.

MOSS

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

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

STOCKINGED FEET

We track on the feet padding down the exterior walkway.

MOSS

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

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

The pole slides off the case.

CHIGURH

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

He stands back.

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

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

He is scrabbling for a machine pistol on the nightstand.

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

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into a bottle.

MOSS

Head still in the airduct, frozen, listening.

CHIGURH

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

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

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

The bathroom door is ajar, its light on.

A long beat.

Movement in the wedge of light.

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

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

MOSS'S POV

Along the air vent.

The machine-pistol chatter crosses to cut.

We hear bullets snap through metal. The sound brings on indirect light

as holes are punched on the duct somewhere around the bend.

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

CHIGURH

Gun leveled, at the open door.

55

Again no movement.

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

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

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

MOSS

He makes another attempts to hook the bag. The hook takes.

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

CHIGURH

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

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

Chigurh enters the bathroom.

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

Man
No me mate.

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

flung hand.

Chigurh looks back up at the survivor.

Chigurh
How'd you find it?

Man
No me mate.

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

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

MOSS

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

MAIN ROOM

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

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

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

He looks under the bed.

He stands, looks around.

He looks up. His look lingers.

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

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

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

grate clatter to the floor.

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

He pivots to face us.

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

Back to Chigurh. His look holds.

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He ducks out.

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

It beeps once.

Silence.

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

CAR

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

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

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

Moss gives him a look. A beat.

Moss
Doin what.

The old man gazes at the road.

Old Man
Hitchhikin.

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

...Dangerous.

BOOMING UP

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

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OFFICE

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

Man
You know Anton Chigurh by sight, is that correct?

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

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

Man
When did you last see him.

Wells
November 28th, last year.

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

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

The man gazes. He nods.

Man
We got a loose cannon here. And we're

out a bunch of money, and the other party is out his product.

Wells
Yessir. I understand that.

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

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

Wells rises to take the card and then reseats himself.

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Wells
Yessir.

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

Wells
Okay.

Man
How well do you know Chigurh.

Wells
Well enough.

Man
That's not an answer.

Wells
What do you want to know?

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

Wells shrugs.

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

A beat.

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

Wells
Okay. We can stop that.

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

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Wells rises.

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

He thumps once at his chest.

...I'm wondering...

Man
Yes?

Wells
Can I get my parking ticket validated?

The man gazes.

Man
...An attempt at humor; I suppose.

Wells
I'm sorry.

Man
Goodbye, Mr. Wells.

DUSK EAGLE PASS

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

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

LOBBY

Moss enters.

Behind the front desk an older man sits reading Ring magazine. He has a handrolled cigarette.

Moss
One room, one night.

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Clerk
That's twenty-six dollars.

Moss
You on all night?

Clerk
Yessir, be here til ten tomorrow morning.

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

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

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

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

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

SECOND-FLOOR HALLWAY

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

HOTEL ROOM

Moss enters a room with old oak furniture and high ceilings. He sets the document case next to the bed, He unzips the duffel and takes out the shotgun which he lays on the bed, and then goes to the window. He parts the curtain to look down.

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

LATER

The room is dark. The music is gone.

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

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straight down toward him.

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

Moss
There just ain't no way.

He sits up and turns on the bedside lamp.

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

He starts riffling money packets.

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

He holds the sender, staring at it.

A long beat.

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

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

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

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

After five rings Moss cradles the phone.

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

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

An open airy sound like when you put a seashell to your ear. Nothing else for a beat. Then, faint creaks - perhaps wood stress.

Moss tries to control his own breathing to make for total quiet.

The creaks stop. Other distant late-night sounds, hard to sort out.

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Moss rises and picks up his shotgun. He sits on the floor with his back against the bedframe, facing the door, shotgun aimed at it.

He looks at the line of light under his door.

A long wait.

We become aware of a faint high-frequency beeping, barely audible. Its source is indeterminate.

At length a soft shadow appears in the line of light below the door. It lingers there. The beeping is still barely discernible. Perhaps we don't become aware of it until it - stops, the restored quiet confirming that something was there.

A long beat.

The soft shadow becomes more focused; It resolves into two columns of dark. Feet planted before the door.

Moss points the shotgun at the middle of the door.

A long beat.

Moss's finger tightens on the trigger.

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

A beat.

The doorknob turns.

For a moment it is held twisted fully left.

The door is launched inward. It swings in with decreasing speed to end up creaking nearly fully open.

Outside, the hallway is empty.

Moss keeps the shotgun aimed at the empty doorway, waiting for someone to swing in.

A long beat.

Moss noses the shotgun toward the wall to the right of the doorjamb.

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His shotgun roar erupts out of the quiet. A spread-pattern of light opens in the wall beside the door.

No sound of any effect from the shot. Renewed quiet.

BATHROOM

A squeak as Moss swings open the medicine chest mirror - not to look inside. He experimentally swing the mirror back and forth.

Close on its hinge pin. Moss's hand enters and starts to thumb the milled edge of its head.

MAIN ROOM

Moss squats by the shot-peppered wall by the doorjamb. He slides the mirror along the floor until it just crosses the doorline into the hallway.

It shows empty hall.

STAIRWAY

Moss trots down with duffle slung over his shoulder, shotgun in one hand, and document case in the other.

A step up from the bottom he leans back against stairway wall and peeks round.

The lobby is empty.

Moss emerges and trots across the lobby. A glance to one side:

A booted foot sticks out from behind the front desk.

Moss goes to the wooden double door to the street. He reaches to push it open.

He hesitates.

He turns back.

BACK DOOR

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

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

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

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

Moss rounds the alley corner. He stops and squats.

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

Close on Moss panting. He unslings the duffle. He presses a hand to his side. It comes away bloody.

He listens. No noise.

He gets to his feet with the document case in one hand and his shotgun in the other. He waits a beat, back against the wall.

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

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

He swings out to look back around the corner.

The street is empty.

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

Long beat. Stillness.

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

Empty street.

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

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

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Quiet hesitation.

Now, a sound: engine noise.

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

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

The pickup dutifully stops at a flashing red traffic light.

It comes on through the intersection.

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

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

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

Moss

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

The windshield stars.

A quick second round pushes part of the windshield in.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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rough guide for steering.

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

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

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

Rattle of shot against sheet metal.

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

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

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

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

He sits leaning back against the car, waiting.

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

He sinks lower.

A long beat.

Footsteps. They approach without hurry.

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

They pass and recede toward the pickup.

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

He slows.

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

Chigurh: slowing further, he sees:

Bloody footprints outside the passenger door.

Moss rises.

Chigurh is turning.

He dives as, behind him, Moss fires.

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

Chigurh dived between them: hit or not?

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

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

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

He looks up and down the street.

Nothing to see.

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

EAGLE PASS BORDER AREA

Deserted.

The pickup truck rattles into frame.

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

It is very quiet.

He looks around.

The Rio Grande bridge.

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

A thought stops him. He turns.

His bloody bootprints point at him like comic clues.

His shoulders sag.

BRIDGE

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

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

Empty walkway.

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

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

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

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

The three boys stare at him.

At length:

Youth
Let's see the money.

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

Second Youth
...Were you in a car accident?

Moss
Yeah.

Youth
Okay, lemme have the money.

Moss
It's right here. Give me the coat.

Youth
Lemme hold the money.

Moss does.

Moss
Gimme the coat. And the shirt.

The youth starts to peel them.

...And let me have your beer.

Youth
...How much?

Second Youth
Brian. Give him the beer.

MINUTES LATER

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

He opens his shirt. He inspects the wounds in his midriff, entrance and exit. Pulsing blood laps weakly out. He shrugs off his shirt, wraps it around his waist and knots it. He starts to put on the new shirt. Something stops him. He pauses.

He vomits into the roadbed.

He straightens slowly and puts on the new shirt.

He looks out.

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

He looks up:

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

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

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He looks up the walkway/

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

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

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

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

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

MEXICAN SIDE

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

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

The guard impassively lets him proceed.

BLACK

In black, an insanely cheerful mariachi song.

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

We boom woozily up and start to un-dutch.

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

Back to the mariachis. Beaming; singing.

Their smiles gradually fade.

The playing falls to silence.

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

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

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

Moss
Doctor.

The mariachis stare. Moss waggles the bill.

Moss
...Medico. Por favor.

RAMCHARGER

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

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

TRAVELING POINT OF VIEW

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

Chigurh, looking.

He parks.

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

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

SHOOTING PAST A PARKED CAR

Chigurh limps toward us. He holds a coathanger bent straight with the balled-up shirtsleeve hooked to one end.

Chigurh arrives, looks up and down the street.

He unscrews the gascap, feeds the coathanger in to soak the shirt, pulls it back out. He tapes the cardboard disc over the open gas tank. He un-hooks the wet shirtsleeve and jams it up over the disc. He lights it and exits.

INSIDE THE PHARMACY

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

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

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

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

MOTEL ROOM

Chigurh dumps the pharmaceuticals into the bathroom sink.

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

BATH

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

A SHAVING MIRROR

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

RUNNING WATER

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

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

The main room. The TV is on now. Chigurh enters from the bathroom with

his leg bandaged. He sits on the bed and tears open the packaging of a syringe.

He plunges it into an ampule of penicillin.

He injects himself.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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

Bell
Anything on those vehicles yet?

A raised female voice from the front office:

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

Molly, the secretary, appears at the doorway.

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

Bell
No. Lord no.

He holds out the checkbook.

...This month's checks.

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

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

Molly
He's goin back out there and he wanted

to know if you wanted to go with him.

Sheriff Bell is putting things away.

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

He rises.

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

Molly
Yes Sheriff.

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

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

Bell
Yes I do. You don't want to lie with-
out what it's absolutely necessary.

Molly trails him into the front office.

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

Molly
We dedicate ourselves daily anew.
Something like that.

Bell
I think I'm goin to commence dedica-
tin myself twice daily. It may come to
three times before it's over...

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

...What the hell?

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STREET

Sanderson outskirts.

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

Driver
Sheriff.

Bell
Have you looked at your load lately?

A MINUTE LATER

Both men are at the back of the truck.

Bell
That's a damned outrage.

Driver
Oh. One of the tiedowns worked lose.

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

Bell
How many did you leave with?

The driver still smiling.

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

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

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

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

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...You going to write me up for im-
properly secured load?

Sheriff Bell cinches the knot tight.

Bell
You get your ass out of here.

HOSPITAL ROOM

Moss, in bed, stirs at an offscreen voice:

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

Moss blearily focuses on:

A fancy crocodile boot.

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

Carson Wells smiles at him from the bedside chair.

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

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

Wells is surprised.

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

He nods, impressed.

...But that won't last.

Moss

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

Wells

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

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Moss

How would you describe him?

Wells

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

Moss

Sugar?

Wells

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

Moss

I know how he found me.

Wells

It's called a transponder.

Moss

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

Wells

Not that way.

Moss

Not any way.

Wells

Took me about three hours.

Moss
I been immobile.

Wells
No. You don't understand.

Wells sits back and studies Moss.

...What do you do?

Moss
I'm retired.

Wells

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What did you do?

Moss
I'm a welder.

Wells
Acetylene? Mig? Tig?

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

Wells
Cast iron?

Moss
Yes.

Wells
I don't mean braze.

Moss
I didn't mean braze.

Wells
Pot metal?

Moss
What did I say?

Wells
Were you in Nam?

Moss
Yeah. I was in Nam.

Wells
So was I.

Moss
So what does that make me? Your buddy?

Wells sits smiling at him.

A beat.

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

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

Wells' smile stays in place

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

Moss stares at him. A beat.

Moss
Why would he go to Odessa?

Wells
To kill your wife.

Another beat.

Moss
Maybe he should be worried. About me.

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

Moss doesn't respond.

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

Moss
What product.

Wells
The heroin. You don't have it.

Moss
No. I don't have it.

Wells
No. You don't.

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He rises.

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

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

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

even like me.

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

Carson Wells wears a forebearing smile.

Wells
Call me. Decide. Before it gets deci-
ded.

COFFEE SHOP

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

Bell
Carla Jean, I thank you for comin.

She sits. He sits.

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

Bell
You ain't heard from him?

Carla Jean

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No I ain't.

Bell
Nothin?

Carla Jean
Not word one.

Bell
Would you tell me if you had?

Carla Jean
Well, I don't know. He don't need any

trouble from you.

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

Carla Jean
Who's he in trouble with then?

Bell
Some pretty bad people.

Carla Jean
Llewelyn can take care of himself.

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

Carla Jean
He won't neither. He never has.

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

Carla Jean
He can take all comers.

Bell looks at her. After a beat:

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

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She shakes her head, shrugs.

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

Indicates between his own eyes.

...and then truss 'em up and slit

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

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

She does not.

Sheriff Bell hands a card across.

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

She takes the card. Sheriff Bell sips.

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

He holds thumb and forefinger a couple inches apart.

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

Another beat. Carla Jean stares at him.

Carla Jean
Why you telling me that, Sheriff?

Bell
I don't know. My mind wanders.

RIO GRANDE BRIDGE

Late day.

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

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

The brown sluggish water of the Rio Grande.

LOOKING ODWN THE WALKWAY

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

Cane on the riverbank, and one gnarled tree.

EAGLE HOTEL LOBBY

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

STAIRWAY

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

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

Chigurh
Hello Carson. Let's go to your room.

HOTEL ROOM

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

Wells
We don't have to do this. I'm a day-trader. I could just go home.

Chigurh
Why would I let you do that?

Wells
I know where the money is.

Chigurh
If you knew, you would have it with
you.

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

Chigurh
I know something better.

Wells
What's that.

Chigurh
I know where it's going to be.

Wells
And where is that.

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

Wells wipes his mouth with his hand.

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

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

Wells
You go to hell.

A beat.

Chigurh
Let me ask you something. If the rule
you followed

86

brought you to this, of what use was
the rule?

Another beat.

Wells
Do you have any idea how goddamn crazy
you are?

Chigurh
You mean the nature of this conversa-
tion?

Wells
I mean the nature of you.

Chigurh looks at him equally. Wells holds his look.

...You can have the money. Anton.

The phone rings.

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

Wells looks at Chigurh, waiting for a decision.

The low chug of the shotgun.

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

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

He picks it up and listens without speaking.

After a beat:

Moss's Voice
...Hello?

Chigurh
Yes?

Another beat.

Moss's Voice
Is Carson Wells there.

87

A longer beat.

Chigurh
Not in the sense that you mean.

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

...You need to come see me.

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

Moss
Who is this.

Chigurh
You know who it is.

A beat.

...You need to talk to me.

Moss
I don't need to talk to you.

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

Moss
Why would I care where you're going.

Chigurh
Do you know where I'm going?

No answer.

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

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

...I know where you are.

Moss
Yeah? Where am I?

88

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

Moss
Yeah. I know where you're going.

Chigurh
All right.

Moss
You know she won't be there.

Chigurh
It doesn't make any difference where
she is.

Moss
So what're you goin up there for.

A beat.

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

Moss
No. Do you?

Chigurh
Yes, I do. I think you do too. So
this is what I'll offer. You bring me

the money and I'll let her go. Otherwise she's accountable. The same as you. That's the best deal you're going to get. I won't tell you you can save yourself because you can't.

Moss

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

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

Chigurh, in the hotel room, cradles his phone.

89

COFFEE SHOP

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

Bell

The motel in Del Rio?

Wendell nods.

Wendell

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

Bell

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

Wendell

Yessir.

Bell

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

Wendell

Yessir. It was punched out.

Bell
Okay.

Wendell
You gonna drive out there?

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

Wendell
How's that, Sheriff?

Bell
Natural to the line of work they was
in.

Wendell

90

Yessir.

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

He rattles the paper.

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

He looks through his glasses at the paper.

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

He peers over his glasses at Wendell who respectfully shakes his head and tsk's.

Sheriff Bell rattles the paper again.

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

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

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

He goes back to the paper.

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

BORDER SHACK

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

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

91

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

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

Moss
I don't know. American citizens.

Official
Some American citizens. Who do you

think decides?

Moss
You do, I reckon.

Official
That is correct. And how do I decide?

Moss
I don't know.

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

Moss
No sir.

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

Moss
I got an overcoat on.

Official
Are you jackin with me?

Moss
No sir.

Official
Don't jack with me.

92

Moss
Yes sir.

Official
Are you in the service?

Moss
No sir. I'm a veteran.

Official
Nam?

Moss
Yes sir. Two tours.

Official
What outfit.

Moss
Twelfth Infantry Battalion. August
seventh nineteen and sixty-six to
July second nineteen and sixty-eight.

The official stares at him, chewing, sour.

Official
Wilson!

Guard
Yessir.

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

STORE

The clerk who earlier sold him the boots:

Clerk
How those Larries holdin up?

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

Moss

93

Good. I need everything else.

Clerk
Okay.

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

Clerk
No sir, it's unusual.

RIVER BANK

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

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

His hand comes away with a small tag.

GREYHOUND STATION

The document case is resting on a small foreground counter.

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

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

Voice
She don't want to talk to you.

Moss
Yes she does. Put her on.

Voice
Do you know what time it is?

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

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

now it has come to pass -

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

Carla Jean
Llewelyn?

Moss
Hey.

Carla Jean
What should I do ?

Moss
You know what's goin on?

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

Moss
What did you tell him?

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

Moss
What makes you say that?

Carla Jean
I can hear it in your voice.

Mother
(distant)
There is falseness in his voice!

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

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

Moss

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

Carla Jean

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

Moss

She'll be all right.

Carla Jean

She'll be all right?

Mother

(distant)

Be all right! I've got the cancer!

Moss

I don't think anybody'll bother her.

A LOCK CYLINDER

It blows in.

The hole shows a brightly lit cinderblock wall behind.

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

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

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

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

He enters.

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

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

the window.

96

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

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

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

Chigurh
Who are you?

A long beat.

Man at Chair
...Me?

Chigurh
Yes.

Man at Chair
Nobody. Accounting.

Chigurh finally looks up at him.

Chigurh
He gave Acosta's people a receiver.

Man at Chair
He feels...he felt...the more people
looking...

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

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

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

Man at Chair
I see.

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

...Are you going to shoot me?

97

Chigurh looks at him.

Chigurh
That depends. Do you see me?

The man stares at him for a beat.

Man at Chair
No.

EYES ON A REAR-VIEW MIRROR

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

Mother's Voice
And I always seen this is what it would
come to. Three years ago I pre-vised
it.

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

Carla Jean
It ain't even three years we been mar-
ried.

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

Driver
Yes ma'am.

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

Driver
Yes ma'am.

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

Driver
No ma'am.

98

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

Mother
That's how many. Ninety degree heat.

BUS STATION EXTERIOR

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

Carla Jean
I got it Mama.

Mother
I didn't see my Prednizone

Carla Jean
I put it in, Mama.

Mother
Well I didn't see it.

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

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

Mexican
Do you need help with the bags, madam?

Mother

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

Mexican

Which bus are you taking?

Mother

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

99

Mexican

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

BUS STATION INTERIOR

Carla Jean is at a phone booth.

After a short while, a pickup and a filtered:

Sheriff Bell

Carla Jean, how are you.

Carla Jean

Sheriff, was that a true story about Charlie Walser?

Bell

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

Carla Jean

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

We intercut Sheriff Bell in his office.

Bell

Yes ma'am?

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

Bell
Yes ma'am, I do.

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

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

100

CHIGURH

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

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

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

Man
What's the problem there, neighbor.

MINUTES LATER

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

Man
Yeah, that'll suck more power. Over
time.

Chigurh
You from about here?

The man emerges with jumper cables.

Man
Alpine. Born 'n bred. Here ya go.

He hands on pair of leads to Chigurh.

Chigurh
What airport would you use?

Man
Huh? Airport or airstrip?

Chigurh
Airport.

Man
Well - where ya goin?

101

Chigurh
I don't know.

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

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

...There's airstrips.

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

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

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

...You gonna clamp them, buddy?

Chigurh is looking at him blandly.

Chigurh
Can you get those chicken crates out
of the bed.

The man stares at him.

Man
What're you talkin about?

COIN SLOT

Quarters are fed in.

Wider as Chigurh unholsters the wand at a self-service car wash.

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

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

MOTEL

102

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

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

Woman
Hey Mr. Sporting Goods.

Moss looks.

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

Moss
Hey yourself.

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

Woman

You a sport?

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

Moss
That's me.

Woman
I got beers in my room.

Moss holds up his left hand to show the ring.

Moss
Waiting for my wife.

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

Moss
Half.

Woman
What else then?

Moss
Lookin for what's comin.

103

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

Moss
Then you'll like me.

Woman
I do like you.

A beat. Lapping water.

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

stay married.

Building jet roar from another climbing plane.

Moss
Ma'am I know what beer leads to.

The woman laughs. Before the plane overwhelms it:

Woman
Beer leads to more beer.

SHERIFF BELL

Driving.

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

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

Sheriff Bell stamps the accelerator and hits his siren.

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

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

104

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

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

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

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

Bell
Call police.

He is still jogging. A glance to the side:

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

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

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

Voices. Sheriff Bell glances off.

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

MOTEL

Night The entrance is blocked by police vehicles.

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

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

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

Sheriff Bell steps toward her.

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

105

Bell
Carla Jean...

Carla Jean
No.

HOSPITAL / MORGUE

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

A long beat.

EXT HOSPITAL / MORGUE

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

A long beat.

Bell
I don't know who she is.

He puts his hat back on.

Roscoe
I thought maybe she was with your boy there.

Bell
No ID in her room?

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

The two men start walking.

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

A walking beat.

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

106

COFFEE SHOP

Roscoe and Sheriff Bell face each other over coffee.

Bell
No money in his room there?

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

Bell

I suppose; Though they was leavin in
a hurry.

Roscoe

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

Bell

Yes.

Roscoe

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

Bell

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

Roscoe

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

Bell

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

A beat.

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

Roscoe

107

Try "old" on for size.

Bell

Yessir. It may be that. In a nutshell.

PARKING LOT

The two men are walking out.

Roscoe
None of that explains your man though.

Bell
Uh-huh.

Roscoe
He is just a goddamn homicidal lunatic,
Ed Tom.

Bell
I'm not sure he's a lunatic.

Roscoe
Well what would you call him.

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

Roscoe
He's real all right.

Bell
Oh yes.

Roscoe
All that at the Eagle Motel. It's be-
yond everything.

Bell
Yes, he has some hard bark on him.

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

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

Bell
Hard to believe.

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

Roscoe closes the door for Sheriff Bell.

...Good trip Ed Tom. I'm sorry we coul-
dn't help your boy.

He is walking away.

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

A long beat.

MOTEL

Now very late, empty of onlookers and emergency vehicles.

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

Sheriff Bell sits looking at the motel.

Very quiet.

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

He looks up the veranda.

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

Sheriff Bell looks up the street.

Nothing much to attract his attention.

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

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

As he draws close to the door he slows.

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

Sheriff bell stands staring at the lock.

Very quiet. The chick. chick. Of the tape-ends against the doorframe.

Still.

INSIDE

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

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

Chigurh is also looking at the lock cylinder.

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

The reflection is still.

OUTSIDE

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

Still once again.

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

INSIDE

Chigurh, still.

OUTSIDE

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

His hand drops.

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

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

FROM INSIDE

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

A still beat.

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

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

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

He toes the door. It creaks slowly open.

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

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

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

He takes a step in.

He looks at the small window.

He looks at the window's swivel-catch, locked.

MAIN ROOM

Sheriff Bell emerges from the bathroom. He sits heavily onto the bed.

He looks around, not for anything in particular. His look catches on something low, just in front of him:

111

A ventilation duct near the baseboard. Its opening is exposed; its grille lies on the floor before it.

Sheriff Bell stares.

At length he leans forward. He nudges the grille aside. On the floor, a

couple of screws. A coin.

A CAT

Licking itself on a plank floor, stiffened leg pointing out.

It suddenly stops and looks up, ears perked.

A frozen beat, and then it bolts.

The camera booms up to frame the barren west Texas landscape outside the window of this isolated cabin. A pickup truck is approaching, trailing dust. The cat reenters frame outside, running across the rutted gravel in front of the house as the pickup slows.

KITCHEN

Ellis, an old man in a wheelchair, has one clouded eye.

Ellis
Min back!

Sheriff Bell enters.

Bell
How'd you know I was here.

Ellis
Who else'd be in your truck.

Bell
You heard it?

Ellis
How's that?

Bell

112

You heard my - you havin fun with me?

Ellis
What give you that idea. I seen one

of the cats heard it.

Bell
But - how'd you know it was mine?

Ellis
I deduced it. Once you walked in.

Sheriff Bell stares at him.

Bell
How many a those things you got now?

Ellis
Cats? Several. Wal. Depends what you mean by got. Some are half-wild, and some are just outlaws.

Bell
How you been, Ellis?

Ellis
You lookin at it. I got to say you look older.

Bell
I am older.

Ellis
Got a letter from your wife. She writes pretty regular, tells me the family news.

Bell
Didn't know there was any.

Ellis
She just told me you was quittin. Sit down.

Sheriff Bell lifts an electric percolator off the counter.

Bell
Want a cup?

Ellis

'Preciate it.

Bell
How fresh is this coffee?

Ellis
I generally make a fresh pot ever
week even if there's some left over.

Sheriff Bell pours some.

Bell
That man that shot you died in pri-
son.

Ellis
In Angola. Yeah.

Bell
What would you a done if he'd been
released?

Ellis
I don't know. Nothin. Wouldn't be
no point to it.

Bell
I'm kindly surprised to hear you say
that.

Ellis
All the time you spend tryin to get
back what's been took from you there's
more goin out the door. After a while
you just try and get a tourniquet on
it.

He taps a cigarette ash into a mason jar lid on the table in front of
him.

...Your granddad never asked me to
sign on as a deputy. I done that my
own self. Loretta says you're quit-
tin.

Bell
Yes, you've circled round.

Ellis
How come're you doin that?

Bell
I don't know. I feel overmatched.

114

A beat.

...I always thought when I got older
God would sort of come into my life
in some way. He didn't. I don't blame
him. If I was him I'd have the same
opinion about me that he does.

Ellis
You don't know what he thinks.

Bell
Yes I do.

A beat.

Ellis
I sent Uncle Mac's badge and his old
thumbbuster to the Rangers. For their
museum there. Your daddy ever tell
you how Uncle Mac came to his reward?

Sheriff Bell shrugs.

...Shot down on his own porch there
in Hudspeth County. There was seven or
eight of 'em come to the house. Wantin
this and wantin that. Mac went in and
got his shotgun but they was way ahead
of him. Shot him down in his own doorway.
Aunt Ella run out and tried to stop the
bleedin. Him tryin to get hold of the
shotgun again. They just set there on
their horses watchin him die. Finally
one of 'em says somethin in Injun and
they all turned and left out. Well Mac
knew the score even if Aunt Ella didn't.
Shot through the left lung and that
was that. As they say.

Bell
When did he die?

Ellis
Nineteen zero and nine.

Bell
No, I mean was it right away or in
the night or when was it.

Ellis
Believe it was that night. She buried
him the next mornin. Diggin in that
hard caliche.

115

A beat.

...What you got ain't nothin new.
This country is hard on people. Hard
and crazy. Got the devil in it yet
folks never seem to hold it to account.

Bell
Most don't.

Ellis
You're discouraged.

Bell
I'm... discouraged.

Ellis
You can't stop what's comin. Ain't
all waitin on you.

The two men look at each other. Ellis shakes his head.

...That's vanity.

After a beat, a fast fade.

In black we hear the chink-chink-chink of chain being played out and
the hum of a motor.

We cut to a dark foreground shape being lowered in sync with the clinking sound. As it drops it clears a tombstone. Progressively revealed:

The name, Agnes Kracik.

Her dates: 1922-1980

The inscription: Beloved Mother.

Off that we cut to Carla Jean, standing by in a black dress and dark veil.

A SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE TWILIGHT

A parched square of grass in front of the house. A rusty station wagon pulls into the driveway and stops. Carla Jean gets out.

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KITCHEN

Carla Jean enters and puts on the kettle. She opens the cupboard looking for something.

LATER

Carla Jean sits at the kitchen table drinking tea. She looks out the window.

Across the street kids are running through a sprinkler that chugs in the yard.

BEDROOM DOOR

The door open and Carla Jean enters holding her hat and veil. She throws the light switch and stops, hand frozen, looking into the room.

After a beat:

Carla Jean
I knew this wasn't done with.

Chigurh sits at the far end of the room in the late-afternoon shadows.

Chigurh
No.

Carla Jean
I ain't got the money.

Chigurh
No.

Carla Jean
What little I had is long gone and
they's bill aplenty to pay yet. I
buried my mother today. I ain't paid
for that neither.

Chigurh
I wouldn't worry about it.

Carla Jean
...I need to sit down.

Chigurh nods at the bed and Carla Jean sits down, hugging her hat and veil.

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...You got no cause to hurt me.

Chigurh
No. But I gave my word.

Carla Jean
You gave your word?

Chigurh
To your husband.

Carla Jean
That don't make sense. You gave your
word to my husband to kill me?

Chigurh
Your husband had the opportunity to
remove you from harm's way. Instead,
he used you to try to save himself.

Carla Jean
Not like that. Not like you say.

Chigurh
I don't say anything. Except it was
foreseen.

A beat.

Carla Jean
I knowed you was crazy when I saw
you settin there. I knowed exactly
what was in store for me.

Chigurh
Yes. Things fall into place.

HOUSE EXTERIOR

Minutes later.

A beat.

The front door swings open and Chigurh emerges.

He pauses with one hand on the jamb and looks at the sole of each boot
in turn.

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He goes to the pickup in the driveway.

A MINUTE LATER

He is driving.

His point-of-view: coming upon an empty intersection, his light green.

Back to Chigurh. He just starts to turn his head to the right.

A huge crash.

EXTERIOR

Chigurh's pickup has been T-boned by an old crate of pickup. Both vehi-
cles slide to a halt amid broken glass in the middle of the
intersection.

The windshield of the truck that ran the light is mostly gone. The dri-

ver is draped dead on the wheel.

After a beat the door of Chigurh's truck is pushed open. He staggers out, heavily favoring one leg where the jeans are shredded and bloody at the thigh. One arm is also bloody and hangs limp. Blood runs down his face from a scalp wound.

He staggers to a lawn and sits.

He looks up.

Two teenage boys have come out of somewhere. They goggle at him.

Boy 1

Mister there's a bone stickin out of your arm.

Chigurh

I'm all right. Let me just sit here a minute.

Boy 2

There's an ambulance comin. Man over yonder went to call.

Chigurh

All right.

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Boy 1

Are you all right? You got a bone stickin out of your arm.

Chigurh

What will you take for that shirt?

The two boys look at each other. They look back.

Boy 2

What shirt?

Chigurh

Any damn shirt. I need something to wrap around my head and I need a sling for this arm.

Bay 2 unbuttons his shirt.

Boy 2
Hell mister, I'll give you my shirt.

Chigurh uses his teeth to clamp the shirt and rips it and wraps a swatch around his head. He twists the rest of the shirt into a sling and puts the limp arm in.

Boy 1
Look at the fuckin bone.

Chigurh
Tie this for me.

The two boys look at each other.

...Just tie it.

Boy 2, the one now wearing a T-shirt, ties it.

Chigurh pulls a bill clip from his pocket and draws a bill out with his teeth. He holds it out to the boy.

Boy 2
Hell mister, I don't mind helping
somebody. That's a lot of money.

Chigurh
Take it. Take it and you didn't see
me. I was already gone.

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Boy 2
Yessir.

Wide on Chigurh limping off.

We can just hear the boys, small:

Boy 1
Part of that's mine.

Boy 2
You still got your damn shirt.

Boy 1
That ain't what it was for.

Boy 2
Maybe, but I'm still out a shirt.

KITCHEN

Loretta pours Sheriff Bell and then herself morning coffee.

Bell
Maybe I'll go ridin.

Loretta
Okay.

Bell
What do you think.

Loretta
I can't plan your day.

Bell
I mean, would you care to join me.

Loretta
Lord no. I'm not retired.

A beat.

Sheriff Bell sips his coffee.

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Bell
Maybe I'll help here then.

A beat.

Loretta takes a sip.

Loretta
Better not.

They both sip.

...How'd you sleep?

Bell
I don't know. Had dreams.

Loretta
Well you got time for 'em now. Any-
thing interesting?

Bell
Well they always is to the party
concerned.

Loretta
Ed Tom, I'll be polite.

Bell
Okay. Two of 'em. Both had my father.
It's peculiar. I'm older now'n he
ever was by twenty years. So in a sen-
se he's the younger man. Anyway, first
one I don't remember so well but it
was about money and I think I lost it.
The second one, it was like we was
both back in older times and I was on
horseback goin through the mountains
of a night.

We cut to night, and snow. Continuing in voice-over:

...Goin through this pass in the moun-
tains. It was cold and snowin, hard
ridin. Hard country. He rode past me
and kept on goin. Never said nothin
goin by. He just rode on past and he
had his blanket wrapped around him and
his head down...

The rider passes as described, horses' hooves drumming and scattering
divots of earth

122

and snow.

...and when he rode past I seen he
was carryin fire in a horn the way
people used to do and I could see the

horn from the light inside of it.
About the color of the moon. And in
the dream I knew that he was goin on
ahead and that he was fixin to make a
fire somewhere out there in allthat
dark and all that cold, and I knew
that whenever I got there he would be
there. Out there up ahead.

The rider recedes and the image fades, the horn bearing fire going last.