

Revenge of The King

by
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INT. KING HOUSE - DAY

Sunlight streams through the windows, flooding the large, sparse but elegantly furnished hallway. Lenny scrawls 'CLEAN ME' on the dusty mahogany half-table. His camera focuses on a framed sepia photograph of a couple. Click.

LENNY
Mum and dad?

He turns the picture over. There's nothing on the back.

LENNY
You're not making it easy for me,
Mister King.

He walks through the house photographing: tin soldiers, Americana style paintings, ships in bottles. A large photo of Elvis Presley. Click. Click. Click.

LENNY
No television?

He tries unsuccessfully to force a bureau's drawers.

A hi-tech record player gets his attention. He pulls a record out at random: 'Django Reinhardt et Ses Rythmes'

LENNY
Who lives in a house like this?

Noticing a figure behind him he spins around raising his arm defensively. The record flies out of its sleeve and hits his own reflection in a large mirror. The record shatters.

LENNY
Shit!

He hears voices in the distance.

INT. CONSERVATORY - DAY

He spies JESSE KING a large, well-toned, white man, sitting crossed legged opposite SIFU, a tiny, frail Chinese man, eyes closed, on the vast lawn. Both wear silk pyjamas. Lenny raises his camera.

LENNY
Jesse King, I presume.

EXT./INT. KING GARDEN/CONSEVATORY - DAY

SIFU

I sense now you feel it. Breathe
into bottom of heart. Release
weight of soul. Release tension.
Peace. Calm. Tranquillity.

JESSE

Peace. Calm. Tranquillity.

Jesse breathes in deeply. His eyelids flicker.

Lenny continues to snap.

LENNY

Who the bloody hell are you King?

Jesse's eyes flicker, slightly opening as a glint of
sunlight hits Lenny's camera lens.

JESSE

What the hell?

SIFU

My son?

Jesse darts towards the conservatory.

INT. CONSERVATORY/HALLWAY - DAY

LENNY

Keep snapping, this could be gold.

Jesse and Sifu are yards from the conservatory.

LENNY

Thanks guys you've been great.

Lenny bolts through the house, Jesse hot on his tail.

JESSE

Stop right there you skunk.

EXT. KING DRIVE - DAY

Lenny runs down the driveway and clammers over the large
gates as Jesse is just out the front door. Sifu joins Jesse
halfway down the drive as Lenny lands on the other side of
the gate.

LENNY

Mister King, you were great. I'd really love to chat but I've got pictures to develop. But don't worry, I'll put this reclusive yank crap to bed. I'll find out who you are. The British public deserve that. Don't you think?

As Lenny turns around a fist WHACKS him in the face knocking him out. DANA, a young looking woman, yanks the camera from Lenny's neck and throws it over the gate into Jesse's hands.

DANA

This the King house? Dana Hyde.
I've come for the housekeeper job.

INT. STUDY. - DAY

Jesse walks Dana around the house.

JESSE

You're a business graduate? Why d'you wanna be a housekeeper?

DANA

Thrills. Spills. Danger.

He flicks through her resumé ignoring her joke.

JESSE

Five years at Silverman-Sanches?
What's that? Money lenders?

DANA

Merchant bankers.

JESSE

No housekeeping experience?

DANA

I can operate a vacuum cleaner.

JESSE

Why'd you leave?

DANA

Silverman-Sanches? I just got sick of a nine to nine where not having a burning desire to earn that kerzillion pound bonus made you a child of Satan.

Jesse whips out a piece of paper.

JESSE
Says here you were fired for
misconduct--
(beat)
-- of a sexual nature.

DANA
Ha.

JESSE
You had your hand down his pants.

DANA
He put his paws on my tits so I
busted his balls. I'm the victim!

Jesse stares at her for a moment.

JESSE
I can't tolerate dishonesty.

DANA
Just because they've got money
they don't lie?

INT. KING LOUNGE - DAY

Jesse picks up the pieces of the broken record.

JESSE
'Cause I keep to myself people
think I got something to hide.

Dana shrugs a 'so what?'

JESSE
That photographer you punched
out? Just another opportunist
hoping that I might be someone.

DANA
Are you someone?

JESSE
Would it matter?

DANA
Not so long as I got paid.

JESSE
I'm just an American living in
Britain. By myself. A quiet life.
Just the way I like it.

DANA
No family?

Jesse straightens the Elvis portrait.

JESSE
A lifetime ago.

DANA
But you do have friends?

JESSE
I don't ask for much. Just keep the house clean and get the groceries twice a week. I cook for myself and I make my own bed.
I'll see you tomorrow?

DANA
I got the job?

JESSE
I should warn you: It's August. Nothing happens in this country in August and the papers got to have something to print. I'm always a good target.

DANA
I'm a pretty good shot myself.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

A PAPARAZZI runs from hedge to hedge. Jesse emerges out of the conservatory with Sifu.

SIFU
How you feel today?

JESSE
Lousy.

SIFU
Ha! You are progressing very well, my young friend.

JESSE
But not fast enough, Sifu. I'm a failure. I've failed my family.

The Paparazzi dives into the undergrowth. Dana is there and smashes him with an uppercut.

SIFU
You punish yourself too much. Patience. All things must come.

EXT. GARDEN VERGE - DAY

PAP 2 wearing camouflage, snaps while Jesse and Sifu jog.

JESSE

Look at me, living like a hermit.
Lisa's going to be twenty-one
soon. I should be there for her.

SIFU

But you are here. Thousands of
miles away. Why?

JESSE

You know why. I made a promise to
protect her.

Suddenly Dana's face fills Pap 2's lens.

SIFU

You protect her by your absence.
And you protect yourself.

JESSE

Do I?

SIFU

Remember, to be a great King one
must be a servant to adversity.

Dana's fist flies straight into Pap 2's face.

EXT. OUTDOOR POOL - NIGHT

Jesse and Sifu are floating on their backs. PAP 3 is just
at the edge of the pool, hidden by the darkness.

JESSE

I should've done things
differently. Not been so
frightened of what people
might've said. Damn it Sifu, I'm
the King of Rock 'n' Roll!

SIFU

Forget past. Past gone. Future to
come, not important, it will
come. But present? It is a gift.

From nowhere Dana lands a kick sending Pap 3 into the pool.

SIFU

(to Jesse)
Enjoy life. It not last forever.

INT/EXT. - BATHROOM/GARDEN - DAY

Jesse is getting out the shower in the sights of PAP 4.
Jesse notices Pap 4 and runs to the bathroom window.
Suddenly Pap 4 falls out of a tree landing hard.

DANA (O.C.)
Don't worry he won't make that
mistake again.

Jesse scans the scene finally making Dana out in the
bushes, wearing green with a bow and arrows.

DANA
He'll live.

PAP 4
Urghhh.

DANA
I think.

EXT. KING GARDEN - DAY

Jesse and Sifu are in the lotus position. A butterfly rests
on Jesse's fingertips.

SIFU
To accept life in all its beauty
you must be prepared to let it go.

JESSE
I love it here. So peaceful.

SIFU
Peace. Calm. Tranquillity.

JESSE
Peace. Calm. Tranquillity.

Suddenly, Michael Jackson's 'Bad' comes blasting from the
house. Jesse's eyes open wide, his hand closes into a fist,
crushing the butterfly. Sifu looks at him, disappointed.

JESSE
It was an accident.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Dana mops the floor, her hips gyrating to the music.

JESSE
(shouting over music)
Turn that off!

DANA
What? I can't hear you.

JESSE
I said: Turn that shit off!

Dana shakes her head, turns towards the boom box. Jesse moving forward pratfalls on the wet floor. Dana, oblivious, turns the music down.

DANA
What were you saying?
(seeing him prostrate)
Oh my god. Are you alright?

Sifu appears, helping Dana get Jesse to his feet.

JESSE
(delirious)
Where, wha--. happen'--?

SIFU
Peace. Calm. Tranquillity.

JESSE
Wha--?

SIFU
Peace! Calm! Tranquillity!

JESSE
Peace. Calm. Tranquillity

Sifu nods sagely to Dana. Jesse hobbles back to the garden.

SIFU
(sympathetically to Dana)
Carry on with work.

She turns to the boom box.

SIFU
Best to keep music down.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

The cashier shakes her head and hands the cash card to Dana.

CASHIER
How about paying by cash instead?

INT. BANK COUNTER - DAY

TELLER
That's correct Miss Hyde. Your account is overdrawn by twenty-seven pounds.

DANA

But that's impossible. I was paid yesterday.

The teller presses a couple of computer keys.

TELLER

No. Nope. Nothing. No payments into your account for over a month.

DANA

But my rent's due tomorrow. How am I going to pay my rent?

The teller smiles sympathetically.

TELLER

I'm afraid I have to keep the card.

EXT. KING GARDEN - DAY

Jesse, eyes closed, twirls nun-chucks in each hand. He somersaults and lands in a perfect Crane stance.

DANA (O.S.)

Where's my money?!

JESSE

Y'know, both our jobs would be easier if we respected each other's boundaries.

DANA

I haven't been paid.

JESSE

We're moving into the nineties, sugar. People ain't dealing with cash no more.

DANA

I've checked my bank account.

JESSE

Check it again. My account's all, auto--uh --matic-- er-- cated--

DANA

Automated?

JESSE

Right. Fool proof. Mistake proof.

DANA

Look. I understand there must've been a mistake but I need to be paid now. I can take cash.

JESSE

Pay you twice? I guess making
money is easy. I might've known!
Fool me twice shame on me.

DANA

I'm serious. I haven't been paid!

Jesse looks at the sais in his hand.

JESSE

Is there a death penalty in this
country?

INT. KING HALLWAY - DAY

Jesse frogmarches Dana by the neck to the front door.

DANA

Let me go you moron, or else--

JESSE

Or else what? You'll punch me
out? Should've had my head
examined before I hired a cooky
broad like you.

Jesse opens the front door. Sifu is ready to ring the bell.

SIFU

Jesse King. Payment not go through.

INT. KING STUDY - DAY

In contrast to the rest of the house hundreds of photos
cover almost every patch of wall. Jesse's fingers rest over
a photo of a six year old girl.

JESSE

Forgive me, honey.

He picks up the phone.

INT. SWEET LIBERTY RECEPTION - DAY

Sunshine floods the office. LOUISE, the receptionist,
cradles the phone and files her nails. Her very-mini skirt
just spares her modesty while her bosoms battle for
domination in her low-cut tightly fitting top.

LOUISE

I told him, he wants to go with me
he has to wear a jacket. He expects
me to be a lady then he has to act
like a gentleman and without a
jacket on I ain't screwing him.

TIM GOODALL walks meekly through towards a glass walled office. He grins hello. Louise un-crosses her legs.

LOUISE
Good Morning Mr Goodall.

TIM
Umm, morning Louise.

Inside the glass office THE COLONEL, late seventies, waves his arms in flamboyant conversation with Mike, late twenties, black guy, extravagantly dressed in a Napoleon Bonapart style jacket, and LISA, a virginal blond in a pink cardigan. The Colonel looks at his watch as Goodall walks in.

LOUISE
Hold on a second Mama.
(pressing a button)
Thank you for calling Sweet Liberty Talent, Louise speaking, how can I help you? You wanna speak to who? And you are? --Jesse King? I'm sorry sir but the Colonel doesn't take unsolicited calls. Thank you for calling. Have a nice day.

She clicks the phone back.

LOUISE
Can you believe that? Nah, some a-hole wanting to talk to the Colonel. Hell, even I wanna talk to the Colonel.
(giggles)
Whatever do you mean, mama?

INT. KING STUDY - DAY

Jesse stares helplessly at the limp phone in his hand.

JESSE
Peace. Calm. Tranquillity.

INT. KING LOUNGE - DAY

Dana and Sifu sit staring at each other nursing cups of tea.

DANA
I can't work here anymore.

SIFU
Patience, you are doing well. He like you.

DANA
Like a pig likes clean water!

SIFU

He has been through much. He need someone like you. You have an aura. He will see it soon. And you will see his also.

Suddenly we hear Jesse let out a loud wail.

DANA

You think he's alright?

SIFU

Better be. My rent due too.

INT. KING STUDY - DAY

Jesse snaps his fingers in sudden realisation, turns to the bookshelf running his finger along the books' spines.

JESSE

The code. Where did I put it?

INT. SWEET LIBERTY CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Mike and Lisa sit at opposite ends of a long conference table captivated by the flamboyant Colonel. Goodall sits at a small desk taking notes.

COLONEL

You kids look beautiful together, y'know that? Lisa, I kinda look on you like the daughter I never had and right now I'm just plum pie happy for you. I know if your daddy was around today he'd be jumpin' for joy like a jack rabbit.

Mike look over to Lisa, her faint shy smile reflected in his mirrored sunglasses.

COLONEL

And Mike. Hell, you're pop royalty yourself. This is a match made in heaven. PT Barnham on his finest day couldn't top the spectacular event that will be your nuptials.

MIKE

I know God is blessing me.

COLONEL

Hallelujah!

MIKE

Are we going to have children?

COLONEL

Well son, that's for you two to decide. Just so long as you lovebirds can keep your frisky fingers off of each other.

Lisa folds her arms tightly as Mike haltingly places his hand on her shoulder.

MIKE

We're so in love it feels like our spirits are one with God.

COLONEL

Right you are son, right you are. Let's keep it in spirit 'til the big day. What d'you say?

LISA

That's how Mike likes it.

Goodall's desk phone rings and he picks it up.

COLONEL

Kids, when your two royal houses come together the world will not be able to contain the glory of it all. Your kids are gonna be princes and princesses. Man, I'm as excited as Mike Jordan in a pigmy pear picking party.

Goodall on the other side of the room is on the phone.

GOODALL

Louise, you know no one gets to speak to him.

INT. SWEET LIBERTY RECEPTION - DAY

LOUISE

I know, I know but he said something about initiating emergency protocols. Sounded pretty official. Y'know, like federal?

GOODALL

Federal? Okay. Put him through. This is Timothy Goodall. How can I help you?

INT. KING STUDY/SWEET LIBERTY RECEPTION - DAY

Jesse, hunched over a little desk peers through half moon specs at an exercise book, telephone carefully to his ear.

JESSE

This is Jesse King initiating emergency red protocol: alpha male. I wish to speak to the Colonel.

GOODALL

Uh, Sir? This isn't a good time. Can I have him call you back?

JESSE

Get the goddam Colonel on the phone 'fore I reach down the line and pull out your larynx.

GOODALL

Yessir.

COLONEL

-- and Mike, I know you got a pappy but I feel Like I could be an uncle to you.

(beat)

What is it Goodall?

GOODALL

(whispers)

Sir, it's a Jesse King. I think he's with the FBI or CIA or something.

The Colonel snatches the phone from Goodall.

COLONEL

'Scuse me kids, I just gotta take this. Mike, Goodall'll go through the contract with you.

(to Godall)

Goddam Jesse who?

Goodall shrugs timidly and rushes to gather the papers off his little desk. The Colonel takes the phone, genially smiling to Mike and Lisa as he walks into reception.

INT. SWEET LIBERTY RECEPTION - DAY

Louise smiles at the Colonel. He gives a lascivious wink.

COLONEL

This is the Colonel. Who the goddam hell is this? And if you waste more than a goddam snake shit second of my time I personally will come to your home and piss in your grits.

INT. KING STUDY - DAY

JESSE
Colonel? Praise the Lord. It's me.

COLONEL
(long beat)
Oh shit. Jesse. King.

JESSE
Jesse King? Colonel it's me. Elvis.

COLONEL
No. No. No. Don't say that name!

The Colonel slumps into the sofa, his head in his hands.

COLONEL
Lousie, go paint your toenails.

Lousie waddles out. The Colonel looks over through the glass walls at Mike and Lisa.

COLONEL
Son? It's good to hear your voice again, boy.

JESSE
You too, Sir. I've missed your-- your wisdom.

COLONEL
But son, remember we were never to speak again. Remember that agreement?

JESSE
I know, sir. But an emergency's come up and you're the only one who can help me.

INT. SWEET LIBERTY CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Colonel storms back into the room.

COLONEL
All done and dusted?

MIKE
I guess I'm your boy now Colonel.

COLONEL
Ain't that sweet. Kids I've got a busy schedule ahead so I gotta cut this meeting real short.

He takes Mike and Lisa by the elbows leading them to the door where Louise is waiting with a smile.

COLONEL

Love you both. Bye!

(to Goodall)

Pull the mother fucking King file and get it on my desk in twenty minutes. I wanna know who in England we got handling that account, then I want those tea sipping mother fuckers on the phone five minutes later. Got that asshole? 'Bout time you started earning your keep you string bean bucked-tooth mother fucker.

GOODALL

Right on it Sir.

COLONEL

And I want the Major in Hastings by tomorrow morning Britain time.

GOODALL

The Major?

COLONEL

Yes, The Major, asshole. Put him on stand-by. Can't afford to leave nothing to chance.

GOODALL

Yes sir!

Goodall rushes out.

COLONEL

Louise, hold all my calls
(beat)
and get your sugar coated candy ass in here.

Int. King front door - day

Dana answers the front door to MILES MUNROE, a fop dressed in tweed suit with matching green silk shirt and handkerchief.

MUNROE

Miles Munroe from Ephram Donaldson.

INT. KING DINING ROOM - DAY

Munroe takes books and ledgers from his carpetbag lining them up carefully on the dining table. Jesse watches, pacing.

MUNROE

I will be with you presently. Not good to rush these things.

JESSE

I appreciate that.

Munroe sits down tucking the chair in tight. He slightly straightens the unopened ledger. Again. And again.

MUNROE

Shall we begin?

JESSE

You bet.

Jesse looks at Munroe.

MUNROE

Can I trouble you for some tea?

JESSE

(shouts)

Dana! Get Mr Munroe some tea.

MUNROE

Mister King, can I complement you on your beautiful home. Most exquisitely presented. One wouldn't ordinarily expect an American to have such modestly elegant taste.

JESSE

Thanks.

MUNROE

Do you recognise the common factor in all great civilisations, Mr King?

Jesse shakes his head in bewilderment.

MUNROE

Tea, Mr King, tea! Not necessarily its cultivation; no, no, no. Its consumption. Great Britain, Japan, China, all carved vast industrial and cultural empires while staving of disease and plague all on humble leaves soaked in clean, boiled water.

JESSE

What the hell you talking 'bout?

Dana enters with the tea.

DANA

Tea's up.

MUNROE

Here we are.
Lovely.

Munroe opens the books in quick succession.

MUNROE

Mr King, your accounts are in exemplary order. Your trust fund is supported by a labyrinth of trusts and organisations that I, unfortunately, am not privy to.

KING

So I do have money?

MUNROE

I'd say enough to keep you in the life, modest as it is, that you've grown accustomed to for, oh lets say, six thousand years.

JESSE

Then why can't I pay anyone?

MUNROE

Heh heh. You can pay. You just can't pay.

JESSE

Huh?

MUNROE

Money laundering. The size of the transactions coupled with your trusts' anonymity, has apparently, how would you Yanks say it, spooked the bank. Your bank account is frozen.

Munroe flashes a thin grin then drains his cup.

JESSE

Can it be defrosted?

MUNROE

Unfrozen? Absolutely. We'll take care of everything.

JESSE

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Jesse pumps Munroe's hand enthusiastically.

DANA

More tea?

MUNROE

Thank you.

DANA

How long before the account is active?

MUNROE

(dryly)

Young lady, this meeting is private and confidential.

DANA

I'm also owed money.

JESSE

Dana, this ain't the time.

DANA

I'll bet he's being paid for his services.

Dana spins a ledger round quickly finding the right page.

DANA (CONT.)

A royalty of six, possibly seven percent?

(to Jesse)

You really are very rich.

MUNROE

Young lady, you have no right--

DANA

-- and how come his payments keep on coming. If they worked for me I'd fire their arses--

MUNROE

This is outrageous. Mr King I guarantee your account is up and running by tomorrow morning.

DANA

You have to learn you can't trust-

-

JESSE

Dana that's enough! Jesus girl, know your place.

DANA

Sure. Sure. More tea?

INT. HALLWAY/BATHROOM - DAY

Jesse in bathrobe, yawning, rubbing eyes, mechanically strolls into bathroom, lifts toilet lid and pisses. Slowly he turns around to see Dana lying in the bath.

DANA

I'd like a little privacy here if you don't mind.

JESSE

Oh, sorry.

He flushes and quickly runs out. Dana sinks lower into the bubbles. Suddenly the bathroom door bursts open.

JESSE

What the hell d'you think you're doing?

DANA

Walking the dog? What are you doing?

JESSE

Why are you taking a bath here?

DANA

My ex-landlord let me take my stuff before he kicked me out. Taking the bath would've been pushing it.

JESSE

You'll be paid in a couple of days.

DANA

Gee Mr King, you're so generous. Look, I don't want to be here any more than you want me here but for the time being let's just agree to give each other some space.

Jesse stares open mouthed at her.

DANA

Close the door behind you.

He walks out, defeated. Then re-opens the door.

DANA

Thank you!

He shuts the door quickly and storms down the hall.

JESSE

Peace! Calm! Tranquillity!

INT. KING KITCHEN DAY

Dana's fries eggs, sausages and bacon in a frying pan.
Jesse trudges in. News plays on a portable TV.

DANA
Never cooked breakfast for you
before. How d'you like your bacon?

Jesse picks up the TV and drops it in the bin. He grabs a
bowl, pours some muesli and milk and strolls into the garden.

DANA
You ain't getting rid of me that
easy buster.

The buzzer rings.

INT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

DANA
(finger down on intercom)
Yes?

POSTMAN (O.S.)
Special delivery for Jesse King.

DANA
Hold a second.

EXT. KING DRIVE - DAY

She meets the POSTMAN halfway up the path.

POSTMAN
Just a small package.

Dana signs the forms as the PAPERBOY rides up to the gate.

DANA
Don't you dare throw them.

As the paperboy cycles up the path, the GASMAN starts
through the gates and up the path.

GASMAN
Come to read the meter.

DANA
You see? This is how it should
always be. Synchronise like this
every day guys, and the world
will be a happier place.

The paperboy and postman leave.

DANA
I'm not sure where the meter is.

GASMAN
'S okay. It's just round back.

DANA
I'll leave you to it then. Push
the button on the right to let
yourself out. Make sure to pull
the gate shut.

GASMAN
Will do.

EXT. GARDEN VERGE - DAY

Jesse sits at an easel, painting. Dana approaches.

JESSE
Finished already?

DANA
You're a man who just wants peace
in his life. I can get that.

Jesse continues to paint.

DANA
I'm here to clean up after you.
That's my job. I still haven't
been paid yet--

JESSE
I told you --

DANA
I know, I know. But that
accountant, probably his whole
firm-- I know how they work. You
have money you don't care about
and they know you don't care.

Jesse shrugs. Dana hands him his letter.

DANA
It's your credit card.

JESSE
You opened it?

Dana looks at him.

JESSE
Sorry.

DANA

Despite everything-- I like working here. I'm sorry if I'm making it difficult for you.

JESSE

No. It's my fault. You've done everything I've asked. You're doing a great job.

DANA

There's too much anger in the world for us to be adding to it.

JESSE

You sound like Sifu. He been getting to you? Maybe this world does need a little love.

DANA

It's not all gloom and doom.

She holds up a newspaper. Headline screams: WACKO TO WED.

JESSE

The so-called king of pop?

DANA

Even he's found true love.

JESSE

She marrying him for money?

DANA

She's just as rich. Maybe richer.

She comes over with the pages open.

JESSE

He used to be good when he was with his brothers. He's nuts now.

Jesse reads. The smile on his face slowly disintegrates. His face gets redder and redder. He picks up the stool and smashes it into the painting.

DANA

What the hell are you doing?

JESSE

Gotta call the colonel.

Kicking the easel out of his way he marches to the house.

DANA

What the bloody hell's wrong?

Suddenly the ground shakes throwing them off balance.

Then BOOOOOM. His house EXPLODES.

As the dust settles Dana looks wild eyed at Jesse.

JESSE

That's it. I'm going to Memphis.

EXT. GARDEN VERGE - DAY

Jesse reads the newspaper on a verge overlooking the debris. Firemen go through the motions. Sifu approaches.

SIFU

How you feel?

JESSE

(head in paper)

Terrible. Sifu, I've got to do something. I feel so helpless.

SIFU

Face reality. Move on with life. Rebuild.

JESSE

How can I. She's my baby.

SIFU

You can always get another.

JESSE

Are you crazy? She means everything to me. I guess I should've told her that.

SIFU

(beat)

We talking about same thing?

Jesse hands Sifu the newspaper.

SIFU

Ah so.

POLICE 1 walks with Dana towards Jesse.

POLICE 1

Only you two in the house?

DANA

Shit! The Gas man

POLICE 1

Gas man?

DANA

Guy came to check the gas. He
might-- oh god. Oh god.

JESSE

There was a man in the house?

DANA

Oh my god.

A PLAIN CLOTHES nods an affirmative to a colleague and joins Dana, Jesse, Sifu and the two uniforms.

PLAIN CLOTHES

We've got some good news--

JESSE

Good news? Break out the
champagne, it's a good news day!

PLAIN CLOTHES

--and some bad news.

JESSE

There you go--

PLAIN CLOTHES

The good news: No body.

DANA

He made it out? Thank god.

PLAIN CLOTHES

The Bad news is we've found
remains of crude-but-effective
charges. Your man worked fast,
efficiently and wasn't too
bothered about covering his
tracks. That was no gas man.

(beat)

Do you have any enemies Mr King?

JESSE

I do now.

INT. AIRPORT TELEPHONE BOOTH - DAY

The Gasman fixes his false-but-convincing moustache, a stack of ten pence pieces on the coin box.

INT. STRIP CLUB - DAY

The Colonel and Mike drink bourbon and orange juice respectively as a stripper gyrates on their table.

COLONEL

Son, I'm pretty sure her real name isn't Peekaboo Lipps.

A minder whispers in the Colonel's ear.

INT. STRIP CLUB BACK OFFICE/AIRPORT PHONE BOOTH - DAY

The Colonel is on the phone, face red with rage.

COLONEL

You did what, Major?

GASMAN

I followed my orders, 'Colonel'. Target King terminated.

COLONEL

I told you to 'await' my orders, Major. Await my orders.

GASMAN

You hired me because I'm the best at what I do. Correct?

COLONEL

But everything was diddly.

GASMAN

No. Everything is diddly.

The Colonel downs a bourbon.

COLONEL

Well. I guess.
No harm done.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Dana struggles with the weight of the suitcases. Jesse wears dark glasses and a baseball cap.

DANA

Tell me again why we're going to America?

JESSE

Unfinished business.

DANA

Unfinished business? Your house is still smoking, I still haven't been paid.

(dropping the bags)

Someone tried to kill you.

JESSE

Quit belly aching. You're getting a free trip. You got new clothes, new shoes, perfume. What more do you want?

DANA

My head examined.

JESSE

Look, I ain't never travelled by myself before and-- well--.

DANA

Why didn't you ask Sifu?

JESSE

He's an illegal. Look, I ain't proud. You two are the only ones I trust in this goddam country.

DANA

You're saying you need me?

JESSE

Yes ma'am.

DANA

You desperately need me?

JESSE

You want me to beg? I. Need. You.

DANA

Then how about you carry some of these bags?

JESSE

Gotta make a phone call first.

CUT TO:

The Gasman striding in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

DANA

Hold on a second. These shoes are killing me.

Dana fixes her shoes. Jesse turns, bumping into the Gasman.

GASMAN
 (not giving a glance)
 Watch where you're going, bub.

Jesse brushes it off and enters the booth.

CUT TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB BACK ROOM / SWEET LIBERTY RECEPTION - DAY

The phone is ringing. The colonel salutes a framed photo of Elvis with a glass of bourbon then swigs from the bottle. He picks up the ringing phone.

COLONEL
 What?

LOUISE
 It's that Jesse King again. You know that guy who called yesterday from the CIA? He didn't have a password or nothin' this time. You want me to put him through.
 (beat)
 Colonel?

The colonel stares at the portrait.

LOUISE
 I'm putting him through.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT PHONE BOOTH / STRIP CLUB BACK ROOM - DAY

JESSE
 Colonel? It's me.

COLONEL
 Son? I thought-- I mean, I heard--

Jesse looks forlorn at the open newspaper in front of him.

JESSE
 Yes sir. I heard too.

COLONEL
 Are you-- are you alright? Are you in-- in-- one piece.

JESSE

I'm broken up inside. We had an agreement, I know, but this is way too important for me to be cooling my heels. I'll be on the next flight home.

Jesse hangs up.

COLONEL

Son? Son?

INT. AIRPLANE ENTRANCE - DA]

Just ahead of Jesse and Dana is BLONDE with two young children, a six year old KID and an EIGHT YEAR OLD.

BLONDE

Give him back his pencil.

The six year old stabs the older sibling with the pencil.

DANA

Happy families.

Taking Jesse's boarding pass, the square jawed, firm-shouldered, blonde stewardess HELGA BRAUN smiles.

HELGA

Seven B Sir.

Dana submits her pass.

HELGA

Sixty-eight E.

Dana sits between a woman with a crying baby and a FAT WOMAN.

FAT WOMAN

Is this your first time flying?
It's mine. I'm not that scared really. I don't think the plane is going to crash or anything but when you think about it what really keeps them in the air? I mean it's like science fiction isn't it? But it must be safer than the boat. And quicker! Personally I'd rather die in a big ball of flames than drown slowly, or get eaten by sharks. Wouldn't you?

(MORE)

FAT WOMAN (cont'd)

I read somewhere, or did I see it on the telly, actually it might well have been on the radio, radio's really good for statistical information you know-- Well anyway what I heard, or read, or saw, whichever it was, was that you're more likely to get kicked to death by a donkey than die in a plane crash. I keep well away from donkeys so I think I'm safe. Do you know any donkeys?

DANA

(getting up)

Excuse me.

INT. FIRST CLASS

A steward pours some champagne.

JESSE

No thanks. I don't drink.

SUSAN, a beautifully coiffeured woman, turns and smiles.

SUSAN

You don't know what you're missing. I have it from a good source that it's a fifty-six. We're being spoiled today.

JESSE

Fifty-six is good?

SUSAN

Last time I flew they tried to pass a Cava. Can you believe? So what is it? Business or pleasure?

JESSE

A bit of both.

SUSAN

I'm Susan by the way.

JESSE

Jesse.

Three seats ahead the Gasman turns around.

SUSAN

Well, it's a long flight, Jesse.

JESSE

Nine hours.

SUSAN

There are ways to make it--
pleasurable.

CUT TO

Dana tries to get into first class but is stopped by Helga.

HELGA

We'll be taking off soon. Please
go back to your seat.

DANA

But my friend is in there.

HELGA

That's first class.

DANA

I guessed that when I saw you
guarding the curtain, Frau Braun.

HELGA

If you don't get back to your
seat I'll recommend to the
captain that you be taken off.

Helga draws the curtain dividing the classes.

CUT TO:

SUSAN

The nerve of some people. I could
never travel economy. I don't
know why they do it when it's so
much more comfortable here.

JESSE

Yeah. It just a different class
of folk this side of the curtain.

The Gasman pulls out a pen, unscrews it carefully laying
the pieces out on his pull out tray. The Kid looks at the
Gasman.

KID

What are you doing?

GASMAN

Shut up.

CUT TO:

Dana squeezes past the fat woman to get into her seat.

FAT WOMAN

Where did you get to?

DANA

I was looking for a donkey.

INTERCOM

Ladies and gentlemen. I'm Captain Ramone. Please observe the seat belt and no smoking signs as we prepare to take off.

SUSAN

(whispers to Jesse)

I never fasten my seat belt. It makes me really horny.

She lifts her arms slightly over her waist and, true enough, her seat belt isn't fastened.

JESSE

Living dangerously.

SUSAN

Just wait till we're at cruising speed. Tell me, are you a bad BAD boy, Jesse?

JESSE

No ma'am. I'm a good boy. Real good.

SUSAN

We'll see how good you really are at fifty thousand feet.

JESSE

What happens then?

She crosses her legs, puts her head back, tilts it towards Jesse, licks her lips and smiles.

CUT TO:

Dana trying to get comfortable.

FAT WOMAN

--gravity compresses the air in the cabin and contracts your bladder and your stomach. It's the airline's secret. That's why they can get away feeding the passengers such small portions. So I came prepared.

She open a bag to reveal a mess of pie and mashed potatoes in a tupperware. She uses the safety card as a scoop to shovel the muck into her mouth.

FAT WOMAN
 Want some? I made it myself.

CUT TO:

The seat belt and no smoking light PINGS out.

INTERCOM
 Weather conditions are beautiful
 so we should have a clean journey
 to Memphis. We're cruising at
 about fifty thousand feet. The
 seat belt signs are off. Stretch
 your legs and enjoy the flight.

Susan moves over to Jesse seat and whispers in his ear.

SUSAN
 I'm going to the little girls'
 room. Join me in five minutes.
 Knock three times.

She strokes his chest and shoulders as she catwalks off.

The Gasman takes a capsule and carefully empties its
 contents into the skinny 'ink' cartridge.

CUT TO:

Dana approaching first class.

HELGA
 Yes?

DANA
 I want to talk with my friend?

HELGA
 (raising her voice)
 I am not going to tell you again,
 this is first class. You are in
 economy class.

The gasman reassembles the pen.

Jesse turns around.

JESSE
 Dana! Get over here girl.

Dana, fuming, marches past the Helga.

The Gasman glances backwards quickly turning his head as
 Dana approaches.

DANA

You prick! I should've known you'd want to stick with your own kind. When we land I want you to get me a ticket on the first plane back home.

The Gasman reaches for the pen. It's gone.

JESSE

Calm down. It was a real mean thing for me to do. I wanna make amends right now.

(clicking his fingers)
Stewardess?

HELGA

Yes sir?

JESSE

I'd like another seat in this cabin for my friend here.

The Gasman looks around frantically. The kid smiles.

The stewardess looks agape at Dana.

HELGA

I'm afraid this section is at capacity. There are no more seats available.

Helga smiles smugly.

The kid slams the pen hard into the Gasman's leg.

JESSE

(whispers)
How about if I swapped seats?

CUT TO:

The fat woman squeezing up the aisle with her plastic bags.

FAT WOMAN

That seat is a little tight. If they made them with a little wider it would be a whole lot more comfortable and they'd probably get more customers.

JESSE

Just a second. I'll be back.

CUT TO:

INT. PLANE TOILET

Susan is naked apart from her pearls in the large executive-style washroom. Three knocks on the door.

SUSAN
It's open.

JESSE
(entering)
Woah. Mamma.

SUSAN
You like?

Jesse averts his eyes-- a little.

JESSE
Jeez Ma'am. I-- Woah.

SUSAN
Well what are you waiting for
Captain America? Make a move.

JESSE
Ma'am. This just ain't me.

SUSAN
You're not going anywhere
handsome.

JESSE
(sighs)
Don't say I didn't warn you.

He takes her scarf and blindfolds her.

SUSAN
Oooh. Kinky.

JESSE
No peeking.

He quietly exits.

JESSE
(to Helga)
Uh Stewardess, I think
you're needed in there.

Helga suspiciously opens the toilet door and closes it behind her. Suddenly there's a scream from the toilet. Two other flight crew rush to the door as Helga, red faced, squeezes through the door trying to fix her hair.

INT. ECONOMY CLASS

Jesse is rocking the crying baby to sleep.

JESSE.

She's not used to flying.

Dana looks at him and smiles. He smiles back.

In first class The Gasman's head is drooped, his eyes closed. The Six year old stares straight ahead guiltily.

DISSOLVE TO]

INT. CREEPY WOODS - NIGHT

A wolf howls. A beautiful girl runs from tree to tree. A dozen or so vampires appear out of nowhere. The girl sprints for her life. Suddenly Mike leaps down catches her arm and swings her into his body. The vampires hiss at him. He jumps up onto his tip toes, swings his leg around, grabs his crotch and opens wide his mouth.

DIRECTOR (O.C.)

--and cut.

The vampires lurk off in one direction, the girl in another and Mike walks towards the DIRECTOR emerging from behind the powerful stage lights.

DIRECTOR

Great work. Just brilliant.

MIKE

Thank you. I want this song to touch the hearts and minds of the world. Especially the children.

DIRECTOR

That's what we're here to do.

An ASSISTANT hands Micheal a drink.

ASSISTANT

Someone to see you sir.

MIKE

(shielding his eyes)
Can someone turn the lights out?

DIRECTOR

Hey Sparks, turn off the goddam lights! No offence Mike.

The lights go off and the Colonel, Lisa and Goodall appear.

COLONEL

My boy.

MIKE
Hi Colonel. Hi Lisa.

LISA
Hi Mike.

Mike hesitantly, awkwardly, kisses Lisa on the cheek.

COLONEL
Oh stop that you two. Can't keep
your hands off each other for a
second can you?

LISA
I like the video, Mike.

MIKE
It was terrible. Those vampires
aren't scary enough. How can I
reach the kids if the vampires
can't dance to beat. I knew I
should've asked Stephen to
direct. This is going to flop.

LISA
But you were good.

MIKE
I was wasn't I.

Mike dances without music. The Colonel claps.

COLONEL
'Scuse me kids.

GOODALL
Uh, Lisa, do you need anything?

LISA
No. I'm good thanks, Tim.

Goodall nods and joins the Colonel.

COLONEL
We got a problem, boy.

GOODALL
What kind of problem?

COLONEL
A seven hundred million dollar
problem 'cause that's what those
two kids are gonna be worth when
they get hitched, and I wanna
make sure that I keep getting me
my forty percent.

GOODALL
But Mike's already signed sir.

COLONEL
You read the contract, Goodall.
Hell you wrote the contract. It's
only binding--

GOODALL
--when he marries Lisa.

Goodall smiles thinly. Mike pirouettes.

COLONEL
If, asshole, if he marries Lisa.

GOODALL
What's could change that.

COLONEL
A dead man. Jesse King.

INT. US AIRPORT IMIGRATION - NIGHT

CLERK opens the passports scrutinising the two travellers.

CLERK
Take off your hat and shades.

Jesse slowly complies. He keeps his head down.

CLERK
(scrutinising face)
Jesse King.

Jesse reaches out for the passport.

CLERK
You look familiar. You on TV? A
cop show?

JESSE
Are we done?

CLERK
(calling his colleague)
Who does he look like?

CLERK 2
Oh my god. I'm a huge fan. You're
that guy off that show.

CLERK
Yeah. Yeah, yeah. You play--
whats-his-name.

CLERK 2

I'm gonna wet myself.

The queue builds up behind them. Jesse desperately tries to hide his face.

Further back the gasman shrugs off help from a pair of stewards and staggers to the end of the queue.

GASMAN

I told you, I'm okay, Now piss off.

The Fat woman is in front of him.

FAT WOMAN

Is sleepy head all rested? We were all wondering what kind of job you do to get you so tired.

The Gasman swipes the sweat off his brow.

FAT WOMAN

I mean you were really out for the count. I was thinking slyly that maybe you needed a little kiss to wake you up.

The Gasman notices Jesse ahead.

FAT WOMAN

And then I thought, no, let him sleep. You must lead such a hectic life commuting back and forth around the world. Me? I'm just a housewife. First time on a plane.

Looking around making sure no security spy him he pulls out five different coloured passports.

FAT WOMAN

Oooh. Five passports. I've only got the one. But they do say the British passports's one of the best.

The Gasman quickly pockets the passports but it's too late. He is spotted by security. They close in.

Up ahead Jesse and Dana look back.

DANA

Give them an autograph.

JESSE

Huh?

DANA

He'll be happy to.

Clerk 2 scrambles a pen and paper. Jesse scribbles a few lines, puts on his cap and shades. Dana grabs the passports. She looks at his photo.

DANA

Well, Mr King, who are you?

JESSE

I have no idea.

EXT. MIA - NIGHT

Jesse finds a telephone booth.

JESSE

You got quarter?

Dana looks at him.

JESSE

Never mind.

DANA

Hey, I think that's us.

It's Goodall, looking uncomfortable holding a card scrawled in green ink: JESSE KING.

JESSE

You think.

INT. GOODALL'S CAR - NIGHT

The rickety car jangles loudly as if it could explode at any second. The window winder comes of in Dana's hand.

JESSE

Where's the Colonel.

GOODALL

He'll meet us later. He's really anxious to meet you.

JESSE

How long till we get home?

GOODALL

My instructions were to take you to the Bonaventure.

JESSE

What?

GOODALL

Those are my orders, sir.

Jesse stares at Goodall.

GOODALL

I've read your file, sir.

DANA

You have a file, eh? Very cloak and dagger. And here I am sitting in the back of a car-- with two strange men-- on a dark road-- in the deep south.

Jesse looks straight ahead. It starts raining.

JESSE

Who else knows?

GOODALL

Just me and the Colonel.

DANA

Knows what? Sounds like you killed--

No one says anything

DANA

You killed someone. Didn't you? That's why you've been in hiding.

JESSE

Hush girl.

DANA

Answer me.

JESSE

(to Goodall)

How long till we arrive?

DANA

Answer me you shit.

JESSE

How long Goodall?

DANA

Stop the car!

JESSE

Keep driving, kid. What the hell's gotten into you girl.

DANA

Stop the fucking car right now!

Screeech. The car comes to a halt. Dana fumbles with the lock and flies out into the torrential rain. She backs away slowly pointing, rapidly getting drenched.

DANA

I want to know what's going on, and I want to know right now.

JESSE

Get back in the car Dana. Please.

DANA

Not a chance Mister King-- if that really is your name. I want to know what's going on.

Jesse walks out into the rain.

DANA

Keep back.

JESSE

Dana, please--

DANA

I said keep back.

JESSE

I have a daughter.

DANA

What? What are you talking about?

JESSE

My daughter. My beautiful baby girl is in trouble. I haven't seen her for-- for too many years. And now-- now I gotta help her before it's too late.

DANA

You haven't killed anyone?

JESSE

Nobody's dead.

DANA

Someone tried to kill you, for god's sake. Your house blew up.

JESSE

That was in England. Those pap jerks went too far. I'll deal with them when I get back. But now, I got to save my daughter.

Dana looks at Goodall. He puts his finger to his head and spins it round indicating to Jesse.

Dana, soaked to the skin, shakes her head laughing.

DANA

Stupid stupid stupid.

JESSE

I need you. Please get back in.

GOODALL

Don't get back in the car.

JESSE

What?

GOODALL

We're here.

Across the road the neon light of the Bonaventure Motel.

INT. BONAVENTURE - NIGHT

Dana and Goodall burst into the dingy motel reception. ENUS, the desk clerk's gaze doesn't shift from the TV.

ENUS

Only got one room. Room's only got one bed. Twenty-two a night.

Jesse turns to Goodall.

JESSE

I thought the Colonel made all the arrangements. Where is he?

DANA

Who the hell is this Colonel?

ENUS

Everybody knows the Colonel and he ain't made no 'rangements.

JESSE

When's the Colonel gonna be here.

GOODALL

In the morning.

JESSE
You said he'd be here later.

GOODALL
That is later.

JESSE
You messing with me boy?

GOODALL
I swear I'm just following
instructions.

JESSE
Okay, we're outta here.

ENUS
(still glued to the TV)
Nearest hotel's 'bout sixty miles
up yonder through to Jillan's
county. Y'all can drive but no
guarantee it'll be accommodatin'.
Might wanna phone first.

DANA
Where's the phone?

DESK CLERK
Phone's broke.

JESSE
(sighs)
Goodall, go get the bags.

DANA
What about food? You do food?

ENUS
Diner's next door.

DANA
Now we're getting somewhere.

ENUS
Diner's closed. Opens for
breakfast at six.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

ENUS
Don't look like much 'cause it
ain't much.

DANA
You're really selling it.

ENUS

Don't need to sell it, you
already bought it. What the three
o' you do in here's your's own
business.

Goodall struggles in with the bags.

ENUS

But if you all need a fourth.

Goodall slams the door in Enus' face.

JESSE

You wanna tell me what's going
on? I didn't come ten thousand
miles to sleep in a roach room.
Where's the goddam Colonel?

GOODALL

Sir. Please calm down.

JESSE

I AM CALM!

DANA

Goodall. When's this Colonel guy
going to show up.

GOODALL

Tomorrow morning. I promise.

DANA

Alright. Alright. nothing we can
do till then. Let's just go to
bed and--

They all look at the bed.

GOODALL

I'll be in the car. See you both
in the morning.

Goodall leaves.

DANA

Go on. Take the bed.

JESSE

The bed's big enough for two. We
know the boundaries.

DANA

Right.

JESSE

Good.

DANA

Okay.

JESSE

Right.

Dana strips off. Jesse quickly turns his back. Dana surreptitiously grabs a knife and dives under the covers.

Jesse takes off his shoes and lies on top of the covers.

DANA

Good night.

She turns out the bedside lamp.

JESSE

G'night.

DANA

What's your daughter's name?

JESSE.

(beat)

Lisa.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Light streams through the cracks in the curtains. There's a banging on the door. Dana is jolted from her sleep.

VOICE OUTSIDE DOOR

Open the goddam door or I'm gonna break it down.

Dana looks over to Jesse. He's not in the bed but near the door holding a lamp, ready to strike. She checks the knife.

VOICE OUTSIDE DOOR

One more chance you punks or we come in guns-a-blazing.

Jesse slowly removes the chain and latch.

VOICE OUTSIDE DOOR

I'm gonna count to three--

Jesse swings open the door lamp held high. It's Goodall and the Colonel, huge grin on his face.

COLONEL

My boy. My boy. Look at you. All grewed up and no one to love ya.

The colonel grabs Jessy and gives him a bear hug. Dana comes slowly to the door.

COLONEL
Or maybe not. You guys hungry?
I'm real hungry. Let's eat.

INT. PETE'S DINER - DAY

Dana, Jesse, and the Colonel are squeezed into a booth.

COLONEL
My boy. My boy. Look at you. You
look strong enough to rassle a
gorilla.

The waitress appears.

WAITRESS
What'll it be?

COLONEL
Shredded three cheese, bacon, and
mushrooms in a three egg
omelette, homefries and a pile a
Pete's pancakes.

DANA
Three egg omelette, bacon,
mushrooms, chives, sausages and
toast, please.

JESSE
Just a bowl of muesli for me.

The Colonel looks at Jesse. The waitress looks at the
colonel. The colonel looks at the waitress.

COLONEL
Just order on menu, son.

JESSE
You got anything vegetarian?

COLONEL
He'll have the eight ounce steak
two eggs hash brown and toast.
I'm still looking after you son.

DANA
So you're the Colonel? I'm
curious. Are you still
commissioned?

COLONEL
A military rank is not a thing to
be treating with disrespect,
little missy.

DANA

The name's Dana. So 'Colonel'
where've you seen action. Nam?

JESSE

Now's not the time, Dana.

DANA

What about Korea?

COLONEL

Woohee, little missy --

DANA

World war two.
(wide eyed)
World war one?

JESSE

Dana.

DANA

No way you were in the Crimea.
American civil war?

JESSE

Dana!

COLONEL

Son, I hope I'm not being
discourteous to your young friend
here, but we need to speak alone.

COLONEL

(tipping his hat)
Missy.

They move to another booth. Goodall runs into the diner.

GOODALL

Sir, it's all arranged. Mr King,
you have a suite at the Marriot.

COLONEL

Good boy. Now go keep Missy Diana
company while us big boys talk.

Goodall joins Dana.

DANA

I've known your boss for an hour
and I hate him already.

GOODALL

He's an acquired taste.

DANA
What about Jesse?

GOODALL
What about him?

DANA
He needs help.

Goodall looks bewildered.

DANA
Professional help.

CUT TO:

COLONEL
Son, if you go home they'll be
riots in the street. They'll tear
you limb from limb.

JESSE
But I got to see Lisa.

COLONEL
Don't you understand, son? You're
dead. The world thinks you're
dead. Lisa thinks you're dead.
And apart from Jesus Christ and
Lazarus no one ever comes back
from the dead. Not even the king
of rock and roll.

JESSE
But once I show 'em I'm not--

COLONEL
They'll stone you for deceiving
them. They'll burn the records.
They'll burn the photos. They'll
burn the movies. Then they'll
burn you.

JESSE
She can't marry that guy.

COLONEL
Son, I've tried talking to her.
But what can I do? Lisa's over
eighteen. She don't listen to a
word I say. You know how kids
are. I tried to be like the
father she never had, but son
it's like holding a skunk by the
tail. It either bites you or
pisses in your face.

He touches Jesse's hand.

COLONEL (CONT'D)
I tried to raise her as my own.
How could I compete with you?
She's a lost cause now.

JESSE
And Mike?

COLONEL
Prize A jerk-off. They deserve
each other. They've shackled up
together in his fortress.

Jesse smashes his fork into his plate.

JESSE
I've got to do something.

The two men fall silent, looking away from each other.

COLONEL
Son, I just had an idea.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - DAY

The Colonel raises his bourbon glass, laughing.

GOODALL
You're going to let him disrupt
the wedding? What about the forty
percent?

COLONEL
Mike'll sign with me whether he
gets married or not. I got
another plan. I'm so excited I
could break dance.

GOODALL
Are you going to tell me?

COLONEL
This plan's too big. Your teeny
brain couldn't handle it.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

Dana strolls into Jesse's suite.

DANA
Don't you lock your door?

JESSE (O.C.)
If you can afford a room here you
don't need to steal.

DANA
(taking it all in)
Well, this job has it's perks.

JESSE (O.C.)
It ain't all fun and games.

Jesse comes out the bathroom dressed in an all black combat uniform and his face boot polish black. Dana is dumbstruck.

JESSE
I've got a daughter to save.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - NIGHT

The Colonel and Jesse clink their glasses together. Jesse's dressed in his combat gear.

COLONEL
To success.

The colonel watches as Jesse necks downs his bourbon.

JESSE
This is crazy. I don't even know her. What gives me the right to come back into her life after more than ten years and destroy it? Who am I to do that?

COLONEL
You're her father. You love her.

He hands Jesse a grappling hook.

COLONEL
Make her proud, son.

The car stops outside a fifteen foot wall.

COLONEL
Welcome to Wonderland.

Jesse checks the grappling hook and rope.

JESSE
He sleeps at the rear?

COLONEL
There or in the snake house.
(beat)
Just kidding, son.

Goodall, the driver, turns around.

GOODALL

All clear.

COLONEL

Godspeed son. We'll be waiting
right here for ya.

EXT. WONDERLAND ESTATE - NIGHT

Clambering over, Jesse cuts his arm deep on the razor wire.

JESSE

Damn it.

He lands running. He gets to a moat surrounding the house.
He takes a run up. He stops short, shaking his head.

JESSE

No way.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE - NIGHT

COLONEL

Alrighty Goodall. We're off.

GOODALL

But what about Mister King?

COLONEL

What about him?

EXT. WONDERLAND ESTATE - NIGHT

Jesse puts his arm in the moat to wash off the blood.
Suddenly a crocodile lunges out of the water at him.

JESSE

Jesus Christ!

He peers across the dark water. More crocodiles.

JESSE

And you wanna marry my daughter?

He runs towards the front. Security that side. He runs the
perimeter in the other direction. Ignoring the KEEP OUT
sign he scales the wire. His pace doesn't let up until--
he's face to face with a lion. It growls. It's not alone.

JESSE

Peace. Calm. Tranquillity.

The lions takes a step forward. Jesse takes a step back.

JESSE

Shit.

He runs back the way he came but faster and gets to the fence just as a lion leaps.

JESSE

Shit. Shit. Shit. Now what?

A light goes out at the far end of the house.

JESSE

Got you.

He returns for the grappling hook, and swings it across the moat. Once taut he sprints across the one inch thick makeshift bridge. The crocs leap up, jaws snapping.

INT. MIKE'S MANSION - NIGHT

Jesse slips through a window. Up the stairs cautiously. Opens a door. Pitch black. Jesse finds a switch. Light. A dozen children are sound asleep in a huge bed.

JESSE

What the hell?

The end of a rifle barrel is pressed against Jesse's head.

MIKE

Stop right there, you sicko.

Jesse puts up his hands.

JESSE

Easy.

MIKE

Move away from the door.

Jesse spins kicking the gun out of Mike's hands. Mike lets out a high pitched HOWL. He grabs his crotch and swings his foot WHACK into Jesses's face.

JESSE

Ouch.

Jesse can't land a blow as Mike moon-walks, struts and dances at lightning speed, throwing in slaps and kicks.

MIKE

Yee hee.

JESSE

Enough of this.

Jesse closes his eyes and throws a punch.

DISSOLVE TO:

Jesse balanced on the rope over the moat holding Mike, slowly regaining consciousness, by his ankle.

JESSE

I'm gonna say this only once.

Mike begins to squirm. The crocodiles leap up.

MIKE

Don't kill me.

JESSE

You will not marry Lisa.

MIKE

It's off. It's off.

From a window we see Lisa looking down.

LISA

Mike!

JESSE

Lisa!

LISA

Help! Security! Help!

A spot light targets Jesse. He flings Mike on the far side of the moat and untangles the hook.

MIKE

Get him. Get him.

Jesse punches Mike out again and sprints across the moat using the crocs as stepping stones. He darts to the wall, as automatic weapons try to pick him off. Grappling hook up Jesse's over in seconds. He lands hard on the other side.

JESSE

Colonel!

The sound of sirens. Machine gun fire from off the wall.

JESSE

(frantically)

Peace! Calm! Tranquillity!

Jesse desperately darts down the road. Goodall's beat up Mustang pulls up.

DANA

Get in.

Dana is in the back. Jesse flops back, exhausted.

DANA
So. How was your night?

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Dana is swabbing Jesse's back with iodine. Goodall's on the phone. TV playing in the background.

DANA
You're crazy you know?

JESSE
(to Goodall)
What happened to the Colonel?

GOODALL
He-- um-- got an important call,
a flash meeting he had to attend.

DANA
In the middle of the night?

GOODALL
It happens.

DANA
You could have been killed.

JESSE
But I wasn't.

Mike's face flashes on tv. He has a black eye.

JESSE
Shhh. Turn it up Goodall.

MIKE (ON TV)
After months of reflection, I
have decided, with a heavy heart,
to break my engagement with Lisa.
That's all. Thank you.

On TV, he steps back as the media scrums.

Jesse looks at Dana and smiles. He leans back on the bed exhausted. He closes his eyes as she strokes his jet black hair, considerably longer than when we first saw him. His sideboards have grown too.

DANA
You're nuts. You do know that?

JESSE
I love my daughter.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Jesse and Dana eat breakfast of steak and eggs. The TV is on in the background.

DANA
What now your majesty?

Jesse smiles. Then quickly frowns.

JESSE
I don't know. I guess I got to get to know my daughter. I better call the colonel.

DANA
I don't trust the colonel.

JESSE
I don't care.

Jesse picks up the phone and starts dialling.

DANA
Hey! Look. It's Lisa. And the Colonel on TV.

Jesse slides back into his chair, eyes glued to the TV.

COLONEL (ON TV)
This has been a particularly traumatic time for Lisa, but Mike understood that matters of the heart cannot be fathomed.

JESSE
Told you the colonel would come through. Told you!

COLONEL (ON TV)
And even though I understand Mike's grief, if love is not present it just ain't present. What we, Lisa and I, wanna say is that we have loved each other from afar and now we feel we should let the world know.

JESSE
What? What did he just say?

COLONEL (ON TV)
We're getting married.

The breakfast table smashes into the TV.

INT. SWEET LIBERTY CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The Colonel has his arm around Lisa's waist. Goodall is standing in the corner, glum. Camera's flash as the media jockey for position.

REPORTER 1
Isn't it a bit soon after your
break up, Lisa?

COLONEL
Who can question the fickle
finger of fortune? The past is
past. The future's forever.

REPORTER 2
When's the big day Lisa?

COLONEL
We don't see the sense of having
a long courtship, we just wanna
get to our happiness as soon as
we can. Ain't that right honey?

REPORTER 1
What about a pre-nup.

COLONEL
When it's true love why sully it
with paperwork.

He slaps a big wet kiss on a surprised Lisa.

COLONEL
That's all folks.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Dana's on the phone. Jesse paces.

DANA
It's ringing.
(beat)
Hello. I want to speak to--
(beat)
It's a recorded message.

She presses the speaker button.

PHONE (COLONEL'S VOICE)
 --to leave a congratulatory
 message for Lisa and the colonel
 do so after the--

The smashed TV crashes down on the phone.

JESSE
 Let's go.

DANA
 Where?

JESSE
 Graceland.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY/FORECOURT - DAY

The Desk Clerk looks Jesse and Dana up and down.

DESK CLERK
 Your card has been refused.

DANA
 But that's impossible.

DESK CLERK
 No, it is very possible.

JESSE
 Screw it. Keep the card. We just
 wanna hire a car. Put it on my
 suite's tab.

The Clerk flamboyantly cuts the card in two.

DESK CLERK
 And what 'suite' might that be?

DANA
 Three. Twelfth floor.

The Clerk clicks through the computer.

DESK CLERK
 You check out at twelve.

The giant clock on the wall reads one minute to twelve.

DESK CLERK
 How would you like to pay?

JESSE.
 (whispers to Dana)
 Run.

They dash through the revolving doors into the forecourt. Jesse catches a set of car keys in mid air thrown to a bellboy by new arrivals. He and Dana jump in the car.

INT. CAR - DAY

JESSE

That lowdown scheming son of a bitch. If he lays one finger on Lisa I'm gonna-- I'm gonna--

DANA

What?

JESSE

Kill the son of a bitch.

EXT. FORECOURT - DAY

As the car speeds off a police car pulls in. The driver gets out. It's the Gasman.

INT. CAR - DAY

JESSE

Strap up.

DANA

What d'you think you're doing?

JESSE

You wanted thrills and spills and danger. You got it.

DANA

You're mad.

JESSE

Mad? I'm fighting furious!

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Goodall is at a urinal. The colonel enters.

COLONEL

Goodall, sometimes even I'm amazed at my own brilliance. In one swoop I got a star under my belt, a millstone off my neck and legal control of an empire. Least now I don't have to keep feeding him the percent of my forty.

GOODALL

But your forty was coming from him anyway.

COLONEL

Don't you get it boy? If I'm supposed to be taking forty why should I be giving him back one? He's got sixty already?

(wistfully)

If there's one thing I hate it's greed.

GOODALL

And now you're marrying Lisa.

COLONEL

Ain't that fantastic.

GOODALL

She's only twenty.

COLONEL

That's love in rock 'n' roll.

Goodall looks down.

GOODALL

Do you love her?

The colonel washes his hands.

COLONEL

Lisa's heir to a half billion dollar empire. An empire I built. Brick by brick. I worked my ass off to make sure her daddy was the best known face, the greatest super star who ever walked on god's green earth. And what do I get for my pains? Ingratitude. Whining: "I don't like the leather." "I wanna Act." "I don't wanna do movies no more." "Why do I have to play Vegas?" "I wanna write my own material." "I don't wanna sing no more." Forty percent. Forty stinking percent.

The colonel dries his hands. Goodall still at the urinal.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

She's twenty-one soon. What's not to love?

The Colonels at the door

COLONEL (CONT'D)
Put it away if you don't intend
to use it, bub.

EXT/INT. MEMPHIS STREETS/CAR - DAY

A fleet of cop cars chase Jesse's car over an open stretch
of road.

DANA
We're fucked.

JESSE
Watch that potty mouth.
One black and white overtakes the
others and is side by side with
Jesse. Dana looks over. It's the
Gasman. He aims his shotgun.

Dana slams her foot on Jesse's foot on the brake. Jesse
lurches forward. The wing mirror takes the bullets. The
Gasman's car spins a hundred and eighty degrees, stalling.

DANA
That's the Gasman.

JESSE
The what?

DANA
The man who came to read the
meter.

JESSE
You're sure?

A few more cop cars have caught up.

DANA
Move over.

JESSE
What?

DANA
You drive like a girl. Move.

JESSE
This ain't the--

DANA
MOVE!

They swap places at a hundred and ten miles an hour. The
Gasman takes aim and blasts out the rear windscreen.

DANA
I've peed my pants.

JESSE
Me too.

But the car picks up speed out pacing the police.

JESSE
We're almost there.

DANA
Graceland?

JESSE
No. Better than that.

The state border. All but one of the police cars stop. The officers get out. One's on the radio.

OFFICER 1
Hey asshole you can stop now.
(to OFFICER 2)
Is he new?

OFFICER 2
Who cares. Want a doughnut?

INT/EXT. HIGHWAY/CAR - DAY

Jesse turns around.

JESSE
He's still on our tail.

DANA
We can still outrun him.

They both look at the fuel gauge. Almost empty.

Jesse opens the glove compartment. There's a gun in it.

JESSE
God bless America.

DANA
Are you nuts?

JESSE
Better to have a gun and not need
one than to need a gun and not
have one.

The road narrows into a dusty track. Trees and bush on both sides. The Gasman hangs out of the window and fires. He hits the other wing mirror.

JESSE
This ends now.

Jesse takes careful aim.

DANA
I'm not looking. I'm not looking.

Click. Click. No bullets.

JESSE
We're in trouble.

He flings the gun at his pursuer. It goes off as it hits the road. The bullet punctures the Gasman's gas tank.

DANA
Watch out!

Jesse jerks back his head narrowly missing an oncoming truck.

JESSE
He's gaining on us.

DANA
You must've really pissed this guy off. Who the hell is he? A homicidal paparazzi?

The Gasman has Jesse in his gun sights.

JESSE
I don't know. I don't even care.
Just make it to the next town?

BANG. A bullet snags Jesse's arm.

DANA
Jesse!

JESSE
I'm okay, I'm okay. Just put your foot down.

They approach a fork in the road.

JESSE
Right. Go right.

The road narrows into more twists and turns, not enough straights for the gasman to get a clear shot.

JESSE
There should be a bridge up ahead. The road splits into three just beyond it.

DANA

You sure?

Jesse grips his arm. Blood oozes slowly but steadily.

DANA

Just hold on.

The next turn reveals a rotting wooden bridge green with moss, wide enough for one vehicle. It spans a dead, unmoving swamp-like river. Dana puts her foot down.

JESSE

(looking back)

Here he comes.

A sound of sirens in the distance.

The gasman puts his foot down hard. No response. The car crawls slowly forward. His tank is empty.

JESSE

What's he waiting for?

Dana puts her foot down. Her car crawls slowly forward.

JESSE

Move it!

The car is in the middle of the bridge.

DANA

It's empty!

The gasman strides towards his prey.

DANA

We've got to run for it.

JESSE

(exhausted))

You go. I can't make it.

DANA

Come on. He's going to kill us.

Sirens are getting louder

The gasman quickens his pace, gun at the ready.

DANA

Hurry!

The bridge creaks. And shakes. Dana holds on.

Police lights creep around the bend in the road.

The gasman takes aim.

Suddenly, the bridge collapses into the swamp taking Dana and Jesse, still in the car, with it.

The Gasman fires a round into the swamp.

GASMAN

Damn.

The SHERIFF and DEPUTY arrive, running out of their cars. The Gasman quickly swaps the velcro badges on his sleeves to match their's.

The swamp belches a few bubbles of air.

GASMAN

Damn. We got here too late.

SHERIFF

I ain't seen you before.

GASMAN

My first day. Exciting huh?

The Sheriff spits.

SHERIFF

Wanna tell what happened here?

DEPUTY

(pointing at swamp)

Over there.

Dana, filthy with mud, struggles out of the swamp. Coughing, she collapses. No sign of life elsewhere. The Gasman lights up a cigarette.

INT. MIRRORED ROOM - NIGHT

Lisa looks stunning in her wedding dress. She stares forlornly at herself in the multiple mirrors. She jumps as Goodall suddenly appears.

GOODALL

How are you feeling?

LISA

Numb.

GOODALL

I see.

LISA

Tim-- I-- What do you think of the dress?

GOODALL

It's nice

Lisa nods.

LISA

Yes. It nice.

GOODALL

And now you're marrying the
Colonel.

LISA

I-- I-- I need someone to lean
on. Someone who's there for me.

They stare at each other. Lisa bites her lip.

GOODALL

Lisa, I---

Two androgynous cockney Japanese, IYA and YUKO appear from
behind a mirrored door.

IYA

There she is, Yuko.

YUKO

A beauty, Iya.

IYA

Brighter than the sun.

YUKO

Fairer than the moon.

IYA

Let's take a look at you.

Lisa takes a step back.

YUKO

Come on love, give us a twirl.

Lisa twirls.

IYA

(Clapping his/her hands)
Spin, spin. Faster. Faster.

Lisa smiles as the veils, and skirts create swirling patterns
in the mirrors.

IYA & YUKO

Stop!

Lisa laughs, tottering gidilly.

LISA
Oh, guys, don't stop me now.

IYA
This won't do. We need passion
here. Hold still. Don't move.

Iya tears a strip off of Lisa's dress.

YUKO
Better.

Yuko, nodding, yanks a sleeve off.

IYA
Yes. Yes. Yes.

They cut and rip. Lisa helps, laughing so much she looks like she's crying.

DISSOLVE

INT. SHERIFFS OFFICE - DAY

Dana is crying. She wears GI prison greys. Behind bars. The Deputy reads off a list. Sheriff rocks in his rocking chair.

DEPUTY
-- possession of a stolen
vehicle, driving without a
license, driving in excess of the
highway's stated limits, driving
under the influence--

DANA
I wasn't drunk!

DEPUTY
Driving without due care and
attention, endangering the life
of a passenger, destruction of
state property, illegal
possession of a firearm, refusal
to co-operate with a duly elected
officer of the state of --

DANA
He was trying to kill me.

SHERIFF
Who was trying to kill you?

DANA
The Gasman.

DEPUTY

What gas man?

DANA

No-- I mean-- he's not really a gasman.

DEPUTY

Who? Who's not really a gas man?

DANA

The guy who blew up the house--
the guy in the police car
shooting at us from Memphis to
wherever the bloody hell we are,
the guy who--
(sobbing)
killed Jesse King.

The Sheriff spits on the floor.

SHERIFF

Who the hell is Jesse King?

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

Jesse's muddy hand grabs hold of bind weed and pulls the whole weight of his filthy body onto the bank. Exhausted he collapses. A little GIRL watches the whole thing continuously eating an ice cream cone.

GIRL

(shouts)

Pa.

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The colonels at the mirror doing a jig.

COLONEL

(singing)

I'm getting married in the
morning. Ding dong the --

GASMAN (O.S.)

King's dead.

The Gasman stands in a shadowy corner.

COLONEL

How the hell'd you get in here?

GASMAN

I'm the best there is.

COLONEL

Is that so?

GASMAN

I-- failed in the first attempt, we both know that. I know you've met him since his arrival.

COLONEL

Then you'll know that I no longer require your services. Good night sir. You may leave by the same means you entered.

The colonel enters his private bathroom.

GASMAN (O.S.)

You misunderstand. My mission is now complete. I expect payment in the usual manner. I wouldn't want to see your wedding disrupted.

COLONEL

You threatening me boy?

The colonel runs back into the office. The Gasman's gone.

COLONEL

Boy?

INT. SHANTY BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jesse wakes up in a clean crisp bed. His arm is bandaged. The room is a mess of boxes, and machine parts. The ten year old girl stares at him from the doorway. Sounds of motorcycles come from outside.

JESSE

Hey there.

GIRL

(shouting)

Pa. He's awake.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHANTY YARD - NIGHT

Two helmetless BIKERS are doing very dangerous stunts over heaps of junk machine parts and barrels. Jesse staggers to the front of the rickety house in his underpants, joining the girl and six younger kids who are watching the bikers.

GIRL

(shouting)

Hey pa.

PA, one of the bikers, launches himself off a ramp and does a three-sixty in mid air. Landing perfectly he speeds up to Jesse and the kids, stopping inches away. Jesse flinches.

PA

Howdy.

JESSE

Hi.

Pa points at Jesse's bandages.

PA

All better now? I'm a dab hand on the first aid.

Jesse is about to speak. Pa waves a halt.

PA

Save it man. Your business is yours. Glad to be of service.

JESSE

I'm much obliged for your hospitality but I gotta go.

The kids are staring at Jesse.

PA

You gotta put on some clothes.

Round the back three dogs are ripping Jesse's clothes to shreds.

PA

We got something in your size. Where you headed?

JESSE

Back to Memphis.

PA

Man, I'd give you a ride but my brother and me's only got the two machines. We're off tonight. Can't take no passengers. Sorry.

Suddenly the other biker spins out of control. The bike lands one side of the yard, the rider crashes into a wall.

PA

Luke!

CUT TO:

INT. SHANTY - NIGHT

Jesse zips up a flamboyant star spangled jump suit and gets on the motor bike.

JESSE
You've got to be kidding me this
is all you got.

Pa puts on his helmet. He wears an identical suit.

PA
You look great. We look great.

Jesse shuffles his shoulders back, swings his hips a touch.

JESSE
Thank you very much.

PA
(to the girl)
Take care of Uncle Luke, sugar.

Pa revs up.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Jesse and Pa cruise down the highway in the moonlight. They shout over the noise of the wind and engines.

PA
You handle her like a pro.

JESSE
Did a bit of cruising in my
youth. Haven't done it in years
though. Feels great.

PA
We got a rendezvous at midnight
my friend. We get there and my
associates will be able to get
you wherever you want to be.

JESSE
I appreciate this. Really.

PA
Couldn't do this without you,
what with Luke banged up and all.

Suddenly Pa's bike starts spluttering and popping, slowly slowing down. Jesse matches his speed.

JESSE

Okay?

PA

Damn it. Thought we fixed it.

CUT TO:

The two men stand over Pa's bike.

PA

It's just a spark. I always carry extras with me just in case.

Pa rummages through the bike's trunk box.

PA

Damn. Not in here.

JESSE

Might be in my one.

Jesse opens the box. In the moonlight he quickly finds the spark plugs. He notices the false bottom of the trunk ajar, bags of cannabis underneath. He feels Pa staring at him.

PA

I got six kids to feed. And it ain't coke. You gonna judge me?

JESSE

It's your business man.

Pa fixes the spark plugs in place. He revs up. Jesse stands by the bike.

PA

I got to meet these guys at midnight. We can be there in time if we put pedal to the metal.

JESSE

I don't like drugs.

PA

You think I do? You think I'd be risking my life and liberty if I had a choice?

JESSE

There's always a choice.

PA

I love my kids and if it means I gotta do this to keep 'em, that ain't no choice at all, mister.

Jesse gets on the bike and revs up.

JESSE
There's always a choice.

INT. SHERIFFS OFFICE - NIGHT

A night stick bangs on the bars of Dana's cell waking her.

SHERIFF
We're moving out.

DANA
What? Where you taking me?

SHERIFF
County jail.

DANA
What about the British consulate?
He's supposed to be meeting me.

SHERIFF
He knows where it is. Least he
will when he gets here.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Pa gives Jesse the thumbs up as they speed down the highway.

PA
We're bang on schedule.

Up ahead the bright lights of several vehicles.

PA
That's us.

A little closer and they realise it's the police.

JESSE
Hell.

Pa turns to Jesse with a panicked look on his face. They turn their bikes around and speed back the way they came.

JESSE
Turn your lights off.

PA
What?

Cop cars have started their pursuit but are way behind.

JESSE
Get out of here.

Pa starts to speak.

JESSE
Just go.

Pa turns of the headlights and speeds off-road.

Jesse turns around speeding into the oncoming cars. The cars scatter banging into each other. Jesse skilfully avoids them. He speeds on through the melee.

Off-road Pa can see streams of headlights rapidly closing the gap on the single light of Jesse's bike.

PA
I owe you, man

Up the highway police lay down stingers. Jesse sees it too late and as he tries to stop he skids right across them. He jumps of the bike, rolls and manages to land on his feet. Police gather round and rush him.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

Jesse marches in line with a dozen other felons. Prison bars on every side loom down on them. They all carry blankets. The din of tin cups on the bars is deafening.

JAILER 1 at the top of the line, walks backwards, leading them on, shotgun cradled snugly. JAILER 2 is at the back.

JAILER 1
Don't go getting excited ladies
this reception ain't for you.

JESSE
I wanna phone my lawyer.

JAILER 1
Shut up.

The procession stops at the far end of the hall. They stand in front of a huge metal door.

JAILER 1
Fall in. One line. Facing me.

He scrapes the barrel of the gun along the floor drawing a line on the dusty floor. The prisoners stand along it.

Jailer 1 takes a step back. Jailer 2 takes a step back.

The huge metal door grates open. Light floods into the dim hallway. WARDEN DICK THORPE, a tiny man, strides in. He looks over the felons his nose up in the air in disdain.

The jail-house falls silent.

WARDEN

Gentlemen, it appears we have the unfortunate task of having the pleasure of each other.

Jesse raises an arm.

JESSE

Can I say something?

Jailer 2 whacks Jesse on the back of his legs with his night-stick. Jesse falls to his knees.

JAILER 2

You can shut up and listen.

The roar of tin cups against metal bars soars again as Jesse fall to the ground. The warden raises his arm to silence them and the noise slowly dies.

WARDEN

Unfortunately, thanks to state budget cuts we have to share these humble facilities with the women's state correction unit.

A loud whooping cheer goes up.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Ladies, I'm sure when finances permit you'll get curtains on your cells.

The sound of female voices shouting obscenities

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Men--
(beat)
Enjoy.

The roar of tin cups against metal bars soars yet again. Warden settles the throng.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Ladies, gentlemen, and newcomers, there is no better time to be a felon in this state correctional facility.

(MORE)

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Every year, as some of you longer servers will know, I throw a party in honour of the King.

A large tapestry of Elvis is lowered from the ceiling, a spotlight trained on its descent.

WARDEN

It may not be much but this is one thing I will not allow the state to take from us. I believe the King is looking down on us with a tear of joy in his eye.

Jesse, still on his knees looks up at the warden.

JESSE

Peace. Calm. Tranquility.

JAILER 2

You gots to shaddup.

Jailer 1 and Jailer 2 pound Jesse while he's down.

WARDEN

Gentlemen, stop! It's The King's memorial day tomorrow and I will not tolerate violence until the celebrations are over.

(to Jesse)

Count yourself fortunate that solitary's filled to capacity.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

A prison officer opens a cell door marked 'Solitary' and wheels in a pallet of drinks. The cell is full of drinks.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTY JAIL MEZZANINE / CELL - NIGHT

Jesse and the new convicts are led to the cells.

JAILER 1

(shouts)

Millar. Bendis.

Two men fall out of line and forlornly trudge in the open cell to their left.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

MARTHA, a large female inmate presses her body hard to the bars straining to see the newcomers. Her cellmate lies on a cot facing the wall.

MARTHA

You're missing all the fun honey.

The cellmate does nothing. Martha sidles up to her.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

We're all lonesome in here. But you know we got some fellas in here now though not everyone's of the same persuasion.

She puts her arm on her cell mate's backside.

Outside, the remaining new convicts pass the cell.

JAILER 1

Krushank. King.

Martha's cellmate suddenly jolts upward. It's Dana.

DANA

King? Jesse?

She jumps up, pushing past Martha, to get to the bars. Jesse is just in sight.

DANA

(shouts)

Jesse! Jesse!

Jesse turns around.

JESSE

Dana!

He runs to her cell. He reaches in and touches her face. She mirrors his move, tears streaming down her face.

DANA

I thought you were dead.

JESSE

I was. But now I'm back. And I've got some scores to settle.

WHACK on the back of his head by Jailer 2 with his night stick. Jesse floats into unconsciousness.

JAILER 2

Boy, when are you gonna learn?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

The sun rises over the barbed-wired turrets. An armed guard takes a swig from a bottle of bourbon.

The Church bells ring.

Along the dusty road leading to the facility a large Winnebago approaches.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

Jesse lies on his cot in his tiny cell staring off into space. Two feet dangle down from the bunk above.

In the cell next door Dana strains her neck as far as it can go to the bars.

DANA

(whispering loudly)

Jesse. Jesse? Can you hear me?
Are you there?

Jesse continues staring.

A loud buzzer sounds. A click and the bars of all the cells slide open. Most of the inmates walk out sleepily. Dana is shocked. Martha walks past her.

MARTHA

This ain't the state pen, sugar.

Dana rushes to the next cell where Jesse's still lying on his cot. She hugs him. He slowly puts his arm around her.

JESSE

I failed, Dana. I failed. I failed Lisa. She's gonna marry the Colonel and there ain't a goddam thing I can do about it.

DANA

Jesse, the consulate's coming for me sometime today. You're a British citizen too, aren't you? We'll be out of here by tea time.

JESSE

Not enough time to save Lisa.

DANA

Jesse. Listen to me. You have to stop this. Lisa is not your problem.

JESSE

She's my daughter.

DANA

Get real will you. Playtime's over. Look at where we are.

JESSE

I have to save her.

DANA

Stop it. Just stop. You are not Elvis Presley.

Jesse sits up and looks at Dana.

DANA (CONT'D)

Let's just get out of here and get back home.

INT. GRACELAND GARDEN - DAY

A buzz of activity. Caterers, musicians, animal wranglers, florists, craftsmen and labourers rush around and past each other. In the midst is the Colonel in white suit and large white stetson. Goodall is at his side.

COLONEL

Magnificent.

GOODALL

I'm sorry?

COLONEL

Forgive me, Goodall. I'm just a big softy at heart.

A tiny woman passes carrying a huge floral arrangement.

COLONEL

What in the name of Jesus H. Christ...?

(shouting to the woman)

Hey you.

TINY WOMAN

Sí, señor.

COLONEL

What did I say about carnations?

She looks around for moral support.

TINY WOMAN
No comprendes, Senor Col-lon-el.

COLONEL
(to Goodall)
Y'see that's why this country's
going to the dogs. And I mean
that literally.
(to the woman)
Woof, woof. Y'understand that?
Get offa my property. You're
fired.
Damn wetbacks.

Several workers ears prick up and they give the Colonel a brief but hard look.

GOODALL
Sir-- Colonel, I think you might
want to be a little more--

COLONEL
A little more what, Goodall? A
little more what?

He grabs the display off the woman and whacks her with it.

COLONEL
I said no carnations, goddamit.

The woman runs away crying.

GOODALL
Colonel, you've gone to far.

COLONEL
Button it Goodall. You're fired
too. Don't even bother clearing
out your desk, just go, you lanky
string of piss.

CUT TO:

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

The room is painted pink and white and adorned with soft toys and dolls. Lisa looks down on the garden from her third floor window at the Colonel. She's in her wedding dress and veil. She clutches at a picture of a relaxed Elvis. This is the first time we notice the resemblance to Jesse. He looks very relaxed and happy and his hair is not in a quiff.

She runs to her bed and buries her face in a pillow.

A knock on the door startles her. She wipes her eyes quickly.

LISA

Yes?

The door opens slowly and Goodall walks in.

GOODALL

Lisa. There's something I have to tell you before I leave.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

The eight-piece Jeff Robertson Band are on the makeshift stage all dressed in identical striped 'prison garb' and sporting slick black quiffs. The lead singer grabs the microphone as the drummer and bassist beat in the intro.

LEAD SINGER

(singing)

The warden threw a party in the county jail.
The prison band was there and they began to wail.
The band was jumpin and the joint began to swing.
You shouldve heard those knocked out jailbirds sing.
Lets rock, everybody, lets rock.
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin to the jailhouse rock.

The inmates hold up their bottles of beer and start dancing and singing under the watchful eyes of the prison guards.

The warden runs on stage and grabs the mic.

WARDEN

What law says you can't have a good time whilst paying your debt to society?

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

Jesse lies on his bunk. The music wafts in. Dana steps tentatively through the open bars.

DANA

I shouldn't have said that.

JESSE

You were right. I gotta stop dreaming. Get on with my life. What time's that consulate guy coming?

DANA

About three. How about we go downstairs, get a beer, see if that band's got what it takes.

Downstairs a guard hands Jesse a bottle of beer as he passes.

JESSE

I don't drink.

The guard grabs Jesse's arm. It's Pa.

PA

You sure?

Jesse double takes. Looks at Dana. She smiles innocuously.

JESSE

They got you too?

PA

I made the rendezvous.
(indicating the band)
Those're my peeps up there. Time to return the favour.

JESSE

What?

PA

We're getting you outta here.

JESSE

This place is a fortress. We won't get a hundred yards.

PA

Got it all figured out pal. How's your singing voice?

INT. GRACELAND LAWN -

The Colonel in a flamboyant white tux greets guests as they pass under an archway made up with roses and peaches. He rocks on his heels and toes, looking at his watch frequently.

The organist strikes up the bridal march as the pews fill.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

LISA
You what?

GOODALL
I said--
(beat)
I said-- I said I love you.

Lisa slumps down on the bed, head in hands. The puffy wedding dress almost swallowing her.

LISA
Oh, Tim. Oh Tim.

Goodall sits next to her. They embrace.

GOODALL.
Losing you once was bad enough.
Losing you to the Colonel..

LISA
Tim, I'm going to marry him.

GOODALL
You can't. I won't let you.

LISA
I made a promise.

GOODALL
Break it. We'll go away. We'll
leave now. I'll make sure the
Colonel never finds us. He'll
never come between us again.

There's a knock on the door.

COLONEL (O.S.)
Lisa honey. The guests are
waiting.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

The song ends. The lead singer quietens the inmates. He turns to his band mates.

LEAD SINGER
Ain't they a beautiful audience.
You really are. Come on. Give
yourself a round of applause.

Whooping and cheering. He tries to calm them down but they continue cheering.

A piercing whistle cuts through the noise.

WARDEN

These people are our guests. They are here to entertain you. If you do not extend to them a modicum of courtesy and respect I will personally drop you into the hole. King Day or not.

Silence.

The Warden nods a 'proceed' to the singer.

LEAD SINGER

Uh, right. Thanks. Ummm, we got a very special treat for y'all. One of your very own is gonna do us a tune. Show yourself fella.

The Warden unfolds his arms, borrows furrowed.

Pa pushes Jesse hard.

LEAD SINGER

(pointing)
There he is.

Dana grabs Jesse's elbow.

DANA

What the bloody hell do you think you're doing?

JESSE

I'm gonna sing. And so are you.

He grabs her hand dragging her up the makeshift stage.

LEAD SINGER

Put your hands together people.

Dana tries to make run of the stage but the warden grabs her by the arm.

WARDEN

Come on honey, don't be shy. Sing for me.

Jesse grabs her other arm snatching her out of the wardens clutches close to himself. They sidle up to the mic.

Jesse glances at the band. The double-bassist smiles back and winks knowingly.

In the audience Pa is moving purposefully towards the back.

JESSE

Ummm. Right. Thank you very much.

Jesse notices his reflection in the microphone. His hair and side-burns have grown. He's a little grey.

The crowd begin to murmur.

DANA

(whispering)

Alright Mr King. You've got your stage. You better start using it.

JESSE

Ladies and gentlemen we're gonna sing a song for you, one that's---

The band strikes up the opening bars of 'It's Now Or Never' drowning out his words. He spins round in surprise.

The Warden jives to the beat.

Suddenly flash bombs ignite all around the jail-house. Pandemonium ensues.

LEAD SINGER

Elvis has left the building.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

COLONEL

(from outside)

Lisa, honey. Bliss is a'calling.

LISA

(to Goodall)

You have to get out of here.

GOODALL

Which way?

They both look at the window, three storeys up.

LISA

You know he'll kill you.

INT. OUTSIDE LISA'S BEDROOM - DAY

COLONEL

Who you talking to honey?

The door opens.

LISA

You realise it's bad luck to see
the bride before the wedding.

COLONEL

Shucks honey, ain't nothing gonna
jinx our future. It's happy,
happy, happy from here on in.

Lisa nods.

COLONEL

Now get your ass down to the
padre.

As she leaves the Colonel enters her room. He looks under
the bed. Opens the wardrobe. Goes into the en-suite
bathroom. He looks at the open window and slowly
approaches.

He shoots his head out.

The ledge is empty. He smiles.

COLONEL

Almost there.

INT/EXT. HIGHWAY/WINNEBEGO - DAY

Jesse, Dana, Pa in the front seats of the vehicle.

DANA

Are you crazy! All we had to do
was wait a couple of hours and
we'd have been free.

PA

Yeah, well I guess you've never
had the good grace to fall on
southern justice before.

JESSE

(pointing)
There. The next turn.

PA

You sure. That road leads to only
one place.

JESSE

Yeah. Home.

The sign on the road reads: Graceland.

EXT. GRACELAND LAWN - DAY

The wedding march plays. Lisa walks up the aisle. Alone. Tears stream down her face. The Colonel waits at the top of the aisle. He grins as she arrives. A Hispanic dwarf dressed in regency-era clothing and a turban holding a diamond encrusted cushion with two gold rings on it stands at one side.

PADRE

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here together in the sight of God, and men--- and ladies--- to bring together in holy matrimony this man and this woman. We know that this wedding is a holy-- wholly holy estate--

The colonel shuffles uneasily

PADRE

-- that is not to be entered into with flagrant frivolity.

Lisa sniffles.

PADRE

And knowing that the Lord God almighty who can see the heart of man, and who will judge the ways of the wicked with hell fire and brimstone, where the worm dieth not, and the torment goes on for an eternity --- and that's a mighty long time---

The Padre catches the Colonel's stoney look.

PADRE

But on this day of joy---

INT./EXT. HIGHWAY/WINNEBEGO - DAY

JESSE

Can't this thing go any faster?

PA

Yeah, it can--- but southern justice is one thing. Nobody said nothing about the Colonel!

DANA

At last. The voice of reason.

JESSE
You backing down now?

PA
You kidding? I hate that mo-fo.

He puts his foot down.

EXT. GRACELAND LAWN

PADRE
And if there is anyone who has
any lawful impediment why these
two should not be bound together
let him speak now or forever hold
his peace.

The colonel looks around menacingly.

Lisa looks around pleadingly.

PADRE
With the power invested in me, I--

GOODALL
Wait!

A gasp goes up through the throng.

COLONEL
Goodall!

LISA
Tim.

PADRE
Well? What's your problem?

GOODALL
Huh?

PADRE
Your impediment? Come on. Come
on. Speak up young man.

GOODALL
Lisa. You can't marry this man. I
love you.

PADRE
LAWFUL impediment, young man.

GOODALL
He's hidden things from you. Your
father! He never told you the
truth about your father.

Another gasp goes through the crowd.

Lisa walks up to Goodall. She slaps him across the face. Even the Colonel is surprised.

LISA
I never want to see you again.

GOODALL
-- but Lisa--

LISA
(screaming)
Get out!

The Colonel collect Lisa and walks her up the aisle.

COLONEL
Bye Goodall.

Goodall leaves slowly. Head down.

PADRE
Okay. Where was I?

COLONEL
I now pronounce you?

PADRE
If there is anyone with any
lawful impediment why these two
should not be bound together let
him speak now or forever hold his
peace.

COLONEL
You did that bit you sonofabitch!

Suddenly the gates are smashed down by the winnebego. Jesse jumps out running down the aisle, waving his hands frantically.

JESSE
Stop. Stop the wedding.

Ushers surround him attempting to hold him back.

PADRE
What? Why? Who the hell are you?

COLONEL
Who cares. Just finish the
ceremony.

Jesse begins to sing in the unmistakable tone of The King.

JESSE

Maybe I didn't treat you
Quite as good as I should have
Maybe I didn't love you
Quite as often as I could have
Little things I should have said
and done
I just never took the time
You were always on my mind
You were always --

The ushers rush him.

Armed security surround the winnebego.

Lisa begins to cry.

LISA

--- daddy?

PADRE

Any more interruptions? Come on,
get it out of your system.
(looking at the dwarf)
What about you? Got something to
say?

The dwarf shakes his head.

PADRE

Good.
With the power invested in me---

A scream goes out from the crowd.

COLONEL

What now for chrissake?

The Padre looks up open mouthed as a heavily armed Gasman,
standing on a first floor balcony, aims his long-range
rifle squarely at the Colonel's head.

GASMAN

I might have an objection.

Security raise their guns in the Gasman's direction
ignoring the less threatening Jesse and company.

DANA

(to Pa)

That's the guy who's been trying
to kill us.

COLONEL

Put your guns up boys.
(to the Gasman)
What d'you want kid?

GASMAN

Like I said Colonel, I might have an objection. Or might not. Got me?

LISA

What's going on?

COLONEL

You and I can both see the job's not done.

GASMAN

Easily remedied.

He marches up to Jesse, cocking his gun.

COLONEL

What're you doing you madman?

GASMAN

Just finishing the job you paid me for.

COLONEL

Not here. Not now you numbskull!

JESSE

Lisa! Honey!

The Gasman pull the trigger. A stream of water comes out the barrel.

GASMAN

Bang. You're dead.

(to the Colonel)

I expect my account to be credited.

(to Jesse)

You've been a worthy adversary. A born survivor. The King, eh?

He walks away.

COLONEL

Get him you idiots.

No one moves. The Colonel, searching for words turns to the Padre exasperated.

COLONEL

Finish the ceremony.

PADRE

Huh?

COLONEL
Pronounce us man and wife you
goddam piece o' shit.

Lisa is dumbstruck. She keeps looking over at Jesse.

PADRE
If there is anyone with any
lawful impediment why these two--

COLONEL
You've done that bit!

PADRE
Just making sure.

From the back of the pack a high pitched but strong voice
blares out. It's Michael.

MICHAEL
She doesn't love him. She's in
love with me.

LISA
Michael!

She runs down the aisle, past Jesse, towards Michael. The
Colonel hobbles after her.

COLONEL
Get back here you little minx.

Jesse gets up standing between the girl and the old man.
Lisa is in Michael's arm.

JESSE
Get out Colonel. You ain't wanted
here no more.

COLONEL
(pulling out a gun)
Come on son. Do you know realise
who you're talking to?

JESSE
Yeah. You're Colonel--

Jesse does a sweeping back kick. The gun flies out of the
Colonel's hand. Jesse catches it while swinging another
kick that launches the Colonel into the monstrous wedding
cake.

JESSE
--but I'm the King.

The crowd looks on. Silence. Jesse looks at Lisa.

LISA
Daddy? DADDY!

She runs towards him. They hug. The tears flow on both sides. The gathered throng CHEERS!

JESSE
Lisa. Forgive me. I should have
been there for you.

The colonel tries to slip away but Dana and Pa grab him.

LISA
Oh Daddy.

JESSE
And I'll support you in anything
you do. I swear.

Michael inches forward.

LISA
Michael, I'd like you to meet my
father.

Dana comes running towards Jesse.

DANA
Well?

JESSE
It's gonna be alright.

DANA
What do you mean it's gonna be
alright?

JESSE
Okay. How about: They all lived
happily ever after.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END