

MURDERDROME

By

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EXT. THE GERMAN LINES, FRANCE - NIGHT

It's 1918. The man we'll come to know as RAY Jackson, at this point 20 years old, is in a doughboy's uniform, lying in the mud, unconscious. His left leg is a bloody mess. He has a head wound that is bleeding badly.

Two GERMAN SOLDIERS approach him, their rifles trained on him. One of them nudges him with his boot to see if he's alive. RAY stirs slightly. The SOLDIERS haul him away.

INT. A GERMAN HOSPITAL - DAY

RAY is in bed. His left leg is gone.

INT. A GERMAN HOSPITAL A FEW WEEKS LATER- DAY

RAY, still in the hospital, scans a newspaper. It's in German, but he can make out that the war is over.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE GERMAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

RAY, limping along with a crude prosthetic leg, steals away from the hospital in the dead of night.

INT. THE PASSENGER'S QUARTERS OR A TRAMP STEAMER - NIGHT

RAY is in a filthy dormitory-like passenger area of a rusty freighter.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - DAY

RAY walks down the gangplank of the ship onto a pier in New York City.

EXT. A TRAIN YARD - DAY

A train pulls up and stops. A sign on the station says "Kansas City".

The door on a freight car opens and a ramp is slid out. RAY Jackson, now 21, dressed in worn workman's clothes, coasts down the ramp on a motorcycle.

The bike looks like it's seen better days; the paint is dull and chipped, the engine is clean but worn looking.

RAY stands astride the bike, adjusting some straps holding items onto the bike. A DOG walks over, sniffs RAY's leg, then lifts his leg and pees on it.

RAY

Hey!

The DOG steps back, but doesn't run away. RAY lifts his pantleg to inspect it, revealing a prosthetic leg that is similar in design to modern legs, but made from materials available in that time.

With the DOG following him, RAY pushes the bike to the Kansas City Motordrome.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE KANSAS CITY MOTORDROME - DAY

RAY walks up to the entrance, pushing the bike. He enters a short hallway/tunnel.

EXT. INSIDE THE MOTORDROME - DAY

RAY emerges from the tunnel into the 1 1/4 mile oval track whose surface is made of rough cut 2X4's. Motorcycles are flying around the track at high speed.

EXT. INSIDE THE MOTORDROME - DAY (LATER)

The stands are filling up with spectators. People line the railing at the top of the turns. Riders and mechanics are busy in the pits making last minute adjustments to their machines.

Riders line up at the starting line. A track official holding a megaphone strides to the middle of the track in front of the grandstand.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Kansas City Motordrome. Our first event of the day is the five mile sprint. The riders will complete four laps around the track. (to the riders) Gentlemen, are you ready?

The flagman motions for them to go. Mechanics push or tow the motorcycles to get them started. RAY pushes his until the motor catches, then quickly hops aboard.

The riders do a lap of the track and are given the green flag for a running start.

RAY is in the middle of the field as they approach the first turn. The other riders hit their kill buttons to slow a bit for the turn, but RAY flies into it at full throttle, barely keeping control.

RAY gains three places in the turn, but on the back straight, RAY's motor sputters and the riders he just passed shoot past him. On turn three and four, RAY repeats his headlong charge and regains his spot.

The race continues like this, RAY charging into the turns, barely able to maintain control, but losing ground on the straights.

Going into turn three on the last lap, he charges into the turn, but the way ahead is blocked by three riders riding side by side. Without slowing, he shoots through a narrow gap between two of the riders, barely missing them. Startled, the riders wobble, but recover.

RAY finishes third. He kills the engine, coasts into the infield and stops. He pushes his goggles up and as he's removing his gloves, notices that his hand is shaking.

The two riders he narrowly missed approach him. One is VINCE Carter, a powerfully built man with dark unruly hair and a menacing presence; the other is RED Walker, mid 30's stocky, well worn.

VINCE
Hey, asshole.

RAY looks up from his hand at VINCE and RED. He remains seated on the bike, returns his attention to his gloves which he puts in his helmet.

VINCE kicks the front tire of RAY's bike.

VINCE (CON'T.)
I'm talkin' to you.

RAY looks at him.

VINCE (CON'T.)
What was that shit you pulled out there? You tryin' to kill somebody?

RAY
 You don't have the balls to race
 with the men, I hear they've got
 some tricycle races for the kiddies
 later on.

VINCE
 If you wasn't a cripple, I'd break
 you in half.

Keeping his gaze on VINCE, RAY stands, swings his left leg
 over the bike to get off. His leg comes off and lands a
 couple of feet away. The DOG goes to it and sniffs it.

VINCE and RED laugh and walk away.

INT. BETTY'S CAFE - DAY

RAY enters and looks around, the DOG at his side. Riders
 from the track and their crews are sitting at tables and the
 counter.

RAY finds a stool at the far end of the counter where no one
 else is sitting.

The waitress behind the counter, BETTY Hlinka, an
 attractive, but not beautiful woman in her late twenties
 comes over to him.

BETTY
 What'll you have?

RAY
 Coffee. And a hamburger

BETTY
 Coming up. (to the cook) Burn one!

She gets a cup, puts it in front of RAY and pours the
 coffee.

RAY
 Thanks.

BETTY
 You're new around here.

RAY
 Yeah.

BETTY
You one of those lunatics who ride
the motorcycles?

RAY
Yeah.

BETTY
Haven't seen you before.

RAY
Just got here.

BETTY
I'm Betty.

She waits for a beat for RAY to reply.

BETTY (CON'T.)
What's your name?

RAY
Ray.

BETTY
Nice to meet you, Ray.

RAY
Likewise.

COOK
Order up!

BETTY gets the burger and places it in front of RAY.

RAY takes half of it and tosses it on the floor in front of
the DOG. The DOG eats it.

BETTY
Where you from?

RAY
Around.

VINCE is at a table with some other men.

VINCE
Hey, Betty.

BETTY ignores VINCE.

BETTY
(To RAY)
I like your dog.

RAY
He's not my dog.

A beat.

BETTY
How's the burger?

RAY
Fine.

A beat.

BETTY
Coffee okay?

RAY
Yeah.

A beat

BETTY
Hey, how 'bout them Dodgers?

VINCE
Hey, Betty, why don't you come over here and talk to some men who have all their parts?

BETTY
I heard about your parts, Vince. And from what I heard there's one that's not too impressive.

Everyone laughs.

VINCE
Watch it, Betty.

BETTY
You know, Vince, I think I'm gonna give you a nickname. Something snappy they can call you at the races. Let's see, the girls tell me that that part's about the size of a spark plug.

Everyone laughs.

BETTY (CON'T.)
How about Sparky? I like
it. Whatd'ya think, Vince?

VINCE
I think you ought'a shut your trap,
bitch.

BETTY
Has a nice ring to it, don't it
boys? Maybe you can paint that on
your iron, Vince.

VINCE stands and begins moving toward BETTY.

VINCE
I'm gonna fix that mouth of yours,
bitch. Let's see how funny you are
without no teeth.

RAY stands and gets in front of VINCE.

RAY
That's enough. Go sit down.

VINCE
Outta my way.

The DOG, who has been sitting by RAY's stool, stands and
growls.

BETTY
It's okay, Ray. I can handle him.

RAY
I said sit down.

VINCE
I told you I'm not gonna go easy on
you because you're a gimp. Now get
outta my way.

RAY
No.

VINCE glares at him, then turns as if he's going to walk
away. He quickly turns back, his right fist swinging at
RAY's head.

RAY deftly slips the punch and gives VINCE a lightning fast
combination, one to the stomach, a sharp left jab and a
straight right that drops VINCE like a sack of potatoes.

The diners silently gapes at what they've just seen.

BETTY
Some of you boys come over here and
haul him away, will ya?

Four men pick up the barely conscious VINCE and take him
outside.

BETTY (CON'T.)
(To RAY)
Nice work. Thanks.

RAY
Sure. No charge.

RAY returns to his stool.

BETTY
You racing tomorrow?

RAY
Yeah.

BETTY
Maybe I'll come out to see you.

RAY
I'll be there.

He puts some coins on the counter and walks out. The DOG
follows him.

BETTY goes to the window and watches him walk away.

VINCE, still recovering outside, glares at RAY as RAY walks
by.

VINCE
This ain't over, asshole!

RAY doesn't break stride; gives him the finger over his
shoulder.

EXT. THE MOTORDROME - DAY

BETTY is in the stands watching. RAY is riding like he's
possessed, cutting in and out of other riders, barely in
control.

As he's passing VINCE, VINCE veers into him, almost causing
him to crash. RAY puts his prosthetic leg out to stay
upright and some of the parts fly off of it. The main shaft
is bent. He manages to stay on the bike and finishes third.

EXT. A RURAL ROAD - DAY

RAY and the DOG are walking along the road. RAY is limping badly. His leg is making a lot of noise.

BETTY pulls up in a Model T flatbed truck. She paces him as he walks.

BETTY
You need a ride?

RAY
No. Thanks.

BETTY
Kind of hot to be walking isn't it?

RAY
No.

BETTY
Your dog looks like he could use a ride.

RAY
He's not my dog.

BETTY
He seems to think he is.

RAY
Can't help that.

BETTY
You mad at me for some reason? Something I said?

RAY
No.

BETTY
Then get in the truck.

RAY
I can-

BETTY
Oh, for crying out loud. Just get in the damn truck.

BETTY turns in front of RAY and skids to a stop, blocking his path. RAY hesitates, then begins to climb onto the truck bed. BETTY pushes the door open, banging it into RAY's shoulder.

BETTY

In here.

RAY rubs his shoulder and gets into the cab. The DOG jumps onto the truck bed.

INT. THE TRUCK CAB - DAY

BETTY

Where you going?

RAY

I need parts.

BETTY

Parts?

RAY stomps his foot on the floor, causing the leg to rattle.

BETTY

Know just the place.

RAY nods.

BETTY (CON'T.)

I saw you out there today. You trying' to get yourself killed?

RAY

You want to win, you have to take chances.

BETTY

There's taking chances and there's suicide.

She points at RAY's damaged prosthesis.

BETTY (CON'T.)

Never seen one like that.

RAY

You've seen a lot?

BETTY

I've seen a few.

RAY

Where?

BETTY
Veteran's hospital.

RAY
What were you doing there?

BETTY
Is that where you got your leg? VA
hospital?

RAY
No. I made it myself.

BETTY
But you were in one.

RAY looks out the window. They drive for awhile without saying anything.

BETTY stops in front of a junk yard. RAY gets out. The DOG jumps down from the truck bed.

BETTY (CON'T.)
I'll pick you up on my way back.

RAY
That's okay. You don't-

BETTY
Wait for me.

She hits the gas and drives away.

EXT. IN TOWN - DAY

BETTY comes out of a grocery store holding two bags. She looks down the street and sees RAY coming out of the bank.

As she watches, he goes to the post office a few doors down.

She goes back inside the grocery and comes out with two more bags just as RAY leaves the post office. She goes back inside the grocery again.

EXT. A RURAL ROAD - DAY

RAY and the DOG are walking back. RAY has a burlap bag filled with parts for his leg. BETTY drives up and skids to a stop.

BETTY
Thought I told you to wait for me.

RAY
I didn't want to wait.

BETTY
Get in.

RAY
I can-

BETTY
Are we gonna go through all that
again? Get in the damn truck.

The DOG jumps onto the truck bed. RAY thinks for a moment,
then throws the burlap bag onto the bed and gets into the
cab. BETTY drives.

BETTY
You got a place to work on that?

RAY
I can find someplace at the track.

BETTY
You got tools?

RAY
A few. I can borrow what I don't
have.

BETTY
There's a shop behind the cafe you
can use. It's got just about any
kind of tool you might
need. You're welcome to work
there.

RAY
Okay. Thanks.

BETTY
There's a cot in there, too if you
want to use it.

RAY nods.

INT. THE SHOP BEHIND THE CAFE - NIGHT

RAY is standing at the workbench, working on his prosthesis, his stump held up by a stool. His motorcycle is just inside the doorway. The DOG is sleeping nearby.

BETTY enters with two cups of coffee.

BETTY

Here, thought you could use this.

RAY takes a cup.

RAY

Thanks.

RAY works with an aluminum shaft about a foot long. He shakes his head. He holds up the shaft.

BETTY

It's too thick. You need to take it down about an eighth of an inch.

RAY

Need a machine lathe for that.

BETTY walks to a dark section of the shop and turns on a lamp. She removes a tarp that's covering a machine lathe.

BETTY

Like this?

RAY

Yeah. Just like that.

BETTY

Here, give me that.

RAY

I can do it.

BETTY

Just give it.

RAY hands the shaft to her. She expertly attaches the shaft in the chuck, drops oil in some bearings and begins turning the piece.

BETTY (CON'T.)

Eighth of an inch?

RAY

Yeah.

BETTY

My Daddy built this shop. I used to spend a lot of time out here with him. He taught me how to use every tool in the place and then some. Always wanted to run my own shop.

RAY

So why aren't you ?

BETTY

You men don't trust women around machines. But you got no problem with us doing your cooking.

RAY

Yeah, I guess so.

BETTY

You look like you know your way around a shop.

RAY

I was an engineering student before the war.

BETTY

You're a college man? Where?

RAY

Princeton.

BETTY

What are you doing risking your neck on those motorcycles? Why didn't you go back to school?

RAY

I needed to make a lot of money fast.

BETTY

Your family had to be pretty well off if they could send you to Princeton. What happened, your old man invest all his money in Deutsche marks?

RAY

My Dad teaches science in the local junior high. I went to Princeton on a scholarship.

BETTY

So what did you need the money for?

RAY

You about done with that shaft?

BETTY

Yeah.

She stops the lathe and removes the shaft.

BETTY

Here.

RAY

Thanks. Nice work.

He turns to the workbench and works on the prosthesis.

BETTY

Didn't see anybody with you in the pits. Where's your crew?

RAY

You're looking at him.

BETTY

You must have your hands pretty full.

RAY

I make out.

BETTY

How many races've you won?

RAY

None so far. But I'm just getting started.

BETTY

You were losing ground on the straights today. Only way you could move up was by flying through those turns like you had a death wish. You not going to get away with that for long. One of these days your luck's going to run out.

RAY doesn't react.

BETTY (CON'T.)
When's the last time you broke down
the motor and cleaned everything,
replaced filters and
gaskets? Ground the valves?

RAY
I don't know. It's been a while.

BETTY looks at oil dripping from the crankcase. She nudges
a pie plate under it with her foot.

BETTY
Where's your tools?

RAY
Over there in that bag.

BETTY opens the bag and finds a couple of wrenches and a
screwdriver.

BETTY
(laughs)
Are you kidding?

RAY
I manage.

BETTY
I could do it for you, be your
mechanic. (motions to the shop) I
come with my own tools.

RAY
Don't need a mechanic. But thanks.

BETTY
No offense, but that iron looks
like it's seen better
days. Where'd you find it, it fall
off a junk wagon?

RAY
The bike is fine, it's an Indian.

BETTY
Yeah, the last of the Mohicans.

RAY shoots her a look.

BETTY (CON'T.)

You're running against factory teams out there. They've got some of the best grease monkeys in the business tuning those motors.

RAY

Yeah, and I finished third today on my own.

BETTY

I thought the idea was to finish first.

RAY

I'll get there.

BETTY

If your motor was running right, you wouldn't have to hang your ass out on those turns just to finish third.

RAY

It's running okay.

BETTY

Alright. But think it over.

RAY

Don't need to. Thanks anyway.

BETTY

Suit yourself. Well, sleep tight, don't let the bedbugs bite.

RAY

Thanks.

BETTY exits.

INT. BETTY'S APARTMENT. - NIGHT

BETTY enters her apartment above the cafe. She turns on a lamp and we see a photo of a young soldier on the table.

She looks through some mail, turns off the lamp and goes to the bedroom. She looks out the window at the light coming from the shop downstairs. Her mind wanders back to:

FLASH BACK TO

INT. WALTER REED HOSPITAL CORRIDOR- DAY

BETTY walks down the corridor. She enters a room.

INT. THE HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Her brother is sitting on the bed in his bathrobe. He smiles sadly at BETTY. His hands are shaking and his head twitches every few seconds.

BETTY hugs him, then sits next to him on the bed. She talks to him, strokes his hair.

INT. THE HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Weeks have passed. As BETTY walks down the corridor, she sees a commotion at the door of her brother's room. She rushes to it, looks in. Orderlies are cutting her brother down from a light fixture. He has tied a sheet around his neck and hanged himself.

EXT. BETTY'S CAFE - DAY

BETTY gets off a bus. She walks to the cafe, puts her suitcase down by the door, then walks around the side to the shop in the back.

INT. THE SHOP BEHIND THE CAFE - DAY

BETTY enters the shop. Her FATHER is working at the bench. She walks to him, puts her hand on his shoulder and tells him of the death of her brother, his son. The man's knees buckle. BETTY holds him up, they embrace and cry.

END FLASHBACK

BETTY turns from the window and prepares for bed.

INT. BETTY'S SHOP - NIGHT

RAY is sleeping on the cot.

DREAM SEQUENCE

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND, FRANCE - NIGHT

Eight men are crawling across no man's land at night, sneaking up on a German mortar/machine gun position. It's very dark and the image is hazy, we can't make out who anyone is.

One of the soldiers - we can't make out his face yet, but we'll see in a few moments that it's RAY - freaks out, stands up and starts yelling.

RAY

I can't do it! I'm going back! I
can't do it!

SOLDIER 1 grabs him and tries to pull him down.

SOLDIER 1

Shut up! Get down, goddamnit!

RAY

Let me go! I'm getting out of
here!

The GERMANS see him and begin firing on their position.

RAY turns away, trying to pull free of SOLDIER 1's grasp. He looks back and we see RAY's face.

SOLDIER 1 looks back at the other MEN in his squad who are being killed, screaming in pain and fear. SOLDIER 1 looks back at RAY again, who runs away.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. THE SHOP BEHIND THE CAFE - NIGHT

RAY

No! Stop! I'm sorry! Oh God no!

INT. BETTY'S APARTMENT. - NIGHT

BETTY awakens. She hears RAY shouting. She goes to the window and listens. RAY quiets down. BETTY stands in the window for a moment, then returns to bed.

EXT. A STREET IN HYDE PARK CHICAGO - DAY

A MAIL CARRIER walks down the street, stopping at a mailbox in front of a large fashionable home bearing the name "Stewart".

He sorts through some mail, places a few letters in the box, closes the door and leaves.

PAMELA Stewart, 22, attractive, comes out of the house, walks to the mailbox, takes the mail and returns to the house.

INT. THE STEWART PARLOR - DAY

PAMELA looks through the mail and sees an envelope with no return address. She opens it and takes out a cashier's check for thirty dollars.

There's a note with it that says "I'm sorry. I know that Dave will always be in your heart, that he'll always be your loving husband just as he'll always be my best friend. Wherever he is, he still loves you. What happened to him was my fault. I know that money can never begin to make up for losing Dave, but I hope it will help make thing easier for you and Dave Junior".

INT. THE SHOP BEHIND THE CAFE - DAY

RAY is asleep on the cot. BETTY walks in and RAY starts awake.

BETTY

You want some breakfast?

RAY

I'll get some at the diner. I can get a discount, I know the owner.

BETTY

So do I and she doesn't give discounts. Get dressed and come up.

BETTY exits.

INT. BETTY'S KITCHEN - DAY

RAY walks up the stairs. The DOG is behind him. He knocks on the screen door.

RAY
Hello?

BETTY (OS)
Come on in.

RAY enters; the DOG sneaks through the door before it closes.

They walk through the parlor where RAY spots the picture of the soldier. He picks it up, looks, puts it down and continues on to the kitchen where BETTY is scrambling eggs.

BETTY
Pour yourself some coffee.

RAY does so, then sits at the table. He looks around.

RAY
This is nice.

BETTY
Be nicer if I didn't have to smell the grease from downstairs.

RAY
This smells better than the places I've been living the last few months.

The sound of MOTORCYCLES from the track wafts in through the window.

RAY
They start early.

BETTY
Been like that ever since they built that damn track. But business is great, so I guess I can't complain. You thought any more about my offer?

RAY
Offer?

BETTY

You know what offer. About my
being your mechanic.

RAY

Oh, that. No.

BETTY slides scrambled eggs onto two plates. She adds bacon and some hash browns and brings the plates to the table. She puts some beef scraps in a bowl and gives it to the DOG.

BETTY

The money doesn't matter, if that's
your problem. Mostly I just need
to get out of here for a
while. See the world a
little. Have some fun.

RAY

You want to go on the road with me?

BETTY

Sure. George can run the cafe.

RAY

I travel in box cars, sleep in a
tent when I'm not on a train. Eat
mostly beans and bread. That sound
like fun?

BETTY

Like a barrel of monkeys. Except we
can drive my truck instead of
riding the rails.

RAY

What about your boyfriend? What's
he going to say about you driving
all over the countryside with me?

BETTY

Don't have a boyfriend.

RAY

Who's that in the picture?

BETTY

Which? Oh, that's my brother.

RAY

Okay, your brother. Isn't he going
to have something to say about his

(MORE)

RAY (cont'd)
sister traipsing around the
countryside with one of those crazy
motorcycle racers?

BETTY
He's dead. He killed himself about
two months after he got back.

RAY
I'm sorry.

BETTY
Shell shock. They put him in
Walter Reed Hospital down near
Washington D.C. I moved out there,
visited him every day. I guess he
couldn't take it anymore and one
day he hanged himself.

RAY
That's rough.

BETTY
While I was there I got a sort of
unofficial job working with the
patients. Just talking to them,
letting them kind of think out loud
about whatever was bothering
them. I think I helped some of
them.

RAY smiles, shakes his head. He stands.

RAY
Thanks for the eggs.

BETTY
What?

RAY
I'm not broken. I don't need
fixing.

BETTY
Who said you did?

RAY
Look, what you did for those guys
you were talking about? That was
great. Really. But I'm not some
basket case in a hospital.

BETTY

I didn't hear anyone say you were. And don't call my brother a basket case.

RAY

Okay. Sorry. I didn't mean -

BETTY

You want some more coffee?

RAY

(warily)

Okay.

BETTY

And most of those guys you're calling basket cases were just fellas who'd been through the wringer and were wondering what they were gonna do when they got out on their own. Talking about it to someone seemed to help.

RAY

Well, I'm on my own and I know what I'm going to do. I'm doing it.

BETTY

Sure. Okay.

RAY

What's that supposed to mean?

BETTY

You are the touchiest son of a bitch I've ever run up against.

RAY

Don't give me that. I could hear it in your voice.

BETTY

Hear what?

RAY

You don't approve.

BETTY

Approve of what?

RAY
Of what I'm doing. Racing that
iron. You think I'm crazy.

BETTY
Don't take this the wrong way, but
I don't give a damn what you
do. It's your life.

RAY
Damn right it is.

BETTY
Well, okay, I'm glad we got that
settled. (a beat) You want more
coffee or not?

RAY
Look, I get it. You couldn't save
your brother and now you think if
you can save me it'll make up for
losing him.

BETTY
Oh, for shit's sake.

RAY
I don't want you thinking I need a
nursemaid.

BETTY
Why the hell do you care what I
think?

RAY
I'm sorry about your brother.

RAY stands.

RAY (CON'T)
Thanks for breakfast.

RAY exits, followed by the DOG.

EXT. THE MOTORDROME - DAY

RAY is lined up on the starting line ready to start a
race. BETTY comes up behind him wearing coveralls. He
looks back at her.

RAY
I told you I don't need -

BETTY
Pipe down, I'm just going to give
you a push.

RAY looks ahead. The starter waves his flag. BETTY pushes him. The motor catches and RAY speeds off.

The riders come around the track and line up for the start. The starter drops the flag.

About thirty yards down the track, RAY's engine sputters and dies. RAY pushes it off the track and back to the pits where BETTY is standing. She kneels down and looks the engine over. She pulls a wrench out of her back pocket and pulls the spark plug.

BETTY
Spark plug's fouled. (she loosens
the gas line.) Gas line's clogged,
too. When's the last time you
cleaned the gas filter? I thought
you said you checked everything.

RAY
I did.

BETTY
This says otherwise. Well, you're
not making any money today. Let's
get this back to the shop and tear
it down.

RAY starts pushing the bike away.

RAY
Don't worry about it. I'll do it.

BETTY
Where? Whose tools you gonna use?

RAY
Can't I use your shop?

BETTY
Not unless you let me work on it.

RAY
You kidding me?

BETTY

No, I'm not kidding you. I'm not running a charity for itinerant motorcycle racers. You want to use my shop and tools, you can pay me rent or hire me as your mechanic.

RAY

How much to rent your shop?

BETTY

How much you got?

RAY pulls his money from his pocket and counts it.

RAY

Twenty dollars.

BETTY

Rental on the shop is twenty five dollars. Cash. In advance.

RAY

I can rent a house for less than that.

BETTY

Then you better start looking.

RAY

Alright. What'll it stand me to hire you?

BETTY

Make me an offer.

RAY

Two dollars a week. When we're out on the road, I'll throw in all the beans you can eat.

BETTY

Sold. Where's our next race?

RAY

Pittsburgh.

BETTY

When?

RAY

Next weekend.

BETTY

Good. We got things to do.

INT. PAMELA'S PARLOR - DAY

PAMELA and her fiance, GORDON Wilson, 28, are in the parlor. GORDON is reading the newspaper. PAMELA looks through the mail and sees another envelope with no return address. She opens it. There is a cashier's check for twenty dollars and another note. The note simply says "I'm sorry".

PAMELA

Gordon, it's another one of those checks.

GORDON

Where's this one from?

PAMELA

Kansas City.

She hands the envelope and check to GORDON. He examines them.

PAMELA

Who's sending these? It's scaring me, Gordon.

GORDON

I don't know, but I'll find out. It'll be okay.

PAMELA stares at a photo of David on a nearby table. GORDON catches this.

GORDON (CON'T)

He's gone, Pam.

PAMELA

I know.

GORDON

But I'm here. I love you and I love little Dave like he was my own. If we're going to be happy you have to let go of David.

PAMELA

I know, Gordon. I'm trying, but every time I get one of those...

GORDON looks at the check and letter.

GORDON
I'll take care of this, Pam.

INT. A FLOWER SHOP - DAY

GORDON walks in the door of Schofield's flower shop. A THUG in a suit standing next to the door looks him over. GORDON goes to the counter.

GORDON
Gordon Wilson to see Mr. O'Banion.

COUNTER MAN
Wait here.

The COUNTER MAN goes through a door leading to the rear of the store. After several seconds he returns.

COUNTER MAN
Through there.

GORDON walks around the end of the counter. The COUNTER MAN stops him and frisks him then steps back and motions for GORDON to continue.

INT. THE BACK OF THE STORE - DAY

GORDON enters. Dean O'BANION is standing at a table working on a flower arrangement.

O'BANION
Gordon, good to see you. What'dya think? Classy, huh?

GORDON
Very nice, Dean.

O'BANION
What brings you to my little shop?
(He motions to his desk) You want some coffee?

GORDON
Yes, thank you.

O'BANION walks toward his desk.

O'BANION
Two coffees, Eamon.

Eamon goes for the coffees. O'BANION sits behind his desk. GORDON, in the chair in front of it.

GORDON

I've got a little problem I'm hoping you can help me out with.

O'BANION

If I can, I'd be glad to, Gordon.

The coffee arrives.

GORDON

My fiance has been receiving checks in the mail; cashier's checks with no name on them. She doesn't know who's sending them. They're being mailed from all over the country.

O'BANION

You're getting money in the mail? I wish I had problems like that.

GORDON

They're only for twenty or thirty dollars. And there's a note with each one that says "I'm sorry".

O'BANION

He's sorry it wasn't more? (laughs)

GORDON

Who knows. Problem is, every time one of these checks shows up, it's like dragging Pam's dead husband into the room. I had a hell of a time getting her to accept my proposal, I don't need her backing out because she feels like she's still married to a dead man.

O'BANION

So what you're saying, you don't need this guy rocking the boat.

GORDON

I close this deal and I'm in clover. And it's not just Pam's dough, but her old man's too. I don't want anything gumming that up.

O'BANION

What do you want me to do about it?

GORDON

Would you have someone in your organization who could look into this and find out who's sending these checks? The names of the banks they were drawn on are on the checks. Maybe someone could go to the banks and get a name.

O'BANION

You think this guy's trying to make trouble for you?

GORDON

I don't know what his game is. If I can find out who it is, I'll have a better idea of how to handle it.

O'BANION

Okay, I think I can help you out. I gotta guy who did a job for me a few days ago and now he needs to make himself scarce. Be good for him to get out of town for a while.

GORDON

I'd be glad to pay for his services, of course.

O'BANION

I don't want to put the bite on you, but I got expenses. You know.

GORDON

I understand, Dean. Thank you, I appreciate this.

O'BANION

Think nothin' of it, Gordon. If this check man turns out to be a problem, if you want he should disappear, my man can take care of that, too.

GORDON

I hope it won't come to that, but it's good to know.

O'BANION stands. GORDON stands and heads toward the door.

O'BANION

Always glad to help out a friend. I'll let my boy know and

(MORE)

O'BANION (cont'd)
 you can get together with him and
 fill him in on the job.

O'BANION picks up a flower, cuts off the stem and puts it in
 GORDON's lapel.

O'BANION (CONT'D)
 Don't worry about a thing, this guy
 of mine is top drawer. He'll take
 care of whatever you need doin'.

GORDON
 Thanks again, Dean.

O'BANION
 See ya around, my friend.

GORDON exits.

INT. BETTY'S SHOP - DAY

MONTAGE BEGIN

BETTY takes the bike and the engine apart. She cleans every
 piece. She machines some of them, drills holes to lighten
 them, polishes the ports, etc. She tightens the spokes and
 aligns the wheels.

RAY hammers out dents on the tank and sands and paints the
 frame and tank.

The reassembled bike gleams in the middle of the shop.

MONTAGE END

EXT. A STREET IN A SLUM IN CHICAGO - NIGHT

GORDON Wilson drives up to a speakeasy. He gets out of the
 car and goes in.

COP 1 hides in the shadow of a doorway across the street,
 watching the speakeasy. He quickly walks to the back of the
 bar to a window. He carefully works his way up to it and
 looks in. He tries to listen, but can't hear more than
 mumbles.

INT. THE BAR'S BACK ROOM - NIGHT

SEAN Murphy, one of Dean O'Banion's thugs is seated at a table, drinking. The lighting is dim. GORDON sits across from him.

SEAN

So you want me to find this mug. Then what, you want I should ice him?

GORDON

Let him know in no uncertain terms that he's to stop sending those checks. Use whatever methods you need to make your point.

SEAN

If you want him taken out permanent, it ain't no problem. It's like they say, all part of the service.

GORDON

Just make him see that sending any more checks to Miss Stewart will have serious consequences. Let me know how he reacts to that. Don't do anything else without orders from me. Got it?

SEAN

Yeah, sure Mr. Wilson. Sure.

INT. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INSPECTOR CHICAGO PD - DAY

The CHIEF is seated at his desk. COP 1 is sitting across from him.

CHIEF

What the hell is a swell like Wilson doing meeting with a hump like Murphy?

COP 1

What else would he want from a button man? Somebody's gonna get hit.

CHIEF

Keep an eye on Murphy, see what he's up to.

COP 1

I've got a man following him, you want us to grab him?

CHIEF

No. Keep your man on him for now. Better yet, I want you to follow him. Take another officer with you. Let's see what he and Wilson are cooking up. Also, I want a tap on Wilson's phone.

COP 1

Yes, sir.

COP 1 exits.

EXT. ON THE ROAD IN THE TRUCK - DAY

RAY and BETTY drive away from the cafe. The bed of the truck is crammed with the bike, tools and camping equipment.

EXT. THE MOTORDROME IN PITTSBURGH, PA - DAY

As they prepare the bike in the pits, several men in dirty coveralls walk by, glaring at BETTY. One TOUGH GUY stands next to BETTY, trying to intimidate her.

TOUGH GUY

Why you wanta come here and do men's work for?

BETTY

Get lost.

TOUGH GUY

I bet you look real nice under them overalls. Whyn't you come over to my place after the race, I'll help wash the grease off ya.

BETTY

Take a hike.

RAY walks over.

RAY

There a problem here?

TOUGH GUY

Get yourself a new mechanic,
Bub. This ain't no place for
girls.

RAY

Fuck yourself...Bub.

TOUGH GUY

Time for you to go, doll. (to
RAY) I'll be back for you in a
minute.

TOUGH GUY grabs BETTY by her collar and tries to pull her
up. BETTY whacks him in the shin with a wrench, then swings
it up into his nuts. The man buckles.

BETTY

Oh dear, clumsy me.

RAY grins. He grabs the man by the collar and belt and
gives him the bum's rush.

EXT. THE MOTORDROME IN PITTSBURGH, PA; LATER- DAY

RAY races. There's a bad crash that Ray is not involved in,
but narrowly misses.

RAY wins. BETTY watches from the infield, then runs to him
and hugs him when he comes into the pits. RAY doesn't return
the hug.

EXT. THE AKRON MOTORDROME - DAY

RAY races. There's another bad crash. This time the
motorcycle and rider fly into the stands. The rider and some
spectators are killed.

RAY comes in second. BETTY hugs him again. This time RAY
tentatively puts one arm around her.

As they push the bike out of the track area, a burly
mechanic brushes against BETTY, almost knocking her over.

MECHANIC

Why'n't you get back in the
kitchen, girlie.

RAY starts for him, but BETTY hold him back.

A headline in a newspaper reads "Rider and spectators killed
in crash at Akron murderdrome."

EXT. A STREET IN KANSAS CITY - DAY

SEAN Murphy goes into the bank where RAY obtained the check. There are no other customers there. Through the window we see him talking to the TELLER who helped RAY get the check several days ago.

INT. THE BANK - DAY

TELLER

I'm not really supposed to give out that information, sir.

SEAN pulls out a wad of cash and peels off a five, sliding it along the counter to the TELLER.

SEAN

Ain't no one going to know but us, pal.

TELLER

I don't know...

SEAN leans in, takes hold of the TELLER's tie and pulls.

SEAN

I give you a five spot and I asked nice. Are we gonna have a problem?

TELLER

No, sir. Just a moment, I have to look in the ledger.

SEAN releases the tie. The TELLER pulls a ledger from under the counter, opens it and flips pages.

TELLER (CON'T)

Here it is. Oh, yes, I remember now. His name was Ray Jackson. He races those motorcycles at the motordrome up the road. What'dya think makes people do that kind of thing? Those fellas are crazy, you ask me.

SEAN

What's he look like?

TELLER

Oh, he's medium height. Blonde hair. Oh, and he has a wooden leg. Can you imagine that, racing motorcycles with only one leg?

SEAN
Where do I find this Jackson
character?

TELLER
I wouldn't know, sir. You can
check at the cafe over by the
racetrack. Those people seem to
congregate there.

SEAN
Anybody asks, I wasn't in
here. Got it?

TELLER
Yes, sir. My lips are sealed.

SEAN takes back the five and exits.

COP 1 and COP 2 wait until SEAN rounds the corner, then go
into the bank. We see them show their ID's and talk to the
teller.

INT. SEAN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

SEAN is on the phone.

SEAN
Yeah. Ray Jackson. He races
motorcycles on those board
tracks. No...Yeah. I asked around
this hash house next to the track
and somebody said he went to
Pittsburgh. No, I ain't seen him
yet. Yeah, you bet Mr. Wilson,
I'll find him.

INT. THE COPS' HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

COP 1 is talking on the phone.

COP 1
Ray Jackson. Yes sir.

INT. OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF INSPECTOR CHICAGO PD -
DAY

COP 5
So what the hell does Wilson want
with this Jackson? He in the
rackets?

INTERCUT WITH COPS HOTEL ROOM

COP 1

Don't know, sir. Warren checked up and told me he can't find anything on him until about six months ago. It's like he didn't exist before that. Don't know why Wilson suddenly got a hard-on for him.

COP 5

Where are you going next?

COP 1

Jackson is headed for Pittsburgh. We'll report in when we get there.

COP 2 puts a newspaper in front of COP 1 and points to a picture of Ray on the sports page posing with two other riders on the Akron track.

COP 5

Alright. Stay on him.

COP 1

Wait a minute.

No one speaks for several moments.

COP 5

Don, you still there?

COP 1

Yeah. I'm looking at a photo of Jackson in the local rag. Damn, I've seen this guy someplace.

COP 5

You know him?

COP 1

I don't know. There's something...Look, I'm gonna send you this picture. Have the Chief send it on to the war department, see if someone there can find him in their files. I'd do it myself, but it'll get taken care of faster if it's an official request from the Chief's office.

COP 5
That's where you know him from, the
Army?

COP 1
Yeah, I think so. Have them check
the files on captured or missing
personnel.

COP 5
Okay, we'll get on it.

COP 5 hangs up.

COP 1 continues to stare at the picture, racking his brain
to remember where he's seen that face.

EXT. THE MOTORDROME IN UNIONTOWN- DAY

RAY and BETTY pull up to the track and get out of the
truck.

SEAN pulls up in his car a short distance away.

RAY and BETTY get out of the truck and stand, stretching.

SEAN leans forward, focused on Ray's face, his expression
intense.

RAY starts walking toward the office, then sees COP 1 and
COP 2 talking to someone inside. He watches for a moment,
then turns and heads back to the truck.

RAY
(To BETTY)
Come on, we're leaving.

BETTY
We just got here.

RAY gets in the truck, behind the wheel.

RAY
Let's go.

BETTY
What the hell's wrong with you?

RAY
We're going to Cleveland.

BETTY

We've got a race to run tomorrow
right here.

The COPS walk out of the office door, light cigarettes and stand talking and looking around. RAY starts the engine.

RAY

I don't like the look of this
place. We're getting out of here.

He leans over and pushes the passenger door open. BETTY looks at the track building.

BETTY

It looks okay to me.

RAY

Just do it. Hurry up.

BETTY gets in the truck. RAY begins backing out before she can close the door. He speeds off.

BETTY

What the hell was that about?

RAY

I told you, I got a bad feeling
about that place. I'm the one
sticking my neck out, I'm the one
who says where we race.

BETTY

Sure, okay. You say so.

She looks back at the track. The cops are still there, looking around.

SEAN starts his car and follows RAY.

EXT. NEAR RAY AND BETTY'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT

SEAN is sneaking through the trees and brush, working his way to the camp. He hears a rustling ahead of him and stops.

EXT. THE CAMPSITE NEAR THE COLUMBUS TRACK - NIGHT

RAY and BETTY are asleep inside the tent on the bed of the truck. The DOG is sleeping just outside the tent door. The bike is on the ground several feet from the truck.

The faint sound of a hacksaw on metal can be heard. The DOG stirs, then sits up, growling. A figure near the bike quietly steals away.

EXT. NEAR RAY AND BETTY'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT

SEAN sees RAY come out of the tent and look around. SEAN points his pistol at RAY. VINCE passes near SEAN on his way out. SEAN ducks down. RAY goes back inside. The DOG continues to be alert.

SEAN thinks for a moment, then leaves.

EXT. COLUMBUS TRACK - DAY

RAY is racing on the track, coming around turn four on the last lap, just ahead of a pack of riders.

SEAN is watching from the stands. He scans the crowd in the stands, his hat pulled down over his face. He spots COP 1 and COP 2 at the far end of the grandstand. They're glancing his way, trying not to look like they're watching him.

The flag man, holding the checkered flag, is standing at the finish line, ready to wave the flag.

RAY pulls ahead, but another rider pulls alongside him. They come out of the last turn side by side. The other rider pulls ahead, but blows a tire and crashes almost in front of RAY.

RAY avoids the crash and wins the race.

As he crosses the finish line, he begins to slow down. The rear axle on his bike snaps. He loses control and crashes, tumbling down the track along with the bike which crashes into the railing, demolishing it.

BETTY and a couple of track officials run to him. On the way, BETTY picks up RAY's leg which came off in the crash.

BETTY

Ray! Are you okay?

She hands him his leg. RAY pulls a large splinter from his arm and attaches his prosthesis. He stands unsteadily, testing the leg then walks down the track to the bike.

RAY
Did I win?

BETTY inspects the bike. She looks closely at the rear axle. It has been partially sawn through. She motions to RAY.

BETTY
Ray.

RAY sees the axle. He looks down the track at the other RIDERS and their CREWS standing in the pits, watching him. Some of them are smiling.

RAY
(To a couple of nearby track
officials)
Can you help us move this, fellas?

The officials and BETTY pick up the twisted remains of the bike and push it off the track.

RAY watches for a moment, then begins to follow when a man in a sweater with an Indian logo approaches him. He and RAY talk, but we can't hear what they're saying.

SEAN watches them from the stands, then leaves quickly. COP 1 and COP 2 look for him, but he's blended in with the crowd.

EXT. A RURAL GAS STATION - DAY

The truck with the remains of the bike on it pulls into the station.

MANAGER (O.S)
Joe! Get your black ass out
there! We got a customer!

Joe Washington, 19, a young African-American man, comes out to the pumps from the service bay.

RAY
Fill it.

JOE
You got it.

JOE begins filling the tank, eyeing the debris on the flatbed.

JOE (CON'T)
Did that used to be a motorcycle?

RAY
Yeah.

JOE
You a motorcycle racer?

RAY
Not anymore.

JOE
Yeah...yeah, I think I saw you in the paper. You're Ray something.

RAY
In the flesh.

JOE
You were doing pretty good there for a while. Looks like you're outta' the business now.

RAY
Pretty much, yeah.

JOE
Too bad.

RAY
Yup.

MANAGER (OS)
Joe! Stop gabbin' with those people and get back to work!

JOE
You in the market for a new one?

RAY
New one?

JOE
Motorcycle. Looks like you need a new one. I got one I could sell you.

BETTY gets out of the truck and walks around to join RAY and JOE.

BETTY
You have a motorcycle for sale?

JOE
Yes ma'am.

BETTY
A racing motorcycle?

JOE
Yes ma'am. A fast one.

RAY
Where is it?

JOE
Come on.

JOE walks into the service bay and pulls a tarp off a motorcycle. It is indeed a racing bike. A little dusty, but a fine looking Harley-Davidson board track racer.

RAY
Let's get it out into the light.

JOE and RAY push the bike out of the garage. JOE brings out a stand for it. He wipes it down with a rag.

RAY (CON'T)
Does it run?

JOE
Sure it runs. I start it at least once a week and let it run on the stand for a while. It runs fine.

BETTY
How much you want for it?

JOE
I could let it go for...three hundred.

RAY
Nice talking to you. Come on, Betty, we've got to get back on the road.

JOE
Hey, my brother put a lot of work into it. It goes like blazes, mister.

RAY

Why aren't you racing it?

JOE

I tried riding it once. Thing scared the hell out of me. My brother was gonna race it, but the war came along and...

BETTY

He didn't come back?

JOE

He never went. Soon as he got his draft notice, he packed up and made a beeline for Mexico. Last letter we got from him said he was in Ensenada. He shows up here, they're gonna throw his sorry black ass...(to BETTY)...excuse me...throw him in jail, so I don't expect him back anytime soon.

RAY

We don't have anywhere near three hundred. Too bad, looks like a fast machine.

JOE

How about this? You race it for me. We split the winnings.

BETTY

How about this? We race it for you, you get a quarter of the winnings.

JOE

Make it a third, and I come with you.

RAY

We sleep in a tent and eat mostly beans and bread. You still want to come?

MANAGER (O.S)

Joe, goddamnit, get your black ass back in the garage. That damn car ain't gonna fix itself!

JOE
When do we leave?

RAY
Hang on, let's see how this thing
runs first.

RAY takes the bike off of its stand and pushes it over to the dirt road.

RAY
Give me a push.

BETTY and JOE push RAY. The engine catches and after a few sputters, the bike takes off down the road like a streak. RAY turns around a mile later and returns, smiling.

RAY
Let's get it on the truck.

They push the bike to the truck.

EXT. A RURAL GAS STATION - DAY - LATER

The truck drives away with the new bike, the DOG, and JOE on the flatbed. The old bike lays in a heap at the station.

MANAGER (O.S)
Joe! Goddamnit! Joe!

EXT. BY THE ROAD - NIGHT.

BETTY is pulling splinters out of RAY by the light of a kerosene lantern. JOE is stirring a pot of beans.

RAY
You're doing a great job.

BETTY
Thanks. I'm getting a lot of
practice.

RAY
No, with the iron, it's running
great.

She looks at him warily.

RAY
What?

BETTY

I'm not used to getting compliments from you.

RAY shrugs.

BETTY (CON'T.)

I guess I've jinxed it now.

RAY

I don't say it enough. I just wanted you to know.

BETTY

Since you're in a talkative mood, why don't you tell me about those two fellas in the suits back in Uniontown.

RAY

What about them?

BETTY

You sure lit out of there in a hurry when you saw them.

RAY

That had nothing to do with them. I told you, I had a bad feeling about that track.

BETTY

You on the run from the law?

RAY thinks for a moment.

RAY

Not exactly.

JOE

Wait a minute. You wanted by the law? You coulda' said something back at the gas station.

BETTY

What the hell's that mean, "not exactly"?

RAY

I can't say.

BETTY

Am I gonna get in trouble for being with you?

RAY

No.

BETTY

What kind of trouble are you in?

RAY

I told you, I can't say.

BETTY

You kill someone?

RAY

No.

BETTY

You rob a bank?

RAY

Just drop it. Okay?

BETTY

Is that it? You robbed a bank?

JOE

Oh, lord, I'm mixed up with bank robbers.

RAY

I told you, it's nothing like that.

BETTY

If you robbed a bank, why do you have to risk your neck racing?

RAY

I didn't rob any damn bank. Just let it go.

BETTY

I'm going to find out.

RAY

You keep this up and you can go back to that greasy spoon of yours.

BETTY

Okay, okay.

JOE

Oh, damn. We're all goin' to jail.

RAY puts his shirt on and goes into the tent.

INT. A HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

SEAN's on the phone.

SEAN

He's got some broad and a nigger with him. The tomato's supposed to be his mechanic, but I'm guessin' she's tunin' up more than his motor.

INT. GORDON'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

GORDON

Have you talked to him yet?

INTERCUT with GORDON's office.

SEAN

Yeah. Yeah, I did. I got him alone and we had a heart to heart about it.

GORDON

Were you able to persuade him? What did he say?

SEAN

Well, he wasn't in such good shape after a while, you know what I mean, so it was kinda hard to understand what he said, but it sounded like he told me to go fuck myself.

GORDON

I'm sorry to hear that.

SEAN

So what do I do?

GORDON

Go ahead with what we discussed.

SEAN
It's as good as done. Don't worry
about a thing.

GORDON
Let me know when you've completed
the job.

SEAN
You got it.

INT. THE BASEMENT OF THE HOUSE NEXT TO THE WILSON'S - NIGHT

COP 4 and COP 6 are sitting at a card table. They have
headphones on. One is writing on a pad of paper.

COP 4
Did he just order a hit?

COP 6
Yeah. Better get this to the boss.

Cop 6 takes the paper, stands, puts on his coat and leaves.

INT. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INSPECTOR CHICAGO PD - NIGHT

Cop 5 is standing in front of the CHIEF's desk.

COP 5
We need to warn him, Chief. And we
need to protect him.

CHIEF
Or we could sit on him, then nab
Murphy when he hits him.

COP 5
Use him for bait?

CHIEF
Wouldn't be the first time.

COP 5
But nab Murphy before he can kill
him. Right?

CHIEF
If possible. (he notices the look
on COP 5's face) Murphy's been
working for O'Banion since before
the war; he knows where the bodies

(MORE)

CHIEF (cont'd)
are buried. If we could nab him
for murder -

COP 5
Or attempted murder.

CHIEF
...we could put the squeeze on
him. He thinks he's looking at the
chair, he'll sing like a goddamn
bird, give us enough to put
O'Banion away for life, break up
his entire gang.

COP 5
Is that worth Jackson's life?

CHIEF
O'Banion and his gangsters have
been been murdering our citizens
wholesale; corrupting our
government with their dirty
money. I just want to make our
city safe. It's a cruel fact that
sometimes sacrifices have to be
made.

COP 5
Let me understand; if our men see
Murphy about to shoot down Jackson,
they are to stand by and let it
happen. Are those your orders?

CHIEF
My orders are that they should act
as the situation dictates, keeping
in mind the goals of the bigger
picture. Got it?

COP 5 stares at the CHIEF for several seconds.

COP 5
Yes sir. I got it.

COP 5 exits.

INT. OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF INSPECTOR CHICAGO PD -
NIGHT

COP 5 is on the phone with COP 1.

COP 5
Have you found Murphy yet?

INT. A HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

COP 1
No.

INTERCUT BETWEEN OFFICE AND HOTEL.

COP 5
Keep tailing Jackson, but keep your
distance. Stay as far back as you
can and still have him in
sight. You don't know where
Murphy'll be. And only one of you
on him at a time. Murphy will show
up eventually.

COP 1
How are we supposed to stop Murphy
plugging Jackson if we're nowhere
near him?

COP 5
Do what you can. In any event,
make sure you nab Murphy
alive...after.

COP 1
You telling me to let Murphy kill
him?

COP 5
The main thing is to get our
man. If we can get him on a murder
rap, so much the better.

COP 1
Better for you, maybe.

COP 5
You have your orders.

COP 1
My orders stink.

COP 5
All I want to hear from you is yes
sir.

COP 1
Yes sir.

COP 5 hangs up.

EXT. THE CINCINNATTI MOTORDROME - DAY

RAY, BETTY and JOE pull up outside the track. The sound of bikes can be heard from the track, which we can't see.

A bike and rider fly off the top of a turn and land about twenty yards from the truck. RAY exits the truck, barely noticing the bike.

RAY
Looks like a good place to set up
camp over there.

He walks away. BETTY and JOE are gaping at the rider and bike.

BETTY
This track you don't have a bad
feeling about?

He walks to the office under the stands. Several men come rushing past him on their way to the accident.

INT. THE TRACK OFFICE - DAY

RAY enters the office. The MAN inside has his face pressed against the window, looking out at what has just happened. RAY goes to the counter, looks over at the man and waits a few beats. The MAN doesn't move.

RAY
Hello?

MAN
Oh, yes. Did you see that?

RAY
How much is the entry fee?

MAN

Entry...? Oh, two dollars.

RAY throws the money onto the counter. The MAN takes it, writes on the form and gives a copy to RAY.

RAY

Which way is town from here?

MAN

Just turn right on the highway and she'll take you right into town.

RAY

Thanks.

RAY exits and walks to the truck.

Men are removing the motorcycle and putting the rider on a stretcher.

EXT. THE CAMPSITE - DAY

JOE is sitting on the truck bed reading the sports pages. An article has the headline "Girl Mechanic Helps Keep Board Track Speed Demon In The Money!". The article includes a picture of Betty smeared with grease, wearing coveralls.

BETTY

I'm not in the mood for beans tonight. It's payday, give me my two bucks.

RAY pays her.

BETTY (CON'T.)

Joe and I are going into town for some real food. You coming?

RAY

No thanks.

BETTY

My treat. My cheapskate boss just paid me.

RAY

No, but I'll ride in with you. I've got a couple errands I can run while you're eating.

BETTY
Suit yourself.

JOE
I think I'll stay here, keep an eye
on things.

BETTY
It'll be okay, come on.

JOE
No, I'll stay. Bring me back a
hamburger, though. Okay?

BETTY
Sure.

JOE
And some of them french fries.

BETTY
Okay.

JOE
And a bottle of pop.

BETTY
Got it.

RAY and BETTY drive away.

JOE waits until they're out of sight, then goes to the motorcycle. He looks at it, strokes it. He puts Ray's helmet and goggles on, gets on the bike. He makes believe that he's racing down the track.

INT. THE TRUCK CAB - DAY

BETTY
I guess we're famous now.

RAY
How's that?

BETTY
The papers are making a big deal
out of me working on your iron.

RAY
I guess, if by big deal you mean
ticked off.

BETTY

You know, we could make it work for us.

RAY

Yeah? How?

BETTY

Play up the angle of a girl mechanic and a war veteran with one leg beating everybody on the track. Get the papers to print more stories about us.

RAY

And that helps us how?

BETTY

After the season you and Joe and I could open up a shop. All that publicity, we'd have customers lining up at the door. We'd put your name on it to keep everyone happy but we'd all own it together.

RAY

Okay, that'd be just dandy for you. What's in it for me?

BETTY

I thought you wanted to make a lot of money. A deal like that, we'd be raking it in from the first day.

RAY

I had a guy from the Indian team ask me to ride for them. Some of those guys are making twenty thousand a year.

BETTY pulls to the side of the road and skids to a stop.

BETTY

When were you gonna tell me about this?

RAY

I'm telling you now.

BETTY

You gonna do it?

RAY
I'm thinking about it.

BETTY
You'd just walk out on me and Joe
for a few bucks?

RAY
It's not just a few bucks. I told
you-

BETTY
Yeah, you told me. So you get
rich, Joe goes back to pumping gas
and I'm dishing out burgers again.

RAY
You could get someone else to ride
for you.

BETTY
Fat chance. So when are you
leaving?

RAY
I don't know if I am yet.

BETTY starts the truck, jams it into gear.

BETTY
Do me a favor and don't wait until
we're halfway across the country to
let me know.

BETTY hits the gas and the truck lurches forward.

EXT. ON THE STREET IN THE TOWN - DAY

BETTY parks the truck in front of a cafe and she and RAY get
out.

BETTY goes into the cafe. While waiting to be seated, she
stands by the window watching RAY out on the street.

RAY looks up and down the street. He stops a PASSERBY and
asks a question. He walks away.

BETTY exits the cafe and follows him at a distance. RAY
enters a bank. BETTY sidles up to the window and watches as
RAY gets a cashier's check. He asks the TELLER a question
and the TELLER points.

RAY exits the bank as BETTY hides around a corner. He walks to a post office and enters. BETTY watches through the window as he buys an envelope, begins to address it, then accidentally spills ink on it. He crumples it up, tosses it into a wastebasket, buys another one, addresses it, puts the check in it, seals it and mails it.

BETTY hides around the corner as RAY exits and walks away. She goes into the post office.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

BETTY rifles through the wastebasket, under the disapproving watch of the CLERK, finds the crumpled envelope and sees that it's addressed to Pamela Stewart, in Chicago. She puts the envelope in her pocket and exits.

EXT. ON THE STREET IN THE TOWN - DAY

RAY is walking down the street. COP 1 and COP 2 are a block and a half away in a car. COP 2 gets out and follows RAY, keeping the same distance from him.

As RAY passes an alley, a hand shoots out and grabs his coat, pulling him into the alley. The hand belongs to SEAN who sticks a gun with a silencer in his face.

COP 2 was looking at the other side of the street when SEAN grabbed RAY. He looks back and sees that RAY is gone. He speeds up his pace a bit, looking at the spot where he last saw RAY.

SEAN steers RAY down the alley. They go all the way to the back of the building to another alley that runs behind the buildings. SEAN pushes RAY up against a wall, puts the gun under RAY's chin. RAY is looking hard at SEAN's face.

SEAN

Yeah, it's me, asshole.

RAY

I'm supposed to know you?

SEAN

Don't give me that shit.

RAY

Look, mister, you've got the wrong guy.

SEAN cocks the pistol.

SEAN
Don't fuck with me, you gutless sack of shit. You can change your name to whatever you want, but I'm not gonna forget your face. I spent two rotten months in a German POW prison because of you.

a beat

RAY
Because of me?

SEAN
Don't pull that shit on me, asshole.

SEAN points the gun at RAY's crotch.

SEAN (CON'T)
I'll blow your fuckin' balls off.

RAY
Wait, wait. Is this about when I -

SEAN
Yeah, it's all comin' back to you now, ain't it.

RAY
You were there?

SEAN cocks the pistol.

COP 2 runs back to the car. He and COP 1 walk quickly to the spot where RAY disappeared. COP 1 goes across the street. COP 2 goes into the nearest store.

SEAN pulls RAY into an open door. They're a few feet into a narrow hallway.

RAY
Look, look, I'm sorry.

SEAN
Best part of this is I'm gettin' paid to knock you off and I'd do it for free.

RAY
I've been trying to make up for it. I'm sending money to Dave Stewart's widow.

SEAN

Yeah, I know. Why do you think I'm here?

RAY

Pamela sent you?

SEAN

Yeah. She don't want your money, she wants you dead.

RAY

She said that?

SEAN

She hates your guts. Her kid ain't got no father cause of you. She told me to tell you "fuck you" before I pull the trigger.

RAY struggles.

SEAN (CON'T)

Fuck you.

A COP walks past the doorway, glancing inside. SEAN and RAY look at him. A moment later, he reappears, staring wide eyed. He goes for his pistol. SEAN shoots him. RAY pushes SEAN away and gets the gun away from him. SEAN runs down the hallway and turns a corner.

RAY stuffs the gun into his waistband, pulls his shirt out to cover it and walks to the door. He looks down at the fallen officer who is obviously dead. He looks in both directions and, seeing no one, walks away. He walks back up the alley to the street, looks both ways and continues on his way, looking around.

COP 2 comes out of a store and sees RAY. COP 1 is still on the other side of the street. He sees COP 2 gesturing to him, sees RAY and goes back to the car. COP 2 follows RAY.

RAY is walking down the street, trying to compose himself, looking around to see if Sean is nearby. He hears yelling coming from the alley behind him.

INT. THE TRUCK - DAY

BETTY is driving.

BETTY

By the bye, we're taking a little detour to Chicago.

RAY

What the hell's in Chicago?

BETTY

I have some family there. Thought I'd drop in while we were in the neighborhood.

RAY

We're not in the neighborhood. Chicago is about two hundred miles out of our way.

BETTY

Guess it depends on how you look at it. Anyway, this truck is going to Chicago. You can go where you like.

RAY

What about the race in Springfield?

BETTY

We'll make it.

RAY

We're out here to win races. This is a waste of time.

BETTY

Oh, relax, I hear it's a nice town. Be good for you to take a break.

RAY

We've gotta get the iron set up for that track. When are we going to have time for that?

BETTY

We'll have plenty of time.

RAY

Looks like I'm the only one here who gives a damn about winning races.

BETTY

Oh, don't get your britches in a knot. It's only for a day.

RAY stares out the side window, sulking.

BETTY (CON'T.)

You going to pout the whole way? 'Cause if you are, you and Joe can trade places.

RAY stares ahead.

BETTY

You got something against Chicago?

RAY

Never been there.

BETTY

You know anybody there?

RAY

No.

BETTY

Then it'll be good for you. Maybe you'll meet some new people, broaden your outlook on life.

RAY gives her a dirty look.

A GAS STATION OUT ON THE ROAD - DAY

An attendant is filling the tank. JOE is behind the wheel. BETTY is getting a Coke from a cooler.

RAY is standing by the side of the road, stretching and looking out at a field across the road. Out of the corner of his eye to his left, he sees a car coming up the road. He watches it.

COP 1 and COP 2 are parked by the side of the road some distance back. The car flies by them.

INT. THE CAR - DAY

SEAN is driving, an intent expression on his face.

INTERCUT WITH GAS STATION SHOT.

RAY looks back at the field, then looks at the car again.

SEAN speeds up.

The car is within fifty yards of RAY now. It's traveling very fast. The car veers toward RAY, who at the last moment jumps out of the way; the car missing him by inches.

The car speeds away.

SEAN hits the steering wheel with his fist.

JOE and BETTY run to RAY.

JOE
You okay? Did you see who it was?

RAY
Probably some drunk. I'm okay.

RAY watches the car speed away in the distance.

EXT. A STREET IN CHICAGO - DAY

BETTY parks near the house with the address that was on the envelope. She sees PAMELA, who is pushing a baby carriage, come out of the house.

PAMELA pushes the baby carriage down the sidewalk.

BETTY gets out of the truck and walks after her. She catches up to her.

BETTY
Oh, what a beautiful baby. Boy or girl?

PAMELA
Boy.

BETTY
What's his name?

PAMELA
David. He's named after his father.

BETTY
He must be so proud.

PAMELA
He was killed in the war.

BETTY
I'm so sorry. So many young men
killed in that awful war.

PAMELA
Yes.

BETTY
I have a friend who was wounded. He
lost his leg. His name is Ray
Jackson.

PAMELA
Yes, it was terrible. I'm sorry
about your friend.

PAMELA, who has been walking away from the house, turns
around and is walking, more quickly, back to it, trying to
get away from BETTY.

BETTY
I wonder if they knew each other,
my friend Ray and your
husband. Ray Jackson, does that
name sound familiar?

PAMELA
No, I'm sorry, it doesn't.

BETTY
So how was your husband killed?

PAMELA
I...that's...I'd rather not talk
about it.

BETTY
Oh, of course, I understand. What
company was he in?

PAMELA
Please, I don't -

BETTY
Where did it happen?

PAMELA and BETTY are back in front of the house.

PAMELA
Please, leave me alone.

She hurries down the walk and into the house. BETTY starts to follow her, but the BUTLER, steps outside and glares at her. She stops, thinking, then walks back to the truck and drives away.

INT. THE PARLOR IN THE WILSON HOUSE - DAY

PAMELA watches BETTY go back to her truck and drive away. She sits, tears running down her cheeks.

There is a picture of David's squad on a table next to PAMELA. RAY is next to David, their arms are around each other's shoulders, they're both smiling.

EXT. THE SPRINGFIELD MOTORDROME - DAY

RAY is doing practice laps on the track. BETTY and JOE are watching from the pits. RAY comes in.

RAY
Runs great.

JOE
Man, I wish I could do that.

RAY dismounts.

RAY
Get on.

JOE
You kidding?

RAY
No. Get on.

JOE mounts the bike. RAY gives him the helmet and goggles.

RAY
Stay down near the bottom of the track. If things get too hairy and you want to slow down, just hit the kill switch.

JOE
You sure about this?

RAY
Yeah. You'll be fine.

JOE puts on the helmet and goggles.

JOE
Oh, damn. (a beat) Okay.

BETTY and RAY push the bike. The engine catches and JOE picks up speed quickly. He goes by the pits after his first lap, giving RAY and BETTY a nervous grin as he goes by.

VINCE approaches.

VINCE
Bad enough we gotta put up with that porch monkey in our pits, now you're lettin' him out on the track? What the hell're you thinkin'? Dumb nigger's gonna kill somebody.

RAY and BETTY give him a look.

RAY
It's his machine, I guess he can ride it when he wants to.

JOE flashes by, a determined look on his face. RAY starts a stopwatch.

BETTY
Looks like he's getting the hang of it.

VINCE
Get him offa there.

RAY
Fuck off, Vince.

VINCE
Assholes.

VINCE stomps away. JOE streaks by. RAY clicks the stopwatch.

JOE goes around once more, then coasts into the pits.

BETTY
I thought you were scared of that thing.

JOE
I was. Guess I'm not anymore.

RAY
Not bad. You did that third lap in
forty four seconds. That's uh...

JOE
Eighty one point eight two miles
per hour.

RAY and BETTY gape at him.

JOE (CON'T)
I'm good with numbers.

RAY
How did it feel?

JOE
Pretty damn good.

JOE pushes the bike into the infield. BETTY begins to
follow him, but RAY holds her arm.

RAY
Just thought you'd want to know,
I'm staying with you and Joe if you
still want me to.

BETTY
Not to look a gift horse in the
mouth, but what made up your mind?

RAY
I'm having too much fun aggravating
Vince.

BETTY
Very funny. Why are you staying,
Ray?

RAY
I can't walk out on you and Joe.

BETTY
Why, Ray?

RAY
I just told you.

BETTY
Come on, Ray, just say it.

RAY
What do you want me to say?

BETTY shakes her head.

BETTY
You give any more thought to the shop?

RAY
Yeah. I'm in.

BETTY
Okay, good.

MONTAGE:

EXT. A BOARD TRACK - DAY

RAY is racing around the track. He pulls into the pits. JOE fills the gas tank while BETTY checks the motor. They push RAY back out.

EXT. ANOTHER BOARD TRACK - DAY

JOE is riding around a track, a determined look on his face. RAY and BETTY watch him, smiling.

EXT. YET ANOTHER BOARD TRACK - DAY

RAY is racing at another track. JOE and BETTY watch him. RAY wins.

EXT. A CAMPSITE - NIGHT

BETTY is working on the bike at night by the light of a kerosene lamp. JOE and RAY sit by a campfire talking.

EXT. ONE MORE BOARD TRACK - DAY

JOE is riding around a track. RAY times him. He clicks the stopwatch, looks at it and raises his eyebrows.

MONTAGE END

EXT. THE DENVER MOTORDROME - DAY

RAY, BETTY and JOE are working on the bike in the pits. A MAN walks by and hands RAY a flyer. It's advertising the championship races in Beverly Hills, California. He reads it, then hands it to JOE. BETTY reads it over his shoulder.

RAY
First prize is eight hundred dollars.

BETTY
We could use that.

JOE
Where's Beverly Hills?

RAY
It's out near Los Angeles. I think a lot of movie stars live there. What do you think, Joe? It's your iron.

JOE
Let's go.

RAY looks at BETTY.

BETTY
I'm game.

RAY
It's a long way from home.

BETTY
We're already a long way from home. What's your point?

RAY
Thanks. Both of you.

BETTY AND JOE
For what?

RAY smiles, shakes his head.

BETTY
So, how do we get to California? I hate to tell you, but this truck ain't makin' it over the Rockies.

RAY
It won't have to.

BETTY and JOE look at him questioningly.

RAY
You'll see tomorrow.

BETTY
I can hardly wait.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MOTORDROME - NIGHT.

VINCE pours gasoline into a bottle. He stuffs a rag into it.

EXT. NEAR RAY, BETTY AND JOE'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT

VINCE is sneaking up on the camp, the bottle of gasoline in his hand. He stops and watches the camp for any activity. SEAN comes up behind him and shoots him in the head with the silenced pistol.

SEAN
(whispering)
He's mine.

EXT. RAY, BETTY AND JOE'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT (LATER)

RAY and BETTY are asleep in the tent. JOE is stretched out in front of it with the DOG. The pop of the silenced gun is heard. The DOG sits up and growls.

RAY exits the tent with SEAN's pistol in his hand, sans silencer. JOE awakens, sits up and sees the gun at RAY's side, inches from his face. RAY stands listening, trying to peer into the darkness.

JOE
What the fuck?

RAY
Quiet.

SEAN fires, the bullet nicking RAY in the side. RAY jumps down behind the truck. He pulls JOE down beside him and returns fire.

BETTY looks out from the tent.

BETTY
What the hell...?

RAY
Get down!

BETTY hesitates, another shot is fired. She jumps down beside RAY. JOE reaches over and pulls the DOG, who is barking, down with them.

RAY
Get behind the front wheel.

BETTY and JOE run to a spot behind the front wheel of the truck. JOE pulls the DOG along.

RAY crawls under the truck, laying behind the rear wheel.

Another shot is fired, the bullet pings off the wheel RAY is behind. RAY fires two quick shots where he saw the muzzle flashes. He hears the shooter run away.

BETTY stands up.

BETTY
Ray, you okay?

RAY
Stay down.

BETTY kneels. RAY runs into the darkness, going out of sight. There is a pause and he returns.

RAY
Okay. He's gone.

BETTY and JOE come out from behind the truck.

BETTY
You okay?

RAY
Yeah. (He looks at the nick in his side.) You?

BETTY
Yeah.

RAY
Joe?

JOE

I'm okay. What the hell was that about?

BETTY

Vince?

RAY

Maybe. (He checks the DOG) You okay, boy? (To BETTY and JOE) Go back to bed. I'll stand watch.

BETTY

(Looking at RAY's side)

Let me see that.

She inspects his wound. She goes into the tent, gets the medical bag and starts cleaning and bandaging it.

BETTY (CON'T.)

We're talking to the cops tomorrow about Vince.

RAY

No. No cops. And we're splitting up.

BETTY

Like hell.

RAY

We'll meet in Los Angeles.

JOE

Not a chance, Ray.

RAY

Look, we're-

BETTY

No.

BETTY dabs at the wound with an alcohol soaked cloth.

RAY

Ow. I don't want anyone else killed because of me.

BETTY

Anyone else? What's that supposed to mean?

RAY
I don't want you hurt. Either of
you.

JOE
Okay, Ray, no cops. But we stay
together.

RAY
I don't -

JOE
That's the way it's gonna be,
Ray. It's my iron. And we're
gonna have a talk with Vince the
next time we see him.

INT. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INSPECTOR CHICAGO PD - DAY

COP 5 rushes into the room.

COP 5
We've got a problem.

He hands the CHIEF a file folder. The CHIEF opens it and
reads.

CHIEF
Shit.

COP 5
This Jackson's a fucking hero.

CHIEF
I can read. Are they sure about
this?

COP 5
It's definitely him. Don't know
why he changed his name. What do
you want to do?

CHIEF
Get ahold of Brennan and Downs
immediately. Tell them
the operation is off and to move
in and babysit this guy until we
can pick up Murphy.

COP 5
Got it.

COP5 exits. The CHIEF reads the file.

FLASHBACK

The scenes described in the citation are shown.

CHIEF (V.O.)

Citation for the awarding of the Congressional Medal Of Honor to Michael Bishop. Rank and Organization: Private, U.S. Army, 60th Infantry, 50th Division. Place and Date: Near Pouilly, France, September 8, 1918. Entered Service at Dayton, Ohio. Citation: While on a night reconnaissance patrol a member of Private Bishop's squad panicked and lost control, shouting and running from their position. A German mortar and machine gun position located approximately seventy five yards to the front of the squad's position saw and heard the soldier and opened up on the squad. Private Bishop somehow made his way to the German position and with his BAR and hand grenades, singlehandedly took out the position, saving the lives of three members of his squad. Private Bishop was captured by the enemy. During this action he received several serious wounds, one of which cost him his leg. His conspicuous gallantry and spirit of self-sacrifice were a source of great inspiration to the members of the entire command.

FLASHBACK ENDS

CHIEF

God damn it.

EXT. A RURAL ROAD - DAY

RAY is driving the truck. JOE is in the passenger seat, reading a book. BETTY is on a car's seat that's been set against the back of the cab. The tarp is stretched over that area providing shade. She's reading a magazine.

RAY looks over at JOE, tries to see the title of the book. JOE notices this and holds up the cover. The title is "Primary Decomposition and Lasker-Noether Theorem".

RAY
You understand that?

JOE
Sure.

RAY
(smiling)
Sure.

JOE
It's not as hard as it looks.

RAY
What's a smart guy like you doing
working in a hick town gas station?

JOE
Well, I'll tell you, Ray, after I
retired on my investments, I felt
like I needed a hobby. You know, I
wanted to keep busy.

RAY looks at him.

JOE (CON'T)
What else am I going to do?

RAY
How about college?

JOE
Like I could get into college.

RAY
Why not?

JOE
You've got to be a whole lot
smarter than me to go to college.

RAY
I've been to college. Believe me,
you've got nothing to worry about.

JOE looks at RAY, then turns to stare out the window.

RAY
So what are your plans?

The car that tried to run RAY over appears on the road a hundred yards behind the truck.

JOE
I own a racing motorcycle. Gonna get rich if my rider doesn't kill himself.

RAY smiles and shakes his head.

BETTY glances up, sees the car but doesn't recognize it yet. She returns to her magazine. RAY looks in the rearview mirror and sees the car, but doesn't recognize it.

INT. THE CAR - DAY

SEAN is driving.

INTERCUT WITH TRUCK SHOTS

RAY
(to JOE)
No, really. You're not going to pump gas for the rest of your life, are you?

JOE
Maybe, I don't know.

SEAN speeds up. He pulls a pistol out of his coat and lays it on the seat beside him.

RAY
Look, Joe, you can't -

The car pulls up beside the truck. RAY looks over and sees SEAN pointing the pistol at him. RAY hits the brakes just as SEAN fires, narrowly missing him. SEAN brakes as RAY downshifts and accelerates.

SEAN's car falls in behind the truck. He tries to pass, but RAY blocks him. BETTY, who is holding on for dear life, picks up a shotgun and levels it at the car. SEAN sees her and hits the brakes, swerving as BETTY fires a shot that misses. She racks another shell into the chamber.

SEAN fires again. JOE comes out of the cab, standing on the running board and fires a pistol at the car.

There is a running gun battle as they speed down the road.

BETTY shatters the car's windshield, causing SEAN to pull off the road and stop.

The truck continues on.

SEAN pounds the steering wheel. His face is peppered with small bloody cuts.

SEAN

Shit!

EXT. A TRAIN YARD - DAY

The truck is tied down onto a flatcar. RAY, BETTY and JOE are standing on the flatcar as the train pulls out of the yard.

COP 1 and COP 2 pull up and watch the train leave. RAY sees them.

When the train is about a hundred yards down the track, SEAN pulls up and gets out of his car. There is steam coming out of the damaged radiator. He looks down the track and spots them. He sees COP 1 and COP 2 some distance away, looking at the departing train. He turns away and gets back into his car.

He waits for the cops to leave, then goes into the freight office and talks to someone behind the counter.

EXT. ON THE FLATCAR - DAY

MONTAGE BEGIN

BETTY is sitting on the flatcar next to the truck, working on the motor. RAY is sitting on the end of a boxcar just behind the flatcar watching her.

BETTY is cooking dinner on a fire built on a piece of scrap steel plate, set on the bed of the flatcar.

BETTY, RAY and JOE are sitting on the side of the flatcar, watching the sunset.

MONTAGE END

EXT. ON THE FLATCAR - DAY

JOE is sitting next to BETTY by the tent. RAY is sitting on the top of the adjacent boxcar.

JOE
Why's he so mad all the time,
Betty?

BETTY
I don't know.

JOE
You think it's because of his leg?

BETTY
I guess that's part of it. There's something else, though. I can't get it out of him. He clams up every time I try to get him to talk about it.

EXT. ON TOP OF THE BOXCAR - DAY

JOE joins RAY on the boxcar.

JOE
You mind some company?

RAY motions to the space beside him.

JOE (CON'T)
I feel bad about my brother running off to Mexico like he did.

RAY
Why? It wasn't your fault.

JOE
He's my brother, my family. Makes me feel responsible somehow. I was gonna sign up. I wanted to be in the 369th Infantry but I was too young. They called them the Harlem Hellfighters.

RAY
Maybe your brother had the right idea.

JOE

Now why would you say that? You being a veteran and all. Getting your leg hurt. I'd think you'd hate draft dodgers.

RAY

There are a lot of people who'd be better off right now if I'd stayed a civilian.

JOE

Why?

RAY

Long story.

JOE

I got no place to go.

RAY

Skip it.

JOE

Do you mind my asking how you lost your leg?

RAY

You don't want to know.

JOE

Yeah, I do.

RAY

I don't want you to know.

JOE

I guess you thought you were done with people shooting at you when the war ended, huh?

RAY

Yeah, I guess I did.

JOE

I suppose you've gotta expect something like that when you got an iron owned by a negro and a girl mechanic working on it. And we're winning races. That's gonna rub some folks the wrong way. I gotta say I didn't expect somebody comin' around shooting at us, though.

RAY
Yeah. Yeah, I guess not.

JOE
Who you suppose it is?

RAY
Beats me.

JOE
Well, it'll make for a good story
to tell my grandchildren. Good
night, Ray.

RAY
'Night Joe.

EXT. ON THE FLATCAR - NIGHT

RAY and BETTY are asleep in their knapsacks on the bed of
the truck. RAY begins tossing and turning.

RAY
No! I'm sorry! God, I'm so sorry!

BETTY grabs his shoulders and shakes him.

BETTY
Ray! Ray!

RAY
I'm sorry!

BETTY
Ray, why are you sorry? Ray.

RAY wakes up.

BETTY (CON'T.)
Ray, why are you sorry? Who were
you talking to? Was it Dave? Were
you telling Dave you were sorry?

RAY gets up, jumps down from the truck bed. He walks to the
edge of the flatcar. BETTY follows him. JOE watches.

RAY
Get the hell away from me.

BETTY
I'm not leaving it alone, Ray. Not
this time. Tell me.

RAY

How do you know about Dave?

BETTY

Pamela told me when we were in Chicago.

RAY

Goddamn it, Betty. Where the hell do you get off sticking your nose in my business? Butt the hell out.

BETTY

You think if you kill yourself on that motorcycle it'll make up for whatever you did to him?

RAY

Fuck you.

JOE steps toward RAY. BETTY put out her hand to stop him.

BETTY

Fuck me? I've spent the last two months running all over the damn country with you in this truck. Fuck me? I've held my breath watching you ride like a crazy man, wondering if you were gonna be alive at the end of the race. I've pulled splinters out of you a half dozen times and I've been shot at twice. Fuck me? We've practically been sharing a bed for weeks. Why do you think I've done all that, Ray?

RAY

You don't-

BETTY

Why, Ray? After all the shit I've gone through and all the shit you've given me, why do you think I'm still here?

RAY just looks at her.

BETTY

Dumb as a bucket of mud.

RAY

If I tell you what happened,
you'll be on your way back to
Kansas the next time this train
stops.

BETTY

If you don't tell me, that's
exactly what's gonna happen. Spill
it.

RAY

I think I'd rather see you leave
than see your face when I tell you.

RAY climbs up the ladder on the freight car next to their
car and sits on the top of it.

BETTY watches him, then goes to the truck, putting her hand
on JOE's shoulder for a moment before getting in her
knapsack. JOE looks at RAY for a few moments, then lays
down to sleep.

EXT. ON THE FLATCAR - DAY (DAWN)

RAY is packing a duffel bag.

BETTY wakes up and sees him.

BETTY

Going somewhere?

RAY says nothing, continues to pack.

BETTY (CON'T.)

So you're gonna ride for that
factory team after all.

RAY

No.

BETTY

Then...?

RAY

I'm getting out of here before I
get you and Joe killed.

JOE appears at the front of the tent.

JOE
I hear my name? What's going on?

BETTY
Ray's walking out on us.

RAY
It's too dangerous for you to be
around me. I don't want you
getting hurt.

JOE
Wait a minute, you lost me. Isn't
all this lead we've been
dodging about Betty and me? How
is you leaving going to change
that?

RAY
It's not about you. He's after me.

JOE
Who's after you?

RAY
It doesn't matter.

JOE
Why's he after you?

RAY
Don't worry about it. As soon as
I'm gone, you'll be okay.

BETTY
Is it those fellas in the
suits? Are they the one's after
you?

RAY
They're after me, but they're not
the ones doing the shooting.

BETTY
For shit's sake, Ray.

RAY
Look, you'll do fine. Joe can race
the iron. You don't need me.

JOE
It's not a case of need you,
Ray. I thought we were friends.

RAY

That's right, Joe, and I don't want to get any more friends killed.

RAY picks up the duffel and walks to the edge of the car. He sees Barstow down the track. The train is slowing to stop there.

JOE

Come on, Ray.

BETTY

Forget it, Joe. (to RAY) You know, Ray, if everything I said last night isn't enough to make you stay, then just fucking go. I've had it, I can't think of anything else to say to you.

RAY

I'm not doing this because I want to, damn it. Didn't you hear anything I said?

BETTY

At least wait until we get to Los Angeles.

RAY looks at the desolation around him. He picks up the duffel and tosses it on the flatbed.

The train pulls into Barstow to take on coal and water. The flatcar is fifty yards or so from the station. A conductor walks past the car.

BETTY

How long we going to be here?

CONDUCTOR

About an hour. This is the last stop before Los Angeles. You want to get anything in town, you got time.

BETTY

(To RAY)

I'm going into town. You do what you want to do. If you're not here when I get back...good luck. (a beat) You taking your dog?

RAY
He's not my dog.

BETTY shakes her head and walks into the town.

EXT. - ON THE FLATCAR - DAY

RAY stands at the edge of the flatcar looking at the town.

RAY
I'm a coward and a deserter. I got
the guys in my squad killed when I
ran away under fire. One of them
was my best friend.

JOE
You? I don't buy it.

RAY
That guy who's been shooting at
us? He was there, he saw me, so I
guess it doesn't matter what you
"buy", does it?

JOE
Okay, Ray. Alright. So what am I
supposed to do now, rake you over
the coals? Tell you what a yellow
shitheel you are? I wasn't over
there, Ray. I never went through
anything like what you did, so
don't expect me to judge you. I'm
not gonna do it. Anyway, I expect
you've been doing enough of that to
yourself, haven't you?

RAY
Thanks, Joe.

JOE
I will tell you that you're the
stupidest son of a bitch I ever saw
for walking away from a woman like
Betty.

RAY
She could get killed if she's with
me.

BETTY
She knows that. Looks to me like
she's willing to take the risk. So
(MORE)

BETTY (cont'd)
am I, for that matter. You might
want to think about that.

RAY paces, thinking.

BETTY comes around a building, followed closely by COP 1. JOE sees them. BETTY points at RAY. COP 1 walks toward him. JOE gestures toward COP 1.

JOE
Ray?

RAY turns and looks where JOE is looking and sees COP 1. He watches him for a moment, then jumps down on the opposite side of the flatcar and runs, disappearing among the other cars. The DOG follows him.

COP 1 breaks into a run, but RAY has too much of a head start and COP 1 gives up his pursuit.

EXT. A STREET IN LOS ANGELES - DAY

BETTY is sitting on the end of the truck bed, the bike and tools are on the bed.

JOE is sitting on the side of the bed, eating a sandwich.

BETTY is reading a newspaper. A headline on the front page says "World War Hero Sought".

INT. THE COOK SHACK AT A BORAX MINE IN DEATH VALLEY - DAY

RAY is standing at a basin washing dishes, the DOG is sleeping on the floor nearby.

He sits at a table to smoke a cigarette, staring out the window at the desert.

INT. A CAFE IN LOS ANGELES - DAY

BETTY is in the stands of a board track reading a newspaper, a small headline in the middle of the paper says "Search continues for World War Hero".

JOE is doing practice laps on the track.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BORAX MINE COOK SHACK - DAY

RAY hauls a pail of dirty water outside and dumps it. He looks like hell, unshaven, dirty. He looks up at the sun beating down on him.

EXT. A STREET IN LOS ANGELES - DAY

JOE is sitting on the motorcycle in the infield of a track. On the front page of the newspaper a headline says "Women get the vote". On the back page a tiny headline on a one inch article says "Whereabouts of world war veteran still unknown."

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BORAX MINE COOK SHACK - DAY

RAY is sitting in a chair outside the shack, drinking coffee. The DOG is sleeping next to him. A battered truck pulls up and a man gets out. He has a newspaper tucked under his arm.

RAY
Hey, Bob, is that a newspaper?

BOB
Yeah.

He tosses it to RAY.

RAY
Thanks.

It's a Los Angeles Times. RAY leafs through the paper.

In the sports section he sees an article about the motorcycle championships in Beverly Hills. The entrants are listed. He scans them and sees an entry that says "Owner - Joe Washington, Rider - Vince Carter." He sits up straight and stares at the page.

He throws down the paper and goes inside. He comes out again in a few moments, walking toward the mine. The DOG follows.

A truck hauling borax is pulling out of a loading area. He signals the driver who stops the truck. RAY steps up and talks to the driver. The driver nods. RAY walks around to the other side and gets in the cab with the DOG.

The truck drives away.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BEVERLY HILLS MOTORDROME - DAY

It's race day and people are all around.

RAY walks through the crowd looking intently for something.

SEAN follows several yards behind.

RAY sees Betty and JOE pushing the bike toward the track. JOE is dressed in racing gear.

RAY walks up to them. The DOG is beside him.

BETTY

Well hi, stranger. Long time no see.

JOE

Hey, look what the cat dragged in. What's new, Ray?

RAY

How much is the reward for turning me in?

BETTY

My only reward is the warm feeling I get for doing the right thing, Ray.

JOE

Looks like you got a lot of sun. You take your vacation at the beach?

RAY

(to JOE)

What are you made up for?

JOE

Since you took a powder on us, I've been riding this iron. Somebody had to bring in some money.

RAY

I thought Vince was riding for you.

BETTY reaches into her coveralls and takes out a dollar which she hands to JOE.

JOE

Told you he'd buy it.

SEAN walks toward them, reaching into his jacket for his gun.

RAY
(to BETTY)
I only came here to tell you to go to hell. And you can tell that cop the same thing when you see him.

BETTY
(Looks behind RAY)
Tell him yourself.

COP 1 and COP 2, appear on either side of him and grab his arms.

SEAN stops, turns around and walks a short distance away.

BETTY (CON'T.)
Thought that was pretty rude, you running off back at that whistle stop like you did.

RAY
You bitch.

COP 2
At ease, Private Bishop. This lady just did you the biggest favor of your life.

RAY
Twenty years in Leavenworth? Yeah, some favor. Or are you going to put me up against a wall and shoot me?

BETTY
They've been looking for you so they can give you a medal, you dolt.

RAY looks uncomprehendingly at everyone.

EXT. A SHORT DISTANCE FROM RAY, ET AL - DAY

SEAN is watching the discussion between RAY and the COPS.

The COPS are explaining the situation to RAY who looks bewildered, shaking his head. COP 1 puts out his hand, RAY shakes it.

RAY and the COPS walk away, smiling. BETTY and JOE continue into the motordrome.

EXT. INSIDE THE BEVERLY HILLS MOTORDROME - DAY

JOE is racing the bike. He wins.

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - DAY

President Wilson puts the medal around RAY's neck.

EXT. THE WILSON HOME - DAY

GORDON Wilson comes out the front door. GORDON walks toward his car in the driveway.

Three police cars suddenly screech to a stop in the street in front of the home, one blocking the driveway.

Uniformed police and detectives pour out of the cars. They approach GORDON, who stands there, dumbfounded. One of the detectives pulls an arrest warrant from his pocket and thrusts it at GORDON.

GORDON is handcuffed and taken away.

EXT. THE SPEEDWAY MACHINE SHOP - DAY

RAY pulls up on a motorcycle. He parks by the roll-up door to the shop. The bike is displayed in a window.

RAY looks at the sign over the door which says "Speedway Machine Shop and Metal Fabrication. Prop: M. Bishop, B. Hlinka, J. Washington." He smiles.

Inside the shop, BETTY can be seen working on a drill press. JOE walks by holding a ledger. He's wearing a UCLA sweater. The DOG is asleep in the doorway.

A shot rings out. The bullet grazes his arm. RAY ducks down behind the bike.

Another shot is fired. It hits the seat of the motorcycle. RAY looks across the street and sees SEAN shooting at him from an alley. He's using a rifle with a telescopic sight.

BETTY steps out the entrance to the shop with a shotgun which she fires at SEAN. SEAN runs to his car which is parked behind him.

JOE flies out the door of the shop on a motorcycle. RAY jumps on his bike and goes after him.

The chase takes them through residential neighborhoods, commercial areas. SEAN is firing at JOE over his shoulder. One of the shots hits JOE's bike and he goes down. RAY stops and runs to JOE.

JOE

I'm okay.

JOE points down the street. SEAN is driving away, fast.

JOE (CON'T)

Get him! I'm okay! Get him!

JOE tosses RAY the pistol Ray got from Sean in Cincinnati. RAY stuffs it in his waistband, gets on his bike and takes off after SEAN.

The chase goes into the Hollywood Hills. They're racing along narrow, winding roads.

SEAN loses control of the car and crashes; the car coming to rest perched precariously on the edge of a sheer dropoff. He's pinned in the wreckage.

RAY stops, dismounts and walks to him.

SEAN

Big fucking hero. I saw the picture in the paper of you gettin' the medal from the President. You phony bastard.

RAY

Yeah? You saw it? Did you see that everything you told me was fucking lies you piece of shit? Did you see that?

SEAN

Maybe you suckered everyone else, pal, but don't try that shit on me. I was there. I know better.

RAY

Harry Franklin, Dan Macklin and Lieutenant Oswald saw it, too. They said I took out that position singlehanded. They fucking saw me do it.

SEAN

They didn't see everything. They sure as hell didn't see how you got there.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND, FRANCE - NIGHT

SEAN (V.O.)

We were spread out all over the place cause there was hardly any moon and we couldn't see shit...

Just as in his nightmare, RAY stands up screaming. SEAN tries to pull him down, but RAY tears loose.

SEAN stands, makes another attempt to pull RAY down RAY gets loose again and is ten yards away with SEAN chasing him when when a mortar round lands a few yards away.

RAY and SEAN are tossed into a ravine, unconscious.

RAY comes to first. Groggy, he tries to climb out of the ravine a couple of times, but falls back.

He staggers up the ravine on his hands and knees, dragging his BAR behind him.

SEAN comes to and sees RAY about ten yards up the ravine. SEAN crawls after him.

SEAN brings his rifle up, takes aim, but RAY rounds a turn and goes out of SEAN's sight. SEAN follows.

When SEAN sees him again, RAY is just behind the German machine gun and mortar position. A GERMAN SOLDIER sees him and turns to shoot him.

Screaming at the top of his lungs, RAY begins firing the BAR, mowing down the Germans. He throws a grenade. He climbs out of the ravine and continues shooting and throwing grenades.

A German standing several feet behind him throws a grenade which knocks RAY out, inflicting a head wound and mangling his leg.

Suddenly the area is swarming with German soldiers who find SEAN and take him prisoner.

END FLASHBACK

SEAN

When you cracked up, Franklin and Macklin and the Lieutenant were twenty yards away. They didn't know what the fuck was happening on our end of the line.

RAY

They saw me take that position. They said I was braver than Sergeant fucking York. They said I was a fucking hero.

SEAN

What they saw was a guy who was too punchy to know where the hell he was going and took a wrong turn into the German lines. What they saw was you fighting for your life because you didn't have no choice.

RAY

Have you told this to anyone?

SEAN

No. After the krauts hauled you away, they grabbed me. After the war, they sent me straight home which was fine with me. I didn't want nothin' to do with nobody in a uniform after that; I just wanted to get the hell outta there.

RAY nods.

SEAN (CON'T)

I didn't know it was you when Wilson hired me. Then I find out this slob I'm bein' paid to bump off is the asshole got our guys killed and me thrown in a kraut shithole of a prison. I couldn't fuckin' believe it.

RAY

Doesn't look like you're going to get to finish the job.

SEAN makes a feeble attempt to reach his pistol.

SEAN

Guess not. But soon as I get a chance, I'm tellin' my story to

(MORE)

SEAN (cont'd)
every newspaper in the
city. Pretty soon the whole
country's gonna know what a
chickenshit bastard you are.

RAY
You think they'll take the word of
a hired killer over the word of
Lieutenant Oswald and those other
guys? You think they'll take your
word over mine? They gave me the
Medal Of Honor.

Police car sirens can be heard faintly in the background.

SEAN
Maybe not. But people are gonna
ask themselves why am I saying
this? I got nothing to gain from
it. Maybe Oswald and those other
guys will look back at that night
and think about what did they
really see? Everyone you know is
gonna be looking at you different
from now on. They'll all be
wondering "did he do it?" I tell
you one thing for sure, that doll
with the shotgun back there is
gonna be wondering. You'll see it
in her eyes. She's never gonna
look at you the same. Not ever.

RAY
She won't believe you.

SEAN
Sure pal, keep tellin' yourself
that.

RAY looks at him for a moment, then stares into space.

SEAN (CON'T)
Big fuckin' hero.

RAY steps over to the car, takes the pistol from his
waistband, wipes fingerprints from it and tosses it into
SEAN's lap.

SEAN takes it and points it at RAY just as RAY shoves the
car over the precipice with his foot. It tumbles into the
canyon. He turns and walks a few steps toward the police as
they arrive.

INT. RAY AND BETY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

RAY and Betty are asleep, BETTY is spooning Ray.

DREAM SEQUENCE

The nightmare is in progress, with a difference. A soldier near him stands and begins screaming. RAY tries to pull him down, but a mortar shell explodes near him, obliterating the soldier and dazing RAY.

RAY is pulling himself up the ravine. He finds himself at the German mortar position. He leaps out of the ravine and begins raking the enemy with his BAR while pulling the pins of hand grenades out with his teeth and tossing them at the Germans.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

RAY is still asleep, smiling.

THE END