

"THE EXECUTIONER'S SONG"

by

Norman Mailer

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CORRECTED

SECOND DRAFT

April 15, 1981

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FADE IN:

1 INT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - OREM, UTAH - NIGHT

1

OPEN on a plastic model of the First Mormon Church, Provo. It is the sort that is sold in Mormon souvenir stores as an ornament, and it is now on top of a Christmas tree. PULL BACK to see the Christmas tree fully decorated, and behind it a ranch house living room. Prosperous blue-collar level of income. The room is about 13 feet in width, 22 feet long. Black wrought-iron furniture with red velvet cushions. Tufted lamps. A lot of gewgaws. A lot of plastic. All the same, a warm, sloppy room. BRENDA, JOHNNY, VERN, IDA, TONI, HOWARD are sitting around a gas-log fire. Presents on the floor. Kids running around. The mood is typical of the evening of Christmas day. Everybody is stuffed with food and feeling reflective.

BRENDA

(reading from a
letter)

This life would be totally alien
to you and your way of thinking,
Brenda. It's like another planet.

TONI

The poor guy.

VERN

What makes you think he can get
parole?

BRENDA

Johnny and I are going to sponsor
him, Daddy.

Johnny nods glumly. Toni also nods. Toni's husband,
Howard, nods. The decision sits heavy on all of them.

TONI

Daddy, I appreciate how you feel.
Every photograph of Gary has a
different expression. Practically
a different face. I don't know if
I like that. But his drawings of
children sure are beautiful.

She passes around a drawing enclosed with the letter.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

IDA

(looking at the
drawing)

He gets his artistic temperament
from his mother. Of all us sisters,
Bessie had the whitest skin. Oh,
she just hated to work in the field.

2 ANGLE - VERN'S POV

2

We see the drawing. A child with enormous eyes, full
of sorrow. Professionally executed. Skilled tech-
niques of shading.

VERN (O.S.)

All this proves is that an artist
can make a mess of his life as fast
as you or me.

3 BACK TO SCENE

3

The RADIO is playing Christmas hymns. Vern picks up
one of Gary's letters in his big hands. There are
dozens of such letters scattered on the carpet. The
family has obviously been passing them back and forth.

VERN

(reads aloud)

'Dear Brenda, Your attitude helps
restore my old soul. A place to
stay and a job mean an awful lot
to the parole board.'

(sighs)

I guess we can't turn our back.

BRENDA

Cheer up, Dad. Gary and I
understand each other. When he
asked me to be his sponsor, I
wrote him, 'Gary, if you screw up,
I'll be the first to turn on you.'

She gives a belly laugh. The others, one by one, join
in.

4 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

4

Brenda and Johnny are alone and tidying up.

JOHNNY

Honey, you haven't seen the man
since childhood.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I'm not embarrassed to harbor a criminal, but, fact it, Brenda, there's going to be problems.

BRENDA

You have one philosophy: don't make waves.

JOHNNY

Gary is not coming into an average community. He's entering a Mormon stronghold. Things are tough enough for a man just out of jail without having to deal with people who think tea and coffee are sinful.

BRENDA

You and me are not your typical, strait-laced Utah County couple.

JOHNNY

It's still one big church supper out here.

(shakes his head)

There's got to be tension.

BRENDA

(angrily)

From your point of view, anything new is obscene.

JOHNNY

What's the use of arguing? You're going to do it anyway.

BRENDA

We are going to do it. But I'll tell you this, Mr. Peace-at-any-Price! I've talked to Dad. Gary is only going to stay Saturday and Sunday with us. During the week he'll be with Vern in the shoe shop.

JOHNNY

All right, honey, I know how you feel.

BRENDA

That's right, Johnny. I feel awfully sympathetic to somebody who's boxed in. Gary Gilmore has paid his dues.

DISSOLVE TO:

5 INT. BRENDA'S LIVING ROOM - CLOSEUP - BRENDA - DAY 5

BRENDA

Gary Gilmore has paid his dues.
He's been in jail thirteen years.
I think it's time he came home.

MONT COURT

Well, being a parole officer, I
am sympathetic to the idea of a
second chance. But I have to tell
you, Mrs. Nicol...

BRENDA

(not unflirtatiously)

Brenda.

MONT COURT

... you better be ready for the
recycling period. A man can't
walk out of prison and go right
into straight, normal living.
It's like being discharged from
service. You just don't become
a civilian immediately.

6 INT. BRENDA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 6

The PHONE RINGS.

GARY (V.O.)

I'm at the airport.

BRENDA

Gary, it'll take us forty-five
minutes to get there.

GARY (V.O.)

I don't mind looking around.

He hangs up.

BRENDA

(to Johnny)

This is one guy who doesn't try to
talk your ear off for a dime.

7 EXT. INTERSTATE TO SALT LAKE CITY - NIGHT 7

Scene of a yellow Maverick driving down the empty
Interstate.

8 INT. CAR - NIGHT 8

Johnny is driving. The speedometer is 55.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

BRENDA

Oh, God, will you hurry up?

JOHNNY

I'm not about to get a ticket.

BRENDA

I wonder how tall he is.

JOHNNY

What?

BRENDA

What if he's short? He might only come up to my armpit.

JOHNNY

You're getting dippy.

BRENDA

If we get to the airport and Gary only reaches my armpit, I'm going to abandon the whole thing right there. 'Shift for yourself,' I'll tell him.

9 EXT. INTERSTATE - NIGHT

9

Car going along. Other cars passing.

10 EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

10

They pull up to the island that runs parallel to the main entrance to the terminal building. As they step out of the car, Johnny is trying to tuck his shirttail into his belt.

BRENDA

(screeching)

There he is, there he is!

JOHNNY

Wait, I have to zip my pants.

BRENDA

Who gives one shit about your shirttail?

11 EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

11

Brenda crosses the street between the parking lot and the main door. We see GARY in our view, a tall man.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

He picks up a satchel and begins to walk quickly toward her. Soon they are running. As they meet, Gary drops his bag, hugs her, and lifts her in the air.

BRENDA

My God, you're tall.

GARY

What did you expect? A midget?

BRENDA

Thank God you're tall.

Johnny stands there grinning, his big, good face going "um, um, um."

GARY

Hey, cos, it's fine to see you.

He shakes hands with Johnny.

JOHNNY

Got everything with you?

Gary picks up his flight bag. It is small.

GARY

This is it. This is all I have.

Gary has a black trench coat slung on his arm, is wearing a maroon blazer over a yellow and green-striped shirt, a pair of ill-fitting beige polyester trousers, a pair of black plastic shoes. Brenda stares at them. They are really cheap shoes.

GARY

Come on, let's get the hell out of here.

He puts his arm around her as they walk to the car.

12 INT. CAR - NIGHT

12

They are driving.

BRENDA

Are you tired?

GARY

A little. I don't know if it was the altitude, or the liquor, but I got tore up on that plane. I was happier than hell.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

BRENDA

I guess you're entitled to be
snockered.

We see his face in the half light of the car. The
prison haircut is short. It sticks up hick-style in
the back. He has a long, fine nose, good chin, thin,
well-shaped lips.

DISSOLVE TO:

13 INT. JEAN'S CAFE - GARY'S POV - NIGHT

13

in the booth. People look well-dressed, all wearing
their polyester specials, leisure suits, electric
colors on some and color-compatible outfits on others.
Bright colors on the jukebox.

14 NEW ANGLE

14

Two cute girls walk in.

GARY

Not bad.

It is so real, the way he says it, that Brenda laughs.
She keeps looking at Gary. He, however, tries to ig-
nore her.

GARY

(to Johnny)

Hey, man, thanks. I appreciate
how you went along with Brenda to
get me out.

They shake hands, thumbs up.

15 INT. BOOTH IN CAFE - NIGHT

15

They are silent.

16 ANOTHER ANGLE

16

GARY

I guess you don't want to hear
about prison. It's not very
pleasant.

JOHNNY

Hey, buddy, we're only tiptoeing
around cause, you know, I don't
want to ask, what's it like in
there?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

Gary smiles. Silence again. Brenda keeps staring at him constantly.

BRENDA

God, it's good to have you here.

GARY

It's good to be out.

BRENDA

Wait till you get to know this country.

(silence)

Oh, Gary, we can take camper trips in the canyons. They're so green. We can have super drinking parties and teach you how to hunt with bow and arrow.

Now it is as if she gets her first good look at Gary. His face is awfully marked up. We see the lines of prison in every bend and wrinkle of his features. She reaches out and touches his face at a place where he has a very bad scar.

GARY

Kind of pretty, isn't it?

BRENDA

I'm sorry, Gary.

GARY

Got it from a guard.

BRENDA

How'd you like to get a hold of the fellow who hit you?

GARY

Don't pick my brain.

BRENDA

OK, but do you hate him?

GARY

God, yeah. Wouldn't you?

BRENDA

Yeah, I would. Just checking.

17 EXT. INTERSTATE, POINT OF THE MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

17

LONG SHOT of the car and the road.

(CONTINUED)

- 17 CONTINUED: 17
- A long hill comes out of the mountains. Its low ridge is like the limb of a beast whose paw just reaches the highway. On the other side, in the desert to the right, is Utah State Prison. There are only a few lights in its buildings.
- 18 INT. CAR - NIGHT 18
- JOHNNY
Well, Gary, I don't recommend a vacation there.
- GARY
Not a bad-looking joint, but I'll wait a while to check it out.
- They laugh. We hear the ECHO of their LAUGH on the highway.
- 19 INT. BRENDA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 19
- Gary is drinking beer. He is slugging it.
- GARY
This beats the pruno we had in prison. That was just a watery brew made from bread. This is beer.
- Johnny yawns.
- 20 INT. BRENDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 20
- Johnny is getting undressed. Out the window, the dawn is coming up.
- 21 EXT. BRENDA'S LAWN - DAWN 21
- We see the sun rising over the back of Brenda's ranch house and all her neighbors' ranch houses. There, standing on the plot of lawn, in a heap of strewn toys, wet with cold spring dew, Gary looks at the sky and takes a deep breath.
- GARY
I feel like jogging.
- BRENDA
You got to be nuts, tired as you are.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

Gary stretches and breathes deep. A big smile comes over his face.

GARY

Hey, man, I'm really out.

The snow in the mountains is iron-gray and purple in the hollows, and glows like gold on every slope that faces the sun. Brenda looks at Gary's face in the dawn light.

BRENDA

You know, Gary, I can't look into your eyes without feeling full of sadness.

GARY

Yeah, Brenda, why is that?

BRENDA

Because your eyes remind me of a scared rabbit.

GARY

Hey, cousin, I owe you an awful lot, but fuck you.

BRENDA

Gary, I've looked into the eyes of scared rabbits. They're not scared. It's just they don't know what's going to happen next.

GARY

Don't be too sure of that.

Puts his arms around Brenda, and starts to give her a kiss.

BRENDA

Hey, you're a real criminal, aren't you?

She disengages herself tenderly.

GARY

Cousin, it's just that I like you a lot.

- 22 INT. BEDROOM - DAWN 22
Johnny is looking through the window at them.
- 23 INT. BEDROOM - ANOTHER ANGLE - DAWN 23
Johnny in bed. Brenda comes over, slips off her negligee, gets under the covers. She is whistling a ditty. Johnny turns over, he swarms on her. For a little while, to quote John O'Hara, they are the happiest couple in Utah County.
- 24 INT. BRENDA'S LIVING ROOM - DAWN 24
Gary is looking at the fold-out bed. He takes a blanket and spreads it. He lies down on his back with his hands over his stomach, his shoes off, his head propped by a pillow. His eyes do not close. He lies there. Through the wall, he hears Johnny and Brenda MAKING LOVE.
- DISSOLVE TO:
- 25 INT. BRENDA'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING 25
It is a couple of hours later. Gary's eyes are still open. Johnny comes out of the bathroom whistling the same ditty that Brenda used in the dawn. He has the bathroom scale in his hands. Now he squeezes it.
- GARY
(recognizing the
challenge)
Hey, partner, how high can you
send her?
- JOHNNY
This trip, I only got the needle
to 250 pounds.
- Gary swings out of bed, reaches for the scale, squeezes it.
- 26 NEW ANGLE 26
The scale. The needle stops at 120.
Gary's face. He is going crazy with effort. He is squeezing the scales until he's shaking.
- 27 INSERT - THE SCALE 27
150.

CUT TO:

28 ANGLE - JOHNNY'S FACE

28

JOHNNY

Yeah, you're improving.

GARY

What's the highest you've gone?

JOHNNY

Three hundred.

CUT TO:

29 INT. CAR - OREM-PROVO HIGHWAY - MORNING

29

Brenda and Gary are driving. Brenda is at the wheel.

GARY

Man, your husband is strong.

BRENDA

Oh, my father is stronger. My father might be the strongest man I know.

GARY

Can Vern beat Johnny on the scales?

BRENDA

Nobody tops Johnny at that. But you can't whip my Daddy at more personal contests. Like arm-wrestling.

GARY

Got you.

The car is going along State Street. THROUGH THE WINDOW, we see quick-eat palaces, used car dealers, chain clothing stores, gas stops, appliance stores, highway signs, fruit stands, one-story banks in pastel colors, real-estate firms in one-story office compounds, rows of condominiums with sawed-off mansard roofs. The buildings are tinted in nursery colors, pastel yellow, pastel orange, pastel tan, pastel blue.

GARY

It sure has changed.

BRENDA

It must be more than twenty-five years since you've seen it.

GARY

Brenda, you're always going to tell me the truth, aren't you?

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA

Better believe it.

GARY

Why are you taking a chance on a man who has spent eighteen of his last twenty-two years in the slammer?

They are both looking ahead.

BRENDA

Gary, I've been married four times. First when I was fifteen. Couldn't live without the guy. After two months, I couldn't live with him. I've been in prison ever since. In my way. So get it straight: the reason I want you out is cause I love you.

GARY

Why do you love me?

BRENDA

Because when I was six, and you were seven, I climbed to the top of an apple tree back in Grandma Brown's back yard, and that branch broke. You caught me on the way down. I still pee in my pants when I think of it. Gary, you were the best boy I knew. Man, were you neat.

All the while, the reflection in the windshield of buildings to the left and right of the highway continue to flash by, all the incarcerations of small-town life. Now they look directly at one another.

GARY

All right, Brenda, I understand. I love you, too.

They smile at each other, like kissing cousins, and drive on. The car pulls into a shopping mall.

30 INT. PENNY'S STORE - LEVI'S DEPARTMENT - DAY

30

Gary is staring moodily at the dungarees.

GARY

Hey, are you allowed to take the pants off the shelf? Or does somebody issue them to you?

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

BRENDA
 (restrained woe at
 his ignorance)
 Find the ones you want. You can
 try them on, you know.

GARY
 Without paying?

BRENDA
 Oh, yeah, you can try them on first.

31 INT. VERN'S SHOE SHOP - DAY

31

A large, cavernous, one room store on the main street
 of Provo.

Vern is a short, powerfully-built man with iron-gray
 hair, a hare-lip, and a mustache. Horn-rimmed glasses.
 Rugged, decent face. Is with Brenda. A worker,
 STERLING BAKER, is in the background.

VERN
 I wish I could walk around the town
 and show it to you, but, don't you
 know, my knee is gone. Osteoarthritis.

GARY
 Must hurt standing on it all day here.

VERN
 It does. Of course, everybody has
 their sad story.

Vern hits the cash register and hands Gary a twenty.

VERN
 Yours must be an empty wallet.

GARY
 Well, I can't pay it back right now.

VERN
 When you can.

GARY
 (brightens)
 I'll buy some jogging shoes.

VERN
 Anything you can't drink.

They smile a little uneasily.

32 EXT. PROVO STREETS - LATE AFTERNOON 32

We see Gary jogging. He runs at a fast rate in his new Levis. We see the intersection of Main and Center Streets. A movie theatre, a park next to a church, a quick-food restaurant, an extra-large drugstore.

33 INT. VERN'S HOUSE - EVENING 33

It has a lot of stuffed furniture in bright autumn colors and bright rugs. Pictures in gold frames. A ceramic statue of a black stable boy with a red jacket. Chinese end tables.

Gary returns. He is sweating.

GARY

(peeling off his
windbreaker)

Is it all right if I get a glass
of water?

VERN

This is your home. You don't have
to ask permission.

GARY

(sweat pouring down
his face)

I'm beginning to get into this. It's
a pretty good life.

VERN

Yeah. Come and go as you want.
Within reason.

34 INT. VERN'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING 34

IDA

Gary, I want you to know, I just
loved your mom. She was my special
big sister. So elegant. I used to
study how to dress just by looking
at her ways.

IDA is small, plump, with red-brown hair.

GARY

She's arthritic now. Can hardly
move around her trailer. I'd like
to improve things for her.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

IDA
I bet you would.

GARY
Could we call her?

IDA
Let's do that.

35 ANGLE - PHONE DESK, LITTLE TABLE - NIGHT 35

GARY

(into telephone)

It's warm here, Mom, real warm for April. You need the desert for your arthritis, not damp old Portland. I'm going to work and get the money to bring you here.

36 INT. VERN'S SHOE SHOP - DAY 36

A large, cavernous, one-room store on a small town main street.

Gary is standing at a bench jack. It is a metal foot upside-down. Gary puts a shoe on.

37 CLOSEUP - BENCH JACK 37

Gary prying off the sole.

38 CLOSEUP - BENCH JACK 38

Gary taking off the heel.

39 CLOSEUP - BENCH JACK 39

Pulling out the nails, Gary pinches his finger with the claw hammer.

40 ANGLE - GARY 40

Pulling out stitches.

Gary is slow and clumsy on all these operations. Contrasted to him is STERLING BAKER, about 20, who is working on the next jack. Quick, deft.

41 LONG SHOT 41

Vern and Sterling are passing work back and forth. Gary is idle by his jack.

GARY

Vern, I hate to stand around like this. Tell me, and I'll catch on.

VERN

Gary, we have a rush job right now. It's easier to do it myself than show a new man how.

GARY

I feel like a dummy, you know.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

VERN

Well, you want perfection too quickly. You can't learn everything immediately.

A WOMAN has entered. A customer.

Gary leaps to wait on her at the counter. She hands him a ticket.

WOMAN

When are you going to have these shoes ready?

GARY

I'm not sure, ma'am. I'm going to have to ask.

WOMAN

Why are you waiting on the counter if you can't tell me anything?

Gary approaches Vern at his bench jack.

GARY

Vern, I don't know if I can handle a rude customer. I'm going to have to sneak up on that.

42 INT. SHOE SHOP - EVENING

42

The door. An attractive teenager enters, leaves a pair of shoes on the counter, smiles at Vern, walks out again. Gary studies her walk.

GARY

Look at her little bootie. I haven't seen any thing like that in years.

VERN

(to Sterling)

What do you think of my nephew?

STERLING

Nice fellow.

VERN

Everything all right?

STERLING

Well, Vern, it's getting so you can hear him breathe. I'd find him a date.

43 INT. FRED'S LOUNGE - BAR - NIGHT

43

Small. Chairs, tables, pinball machines.

LU-ANN

I didn't always have red hair. Used to be a blonde before my divorce, then a little brown, some ash-blonde. Just yuck. I settled on red cause it suits my temperament. Being a redhead is being me.

She is thirty and plain. Gary doesn't know what to say. Nods. She is sipping her beer. He is downing a mug. Makes guzzling sounds.

LU-ANN

Haven't been in a bar lately, have you, Gary?

GARY

Not since I got out.

LU-ANN

Let's play the jukebox.

GARY

You make the selections.

44 ANOTHER ANGLE

44

LOUD ROCK from the jukebox.

GARY

(swallows his beer)

Is it all right to take a six-pack with us?

LU-ANN

If you want it.

GARY

Okay to drink my beer in your car?

LU-ANN

(puzzled)

Yes.

45 INT. CAR - STATE STREET - NIGHT

45

Lu-Ann is driving. Gary is slugging beer.

GARY

Why did you tell Vern you'd come out with me?

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

LU-ANN

It's simple. You need a friend
and I need a new friend.

GARY

Do you normally do this? Just
drive around?

LU-ANN

Yes, I do. It relaxes me.

GARY

Doesn't bother you? Me being here?

LU-ANN

No. Not in the least.

GARY

Will you go to a motel with me?

LU-ANN

No.

46 ANOTHER ANGLE

46

LU-ANN

You better look someplace else if
the other is what you want.

GARY

I'm sorry.

LU-ANN

You can't have it all in five
minutes, Gary.

GARY

Everybody's got something. I have
nothing.

LU-ANN

Listen, I work hard. I and my
friends like Brenda have all
worked super-hard to have our
homes and our cars.

GARY

You... have all had it easy.

LU-ANN

(loudly)

We've earned it.

GARY

I don't want to hear any more of
that.

LU-ANN

Well, you're going to.

Gary raises his fist.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 46

LU-ANN

You want to hit me?

GARY

Let's drive home.

47 EXT. VERN'S HOME - NIGHT 47

The car is parked. We COME IN on them. They are sitting near each other.

GARY

Can I hug you?

She nods dubiously. He hugs her hard.

LU-ANN

I'm friendly with a lot of people but offer my friendship to very few. Don't rush so, Gary. You've got time.

GARY

I haven't. I can't make those years up.

LU-ANN

Take it one step at a time.

GARY

You're not going to see me again, are you.

LU-ANN

Well, if you need someone to talk to, my phone is open 24 hours a day.

He forces a kiss.

GARY

(getting out of car)

I'm sorry. I've messed it up. Vern's going to be mad at me.

48 INT. VERN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 48

Gary is hitting up on the remains of the six-pack.

VERN

You were too forceful. You don't try to do everything on the first date.

Gary belches in Vern's face.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

VERN

Are you going to shape up or am I going to have to knock you on your ass?

GARY

You aren't afraid of me?

VERN

No, I'm not. Should I be?

They both begin to laugh.

GARY

I want a family. I want a house like this.

VERN

You can't have it all in five minutes. You have to work for it.

49 INT. STERLING BAKER'S ONE-ROOM APARTMENT - NIGHT

49

Gary is holding Sterling's baby. Sterling and RUTH ANN, his wife, are sitting beside Gary at the kitchen table. It is a poor pad, one all-purpose room, some broken-down furniture, a raggedy poster. The RADIO is playing Country and Western and Gary is bouncing the baby on his knee in tune to a song by JOHNNY CASH.

GARY

Now there was this black dude who'd been trying to make this nice white kid his punk. The kid asked me for help. So another buddy and me got ahold of some pipes. This convict we were taking on was a bad nigger. Been a professional fighter. We waited on him in the stairway, and jumped him with the pipes. Then we put him back in his cell and stabbed him with a homemade sticker fifty-seven times.

Sterling looks very uncomfortable, ditto Ruth Ann. As Gary has been telling this story, RIKKI BAKER, a very tall young man, has ambled into the room. He is in time to hear the last half if it. It leaves him looking somewhat wan. Gary fixes all of them with his stare.

GARY

Ruth Ann, do you know any girls who would go out with me?

RUTH ANN

(her face as guilty as hell)

Well, now, no, I don't. Not off-hand, Gary.

50 INT. STERLING'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (LATER)

50

Five or six fellows around a poker table.

GARY

You men don't know the rules. The true regulations of draw poker have been hammered out by discussion among convicts and are passed from jail to jail. Your rules is how they play in Mexico.

The other players eye each other uncomfortably, nervously, with mounting anger. JIMMY POKER-GAME, a big Mexican who has been singled out by Gary's remark, looks particularly angry.

51 ANOTHER ANGLE

51

A hand has just been dealt. As the players pick up their cards, Gary leans to the right, getting a glance at what the man next to him is holding. Jimmy Poker-Game throws down his hand. The others signal by their expressions to Sterling how unhappy they are. Sterling looks at Rikki.

RIKKI

Hey, Gary, why don't you and me go out and chase down some girls?

GARY

That's the best offer since I got out of prison.

JIMMY POKER-GAME

(relaxing now that
Gary will leave)

Hey, Gary, Sterling tells me you're the horniest guy he ever met.

GARY

Horny? I've spent half my life looking at nude pictures in Playboy. You're damn right I'm horny.

52 EXT. CENTER STREET - NIGHT

52

It's a four-lane main street with an island in the center. Two lines of cars are going in each direction slowly, girls cruising in some cars, boys in the others. Everybody's RADIO is going real loud.

53 EXT. CENTER STREET - FROM OVERHEAD - NIGHT

53

We see Gary with his head out the passenger window, talking to some girls in a car on his right.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

They're moving along together and when the light turns red, Gary jumps from his car and puts his head in the window of the girls' car. The light turns green, and the girls try to take off, but Gary won't take his head out. When they finally get going, Gary jumps back in Rikki's car.

GARY

Chase them down!

RIKKI

Ain't no way.

GARY

Do it! Show you're as good as you said.

RIKKI

You gotta come up on them easy, not scare 'em out of the water.

Gary's eyes blaze at him.

GARY

All right, show me your way. Let's see if you can deliver.

54 EXT. CENTER STREET - NIGHT

54

Rikki's GTO is idling next to a pickup with three girls. The truck is on Rikki's left. He speaks through the open window.

RIKKI

I'm not dangerous. You can tell by looking at me. Why, with a face like mine I'm barely good for raising rabbits.

The girls laugh, and take a right at the next corner into a dark street. They park. Rikki follows. The GIRL who has been driving gets out to talk to Gary while Rikki walks up to the girls' truck.

GIRL DRIVER

(to Gary)

Hi? What do you call yourself?

GARY

My name is Gary Gilmore and I'm going to come right out and ask you for it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

GARY (CONT'D)

It's been a long time and I'd like
some right now. Or in the next
few minutes.

Smiles to be charming. The Girl leaves him instantly.

Rikki is bantering with the girls in the truck. The
Driver comes back.

GIRL DRIVER

You ought to do something about
that guy you've got along.

She gets into her truck and takes off fast.

55 EXT. RIKKI'S GTO - NIGHT

55

Rikki starts to get in but Gary is in the driver's seat.

GARY

Is your car fast?

Rikki nods.

RIKKI

Yes.

GARY

Can I drive it?

RIKKI

(pauses)

Take it easy.

Gary gives him a look. They stare into one another's
eyes.

RIKKI

Hey, man, don't get bent out of
shape.

CUT TO:

56 GARY

56

driving. He is zooming through back streets. Takes a
corner fast and nearly hits a stop sign, doesn't slow
down at the intersection, and goes cata-humping over
the drainage ditch that crosses the street to slow you
down. Next a car coming toward them has to go onto
the shoulder to avoid collision.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

RIKKI

Stop, you son of a bitch, stop,
you're a madman!

GARY

(quiet voice)

This is not bad. Do you know how
long it is since I drove?

Gary passes another car on a turn and almost hits an
oncoming vehicle.

RIKKI

For God's sakes, pull over!

We see a cop's car. Gary hits the BRAKES AND CONKS
THE MOTOR.

CUT TO:

57 GARY'S FOOT

57

trying to start.

GARY (O.S.)

It won't go.

58 ANOTHER ANGLE

58

He still can't start it.

59 ANOTHER ANGLE

59

Rikki is getting behind the wheel again. STARTS THE
MOTOR. Gary looks very depressed. He is brooding.

GARY

I wish that car hadn't given up
on me.

RIKKI

It happens to anybody.

GARY

Then let's see Lu-Ann.

RIKKI

Who's she?

GARY

That, my friend, is the name of a
boss redhead I happen to know.

60 EXT. PROVO STREET - NIGHT 60

GTO pulls up to a two-story building like a small motel, with several apartments on each landing. Gary gets out of the car.

61 EXT. DOOR TO AN APARTMENT - NIGHT 61

Gary pounds on it.

VOICE
(through the door)
Lu-Ann's gone to bed. I'm her
sister.

GARY
Tell her I'm here and she'll get
up.

VOICE
She needs her sleep.

SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS walking away.

GARY
Cunt!

Gary going downstairs.

GARY
(to Rikki)
Let's tip her car.

62 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 62

Gary and Rikki are putting their backs into Lu-Ann's car. They cannot tip it over, they can only rock it. Gary gets a tire iron out of the GTO's trunk and busts the windshield out. The SOUND OF GLASS BREAKING sends Rikki flying over to his car. As he takes off, Gary opens the door on the run and jumps in.

63 INT. VERN'S DINING ROOM - MORNING 63

Vern and Gary are eating breakfast. Ida is having coffee.

VERN
I got a call from Lu-Ann this
morning.

GARY
Haven't seen her since our date.
She's too frigid for me.

(CONTINUED)

VERN

Her windshield got smashed last night.

GARY

Hey, that's terrible. Was she riding in it?

VERN

Gary, if I believed you had anything to do with it, I'd ask you to leave this house right now.

GARY

Well, Vern, last night I did get shit-face, and I did knock on her door, but I never laid a hand on her car.

VERN

I'm glad to hear that.

GARY

Right.

VERN

Right.

They eat in silence.

GARY

I guess you think I gobble like a pig, kind of quick.

VERN

I noticed you eat fast.

GARY

Well, in prison, you got fifteen minutes to get your food, sit down and swallow it. Otherwise, you just don't get it.

VERN

But you managed?

GARY

Yeah.

VERN

Well, now why don't you try to take a little more time?

(CONTINUED)

GARY

You're a pretty strong fellow,
Vern, aren't you?

VERN

The champ.

GARY

Let's arm wrestle.

Vern shakes his head.

IDA

Go ahead, Vern, arm wrestle him.

GARY

Yeah, come on. You think you can
take me?

VERN

I don't have to think. I can take
you.

GARY

Well, Vern, I feel pretty strong
today. What makes you think you
can beat me?

VERN

I'm going to make up my mind, and
then I'm going to beat you.

GARY

Try it.

Vern is arm wrestling with Gary.

GARY

Son of a bitch! For an old bastard
you're pretty strong.

VERN

You're doing pitiful. It's a good
thing you finished your breakfast.
I wouldn't even give it to you now.

Vern gets Gary's arm halfway over. Then he picks up a
few toothpicks and holds them in his left hand.

VERN

Anytime you want to say 'uncle,'
quit.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

VERN (CONT'D)

If you don't, I'm going to drive
your hand onto these toothpicks.

Gary is straining. He starts to give karate yells. He even rises half out of his seat. It makes no difference. Vern gets him down on the point of the toothpicks.

GARY

I quit.

They relax.

GARY

Would you really have stuck me?

Vern nods.

GARY

Vern, you're okay.

VERN

Up to a point.

65 INT. A LUNCHROOM BOOTH - DAY

65

Toni and Brenda are seated on either side of Gary. All three are eating hamburgers.

TONI

Dad would never tell you, Gary,
but I don't think you realize that
he can't keep giving you tens and
twenties.

GARY

Are you saying Vern is that short
of money?

TONI

He has a little, but he needs an
operation. That leg gives him
pain all the time.

GARY

I didn't realize I was putting Vern
on the spot.

TONI

You know, Daddy really created that
job so the parole board would pass
you...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

TONI (CONT'D)

... but, truthfully, I don't think
the work is really there.

BRENDA

It's just you needed a few weeks
to unwind with somebody you wouldn't
have to regard as a boss.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

GARY

Hey, you know, yeah!

BRENDA

Gary, maybe the moment has come to think about a real job.

GARY

I don't think I'm ready. I'd appreciate hanging in with your folks a little longer.

BRENDA

(she is one-on-one,
face to face)

Gary, they love you, but I'm going to be frank. You are starting to get on their nerves.

66 INT. SPENCER McGRATH'S OFFICE - LINDEN, UTAH - DAY

66

Small office. Through the window we see a muddy yard and trucks. Brenda is with Gary.

GARY

A man offered me a dollar-fifty an hour. I said 'That isn't even minimum wage.' He said, 'You're an ex-con.'

SPENCER

Well, Gary, that's not fair. If you do the work, you should be paid the money.

McGrath looks at Brenda and smiles.

SPENCER

Your experience isn't very applicable for us, but you impress me as intelligent. I believe I can put you on here. Why don't you start tomorrow? Three-fifty an hour.

GARY

That's decent wages, Mr. McGrath.

SPENCER

I'd like to take all the credit; but in fact, Gary, there's a government program for ex-cons.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 66

SPENCER (CONT'D)

They pay half your salary. Hours
are eight to five.

67 EXT. STATE STREET - DAWN 67

By the clock in a store window, we see it is six a.m.
Gary is hitching in the rain. When two cars pass him,
he begins to walk.

68 EXT. THE WORK YARD - MORNING 68

Gary is drilling a hole in a board. He bears down hard
on a piece of wood, but no hole gets started. The fore-
man, CRAIG TAYLOR, comes by.

CRAIG

Gary, you're running that drill
on reverse.

GARY

I didn't know these things had a
reverse.

69 EXT. THE WORK YARD - NOONTIME 69

The other workers are sitting around eating, talking,
and laughing. Gary is off to the side. He perches on
a piece of machinery and eats his lunch out of a brown
paper bag. Silence is around him.

70 INT. VERN'S KITCHEN - EVENING 70

Gary has just brought in a sack of groceries. Johnny
and Brenda are with Ida.

BRENDA

(delightedly)

What did you do? Aw, that's nice.

GARY

Took in my first week's pay today.
I thought I'd put up my share.

IDA

Gary, you're crazy! Red caviar,
pate, I don't think I've ever
tasted these things. How could
you afford it?

GARY

Ask me no questions, Aunt Ida, and
I'll tell you no lies.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

GARY (CONT'D)

(he leaps up like a
kid of fourteen and
gives a "yahoo!")

This is my night!

71 EXT. DOWNTOWN PROVO - NIGHT

71

Gary, Brenda and Johnny are waiting in line outside
the Provo movie theatre with a few other people.

BRENDA

Hey, it's sweet to treat us to the
movies, Gary.

GARY

Cousin, you just got to see this
flick. I love it. 'One Flew Over
the Cuckoo's Nest.' I love it. I
watched them film it right down the
road from the Penitentiary. Watched
it right from my cell window. Saw
them bring Jack Nicholson in with
handcuffs and leg irons.

On the line outside the movie theatre waiting for the
picture to begin are also MAX JENSEN, a tall, well-
built law student, hair cleanly parted on the side,
and his wife COLLEEN, a pleasant-looking young woman,
together with another young couple who are friends.

FRIEND

Max, I hear it's your turn to give
the presentation this Sunday.

COLLEEN

Yes, Max is going to tell the kids
what his mission was like.

MAX

Well, I want to reach them with the
idea that if you want to improve
on our average for conversions then
you have to learn how to take rebuff.
Particularly in Catholic countries.

COLLEEN

Will you tell them about living with
your fellow missionaries?

Polite, uneasy laughter.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

MAX

It's quite a challenge.

(pause)

Okay, learning how to live with
your fellow missionaries can get
closer than marriage, you know.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

