

FREE WORLD

(Pilot Episode)

"Conditions of Parole"

by

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January 10th, 2017
Registered WGAw

FADE IN:

INT. PELICAN BAY STATE PRISON - DAY

Two prison guards walk HENRY ERBACH (36), from his cell to a holding room. They frisk him and order him to strip. During this, we hear:

VOICE (O.S.)
Inmate #402419... Henry Francis
Erbach, armed robbery, 10 years.

Henry undresses. He's medium build, crucifix tattoo on each forearm, no piercings.

You wouldn't know it to look at him but Henry is a high-line pro, career thief. He's an expert in metallurgy, in Telco security systems, machinist tools, whatever it takes to steal valuable shit from bank vaults and depository safes.

A guard tosses him an orange jumpsuit.

EXT. PRISON LOADING AREA - DAY

The guards walk Henry out to a parked bus.

VOICE (O.S.)
Highly successful fitness reports,
no isolation time, D reports look
slim, warden endorsement in order.

INT. PRISON BUS - MOVING - DAY

Henry rides in the rear, alone. A cage divides inmates from prison guards and the driver.

INT. PAROLE BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY

Henry sits in his orange jumpsuit.

VOICE (O.C.)
The purpose of this hearing is to
determine whether, if released, you
are likely to break the law again.

WIDER VIEW -- SIX BOARD MEMBERS sit at a table across from Henry. The CHAIR peruses his file, speaks in a microphone.

CHAIR
Do you feel that you've been
rehabilitated?

No answer. Board members exchange glances, someone clears his throat.

MEMBER

It means are you ready to rejoin society--

HENRY

I understand. You want to know if I'm sorry.

CHAIR

Well are you?

HENRY

I regret what I've done. And not because I'm locked up.

BACK ROW -- TERRY WALSH (55), John Deere cap and Black Raid jacket, watches with interest. We only catch a glimpse but Walsh won't be a mystery for long.

CHAIR

What made you commit the crime for which you were sentenced?

HENRY

I was a drug addict. I got caught up in a self-destructive pattern.

CHAIR

If released, is it likely you'll fall into a similar pattern?

Off Henry's blank reaction...

CUT TO:

Close on a PAROLE FORM as a rubber stamp SLAMS DOWN! Lifts away to reveal the word "APPROVED" in red ink.

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

Henry sits across from cell-mate ARCHIE (70), an old-school thief and the closest thing Henry has to a father.

A GUARD slides the door open. This is goodbye. The men stand and embrace. Archie hands Henry his tattered bible.

HENRY

I can't--

ARCHIE

Go on. You're gonna need it more
than me.

INT. PRISON CHECK-OUT - DAY

Henry puts on civilian clothes, signs a form and receives
his boxed possessions.

CHAIR (O.S.)

Conditions of parole are as such:
Report to assigned Parole Officer
within 24 hours. Submit to random
search of person, residence, and
vehicle.

EXT. PRISON - FRONT GATE - DAY

Barren landscape. The Pacific wind WHISTLES in from the bay.
Sign reads: "California State Correctional Facility".

The steel door slides open. Henry steps out, a free man. He
checks the sky, takes a deep breath of free air.

CHAIR (O.S.)

Obtain permission before change of
residence or employment. Report
weekly and as instructed to
assigned Parole Officer and for
weekly drug tests... Inmate will
abide by requirements as listed on
the inmate's prison release order.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - FREEWAY - DAY

Henry rides past a sign: **Los Angeles, 162 miles.**

BOARD CHIEF (O.S.)

Violation will result in suspension
of parole and return incarceration
for balance of sentence. Good luck.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS - NIGHT

The bus approaches the downtown Los Angeles skyline. Off the
sound of a BANGING GAVEL--

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. LENNOX NEIGHBORHOOD - BODEGA - DAY

Henry sips coffee outside. He observes passing cars, foot traffic, bits of conversation, nearby radio MUSIC -- hyper-alert, like an alien.

He's spying on a rundown public school across the street.

HENRY'S POV - JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY

CALVIN RUSSELL (64), is picking up his grandson, JAVAN (10). Calvin, black, is a hardworking mailman who loves his family and has a healthy mistrust of white folks. He walks ahead of Javan, no-nonsense, waving him to keep up.

Henry follows them for two blocks to,

EXT. RUSSELL HOUSE - SAME

A cramped one-story built in the 1920's: patch of weed-grass out front, bars on the windows and a roof that's seen better days. Still, it's the best-kept house on the block.

Henry watches as Calvin's wife of 40 years, ETTA (63), opens the door and hugs Javan. They disappear inside. (We don't know yet who these folks are to Henry.)

EXT. RAY'S GARAGE - BOYLE HEIGHTS - NIGHT

A rundown mechanic's shop in a shady neighborhood. Out of nowhere, a Lexus LS-460 speeds onto the lot and disappears inside the garage. The door closes fast.

INT. RAY'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Two CAR THIEVES hop out of the stolen Lexus. The mechanic, RAY HALL (34), jacks the car up on hydraulics, removes the muffler plate and rips out the factory Lojack.

He tosses the tracker to brother DEMARCUS (28), who drops it into a bucket of water until the flashing light stops.

ONE MINUTE LATER --

The Lexus is down off the lift, IDLING. The thief behind the wheel slips Ray a roll of cash. Dee raises the garage door. The Lexus races out past

HENRY

who stands outside with a paper bag under one arm. Ray is startled, then smiles warmly. Demarcus laughs.

DEMARCUS

Creeping up on a motherfucker.

INT. RAY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ray pulls a CIGAR BOX from his desk drawer. It contains a stack of \$100 bills and a logbook. Henry pockets the cash.

RAY

Ten years at a grand a month plus rehab, toys and stuff for the kid ...leaves forty-six hundred.

Ray hands him the book. Henry nods, grateful.

HENRY

Thanks for looking out. So you be ripping lo-jacks now?

RAY

Desperate times.

HENRY

Get me violated first day out.

RAY

(laughs)

Next time you're released give a heads up and we'll schedule our bootleg activity around it.

Demarcus hovers at the door, on edge, eager beaver.

DEMARCUS

Speaking of...when do we get back to work?

RAY

Dee, shut the fuck up.

Dee walks off. Henry turns to Ray.

HENRY

I need a lift.

INT. RAY'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Ray drives through West Adams. Henry stares out of the window, dope-slingers on every corner.

RAY
Where we going?

HENRY
Nowhere. Just cruise around. I
haven't been in a car in 10 years.
(pause)
I missed it...the motion.

Ray looks over at Henry like he's a stranger.

RAY
How does it feel? Being out?

HENRY
It's easy staying clean in prison.
The same routine every day... all
your choices made for you.

RAY
And now?

HENRY
Shaky.

RAY
You don't look shaky.

HENRY
I've been working a program going
on two years.

RAY
Twelve step?

HENRY
No.

Ray sees the crucifix tattoo on Henry's arm.

RAY
Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! Step the
fuck back. Jailhouse conversion?

HENRY
Nothing I say gonna make it sound
any less crazy.
(pause)
I asked for something to come into
my heart, make me a human being.

RAY

It's a drug, man. Instead of blow
or H, you're mainlining God.

Henry won't take the bait. He holds his arm out the window,
rolling it up and down, catching the wind.

RAY

We're thieves, Cuz. We rip scores
and sometimes we hurt people. How
you gonna square that?

HENRY

I spied on Javan today. Watched
Calvin pick him up from that shitty
school. 'Hood is a war zone. The
old man is still walking his route
at 65.

(pause)

It don't have to be like that for
Javan. I can change his life. Put
him on a path. But it takes
scratch.

RAY

So you're still in the game?

HENRY

I'm a 36 year old ex-con with no
education and no employment record.
I'd say my options are limited.

(pause)

No, it's time to get paid.

INT. MOM'S BARBECUE - NIGHT

A rib joint at Crenshaw and Vernon.

DARNELL JAMES (28), dealer, street name is "Cyclops", sits
at a booth surrounded by his thug crew. Darnell is 300 lbs
in a sweat suit, chowing on a pulled-pork sandwich dripping
with sauce. Sports a foggy glass eye from a gunshot wound.

A soldier rolls up, WHISPERS in his ear. Darnell wipes his
face with a wet towel and follows his boy outside.

EXT. REAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Darnell gets in his Suburban. His boy grabs a case and walks
it over to an Escalade. The BUYER inside inspects the
product (heroin) and they do the deal. Soldier boy walks a
gym bag full of cash back to Darnell.

ACROSS THE LOT --

reveal Detective ALVIN DORR (50), button-down Dragnet-style cop, is watching the deal go down from his sedan.

INT. DORR'S SEDAN - MOVING - NIGHT

He trails Darnell in traffic. Dorr doesn't radio for back-up so we're thinking maybe this guy is off the reservation.

EXT. WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - CULVER CITY - NIGHT

Navigator pulls inside a warehouse compound with two GUARDS positioned at the gate. Dorr watches, amused.

INT. JOB PLACEMENT CENTER - DAY

Henry sits across from a state-employed SECRETARY who is searching a database of menial jobs.

SECRETARY
Vocational skills?

HENRY
Some machinist work.

SECRETARY
Employer?

HENRY
Self-employed. I designed and built tools for specialized use.

She looks up, glasses low on her nose.

SECRETARY
Yeah, we're fresh out of tool design jobs.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Henry enters, talks to a frumpy CHECKOUT GIRL. She points to a back office.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Henry stands in front of GLENN (50), soft with dull features and a tragic mustache.

GLENN

Don't speak to customers or leave the premises during shift. I got cameras all over so you rip off a pack of gum it's on the video and I call the cops. Understand?

(off Henry's nod)

And keep your swinging dick away from my checkout girls.

Henry glances out at Glenn's homely stable of girls.

HENRY

Not a problem.

GLENN

Tuesday is payday. Half you kick back to me, two bills a week or I remand your ass. Understand?

EXT. GROCERY STORE LOADING DOCK - DAY

Henry unloads a truck, sweaty, hands raw with blisters. He walks over to a SINK and washes his bloody palms. The dock FOREMAN appears behind him.

FOREMAN

It's not your break.

HENRY

I need gloves.

FOREMAN

Home Depot, motherfucker! Get back on the truck.

Henry stares at this prick...returns to work.

EXT. PAY PHONE - DAY

Henry dials a number off a Corrective Services card. It RINGS. An assistant picks up.

HENRY

Henry Erbach, 402419. Calling for Terrance Walsh.

INT. LUTHERAN CHURCH - GYM - NIGHT

Henry peeks in at a Narcotics Anonymous meeting. A dozen addicts leaning on each other to stay clean. Free coffee and donuts. A PRIEST gives testimony:

PRIEST

My relationship with drugs is like a bee allergy. Naturally if you have an allergy you stay away from the hive or else you die. But in my case, I only see the honey.

Henry scans the crowd, stops on VERNA RUSSELL (33), black, bone-thin beauty with a short-cropped Afro. Sadness seems part of her DNA.

PRIEST (O.C.)

Now when I think about the honey I have to remind myself of the sting.

EXT. LUTHERAN CHURCH - NIGHT

The meeting lets out. Henry leans against a car, watching addicts lighting up, huddling. Verna hugs someone goodbye and walks around to the lot.

She nearly passes Henry...then sees him and freezes.

VERNA

Henry? Jesus--

HENRY

I scared you. I'm sorry.

VERNA

I thought you were a ghost.

She hugs him, smiling nervously.

VERNA

You gained weight.

HENRY

Not much choice, I was down to a buck-fifty when they locked me up.

VERNA

No, you look healthy. How are you?

HENRY
 (can't find words)
 Adjusting... You need a lift? Or
 maybe--

VERNA
 No, uh...I got a ride.

HENRY
 I heard you were clean.

VERNA
 I am today, yeah, two years. I got
 my real estate license, selling Mid
 City, Pico Union and Baldwin. Mom
 helps out with Javan. It's a grind
 but it's good for me, the routine.

HENRY
 And the bad old days. You miss it?

Verna smiles softly. The years melt away and for a moment
 they are familiar, event intimate.

VERNA
 All the time. It was the most fun I
 ever had until it wasn't anymore.

Just then a 2012 Lexus pulls up. The DRIVER (40s), a white
 yuppie in a pricey suit and haircut, gives a friendly HONK.

Henry is wondering what this guy is doing with a home-girl
 addict single mom from South Central. Verna signals driver
 to 'wait a second'.

HENRY
 (spell broken)
 Who is he?

VERNA
 Elliot. Cokehead, 18 months clean.
 He used to be a lawyer until he got
 disbarred. We met in rehab--

HENRY
 You're with him?

She nods, contrite.

VERNA
 We kicked together. He knows all my
 darkest secrets and he doesn't
 judge.

HENRY
We need to talk about Javan--

VERNA
I gotta go. I'm sorry.

Quick hug. Verna moves to the Lexus:

VERNA
I just want to be a regular person.
I was sick for so long. And when I
got straight I had to keep it
together for Javan. That's why I
never came to see you--

Henry blocks her from opening the door.

HENRY
When do I meet him?

EXT. POLICE-NARCOTICS PRECINCT - PARKING LOT - DAY

Alvin Dorr waits on the steps, smoking. An F-150 pulls in
and parks. Dorr tosses his butt, walks over and gets in.

INT. WALSH'S TRUCK - DAY

Terry Walsh, the mystery man from the parole hearing, is the
driver. Dorr briefs him:

DORR
Darnell unloaded two bricks. Cash
is in a warehouse in Culver.

He hands Walsh a manila envelope.

DORR
Full architectural. Surveillance
photos, security protocol, circuit
and phone schematics. Third shift
is the sweet spot.

WALSH
How long?

DORR
Maybe five days.

EXT. GROCERY STORE LOADING DOCK - DAY

Henry, now wearing gloves, unloads produce. A cashier walks by and hands him his paycheck.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Glenn sits feet up reading a Lowrider Magazine. Henry walks in, drops a cash envelope on the desk, walks out.

INT. TOYS R' US - DAY

Henry pushes a cart down an aisle, tossing stuff in without much thought: razor scooter, soccer ball, kite. He notices

a FATHER AND SON shopping for toys together. Henry watches them for a beat.

INT. NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

Sunlight shines through the stain-glass. A REVEREND and his congregation are dancing. White-robed choir singing gospel. Verna is lead, voice swelling.

IN FRONT ROW Calvin shares a song book with ETTA, who wears her best go-to-church hat. She has her arm around Javan, in a white shirt and bow-tie.

EXT. CHURCH STEPS - DAY

Churchgoers file out, still euphoric from the service. Etta hugs the Reverend. Javan and Verna emerge, holding hands.

ACROSS THE STREET -- REVEAL HENRY

He watches Verna kiss her mother goodbye and walk off with Javan. Calvin and Etta head home in the opposite direction.

INT. BURGER KING - DAY

Henry and Javan sit in a booth, staring at each other. The toys are unopened. Henry starts:

HENRY

Been wanting to meet you for a long time. Do you know who I am?

Javan shrugs.

JAVAN
Yeah... It's a lie.

HENRY
Why is it a lie?

JAVAN
Because ain't no white dude gonna
be my daddy.

HENRY
You hate white folks? That it?

JAVAN
I don't even know any white folks.

HENRY
Well you know one now you little
pint-size racist. And you don't get
to choose family...it chooses you.

AT THE DOOR the Reverend enters with his family, sees Javan
in a booth alone with Henry, looks concerned.

HENRY
Blood is blood, Javan. Skin don't
mean a thing.

EXT. BURGER KING - PLAY AREA - DAY

Verna stubs out her cigarette, checks her watch, nervous.

INT. BURGER KING - DAY

Henry watches Javan play with his french fries.

HENRY
What's on your mind?

JAVAN
You used to get high with my mom?

HENRY
I did a lot of stupid things with
your mom.

JAVAN
Is that why you got sent away?

HENRY
Nobody told you?

JAVAN
(shakes his head)
They don't talk about you.

HENRY
Armed Robbery. Do you know what
that is?

JAVAN
You be strapped when you rip folks
off... Why'd you do it?

HENRY
Because I never learned how to do
anything else. Never had training.
The choices you make in life, they
define you.

JAVAN
Like what?

HENRY
Like I needed cash on account of I
was a drug addict.

JAVAN
My moms, too.

HENRY
She seems okay now.
(pause)
Drugs. It was a choice. Speaking
of, I hear you're shooting junk in
your veins or smoking that rock I
will beat your ass. We understand
each other?

Javan shrugs, nods agreement.

JAVAN
Do you still love her?

Henry stares at the boy.

HENRY
I loved getting high with her.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS - CLINIC - DAY

Henry swipes his parole ID card. A NURSE checks the photo
and hands him a urine sample container.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS - OFFICE - DAY

Henry sits across from his Parole Officer, Terry Walsh. He reads Henry's file for a long beat...then looks up.

WALSH
You ran a tight crew.

HENRY
In another life.

WALSH
Tell me about it.

HENRY
Jobs were high-line, on the prowl,
no cowboy shit unless called for--

WALSH
How did you get onto scores?

Henry stares at Walsh, senses trouble.

HENRY
Insurance agents, security guards,
junkies, drug soldiers, Five-0...
(beat)
Say a security agent gets an order
to install cameras, motion sensors,
maybe an alarm system with a direct
line to police. Toss in a JV-30-20
wall safe and odds are, the mark is
holding uncut diamonds.

WALSH
You drop any bodies?

HENRY
(pause)
No, sir.

Walsh is dubious, lets it slide.

WALSH
So what happened? I mean if you're
such a genius how'd you fuck it up?

HENRY
I didn't.

WALSH

The decade you spent in a cage says
you did.

HENRY

Somebody snitched.

WALSH

Every convict I ever met drops that
same line.

HENRY

It was drugs. Crew got caught up.
In the end we were low-IQ addicts.
I had 10 years to mull it over.

(pause)

Somebody took a collar and turned
rat.

WALSH

You gonna find out who?

HENRY

It's on my bucket list.

Walsh sizes Henry up...then grabs his jacket:

WALSH

Let's go.

INT. WALSH'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

No chit-chat. Walsh exits the freeway. Henry looks over,
knows Walsh is up to no good.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOFTOP - DAY

Overlooking the WAREHOUSE. Henry looks through BINOCULARS at
a pair of teenage guards out front.

WALSH (O.C.)

Guards are strapped. Two front, two
rear, four more inside, up all
night doing blow...blasting jungle
music.

(points)

Positional cameras on the roof and
we assume inside--

HENRY

Who's crib?

WALSH

BD Management. "BD" stands for Big Darnell, street name Cyclops, on account of he got his eye shot out back in the day over some piece of shit corner. Biggy runs 30 blocks around Vernon and West Adams. Got his one good eye on Boyle Heights.

HENRY

(already knows)
Why you telling me?

WALSH

Because there's something inside I want. You're gonna get it for me.

Henry hands Walsh his binoculars. Chooses his words carefully.

HENRY

Due respect, I just got out. I'm trying to turn my life around.

WALSH

I read your jacket. Junkie thief, fire baptized, Holy Ghost purified. That it?...Are you *preaching* to me?

HENRY

No, sir.

WALSH

It's cool. I'll take you back

INT. WALSH'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

No talk. Henry glances at Walsh. It is definitely not cool. He knows he's in deep shit.

INT. WALSH'S CAR - NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

He pulls up to a LIQUOR STORE, reaches in the GLOVE BOX and pulls out a gun and ski mask.

WALSH

Take down that bodega.

Henry checks the store, glances back at Walsh.

WALSH

So there's no confusion, I'm gonna be clear: I want you to step out of the car and rob that fucking liquor store. Now.

(pause)

Do it or you're in stir by sundown.

HENRY

You want to pull a daylight smash-and-grab for a dime-store register?

WALSH

It's not about the coin. This is about establishing a *relationship dynamic*.

Walsh holds the gun out, waiting. Henry takes it and checks the chamber: no bullets. He gets out.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Henry loiters, trying to figure a way out. No choice. He girds himself and slips on the mask.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Henry rushes in all business. He pistol WHIPS the cashier, empties the till and flees in 10 seconds flat. A customer stands at the soda fountain, stunned.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Henry exits and sees Walsh's car is gone. He runs down an ALLEY, dumps the gun and mask...climbs a fence and sprints through a backyard.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - SIDEWALK - SAME

Henry emerges and walks calmly, catching his breath. After a few beats, Walsh pulls up alongside, drives slow, doesn't say anything. Henry finally gets in.

INT. WALSH'S CAR - SAME

Driving slow, Walsh gives Henry a few seconds to grasp the new normal.

WALSH

First thing happens your piss test comes up dirty. Routine search of person gives me possession. Then maybe you resist arrest, assault a cop. Are you getting the picture?

(pause)

Full compliance. You'll earn for me or your ass is back in stir getting punked by the Zulu nation.

He slips a card in Henry's pocket.

WALSH

Call this number. Do whatever the man tells you.

INT. PELICAN BAY STATE PRISON - DAY

Steel-reinforced concrete walls topped with razor wire, set off at intervals by guard towers. A hundred CONS are in the yard: pumping iron, shooting hoops or just killing time.

INT. PRISON VISITING ROOM - DAY

Henry sits across from Archie who has been briefed.

ARCHIE

First time I made parole was '77. I get assigned this red-ass P.O. The guy can't make it with his wife so he puts a gun to my head and orders me to bang her. It's the only way this freak can get it up.

(puffs his cigarette)

The wife being half-beast plus the gun barrel digging in my scalp made it hard for me to get her off. But I did, many times. It's what a man does to stay out of the joint.

Archie, having made his point, sits back and drags on a cigarette. Off Henry's reaction,

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Henry buys a disposable cell phone.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

He walks around to the ALLEY and dials the number off the card Walsh gave him. It RINGS.

DORR'S VOICE

Yeah?

HENRY

This is Henry Erbach--

DORR'S VOICE

Corner of East 12th and Hooper,
downtown. Be there at midnight.

EXT. TACO STAND - NIGHT

Henry sits across from Dorr and another MAN who we suspect is also a corrupt cop. Dorr slides Henry a folder. It is intel on Darnell's warehouse.

DORR

Full architectural, floor plan,
circuit diagrams, cameras...

He points to a PHOTO of the rear of the building.

DORR

This pole is Verizon. Bypass these
lines and even if they hit an alarm
nothing is gonna happen.

HENRY

What's in the safe?

DORR

Not your business. But as I feel it
might provide your crew with a
sense of purpose I'll clue you in.

(beat)

Cash stash. In the neighborhood of
400 stacks.

HENRY

What's the window?

DORR

Four days.

Dorr gestures the silent man next to him.

DORR

This is Lamar. He's gonna ride
along and make sure a hundred
percent of what you pull out of
that safe makes it back to us.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOFTOP - DAY

Henry and Ray overlook Darnell's warehouse. Dorr's intel is
on the ledge. Henry has already briefed Ray.

RAY

What's your end?

HENRY

I stay out of the jug, maybe skim a
little from the take.

RAY

And after this one?

HENRY

Walsh owns my ass for the next two
years. This buys me time.

RAY

For what?

HENRY

For what needs to be done. If we
take down a score with a bent cop
there's no end of the rainbow.

(pause)

Look, you can take a pass.

Ray studies Dorr's intel.

RAY

Five men.

HENRY

Four.

Ray looks up, forcing Henry to say what he means.

HENRY

Dee's a risk.

RAY

Dee's fine.

HENRY

Dee sweats H. He's a junkie. And I am not going back to jail.

Ray knows he's right, still, Dee is blood.

RAY

We need him on the pole, and we need his nine if things go wild west. Dee handles his business.

(pause)

He'll be my responsibility.

They lock eyes for a beat. Henry sighs, nods.

HENRY

Five men. And we're gonna need some motherfucking guns.

EXT. STOR-QUEST STORAGE - DAY

Ray and Henry drive onto a STORAGE LOT under a freeway near the Los Angeles River.

RAY

He's been dealing arms to slinger-tribes across the city.

HENRY

Is he making it?

RAY

Scraping by. Hustling.

Henry nods, quiet.

RAY

Something wrong?

HENRY

No. I'm fine.

EXT. STORAGE CONTAINER #116 - DAY

DENNIS SILVA (40s), slick bullshit artist, stands smoking a Camel. He was one of Henry's crew back in the day.

DENNIS

Amigo! Welcome back to the human race.

He hugs Henry who allows it. After a beat:

HENRY

Hey Dennis...

(testing him)

How come you never came to see me?

DENNIS

Who wants to see you in a cage?

Henry stares right through him, nods.

RAY

You look flush.

DENNIS

This is America, sweetheart! Land of the 2nd Amendment. If our founding fathers saw fit to give its citizens the constitutional right to waste each other with 1000-rpm weaponry, who am I to argue?

RAY

So business is good?

DENNIS

Keeping the lights on. Margins are pube thin plus I gotta deal with ATF...Homeland Security, local law enforcement and there's always the risk of getting jacked by your own customers.

HENRY

Keeping it clean?

DENNIS

What?

Henry grabs Dennis' arm and checks for tracks. He frisks him, pulls his pockets inside out, dumping his cigarettes, wallet and cell phone.

DENNIS

(to Ray, amused)

I didn't know better I'd say your boy is making a back door play.

RAY

The joint do change a man--

DENNIS

Get off me, man! I'm clean.

Dennis shoves free, not laughing anymore.

HENRY

Good. Let's see the inventory.

INT. STORAGE CONTAINER - DAY

The steel doors swing open. Dennis moves inside past boxes, patio furniture and bicycles. He pulls back a false-shelf.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - SAME

REVEAL an arsenal of Semtex, automatic weapons, shotguns and ammo. Ray presents a list. Dennis scans it.

DENNIS

Got most of this already. The rest
I can rustle up fast. What else?

HENRY

I need to get with Butchie.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE - DAY

As Calvin delivers mail on the porch, a screen door opens and the church Reverend steps out, grim-faced.

REV

Got a second, Cal?

CALVIN

Sure, what's up?

INT. RUSSELL KITCHEN - DAY

Verna is helping her mom make dinner: fried chicken, mashed potatoes, greens and corn bread. She is relaxed with Etta, who sits at the table brooding chicken.

They hear Calvin coming home. He enters, still in uniform, moves past Etta and stops at the counter next to Verna. He stares at her for a beat.

CALVIN

Where did you go after church?

VERNA

(chopping celery)
What?

CALVIN
Sunday. Where'd you take Javan?

VERNA
(lies)
Toys R' Us. He wanted a scooter.

CALVIN
Where'd you eat lunch?

Verna looks up at her dad. No answer.

CALVIN
Burger King?

VERNA
You been *following* me?

CALVIN
The Rev saw Javan alone with that
white trash junkie convict. *How
long he been out?*

Verna turns to her mom for help. Etta speaks softly.

ETTA
How long?

VERNA
Just two days. He wanted to meet
his son.

CALVIN
That is not your decision!

VERNA
I was gonna tell you--

CALVIN
It's starting up again! The secrets
and the sneaking around, every word
a goddamn lie!

VERNA
I didn't lie.

CALVIN
I won't stand for it! I'll cut you
out of Javan's life before you put
your momma through that again--

VERNA

It ain't like that. He don't want nothing. He's clean, working a job.

CALVIN

Man's got to keep a job if he wants to stay outta jail.

VERNA

The boy should know his father.

CALVIN

You spread your legs for a man it don't make him a daddy.

Verna looks down at her feet, stung. She abruptly rushes for the front door. Calvin goes after her, softening.

CALVIN

I'm sorry I said it. But your mom and me are in charge of what's best for Javan now. You gotta remember--

VERNA

(at the door)

Think I'm ever gonna forget it?

She storms out, SLAMS the door. Calvin SLAPS it with his hand. He looks up and sees Javan in the hallway, watching.

EXT. SOUTH CENTRAL - STREET CORNER - NIGHT

ADINA "BUTCH" WARFIELD sits on a stoop watching her corner drug crew push a heroin package. In a hoody and low baggy jeans, she's a hard-ass dealer and thief.

At first glance you miss she's a woman, and a damn fine one at that when she makes the effort. Her runner approaches--

RUNNER

Some white dude asking for you...
back in the alley.

Butch confirms the .9mm handgun in her waist.

INT. ALLEY - SAME

Butch rounds the corner, sees Henry and drops her tough demeanor. She runs and jumps into his arms, plants one right on his kisser.

BUTCH
Motherfucker!

HENRY
 Butchie--

BUTCH
 I hear you be sucking some major
 cock up in the joint, huh?

HENRY
 And you're still peddling rock and
 eating pussy.

BUTCH
 What can I say? Neurotic Caucasian
 bitches with zero self-esteem, they
 love my ass.

HENRY
 You haven't changed. Speaking of, I
 got work for you.

Butch laughs, shaking her head.

BUTCH
 Why the fuck not? You been out all
 of two days.

INT. RUSSELL HOUSE - MORNING

Etta fixes brown-bag lunches. Javan picks at his breakfast.
 Calvin enters, in uniform. Etta kisses Javan on the head.

ETTA
 Go brush your teeth.

Javan runs off. Etta turns to Calvin:

ETTA
 She called, crying her eyes out.

CALVIN
 I said what needed saying.

ETTA
 You tell the girl she's nothing but
 a junkie and you're just asking her
 to prove you right.

Calvin exhales. Etta hands him coffee, kisses him.

CALVIN
Gonna be a wet day.

ETTA
I packed extra socks.

EXT. INGLEWOOD SUBURB - MAIL ROUTE - DAY

Calvin walks his route, delivering mail in the rain.

EXT. DUMPY HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Calvin trudges up the stairs, looks woozy. He sits on a swing, pulls out his insulin pack, pinches belly fat and injects. An OLD WOMAN opens her screen door.

OLD WOMAN
Feeling sick, Cal?

He shakes his head. He's fine.

INT. PUB & GRILL - DAY

Calvin sits on a stool having a sandwich and beer, reading a newspaper. Henry enters, sits next to him.

HENRY
(to bartender)
Club soda.

Calvin doesn't even look up.

CALVIN
No booze?

HENRY
No.

CALVIN
Why you come here?

HENRY
To clear the air.

CALVIN
Nothing to talk about. You're back
and it's all gonna go to shit now.

Calvin sips his beer, hand shaking.

CALVIN

Verna was a good girl. She had a good head on her shoulders until you got her hooked on that poison.

HENRY

It wasn't like that.

CALVIN

She's trying to stay clean and you are disrupting her routine. That's a dangerous thing for an addict.

(beat)

Why you even wanna come back?

HENRY

I love your daughter. And I have a son.

CALVIN

You gonna be his daddy now?

Calvin shakes his head, discouraged.

CALVIN

Best thing you can do is go on back to jail.

HENRY

I'm gonna see him.

CALVIN

Then get yourself a lawyer. 'Cause I'm his legal guardian going on two years now. You wanna get to know the boy? It's gonna be on my terms.

INT. RAY'S GARAGE - OFFICE - DAY

Ray looks out a window onto the lot where Dee is chatting up a drug runner, BUG. Dee slips Bug cash for a dime bag. Bug scurries off.

INT. RAY'S CAR - DAY

Ray drives. Dee rides shotgun, coasting on H but alert enough to notice his big brother is pissed.

EXT. ACE SECURITY OFFICES - DAY

Ray parks the car. He checks photos of Darnell's warehouse security equipment -- alarms, cameras, motion lights -- all display "Ace Security" decals.

DEMARCUS

Want me to come with?

Ray ignores him, gets out.

DEMARCUS

Hey man, I do something wrong?

RAY

Sit tight. And don't play the radio. It drains the battery.

Dee watches Ray go in and shake hands with a sales agent.

INT. RAY'S PARKED CAR - LATER

RAP MUSIC on the radio. Dee is asleep. Ray gets in, shuts it off. He drops a catalogue on Dee's lap, waking him up.

RAY

Assume they ordered the full menu. Cameras, top-shelf safe, alarms go out through a phone line, only the call doesn't go out to Five-0. It goes to Darnell's crew... an urban death squad.

DEMARCUS

Man, I don't want no part of this train wreck.

RAY

We owe the man.

DEMARCUS

You think some dirty cop is gonna let us walk after we hand him a bag of stolen drug money? Nah way--

RAY

The man did 10 years in a cage for us. It means we owe him, feel me?

Dee checks himself, nods.

EXT. GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Henry walks out after work...sees Robbery Detective BRUCE WAGSTAFF (50s), fat with a walrus mustache and shit-eating grin on his face, planted on the hood of his car.

WAGSTAFF

Ten years. How does it feel to piss away so much time?

Henry tosses his backpack in the trunk.

HENRY

What d'you want?

WAGSTAFF

Saw your name on a felony parole sheet and I wanted to let you know I'm still on the job. You start making moves, I'll be watching.

Henry breaks into his best "fuck you" grin.

HENRY

Back in the day you were on me for like six months, right?

(no response)

I know this because I made your dog shit crew from the jump. Fumbling around, snapping board-photos, trying to get up on a wire. After how many man-hours, what happened? Some dealer-weight snitch trades his sentence for mine.

(pause)

So you creeping up acting the big shit like *you* took *me* down? That is straight-up mope fantasy.

Wagstaff just got faced. He jumps down, grinning like an asshole, trying to play it off.

WAGSTAFF

Don't shit in my backyard is the message.

HENRY

Okay. Am I locked up?

WAGSTAFF

Not yet.

Henry gets in his car and drives off.

EXT. HENRY'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

He drives, rage building, until he loses it, PUNCHING the dashboard over and over again.

EXT. SUNSET MOTEL - ROOM 14 - DAY

Dennis and Ray KNOCK on the door. A MAN opens up with the chain locked. He peeks out, sees Dennis and lets them in.

INT. MOTEL ROOM 14 - DAY

Dennis shakes hands with the arms dealer. Four OPEN CASES are on the bed with identical rifles and vial-darts. Ray checks a scope as the dealer gives him the specs.

ARMS DEALER

Pneu-Dart X-Caliber, c02-based...
pressure-gauged full-volume dump,
virtually silent.

(beat)

Constructed of machine aluminum,
with an elements-resistant satin-
finish. It's lightweight without
sacrificing range or accuracy.

(beat)

Cadillac of tranquilizer guns.

RAY

Reaction time?

The dealer holds up a vial.

DEALER

Haloperidol, 40ccs. This dose'll
drop an elephant in two seconds.

INT. HOME DEPOT - DAY

Dee pushes a cart, grabs three MSA respirators, a MaxPro fire extinguisher, Carlson coolant spray and sledge hammer.

INT. STOR-QUEST STORAGE - CONTAINER 116 - NIGHT

A dozen .9mm handguns are laid out on a table. Butch loads bullets into each clip, loads the guns, and stows them in a duffle. She begins loading shotgun shells--

INT. RAY'S GARAGE - DAY

Henry and Ray sit at a workbench. Ace Security catalogue is open in front of them along with print schematics of a dozen high-end safes.

RAY
Hardplate or composite?

HENRY
Gotta be composite with embedded tungsten around the lock mechanism.
(pointing to catalogue)
These carbide chips they shred the cutting tips on most bits.

Ray opens his note-pad, grabs a pencil.

RAY
What do we need?

HENRY
Cobalt bits with a diamond-center tip... a half-dozen at every size designation less than 5/16".

As Ray writes it down:

HENRY
You should've told me Verna lost custody.

RAY
I didn't see any good in it. You were non-custodial and locked up. There was nothing you could've done except get hot, start a fight.

Henry nods, studies the schematics.

HENRY
You still should've told me.

INT. TOY STORE - DAY

Pushing a cart, Henry grabs a Boxing Kit (gloves, headgear, speed-bag) off the shelf and flags a salesman.

HENRY
Is this the best one?

AT THE REGISTER He sets the boxing kit on the counter along with six hockey masks. Pays cash.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - LOBBY - DAY

Henry arrives, carrying fast food and wrapped toys. Female social worker GALE (50s), greets him along with an LAPD COP in uniform. Gale shakes his hand.

MONITOR

Gale Ortiz. I'll be monitoring the visit. Set your stuff down here.

Henry puts his things on a folding table.

MONITOR

Officer Chapel is going to frisk you now. Intake protocol. He'll also verify your sobriety. And I have to unwrap the gifts--

Henry holds out his arms, gets padded down. Gale rips the wrapping off and inspects the toys.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - HALLWAY - DAY

Gale recites the rules as she leads Henry to a VISIT ROOM. Officer Chapel walks behind them.

GALE

No smoking. No weapons or articles that could be used as a weapon. No alterations to the child: haircuts, tattoos, piercings. No photographs without written consent and the old man didn't give it.

AT THE DOOR Henry sees Calvin sitting in a chair at the end of the hall. He looks up at Henry, then checks his watch.

GALE

I won't get in the way but I will be in the room. You have to speak English loud enough for me to hear. You can't disparage the guardian and there is no contact between you and the guardian during the visit.

Gale stops at the VISIT ROOM door.

MONITOR

Visitation fee is paid in full by the non-custodial parent prior to start of session. Two hours, two-hundred-eighty.

Henry pays her in cash. He shoots Calvin a hard look then follows Gale inside.

INT. VISIT ROOM - SAME

Henry enters. He sees Javan sitting in a chair, waiting nervously. He forces a smile, holds up the fast food.

HENRY

Burger King.

INT. VISIT ROOM - LATER

Food eaten. Toys on the table. Javan is wearing his new boxing gloves, PUNCHING at Henry's open palms. Gale sits against the far wall, barely paying attention.

HENRY

Are you a badass, Javan?

JAVAN

Yeah.

Javan punches harder, trying to prove it. Henry glances over at Gale, lowers his voice.

HENRY

How do you like this Elliot guy your mom's seeing?

JAVAN

Dunno...It's hard to be chill when he's around.

HENRY

Why is that?

JAVAN

My mom acts all nervous. Like she can't be herself around him...like she's not good enough.

Javan throws a few more combinations. Henry grins.

HENRY

You've never once been in a fight,
have you?

(pause)

It's okay. You don't have to be a
tough guy but you need to know how
to trade punches. If you ever get
into a scrap put your man down fast
and kick him hard and keep kicking
until he passes out.

Javan is listening.

HENRY

One thing I learned in stir and
it's the same out here... Show
weakness and you're dead.

INT. ROBBERY-HOMICIDE DIVISION - DAY

Wagstaff sits across from Precinct Captain BUD NOVICK, who
reads over a request for a 90 day surveillance warrant.

WAGSTAFF

Target is Henry Erbach. High-line
thief I busted years ago. He's on
the street again, making moves.

NOVICK

What's the ask?

WAGSTAFF

Four men to start. Audio and video
surveillance. Phones, narrowband
and encrypted wireless. Financials
and GPS placement for good measure.

Novick signs the warrant, hands it back.

NOVICK

Happy hunting.

INT. MOONLIGHT ROLLERWAY - SKATING RINK - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS --

Henry's crew roller-skates to Blue Swede's "Hooked on a
Feeling". Dennis sings the lyrics. Ray and Butch groove to
the beat. Dee battles to stay upright. Henry glides around
the rink, feeling the joy of motion and music.

A bizarre activity for thieves on the eve of a major heist.

INT. SKATING RINK - BARRIER WALL - MINUTES LATER

REO Speedwagon's "Time For me To Fly" now playing. The crew huddles at the wall for a meet. Open space makes it hard to eavesdrop. Loud music drowns out any bug.

HENRY

You get the black boxes for the alarm?

RAY

Yeah, Dennis crushed it. They're in the storage drop.

HENRY

And the rear door?

RAY

It's a straight punch. But those homeboys better be blasting tunes 'cause we're gonna make some noise.

DENNIS

We didn't drive cross-town for a pregame rundown.

BUTCH

Yeah, what the fuck we doing in Glendale?

All eyes on Henry...

HENRY

There's been a development. You remember that Keystone Cop was chasing after us back in the day?

RAY

Wagstaff. Robbery-Homicide.

HENRY

He paid a visit. Tells me I'm on his radar, to keep my nose clean--

DEMARCUS

...So we shut it down?

HENRY

I'm in a bind. I have to take the warehouse. But you can take a pass and with this heat you should.

Nobody answers. Then:

RAY
I'm in. I accept the risk.

HENRY
Butch?

BUTCH
I roll with you, man. Whatever...

Henry gives Butch a grateful nod. Turns to Dennis.

HENRY
Dennis, you have a business, the
inventory alone is worth a bundle
plus what's under the mattress.
(pause)
I'd be smart, walk away.

DENNIS
And look like a dick in front of
you assholes? Not a chance.

HENRY
Dee?

RAY
Dee's good to go.

HENRY
No. Let him answer.

Dee looks at Henry...shrugs, laughs.

DEMARCUS
Hey for me the donkeywork is half
the kick. I'll roll with you.
(pause)
Now can we get the fuck outta here
before somebody plays Xanadu?

INT. VALLEY BAR - DAY

Walsh is at the end of the BAR flanked by his crew of dirty
cops. Dorr is there, also Lamar. Henry enters... walks to
the bar. Walsh waits for him to speak. Long beat.

HENRY
Tonight.

He hands Walsh a hand-written invoice. Total: \$17,800.

WALSH

You padding my nut on this job?

HENRY

Stuff is all on consignment. And this is no smooth caper. It's a stick-up, maybe a firefight. Then we run through a composite box with fortified alloy steel and stealth tumblers. Talking machine tools, electronics, weapons and an aptitude for the work. If it was a walk you'd do it yourself, right?

Walsh signals the bartender who hands Henry a cash envelope ...then SLIDES a folder across to him.

HENRY

What is this?

WALSH

Motivation.

Henry opens a file on LESTER WOOD, serial rapist, serving 20 years at Corcoran. Henry sees graphic victim photos. To these Walsh has added surveillance shots of Verna and Javan.

WALSH

You fuck this up or cross me and I will put you back in a cage. Then Lester here makes parole and first thing he's gonna do is call on that boot-lip baby-mama of yours ...cleans up good for a rock fiend.

(pause)

The next time we meet *you best be handing me cash.*

EXT. CAPRI HOTEL - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

A seedy live-in hotel near Skid Row. Elegant in the 40s, the building has fallen into disrepair. Now it's home to junkies, dealers, prostitutes and the recently-paroled.

INT. CAPRI HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Henry moves past the front desk where night manager, CESAR (70s), is reading a comic book.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Henry walks past OPEN DOORS with junkies, prostitutes coming and going with clients, other fringe characters hanging out.

IN A ROOM across from his -- three whores (GRACE, HOPE and FAITH) are having dinner and talking shop.

GRACE

Gotta let these johns know you have respect for life. It pays.

FAITH

Pays how?

GRACE

Any night of the week, walk down 6th, most girls are HIV positive, they don't know what a condom is. Johns are horny but they're risk averse, see?

(sees Henry)

Henry, you look tired.

HENRY

Working on deadline.

GRACE

Got pizza and Red Bull if you're looking to murder a few hours.

He shakes his head "no".

HENRY

I need to sleep. I can't sleep. Can you help a brother out?

INT. HENRY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Henry lies on the bed, staring up at the swirling popcorn landscape of the ceiling. Grace dims the lamp and sings:

GRACE

When trouble surrounds us,
When evils come,
When these things beset us,
He doesn't forget us,
He sends down His love
on the wings of a dove

Hope removes Henry's boots. Faith pulls up a blanket. The women slide in close, comforting him. It's not sexual.

GRACE/HOPE/FAITH

On the wings of a snow white dove,
He sends his pure sweet love,
A sign from above...
On the wings of a dove.

Henry drifts off in the warm embrace of his sirens. The LULLABY continues as we,

FADE TO BLACK:

Superimpose: 1:17 am

FADE IN:

EXT. AIRPORT HOLIDAY INN - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dee moves past a row of courtesy vans. He looks around... jimmys open the door on one van. He climbs in, hot-wires it and drives away.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

Lamar waits. A car pulls up and he gets in.

INT. RAY'S CAR - SAME

Ray and Henry in front. Lamar buckles up as they drive off.

INT. CLUB FUBAR - WEST HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Butch sits on a VIP BOOTH chatting up a blonde kitty in a sexy dress. Butch's phone VIBRATES. She kisses the girl goodbye, drops cash on the table, walks out.

EXT. CLUB FUBAR - NIGHT

Dennis is double-parked. Butch gets in and they drive off.

EXT. LOS ANGELES RIVER (RENDEZVOUS SPOT) - NIGHT

Cars parked, crew waiting. Dee pulls up in the STOLEN VAN and they load it up with tools and weapons.

INT. VAN MOVING - NIGHT

Dennis drives. Crew members suit up in latex gloves and Kevlar, checking weapons. Lamar holds up a mask.

LAMAR
Hockey masks?

HENRY
On the plus side, it'll stop a
bullet.

Ray snaps a night-scope onto one of the rifles.

EXT. WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT

The industrial part of Culver City.

EXT. DRUG WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

TEEN GUARDS stand post, two in front, two in rear, .9mm guns strapped. A bass-heavy RAP BEAT plays from inside.

INT. DRUG WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Classic Death Row Tupac BLASTS on speaker. Four SOLDIERS sit at a table behind a CARGO TRUCK, playing dominoes and doing much blow.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Seen through the green tint of a RIFLE SCOPE, the perimeter guards smoke weed and talk shit, killing time.

EXT. NEIGHBORING ROOFTOP - NIGHT

REVEAL HENRY AND BUTCH nested, rifles aimed, wearing radio earpieces.

HENRY
Confirm positions.

EXT. EMPTY LOT BEHIND WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Ray and Dee lie flat in the weeds, rifles aimed at the rear guards. Ray checks Dee then peers into his scope, finger on the trigger.

RAY
Roger that.

In charge, Henry counts down as the four snipers take aim.

HENRY (RADIO)
Three. Two. One. Fire--

EXT. WAREHOUSE ENTRANCES - NIGHT

All four GUARDS fall in unison. Out cold before they hit the ground. The crew moves in fast, masks on.

IN FRONT --

Dennis and Lamar pull up, jump out of the van and drag two guards out of sight. Dennis grabs up guns and cell phones.

IN BACK --

Ray and Dee drag the guards into an alcove. Dennis pulls up in the van as Henry and Butch arrive. They trade rifles for handguns. Henry grabs a shotgun.

Ray runs a tool case down three steps.

EXT. REAR DOOR - NIGHT

Solid steel with a thick bolt. Ray assembles a lock-punch then signals Henry who is next to the van, watching.

Henry signals Dee.

Dee climbs a TELEPHONE POLE. Slips past PGE cables. Opens the junction box. Hangs a small case over the door with an array of black boxes and alligator clips.

He bypasses the alarm circuits...then signals Henry.

EXT. REAR DOOR - NIGHT

Henry and Butch join Ray. Butch holds a 10 inch bit up to the dead bolt, turns her head and closes her eyes.

Henry nods to Ray who SLAMS the lock with a sledge hammer. The door POPS open.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MAIN FLOOR - NIGHT

The guards don't hear a thing above Tupac at 90db.

INT. WAREHOUSE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Henry, Butch and Ray enter, guns drawn. They move down the hall to the MAIN ROOM... inching forward until Henry has an angle on the guards.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Dee climbs down the pole and moves to the doorway. Dennis stays in the van with Lamar.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Henry, Butch and Ray slide along the cargo truck. They move in fast and hard--

BUTCH
Hands, yo!

Henry jams the shotgun against the lead guard's head.

HENRY
Gatts on the table.

LEAD GUARD
Y'all some dead, motherfuckers.

No warning, Henry slides the shotgun off the guard's chin and FIRES! The blast scorches his face, crushes his eardrum.

All guards quickly drop their guns and cell phones. Ray and Butch shove them to the floor, bind them with plastic wrist-strips.

HENRY
(on radio)
Secure.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NEAR VAN - NIGHT

Lamar puts on his mask and runs in. He passes Butch and Ray who are coming out. Dee starts unloading equipment.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Henry and Ray open the CARGO TRUCK hatch to reveal a steel safe inside, riveted against the front wall.

INT. CARGO CONTAINER - MINUTES LATER

Generator running. Drills laid out. Ray and Butch wear oxygen masks. Ray brightens the cab with flood lights.

Henry tapes a template with drill points to the safe. He starts DRILLING slots in the lock mechanism...

exposing cylinder wiring, magnetic tumblers and gates. The drill burns white and flames.

Ray extinguishes the flame... SPRAYS coolant on the safe. Butch swaps the spent drill for a new one and AIR-SPRAYS away debris. She rubs Aquafor lube around the surface of the hole.

Henry wipes his brow. Starts DRILLING again--

INT. CARGO CONTAINER - MINUTES LATER

Now silent. The safe has been prepped for surgery. Henry wears a magnifier. Ray holds a hi-beam flashlight as Henry manipulates the tumblers, lining up each groove.

Anticipation builds... until the last one falls into place. The metal fence falls into the channel created, unlocking the mechanism, CLICK.

No better moment. Pure joy. Henry grins at Ray then walks off past Lamar who rushes in and opens the door.

INSIDE THE SAFE --

Six large zip-lock freezer bags packed tight with 100-bill packets. Lamar stuffs them into his satchel. It's clear nobody else is touching the cash.

EXT. WAREHOUSE (PARKED VAN) - NIGHT

Dennis (the lookout) sits in the van.

HENRY (RADIO)
Coming out.

DENNIS
Roger that.

Dennis checks his watch, right on schedule. As he starts the engine CAMERA PULLS UP AND AROUND the building to reveal a--

POLICE CRUISER

A city cop making the rounds. He drives past the alcove where the drugged guards are stowed.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Henry and crew fall out, leaving the tools behind, walking fast but composed, all but Lamar who pulls off his mask and WHOOPS it up, pumping his fist in the air.

DEMARCUS

Chill, man!

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Henry, Ray and Butch move quickly to the van. Just then--

THE POLICE CRUISER rounds the corner 30 feet away. The cop sees masked thieves, flips on his SIREN and flashers.

PATROL COP (SPEAKER)

LAPD! Hands up--

Dee FIRES the shotgun, cripples the cruiser's engine block. The cop returns FIRE, hits Dee. Kevlar turns it into a hard punch that knocks him on his ass.

RAY

Dee!?

DEMARCUS

(coughing)

I'm good. Let's go, man!

The crew piles into the VAN. That's when Lamar realizes he has taken off his mask. The cop saw his face. Lamar opens fire and hits the cop in the shoulder.

HENRY

Get in the van--

LAMAR

He made me!

Lamar moves in for the kill. Henry draws his .9mm and SHOOTS him in the leg. Lamar buckles and spins to return fire -- and Butch KNOCKS him out with her rifle butt.

Henry checks the wounded cop.

HENRY

No bleeders. Can you call for an ambulance?

He hands him the police radio. The cop nods, grateful.

INT. MOVING VAN - NIGHT

Tense silence. A shell-shocked crew processes what just happened. Butch checks Lamar's leg.

BUTCH
This mope is bleeding out.

HENRY
From a leg shot?

BUTCH
I don't know, man. Lotta blood.

Henry whips off his belt, tosses it to Butch.

HENRY
Rope that shit off.

EXT. LOS ANGELES RIVER (RENDEZVOUS SPOT) - NIGHT

THE VAN pulls up to the parked cars. Lamar is now passed out. Ray is doing a fast count of the score.

RAY
I count five thirty-five.

DEMARCUS
Take half--

HENRY
Dorr put it at three-fifty on the low end. We bring Walsh any less and it raises a flag, puts us all at risk.

DEMARCUS
I just got fucking shot, man!

HENRY
We bank one-sixty. Leaves three-seventy-five. Anybody disagree?

Nods all around...Dee is last. Henry turns to Butch.

HENRY
Burn the van, dump the arsenal and run the skim back to the garage.
(to Ray)
We settle with Walsh.

DENNIS
(re: Lamar)
What about this bleeding cunt?

Henry looks at Lamar, passed out, tourniquet.

HENRY
Bring him. He's Walsh's problem.

INT. RAY'S CAR - NIGHT

Henry and Ray drive in silence. In the back, Lamar is coming around, MOANING.

EXT. GARAGE WAREHOUSE - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

The door rises. Ray pulls the CAR in. The door closes.

INT. GARAGE WAREHOUSE - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Dorr and six ARMED COPS walk alongside the car, shotguns aimed. Walsh watches from a safe distance. Dorr taps on the driver-side window.

DORR
Kill it. Step out.

Henry and Ray turns the car off and get out. Gunmen pat them down, take their guns. Dorr leans in the BACKSEAT, pulls the satchel from Lamar's grip, walks it over to Walsh who checks the haul.

WALSH
How much?

HENRY
No idea. We had other matters to tend to.

Henry gestures Lamar in the car...moaning, blood everywhere.

WALSH
What happened?

HENRY
Five-0 made the scene and mayhem ensued. It was under control except your man, who couldn't wait to take off his mask, got himself made and goes to war with the LAPD--

WALSH
So you shot Lamar?

Henry chooses his words carefully.

HENRY
You know what they do to cop-killers in this state? You drop a badge it's a redball homicide. The mayor gives a press conference, offers a reward, 20 detectives pulling OT. That is serious heat.

Walsh nods, convinced. He moves to the CAR and leans in, checking out a woozy Lamar.

LAMAR
Fucking convict *shot me--*

WALSH
I can see that, Lamar.

LAMAR
I don't feel so good. I'm leaking a shitload of blood.
(scared)
Terry, *I'm begging you*. Children's Mercy is six blocks--

Walsh nods, pats Lamar. He leans out and signals Dorr who FIRES into the open window. Henry and Ray react, stunned. Dorr pulls out the clip, tosses Henry's gun back to him.

DORR
See that? You just executed an LAPD detective.

Walsh puts an arm around Henry...Surveys the scene.

WALSH
Lamar needs to disappear.

EXT. INTERSTATE - PALM DESERT - NIGHT

Ray drives. Henry rides shotgun. Both are showing the strain of the night's events.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Ray turns onto a sand road that narrows until it dead-ends. He kills the engine. The breeze RUSTLES the brittlebush. A galaxy of stars overhead.

RAY

If I ever go deaf I'm moving to the
desert.

EXT. DEEP DESERT - NIGHT

All business. No talk. Henry and Ray pull Lamar's tarp-wrapped body from the trunk and carry it into the brush.

VARIOUS SHOTS:

- They pull shovels out of the trunk and start digging.
- Henry searches Lamar's pockets, takes his wallet and cell phone. They roll the body into the shallow grave.
- Ray grabs a hammer, climbs down into the fresh-dug grave and smashes Lamar's teeth.
- Henry wipes down the guns, tosses them in.
- Ray empties a jug of petrol into the grave. He lights a match and tosses it in. The flames engulf Lamar.
- Fire is out. Our guys wear masks, shovelling lye over the remains...then re-filling the hole by the light of the moon.

EXT. RAY'S CAR - NIGHT

It cruises down the interstate against a desert sky.

INT. RAY'S CAR - NIGHT

Tired and dirty, Henry and Ray ride in SILENCE for a long stretch. Finally:

HENRY

This is NOT the plan I had in mind
when I walked out of Pelican Bay.

RAY

...Hear that.

EXT. DARNELL'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A caravan of three Escalades speed onto the LOT and up to the entrance. Big Darnell gets out of the middle car and heads inside, moving fast for his heft.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Darnell enters flanked by his soldiers. He takes in the robbery aftermath: safe cleaned out, tools left behind.

His guards stand in line, scared. They have fucked up and Darnell is a scary dude. Not to mention, nobody knows who he's glaring at due to his wandering eye.

DARNELL

(shaking his head)

Not one of you worthless niggers
felt the need to take a bullet in
defense of the realm?

No answer.

DARNELL

I'm putting 50 G's on the street
for an ID on the bitches who ripped
my shit. Put the word out to
homeboys, traphounds, bent cops,
dope fiends, anybody with eyes and
ears. And y'all better be some top-
shelf motherfucking detectives
because your asses depend on it.

EXT. CAPRI HOTEL - NIGHT

Ray drops Henry off after a long night. In the car, Ray shakes his head, releases a weary laugh.

RAY

Goddamn beat cop.

HENRY

Bad luck.

Ray looks at Henry, smile fading.

RAY

How does it end, with Walsh?

HENRY

Walsh is a dog with a bone. He
won't give it up without a fight.

RAY

Then he's gotta go.

Silent agreement. Henry gets out, looks back through the window.

HENRY
Burn the car. And chop the score.

Ray nods, drives off.

EXT. CAPRI HOTEL - NIGHT

Alone Henry walks to the ENTRANCE, notices a black SUV down the block, engine on. Sensing a threat, he moves inside--

EXT. HOTEL LOBBY - SAME

It's eerily empty. No riffraff. Nobody at the front desk.

Henry closes the door and peeks back out through the glass. That's when two men rush him from behind and TASER him--

CUT TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. LINCOLN NAVIGATOR - NIGHT

Henry wakes up in the backseat flanked by MEN IN SUITS. The vehicle is circling an underground garage. No explanation.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

The suits hustle Henry onto a service ELEVATOR. They ride in silence up to the 20th floor.

INT. CORPORATE OFFICES - NIGHT

They walk Henry through an empty office with a downtown view ...and into a CONFERENCE ROOM --

CHERYL IVERSON (mid-30s), black female, stands at the window looking out. She signals Henry to take a chair...then sits across from him. Crosses her legs.

IVERSON
Questions?

Henry glances at the laptop in front of Iverson, trying to figure out what kind of jam he's in.

HENRY
You don't work for Wagstaff so you gotta be federal.

She slides her FBI badge on the table.

IVERSON
Cheryl Iverson.

HENRY
What do you want with me?

IVERSON
Tell me about tonight.

HENRY
Tonight?

She taps the space bar on her laptop.

ON SCREEN surveillance tape from the robbery shows a masked Henry shooting Lamar. He pulls off his mask a split-second before jumping in the van.

Iverson PAUSES. It's Henry's face, clear as day.

IVERSON
This was taken from a neighboring rooftop. AstroScope Night Vision, 135mm C-mount lens. Good quality.

Henry sits motionless, totally screwed.

IVERSON
We're on Walsh. He recruited you. That is some shitty luck.
(pause)
He's been on FBI radar for months. He runs a criminal network...Vice, Anti-Crime, Corrections.

She toggles to an ORG CHART of corrupt cops.

IVERSON
His people feed him intel on stash houses and drug scores from active investigations. He owns guards and parole boards from San Quentin to Chino. Recruits talent from the prison population.

Iverson gestures to Henry ("the talent").

HENRY
Why not take him down?

IVERSON

That's gonna happen. But first we want to build a RICO case and drain the swamp. I need someone inside.

Henry looks around... all eyes on him.

HENRY

You and Walsh are a lot alike.

IVERSON

I agree we can both get you locked-up for the rest of your life.

HENRY

And if I refuse?

IVERSON

We charge armed robbery, aggravated murder. You take the needle. Your crew goes down.

(pause)

And your lady friend? She's a dope fiend. She'll backslide and when she does I'll make sure she takes a bust. Your boy gets raised by his grandparents or worse, he goes into foster care. Nobody's gonna adopt a 10 year old colored boy.

Henry is trapped and he knows it. He points to the surveillance video.

HENRY

You can make this go away?

IVERSON

(closing the laptop)

Like it never happened.

HENRY

And my crew?

IVERSON

I'm only interested in Walsh.

Henry locks eyes with Iverson...and nods.

IVERSON

Good. We need a full statement on what happened tonight.

She slides a legal pad across the table. The gospel-country version of "Wings of a Dove" (Ferlin Husky) plays as we...

START MONTAGE:

EXT. AUTO GRAVEYARD - DAWN

Ray drives in, followed by Butch in a second car. He gets out, tosses his keys to the proprietor, SAL. Ray and Butch drive off in the second car.

INT. FBI CONFERENCE ROOM - DAWN

Iverson watches Henry sign his typed deposition.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Wagstaff sets up his TASK FORCE: Tech guys install phones. Cops unload boxes. Wagstaff pins old surveillance photos on a cork board: Ray, Dee, Butch, Dennis, even Verna.

Henry is at the top of the pyramid.

INT. RAY'S GARAGE - DAY

QUICK SHOTS show Dee then Butch then Dennis picking up their cuts of the score -- small change for such a virtuoso job.

EXT. INGLEWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Calvin walks his mail route, sweating, slightly dizzy. He sips a juice box and trudges on.

INT. LUTHERAN CHURCH - DAY

Verna speaks at an NA meeting, fighting back tears as she holds up a SOBRIETY CHIP and kisses it.

EXT. LUTHERAN CHURCH - DAY

Henry is waiting as the meeting lets out. Verna sees him and looks uneasy and a little scared. He hands her a cash envelope with "**Javan**" scribbled on it.

INT. VISIT ROOM - DAY

Supervised visit. Henry and Javan are more comfortable, having pizza, talking freely. Javan even cracks a smile.

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - DAY

Dee hands Bug a roll of cash... walks around a corner to where a second runner hands him a glassine bag of heroin.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

Dee hangs with two dope fiends, drug kit open. He ties off, fuels up, slips on headphones... and drifts off.

INT. ARCHIE'S PRISON CELL - DAY

Archie enters and finds a care-package on his bunk: snacks, cigarettes, magazines, new bible and letter from Henry. He sits down and starts reading the letter.

INT. DOWNTOWN LOFT - NIGHT

Butch lies naked in bed with the sexy blonde from the club. The two women, sweaty and sated, share a post-coital joint.

EXT. BRENTWOOD CONDO - NIGHT

Two-story \$1 million unit, all new. Henry is watching from his car across the street.

IN THE WINDOW, Verna, Javan and Elliot are having dinner. Elliot pours sparkling cider...and kisses Verna. She looks happy. Henry stoically spies this warm tableau.

EXT. SKID ROW AREA - NIGHT

Henry approaches a once grand shuttered HOTEL and turns down an alley where two GUARDS stand at a side entrance.

INSIDE THE HOTEL, a guard leads Henry down a staircase. The vibe is illicit, so it's surprising when he opens a ballroom door revealing a

MIDNIGHT CHURCH REVIVAL --

A PREACHER is sermonizing, backed piano and gospel singers. His congregation (homeless drunks, ex-convicts, dope fiends and wheelchair veterans) are PRAYING fervently and SHOUTING and CLAPPING.

Henry joins in as the doors close behind him.

FADE BLACK:

END MONTAGE

"Wings of a Dove" continues ON RADIO in the b.g.

EXT. PARKING LOT - RAIL YARDS - NIGHT

Henry sits alone in his car, overlooking the trains. Walsh pulls up in his truck. Henry gets out and walks over.

INT. WALSH'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Henry gets in. Walsh hands him a folder on Wagstaff.

WALSH

He's building a task force, 24/7 surveillance, title search, data mining, trap and trace--

HENRY

Based on what?

Walsh shrugs.

WALSH

None of it is evidentiary. It's a brass-sanctioned witch-hunt, you're top of the pyramid. Wagstaff has a hard-on for you.

(pause)

Call Dorr. He's onto something.

Henry nods, looks out the window.

HENRY

I need something from you.

WALSH

Is that right?

HENRY

Arrest files for my crew.

WALSH

Rat hunt. I can help but you gotta earn it.

HENRY

When are we square?

WALSH

You're a rabbit in a trap. You only hurt yourself by struggling.

Walsh starts the engine. Henry gets out of the truck.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME

Henry walks back to his car, whispers:

HENRY
You get all that?

EXT. ACROSS THE LOT - NIGHT

A rusty VAN is parked, camper top and curtains. Closer look reveals a fiber optic periscope-lens peeking out of the top.

INT. FBI VAN - NIGHT

TWO AGENTS are running audio and video equipment. Cheryl Iverson sits behind them, watching. On GRAINY VIDEO--

the camera tracks Henry back to his car as Walsh drives off. Henry gets in his car and pulls out of the lot. His vehicle gets smaller and smaller...until it disappears.

FADE OUT.

Blue Swede's "Hooked on a Feeling" plays over credits.

END OF PILOT