

CandyCellers

By

Benin Trotter

Benin Trotter
40 Sloganeer Trl.
Palm Coast, FL. 32164
(386) 290-9089
bentrotter@live.com

EXT. WOMEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - SALEM, OREGON - NIGHT
(SUMMER 1978).

Douglas firs dominate a moist daisy-chain of illumination encircling barbed security fences and rain-streaked barracks.

INT. GUARD STATION CHECKPOINT - NIGHT.

HARRIET HOBSON (HARRIE) (28) Black woman with short nappy twists, oscillates like a boxer, always ready for a beat-down, weight shifting from foot to foot. BACK GUARD stands behind her breath-close. BIZZZ! The DOOR CLAPS OPEN.

LOG DESK

BRENDA (30) a pudgy guard with big hair and bigger smile. She's an original Christian that can't find something bad to say.

Brenda lifts a heavy plastic bag to the counter.

BRENDA
Wanna check it?

Harrie hoists the bag and shoulders it. Brenda shoots a card across the desk.

INSERT - CARD

"BRENDA'S PARALEGAL SERVICE".

Has phone number. Self typed.

BACK TO SCENE

Harrie flips the card in her hand.

HARRIE
You a lawyer?

BACK GUARD SNORTS. Always got his hand on his crotch. You can bet he whacks off to his female prisoner fantasies and for sure his fat ass ain't never missed a meal.

Back Guard flourishes his arm like an adios. Harrie squeezes by his fat ass.

EXT. CORRECTION FACILITY - NIGHT

Out front, A primed WHITE FORD VAN IDLES, it's faint letters "L.O.G.I.C" (Lord Our God in Christ) near rubbed away.

The FACILITY GATE HISSES and Harrie strolls out.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

PASSA (60s), unflappable from vaseline curls to spit-polished shoes. Naps in a suit. Be sharp at the Consummation.

SISTA SHAY

Can she walk any slower?

That's Sista Shay. Passa's right hand--if you don't count Brotha Luke. I guess that makes her the left. Sista Shay's checking her watch for the thousandth times. She's poppin' LifeSavers and hittin' them hard.

PASSA

You got chittlin's burnin'? Be still or you gonna choke on that candy.

Sista Shay settles back in her seat as Harrie approaches her side of the van. Sista Shay rolls down the window.

SISTA SHAY

Get in the back!

Harrie slides the side door. The hold is jammed with boxes.

PASSA

Mind the candy.

Harrie shoves her bag in. Manuevers herself in and slams the door. Harrie BANGS the CARGO CAGE that separates cab and driver.

HARRIE

Tryin' to get comftable.

Passa shakes his head, CRANKS and the van jerks forward. Sista Shay rolls her eyes and goes to town pucker-sucking her LifeSaver.

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - NIGHT (I-5)

VAN CLAMBERS onto a desolate ribbon of I-5.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Harrie peers through the mesh.

HARRIE
We taken I-5?

VAN RATTLES on. Lights streak by in silence. As the van takes a curve, a box tips spinning bars across the metal floor.

HARRIE
Want me to get that?

Their nappy heads don't budge. Guess nobody's talking. Harrie gathers a bar of chocolate.

HARRIE
World's Finest? That's some nasty
shit!

Passa shoots her a look. We're still in a church van.

HARRIE
Stuff. Nasty stuff.

Harrie stuffs the box and folds the lid down. Harrie crawls to the cop cage.

HARRIE
Where we goin'?

PASSA
Church.

HARRIE
Church?

PASSA
Yeah. Church. That's where you
gonna sleep.

HARRIE
I ain't sleepin' in no church.

PASSA
No church folks want you in they
house.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

I don't care. Take me to ma house
on Grand. Don't take me to no damn
church.

Sista Shay gulps. Had enough. Time for a beat-down.

SISTA SHAY

Grand?! You must be nuts--

PASSA

Sista!

Shay turns back around. Far as she can. Pouting.

PASSA

Harrie, now you know you can't go
to Grand. You know that. Besides,
Big Dee throwed yo stuff out.

HARRIE

Throwed out? He caint...how y'all
gonna let him throw my stuff out?!

PASSA

We had nuthin' to do with it. Dee
got a court order.

Harrie slumps back. Passa the Diffuser. Seminary smooth.

HARRIE

I wanna see P'nut.

Not happening.

PASSA

P'nut? We'll see. You still gotta
that hearing before you see him.

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Van pulls in to an empty parking lot.

INT. VESTIBULE - NIGHT

A night-light faintly illuminates the church's forecourt:
The vestibule leads up to the nursery or down to the
basement.

Passa leads a sack-burdened Harrie and Sista Shay to the
landing at the foot of the nursery stairs.

(CONTINUED)

PASSA
Sista go down in the basement to
the main panel and flip on the
lights.

Sista Shay descends the basement stairs.

PASSA
Whatchu smilin' at?

HARRIE
Nuthin'.

Harrie's got that shit eatin' grin.

PASSA
What?

HARRIE
This is where you use ta squeeze my
titties. Member?

Passa turns and starts up the stairs. Stops.

PASSA
God wiped away ma sins and
iniquities a long time ago.

He continues his climb as heavenly incandescence fills the
chamber.

INT. NURSERY - NIGHT

Rows of wooden cages line the back wall--beds for little
children. Cage locks. Keep them from falling out. Opposite
is a window overlooking the sanctuary. Nursery ceiling
corners boast speakers blaring God's word.

Passa's closing the cage doors, checking the locks and
wooden bars. Wouldn't want a baby to escape. Harrie goes to
the large window.

HARRIE'S POV

Below BROTHA LUKE (60s) in hip-high rubber boots scoots
between the pews. Behind the chancel the BAPTISMAL POOL
drains. A mural of Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist
graces the pool wall.

Brotha Luke steps down into receding Bethesda. He's like Big
Al, Disney's Country Bear, except with no fur, slouch hat or
"gee-tar".

BACK TO SCENE

PASSA
You'll stay here.

HARRIE
Where the kids gonna sleep?

Passa walks to the far corner of the nursery. Opens a small door.

PASSA
Not here. In here...

ATTIC

Harrie ducks in through the small door. Not dusted since Jesus. Single bulb dangles from the ceiling. Wafer thin mattress on the floor. Reeks of used condoms.

Passa reaches past Harrie and yanks the bulb chain. Let there be...

Sista Shay clomps up behind Harrie. Shay's winded from the stairs.

SISTA SHAY
Passa?

Shay says "Passa" like she says "Jesus", soft and syrupy. She approves of Harrie in the attic. Passa backs out of the closet-size room.

NURSERY

PASSA
We comin', Sista. Weeza comin'.
(to Harrie)
Switch off the light and come downstairs.

Passa and Sista Shay head stair-ward as Harrie disappears into the attic.

INT. PASSA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

(CONTINUED)

Passa's office is full of demoded mahogany furniture arranged right from the pages of Montgomery Ward. Harrie sits on a plastic-covered couch opposite Passa's desk. A large vase of long-stemmed roses dominate the desk. And stems and roses can't hide the fact that Passa has the face of a pimp.

Sista Shay stands just inside the door.

PASSA
Luke done yet?

SISTA SHAY
Almost.

PASSA
Now...Harrie...we ain't gonna have
what we had last time.

Rhetorical. Give the "who me" face.

HARRIE
No suh, we ain't.

PASSA
Anything. Any-thing. You out. You
hear me, ma'am?

Ending with "ma'am" must be serious.

HARRIE
Yessuh. I mean nosuh.

PASSA
Good.

Passa thrusts back. Opens a drawer. Shoves a piece of paper across the desk.

PASSA
Sign this.

Harrie Skims. Signs. Pokes it back across the desk.

Brotha Luke's big head droops in.

BROTHA LUKE
I'm done.

Passa raises a "wait till I'm finished" hand. Brotha Luke sidles up next to Sista Shay.

Passa pulls out a second sheet of paper.

PASSA

Here's yo chores. Get 'em done early. Always clean the van first so we can load it with candy.

HARRIE

Candy?

PASSA

Shower at the "Y".

Motions to Harrie's cut-offs.

PASSA

Not gonna wear those in the Lord's house. Shay got womens clothes in the basement trunk.

Harrie peels her thighs from the plastic couch. Time to go.

PASSA

I'm not done.

She re-peels herself onto the couch.

PASSA

Here's a map. Here's a Tri-Met schedule and a bus pass for August. Here's da Classifieds.

Passa slow-folds the newspaper like it contains the Nixon tapes or something. He slides it across the table.

Harrie snatches it up and mashes it into her purse. Rises from the couch a second time.

SISTA SHAY

(clears throat)

Huh-hmmmm.

PASSA

(to Harrie)

Where you goin'?

HARRIE

Thought we was thru.

PASSA

Nope.

Sista Shay steps forward and takes Harrie by the arm and turns Harrie so Brotha Luke can take the other arm.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

Where we goin'? Ma stuffs still in
the van.

SANCTUARY

Main congregation room. Sista Shay and Brother Luke drag Harrie into an empty congregation room, to the front row, and forces her to her knees.

SISTA SHAY

Close yo eyes and say "Jesus".

Harrie closes her eyes.

HARRIE

Jesus.

SISTA SHAY

Say Jezus! Say Jezus! Jeezus!

HARRIE

Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.

SISTA SHAY

Faster. Jezus-Jezus-Jezus! Oh
Halleluyah! Say the name...Jezus!

HARRIE

JesusJesusJesusJesus...

SISTA SHAY

C'mon. Geegeeegeegee--Alleluia!
C'mon...Praise Him...

HARRIE

Geegeeegeegeegee...

Unknown tongues echo throughout the sanctuary.

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

Harrie pillows her black plastic bag as she dozes on the thin mattress.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

She fumbles for the bulb chain in the dark. She yanks. The LIGHT BUZZES and FLICKERS to life.

She picks up her ALARM CLOCK and shakes it. RATTLES. TICKS. A few more TICKS. Stops.

Harrie rolls over. She pats around with her hand. Here it is. Clothing. She dons a hand-me-down dress, socks, etc....

EXT. STREET - BUS STOP - DAY

Harrie's on the street, a fashion eye sore.

A dirty, orange and silver TRI-MET bus rumbles to her stop but it's building speed not slowing down.

Harrie panic-flaps the bus.

It passes.

Harrie runs, short-cutting the backyards.

EXT. BLIND OLD BLACK MAN'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

A dirty, black, yelping MOP chases her, nipping at her heels.

HARRIE

Get! Get!

Harrie spins. Stutter-steps and kick-fakes. The little beast cowers but soon resumes pursuit.

A BLIND OLD BLACK MAN sits on his back porch perch.

BLIND OLD BLACK MAN

Malcum! Get yo ass back over here!

Blind Old Black Man rises. Slaps his thigh.

BLIND OLD BLACK MAN

Malcum! Come here! I tole you you only bite white peeples!

Malcum stops. Resumes good measured yelping but fails pursuit.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
Hey, old fuck, I'm white!

Blind Old Black Man eases into his porch chair.

BLIND OLD BLACK MAN
You sound Black!

EXT. STREET - SECOND BUS STOP - DAY

Harrie clears Blind Old Black Man's back yard. Gulps air.

Tri-Met turns the corner.

Now Harrie waives like she's on a deserted island. Bus grunts, wheezes and decompresses. It's doors flap open.

INT. BUS - DAY

Harrie steps up like a rescue survivor.

HARRIE
Thank ya, Jesus.

BUS DRIVER is not amused. Harrie plops down, frees a pack of cigarettes from her purse.

BUS DRIVER
Caint smoke on the bus!

EXT. STREET - SECOND BUS STOP - DAY

Bus rumbles from the stop. But Brotha Luke sits in a tinted Olds Delta 88 trailing Tri-Met from a half block away.

EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Harrie takes a few short puffs of her cigarette before crushing it.

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - DAY

Office is full of bitches looking better than on disco night. Harrie smooths her hand-me-down dress with her hand. She squeezes into a seat next to two ESSENCE WANNABES.

Essence Wannabes look her up and down.

Hand-me-down dress seems more wrinkled than before. Harrie stands and leaves.

OUTSIDE

PORTLANDERS hustle along the sidewalk sniffing and fearing potential rain. Harrie slouches along migrating mass fighting upstream. Harrie stops at an insurance office window.

INSERT - WINDOW SIGN

"HELP WANTED" Sheldon's Insurance.

BACK TO SCENE

Harrie swings the door open.

EXT. SHELDON'S INSURANCE OFFICE - ACROSS THE STREET - DAY

The Delta 88 parks across the street.

INT. SHELDON'S INSURANCE OFFICE - DAY

Harrie fills out an application. She's squirming.

INSERT - APPLICATION FORM

"HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A FELONY"

Harrie checks "NO".

EXT. SHELDON'S INSURANCE OFFICE - PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Delta 88 eases from it's space and parks in front of a phone booth. Brotha Luke climbs out of the car and into the...

PHONE BOOTH

Brother Luke flips through the YELLOW PAGE "S's" till he finds "Sheldon's Insurance". Luke drops a dime.

INT. OLDS DELTA 88 - MINUTES LATER

From his car, Brotha Luke watches the insurance office door.

EXT. SHELDON'S INSURANCE OFFICE - DAY

MR. SHELDON, tugs Harrie out the office. He has her by the arm. Squabbling must've started inside because it's spilling outside. Sheldon has the help wanted sign in his hand.

MR. SHELDON
The position has been filled!

HARRIE
I didn't lie on my application!

MR. SHELDON
Don't matter! Don't matter! The
position has been filled!

HARRIE
You're the fuckin' liar!

MR. SHELDON
I'm callin' the cops! Get the fuck
off my property!

HARRIE
You don't own the sidewalk.

Mr. Sheldon turns and goes inside. Harrie rushes off.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Harrie's cools-down as she walks a few blocks from Sheldon's. She unfolds the newspaper and bus schedule from Passa. Scans. Finally, she runs her finger along bus route.

Harrie checks the time and gallops across the street to another stop.

INT. RESTAURANT - COFFEE SHOP (LLOYD'S CENTER)- DAY

Harrie stirs a swirl of blackness in her coffee cup as she reads restaurant application.

INSERT - APPLICATION

"Have you ever been convicted of a felony?"

Checks "Yes".

"If 'Yes' then 'Why' "

BACK TO SCENE

Harrie presses her stubby pencil to the page.

INT. PASSA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Passa sits behind his desk busying himself with paperwork.
Harrie pops her head in.

PASSA
How'd it go?

HARRIE
Gotta job!

This is news. Passa looks up.

PASSA
Good. Where at?

HARRIE
Union. Bob's. Restaurant near Lloyd
Center.

PASSA
Lloyd Center? Yeah? Bob's, huh?
Think I know it. Burgers?

HARRIE
Don't know. Found it by accident--

Brotha Luke shoots in the door like Passa's prize roses have
been stolen or something. Luke sees Harrie. Surprise. When
the air comes back in he room. Passa turns to Brotha Luke.

PASSA
What?

Brother Luke doesn't want to talk with Harrie there.

PASSA
Yesss?

Brotha Luke shakes like a whippin's coming.

(CONTINUED)

BROTHER LUKE
I...I...got something for Miss
Harrie.

Brother Luke hands Harrie Brenda's crumpled business card.

HARRIE
Sheet! Been lookin' all over for
this! Where'd you find it?

Both men look like Jesus just showed up.

Harrie slaps her hand to her mouth.

Passa stretches back in his chair. When Passa leans forward
Brotha Luke occassions to tip out.

HARRIE
Passa. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.
(beat)
Passa, can I use yo phone? It's
important.

Passa pushes the phone forward. Harrie lifts the receiver...
dials. Hangs up. Picks up. Redials. Repeats.

PASSA
Dial nine first.

HARRIE
Passa. Didn't mean to cuss in yo
presence. In the Lord's house.
(beat)
Them's some nice flowers.
(into phone)
Hello? Hey, Brenda. Harrie. Yeah,
girl...just found yo card...

Passa lifts the vase and places it on the sill.

PASSA'S POV

Brotha Luke ducks Passa's gaze by busying himself hurling
candy boxes from the new white church van to his Delta 88.

BACK TO SCENE

DIAL TONE. Passa hangs up the receiver and places the phone
back on his desk. Harrie has disappeared during his revery.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Brotha Luke shoves the last box into the backseat. Won't fit. Stuffs it into the front passenger seat. He saunters around and slams the trunk shut. Goes to the van and slips a key under the floor mat.

Harrie leans against the van. By the way Brotha Luke jumps...the Ba-Jesus's been scared out of him.

BROTHA LUKE
How long you been standin' there?

HARRIE
Can you give me a lift?

BROTHER LUKE
Lift?

HARRIE
Yeah. Just to Killingsworth.

BROTHA LUKE
Killingsworth?

HARRIE
Yeah.

Brotha Luke strolls over to the 88. Harrie walks over to the passenger side. Brother Luke reaches over and locks the door.

BROTHA LUKE
Nuh-uhn. Ain't got 'nuff room.

HARRIE
Can't you move some of these boxes?

BROTHA LUKE
Don't you got a bus pass?

Brother Luke adjusts his seat belt, starts the motor and pushes off.

EXT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Harrie KNOCKS then walks to the edge of the porch. DOOR CREAKS.

HARRIE
Brenda here?

(CONTINUED)

It's TED'S eyes peeking out. The rest of him we can't see, if we could we'd see his glorious Dad Bod, flex-ready against this intruder. He can tell it's one of Brenda's strays. But he's not the type to confront Harrie--we won't say nothing--he's the strong silent type--he'll bitch when Harrie leaves.

TED
Brenda! For you!

INT. BRENDA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ted voices his displeasure by staging a stand-in next to the kitchen. Brenda dumps coffee grounds into a trash can. Harrie sits at a alcove table. Harrie glances at Ted.

HARRIE
(to Brenda)
He ok?

Brenda hands Harrie a steaming cup. A saucer to go under.

BRENDA
Sugar?

Harrie shakes her head.

BRENDA
Where you stayin'?

HARRIE
Lord Our God's...

BRENDA
The church?! Gotta job?

HARRIE
Uh-huh.

BRENDA
Patterson'll like that you have a job.

HARRIE
Patterson?

BRENDA
Judge Patterson.

Harrie puts down her cup.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

We gonna get P'nut, right?

BRENDA

Doin' a lot a-readin' up on
custody. Pretty good.

HARRIE

Did I show you his picture? He was
so tiny then...in Mexico?

Harrie snaps open a coin purse, pulls out a stained square.

BRENDA

He's cute. Wha? You're cute too!

Harrie slides her hand over half the picture.

HARRIE

Don't look at me. I'm big as a
house.

BRENDA

Girl, you petite! Look at me!

(beat)

We may need an attorney. Patterson
don't like women attorneys.

Ted's inside the kitchen doorway with reinforcements: their
daughter SIERRA, four-ish, a Ted miniature with curls and
marshmallow shyness.

Ted clears his throat.

BRENDA

Gettin' late, pumkin?

The marshmallow politely nods. She's on Daddy's side.

INT./EXT. BRENDA'S PORCH - NIGHT

Harrie back steps out the door.

BRENDA

It's only a hearing. We got plenty
of time.

(whispers)

And if we need a attorney...we'll
get a attorney.

Brenda closes the door. Inside Ted's voice rises. Brenda
shushes.

Porch light extinguishes.

INT. CHURCH ATTIC - DAY

Choking dust settles into the uneasy quiet. The attic is freezing. Harrie's awake but she's still her cot. She reaches up and jerks the chain. Nothing. Power outage.

Harrie shoots up. Grabs a handful of clothes. Fumbles. Wraps a robe about her and bolts down stairs.

VESTIBULE

Harrie props the church entrance door, morning light washes over the mounted grandfather clock and across the offertory table. Harrie makes out time.

Harrie rummages brochures and tithing envelopes from the table. Too dim to read. Grabs a stack of flyers and brochures and steps to the door light. One flyer says YMCA.

INSERT - FLYER

Harrie reads the "YMCA" hours.

BACK TO SCENE

Harrie hustles into the sanctuary.

SANCTUARY

She rushes down the center aisle past the altar to Passa's office. RAPS.

HARRIE

Passa!

Nothing. Harrie returns to the front pew plops down

HARRIE

What you gonna do, Harrie? You need this job.

Light filters through variegated stain-glassed tableaus.

HARRIE

Lord, why you goin' do this?

HARRIE POV

Sparkling water reflections dance like a silver net on the mural John baptizing Jesus. Above the holy pair, a dove descends on a radiated halo above Jesus's outstretched arms.

BACK TO SCENE

Harrie jumps up and runs to the baptismal pool.

INT. BAPTISMAL POOL - DAY

Harrie grabs a towel and dons a rubber cap before stepping down the cool, clean fiberglass pool. She grabs the rail and disrobes, takes the wedge of soap from the robe pocket and submerges her nakedness into the chilling water.

She foams a nice lather, until--a miracle happens--a light from heaven appears from the ceiling lamps.

VOICE (O.S.)

Power's on! Tell the pastor, that
the power is back on!

The voice comes from outside the church.

Harrie swaddles her clothes and tips out of the pool.

SANCTUARY

Harrie snatches up her clothes from the pew and scampers down the aisle and out the sanctuary entry...

...just ahead of Passa and GROUNDSMEN coming in by another way.

Only Passa notices suds on the carpet. And a track of spongy footprints!

INT. BOB'S RESTAURANT/KITCHEN - DAY

Busy. Morning feels like forever. COIFED ZOMBIES balance trays and trance along to DISH CLANGING, WHITE NOISE AND DISCO JAMS.

SWEATY BOSS DIRTY APRON weaves Harrie through the greasy spoon maze into a dark kitchen corner.

(CONTINUED)

SWEATY BOSS DIRTY APRON
I try to be fair to all you girls,
see? Some girls don't feel that
way, see?

HARRIE (V.O.)
Here we go. I swear I'll drop this
muthafucka he lay a hand on me.

SWEATY BOSS DIRTY APRON
I pick the best girls, see? Cream
of the crop, see?

HARRIE (V.O.)
Bet you do. But, I ain't gone suck
no dick to keep this damn job.

Sweaty Boss Dirty Apron tugs a folded piece of paper out of
his dirty apron. It's not favors he wants.

It's her employment application.

EXT. CHURCH/BACK STAIRS - DAY

Harrie hunches like she's been kicked.

Passa walks up the stairs.

PASSA
Thought you was at work.

Harrie peers up. Holds up a check.

PASSA
What it's been? A week?

Harrie nods. Passa sits beside her. He takes the check.

PASSA
Thirty eight and eighty three
cents?

HARRIE
Ah prayed, Passa. Ah, prayed.

PASSA
Yo license still suspended?

Nods.

(CONTINUED)

PASSA

How close is the trial...I means
hearing?

HARRIE

Tomorraah. Can you come?

PASSA

If you want.

She rests her head on his shoulder. His arm comes around
her...the comforter.

INT. MULTNOMAH COUNTY COURTHOUSE/THIRD FLOOR ROOM - DAY

Harrie and Brenda sit quietly at a small table with Passa
seated behind them. JUDGE PATTERSON was there before they
arrived. It's judgment day. It's his house and he's god in a
black robe. Non-descript BAILIFF blurs the fore bench area.

BIG DEE's on the other side: nineteen at Tet, twenty-nine
now, Camo jacket that says 'Nam without saying 'Nam and dark
shades covering a fuck-with-me-if-you-want non-expression.
Dee's got this PUPPY SCARED ATTORNEY next to him who'll bark
when he tells him to bark.

Patterson scours Brenda's petition.

JUDGE PATTERSON

What the hell is this?

Rhetorical. Don't answer.

JUDGE PATTERSON

Where do you live? You!

Harrie turns around. Turns back.

JUDGE PATTERSON

You! I can only be talking to one
Miss Hobson! Where do you live!

HARRIE

The church.

The fuse is lit.

JUDGE PATTERSON

The church?!

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
Yessuh. For right now.

Three too many words to yessuh. Patterson searches the ceiling for divine aid. Bailiff grins.

JUDGE PATTERSON
Guess the kids'll be early for
Sunday School?

HARRIE
For prayer meetings and revivals.

God's judge is the only one allowed to make funnies.

Big Dee scoffs.

Patterson eyes Harrie then slow-turns to face Big Dee.
Patterson can fight two smartasses at a time. No problemo.

JUDGE PATTERSON
(to Big Dee's puppy)
Have your client remove his
sunglasses...this ain't a juke
joint, disco or race track.

The puppy shivers. It's a Patterson not today day. Big Dee
removes his shades.

Patterson turns back to fight the first smartypants.

JUDGE PATTERSON
Employment history Miss Hobson?

BRENDA
Sir, she's working at...

JUDGE PATTERSON
Are you employed Miss Hobson?

Patterson leans forward like he's gonna bite.

JUDGE PATTERSON
Quit twisting your hair like a
pickaninny! Do you have a job?

HARRIE
I--

PASSA
Your honor, if I may?

JUDGE PATTERSON
Who are you!

PASSA
Miss Hobson's pastor, your honor.

Good, an acolyte.

JUDGE PATTERSON
Yes, reverend?

PASSA
Miss Hobson works for me at the church. She's driving our church van...helping needy children sell candy over the summer...It's temporary but it pays her room and board.

Patterson leans back like King Solomon weighing cutting the Harlot's baby in half.

JUDGE PATTERSON
Stand, Miss Hobson. Stand, Miss McKenna.

BRENDA
McKinney.

JUDGE PATTERSON
Mic-kin-eee...stand!

He lifts the papers, leans forward and lets them drop to the floor. He picks up the gavel and screw-tightens the head.

JUDGE PATTERSON
A six year old could've prepared a better petition. Restraining order upheld.

He RAPS the GAVEL. "Patterson's Period" to the proceedings.

JUDGE PATTERSON
As for the custody? Get a real lawyer. What's the custody docket?

PUPPY SCARED ATTORNEY
Two weeks, your honor.

JUDGE PATTERSON
Two weeks.

BAILIFF

All rise!

Everyone pops to attention!

INT. BIG DEE'S HOUSE - DAY

This is what victory looks like, Big Dee swaggering in the front door.

Parks his shades on his elk head mount above the closet door. Victory struts into the living room.

LIVING ROOM

Big Dee's Little Africa: Begira tufted faux tiger rug flanked by a large porcelain Indian elephant stool (which probably should be a plant-holder outdoors, but you can't tell Dee nothin').

Big Dee plops down on the couch. Nevermind the description of the couch, all he cares about is the Beretta pistol underneath the couch at arm's length!.

BIG DEE

P'nut!

TINEY stands in the doorway. He's Dee's other son, thirteen, footballer, nose tackle, but coach parks him off the line of scrimmage, or as big as his watermelon head is, Tiney'll be off-sides every fucking time.

BIG DEE

I called P'nut!

Tiney doesn't like being yelled at. Tiney's always quiet when somethings wrong. He's big but he's sorry.

BIG DEE

P'nut with those Gooks, again? That hooch-girl?

Tiney shrugs.

BIG DEE

I'm holdin' you responsible, hear me?

Tiney responds to Big Dee by not responding. By being invisible.

(CONTINUED)

Big Dee jumps up from the couch. It's a did-you-hear-me-jumps. Tiney crumples.

That's all Dee wanted to see: cowering.

Tiney leans on the door jamb, making way for the passing king, Big Dee.

Outside we hear the ENGINE ROAR and the SQUEAL of Big Dee's TIRES. Tiney lets the doppler waves recede through him before he relaxes a muscle.

EXT. OPEN FLEA MARKET - DAY

P'NUT (7) with pinchable cheeks and a weedy exuberance (found in those passing the second grade), tags-along with TAN, a Vietnamese matron in her fifties, a squat dynamo flechetting through the market like a terrier hunting rats.

EASTER LILIES

Found it. Tan grabs and bunch of Easter lilies by the throat, yanks them out of a bucket and vigorously shakes them.

Tan's sidekick (P'nut) nods approval.

INT. TAN'S DATSUN - DAY

P'nut cradles the Easter lilies to Tan's Datsun. Tan's son and daughter horse around in the back seat.

KHANH (12) school kids call him Bruce Lee's little brother, more from his strut than his being Chinese.

DAI, Khanh's thirteen year old sister, is taking advantage her summer growth spurt by whooping Khanh's ass.

Tan gets in and slaps both their heads and starts the car.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Today feels like summer just caught up to Portland.

Harrie watches Brotha Luke again heave boxes the 88 Olds into the old L.O.G.I.C. van.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

Must sell a lot of candy.

Brotha Luke opens the boxes and counts. Got his method. Down to a science. An abacus of World's Finest chocolate bars, chocolate-covered turtles, Reeses, M&Ms, everything.

Six or seven afro'd KNUCKLEHEADS, bell-bottomed dropouts, have abandoned by their parents at Passa's church doorstep. It'll be a candy selling rest of the summer.

Passa strolls past the victims. His shoes boot camp polished as are his nails.

Passa jangles some keys above Harrie's head.

Harrie snatches the keys and horses like she's driving. Brotha Luke quits abacus-ing.

She's pretending to drive by turning the wheel and falling out of the seat. Knuckleheads are all over themselves laughing. Harrie's always been a clown!

BROTHA LUKE

You outta you mind? You ain't drivin'!

HARRIE

I'm Brotha Luke! Watch! Whoa! Whoa!

More laughter.

BROTHA LUKE

Get outta the driver's seat!

PASSA

No. Let her.

BROTHA LUKE

Drive?

PASSA

Yeah. Trial.

Brotha Luke shrugs and gets into the passenger seat. He unfolds a map. Felt-mark ribbons of yellow, blue and red high light the map seller zones.

BROTHA LUKE

You stay in the yella and you fine.
You go past the yella and you in
the other fellas zone...

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

Uh-huh.

BROTHA LUKE

Uh-huh? Drivers complain when
somebody gets in they zone.

Brotha Luke tears a sheet of paper from his pad.

HARRIE

Who dis?

BROTHA LUKE

Addresses where you drop these kids
off when you done.

PASSA

Drop them off before dark.

HARRIE

Does da brotha need to come, Passa?

Country bear was planning on chaperoning.

PASSA

He don't have to.

HARRIE

Good. C'mon, knuckleheads!

Knuckleheads pile in the back and sidle up to their candy
boxes.

HARRIE

Who ridin' shotgun?

KNUCKLEHEADS

Nobody. We good.

HARRIE

Uh-huh. Bet yo mommas tole you I
was a pariah.

Knucklehead are silent. Whatever pariah
means...Knuckleheads' mommas told them not to associate with
it. So, yeah, Harrie's a pariah.

INT. VAN - MOVING - DAY

Splotches of rain. Steam bubbles up from the mottled strip of highway. SMART KNUCKLEHEAD is paying attention to street signs and landmarks.

SMART KNUCKLEHEAD
This ain't the way. Gresham's that way.

HARRIE
This is a short cut through
Overlook. Ainsworth. Greeley.

Wails erupt. But the Knuckleheads know that ain't nobody buying there.

SMART KNUCKLEHEAD
Ain't nobuddy buyin' there!

HARRIE
Where they buyin', smart butt?

KNUCKLEHEAD #2
Eliot.

HARRIE
Eliot? That's Skidmore. Too far--

KNUCKLEHEADS
C'mon!

Harrie slams to a halt. Knuckleheads skid forward.

HARRIE
This best not get out. And all
y'all niggas need to bust butt
selling candy...

KNUCKLEHEADS
Yeah! Yay! We will!

EXT. STREET - SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

There are two sides to this neighborhood--the rich in stately houses behind disiduous trees like hen coops--and the other side.

INT. VAN - DAY

Harrie parks across from the Sherwin Williams paint shop.

HARRIE

Get out.

Not a Knucklehead stirs.

HARRIE

Out.

Finally, Knucklehead #1 slides the door open and tows his candy box out. Other Knuckleheads follow suit till the last one files out.

HARRIE

Last one close the door!

Not one Knucklehead closes the door.

OUTSIDE VAN

Harrie slams the door shut. She stops...

PARKING LOT

There's a boy (P'NUT) lying in the parking lot.

INT. VAN - DAY

Harrie jumps in the van--fires the igniiton.

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

Harry rolls through the lot...but, there's no one.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Knucklesheads crowd Passa as he counts candy boxes, bars, etc. and cashes-out each seller. Sista Shay forces the Knuckleheads to form a post-pay queue.

PASSA

Do better tomorrow. Don't eat yo profits and make mo money.

(CONTINUED)

KNUCKLEHEADS

Yessuh.

They'll eat their profits.

Harrie's turn. Passa peels bills from his wad. Hands it to Harrie.

PASSA

Wait.

Snatches the bills back and hands Harrie a check.

PASSA

Checks a record. For court.

HARRIE

Eight dollars? Jesus!

PASSA

Custody hearing in two weeks. You wanna find another job? What I thought.

Harrie climbs into the van.

PASSA

Where you goin'?

HARRIE

Gettin' the rest of the boxes.

PASSA

Let the Brotha Luke take care of that. Already took his other job.

Harrie climbs out. Passa scrunches-up his nose. Passa turns to Sista Shay. They look at Harrie.

HARRIE

Wha?

SISTA SHAY

You need to shower.

Harrie slams the van door.

INT. YMCA - DAY

Harrie showers behind the plastic curtain.

INT. VAN - DAY

Harrie stakes-out across from Sherwin Williams.

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

Khanh and two VIETNAMESE TUFFS punish a wrinkled soccer ball across the lot. No P'nut in sight.

Harrie drives off.

INT. VIETNAMESE GROCERY STORE - DAY

VIETNAMESE CLERK drops seven dollars and coins on the counter.

HARRIE
This ain't eight dollars.

VIETNAMESE CLERK
Service fee.

Harrie shakes her head and scoops up her divvies.

EXT. FRED MEYER SUPERSTORE - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

Our familiar white van is thrown between two parking spaces.

INT. FRED MEYER SUPERSTORE - DAY

Harrie strolls down the aisles. Finds and pulls Dark and Lovely hair relaxer from the shelf.

INT./EXT. FRED MEYER SUPERSTORE - DAY

Droplets patter on the news paper Harrie holds over her head as she runs to the van.

INT. VAN - MOVING - DAY

Harrie passes P'nut. He's walking in the opposite direction. Harrie goes around the block. waits. P'nut trudges up. Harrie rolls down the window.

HARRIE
Wanna ride?

P'NUT
No ma'am.

He continues walking. Harrie fires up the van and pursues. Comes alongside.

HARRIE
You soaked, boy! Get in here!

P'nut stops. Harrie slams on the brakes. Her Fred Meyer bags cascades to the floor. HORNS BLARE from backed-up TRAFFIC. Harrie pushes the passenger door open.

P'nut eyes the mounting traffic behind the van. Climbs in.

HARRIE
You, don't have enough sense to
come in outta the rain, do you?

Harrie checks traffic and pulls away from the curb.

HARRIE
See all that stuff on the floor?
Pick it up.

P'nut picks up the hot comb and gel and stuffs them in the bag but scrutinizes the Dark and Lovely jar.

P'NUT
What's this?

He puts it in front of her face.

HARRIE
Relaxer.

P'NUT
What does it do?

HARRIE
Look at the picture.

P'nut turns it. Harrie runs her hand along the back of her head and neck.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

See all this? Gets rid of naps.

P'nut tugs a strand of his hair.

P'NUT

My naps?

HARRIE

Girl naps. Not boys. Boys don't need it.

P'NUT

Uh-hunh.

HARRIE

Unh-uhn. Boys that use relaxer are kinda...

Harrie banks her hand back and forth. "Funny".

P'NUT

Uh-hunh. Khan and Fann-o got straight hair and they aint...

Imitates "funny" gesture.

HARRIE

Who's Khanh?

P'NUT

My Bietnameez friend.

HARRIE

Vietnamese. That's different.
Vietnamese ain't Black.

P'NUT

I'm Black, right?

HARRIE

Uh-huh.

P'NUT

And I put my arm side Khanh's arm
and his arm was oranger than mines.

HARRIE

He's yellow not orange. Nobodies orange.

(CONTINUED)

P'NUT

Yes there is... Khanh's orange,
oranger than me.

HARRIE

Where you live so I can drop you
off.

P'NUT

Near Irvington Park. Grand avenue.

HARRIE

And you all the way out here?

P'NUT

I took Tri-Met.

HARRIE

Tri-Met? You too little to ride
Tri-Met by yoself.

P'NUT

Nuh-unh. Kids do it all the time.

HARRI

Kids get killed, too.

Silence.

P'NUT

I'm goin' to pick strawberries on
Sophie's Island. With Khanh.

Sauvie's Island is pronounced Sophie.

HARRIE

I picked when I was little. But, we
took a school bus not Tri-Met.

P'NUT

Gotta be nine to ride the school
bus.

HARRIE

I can drop you off as far as
Irvington. But that's it.

P'NUT

I don't wanna go to Irvington.

Silence weaves into the rattling van.

(CONTINUED)

P'NUT
Can you straighten my naps?

HARRIE
Now?

P'NUT
Yeah.

HARRIE
In this dirty van?

P'NUT
Yeah.

HARRIE
Boys don't...It's gonna burn.

P'NUT
I don't care.

She looks at his scalp. Won't take much.

EXT. UNION 76 GAS STATION - DAY

Van pulls around to the restroom.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - LATER

P'nut admires his partially straightened locks in the halo of mirror. Thin burn streaks chalk-line his temples.

INT. VAN - DAY

P'nut bounces into the passenger's seat. Harrie climbs in the drivers.

HARRIE
Home?

P'NUT
Sophie's Island.

HARRIE
Nuh-uhn. Home.

P'NUT
How bout the paint store?

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
Sherwin Williams?

P'NUT
Yeah. The bus'll drop Khanh and
them off after strawberry pickin'.

HARRIE
So it was you I saw layin' in the
parking lot.

P'NUT
Uh-huh.

HARRIE
Can't do that. You get run over.

P'NUT
You know how that paint sign goes
around?

HARRIE
Yeah.

P'NUT
I count how many times the shadow
passes over me before the school
bus comes.

HARRIE
What if a car comes?

P'NUT
People don't paint that much in the
summer.

Harrie turns the wheel.

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

Harrie pulls the van into the parking lot. P'nut jumps out.

HARRIE
Hey! You welcome. What's your name?

P'NUT
You know.

Harrie rolls down the passenger window.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
Do you know who I am?

P'NUT
Yeah.

HARRIE
Who?

P'NUT
Ma crazy mama.

Crazy mama? That's a brick in the face.

P'NUT
Daddy said you ain't 'sposed to be
near us. And if you do...I should
call the cops.
(Beat)
That's why we gotta move.

HARRIE
Move?

P'NUT
To Arkansaw.

HARRIE
Arkansaw?

P'NUT
Khanh's my best friend. Gotta see
him before we go! Khanh's on
Sophie's Island.

HARRIE
Best friend?

P'NUT
Yep.

HARRIE
Well...get outta the rain or you'll
mess up yo hair.

P'nut pulls his coat over his head. Runs under the awning.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Harrie pulls the van into the parking lot. Passa paces under an umbrella held by Brotha Luke. He's wet all over--all but his expression--it's not wet.

PASSA
Candy sellers are waiting.

HARRIE
Why didn't you tell me Dee's takin'
P'nut to Arkansaw!

PASSA
We'll discuss that later! Candy
sellers!

Hands her a soggy map.

PASSA
Parents're already calling the
church wondering when their boys'll
be picked up.

The map is tearing at the creases. Colors streaking.

INSET - MAP

Black felt tip circle splotches like a fuzzy caterpillars
menace the outskirts of Gresham.

BACK TO SCENE

HARRIE
Gresham?

PASSA
Gresham and Troutdale! Go!

EXT./INT. EVERYBODY'S GRANDMA'S HOUSE - EVENING (GRESHAM)

EVERYBODY'S GRANDMA behind screen mesh door, clutches a coin
as BARELY CAN HEAR KNUCKLEHEAD recites spiel.

EVERYBODY'S GRANDMA
Wha?

Barely Can Hear Knucklehead starts afresh.

(CONTINUED)

BARELY CAN HEAR KNUCKLEHEAD
(near whisper)
We are trying to raise money for
our...

EVERYBODY'S GRANDMA
Heard that part. I don't eat candy.

HARRIE
Ma'am may I use your phone?

Everybody's Grandma balks.

HARRIE
It's an emergency.

EVERYBODY'S GRANDMA
Not an emergency that needs my
phone.

HARRIE
One my kids is missing

Everybody's Grandma disappears. After scuttlebutt, reappears
with phone.

EVERYBODY'S GRANDMA
Only stretches this far.

HARRIE
Thank you.

Everybody's Grandma unlatches the screen door. Everybody's
Granda ushers Barely Can Hear Knucklehead into the parlor.
Harrie dials from the foyer.

HARRIE
Brenda, please. Hello? Hello?

Open line dead air.

BRENDA (V.O.)
Hello?

HARRIE
He's takin' the kids! Big Dee!

Barely Can Hear Knucklehead emerges hefting his box. His
face says "no sale". Everybody's Grandma deposits a quarter
in Harrie's palm.

(CONTINUED)

EVERYBODY'S GRANDMA
I don't eat chocolate.

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

Pasty fog smears across the wet face of the Sherwin Williams storefront.

Dozen or so Vietnamese kids horseplay in the lot and near the curb.

Finally, the school bus clears the dense patches and lumbers to a stop.

None notices the white church van across the lane.

INT. VAN - DAY

Harrie cranes seeing if P'nut's there.

P'nut yanks the driver's door open. Harrie claws for the steering wheel.

P'NUT
Suprise!

HARRIE
Boy, I'mma beat you you ever do
that again!

P'NUT
Knew you'd come!

P'nut hops in.

Harrie shifts gears and tails the bus as it burrows through the fog.

EXT. ROAD - DAY (SAUVIE'S ISLAND)

A thin layer of fog peels away from from the highway revealing a yellow bus and white van mounting the Sauvie Island Bridge, across the Multnomah Channel and onto the island proper. Past KRUGGER'S FARM and VIRGINIA LAKE. Rows of green beans sprout, crowding infinite corn and wheat stalks. Intermittent gusts wring spray from twisted, corselet clouds.

INT. VAN - DAY

P'nut rolls the window up then down then up...

P'NUT
Guys wear makeup?

HARRIE
Quit playin' with the window.

P'NUT
Do guys--

HARRIE
No.

P'NUT
Do you wear eyeliner?

HARRIE
Why are we talkin' about this?

P'NUT
Dai wears makeup.

HARRIE
Die? who's he?

P'NUT
Dai's a she not a he. She puts
eyeliner on--

HARRIE
She Vietnamese? How old is this
girl?

P'NUT
Almost thirteen.

HARRIE
Only punks wear eyeliner. Punks and
sissies.

Drill it.

HARRIE
You know what a punk is? Look at
me. You know what a punk is?
(beat)
They's punks in yo school, right?

(CONTINUED)

P'NUT

Yeah! Punks're somebody people want
to beat up!

P'nut thrusts his arm out the window. He's not a punk though
kids want to beat him up sometimes.

P'NUT

Daddy gonna kill you when he finds
out you brought me here?

HARRIE

Get your arm in the window fo it
gets knocked off.

He's hard-headed. Ain't gonna listen.

P'NUT

He gonna kill me for hangin' out
with gooks?

HARRIE

They're not gooks. Put your arm in!
Gonna count to three. One...two...

P'nut yanks his arm in.

EXT. SAUVIE'S ISLAND - STRAWBERRY FIELDS - DAY

School bus halts near vast strawberry fields. Harrie hauls
up behind the bus. Trucks harvesters unload plats to
harvesters who dart to and from berry rows.

INT. VAN - DAY

P'nut pops out the van and barrels down a strawberry row.
Harrie remains in the van.

FIELD

Half dozen Vietnamese families form down the patch rows.
They're picking fast. Dust rises as P'nut plops down near
Khahn. P'nut feasts on plump strawberries only tossing a few
in the crate.

VAN

STRAWBERRY BOSS passes by Harrie.

HARRIE

Hey! How much you pay?

Strawberry Boss walks up to the van. Leans in the window.

STRAWBERRY BOSS

Free for yourself. You can make a little money working for me.

HARRIE

Is is hard?

STRAWBERRY BOSS

You ain't never picked strawberries?

HARRIE

Nuh-uhn. Beans. Cotton.

STRAWBERRY BOSS

Easy. Not like cotton. Falls right in your hand. Gotta be quick. Quick like dem boat people down there.

HARRIE

How much?

STRAWBERRY BOSS

One eighty five per crate. Sometimes two fifteen per.

HARRIE

I'll take two fifteen.

Strawberry boss laughs.

EXT. STRAWBERRY PATCH - DAY

Harrie's pickin' and sweatin'. Keepin' pace with the Vietnamese who're edging down the aisles. P'nut's next to her for now. He's tossing berries and twirling. He runs.

HARRIE

Where you goin'?

P'nut points to Khanh downfield.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

Nuh-uhn. They got enough help.

He squats. Eyes a fat strawberry.

P'NUT

"I have you now, Skywalker!"

He rips the red flesh from a strawberry.

EXT. SAUVIE'S ISLAND GAS STATION - DAY

Harrie pulls the van to the pump. STEVENS (50s) advances to prevent self-pumping.

STEVENS

How much, sweetheart?

Stevens is not one for bullshit. But since he's been born again, he's put up with more than his fair share of shit. Calls ladies girls and girls sweetheart.

HARRIE

Five dollas.

Pump clicks. Numbers flip.

P'nut jumps out and runs about the hardscrabble patches yard. P'nut tries the doors of a CLACKING REFRIGERATOR TRUCK.

HARRIE

How big is this island?

STEVENS

Big.

HARRIE

People get lost out here?

STEVENS

Sometimes. Out in the corn mazes.
Strawberry patches. Some drown.

P'nut pries a door.

HARRIE

Can you cross to Vancouver?

STEVENS

Not less you can fly. Ferry hasn't
run since fifty eight.

Stevens squeezes, shakes, and hangs the nozzle. Harrie flits out four bills and some change. Hands it to Stevens.

REFRIGERATED RIG

P'nut unlatches the rig door. White mist belches out. P'nut lifts a leg...

HARRIE (O.S.)

Boy! Come from over there!

P'nut climbs up. Cold air washes over him.

P'NUT

It's cold!

HARRIE (O.S.)

One...two...!

VAN

P'nut runs up to the van window.

P'NUT

Momma. Gotta to tell you a secret.

HARRIE

Wha?

He clamps his hands on her cheeks.

HARRIE

Fuck!

P'NUT

Cold!

Stevens laughs.

STEVENS

Our ice cream freezer is caput. So we're usin' the rig for now. Hey, I got a secret, too...

Stevens loves games. But no one ever picks him for their team.

Stevens reaches into his pocket. Slides out a CHICO STICK..

(CONTINUED)

STEVENS
Candy, son?

P'NUT
No, thank you.

HARRIE
Nah. He don't want no candy. We
sell candy. See?

P'nut opens the side door. P'nut climbs in the hold and
slides a box to Stevens who takes a bar.

STEVENS
Squishy.

HARRIE
Oh, shit! It's melting!

STEVENS
Here. Follow me.

Stevens lifts the box and heads to the refrigerated trailer.

INT. PASSA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Passa's frozen at the window. Harrie's hammies are sticking
like fly to flypaper on the plastic-covered couch.

Brotha Luke knocks. Enters. He's been checking the van.

PASSA
Check the tank?

BROTHA LUKE
Three quarters.

PASSA
Odometer?

BROTHA LUKE
Um...

PASSA
Don't guess.

Brotha Luke hustles out. He's been doin' this for the last
10 to 15. Checking one thing at a time.

PASSA
Can't hide nuthin' from God.

Sounds like Patterson's courtroom.

(CONTINUED)

PASSA
Am I right?

HARRIE
Uh-huh.

PASSA
Uh-huh? God's so high. Can't get
over Him. So low. Can't get
under...

TAPPING comes from DOOR. Brotha Luke. Waits. More TAPPING.
Luke finally enters. Brotha Luke had the good sense to carry
a notepad this time. Hands Passa the notepad. Passa's eyes
move across the scribble.

PASSA
How far you say you went?

HARRIE
Few miles.

He's subtil. Can't tell Passa ever ex-con till you see how
his eyes move quick to your face. Prison-yard quick. Quick
like Jesus. Without compassion. He's gotcha when he starts
quotin' scriptures.

PASSA
"All liars have their part in the
Lake of Fire". You don't want no
part o' that, do you?

HARRIE
Nahsuh.

PASSA
This ain't no "few miles".

He wants to hear a new story.

HARRIE
I drove around looking for places
to sell candy. Help y'all by
covering more...

PASSA
Let me worry bout what territories
need covering.

HARRIE
Yessuh.

(CONTINUED)

PASSA
You wanna get yo chillren back,
right?

HARRIE
Yessuh.

PASSA
Now I know this candy job ain't
much. But, it's a start. And I'm on
the phone everywhere trying to get
you somethin' a little better.
Believe that?

Passa mode shift: the poor me.

PASSA
Now, I got Vacation Bible School
startin'. Ministries set up. All
over by Grace a God. Halleluyah!

Halleluyah is Passa's signal it's comin'.

PASSA
I wanna lift yo heavy burduns. Now,
I'll fight you for you. But you
gotta help me out. Can you do that,
Miss Harriett? Can you lift these
heavy burduns?

HARRIE
I'll try.

PASSA
That's all I ask. Try. And you'll
receive blessins you caint
conceive. Blessins you caint
contain. If you truthful.

This is the cue. Peel off the couch. Get on your knees and
serve the Lord.

HARRIE
Forgive me, Passa.

PASSA
For...

HARRIE
Lookin' for other candy routes.

Passa's knees shakes. He sits restraining the spirit.

(CONTINUED)

PASSA

What we gonna do is have you work
around here for now. That Ok? That
all right?

Harrie crawls over to Passa's desk.

PASSA

That fine?

HARRIE

Yeah. That's fine.

AROUND CHURCH - MONTAGE

Harrie prunes roses. Places long stems in Passa's office.

Mows.

Lugs folding chairs from a storage closet.

Unstacks cots.

She unfolds a table and covers it with butcher paper.

She paints "VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 1978" in large black
letters across the butcher paper.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - CANTEEN - DAY

Harrie dusts shelves topped with jars of polish sausages and
pickled pigs feet. She unpacks foot-long licorice and stacks
alongside other booty.

Passa's canteen is part goods store and raid storage to
counter nuclear fallout or Armageddon.

Harrie tries to align the jars.

Behind the jars, a small metal lock box is prevents
alignment.

Sista Shay's head pops through the top half of the dutch
door. She's bouncing on her tip toes trying to free the
bottom half latch. Her bosom is bouncing on the ledge.

SISTA SHAY

Make sure you put the oldest stuff
up front so it can be sold first.

(CONTINUED)

She must've been spying outside the canteen. She can hear a rat pissin' on cotton. She smells like an old cat lady. She finds her way into the canteen.

SISTA SHAY
Gotta show you everything?

Her bulk presses Harrie to the wall. Sista Shay turns the jar labels facing forward.

SISTA SHAY
Nobody can see 'em if their
backwards. That's enough for today.

Harrie steps outside the door. She hears SCRAPING, a CLICK and coins CLATTERING into the metal box.

Soon Sista Shay joins her and locks the canteen door. Sista Shay drops the key in her apron.

INT. BASEMENT KITCHEN - DAY

Steam rises from a three compartment sink. Sista Shay jerks the nozzle like it's her dead husband's penis. She's washing. Harrie's drying.

SISTA SHAY
Dry.

HARRIE
Yesmum. Sista Shay?

SISTA SHAY
Wha?

HARRIE
Gotta bobby pin?

Gotta a lot to do before Bible School starts. Sista Shay fishes around. Pulls one from her bun.

HARRIE
Thank you.

SISTA SHAY
Uh-hunh.

Sista Shay wipes and leaves the kitchen. Harrie listens as Shay clumps up the back stairs.

CANTEEN

Harrie crimps the bobby pin and threads it into lock. Turns.
It doesn't budge.

Footsteps. Harrie runs back to the kitchen.

KITCHEN

Passa stands at the kitchen hatch. He's got wool blankets
under his arm.

PASSA
Where do I put these?

Being helpful. VBS is a money maker. Harrie points to cots.

PASSA
Looks good. Be ready for Sunday?

HARRIE
Yessuh.

PASSA
You ready?

HARRIE
Yessuh.

PASSA
Close yo eyes. Open yo hand.

Drops van keys in her hand.

PASSA
Trust.

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

Sunless windows distort a white van slipping through the
parking lot.

INT. VAN - DAY

Harrie's van is Knucklehead full.

SMART KNUCKLEHEAD
Hey! What we stoppin' here fo?

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
Shuddup and sit yo ass down!

KNUCKLEHEADS
Wooooo! She told you!

Harrie pulls off.

PARKING LOT

Mustard-colored Datsun pulls in. Stops. DATSUN BEEPS.
Flashes.

P'nut rushes out of the Sherwin Williams and jumps into the car.

Datsun speeds off.

INT. VAN - DAY - (LATER)

Harrie pulls along the curb. Knuckleheads mill at the corner. They slide the van door open and file in.

KNUCKLEHEAD #1
No sale.

KNUCKLEHEAD #2
No sale.

KNUCKLEHEAD #3
No sale.

Six Knuckleheads get in. No sale.

Harrie cranks the engine. Rolls down the window and sticks her head out.

HARRIE
None of you fuckers eat candy!

EXT. STREET - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

White van goes through the neighborhood toppling trash cans and crashing mailboxes.

EXT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Harrie paces under porchlight. We notice Ted's eyes peering from behind the blinds. Harrie polite-raps the door again. Harrie puts her face to the picture window. Her eyes meet Ted's. She sticks Brenda's card to the window. At length, Ted opens the door.

HARRIE
Brenda home?

Ted's face registers nothing. He steps back and partially closes the door.

TED (O.S)
Brenda!

Door cracks open. Brenda has a muumuu and terry robe on.

BRENDA
Harriet?

HARRIE
(Whispers)
I need a favor.

BRENDA
A favor? What kinda favor.

HARRIE
Your car.

Brenda crosses the threshold and pulls the door behind her. She walks Harrie to edge of the stairs.

BRENDA
My car? You can't borrow my car!
You don't have a licence.

HARRIE
Somebodies got P'nut!

BRENDA
Are you a hundred percent sure?

HARRIE
I was driving off when I saw a lil
boy jump into a car. I drove around
but the car was gone.

Brenda looks at her. Silence.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA
Big Dee?

HARRIE
No.

BRENDA
Call the police.

HARRIE
Police won't do nuthin'. Dee has
custody.
(beat)
I think he's in Little Vietnam.

The drapes part. Ted glares through the window. Sierra is by his side.

HARRIE
Could you drive me there?

Ted TAPS on the PANE. Brenda turns. Ted points to his invisible watch.

TED
(mouths)
Sierra's naptime!

BRENDA
(mouths)
In a minute!

Ted drops the blinds. Jerks shut the drapes.

BRENDA
(to Harrie)
Excuse me.

Brenda steps inside.

BRENDA (O.S.)
Can't you see I'm talkin'!

Brenda returns. She steps Harrie down the porch tread.

BRENDA
(whispers)
I want to help but I can't.

HARRIE
A few minutes!

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA
I would if I could.

HARRIE
What if we lose in court, Brenda?
What if somethin' happens to him
before court?
(beat)
What would you do if it were
Sierra? What if you somethin'
happened where you never saw her
again?

Harrie steps off the porch. Starts for the sidewalk.

BRENDA
Wait.

Brenda disappears inside. Returns clutching car keys.

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

From the yellow bus Vietnamese berry pickers spill across
the walk into the lot.

Nearby HUMS a PLYMOUTH FURY with tinted windows.

INT. FURY - DAY

Big Dee adjusts his sunglasses. Tiney's beside him
cork-screwing a baseball bat as he waits for the action.

A few no-name niggas crowd the back seat. Wanabe BANGERS.
Yeah, they got records. They'll scam before the cops come.
Their itchin' to get gooks outta the hood.

BIG DEE
(to Tiney)
You know what to do. Ask him where
P'nut is.

Tiney nods.

OUTSIDE

Emptied, the school bus pulls to the traffic signal.

CROSSWALK

Vietnamese families along with Khahn and his CHUMMIES wait for the light to change.

INT./EXT. FURY - DAY

Tiney and the Bangers jump out the car and head to the crosswalk. Bangers got bats, too.

CROSSWALK

Tiney struts up to Khanh.

TINEY
You know me?

Khanh nods.

TINEY
Where's P'nut?

Khanh and his Chummies look at each other.

TINEY
Don't fuckin' look at them! I asked
you a question!

BANGER #1 strolls through the crowd like he's the new sheriff. BANGER #2 shoves Khanh in the back.

BANGER #1
Answer fuckin' Chinaman!

KHANH
I ain't no fuckin' Chinaman!

CHUMMIE #1
(Vietnamese; subtitle)
Forget them, man!

BANGER #2
(mocking)
DO DANG DING DONG! Speak fuckin'
English!

Tiney steps in front of Khanh. Eye to eye. Time to dance.

Tiney looks him up and down. Shoves him.

(CONTINUED)

TINEY

C'mon. Pull a "Bruce Lee" on my
ass!

OLD VIETNAMESE MAN takes Khanh by the arm.

TINEY

Yeah. Grandpa save you. C'mon,
niggas let's go. Fuck these
chickenshits!

OLD VIETNAMESE MAN

(Vietnamese; subtitle)

Who are they?

KHANH

(Vietnamese; subtitle)

Black boys from high school.
Dropouts.

OLD VIETNAMESE MAN

(Vietnamese; subtitle)

Niggas always talk shit?

TINEY

What did he say?

KHANH

Nuthin'.

BANGER #1

I heard "nigger", Tine.

Tiney grabs Old Vietnamese Man.

TINEY

Old man, I'll put my foot up yo
ass!

KHANH

He didn't say nuthin'.

BANGER #1

So I'm lyin'!

KHANH

You a liar!

The SWOOSH of Banger #2's BAT catches Khanh between the
shoulder blades.

Vietnamese crowd crushes in while VIETNAMESE TUFFS gather
pallet shards and wield them as sticks. Bats and sticks are
flying--WHOOOP! WHOOOP! WHOOOP!

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Bus driver, JESUS (35), dispatch calls him a uniformed pitbull cause he barks orders and doesn't use his inside voice. Portland has nearly planed away his Chicano accent.

JESUS
You kids sit down!

All he can see is the backs and butts of BUS KIDS.

BUS KIDS
Fight! A fight!

Jesus adjusts his mirror. Sure enough.

EXT. SCHOOL BUS/STREET - DAY

Jesus springs the door and is policing the street.

JESUS
Hey! You kids break it off!

TINEY
Go drive yo bus, fuckin' wetback!

JESUS
Fuck you you fuckin' pendejo!

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Jesus rushes back to the bus. Yanks down a black bag.

JESUS
Maricon!

He pulls a pistol. Releases the clip and let the clip fall into the bag.

EXT. SCHOOL BUS/STREET - DAY

Harrie cruises past in Brenda's Aspen. Kids are are hanging out of windows. And there's a lunatic waving a gun. Harrie shifts to park and ducks in her seat.

Bats and sticks hit the ground and everybody sprints in all directions.

(CONTINUED)

JESUS
Dats right! Run! Run! Fuckin'...

Harrie peeks up as Khanh and others zig by the Aspen.

HARRIE
(to Khanh)
P'nut! Have you seen P'nut!

Khanh recognizes Harrie but in a instant Khanh darts into an alley. Harrie shifts to drive. jerks the car in gear and turns down the alley.

HARRIE
Get in!

Khanh stops. He's bleeding. Harrie leans over and open the back door. Khanh hesitates then throws himself on the seat.

INT. ASPEN - DAY

He's not bleeding, but it is getting on the backseat.

HARRIE
Where you live? You understand
English?

Nods.

HARRIE
Which way to your house?

Khanh sits up, leans over the seat. Thumbs "back there". Harrie spins the stirring and the car swerves. They ride a few blocks in the opposite direction.

KHANH
Here!

HARRIE
Here?

EXT. KHANH'S HOUSE/BACK YARD - DAY

The Aspen stops at the back yard of a bleached Cape Cod house popular in the Northeast Portland of the Twenties. It has a jaw chain link strapped about it.

INT. ASPEN - DAY

Harrie turns toward Khanh.

HARRIE

P'nut--?

Khanh kicks open the back door...

EXT. KHANH'S HOUSE/BACK YARD - DAY

...bolts over the fence and disappears into the house.
Harrie processes too late. Jumps out and runs to the fence.

HARRIE

Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

EXT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Brenda hunches on the stoop. Behind her in the window
tableau Sierra stands. In a moment, the candy apple Aspen
screeches to the curb.

Brenda stands. She shoos Sierra from the window with a back
wave. Sierra vanishes.

BRENDA

Keys! Give me the keys!

Harrie hands the keys through the open window.

BRENDA

Get out! Get out of my car!

Brenda storms around the hood. She forces the door and
snatches Harrie out.

BRENDA

Look at my car! Scratches! You said
a few minutes! A few minutes!

Brenda's mouth drops.

BRENDA

What the hell is that!

Brenda near rips off the back door. Wipes her fingers across
the upholstery.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA
Jesus, Harriet! Is this fuckin'
blood? Jesus! Excuse my
french...but...Jesus--

HARRIE
I had...

BRENDA
What, Harrie? You had what!

HARRIE
My...period.

Incredible.

BRENDA
This is fuckin' incredible. Excuse
my French. But you fucked someone
in my backseat? That's fuckin'
effed-up!

HARRIE
P'nut...

Brenda shoots up her hand.

BRENDA
Ted said I didn't owe you anything,
Harrie! He said you shudda got yo
own attorney. Said I gotta learn
what to love and what not to
love...

Brenda retreats up the stairs.

HARRIE
Bren...I'm sorr--

The DOOR SLAM drowns Harrie's plea.

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

Harrie lies on the asphalt.

HARRIE - POV

An upturned paint can labeled "SWP" drips gobs of red paint
on a blue globe. It spins. Reads Cover the Earth!

BACK TO SCENE

She closes her eyes as the spinning GLOBE DRIPPING PAINT SIGN passes a faint shadow over her body.

Shadow of Datsun pulls alongside Harrie.

P'nut's head pops out.

P'NUT
Tryin' to kill yoself?

Harrie smiles. Not a bad idea.

P'NUT
Ride?

Harrie pushes herself from the concrete.

EXT. ROADSIDE FRUIT STAND - DAY

As Harrie and P'nut wait in the car, Tan and a fruit vendor fire away at each other in Vietnamese. Not necessary to know what their saying--It's Vietnamese and it's over priced.

INT. DATSUN - DAY

P'nut climbs into the back seat. He happy bounces till he gets Harrie's attention. He places his head on her shoulder.

EXT. KHANH'S HOUSE/PORCH - DAY

Up the front porch a brown bag with legs huffs up the stairs. It's P'nut (who Tan hurrys along by patting his butt) who sets the teeming sack on the porch. P'nut leans into the buzzer. Tan pats his hand. Stop.

They enter the house. Harrie remains in the Datsun. Tan re-opens the front door.

TAN
C'min! C'min!

INT. KHANH'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - DAY

The living room doubles as a Pooja where an jolly Buddha (more Quan Am than Buddha) on an altar table before cut flowers and bansais. The portrait of Khanh's deceased father has the expression of seeing a child birth.

(CONTINUED)

Kneeling girl is Dai.

P'nut kneels behind Dai, Khanh behind Tan.

TAN
(Vietnamese; subtitle to
Khanh)
P'nut's mother staying for dinner?

Khanh goes from kneeling to standing. Steps to Harrie.

KHANH
Mom wants to know if you're stayin'
for dinner?

HARRIE
No. Gotta get back to the church.

TAN
(Vietnamese; subtitle)
Does she need a ride?

KHANH
Need a ride?

HARRIE
I can take Tri-Met.

KHANH
(Vietnamese; subtitle)
She'll take the bus. You drive
crazy.

P'nut stands next to Khanh.

P'NUT
Look, momma.

Holds his and Khanh's arms up.

P'NUT
Told you he was oranger than me!

DAI
Shhh!

Buddhist chant rises, fervent as witchcraft as Harrie tips
out.

EXT. TRI-MET BUS STOP - EVENING

Battered, plastic shelter overhangs a comfortless bench.
Smattering rain pools at Harrie's feet.

Tri-Met rolls up. Harrie steps onto the first step. Reaches
in her pocket. No bus pass. Harrie steps off.

DRIVER
You gettin' on?

HARRIE
No, I...

DRIVER
Him.

Harrie turns. P'nut is standing there. Driver jerks the door
handle and door seals. Bus snorts and brushes off.

HARRIE
Thought yo was stayin'

P'NUT
I am.

Beat.

HARRIE
Better hurry. Gonna rain again.

P'NUT
Already raining.

HARRIE
I mean harder.

P'NUT
I know.

P'nut looks after the bus chugging wakes of gray.

P'NUT
Ain't got no money?

HARRIE
Left my bus pass at the church.

P'nut reaches into his pocket. Pulls out a few crumpled
bills and some change. Holds it out.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

I can walk. Ain't far.

Stuffs the money back into his pocket.

HARRIE

P'nut. You know I'll do anything
for you.

She takes his hand. They sit on the wet bench.

P'NUT

You gonna lose ain't you?

HARRIE

You'd better get back.

Harrie stands. Magnet's holding P'nut to the bench.

P'NUT

I don't wanna go to Arkansaw.

HARRIE

Arkansaw ain't so bad.

P'NUT

Better than Portland?

HARRIE

Better than a thousand Portlands, I
swear.

P'NUT

Tiney says Arkansaw is
"countrified". Daddy'll have us
candy sellin' till we find other
knuckleheads to do it!

HARRIE

Wanna stay with me?

(beat)

Wha?

P'NUT

Daddy says you're a fuck-up. You
goin' fool around and wind up back
in the pin.

Harrie sits back on the bench.

HARRIE

Well the court's gonna say who's
more or less of a fuck-up: me or
him. Right?

(CONTINUED)

He nods. Harrie love-jabs his arm.

HARRIE
Maybe...we could hang out together
before you go?

P'NUT
Hang-out where?

HARRIE
Sophie's Island. Strawberry fields.

P'NUT
I tole you, Jesus...

HARRIE
Jesus?

Harrie puts P'nut in a headlock.

P'NUT
Stop! You play too much!

HARRIE
Say you'll sneak on the bus?

Squeezes.

P'NUT
Sneak? When?!

HARRIE
Tomorrow!

He nods. She releases him. He got a porcupine-fro.

P'NUT
Tomorrow? Why tomorrow?

HARRIE
It's a suprise.

P'NUT
You ain't got no suprise.

HARRIE
Keep thinkin' that. Don't matter.
You can't get to Sophie's.

P'NUT
Bet I can.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

How much?

Pulls out the money.

HARRIE

Deal.

They don't hug. P'nut's too big for that. Sealed with a soul handshake.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Close in on a row of gold-foiled World's Finest chocolate bars as Brotha Luke closes a box lid and lifts the box into the new church van.

His busyness allow Harrie to sneak by him and up the back stairs.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Harrie stuffs her plastic bag with clothes.

BACK STAIRCASE

Harrie props plastic back in the door and descends to the back stairs to the basement.

CANTEEN

Harrie fashions two bobby pins together. Twists the makeshift key in the keyhole. The LOCK CLICKS.

Harrie creaks the Dutch door open and eases inside.

She plunges her arm into the the dark space between and behind the pickle jars until she feels the sharp corner of metal cash box. She slides her hand across the top and grasps the handle.

Harrie bobby pins the latch, pops the lid, pockets the cash and leaves the checks.

And she's out re-locking the door and retracing her steps.

BACK STAIRCASE

Brotha Luke shadow looms at the top of the stairs. He's gripping Harrie's bag while doing his best Adam-12 impression.

BROTHA LUKE
This yours?

HARRIE
Yeah. Dirty laundry.

BROTHA LUKE
Somebody could trip on it.

HARRIE
You think you can drive me to the
laundramat on Union.

He weighs the bag.

BROTHA LUKE
Gotta candy run.

HARRIE
Thought you did that later?

Is she keeping tabs?

BROTHA LUKE
Whatchew mean?

HARRIE
Mean you could take me and be back
in no time.

He tosses her the bag, turns and mounts the stairs to the sanctuary.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - DAY

Brotha Luke's Delta 88 idles between the new minted white L.O.G.I.C van and the primered one.

Harrie swings open the primered door and feels under the floor mat. No key.

She runs to the driver side of the new van. No key under it's mat either.

But there the key is...in the ignition switch.

(CONTINUED)

Harrie moves the candy box occupying the driver's seat into the the passenger's seat, jumps in and turns the ignition.

The new VAN PURRS.

EXT. SAUVIE'S ISLAND GAS STATION - DAY

Minted van screeches alongside a pump. YOUNG ATTENDANT strolls from behind the counter.

HARRIE
Fill it up.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Can you back it up...pump won't reach that far.

Harrie puts it in gear. Grinds it. Van jolts back a pace.

HARRIE
Where's the other guy. Older guy.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Mister Stevens?

HARRIE
Yeah. Stevens.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Back later. Tomorrow, maybe.

HARRIE
He told me if I needed, I could use his refrigerator.

Young Attendant frowns.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Didn't say a word to me bout no refrigerator.

HARRIE
For the candy in the back. It'll melt.

He cradles the nozzle, cups his eyes and peers through the van window.

HARRIE
See? Anyway, Mister, uh, Stevens said if ever I was over here early picking I could use that...

(CONTINUED)

Harrie points to the rig.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
The trailer?

HARRIE
Yeah.

He scratches his head.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Sure he didn't say inside?

HARRIE
Outside. And for five dollars I
keep as many boxes in there.
(beat)
Least while I was berry pickin'.

Harrie dips in her pocket and flashes the cash wad. Unpeels and dangles a fiver.

He juts the nozzle in. PUMP numbers FLIPPETY-FLIP his contemplation. At three dollars and twenty eight cents the flipping stops.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Get your change.

He takes the five and disappears into the station. Must be counting with his fingers as long as he's taking.

He reappears and drops the change in Harrie's hand.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Let me fire it up.

He meanders to the rig, climbs in and a moment later it rumbles to life. He climbs out the rig and comes to the van.

HARRIE
How early do the school buses come?

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Six or seven in the morning.

HARRIE
The ones with the Boat People?

YOUNG ATTENDANT
That's all they got! Boat People!

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
Mind if I park here for a few
hours?

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Guess it's okay.

HARRIE
Thanks.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
Gonna need help takin' those boxes
to the rig?

HARRIE
Sure.

He rolls the sliding door open.

INT. VAN - EVENING

Chip wrappers, soda cans and half eaten sandwich litter the
floor and dashboard. Harrie curls in the driver's seat.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Tractor trailer rig's humming fills the wee hours.

Harrie sits in the dark emptying potato chip crumbs into her
mouth. Out of food and the station closed.

She reaches into the candy box passenger side. Lifts out a
chocolate bar with white wrapping and gold leaf.

HARRIE
"I got the golden ticket"

She peels-off the wrapper and licks the sweetness.

DREAM SEQUENCE - EXT. SMALL MEXICAN VILLAGE - DAY

Harrie's tripping. She's pregnant and Big Dee yanks her down
a dusty street.

Faceless men wearing sombreros recline against adobe walls.

The ground bakes their bare feet.

At the end of the street, Big Dee flings open the door of an
old warehouse full of chickens.

(CONTINUED)

A man in a white coat seals chickens in metal trash cans.

A blade slices through the narrow slit in the trash can and lops the chickens' heads off. When he releases them, headless chickens run helter-skelter out of the warehouse and into the street.

Harrie scoops up a headless chicken and slams her hand to the squirting neck...

She wraps her skirt over the chicken. It's the size of an infant. But blood still flows.

END DREAM SEQUENCE.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

New van is twisted around a tree.

Harrie slumps over the wheel.

Stevens and Young Attendant open the van door.

Harrie's bleeding. Looks minor.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
(to Stevens)
See? Told ya.

Stevens peruses. Shakes Harrie.

HARRIE
Dee did it! In Mexico!

Stevens motions to Young Attendant. Leaves. Returns with a glass of water.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Harrie squints away the darkness.

HARRIE'S POV

Judgment Day is come. Jesus is trampling out the vintage cause Passa, Brotha Luke, Sista Shay, Stevens and Young Attendant perch above her.

BACK TO SCENE.

STEVENS
Toe-up pretty good.

Passa says nothing.

MISTER STEVENS
Yours was the only number I could
find in the van.

Nods.

PASSA
(to Brother Luke)
How many candy boxes left?

BROTHA LUKE
Five. Six. Melted, though. And the
one in the front seat.

Young Attendant steps forward.

YOUNG ATTENDANT
We stored some on the rig.

HARRIE
Sorry, Passa.

Passa tightens his lips like a terrible swift sword.

STEVENS
You want the police? Ambulance?

PASSA
No need.

STEVENS
Sho toe-up though. Van looks new.

PASSA
She's my nephew's ex. Love her like
a daughter. I'll take care of it.
Get her up. Put her in the car.

Passa's eyes burn like when he preaches a "firey damnation"
sermon.

Harrie closes her eyes.

INT. PASSA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Bright red roses blare before Harrie's eyes.

Standing is difficult and not helped by the fly strip couch.

Passa enters with more roses. Wet, long-stemmed, thorny.
Passa stretches gardening gloves over his fingers. He wraps
a thick cloth around the stem base

He braids the stems together.

PASSA
(to Brother Luke)
You call Doc Gordon, yet?

Brother Luke nods. Better hurry.

PASSA
Thy laws are are more precious than
gold, than much pure gold...

Harrie struggles to sitting.

PASSA
they are sweeter than honey, than
honey from the honeycomb.

Passa brushes RED PETALS into a waste paper basket.

PASSA
Remember when you sang in the youth
choir? Had the prettiest voice.
Sang you little heart out.

Harrie tries standing. It's like stripping a band-aid off a
scab.

PASSA
Yo heart was pure then. Only a pure
heart could sing like a bird.

Cue the chorus:

	SISTA SHAY	BROTHA LUKE
Amen!		Like a bird!

PASSA
Then Satan crept on in.

SISTA SHAY	BROTHA LUKE
Dat's right, uh-hunh!	Preach!

(CONTINUED)

PASSA

But, then, Jesus gave us the power
to cast his heinie out...

That's the signal. Sista Shay and Brotha Luke grab Harrie and force her to her knees facing the couch. Luke pins Harrie while Shay exposes Harrie's buttocks.

PASSA

Come outta her Satan!

WHACK! Down comes the switch-o-nine-tails. WU-ACK! Second stroke. A third. A fourth...

Harrie grits. Not gonna cry. A fifth...

PASSA

Satan! In the name of Jesus! Jesus!

Thorns lodge in Harrie's flesh.

And Satan? He froths, screams and collapses on the plastic couch before departing.

INT. SANCTUARY - DAY

Audience of one. Passa, in purple vestments, pantomimes from the pulpit. The sole parishioner, Brotha Luke critiques of Passa's mock sermon, gently giving Passa pointers.

INT. NURSERY - DAY

Sista Shay stands at the nursery window watching Passa gesticulate. Shay hefts a folded, white dress.

Sista Shay steps from the window to the attic.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

SISTA SHAY (O.S.)

Get up. Cover yoself. Take this
dress.

An arm with a dress thrusts through the open door. A fucking minute please!

HARRIE

Just a minute!

(CONTINUED)

SISTA SHAY (O.S.)
Passa want you down there 'fore
service. Dress in the bathroom.

INT. NURSERY - DAY

Harrie emerges and takes the dress.

INT. SANCTUARY - DAY

Dull, strained light filters through stain glass. Sista Shay leads Harrie through the sanctuary doors and park her on the back pew as CHURCH MEMBERS sift in.

INT. SANCTUARY - DAY (LATER)

Members cram every pew. White gloved USHERS stand erect, eyes front like beefeaters.

Sermon's kickin'. Passa's stompin' behind the PULPIT.
Sweatin'. Halleluing!

He struts across the stage. Snatches up I white linen hankerchief and mops great drops of sweat. He waves the kerchief in the air "surrendering to the Almighty".

CHURCH FOLKS've seen it a thousand times but they're still cryin' and snottin'. Passa knows we ain't ripe yet. The ORGANIST pitches the mood. Raises the ferver. Spirit makes Passa hop on one leg.

PASSA
Can I get an amen!

CHURCH FOLK
Amen!

Bout to turn it up a notch. Speak in tongues.

PASSA
(gibberish)
Hamininahaminahamina...Halleluyah!

CHURCH FOLK
Halleluyah!

They are primed.

(CONTINUED)

PASSA
Sinners! You know who you are! Come
on up her and confess before God!

Whole church knows who he's talking to. Come up Harriett
Hobson. Wanna make him call you by name?

PASSA
Sista Harriett...are you ready?

CHURCH FOLK
Thank you, Jesus!

Harrie stands and wobbles down the center aisle. As she
passes, eyes stone her. She gathers at the altar and
about-faces.

PASSA
Deacon, hand Sista Harriett the
mic.

Brotha Luke frees the mic from its stand. Untangles it and
hands it to Harrie.

PASSA
Tell the congregation what Satan
did. Go on...

Fervent faces hunger for another Satan story.

HARRIE
I...I..took the church van.

PASSA
Stole! The new one! And?

HARRIE
I wrecked it...

CHURCH FOLK
Ohhh!

HARRIE
And I took the Vacation Bible
School money!

PASSA
Stole the cashbox from the canteen!

Burden's greater than Harrie can bear. She kneels.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

Satan made me eat chocolate...

PASSA

That's right! Lost all our
fund-raising chocolate to Satan!
But, we ain't gonna let Satan take
our blessing away, are we?

CHURCH FOLK

No!

PASSA

We can beat Satan with kindness!
Can we forgive!

CHURCH FOLK

Yes!

It's a hive of electricity. Passa bounds off the stage. A
stunt he pulls to get the audience jumping.

Members shoot up from their seats.

Passa dances by them to...

POSTER

Ceiling to floor poster of unscrolled butcher paper. On the
poster is a hand drawn varicolored thermometer. The black
felt pen lines demark donation scales: 10,000. 50,000.
100,000...

Passa runs his hand along the 100,000 line.

PASSA

God's gonna bless us with a van!
Can I get a amen?!

CHURCH FOLK

Amen!

Passa raises his hand to invisible 200,000 line.

PASSA

God gonna replenish our VBS
coffers!

CHURCH FOLK

Amen!

His hands go ceiling-ward. Blessings are raining.

(CONTINUED)

PASSA
Our Loosiana ministries? Our
Arkansaw ministries? Arkansaw? Can
they suffer?

CHURCH FOLK
No!

ALTAR

Passa sprints around the aisles and halts at the altar. He lifts Harrie's arm and strikes her head with his palm.

PASSA
Loose her! In the name of Jeeezus!

Harrie swoons like the wind's been knocked out of her.

She stands and raises her arms.

Church Folk rise. A CRESCENDO of CLAPPING fills the sanctuary as white-gloved ushers pass the collection plate.

Close in on a seated Big Dee writing a check, folding it, and placing it in the passing plate.

Passa escorts the new creature (Harrie) down the main aisle.

Big Dee gets up and tips down the back stairs.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Harrie sleeps under a wool blanket.

Big Dee hunches in plastic nurse chair nearby. He's tapping the Beretta on his thigh.

Harrie startles.

HARRIE
Who's there?

BIG DEE
Don't show at court tomorrow.

Big Dee shifts forward, he is the tangible side of gloom.

BIG DEE
Right, Passa? Be a no show. C'mon
quit hidin'!

Passa steps inside the attic.

(CONTINUED)

BIG DEE
Bullshit!

HARRIE
No no no no no...no bullshit! Why
did I go to Mexico, huh?

BIG DEE
Cuz you know what'd happen if you
stayed.

HARRIE
What? Beat me? I was pregnant,
Dee...and you beat the shit outta
me!

Big Dee ceases dancing the pistol on his thigh.

HARRIE
What was in the chocolate, Dee?

BIG DEE
Chocolate.

HARRIE
I know a trip--

BIG DEE
You know a trip? You trippin' now.

HARRIE
P'nut sellin' that shit?

BIG DEE
Everybody part of ma fund-raiser.

HARRIE
You ain't takin' P'nut to Arkansaw?

BIG DEE
Ma best recruiter? Shee-it!

He tucks the gun in his waste band near his ass crack.

BIG DEE
Harrie, you used be smarter. Used
to be smart!
(beat)
Passa made sure yo ass was an
accomplice! Made sure yo ass
couldn't get a job, right Passa?

Passa's face is numb, all but his eyes, they look like
they're being squeezed out.

(CONTINUED)

BIG DEE
All this cloak and dagger shit!

Big Dee reaches in his pocket. Draws out a keys.

BIG DEE
You want P'nut? He'll be in
Arkansaw. And I promise you...after
we get off the ground...you can see
him as much as you want.

He reaches over and places the keys onto Harrie's stomach.

BIG DEE
Like I said...you can always come
home...you know, these church folk
don't want you. Tell her, Passa.
(beat)
Cuz a good fuck-up like you,
Harrie, is sho-fire moneymaker.
(beat)
Passa how much you make today?

Passa shrugs. He's just a small vessel doing God's bidding.
Big Dee laughs as he leaves.

INT. NURSERY - DAY

Harrie stands at the nursery window, she's got the plastic
bag stuffed between her legs.

HARRIE'S POV

Below we recognize several ushers carrying a ladder through
the sanctuary center aisle. They prop the ladder against the
wall. One climbs and unpeels the thermometer poster down.

BACK TO SCENE

Guard pair of Sista Shay and Brotha Luke stand at the door.

SISTA SHAY
Hu-hmmmm.

Harrie scoops up her plastic bag and heaves it over her
shoulder.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Shay and Luke march Harrie down backstairs into the parking lot. Ushers have set up tables end to end and have layed the thermometer poster on it.

INSERT - POSTER

In black letters along a demarcated black line "300,000"

BACK TO SCENE

God's been good.

The escort ends at the property line. Harrie stands on a mound just off church grounds.

A TOW TRUCK RUMBLES into the lot. It's hauling the mangled minted van. Place it near the entrance. Constant reminder. Nice touch.

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

Tri-met dumps Harrie at the paint shop. She lugs her bag to the store front, drops it and plunks down.

A few moments later, Dai walks by.

Harrie takes up her bag and tails.

No matter how Dai tries to ditch Harrie, Harrie persists.

EXT. KHANH'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Dai races into the house and slams the door.

Harrie rushes the stairs and beats on the door.

DAI (O.S.)
Go away!

HARRIE
You're P'nut's girlfriend, right!

DAI (O.S.)
Go away!

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
I'm P'nut's moth--

DAI (O.S.)
I know who you are! Go away!

Harrie throws her bag on the porch and huffs down.

HARRIE
I'm homeless. I've been kicked
outta the church and I need to talk
to P'nut!
(beat)
And I'm not gonna leave this porch
till I do!

Afer a while, Dai cracks open the door.

DAI
He's not my boyfriend!

HARRIE
Can you give him a message?

DAI
No.

Harrie fluffs her plastic bag like a pillow. Nestles.

DAI
What message?

HARRIE
Can you tell him to get on the
Sophie bus tomorrow?

DAI
Why?

HARRIE
Tell him he can stay with me or go
to Arkansaw. Tell him that.

Dai nods. Harrie picks up her bag and steps off the stoop.

DAI
He can't go to Arkansaw. He belongs
here.

HARRIE
I know.

INT. BUS - DAY

Harrie's curls-up up in the rear of the bus, her face plastered to a window.

BUS DRIVER checks Harrie in his rearview.

He rolls rolls the bus to a stop. The bus is empty. He pulls the handle and flicks open the door.

BUS DRIVER
Last stop.

Waits.

The driver gets up. He's rollie pollie rumbling and shaking seats as he heads rearward. Gets to Harrie.

BUS DRIVER
Laaast stah-ahp!

Nothing. Shakes the head rest.

HARRIE
Did we pass Williams Avenue?

BUS DRIVER
Few stops ago. I yelled it.

HARRIE
Can you go back? I need to go to the Salvation Army.

BUS DRIVER
Ma'am this is the Killingsworth bus. This Killingsworth's last stop. Killingsworth then goes to the garage.

Harrie wipes away the slobber, gathers her things and steps down the rear door steps and waits for the doors to open.

The Bus Driver walks back to his seat. Adjusts his mirror.

BUS DRIVER
Exit here.

Harrie lifts her bag and comes forward. The driver yanks the handle and the door swooshes shut.

BUS DRIVER
Sit down.

He starts the bus.

EXT. SALVATION ARMY - NIGHT

Bus Driver deposits Harrie in front of the Salvation Army. Harrie drags her bag along the concrete. The bag snags on the gate and tears.

Harrie ties the the platic at the tear tightening the knot with her mouth.

ENTRANCE

Awash along the mission entrance, huddled human stones await daybreak. As Harrie these homeless SHAPES lift their heads from makeshift pillows at Harrie's passing.

SHAPE:
Ain't no more beds.

Harrie ignores Shape, steps over human debris and reads the hours on the Salvation Army.

SHAPE:
They're closed.

Harrie heaves the bag to her shoulder and an avalanche of clothes fly out.

SHAPE:
Yo bag broke.

No frippin' shit.

Harrie spreads the plastic remains on the ground. Re-stacks clothes.

HARRIE'S POV

Shadowy sedan pulls outside the halo of street lamp.

BACK TO SCENE

When the sedan notices Harrie notices--it screeches away.

HARRIE
Pay phone somewhere?

Shape points.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
Gotta dime?

Shape fumbles through his dirty trousers. Finds it.

SHAPE:
For a blow job?

HARRIE
I ain't about to suck yo dick fo'
no dime! I'll fuck you up!

SHAPE:
Awright! Awright!

Shape fumbles around. Pitches a dime.

INT. SAMBO'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

PREGNANT WAITRESS stacks Brenda and Harrie's dirty dishes,
adds fresh place mats and twists syrup dispensers atop them.

PREGNANT WAITRESS
What else can I do you for?

She rests the order pad on her baby bump.

BRENDA
Coffee.

HARRIE
Water. How many weeks?

PREGNANT WAITRESS
Twinny-five.

Waitress clears. Leaves.

BRENDA
They'll say you drove the van.

Harrie nods.

BRENDA
(whispers)
Drugs, right it?

Nods again.

BRENDA
If you won't go to the police. How
bout we tell Patterson in court
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA (cont'd)
tomorrow? Ask for chambers? Pull
him aside?

HARRIE
Nah.

BRENDA
How much you think they got?

HARRIE
Hundred Fifty two hundred thousand.

BRENDA
(whispers)
Two hundred thousand dollars!

HARRIE
Wanna get P'nut.

Brenda hesitates.

BRENDA
Sure. You can stay with me tonight.
(beat)
I know Patterson won't give the
boys to some drug dealer and some
jack-leg preacher. P'nut and Tiney
be better off with they mother.

HARRIE
I...

BRENDA
Wha?

HARRIE
I don't want Tiney. He's from
Dee's ex.

BRENDA
What's Dee to Passa.

HARRIE
Nephew.

BRENDA
What'd you think he'd do?

HARRIE
Who Dee?

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA

Yeah.

Harrie stirs the water with her finger.

BRENDA

Kill you?

Harrie shakes her head. Pregnant Waitress returns.

PREGNANT WAITRESS

Dessert?

BRENDA

No thank you.

HARRIE

No, thanks.

Pregnant Waitress refills. Leaves.

BRENDA

What happened in the desert?

MEMORY FLASH - DESERT

- Parked car headlights burn across a tilted adobe shanty.
CLUCK CLUCK CLUCK resonates from nearby COOPS.

BRENDA (V.O.)

Mexico?

- Big Dee's Fury. Blood on the backseat. A shovel on the floor.

HARRIE (V.O.)

New Mexico. Carlsbad. Near the border.

- Blurred red lights swirling. "State Police" above the wheel well of the patrol prowler.

HARRIE (V.O.)

We were on the sixty-two half way
to Juarez...Started bleedin'...

BRENDA (V.O.)

My god...

- Paramedics push Harrie into an ambulance. Her hands are cuffed.

BACK TO SCENE

Brenda carves at the edges of the story.

BRENDA
Did he leave you...?

Harrie raises her hand. No more questions.

HARRIE
Enough.

Pregnant Waitress returns. Waits.

BRENDA
Just the check, thank you.

Pregnant Waitress marks the pad and tears off a sheet. Puts it on the table. Harrie lifts the bill. Harrie can't make it out for the tears but she still reaches in her pockets.

BRENDA
I got this.

Brenda tugs the check from Harrie's fingers.

HARRIE
Can't thank you enough for
everythin'.
(beat)
Lost one. Not gonna lose another.

Brenda dips in her purse and places a few bills over the check.

INT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Harrie lies on the floor so she doesn't muss Sierra's bed.
Brenda stands in the doorway.

BRENDA
Ted's outta town on business.
Sierra's at a slumber party.
(beat)
You can use the bed you know.

Harrie stays put.

BRENDA
Wanna sleep with me?

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE
I'm fine right here.

Brenda walks across the room. Opens adjacent door. Bathroom.

BREND
Shower?

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Harrie rouses. Follows Brenda into the bathroom. It's immaculate.

BREND
I'll get some of Ted's old pajamas.
Towels?

Harrie nods.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Harrie's head above the steam and spume of hot water filling the tub.

She sinks below the surface. Counts. Pops up.

She steps out of the tub and shakes her fro like a shaggy dog. Grabs a towel.

INT. BREND'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Clean Harrie lies Sierra's bed. Her eyes rove across...

Champagne bodied butterflies, white-winged, migrating across Sierra's ceiling.

Harrie props on one arm taking in the rest of the room--matching chest, nightstand and vanity of cottage blush

TAP. TAP. TAP

Brenda RAPS. It's one of those "I don't want to disturb" RAPS. Pokes her head in.

BREND
I see you're using the bed. Good.

Harrie nods.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA
Put your clothes are in the
laundry, if that's okay.

Nods.

BRENDA
Doin' okay?

HARRIE
Fine.

BRENDA
Once we tell Patterson
tomorrow...things'll change.
(beat)
Forgot to tell you. I'm workin' for
an attorney named Frank. He's
really interested in your story.

Harrie lies back. Brenda draws the door shut like pulling a string.

INT. SALVATION ARMY - DAY

A check-in queue catepillars it's way to the entry desk
where the needy crowd to register for the day.

Big Dee marches in and pushes past the disheveleds.

Big Dee is forming his own line near the clerk. Finally...

CLERK
Sir, you need to get in line like
everybody else.

BIG DEE
I ain't no bum. Just need to see if
somebody's here.

CLERK
Sir, everyone will have to--

Big Dee spins toward the inner door.

CLERK
Hey! Can't go in the sleeping
quarters!

Big Dee forces the doors open. Clerk jumps up.

(CONTINUED)

CLERK
Excuse me! Excuse me!

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

BIG DEE
Harrie! Where you at!

Big Dee shuffles up to a bed where a huddled lump lies...

BIG DEE - POV

BIG DEE (O.S.)
Harrie?

A DIRTY-FACED WOMAN and LITTLE GIRL stare up at him.

BACK TO SCENE

Big Dee quests along each bed.

BIG DEE
Harrie!

Clerk trails. Several helpful HOMELESS tag behind the clerk.

CLERK
Sir, I'm calling the police!
Calling right now! Leave now!

Clerk and Homeless crowd Big Dee. He stops. Removes his sunglasses. All little shits. Beat all their asses.

Big Dee pulls a blanket. Looks under. Last check. Then strolls past the Lilliputian militia.

INT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - SIERRA'S ROOM - DAY

Brenda back polite tapping.

BRENDA
Need anything before I hop in the shower?

Harrie shakes her head.

BRENDA
Court at nine.

Nods.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA

Your clothes are folded on top of
the dryer.

HARRIE

Thank you.

Brenda gently retreats. A moment later comes the GUSH of
SHOWER. Harrie bounds out of bed.

HALLWAY

Harrie tips past the bathroom door into...

BRENDA'S BEDROOM

Rummages through the closet and grabs a handful of clothes.

STAIRCASE

Harrie back tracks and flies down the stairs dressing as she
goes.

KITCHEN

Harrie rifles through Brenda's purse, KEYS JANGLE as she
pockets them.

She counts out Brenda's cash and thrusts Brenda's checkbook
into her back pocket.

INT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Harrie unlocks Brenda's car and fires up the engine.

EXT. COURTHOUSE STREET - DAY

We see Brenda's Aspen follow a line into the court house
parking lot. Harrie pulls into a vacating parking spot and
waits.

Soon a sleek white van, with the unmistakable L.O.G.I.C
lettering. Parks in an unloading zone. Car's emergency
flashers blink.

HARRIE'S POV

Brotha Luke jumps out of the driver's seat to the other side of the van and slides the side door open. Out pops Passa, Sista Shay and Tiney.

BACK TO SCENE

Aspen reverses and pulls along side the van.

Harrie jumps out. Yanks driver side door open.

HARRIE
Where's P'nut!

BROTHA LUKE
You!

Brotha Luke zips around the van. But Harrie's to the other side.

HARRIE
(yells in van)
P'nut!

Passa, Tiney and Sista Shay run back down the courthouse stairs...

But, Harrie's inside the Aspen, jerking it into gear and flooring it.

INT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Brenda in towel and turbin absorbs her image in the vanity mirror. She's leaning close, applying fake lashes.

BRENDA
Be a million deputies there, right?

She dips. Applies another lash. Winks. Still uneven.

BRENDA
Be a fool to try anything.

Something catches her eye in the reflection.

HALLWAY

Her clothes on the floor.

BRENDA

Harrie?

SIERRA'S ROOM

Peeks in.

BRENDA

Harrie?

Goes to Sierra's bed. Lumpy. But just pillows. Brenda rushes to Sierra's window and cranes.

She bolts out of Sierra's room.

STAIRCASE

Ted's pajamas are strewn across the rail and floor.

BRENDA

Shit shit shit shit shit!

Brenda takes two stairs at a time.

KITCHEN

Brenda snatches up her purse.

No money.

No keys.

No nada...

EXT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Brenda hurtles the porch steps into the garage.

GARAGE

No car.

INT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Brenda picks up the phone.

BRENDA
Portland Police, please!

EXT. SHERWIN WILLIAMS PARKING LOT - DAY

Aspen careens into the parking lot.

INT. ASPEN - DAY

Harrie searches the parking lot.

No P'nut.

HARRIE
Where could he be?

Harrie brakes and sits. Taps the steering wheel.

HARRIE
Maybe...!

Harrie throws the car in gear and takes off.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALL - THIRD FLOOR - OUTSIDE JUDGE
PATTERSON'S COURTROOM - DAY

Big Dee bounds to the top of the stairs to the third floor
landing.

Big Dee's Attorney stands in front of the seated trio,
prepping Passa, Tiney and Sista Shay before the court entry.

BIG DEE
Harrie in there?

Big Dee's Attorney wags a teathy grin.

BIG DEE'S ATTORNEY
Got her dead to rights!

BIG DEE
Good...let's go in.

No one moves.

Big Dee's eyes count down the row of faces.

(CONTINUED)

BIG DEE
What?

PASSA
Harrie came already.

Big Dee removes his sunglasses. This-shit-ain't-funny face.

BIG DEE
P'nut?

PASSA
It's fair to say--

BIG DEE
Shuddup! Tiney, where da fuck is
P'nut?

Tiney doesn't peep--he's the dog who acts guilty though you
ain't found the crime yet.

BIG DEE
Ain't gonna ask you again.

Tiney uses two tactics: silence and slouching. Slouching
helps him...

SMACK! Dee whales him right across the face!

...Got out of range too late. Big Dee hauls back--

TINEY
Dai! Dai!

BIG DEE
Dai? Gooks, Tiney? Fuckin' gooks!

Big Dee doesn't wait for an answer. He bolts down the stairs
as an OFFICER comes up. Big Dee non-stops past the officer.

BIG DEE'S ATTORNEY
Hey! Wait!

OFFICER
Is there a problem?

PASSA
No, officer everythings fine...

Patterson's courtroom opens but Passa and the rest stand
unsure.

EXT, COURTHOUSE - DAY

Brotha Luke sits in the van driver seat, he's referencing an open Bible on his lap. Luke's spellbinding an invisible congregation with his Passa-like imitations.

BROTHA LUKE
"And God said...ah..."

Peeks down at his Bible.

BROTHA LUKE
"...and God said...ah...in
Donaronamee six...ah...!"

The van door swings open and Brotha Luke is yanked out of the seat to the pavement.

BROTHA LUKE
Hey!

Big Dee jumps in the driver's seat, FIRES the IGNITION and SCREECHES down the street.

EXT. BIG DEE'S HOUSE - DAY

Van fishtails onto the front lawn before skidding to a stop.

Big Dee runs up the steps into the house.

Moments later he emerges heaving a sleeping bag.

He slides the van door open and lays the bag inside.

INT. VAN - DAY

Big Dee climbs inside. He smooths a mat, unfurls the sleeping back and assembles a M16 rifle like he's being timed for a Guinness record.

EXT. SAUVIE'S ISLAND - ROAD - DAY

Harrie shoots up behind the school bus, bringing the Aspen alongside and laying on horn.

HONK! But, the bus doesn't stop. Harrie floors it back into her lane as oncoming traffic swerves by.

After the cars pass, Harrie's back alongside waving. She recognizes Jesus as the gun wielding driver from earlier.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

Hey! Hey! Pull over!

Jesus gives her her horn medicine. HONK!

The Aspen remains alongside. Jesus opens his window.

JESUS

You crazy!

HARRIE

P'nut there?

JESUS

Wha?

HARRIE

P'nut...!

A car comes in the opposite direction, horn blaring, Harrie now pulls behind the bus.

Vietnamese faces press against the glass.

Harrie flashes her lights but the bus speeds along.

INT. ASPEN - DAY

Harrie a jolt lashes her forward. For a moment, she loses control of the wheel.

White van rams her again.

EXT. SAUVIE'S ISLAND - ROAD - DAY

The van forces her off the road and into a ditch and parks a few yards off.

INT. ASPEN - DAY

Harrie watches as the van stops and Big Dee gets out. He's lugging a rifle.

Harrie locks the doors. She lies down for cover.

Big Dee tries the door.

BIG DEE

Unlock it!

(CONTINUED)

He smashes the window with the stock. Glass showers everywhere. He round-robins all the windows, smashing each.

BIG DEE
Now, get out!

Harrie death-grips the steering wheel.

Big Dee lays his rifle of the Aspen hood and wrenches Harrie's arms from the wheel then drags her through the window. He throws her to the to the ground.

She's bleeding.

BIG DEE
Where's P'nut?

She kicking, screaming, flopping in the dust.

HARRIE
Ain't...ain't got him!

Big Dee grabs her by the collar drags her to the Aspen where he retrieves his rifle.

BIG DEE
Was on that bus? Answer! Is he on that bus!

HARRIE
Fuck you!

Dee wrestles her to the van and shoves her into the van. He forces her in with the rifle to her back. He climbs in behind her.

BIG DEE
Go to the front seat!

She staggers to the front seat and collapses.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Van trails as a strap of dust as it gains on the school.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jesus watches in side mirror as a reckless van gains.

The commotion causes kids to hang their heads out windows.

Excited kids crowd the rear exit door to gander.

(CONTINUED)

JESUS
You kids sit down! Sit down!

Some sit on the seat edges others remain standing their heads turned.

JESUS
I said sit the fuck down!

Excited chatter swells as the van pulls alongside.

JESUS - POV

Close in on Harrie's lacerated face and barrel of the M16 propped between passenger and driver.

BACK TO SCENE

JESUS
Mierda!

Jesus jerks the wheel...

A PEAL of SCREAMS reverbate the bus as the bus...

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Careens into a ditch and topples over.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jesus is trapped by his belt and struggles to unbuckle.

JESUS - POV

Jesus's fingers writhe to reach his pistol bag.

BOOT-CLICKS come from the PAVEMENT outside and the SCAPING across the GROUND.

Jesus gets his fingers around the strap of the bag and...

BACK TO SCENE

Yanks the bag to him. ZIP! Jesus unzips the bag and retrieves the pistol and finally gets the clip loaded when--

RAT-TA-TATTAT-RATTA-TAT-TAT...

EXT. BUS - DAY

...BULLETS PING and WHIZ by.

Vietnamese women and children are climbing out the the bus windows and through the rear exit.

Then there's gun fire!

A body falls back into the bus. Screams. Scattering. Crouching.

BIG DEE - POV

Yeah, it's motherfucking 'Nam!

Gooks climbing out of windows. Out of doors. Cockroaches hatching from everywhere.

BACK TO SCENE

Big Dee crouches from behind his driver's side shield and cautiously moves toward the bus.

Vietnamese run into the fields.

Dee squeezes more targeted kills...PAT! PAT! PAT!

A few drop.

BIG DEE

Sheeet! See how they dropped! Damn gooks! Cover me! Ahma get P'nut!

Big Dee straps the rifle on his back, slots his Beretta and CLICKS the MAGAZINE.

Dee runs and mounts the over turned bus. Tromps along the yellow flank seeking a better vantage.

Dee crouches, levels the rifle and fires at stray scurriers in the field.

INT. BUS - DAY

Jesus turns the side mirror which focuses on Big Dee's crouched image. He aims. Squeezes. Fires off a few rounds.

CRACK!

Big Dee's legs buckle. He staggers. Gains footing.

BLAM!

The second shot turns him. Drops him to his knees. Other shots whisper by like punkies. Big Dee smears blood crawling toward Jesus.

BIG DEE
C'mon Charlie! Fuckin' gook!

Big Dee throws his arm over the shattered window and fires down on Jesus. Jesus is hit.

JESUS
Fuck you! I ain't no fuckin' gook!
I'm a fuckin' Marine, Second
Battalion...Seventh...

Big Dee fires again. pokes the barrel through the hole and fires.

Big Dee falls back on his butt and swings the rifle to his chest. He loads the twenty-rounder as blood pools in his lap.sits watching the runners. He reloads.

HARRIE - POV

Harrie lies on the ground with her hands covering her head. Seems like a ceasefire. Can't see P'nut nowhere.

BACK TO SCENE

Harrie belly-crawls under the van. Big Dee's silhouette's almost immobile.

Here's my chance.

Harrie scoots under the van and comes out on the driver's side. Shes eases up. Big Dee is standing. Taking aim. Firing into the field.

INT. VAN - DAY

Harrie scampers into the drivers seat and pumps the gas. She turns the ignition and the van comes to life.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Harrie goes into a shallow ravine then abruptly turns the car back the way it came.

EXT. ROAD/PASSING THE BUS - DAY (SLOW MOTION)

She passes the bus and the glazed stare of an animal. A frothy Big Dee turns, lifts the rifle.

INT. VAN - DAY

Harrie hunches and SLAMS on the ACCELERATOR.

Billows of dust pour out behind her.

Harrie looks in her rearview mirror. The bus is a dot in the distance and then lost to sight.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Harrie eases the van into a ditch. Waits.

HARRIE - POV

DISTANT SIRENS grow. FLASHING LIGHTS whiz by her window.

BACK TO SCENE

Harrie waits a few moments and nudges up then turns the ignition.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The red spin of a Multnomah County Sheriff's cruiser wash across the abandoned carmel-colored Aspen.

Harrie eases the van forward.

DEPUTY one-arm windmills Harrie to pull over. Then he jabs for her to pull up to his mark.

(CONTINUED)

Harrie remains forty yards.

Deputy advances. His hand on his holster.

Then the POLICE RADIO HISSES to a ROAR.

What follows is a series of unintelligible high-pitched male SQUEALS. CRACKLES.

RADIO (O.S.)

On the bus! On the bus! Shooter's
on the bus! I repeat the shooter...

Multiple MANGLED VOICES spill out...

RADIO (O.S.)

Shots fired! Shots fired! All units
respond! All units...!

The Deputy holsters his weapons and races to his cruiser.

EXT. VIETNAMESE NEIGHBORHOOD - HONG KONG MARKET - DAY

Sign above the Hong Kong Market are Chinese script not Vietnamese, but few mind, nor do they mind the Black kid (P'nut) cross-legged obstructing the front door.

P'nut pops up and cups his hand to the window as Dai exits.

P'NUT

Got 'em?

Dai dangles a small bag.

P'NUT

Hair stuff too?

Dai teases. Opens the bag then shuts it tight. Runs.

She's fast. P'nut hustles to keep pace.

P'NUT

Let me see!

Dai wheels around. Dances the bag above his head. He jumps and jumps. When he grabs it, it spills to the ground. He picks up everything--Orajel, Dark and Lovely relaxer, Band-aids, eyeliners and razors--examining if there's damage to each.

(CONTINUED)

P'NUT
You gonna do it?

DAI
Do wha?

She leaps into a head start.

INT. KHANH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Steam thickens the small space with the unmistakable smell of Bun Thit Nuong (Grilled pork with noodles).

Tan, like a Shiva with six arms, darts through the haze preparing dinner.

LIVING ROOM

Dai and P'nut cross the living room and squeak by the kitchen unnoticed.

BATHROOM

Dai cranks the faucet and water fills the basin. She disappears and reappears with a stool.

DAI
Sit!

He complies.

Dai moistens a small towel and dabs P'nuts eye lids then draws a thick charcoal line with the eye-line pencil. Turns his head to the mirror.

DAI
Like?

She nods him like a ventriloquist dummy. Her cheek touches his.

DAI
"Yes, Miss Dai, I like".

She draws along the other eye.

P'nut places Dark and Lovely in her palm.

(CONTINUED)

DAI
Later. Give me that. No that.

P'NUT
Orajel?

Nods. She snips the nose off the tube, squeezes and dabs along the penciled eye corners.

DAI
Numbs.

She opens a pack of razors.

EXT. KHANH'S HOUSE - DAY

White van plows by, swerves then reverses a halt. Harrie leaps out and leaves the van running.

PORCH

Harrie bangs.

HARRIE
P'nut! P'nut!

Harrie enters the unlocked door...

LIVING ROOM

Tan flies out of the kitchen.

HARRIE
P'nut!

Harrie is about to search the house when Tan blocks her.

TAN
No P'nut!

Harrie shoves Tan to the floor.

HARRIE
Get out of my way, snaggle-tooth bitch!

TAN
I no snaggle-tooth bitch!

(CONTINUED)

Tan jumps up and squats like a sumo. Harrie slams into her. Grappling. Tan bear-hugs Harrie's waist. Harrie drags her a few steps.

Harrie wrenches Tan loose and throws her to the floor.

TAN

You nigger--

Harrie spins. N-word, huh? Harrie yanks Tan's hair and slams Tan's face into the floor. She's pinning Tan when Dai emerges from the bathroom.

Dai rides Harrie's back hailing wild punches.

DAI

Stop! Stop hitting my mother!

Harrie thrusts backwards and she and Dai hit the floor.

P'NUT

Momma?

P'nut's voice punctures the tension in the room. He's standing in the doorway.

HARRIE

P'nut?

Bandages criss-cross his eyes...skull.

Harrie rolls off Dai.

Harrie places her hand on her hands on the ill-wrapped mummy's head.

HARRIE

What kinda people are you?

Harrie hoists her young pharoah into her arms, turns and kicks the front door open...

EXT. KHANH'S HOUSE - STREET - DAY

...where curious VIETNAMESE GAWKERS gather at the idling van.

Harrie forces her way through the crowd.

HARRIE

Get back! Get back!

(CONTINUED)

The Vietnamese sea parts. Harrie cradles P'nut into the passenger's seat.

At the rear of the van, Harrie swings open the cargo doors and spills the boxes of candy to the pavement.

HARRIE
Here ya go, fuckers!

Harrie springs into the van and peels away as onlookers pick up the gold-wrapped chocolate bars.

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - BRIDGE - DAY

White van whips under green girders beneath a...

INSERT - SIGN

...green traffic "Entering Washington" sign

BACK TO SCENE

The van rumbles over the bridge.

INT. VAN - DAY

Blood splotches rim the corners of gauze patches around P'nuts bandages. P'nut breaks the miles-long silence.

P'NUT
Where we goin'?

HARRIE
We need to stop for gas.

EXT. WASHINGTON GAS STATION - DAY

Harrie pulls the van to a secluded pump near the rear of the station. Harrie gets out and meets the WASHINGTON ATTENDANT as he strolls up.

WASHINGTON ATTENDANT
Can't pump your own.

HARRIE
I know.

(CONTINUED)

WASHINGTON ATTENDANT
How much I do you for?

HARRIE
Fill'er up.
(beat)
How far to Canada? Didn't see no
signs.

WASHINGTON ATTENDANT
Canada? Bout three
hundred...signs'll start poppin'
up.

HARRIE
Thanks. Got any gauze.

WASHINGTON ATTENDANT
Gauze?

HARRIE
My boy just had eye surgery.

WASHINGTON ATTENDANT
Don't usually carry it. Safeway or
the Piggly Wiggly might. Providence
Hospital--

HARRIE
Don't need a hospital, thank you.

EXT. PIGGLY WIGGLY - DAY

Harrie has a brown bag of groceries that she puts in the van
rear. Close in on Harrie taking gauze from the bag.

She goes to the passenger side.

INT. VAN - DAY

She unwinds the bandages revealing half-inch razor slits at
the corners of each puckered eye--mask of the blood-weeping
Kabuki.

He squints but can't open his eyes.

P'NUT
See? I'm Vietnamese now, mama.

Harrie drops the gauze.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIE

Why, baby? No baby you'll never...

P'NUT

Uh-huh. Look...

He takes his fingers to the corners of his eyes and slowly raises them.

P'NUT

Bietnameez.

Harrie pulls him to her. Hugs him. Rocks him.

INT. PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Harrie's SHRIEKING the HORN as sidewalk the van in front of the Providence Hospital Emergency entrance.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

She through the door with P'nut in her arms.

HARRIE

Help! Help! My baby needs help!
He's bleeding!

The commotion draws the attention of a couple of PARAMEDICS.

DOCTOR and a nurse walk-run to Harrie.

A paramedic wheels up a gurney. He assists Harrie lying P'nut on the gurney.

The doctor bends over P'nut and gently pokes swelling pustules. He looks up.

DOCTOR

You the mother?

Harrie nods.

Paramedics push P'nut through flaps tailed by the doctor and nurse.

Harrie watches the entourage disappear and tips back though the emergency doors.

EXT. PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL - DAY

Motors running. Harrie climbs into the driver's seat.

INT. VAN - DAY

Harrie puts the car in drive and circles the parking lot.
Parks. Backs out.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Pulls onto Washington Street. Pulls back into the parking lot and up to the Emergency Room entrance.

Idles.

Pulls out of the unloading zone.

Stops.

Turns off the ignition.

Rests her head on the steering wheel.

EXT. PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - DAY (LATER)

Hospital security guard approaches a white van in the parking lot.

EXT. OREGON CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR WOMEN - DAY

Gray light filters just above the ground. Oregon overcast.
Sparse ray russets the brick face of the prison walls.

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

Harrie overlooks a sage sparrow wandering into the prison courtyard before it disappears.

INT. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - VISITATION ROOM - DAY

Clipped metal stool stools align uniform rows of phones. Phones front an impenetrable sheet of bullet proof glass.

Brenda and FRANK file behind bedraggled conjugal. Frank's no Atticus Finch.

(CONTINUED)

Brenda sits at a booth opposite the glass partition. Frank straddling his briefcase. He's in Brenda's people-space, but some people are oblivious.

Reverse angle on GUARD escorts Harrie opposite Brenda.

Brenda waves. Picks up phone. Harrie picks up her phone.

BREND A

This is Frank. A real attorney.
He's showin' me the ropes. Be a
paralegal in no time.

Frank waves at Harrie. Brenda leans forward.

BREND A

I guess you know they shipped Big
Dee's body to Arkansaw.

Harrie nods.

BREND A

Beautiful Service. Military Honors.
Buried next to his brother at
Oakland cemetery.
(beat)
We served Passa...

Harrie looks up.

BREND A

Never wanted the boys no how...so I
don't think he'll fight custody.

HARRIE

Just recruits.

BREND A

Recruits.

Brenda swivels the stool toward Frank who rises and unlatches his briefcase.

FRANK

We've prepared a statement, Miss
Hobson.

Brenda smiles.

BREND A

See? A real attorney. Frank's
always prepared.

Harrie bows her head.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA
Ted's taken Sierra. Sierra's room.
I can make a room in the basement.
Gotta a little space now.

Harrie sets her phone down. Sleeves across her eyes.

BRENDA
P'nut? He...

Harrie knows.

BRENDA
Didn't wanna come in.

Harrie nods.

BRENDA
He wrote you a letter. Wouldn't let
me see it. Said he'll bring himself
when it's the right time.

Guards appears behind Harrie. Brenda stands.

BRENDA
Rooms're nice. Maybe too
girlie...We'll see.
(beat)
Oh. Almost forgot.

Brenda lifts her clear plastic purse to the glass partition.
The plastic purse conceals her i.d., coins and a two inch
porcelain Buddha.

INT. CELL - DAY

Harrie places the porcelain Buddha on the cell window sill.
This Buddha is so fucking jolly he can break the bars.

FADE OUT.

THE END