

# Cajun Justice

by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOLCUM PRISON/CELL - DAY

MIKE DALEY (26) lays unconscious on the bottom bunk in a crude, dark, claustrophobic prison cell. His face is swollen, bloodied, bruised, and stitched. Blood stains his pillow.

He opens his dazed eyes. Lays motionless. Gingerly sits up. He cringes from the pain. He wears a short-sleeved white prison uniform with black stripes down both sides.

An African American inmate - GILBERT McNARY (38) looks down from the top bunk. He stares at Mike.

GILBERT  
Jesus Christ, white man breathin'.

Gilbert hops off his bunk. He's slightly overweight. He sees that Mike is dazed and glassy-eyed.

MIKE  
Where the hell am I?

GILBERT  
You're in Holcum Prison.

MIKE  
Prison?  
(confused)  
How long have I been here?

GILBERT  
About three weeks or so.

MIKE  
What am I doing here?

GILBERT  
Man, they really fucked you up.

MIKE  
I need to talk to someone.

GILBERT  
No!... You don't wanna be doin'  
that. Just keep your ass planted  
here... and your mouth shut.

A bell rings. Cell doors slide open. Gilbert turns and puts on his prison shirt. When he turns back around Mike is gone. Gilbert reacts.

## CELL BLOCK

The inmates stand in a single file line outside their cells. Gilbert rushes out of the cell buttoning his shirt.

A dazed, and slightly stumbling, Mike walks toward two GUARDS. They quickly draw their clubs.

GUARD #1  
Get your ass back in line!

Mike keeps coming. A guard hits him with his club. Mike screams and tumbles to the floor in agony. He's dragged away.

## WARDEN'S OFFICE

Warden ELSON MONHEILER (56) sits at his desk. Overweight. Glasses. A scar down his right cheek. He seems of cold demeanor - and a perfect fit for this hellhole.

The guards drag a suffering Mike into the office.

ELSON  
You causin' a problem, boy?

Mike gingerly shakes his head.

ELSON (CONT'D)  
You're in my house. You do as  
you're told... and nothing more.

MIKE  
There must be a mistake.  
(beat)  
I don't think I belong here.

A guard slams Mike with his club. Mike reels in agony.

ELSON  
You don't think, period.

## CELL

Mike is roughly dumped back into his cell. He slowly sits up and struggles to his feet. He stands motionless and scans the cell.

He gingerly moves over to the old filthy sink. He turns on the water, splashing his face. He stares into the old crusty mirror...

INT. DINER - DAY

Mike is fit. Handsome. Dressed GQ casual. He has finished his lunch and downs the remainder of his iced tea.

The WAITRESS brings his credit card and slip. He signs the slip and smiles at the waitress.

MIKE

Thank you.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Mike exits the diner talking on his cellphone.

MIKE

Hey, babe. I'm heading down to Morgan City. I'll call you when I get there. Love you.

He gets into a gun metal grey Infinity.

INT. INFINITY - DAY

Mike is on a remote county road sparse in homes. A Progressive Insurance notebook sits on the passenger seat.

He appears uncomfortable. He winces and adjusts his posture. He winces again, then glances in the rearview mirror. He pulls over and gets out.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Mike steps inside the woods and pisses. He hears a terse verbal confrontation. He goes further into the woods to investigate, stopping by a tree.

ANGLE

An old black 1978 Camaro is stopped on a dirt road. A sheriff car with lights flashing blocks its path.

A YOUNG MAN - hillbilly type around 23 - is on his knees in front of the car. His hands cuffed behind him.

Parish Sheriff PAUL PACQUETTE (65) - a slightly overweight curmudgeon with a stogie in his mouth - pulls money and bags of Crystal Meth from a brown grocery bag.

PACQUETTE

You tryin' to make a fool of me, boy?

MAN

No, sir, sheriff. I didn't know any that was there. I was just hired to drive the car to Memphis, nothing more.

PACQUETTE

Bullshit! You ran a load through here a few weeks ago and got the best of me.

Pacquette pulls his sidearm.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

But not today.

Pacquette shoots the man twice in the head.

ANGLE

Mike is startled. He stumbles back, cracking twigs and dead leaves. He flees as Pacquette looks over.

INT. INFINITY - DAY

A trembling Mike speeds away. He glances into his rearview mirror. The road behind is clear. He grabs his cellphone.

The Sheriff car ominously appears in his rearview mirror. Mike doesn't notice it as he dials 911. The car violently jolts as he connects.

The cellphone flies out of Mike's hand. It disappears down between the passenger seat and door.

MIKE

Fuck!

Mike glances in his rearview mirror. Sees emergency lights and hears a siren. His car is rammed again. He almost loses control.

Mike looks into the rearview mirror again. Sees Pacquette brake hard. He looks ahead. A truck is pulling onto the road in front of him. Startled, Mike slams on his brakes and swerves hard.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD - DAY

Mike's speeding Infinity blasts through a guardrail into a large clearing. It slides, spins, and flips wildly. There is stark silence as it comes to rest in a huge cloud of debris and dust.

PASSERBY rush to Mike's aide. Sheriff Pacquette stops and gets out of his car - weapon drawn. Passerby pull the unconscious Mike from the car. Pacquette holsters his gun.

ANGLE

An elderly African-American WOMAN on a house porch across the road dials her phone.

INT. HOLCUM PRISON/CELL - NIGHT

Mike sits on his lower bunk. An untouched tray of slop next to him. He stares at the floor for several moments.

MIKE

I witnessed a sheriff kill a guy he had already cuffed. The next thing I know I wake up in here.

GILBERT

You have no idea what's going on.

MIKE

Nobody's told me anything.

Gilbert sets his tray down. Pulls his chair close to Mike.

GILBERT

They're not going to tell you shit. That sheriff you saw, Pacquette. He's been sheriff of his county over 40 years now.

(stressing point)

He's a thievin', murderin' crooked sonofabitch. He's in cahoots with the warden here, and he's just as crooked.

MIKE

I just pulled over to take a piss.

GILBERT

You were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Bad roll of the dice.

MIKE

They gotta listen to me in court.

GILBERT

You won't be going to any court.

MIKE

What the hell you tellin' me?

GILBERT

Must have been witnesses or some other reason he didn't put a bullet in you. Instead, they tuck you away in here. You simply vanish from the outside world. No trial, no file, no paperwork, nothin'. Seen it before.

MIKE

Impossible. How can they just lock someone away?

GILBERT

(chuckles)

You one ignorant white boy. The easiest crime to commit is one in plain sight. People are blinded by their adoration. They don't see the truth.

(beat)

Rumor has it that when Pacquette was first running for sheriff he made sure the incumbent had no chance. He made a side deal with an inmate to let him and two pals escape. He would supply them with a car and money. The incumbent would look bad. The plan worked. They escaped. They went to the location where the car was hidden, but never had a chance. Pacquette was waiting. Killed them all. Ended up looking like a big hero. He's been sheriff ever since. The ignorant people consider him a legend.

(beat)

But what the public doesn't know is that the sheriff and warden use us for outsourced labor. They've cut deals all over the south. They're getting rich off our blood.

MIKE

I can't just spend the rest of my life in here and waste away. What about the prison regulators?

Gilbert chuckles and shakes his head.

GILBERT

Just like Hoover when he ran the FBI, no one is seriously watching Pacquette or Holcum. No one cares. No one. When these so-called prison regulators do bother to show up, they're in the pockets of the sheriff and warden. They get a nice fat envelope, a trip to the strip club, and a couple hoes.

Mike is clearly distraught.

GILBERT (CONT'D)

Listen good. You start talkin' and inquiren', drawin' attention to yourself, they'll feed you to the gators.

(stern)

Keep your mouth shut. Ya hear me? Keep it shut. When you're healed they'll put you on the gang. You keep workin', producin', no slaggin', they'll keep you around. The moment you are of no use... you don't come back.

(beat)

Best you can do is hold out long enough until you get a chance to bug, or die tryin'. And so far, everyone's died tryin'.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

A white short bus with Holcum Penitentiary painted in black letters is parked just off the remote rural road.

Nine INMATES clear trash and thick overgrowth. Two armed GUARDS stand watch.

Mike and Gilbert are leg-chained together. Mike's injuries are almost completely healed. He looks absolutely miserable.

Also leg-chained together in groups of twos are three African American inmates and three white inmates. One lone white inmate wears solo leg-chains.

One guard moves Gilbert and Mike. The other guard is quickly ambushed and stabbed by a white muscular inmate. He screams out, collapses, and dies.

A startled Mike and Gilbert watch the other inmates swarm the remaining guard and stab him to death.



No one moves. A stark silence. A white inmate with a tiger tattoo on his forearm grabs a gun from a downed guard.

The inmate who did the first stabbing grabs the shackle and bus keys. He quickly unlocks his and the tiger tattooed inmate's leg-shackles.

The inmates make a mad dash for the bus. An African-American inmate grabs the other guard's gun. Gilbert and Mike make a dash for the bus and jump in.

INT. PRISON SHORT BUS - DAY

The tiger tattooed inmate jumps behind the wheel. The shackle keys are passed around as the other inmates quickly unlock their leg-shackles. The bus hauls ass out of there.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - HOURS LATER

Numerous OFFICERS and the MEDICAL EXAMINER are on scene. Officers search with hound dogs as a helicopter circles. Elson and a few GUARDS are also present.

Police Inspector JOCELYN SAUNDERS (32) is in charge. Attractive. Brunette. She inspects the scene. Assisting her is Detective ADAM BARONET (27). Youthful. Casually dressed.

ADAM

They fled in a prison vehicle  
approximately two hours ago.

JOCELYN

Great... Just what I need.

ANGLE

Jocelyn lays out a Louisiana state map the hood of a police unit. Several ranking OFFICERS from numerous jurisdictions surround her.

Jocelyn marks seven red X on the map. All but two are in the southwest part of the state.

JOCELYN

Get these roadblocks set up ASAP.  
Let me know as soon as they're in  
place.

Adam approaches. He carries eight files.

ADAM

We have all the escapees  
identified.

INT. PRISON SHORT BUS - DAY

Mike sits in the backseat of the bus and stares out the window. Gilbert sits next to him. A white inmate sits on the other side of Gilbert.

From the back of the bus - with Ray and Gilbert - to the front - as Adam gives a run down on each escapee.

Thin and slinky Ray (28). Slightly chubby GILBERT (38).

ADAM (V.O.)

Ray Littleton, doin' thirty-six for smuggling coke and meth. Gilbert McNary, doin' twenty for two counts of attempted murder.

Next is a stocky WILLIAM (40). African-American.

ADAM (V.O.)

William Tannenhill, twenty for armed robbery.

In the middle row - Greasy, dirty STAN (44). Rail-thin DACK (38). African-American. EDDIE (32). African-American.

ADAM (V.O.)

Stan Kentwood, life for rape, robbery, and murder. Dack Holton, twenty for selling narcotics. Eddie Lang, life, convicted as a minor for killing a detective.

In the first seat is CARL (32) - Muscular. Multi-tattooed. Menace. Driving is NICK (35) - Muscular. Intimidating. A distinctive tiger tattoo on his left-forearm.

ADAM (V.O.)

Carl Bricker, life for robbery and murder.

(beat)

Nick Dodson, life for double homicide.

BACK TO SCENE

Adam and Jocelyn are interrupted by Elson, Sheriff Pacquette, and Pacquette's Deputy BILLY TYLER (27). Sheriff Pacquette holds a paper.

PACQUETTE

Excuse me, Inspector.

JOCELYN

Yes?

PACQUETTE

I'm Sheriff Paul Pacquette, and this is my deputy, Billy. We're working in conjunction with the warden here and the D.O.C.

He hands Jocelyn the paper. She reads it over.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

All apprehended fugitives are to be immediately transferred into our custody.

JOCELYN

You're a long way out of your jurisdiction, sheriff.

PACQUETTE

There are no jurisdictions when fugitives are on the run.

JOCELYN

I just find it very odd that the state police would have to turn over custody of escapees to a parish sheriff.

PACQUETTE

I was sheriff before you were a stain on your momma's panties.  
(intense)  
You better show some respect.

JOCELYN

Well, with all do respect, sheriff, this document is from a parish court and don't mean shit. The entire state of Louisiana is my jurisdiction, and I answer only to the Governor. We will retain custody. You have a nice day.

Jocelyn hands him back the court order. He stares intensely at her. He walks away - followed by Billy and Elson.

ADAM

What the hell was that?

INT. PRISON SHORT BUS - DAY

NICK  
We need to ditch this thing.

EXT. ROADSIDE FRUIT STAND - DAY

There is a stretch van with tinted windows pulled to the side of the road. COTTONSPORT BAPTIST CHURCH on the side. The prison bus pulls over several yards behind it.

INT. PRISON SHORT BUS - DAY

Nick spots a middle aged WOMAN standing outside the van.

NICK  
Let's go.

EXT. PRISON SHORT BUS - CONTINUOUS

The escapees get off the bus. Carl heads for the fruit stand - gun in hand.

EXT. VAN - DAY

Nick approaches the woman at the van. She stays conscious long enough to see Nick's fist coming at her. Nick waves the others over.

EXT. ROADSIDE FRUIT STAND - DAY

Carl rushes the CASHIER... Armed. Hyper. Screaming orders. CUSTOMERS cower. Carl whacks the cashier across the face with his gun. He grabs all the bills from the register.

EXT. CHURCH VAN - DAY

The church van speeds away.

INT. STATE TROOPER CAR - DAY

Louisiana State Trooper GRADY THOMAS (52) - African-American. Grandfatherly - is parked behind a disabled car on this rural highway writing a warning ticket.

He hears an approaching vehicle. He glances up to see the church van speed past him going in the opposite direction.

He looks in his side mirror and catches a glimpse of Nick eyeing him. Grady makes a U-turn. Accelerates after the van.

INT. CHURCH VAN - DAY

WILLIAM

Shit! That was a trooper!

Nick turns onto a rural county road. Eddie glances out the rear tinted window. Grady has activated his emergency lights.

EDDIE

He's on us.

Nick glances in his side mirror and pulls over.

NICK

Everyone just stay cool.

Carl takes off his prison shirt. The others do the same. Nick looks into his side mirror as Grady approaches the van.

EXT. CHURCH VAN - DAY

Grady approaches the van. His right-hand is gripped firmly on his holstered gun.

GRADY

Little heavy on the gas back there.

Grady takes notice of all the men - Nervous. No shirts. Prison pants.

GRADY (CONT'D)

What are you boys up to?

NICK

Doing some work for the church.  
Just goin' on a lunch break.

GRADY

A little late for lunch.

(beat)

Can I see your license, please.

Nick acts like he's looking for his license.

NICK

I think it's back at the church.

Grady carefully looks the men over again. He spots a glimpse of a prison shirt. He hears his car radio beep.

GRADY

You boys sit tight.

As Grady gets to the rear of the van he's jumped by Carl. A gun is shoved in his face. Grady grabs Carl's gun hand.

A single shot rings out. Grady stumbles back. Grazed by the bullet. Carl takes Grady's gun and handcuffs. Nick appears.

NICK  
Finish him off.

Mike jumps out of the van as Carl raises the gun. He knocks it out of Carl's hand. They struggle. Nick intervenes. Slams Mike against the van.

MIKE  
Look... he's better off alive...  
We might need him later as a  
bargaining chip...

He sees no sign of recognition on Nick's face.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
If you kill him, every cop in this  
state will be gunnin' to waste us.

Nick takes the handcuffs. He cuffs Grady and Mike together. He slams Mike hard against the van.

NICK  
You care so much, the two of you  
can stick together.  
(to Carl)  
Get them in the van.

Carl roughly pushes Grady and Mike inside.

INT. COMMAND ROOM - DAY

The room is bustling with activity. The escapees mug shots hang on one wall. A large Louisiana wall map is on another.

Jocelyn drinks a large mug of coffee and immerses herself in the escapees files. Adam rushes over.

ADAM  
They jacked a church van near  
Marksville and fled south.

Jocelyn jumps to her feet and locates Marksville on the map.

JOCELYN  
Alert everyone south of Marksville.

Jocelyn goes out the door. Adam is right behind her.

INT. REMOTE BAYOU ROADHOUSE - NIGHT

Sheriff Pacquette enters the roadhouse. He smokes a cigar. This place is like stepping back in time a hundred years.

He spots Elson sitting at a rear table eating a large meal. A bottle of whiskey sitting on the table.

He grabs a tall glass as he goes over and joins Elson. He pours a half glass of whiskey, swirls it, and takes a big shot. He takes a puff from his cigar. Looks coldly at Elson.

PACQUETTE

You really fucked up. You realize what will happen if that boy contacts anyone?

Elson takes a shot of whiskey.

ELSON

(beat)

We pushed the odds too long.

PACQUETTE

Things need to be handled properly. So you make real sure to keep me up to the minute.

Sheriff Pacquette takes another shot of whiskey. He stands up, takes a big puff from his cigar, then leans in close to Elson.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

You fail me...

He puts his cigar out on Elson's steak... then walks away.

INT. CHURCH VAN - NIGHT

The van is out of gas. Nick steers it off the road. The van cuts through thick brush and stops amongst a cluster of thick trees. It cannot be seen from the road.

The headlights illuminate the Atchafalaya River a few yards ahead of them. Nick kills the headlights.

NICK

We're gonna get some rest here until dawn. When it gets lighter we'll see what our options are.

EXT. ROADSIDE FRUIT STAND - NIGHT

Scene is flooded with POLICE OFFICERS. DETECTIVES. EMS. The prison short bus is loaded onto a flatbed truck.

JOCELYN  
 (to detective)  
 Get the description of that van out  
 multi-state.

Adam comes over. He pulls Jocelyn aside.

ADAM  
 There's a trooper car about three  
 miles from here, and the trooper is  
 missing.  
 (beat)  
 He ran a check on a disabled car  
 about the same time this hit.

EXT. RURAL COUNTY ROAD - NIGHT

Grady's car sits with emergency lights still flashing. It's taped off. Multiple police and trooper cars are on scene.

A helicopter flies over a nearby field and woods - shines its bright spotlight.

OFFICERS and HOUND DOGS work the area. A STATE TROOPER walks Adam and Jocelyn forty feet in front of Grady's patrol car.

TROOPER  
 No sign of him, but we found this.

He shines his flashlight on the ground. A shell casing is there and marked.

Jocelyn pulls her flashlight and walks forward. Dirt is spilled onto the road where the church van accelerated back onto the road. No footprints in the dirt shoulder.

She sees multiple footprints where the church van was stopped. Only one set of footprints leads to the scene. They lead directly from Grady's car.

JOCELYN  
 No sign of a struggle past this  
 spot.

ADAM  
 Chances are they have him.



INT. CHURCH VAN - SUNRISE

Maurice is on watch. The stark darkness is cut by the slim sliver of sunrise as it just appears over the horizon. Nick wakes up. He starts shaking the others awake.

Nick looks out the window. He can barely make out a private dock with a boat about fifty yards up the river. Everyone wakes up. Nick looks out at the boat again.

NICK

We got a boat just up river. We can take it south to the gulf.

DACK

Oh, hell no. I ain't gettin' on no boat.

CARL

Like hell you ain't.

DACK

I can't swim, and I nearly drowned.

NICK

We're not splitting up.

DACK

Listen... to... me! I'm NOT getting on a fucking boat!

Dack shoves Nick then spreads his arms.

DACK (CONT'D)

Bring it on.

Carl violently shoves Dack, knocking him back to the floorboard. Carl pulls Nick aside.

CARL

(sotto)

We can't afford some cowboy. He'll get us tapped for sure. Let him go. He's a total fuck up. He'll throw them off our trail.

NICK

Get him out of this van.

Van door slides open. Dack is violently shoved out. He backs away, arms spread, turns, then jogs away.

EXT. PRIVATE DOCK - SUNRISE

Nick leads the way. The escapees approach the private dock. They keep an eye on the nearby house.

A car passes by on the road. The others force Grady and Mike to the ground as they all lay flat. The car passes.

They all climb into the boat, Grady and Mike shoved along. Eddie unties the boat and pushes it away from the dock. It drifts out into the Atchafalaya River... and darkness.

ANGLE

Grady's badge and name pin lay on the ground near the dock.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The church van is loaded onto a flatbed. Adam is on his cellphone.

ADAM

They jacked a boat from a private dock on the Atchafalaya River, which gives them a straight shot to the gulf if they headed south. We located Trooper Thomas' badge and name pin at the scene, so he's still with them and presumed alive.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Jocelyn follows the Atchafalaya River on the map.

JOCELYN

(into phone)

Okay... get posts set up at... umm... Berwick and Morgan City. If they're heading south, we can set up at the Grand Lake area.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A police roadblock has been set up. The two-lane highway is backed up in both directions.

EXT. ESCAPEES BOAT - DAY

The boat cruises down a remote section of the bayou. It stays under the thick tree branches and foliage.

Everyone in the boat is asleep except William. The motor sputters. Nick stirs awake.

WILLIAM  
We're about to run out of gas.

Nick spots a small rickety dock ahead.

NICK  
Pull up there.

The rest of the escapees begin to wake up as William steers the boat toward the dock. A poorly constructed remote backwoods house comes into view.

EVELYN LaFOURCHE (15). Attractive. Petite. Hangs clothes on a clothesline.

Grady and Mike notice the devious look on the escapees faces. William secures the boat to the dock. Everyone gets out.

EXT. REMOTE BAYOU HOUSE - DAY

Mike and Grady are put in the rear of the group and forced along. Nick leads. They approach Evelyn.

NICK  
Your parents home?

Evelyn turns toward the house and yells in French.

EVELYN  
Mere'! Visitors!

Evelyn's mother MONIQUE (40) - comes out onto the front porch wearing a simple dress. She looks suspiciously at the men. She speaks with a Cajun-French accent.

MONIQUE  
Can I help you?

Eddie and Stan eye two teenage girls inside the screen door.

GILBERT  
We're lost.

NICK  
Can we borrow your phone?

MONIQUE  
No phone. Just head northeast.

CARL  
That's a real sexy dress.

The other escapees laugh. Monique looks coldly at Carl.

MONIQUE  
You better leave now.

CARL  
I like the view.

Monique turns away. Carl suddenly grabs her. He forcibly kisses her and runs his hand up under her dress. Monique struggles, but she is no match.

Mike pushes others out of the way and rushes forward. Grady is pulled with him. Mike tries to pull Carl away from Monique.

MIKE  
Leave her alone!

Nick viciously punches Mike - knocking him unconscious. Grady also falls as Mike collapses. Monique looks over at Evelyn.

MONIQUE  
(urgent)  
Courir dans pere!

Evelyn takes off running. She quickly disappears into the dense woods. Ray takes off after her. The others rush inside.

Carl forces the struggling Monique into the house as screams of the other girls are heard.

Nick stays on the porch with Grady and the unconscious Mike. Grady shoots Nick a horrified look.

NICK  
What the fuck you lookin' at?

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Evelyn runs through the dense woods. She stops to catch her breath. Ray bursts through the overgrowth. Evelyn is startled and staggers back. Ray doesn't make any sudden moves.

RAY  
I won't let them hurt you.

Evelyn takes a few steps back.

RAY (CONT'D)  
They'll kill the others if I don't  
bring you back.

He takes a slow step toward her. Evelyn quickly moves back.

RAY (CONT'D)  
I won't let them touch you. I  
promise. You have my word. Just  
come back to the house with me.

They make intense eye contact. Ray lunges at her, almost grabbing her. Evelyn flees. Ray is right behind her.

Just as Ray grabs her hair, he trips and falls over a rotting log. Evelyn stumbles, but keeps running, and quickly disappears into the woods.

EXT. REMOTE BAYOU HOUSE - DAY

Nick reacts when Ray returns alone, frustrated, and limping badly. Nick just shakes his head. He and Ray go inside the house.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER - DAY

The helicopter follows the Atchafalaya River.

EXT. REMOTE BAYOU HOUSE - DAY

LOUIS LaFOURCHE (23) rows a pirogue to the dock. He has a crossbow slung over his shoulder. Rabbits tied on a rope.

He climbs out of his pirogue. He looks at the escapees boat. He goes over to it and glances inside.

He hears voices, and looks toward the sound as the escapees come out of the house. They carry a gas can, water, and a couple sacks of food.

Gilbert and William also carry guns. A semi-conscious Mike is pulled along by Grady and Eddie.

Louis approaches them. Gilbert shoots him without warning. Louis falls hard to the ground.

RAY  
(laughs)  
Backwoods fuck.

The escapees climb into their boat. They quickly fill the tank and push away from the dock. Stan starts the motor and steers the boat away.

Louis slowly rolls over. He's been shot in his shoulder. He sits up. The escapees boat disappears around a bend.

Louis struggles to his feet. He grabs his crossbow, glances at the house, and takes off into the woods.

EXT. ESCAPEES BOAT - DAY

Mike glares at Nick through his blood-swollen eye.

MIKE  
You sick fuck.

NICK  
What, she alive? What a fucking  
shame.

Nick comes over and kneels in front of his face.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Wow... I really did a number on  
your eye. Let me help you out with  
that.

He grabs Mike's hair, jerking him from his seat. He plunges his head into the water, almost sending Grady over as well.

He holds Mike's head under water for quite a while before yanking him back up. Mike gasps loudly for air.

Nick plunges his head under water again. This time he keeps it under even longer. He pulls it back up. Mike chokes, coughs, and gasps loudly for air.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Nobody wants to hear your shit.

He shoves Mike back down hard. He points a finger at him.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You only exist until I don't need  
you anymore.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Louis comes to the water's edge. He stands hidden amongst the trees and thick foliage. He hears voices. The escapees boat comes into view.

Louis carefully aims his crossbow, wincing from the pain of his bullet wound. He patiently waits for his shot. The escapees boat gets closer. He holds steady aim. He fires.

EXT. ESCAPEES BOAT - DAY

The crossbow arrow impales Gilbert in the right-shoulder. The tip protrudes out his back.

Gilbert screams out in severe agony. He slumps forward, sweats profusely, and badly trembles.

GILBERT

Oh God!  
(panic)  
OH GOD!!

Stan quickly accelerates the boat out of the area. Nick and Carl closely inspect Gilbert's wound. Gilbert is in exceptional agony.

GILBERT (CONT'D)

(pleading)  
Pull it out!

NICK

We can't.

GILBERT

(desperate)  
Do it!

NICK

You'll bleed to death.

GILBERT

I don't give a shit! I can't stand  
this fucking pain!

Eddie punches Gilbert hard. Knocks him unconscious.

EDDIE

I can't stand your fucking mouth.

STAN

What the hell was that?!

EDDIE

Probably that hillbilly cracker.

GRADY

You boys can't be messin' with the  
Cajuns.... This is a whole other  
world... one you ain't ready for.

STAN

Listen up pig, keep your opinion to  
yourself. Ain't no Cajun gonna  
intimidate me.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Detective KURT ADDISON (32). Tall. Well-groomed. Glasses. Crewcut. Enters carrying a folder.

JOCELYN

Detective.

KURT

We got us a very unusual situation,  
and I'm talkin' VERY unusual.

Jocelyn gives Kurt her complete attention.

JOCELYN

I'm intrigued.

Kurt hands Jocelyn a missing person APB on Mike. It has Mike's picture. Photo of his Oklahoma Drivers License. Photos of his Infinity and license plate. Jocelyn reads it over.

JOCELYN (CONT'D)

Interesting.

KURT

Forensics found fifty-seven sets of prints in the vehicles belonging to an individual named Mike Daley. He vanished without a trace on February 3rd en route to an appointment in Morgan City. His girlfriend nor his family have heard from him since, and there has been no activity on his credit cards.

JOCELYN

Maybe he wanted to vanish? People voluntarily disappear all the time.

KURT

Not this guy. Definitely tight with his family, summer wedding planned, great job, lots of friends.

JOCELYN

Anything in his background?

KURT

Nothing. He has no arrest or criminal record whatsoever. Except for two parking tickets in five years, clean as a whistle.



JOCELYN

So what's he doing with the fugitives? He vanished about ten weeks before the Holcum escape. So the question begs is he in on the escape? Did he disappear on purpose? Or did he end up in a bad situation?

KURT

A cross check with the fugitives came up with no connection whatsoever to Mr. Daley.

JOCELYN

If he left behind fifty-seven sets of prints it wasn't by mistake.

KURT

This whole thing is pretty weird.

JOCELYN

Get on it and see what you can find out. We're shifting to Grand Lake.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

The gas station and mini-mart are crowded with weekend travelers. Cars. Trucks with boats. Motorcycles. ATVs. Motor homes.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Dack watches the gas station from shrubs across the highway. He spots a van parked near the rest rooms. A lone MAN is putting air in the tires.

Dack pulls his gun out and darts across the highway. A WOMAN pumping gas notices Dack - and his gun. She immediately calls 911 on her cellphone.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Dack is jittery. Lingers for several moments. He slowly approaches the man who is putting air in the front driver's side tire. The man glances up. Sees Dack in front of him.

MAN

Can I help you?

DACK

Keys and wallet.

The man is startled at the sight of Dacks gun.

MAN

What?

Dack sticks the gun against the side of his head.

DACK

Keys, wallet... now.

MAN

Take it easy.

STAN

You take it easy, and do what  
you're told.

The man takes out his wallet and the keys just as his WIFE  
and young CHILDREN come around the corner of the mini-mart.

The man's wife screams hysterically. She pulls her kids back  
around the corner of the mini-mart.

Dack reacts. Turns his attention toward her. The man shoves  
Dack hard, then flees around the front of the mini-mart.

An approaching siren is heard. Dack momentarily panics. He  
appears confused, briefly paces, and starts to walk away.  
Grips his gun firmly in his hand.

ANGLE

The state trooper car screeches to a stop. The STATE TROOPER  
leaps out, standing behind his open door. He aims his weapon  
at Dack.

TROOPER

Drop the weapon! Do it now!

Dack fires at the trooper. Misses. The trooper returns fire,  
wounding Dack in the arm. Dack fires again, hitting the  
trooper in the abdomen.

The trooper goes down - but fires several shots as he does  
so. Bullets strike Dack in the collar bone and neck. Dack  
stumbles, bleeds profusely, and collapses.

HOURS LATER

Huge POLICE presence. The gas station is completely taped  
off. Police cruisers form a perimeter. A police helicopter  
hovers overhead. OFFICERS with DOGS swarm the surrounding  
area.

Large CROWDS have gathered across the highway to watch the spectacle. Traffic is slowed by onlookers.

The state trooper car remains as is. Numbered markers indicate shell casings and Dacks gun. First Aid remnants scattered next to the car.

Dacks body is covered by a yellow blanket. His right-hand slightly sticks out. Adam is escorted over by a DETECTIVE.

ADAM

How's the trooper doing?

DETECTIVE

Stable condition. He'll make it.

Adam looks under the blanket. He then looks at the photographs of the escapees. He puts Dacks photo on the top. He pulls out his cellphone.

EXT. GRAND LAKE COMMAND POST - DAY

A command post has been established with two command mobile homes - and a large tented post.

Heavily-armed OFFICERS and NATIONAL GUARDSMEN patrol the area. Police boats patrol the lake. Helicopters fly overhead.

ATVs are parked in rows. OFFICERS ride others into the woods. Swamp airboats are at the ready. Teams of OFFICERS maneuver others into the bayou and waterways.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND 1 - DAY

The high-tech mobile home is the nerve center of the massive manhunt. Jocelyn's cellphone rings.

JOCELYN

(into phone)

Yes...

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

ADAM

(into phone)

Confirmation on Dack Holton. Dead at the scene.

(beat)

No traces of the others.

(beat)

Looks like he acted alone.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND 1 - DAY

Jocelyn moves to a window and looks to the north.

JOCELYN

(into phone)

Shit, they might have split up and scattered in different directions.

(beat)

As a precaution we'll set up additional posts to the west and north.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER - NIGHT

The PILOT and a SPOTTER search the bayou. The bright spotlight illuminates the bayou below.

EXT. ESCAPEES BOAT - NIGHT

The bayou is intensely dark. Lite ghostly fog shrouds the water. The boat drifts. Gilbert is slumped forward, his breathing labored. He sweats profusely. His shoulder seriously swollen.

In an instant - someone or something - lunges up from the water, grabs Gilbert, and pulls him overboard. Once they hit the water they're gone. No splashing, no movement, no sound. Carl and Nick leap to their feet.

CARL

Jesus Christ!

RAY

(startled)

What the hell was that?!

NICK

Do I look like I fucking know?!

Eddie looks over the side.

EDDIE

(yelling)

Gil! Gil!

Nick grabs the flashlight and quickly shines it out into the water. There is no sign or sound of Gilbert. Just an eerie stillness.

STAN  
(chuckles)  
Ole Gil's just having a bad day...  
A real bad day.

An owl suddenly hoots, startling Nick. He fires five shots in that direction.

CARL  
Fuck this.

Carl starts the motor. He grabs the rudder stick. Accelerates the boat out of the area.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER - NIGHT

SPOTTER  
I have multiple light flashes of  
some kind at eight o' clock.

The pilot veers the helicopter in that direction.

EXT. ESCAPEES BOAT - NIGHT

Carl steers the small motorboat through the bayou. Nick shines the flashlight ahead of the boat.

CARL  
What the hell got a hold of Gil?

NICK  
I don't know, man, and I don't want  
to find out. This place is giving  
me the creeps.

They hear the growing rumble of a helicopter. The powerful spotlight of the police helicopter illuminates the bayou about a hundred yards away - and getting closer.

CARL  
Fuck!

NICK  
Go!

Carl accelerates full power, dangerously navigating the boat through a lite fog. Nick holds the flashlight low. The helicopter spotlight comes within twenty yards of them.

Carl steers the boat under thick Cypress branches. Nick shines the flashlight at an isolated spot under two enormous Cypress trees. Carl steers the boat over to it.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

The escapees get out of the boat. Pull it out of the water. Step into the thick overgrowth. Settle at a well concealed spot. Nick firmly binds Mike and Grady's ankles together.

NICK

You two try anything, you'll be  
gator food.

William is unnerved. He paces and looks into the shadows.

WILLIAM

They're gonna get us.

NICK

Who?

Nick points out to the police helicopter spotlight - which is now moving well away from them.

EDDIE

Shit. We should of went to New  
Orleans.

STAN

That's the first place they'd look.

RAY

Florida.

MIKE

Canada.

Everyone looks at Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)

They wouldn't expect us to go  
north.

(beat)

Cold climate.

NICK

Fuck you and your cold climate.

INT. CAJUN CABIN - NIGHT

The room is dimly lit by a fire place and lanterns. The light flickers off the walls and ceiling.

Gilbert is alive, clearly weak, and sweating profusely. The arrow has been removed. He is dressed in a black suit.

Gilbert looks around the dimly lit room. He can barely make out figures in the flicker of the lanterns. They appear almost ghost-like.

He tries to move. Winces from the pain. He looks around. He's clearly jittery, nervous, and very scared.

GILBERT

Hello?

No answer. He feels where he's laying. It's a very tight spot. He realizes he's laying in a 19th century style pine coffin. He starts to panic.

GILBERT (CONT'D)

What is this?!

(nervous)

Who are you?

Some CAJUNS file past the coffin like they are at a wake. Weathered life worn faces ghostly in the flickering light.

A few WOMEN make the sign of the cross. A few set small cross chains on Gilbert's chest.

They all chant some sort of Cajun prayer in sync in a low murmur tone. The whole scene is surreal with the low light and flickering lanterns.

GILBERT (CONT'D)

What's happening?

(screams)

Who are you?!

PIERRE LaFOURCHE (53) comes over. Scraggly beard and moustache with a life worn face. He is wearing a hat and clothes that have seen better days.

He stands over Gilbert. Places one arm on the open coffin lid. He looks down at Gilbert.

INSERT - GILBERT'S POV

Pierre stands over him.

GILBERT

Please, I haven't done anything.

PIERRE

The woman you assaulted is my wife.  
The girls you assaulted are my daughters. The man you shot is my son.

GILBERT

I didn't want to be there. You gotta believe me, mister. I wanted no part of it. They did it. They forced me to be there. I couldn't get away.

PIERRE

You shot my son.

GILBERT

I'm sorry. I'm really sorry. I didn't want to do it, but I had no choice. They made me shoot him. If I didn't do it they were going to shoot me.

Pierre remains silent for a few moments.

PIERRE

God forgives you...  
(beat)  
But we do not.

Pierre slowly closes the lid. BLACK.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Two CAJUNS holding lanterns lead the way. Six CAJUNS carry the coffin into the woods. They ignore the very audible sounds of Gilbert kicking, pleading, and screaming.

They walk several yards and stop at a deep grave that has been freshly dug. They slowly lower the coffin down into the dark muddy abyss.

They begin shoveling wet dirt into the hole. Gilbert's frantic kicks and screams become fainter and fainter as the dirt is filled in.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

The escapees are asleep - except for William who is on watch. Mike and Grady are awake. They are surrounded by all the sounds of the dense bayou. They talk in low hushed tones.

MIKE

What's your name?

GRADY

Grady.



MIKE

Mike Daley.

GRADY

Listen son, you boys are making it worse for yourselves. A lot worse. You need to turn yourselves in before this gets any worse.

MIKE

I haven't taken part in any of it.

GRADY

Maybe, maybe not. But you're an escapee, and you're here with them. The only outcome with this situation is going to be a real bad one. You need to stop before anyone else gets hurt.

MIKE

I'm tied up just like you.

(beat)

Look, I know this is going to sound nuts, really nuts, but what I'm about to tell you is the truth. I swear to God. I'm just an insurance adjuster.

GRADY

Then what are you doing with this bunch?

MIKE

I was down here in February doing claim follow ups. I know this is going to sound real crazy, but I witnessed a sheriff kill a guy. Next thing I know, they incarcerate me. No trial, nothing. This Sheriff Pacquette guy and the Holcum warden are into some really crooked shit, including brutality, murder, and forced labor for profit. Been going on for decades.

GRADY

If what you say is true, then someone must be looking for you.

MIKE

My problem is no one knows what happened to me. They probably think I'm dead somewhere.

GRADY

Right now, we have to worry about our asses. You know as well as I do, once they reach the gulf they won't need us as hostages anymore. At that point we're dead.

MIKE

We better figure something out because we're running out of time.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND 1 - NIGHT

A fatigued Jocelyn works with OFFICERS to plan out search grids. They have a large map of the bayou open on a table.

They have highlighted the Atchafalaya River all the way down to Grand Lake. They mark off search grids along - and surrounding - the Atchafalaya River.

JOCELYN

They should stay pretty much to the river if they want to get to the gulf as fast as possible. The big questions are... Did they split up? And where are they heading?

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Blood drips onto Stan's face. He is in a semi-sleep state. He wipes off each drop as it hits him. He shoots up into a sitting position.

STAN

(irritated)  
What's this shit?!

He wipes his face and looks at his hand. It is covered in blood. Another drop hits him. He looks up, a terrified expression coming over him.

William's shirtless body is hanging high up in a tree by his bound wrists. His face is frozen with a horrific look. His body is bruised and bloodied.

STAN (CONT'D)

What the fuck!?

He shoots to his feet and mindlessly stumbles backwards.  
Trips over Nick. Lands on Carl.

NICK  
What the hell are you doing?!

Nick sees the terrified expression on Stan's face. He looks up. Sees William's body. He leaps to his feet.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Hey!

Everyone wakes up. Reactions.

NICK (CONT'D)  
(rushing)  
Let's get moving, now! NOW!

They make their way over to the boat. Nick unbinds Mike and Grady's ankles. They are rudely pushed along by Carl. Eddie and Stan slide the boat into the water.

EDDIE  
Wait a minute... Where's Ray?

They all look around. Ray is nowhere to be seen.

CARL  
I don't want to stick around and  
find out.

EXT. ESCAPEES BOAT - DAY

They climb into the boat and flee the scene. Nick looks hard into the ominous woods.

NICK  
They're watching us.

EXT. TREE - DAY

William is not dead. His terrified eyes are locked onto a lone CAJUN hiding in thick overgrowth. He has a crossbow aimed directly at him.

INT. DINER - DAY

Kurt enters. The same waitress who helped Mike is working. She grabs a menu and approaches.

WAITRESS  
Hi. One?

Kurt shows his badge.

KURT  
I'm Detective Kurt Addison. I'm  
investigating a missing person who  
last used his credit card here back  
on February third.

He shows her the APB Bulletin on Mike.

KURT (CONT'D)  
Recognize him?

WAITRESS  
(nods)  
I remember him. He left me a twenty  
dollar tip on a seven dollar order.

KURT  
Was he with anyone?

WAITRESS  
(shakes head)  
No.

KURT  
How was his demeanor?

WAITRESS  
Normal. Very polite.

KURT  
Any distress?

WAITRESS  
(shakes head)  
None. If I remember he was into  
insurance or something.

Kurt hands her his card.

KURT  
Thank you. Please call me if you  
remember anything.

INT. DETECTIVE UNIT - DAY

Kurt gets in and skims over his notes. He sees the time on  
Mike's credit card receipt is 12:33pm. His attempted 911 call  
was made from his cell at 12:50pm.

He doesn't notice a red 1952 Ford pick up that pulls into the lot near him. The driver - seen only from the waste down - wears overalls and goes into the diner.

Kurt sets a timer on his phone for 17 minutes. He pulls out onto the county road. Heads south. Sets his speed five miles per hour over the speed limit.

EXT. BAYOU HUNTER CAMP - DAY

Ray sits. His arms are tied back around a wood post. His shoes, pants, and shirt are gone. He wears only boxers. He surveys the old battered camp.

There is a large weathered tent with two twin beds. A few crude tables and utensils. Drying line. Large barrel of water. Small campfire. An eight foot long fallen tree trunk about three feet off the ground.

Two CAJUNS walk into the camp. One is scraggly looking. The other weathered - two day shadow - scar above his right-eye.

They carry a dead and gutted ten foot alligator. They secure it to the drying line.

RAY

Hey... What's going on? Who are you guys?

They do not pay Ray any attention as they ladle water from the barrel into buckets and wash up.

RAY (CONT'D)

Hey... I'm talking to you... I know you hear me.

The Cajun with the scar shoots him a bone-chilling stare. Ray looks extremely nervous.

RAY (CONT'D)

Look... I escaped from Holcum Prison. The police are looking for me. If you turn me in I'm sure you'll get some reward money.

(stressing point)

Maybe even a lot of reward money.

The scraggly Cajun comes over without saying a word. He stands in front of Ray, looks down at him, and stares intently.

He pulls Ray to his feet. His arms still tied around the post. The scarred Cajun comes over and joins them. They don't say a word.

RAY (CONT'D)  
You guys know money?

The scarred Cajun gently runs his hand across Ray's mouth - then all around his face. Ray turns his head. The Cajun gently rubs his cheek.

CAJUN  
Pretty mouth... Pretty, pretty boy.

RAY  
I don't play like that.

The scarred Cajun leans in to kiss Ray. He turns away.

RAY (CONT'D)  
Oh... fuck no!

The Cajun licks his cheek. Ray is panicking.

RAY (CONT'D)  
Get away from me!

Ray tries to struggle. No use.

RAY (CONT'D)  
I saw Deliverance. You bitches  
ain't layin' a hand on me!  
(louder)  
You try and touch me it'll be the  
last mistake you ever make!

The scraggly Cajun produces a large hunting knife. He cuts the ropes that bound Ray. They forcibly pull him to the fallen tree log.

RAY (CONT'D)  
Ain't gonna happen!

Ray fights and resists to no avail.

RAY (CONT'D)  
No! No!  
(louder)  
Stop!  
(terse)  
Get off me!

They kick Ray in the side of the knees, greatly reducing resistance. They force him to straddle the fallen log.

His ankles are tethered together with rope underneath the log. He fights to stay in an upright sitting position - but he's forced stomach down on the log.

His wrists are secured tightly together. His arms pulled forward like Superman flying. The end of the rope is tied around a tree. Ray continues to struggle - but to no avail.

RAY (CONT'D)  
You crazy fuckers leave me alone!

The scraggly Cajun takes his hunting knife and cuts off Ray's boxer shorts. Flings them to the ground. He moves in behind Ray while the scarred Cajun moves in front of him.

SCARRED CAJUN  
What is it you said to Louis?...  
Backwoods fuck.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Ray's horrific screams echo throughout the bayou.

RAY (V.O.)  
No! No! Stop! Don't! Nooooo!

INT. DETECTIVE UNIT - DAY

Kurt's timer starts beeping. He slows, looks along the roadside, sees nothing unusual. He keeps driving, passing a spot where a large section of guardrail is missing.

He drives a little further then stops. He looks back. He backs up and stops, glancing at the house across the road.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Kurt gets out of the car and walks into the clearing, closely inspecting the ground. There is hard evidence remaining from Mike's wreck.

The ground has suffered severe trauma. A lot of shattered glass, an Infinity hubcap, and a piece of blinker cover. He picks them up.

He looks back at the road. He can see the clear path the car took. He inspects the spot where a car clearly came to rest.

He walks back to his car, opens his trunk, and places the items into a bag. Shuts the trunk. He looks at the nearby house across the road.

As he walks down the driver's side of the car he sees a red pick up truck in his side mirror. It is stopped on the side of the road seventy-five yards behind him. A lone man inside.

KURT  
Who the fuck is this guy?

ANGLE

Red 1952 Ford pick up truck. The same one that pulled up to the diner. Cigar smoke billows from the drivers window.

ANGLE

Kurt walks down the shoulder then cuts across the road. He approaches the house.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Kurt comes up on the porch and briefly looks around. The view to the clearing is perfect and unobstructed. He glances into a window. Tries the screen door. It is locked. He knocks.

KURT  
Hello?  
(beat)  
Police officer.

He gets no reply. He knocks again.

KURT (CONT'D)  
Hello?. Police. I just need to ask  
you a few questions.

No answer. He glances into the window again - then leaves.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD - DAY

Kurt walks back to his car. He glances at the pick up truck.

ANGLE

The pick up truck does a sudden U-turn and accelerates away.

EXT. GRAND LAKE COMMAND POST - DAY

The media has descended upon the command post. The Louisiana GOVERNOR stands in front of dozens of reporters. Microphones. Cameras.



Standing behind the Governor are Jocelyn. STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL. STATE POLICE COMMANDER. Elson. REPRESENTATIVES from various police agencies, including Pacquette's deputy Billy Tyler.

GOVERNOR

The state of Louisiana is conducting the biggest manhunt in our state's history. These remaining seven fugitives pose a serious threat to the citizens and law enforcement of this great state, and have taken State Trooper Grady Thomas hostage. We are utilizing all our resources in this massive search effort, and are also being assisted by the FBI, Federal Marshals and National Guard. We ask all citizens, especially those in rural and isolated areas, to be extra vigilant, and to immediately report any suspicious activity or persons. The intense manhunt is in progress via air, land, and water, and we hope to bring these violent individuals to justice as swiftly as possible.

INT. SERVICE TENT - DAY

Jocelyn talks with numerous OFFICERS. Kurt enters.

JOCELYN

Excuse me.

She goes over to Kurt.

KURT

I went to the location where Mike Daley last used his credit card. The waitress positively identified him. I also took his last known route, and discovered a location where an accident may have occurred. But a check of all hospitals and morgues came up negative. I have a lot more investigating to do, but it looks like he may be with the fugitives. But the big mystery is how and why?

Jocelyn sees Elson eating lunch with Pacquette's deputy Billy Tyler across the tent.

JOCELYN  
 (gestures)  
 That's Warden Monheiler. Why don't  
 we go ask him.

Jocelyn grabs Mike's missing person bulletin. They approach  
 Elson and Billy.

JOCELYN (CONT'D)  
 Excuse me, warden, can we interrupt  
 for a few minutes?

ELSON  
 What's on your mind?

JOCELYN  
 We have a quick question for you.

Elson puts down his utensils. He sits back and crosses his  
 arms.

ELSON  
 Shoot, missy.

Jocelyn sets Mike's missing person bulletin in front of Elson  
 and Billy. They briefly glance at it.

JOCELYN  
 Have you seen, or do you know of,  
 this individual?

Elson quickly skims over the bulletin again. He hands it to  
 Kurt.

ELSON  
 I have no idea who that is.

KURT  
 You sure? Not one of your inmates?

Elson is clearly irritated.

ELSON  
 Son, before we have a situation  
 here, I done told you I have never  
 seen him before. I have no idea who  
 that is.  
 (hard stare)  
 Am I making myself clear?

KURT  
 Perfectly.

ELSON

Now, if you'll excuse me, I'll  
forgive this intrusion and get back  
to my meal.

KURT

That meal you're stuffing in your  
face is meant for law enforcement  
officers actively conducting the  
search for the escapees.

Kurt keeps his eyes locked on Elson as he reaches down and  
takes a piece of bread off of Elson's plate. Bites into it.

KURT (CONT'D)

We'll be talking again soon,  
warden.

Jocelyn and Kurt walk away.

JOCELYN

That guy stinks.

KURT

Just like a trash can down at the  
docks.

JOCELYN

You're on this full-time. Get  
everything you can. I'm not sure  
what the hell is going on here, but  
this warden and Sheriff Pacquette  
know a lot more than they're  
letting on. If this Mike is still  
alive I have to get him out  
unscathed. This whole thing could  
explode.

Kurt leaves. Jocelyn sits at a table. Takes a drink of her  
coffee. Elson and Billy walk by and shoot her a nasty looks.

JOCELYN (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Someone's shittin' their pants.

EXT. ESCAPEES BOAT - DAY

The escapees navigate through the swamp waters. The trees and  
foliage are very dense. An alligator darts into the water.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Two CAJUNS have camouflaged themselves inside the woods. They watch as the escapees boat gets closer.

EXT. BAYOU BRIDGE - DAY

A police car is parked on an old remote bridge. An OFFICER walks on the bridge. He reacts to the sound of a boat motor.

The officer quickly moves along the bridge. Glances through tree branches. He sees the escapees.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

The Cajuns take careful aim with their crossbows.

EXT. BAYOU BRIDGE - DAY

The officer pulls his gun. Runs along the bridge. When escapees come into view he's over-anxious.

OFFICER

Police! Cut the motor now!

ANGLE

The officer fires. The Cajuns step back into the shadows.

EXT. ESCAPEES BOAT - DAY

Bullets rip into the side of the boat. Carl guns the motor. Nick and Stan return fire.

The officer is shot and tumbles off the bridge. He floats face down as Carl accelerates the boat past the bridge.

INT. POLICE HUMVEE - DAY

Jocelyn and Adam ride in a police Humvee as the driver navigates the bumpy and swampy terrain.

EXT. HOG PEN - DAY

A filthy, bloody, and traumatized Ray is brought to a hog pen. Four feral HOGS squeal and bash the sides of the pen.

CAJUN #1

They ain't been fed in nine days.  
We let them sniff gator blood and  
meat. Works them into a frenzy.

(directly to Ray)

They need to be fed.

The scraggly Cajun steps up and deeply slices Ray's left-arm. They pull Ray up to the pen fence and hold his cut arm out.

His blood drips onto the hogs - working them into a wild and terrifying frenzy. They squeal and bash the side of the pen.

They push Ray farther down the pen. They open a gate and put him into the running pen - a long narrow fenced passage that connects the hog pen to a fenced-in half acre pen.

They force Ray to walk the full length of the running pen. His blood dripping onto the ground.

Two CAJUN BOYS take sticks and repeatedly bash them against the hog pen. The crazed hogs are terrifying.

CAJUN #1 (CONT'D)  
Better run, boy. Feeding time.

The scraggly Cajun pulls up a gate. The crazed hogs race into the running pen.

Ray briefly looks at the blood all over him - then up the wild hogs charging at him full-speed. Ray turns and flees.

Ray makes it out into the half-acre pen. He sees Monique, Evelyn, and the other two GIRLS from the house - all standing along the outside of the fence.

Ray looks at the women, turns to run, and only lives long enough to see the crazed feral hogs charge him full-speed in a horrific - uncontrollable - wild feeding frenzy. They viciously rip him apart.

EXT. TURN-OUT/BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Late afternoon. The Police Humvee carrying Jocelyn and Adam pulls into a turn-out just off an old dirt country road. A small field command post has been established here.

Dozens of OFFICERS are present. Jocelyn - the only woman in the group - stands on the running board of the Humvee.

JOCELYN  
We believe the fugitives could be following the Atchafalaya River south. If they are, then they should be close to this location by now. They may feel safe and let their guard down.  
(beat)  
Let's locate and apprehend them tonight.

EXT. ESCAPEES CAMP - DUSK

The inmates have stopped for the night. They carry on a tense, but hushed, conversation. Mike and Grady sit bound a few feet away.

Mike eyes a paper with a paperclip just protruding from Grady's breast pocket. He reaches over and takes it.

GRADY

(sotto)

What are you doing?

MIKE

(sotto)

I'm getting us out of here.

Mike starts trying to pick the handcuff lock.

GRADY

(sotto)

Be careful. If they catch on they'll waste us.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Officers disperse into the dark woods. Jocelyn moves through the woods with Adam and three other officers. Their guns are drawn. They use pen flashlights.

EXT. ESCAPEES CAMP - NIGHT

Eddie stands guard while the others sleep. He drifts off to sleep. Mike continues to pick the handcuff lock. He finally succeeds. His cuff opens. He picks Grady's cuff.

Mike struggles to untie his tightly bound ankles. He helps Grady untie his ankles.

They look over at the sleeping escapees. Eddie has dosed off. They quietly vanish into the woods.

EXT. BAYOU MARSH - NIGHT

Jocelyn, Adam, and an OFFICER traverse around a marsh. The darkness and fog are blinding.

ADAM

I can't see shit out here.

JOCELYN

You'll hear them before you see them.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Mike and Grady have stopped. Grady rests.

MIKE  
Any idea where the hell we are?

GRADY  
Won't know until morning. We just  
have to get as much distance  
between us and them as possible.

EXT. ESCAPEES CAMP - NIGHT

A frog croaks. Eddie jilts awake. He looks around. Fog moving in. Mike and Grady are gone. Eddie bolts to his feet.

EDDIE  
(sotto)  
Goddamn't!

The others are fast asleep. Unaware. Eddie quickly looks around. He finds a piece of rope ten feet inside the woods.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(sotto)  
Shit!

Eddie takes off running in that direction.

EXT. BAYOU MARSH - NIGHT

Jocelyn, Adam, and the Officer have traversed around the marsh. They regroup and continue into the woods.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Mike and Grady stop for a moment. Grady is struggling.

MIKE  
Can you keep going?

GRADY  
(nods)  
Yeah... Yeah.

Mike puts his right-arm around Grady's back and helps him move. A sudden shot rings out. A bullet ricochets off a tree.

MIKE  
Move!

Mike pulls Grady hard to the left - then pushes him down a small ravine. Mike takes off running away from where Grady is. Eddie appears from a blanket of fog. Goes after Mike.

EXT. RAVINE - NIGHT

Grady rolls down the small thick ravine. He slams hard against a rock. Lands at two tree trunks.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Jocelyn, Adam, and OFFICERS kill their flashlights. They all kneel down onto one knee and listen intently.

ADAM

That shot was real close.

EXT. RAVINE - NIGHT

Grady manages to sit up. His face is twisted in agony. Knee bleeding. He freezes. Expression of fear. He slowly looks up.

Two CAJUNS stand over him. One pulls a large hunting knife. The Cajun moves toward him.

Grady rolls on his side. His face turned to the ground. The Cajun kneels down. Grady tenses up.

The Cajun cuts a length of shirt. He wraps it around Grady's knee. Grady turns back over - but the Cajuns are gone.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Mike quickly ducks into thick foliage. Eddie suddenly comes into view. Befuddled, he stops, scans, turns in circles.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Jocelyn, Adam, and numerous OFFICERS hit a thick patch of woods. Jocelyn stops, motioning to the others. She peers into the darkness.

JOCELYN

(sotto)

Split up.

They move off to the left and the right. Jocelyn enters the dark thicket in front of her. Aims her gun.

ANGLE

Eddie stands motionless - gun in hand. He hears movement, scans all around him.



EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Jocelyn comes upon a steep embankment. She doesn't see it in the darkness and fog.

She loses her footing, and slides and tumbles down the embankment. Her gun flies out her hand. She slams to the ground at the bottom of the embankment.

She reaches for her gun. A shoe suddenly slams down on it. Jocelyn looks up. Eddie is standing over her - aiming his gun at her. He reaches down and takes her gun.

EDDIE

Who the fuck are you?!

Jocelyn doesn't say anything. Eddie sees her badge hanging around her neck. He grabs it.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Fucking pig!

Eddie aims his gun at Jocelyn. He's blind-sided by Mike. They wrestle on the ground. Fight for control of the gun. Mike looks at Jocelyn.

MIKE

Get the hell outta here!

There's a sudden shot. Eddie gets to his feet. Mike holds his arm. Eddie grabs Mike by the hair and yanks him to his feet.

Eddie turns to shoot Jocelyn. Numerous shots ring out. Bullets strike near Eddie and Mike. Eddie returns fire, using Mike as a human shield.

Jocelyn and Mike make eye contact for a few intense seconds. Eddie then forces Mike into the dense woods. They run off. Officers continue to fire. Jocelyn loses it.

JOCELYN

(yells)

Hold your fire! You can't even see who you're firing at!

Jocelyn gets back to her feet. Officers slide down the embankment to assist her.

OFFICER

You okay?

JOCELYN

(nods)

I'm fine.

Adam and an OFFICER give foot pursuit. Quickly disappear into the woods. Jocelyn and the officers with her hear movement. They aim their guns at the noise.

GRADY (O.S.)

(loud)

Hold your fire. Hold your fire.

Grady limps into view. His arms are raised. His wrapped knee is bleeding badly.

GRADY (CONT'D)

I'm State Trooper Grady Thomas.

OFFICERS shine their flashlights on him. See his uniform. Lower their weapons. Two officers immediately go over to him.

JOCELYN

(into radio)

We need helicopters and EMS here  
ASAP.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Eddie keeps violently shoving Mike forward. He smacks him hard across the head a few times with the side of the gun.

EDDIE

You stupid prick.

(shakes head)

You really did it this time.

MIKE

Good. They're going to kill me  
anyway.

They hear movement behind them. They turn and barely see Adam and the officer. They flee just as the officers fire.

Bullets ping and ricochet into the woods. Echo throughout the eerie darkness.

ADAM (O.S.)

Police!

EDDIE

No shit!

Eddie and Mike run harder. Eddie looks over his shoulder. Can barely make out Adam and an officer. The officer fires.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(taunting)  
Come on you fuckin' pigs!

Eddie spins around and fires several rounds.

ANGLE

Bullets ricochet off the tree Adam is taking cover next to. Bark and debris blast into the right-side of his face. He jerks away. Drops his gun. Grabs his face.

ADAM  
Fuck!

The officer rushes over to him.

OFFICER  
Let me see.

He forces Adam to move his hands.

OFFICER (CONT'D)  
Hold still.

The officer pulls large slivers of bark out of Adam's bloody face.

ADAM  
Take it easy!

OFFICER  
You'll be okay.

EXT. FIELD COMMAND POST - NIGHT

Several officers lay Grady in the back of a Humvee. Adam and the officer return. Jocelyn reacts to Adam's bloody face.

JOCELYN  
You okay?

Adam nods. Jocelyn moves over to Grady.

JOCELYN (CONT'D)  
Mr. Thomas. I know you've been through a rough time. But I need to know where they are, and if they're together?

GRADY

They're about two miles back I think. There's five of 'em. One split from the group, and three of 'em most likely dead.

(beat)

They're heading for the gulf so they can get to Mexico.

Jocelyn shoots Adam a grin.

GRADY (CONT'D)

Listen... I don't know about that Mike Daley or his circumstances. But that boy stopped them from killin' me, and he risked his own life to free me tonight.

JOCELYN

I owe him one myself.

GRADY

(nods)

He spun some wild story about witnessing a sheriff commit murder, then he was thrown in Holcum. He claims the sheriff and warden are into illegal activity. He saved my life twice. If it wasn't for him, I'd be dead.

Billy Tyler - standing in the group of officers - slips away.

JOCELYN

We've been investigating his situation and are well aware of it. Good to know he's still alive.

GRADY

Once they reach the gulf they're gonna kill him.

JOCELYN

Not if I can stop it.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Eddie drags Mike back to Nick, Carl, and Stan. The growing rumble of an approaching police helicopter is heard.

Carl slams Mike into a tree and holds him. Nick does the same with Eddie. Takes his gun from him.

NICK  
What the fuck is going on?

Eddie shakes with fright.

EDDIE  
They escaped. I caught him...  
(beat)  
but the trooper got away.

Nick slams him hard against the tree again. He shoves the gun against Eddie's cheek.

NICK  
You were on watch.

EDDIE  
I... I... closed my eyes just for a  
second.

Nick speaks to Carl without taking his eyes off Eddie.

NICK  
Fuck it, I'm tired of these  
assholes. They're just dead weight.  
Let's waste 'em both.

Mike looks around. There's no escape. The police helicopter spotlight illuminates the woods just yards away.

MIKE  
Look... you fire those guns, and  
we're all done.  
(beat)  
We need to get our asses out of  
here now and get off their radar.

The helicopter gets closer. Its rumble is deafening. Its spotlight brighter.

Nick glares at Eddie and pulls the gun away. He jerks him away from the tree.

Nick quickly approaches Mike. He pulls him away from the tree.

Nick slams Mike hard against the side of the face with his gun. Mike falls to his knees. Blood pours out of his mouth.

NICK  
Get up.

Nick yanks him to his feet. Tightly binds his hands in front.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You think it's bad now? Wait until  
we reach the gulf.

They run into the woods. Nick keeps a tight grip on Mike's shirt collar. It is chaos all around them. The low flying helicopter rumbles loudly as its spotlight shines close.

They can see flashlight beams in the distance. Barking dogs are heard. They hit a shallow stream. Carl leads them.

The helicopter turns toward them and illuminates the stream. They cut hard into the woods, barely evading the light. They run over a muddy bank and hit knee high water.

Stan quickly glances behind him. The helicopter is farther back now. He turns back around - and is face-to-face with an evil-looking CAJUN.

Stan stumbles back several feet. Falls on his ass. He quickly gets back to his feet.

STAN  
Shit, man... You scared the hell  
outta me.

The Cajun smiles through rotting teeth. He raises a hatchet. Stan attacks. The Cajun knocks him to the ground and gets on top of him. He raises his hatchet and swings.

Stan just moves his head out of the way. The Cajun raises his hatchet back again, swings it down hard, and amputates Stan's left-ear. Stan screams, grabbing at his bleeding ear hole.

The Cajun raises the hatchet back for the kill. Carl kicks him across the head. The Cajun drops like a rock. Carl pulls Stan to his feet and pushes him along.

STAN (CONT'D)  
(in agony)  
My ear! My ear!

CARL  
Fuck your ear! Move your ass.

They run through the woods to a shallow stream. They run down the center of it and meet up with the others.

Eddie leads the others out of the water. They move quickly. Constantly look behind them. The helicopter is over a mile back.

They run through the woods. Fog thickening. Come across a cove on the edge of a small pond. It is well concealed - rock overhang - thick foliage.

EXT. COVE - NIGHT

They settle into it. The left side of Stan's head is caked with blood. His ear is missing. He moans and shakes.

STAN

That backwoods fuck got my ear!

Nick shoves his gun in Stan's face.

NICK

Shut the fuck up and deal with it.  
These woods are crawlin' with  
Cajuns and cops.

Nick tightly binds Mike's wrists and ankles. Viciously punches him in the face twice. Mike loses consciousness.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS/DETECTIVE ROOM - NIGHT

A female officer approaches Kurt. Puts a paper on his desk.

OFFICER

There were two 911 calls between  
12:50pm and 1:15pm but, by their  
location, they were unrelated to  
each other.

Kurt looks at the paper. He reacts.

KURT

(hyper)  
I knew it!

He immediately gets up.

INT. DETECTIVE UNIT - NIGHT

Kurt parks on the side of the road where Mike's car crashed. He looks at the house across the road.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Kurt walks onto the front porch. He sees the glow of a single light from inside the house. He knocks on the screen door.

KURT

Police.

He gets no reply. He knocks a second time. No reply. He opens the screen door.

KURT (CONT'D)  
Police.

He hears the sound of heavy footsteps moving quickly inside the house. When he knocks on the front door it swings open. The light that was on is now off. The house is dark.

KURT (CONT'D)  
Hello? Police.

He pulls his gun.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Kurt cautiously enters the darkened house.

KURT  
Hello?

He stands perfectly still. Listens intently. He turns as someone rushes past him, pushing him hard to the floor. The person bolts out the front door.

Kurt struggles back to his feet. He reaches around and finds a lamp. He turns it on. He looks around and finds his gun. He surveys the house. Sees a hallway.

He slowly makes his way up the hallway. He sees a bedroom light on.

BEDROOM

Kurt cautiously enters the bedroom. Clear evidence of a struggle. No one is in the bedroom. He lowers his gun.

He starts to leave when he hears a slight noise in the closet. He aims his gun. Approaches with caution.

KURT (CONT'D)  
Police!

He flings open the closet door. An African-American woman cowers inside. The same woman who witnessed Mike's wreck.

She's RUTH WHITNEY (60). She has been severely beaten. Kurt shows his police badge.

KURT (CONT'D)  
Police. It's going to be okay.



She mumbles something inaudible. Kurt leans closer.

RUTH  
I played dead.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - NIGHT

Nick is on watch. Gun in hand. He stretches, then walks out of the cove into the woods and relieves himself.

He hears a noise, stops, kneels down and listens. He hears leaves rustling and cautiously investigates, gripping his gun tightly.

He comes across a small clearing. He stops and listens. Scans the clearing. He is unable to see anything in the darkness.

He turns to go back. He is hit in the face and knocked to the ground, losing his gun. Dazed, he struggles to his feet.

He's hit hard again and tumbles back to the ground. He's brutally hit and kicked. The attack suddenly stops.

Nick is disoriented. He crawls to a nearby tree and sits against it. Someone reaches around the tree and grabs a hold of him.

His mouth is covered by a strip of cloth. His arms are pulled back on either side of the tree trunk and held tightly.

Someone sets a dimly lit lantern on the ground to Nick's left. He tries in vain to turn his head to see who it is. He is pulled tighter against the tree.

A shadowed figure appears just behind and to the left of Nick. Brief and dim flickers of light indicate that it is Pierre LaFourche.

PIERRE  
You have brought grief and  
suffering to many people. You  
attacked my family. All of the pain  
and suffering shall now belong to  
you and your men.

Pierre produces a large hunting knife.

PIERRE (CONT'D)  
You have the mark of the cat. It is  
said that a cat has nine lives. For  
all the pain and suffering you have  
brought, I am taking seven of your  
lives now.

Nick struggles in vain. Pierre deeply slices his arm seven times above his tiger tattoo.

Nick's screams are muffled by the cloth strip being tightly pulled around his mouth. He's smashed in the face with the butt of a rifle. BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Kurt enters the room. Ruth is resting. She has IVs and monitors hooked up to her.

KURT  
Good morning, Ruth. You remember me?

Ruth  
Yes.

KURT  
Good. How are you feeling?

RUTH  
Better.

KURT  
I need to ask you some very important questions. Would that be okay with you?

She nods.

KURT (CONT'D)  
Good.  
(beat)  
Do you know who did this to you?

She nods again.

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

A beaten, bloodied, and dazed William sits in a pirogue. His hands tied in front of him. Three CAJUNS are with him. They row the up to a large barren Cypress tree.

William is clearly terrified. He suddenly leaps to his feet. Attempts to dive into the water. The Cajuns grab him at the last second.

WILLIAM  
(pleading)  
Let me go!

One Cajun throws a rope over a high branch. Two of the Cajuns hold onto one end. The other end is bound around William's wrists.

The Cajuns pull on the other end of the rope, raising William out of the pirogue. He kicks and swings. Tries in vain to get loose. His feet dangle just above the water.

The Cajuns then secure the other end of the rope around a low protruding branch, leaving William dangling. A Cajun produces a large hunting knife. He grabs one of William's ankles.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
(full panic)  
No! No!... Please don't!

The Cajun deeply cuts William's Achilles Tendon. William moans loudly as blood gushes into the water. His foot droops down just inches from the water. The Cajuns quietly row away.

In pain and losing blood - William struggles. His eyes lock on numerous alligators as they slip into the water. He starts to loudly whimper.

He sees the alligators approaching as blood continues to flow from his sliced tendon. He's now too weak to struggle.

The alligators vanish under the water. Several tense moments later they reappear. Their eyes barely above the water just a few feet away from his dangling legs.

The alligators maneuver for position. William kicks at the alligators with his good leg - a useless maneuver.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
No!

The alligators lunge up out of the water and rip off William's legs in a feeding frenzy. Blood pours from his amputated legs. More alligators approach.

EXT. PIROGUE - DAY

The Cajuns hear William's blood-curdling screams, which quickly go silent.

INT. PACQUETTE'S OFFICE - MORNING

Kurt enters Sheriff Pacquette's office. There is a lone woman at a desk. She's SHERI MCKINLEY (51).

SHERI  
Can I help you?

Kurt shows his badge.

KURT  
I'm looking for Sheriff Paul  
Pacquette.

SHERI  
He's been out all week. He's  
assisting in the search for the  
Holcum escapees.

KURT  
Any idea when he'll be in?

SHERI  
Don't know when he'll be back in.  
Keeping me informed is not his top  
priority.

KURT  
Okay then, thank you.

Kurt turns to leave. He notices an old framed newspaper mounted on the wall. He gives it a glance. It is dated October 8, 1990 and is titled COUSINS KEEP LOUISIANA SAFE.

There is a picture of Sheriff Pacquette and Elson. The type underneath states: Sheriff Paul Pacquette and Holcum Warden Elson Monheiler team up to rid Louisiana of crime.

KURT (CONT'D)  
(reacts)  
Fuck me!

Kurt bolts from the office.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Carl shakes everyone awake. He points his gun at Mike's face and motions for them to be quiet.

CARL  
(sotto)  
It's Nick.

Carl unties Mike's ankles. They stay in a tight group as they quietly make their way through the woods.

Carl leads them to the clearing. Nick is slumped against the tree, unconscious. His left-arm and face are caked with dried blood.

Carl is hesitant. He carefully scans the area. Looks at the nervous men.

CARL (CONT'D)  
 (sotto)  
 This could be a trap. Watch my  
 back.

Carl cautiously steps out into the clearing. He quickly makes his way across to Nick. He feels Nick's neck for a pulse.

CARL (CONT'D)  
 Nick?... Nick?

Nick grabs Carl, who struggles to get free from Nick's iron grip.

CARL (CONT'D)  
 Hey!

Nick regains his senses. He looks at his left-arm and feels his face. Winces from the pain.

CARL (CONT'D)  
 What the hell happened?

NICK  
 Those bitches we did have some  
 seriously pissed off relatives.

CARL  
 How many of them are tracking us?

NICK  
 I don't know, but they're some  
 serious mother fuckers.

CARL  
 Why haven't they wasted us all?

NICK  
 They plan to, believe me...  
 (looks around)  
 But they're playing some sadistic  
 game.  
 (beat)  
 We don't have any time to waste, we  
 gotta get to the gulf.

A growing rumbling noise can be heard. Carl helps Nick to his feet. Eddie rushes up to them.

EDDIE

Copters!

Carl and Eddie help Nick. They rush across the clearing toward Mike and Stan. A police helicopter flies overhead before they can make it.

EXT. GRAND LAKE COMMAND POST - DAY

The bright morning sun warms the bayou. Dozens of OFFICERS mill about. Some drink coffee and eat donuts. Others head out on ATVs, swamp airboats, and transport Humvees.

Jocelyn goes over a map with a group of NATIONAL GUARDSMEN. Adam rushes over.

ADAM

They got 'em! Five miles north!

EXT. BAYOU ROAD - DAY

A caravan of Police Humvees activate their emergency lights and sirens. The speed kicks up. Its a bumpy, dusty, and treacherous ride.

INT. POLICE HUMVEE - DAY

As the DRIVER navigates the bumpy road. Adam and Jocelyn can see a low circling police helicopter in the distance.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

The escapees run for their lives. Mike, suffering from a gunshot wound and his hands bound in front of him, is forced to lead the way. Nick firmly holds onto his collar.

A police helicopter flies low and stays on their path. Its rumble deafening.

They hear the sound of motors. See three OFFICERS on ATVs making their way toward them.

Nick, Carl, and Eddie open fire on the officers. One officer is hit. The others stop their ATVs and take cover.

NICK

(urgent)

Let's go!

The escapees flee down a stream. They randomly fire back at the officers.

EXT. BAYOU ROAD - DAY

The Humvees pull off the treacherous bayou road. Everyone quickly exits. They can see the hovering police helicopter about two hundred yards away.

Jocelyn, Adam, and dozens of heavily-armed OFFICERS rush into the bayou woods.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

The escapees continue to run down a shallow stream. They can't see the helicopter - but hear its loud roar. They come to a steep riverbank. An old log crosses the river.

Alligators in the water below. On the other side of the log are very dense woods. Nick tests the log. Makes it across. Carl shoves Mike.

CARL

Get movin'... Fast!

Mike starts across. The police helicopter comes overhead. It comes in low. The rotor blades kick up a violent downdraft. Mike stops, wobbles badly, and inches forward.

He loses his balance and falls, grabbing onto a branch stub at the last second with his bound hands. He dangles over the alligators, but manages to pull himself back up.

He barely makes it back onto the log. He regains his composure and scurries to the other side. Nick quickly grabs a hold of him.

Stan goes next. Wobbly all the way. He makes it. Carl rushes across. Almost falls twice. Eddie hesitates. There is movement behind him. Carl fires at an approaching OFFICER.

CARL (CONT'D)

Move your ass now or we leave you!

Eddie starts across, almost falling. He leaps off the log to the other side. Stan and Carl then struggle to move the log. They manage to dislodge it.

The log falls to the river below - cutting off the officers on the ground. The escapees run into the woods.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER - DAY

The pilot descends closer to the tree tops. But they no longer have a visual on the escapees.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

The escapees get farther and farther from the sound of the helicopter. They hit a stream about knee-high. They move down the center of it.

The stream finally intersects another waterway. They quickly move down that one.

They come out on a far bank under thick woods. The sound of the helicopter is barely audible. They collapse on the riverbank directly across from another dense tree line.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Jocelyn, Adam, and several OFFICERS are at the spot where the log was dislodged into the alligator infested river below.

Jocelyn is annoyed. Looks at her map. Snaps into her radio.

JOCELYN

I need the nearest point that we  
can get across this river some time  
fucking today!

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

The escapees walk along the water's edge. They are extra vigilant.

STAN

I think we lost 'em.

Carl screams out and bowls over. He has a crossbow arrow straight through his upper right-leg. Nick grabs Carl and drags him into the tree line. Carl is shaking uncontrollably.

CARL

Fuck!

Nick pulls the arrow out. Carl screams in agony, almost passing out. Nick rips a strip of shirt and ties it around Carl's wound.

NICK

Hang in there, we're almost to the  
gulf.

Mike, Eddie, and Stan look across the water. Their eyes lock on several armed CAJUNS as they emerge from a thicket.

EDDIE

They're comin'!



The eerily calm Cajuns start to wade across the water. The escapees flee into the woods. Carl is in excruciating pain.

ANGLE

The Cajuns move through the woods at a calm steady pace. Determination is etched on their cold weathered faces.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

The escapees briefly stop. They gasp for air and sweat profusely. They constantly look around. All paranoid.

STAN

They're everywhere.

EDDIE

We just gotta stay ahead of 'em.

STAN

These hillbilly crackers or the cops?

NICK

We ain't lettin' nobody get us.

They spot movement in the woods. More CAJUNS. The escapees take off again. They hit swamp and momentarily stop. The Cajuns are gaining on them.

STAN

Where?!

Nick takes off along the muddy bank. They find a muddy patch which divides the swamp waters in two. Nick takes off across it. The others follow.

Stan is too far to the left. He falls into the water and quickly pulls himself out. He runs into the woods. He has lost the others. He stops and looks around.

STAN (CONT'D)

Where the fuck are you guys?

CAJUNS emerge from the thickets. Stan takes off running. He sees a CAJUN with a rifle making his way down a small incline. Stan cuts to his right and onto a muddy clearing.

He sees water. A dense patch of woods is on the other side. He takes off for it. He runs across a patch of gooey soft mud. He's impaled by a crossbow arrow in his right-arm.

Stan screams and falls to his knees. His face twisted in agony. He struggles to his feet. They instantly sink into the thick gooey mud which holds them like glue.

His eyes dart around as he frantically attempts to get his feet out. No matter how much he tries it's no use.

STAN (CONT'D)

Shit!

He struggles to get free. His legs sink to his shins. He can't move. His right-arm is useless.

STAN (CONT'D)

Goddamn't!

(yells)

Nick! Eddie! Someone! I need help!

Help! Don't leave me! Get your asses back here!

Stan desperately tries to free himself. His legs sink to his knees. He stops moving. His face is drenched with sweat. He breaths hard.

He sees shadows moving around him. Terrified, he slowly looks up to see five CAJUNS. One of them is Louis LaFourche. Another Cajun wears Stan's bloody amputated ear around his neck on a string.

STAN (CONT'D)

Oh, hell no.

Stan feverishly tries to free himself. The more he does so - the more he sinks into the mud. The five Cajuns step up.

STAN (CONT'D)

I ain't goin' out like this. You crazy fucks stay away from me!

Stan swings wildly. Two of the Cajuns grab him by each shoulder and start pushing down on him.

STAN (CONT'D)

Get off me!

They push down harder. Stan has sunk up to his waist. Blood flows out of his arm wound. The Cajuns calmly walk away. They eerily disappear into the woods.

STAN (CONT'D)

(delirious)

Get me outta here!

He hears something rustle in the brush. He catches a glimpse of something moving in the shadows.

STAN (CONT'D)  
(whimpering)  
What?!

He struggles more. He sinks to his chest.

STAN (CONT'D)  
(frantic)  
Help! Help!

His eyes open wide. Pure terror. Mud up to his chin. He screams. No use. His face sinks under the mud. He continues to sink until only a hand is visible. The mud bubbles. The hand vanishes.

More movement and rustling in the woods. A deer walks out from the shadows. It walks to the water and takes a drink.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Carl, Eddie, Mike, and Nick continue to move quickly. Carl is struggling. Clutches his thigh. Eddie pulls him along.

Several shots ring out. A crossbow arrow narrowly misses Mike, impaling a tree. They glance behind them. Terrifying CAJUNS are coming out of the thickets like flies.

NICK  
Go! Go!

They pick up their pace, darting into a thicket. They quickly duck behind thick shrubs and fallen logs. They lay perfectly still. They hear Cajuns moving all around them.

INT. POLICE HUMVEE - DAY

The police Humvees are on the move. Bouncing hard. Mud is flying. Windshield wipers are full bore.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Nick climbs up and carefully sticks his head out. Everything is clear. He waves the others up.

NICK  
Come on. Keep it quiet.

Eddie is quick. Mike struggles because of his arm wound and bound hands. Carl badly struggles because of his leg wound.

Every sound catches their attention. Mike's eyes dart around the woods. A Cajun's arm suddenly swings out from the thick brush wielding a hatchet.

MIKE

Awww!

Mike ducks just in the nick of time - a lock of his hair being taken off. Everyone flees. Several CAJUNS filter out of the woods.

The escapees don't look back. They slightly spread out as they dart through the woods. Carl struggles badly.

They come to a slope. It goes down about forty yards. They see a large pond about sixty yards away from it.

EDDIE

Shit!

Nick shoves Mike, who violently tumbles hard down the slope. Nick slides down after him. Carl gingerly starts down on his ass. He slides much slower than Mike and Nick.

Eddie starts down. A loud shot rings out. He jerks violently. He's wounded in the shoulder-blade. He tumbles uncontrollably down the slope.

Nick grabs Mike and bolts for the pond. Carl lags. Mike and Nick hit the water and start swimming toward the far end.

Carl struggles as he makes it to the water. He briefly glances back at Eddie.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I've been shot. Don't leave me,  
man.

CARL

Shot or not, you better move your  
ass.

Carl ignores his plea. He gingerly enters the water. Eddie gets to his feet, struggling to remain standing. He stumbles toward the pond. The others are well ahead of him.

EDDIE

Don't leave me!

He looks to his right - sees movement in the woods. He takes off running into the woods on his left.

EXT. POND - DAY

Mike and Nick make it to the far end of the pond. Carl is a third of the way across. Mike climbs out. Gets to his feet.

Nick climbs out. He spots the rope from Mike's bound wrists laying in the dirt. He grabs a hold of it.

Nick looks up just as Mike spins around with all his might. He slams Nick across the face with his fist.

Nick is knocked back to the ground. He loses the gun. Mike goes for it. Nick trips him.

NICK  
Ain't happenin'!

The two men scramble for the gun. Nick is quickly on Mike. Punches him in the face and wounded arm. Mike reels in pain. He kicks Nick off.

Mike is on his stomach. Scurries madly for the gun. Just as he reaches it - Nick's foot slams down on it.

Nick reaches down and picks up the gun. He violently yanks Mike to his feet. Pushes him hard.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Get movin'

Nick pushes Mike again. A defiant Mike resists. Nick puts the gun to Mike's head. He presses it hard. Draws blood.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You don't want to try my patience.  
I have an itchy trigger finger.  
(beat)  
Now that we understand each  
other... move your ass.

Nick violently shoves Mike. They disappear into the woods.

EXT. POND - DAY

Carl barely manages to reach the other side of the pond. He struggles badly to get out of the water. He lays exhausted on the ground.

He glances back across the pond. CAJUNS are filtering out of the woods. He forces himself to his feet and stumbles off into the woods.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Exhausted and in pain - Eddie stops. He scans the area.

EDDIE

Where in the fuck are those guys?

He hears two voices on the other side of a thicket. He carefully makes his way into the thicket.

He spots two CAJUNS. A MAN and a WOMAN. Both in their 20s. They are unloading supplies from a pirogue.

Eddie looks around - No other Cajuns are around. He comes charging hard. He slams into the man. Knocks him down.

Eddie grabs a rock and bashes him in the face, shattering his jaw and knocking him unconscious.

The woman screams and attempts to flee. Eddie grabs her. Covers her mouth.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

If you scream again, I'll kill you.

(scans area)

We're getting in that boat, and you're taking me outta here...

He squeezes her harder.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

You understand me?

She nods.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Let's go.

Eddie grabs the man's rifle. He forces the woman into the pirogue. He sits close to her. Keeps the rifle aimed directly at her.

She starts rowing. She never taking her eyes off of him or the rifle.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Movement in the woods.

EXT. PIROGUE - DAY

The woman continues to row the pirogue down a narrowing water passage - covered on both sides with thick woods.

Eddie reacts to a CAJUN standing motionless with his rifle across his chest. He just stares ominously at Eddie. Jittery and nervous - Eddie sits closer to the woman.

EDDIE  
Keep rowin'.

He spots a second CAJUN on the other side of the water. He's just twenty feet away. Armed with a crossbow. He just stares at Eddie as well.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
(to woman)  
What are these fuckers up to?  
(to Cajun)  
I'll kill her!... I mean it!

He looks the woman in the eyes.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
I mean it!

When Eddie looks back - The Cajun men are gone.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
What the fuck?

Eddie looks around. Freezes. His eyes widen. Six CAJUNS are ahead - three on each side of the water. All aim their crossbows directly at him. He pulls the woman very close.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Back off! I'm not fucking around,  
I'll shoot her! You hillbilly  
crackers don't want to try me!

Eddie puts the rifle barrel against the woman's face. In unison the Cajuns harden their aim with the crossbows.

Eddie panics. Attempts to pull the trigger, but the safety is on. He quickly fumbles with the rifle and loses his edge.

Eddie is lassoed. The rope quickly pulled tight, securing his arms to his sides. He drops the rifle. He is violently pulled from the pirogue, dragged through the water onto the bank.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Mike and Nick continue through the woods. Nick's gun digs into Mike's back. They walk slow and careful.

EXT. CAJUN CAMP - DAY

Several Cajun MEN and some WOMEN are in the camp. Eddie is stripped to his underwear. He's tied against a tree.

His arms wrapped back around the trunk. He's tied a foot above the ground. His body weight rubs against the tree trunk. He's disoriented.

Blood runs down Eddie's back. He trembles, his face bloody and swollen. Figures look blurry and off-kilter. Sounds echo deeply in his head.

Cajun figures come up to him. Eddie can't make out their faces. They randomly cut him on his body. Small cuts. Little slices. He jerks his head and mumbles.

EDDIE  
(in anguish)  
What do you want?

Pierre LaFourche walks up to him. He grabs him by the chin and raises his head. He looks at Eddie's beaten face.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
What's happening?

Pierre motions to several men. They cut the ropes. They grab Eddie before he can fall.

They hold Eddie up as two large pails of water are splashed in his face and body - rinsing the blood away. Eddie is more alert. He struggles, but is no match.

They drag him over to one of several oak barrels. They pick Eddie up by his ankles and arms.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Hey!... Hey!...  
(frantic)  
What are you doing?!

They put him inside of the barrel ass first. His face resting against his knees. One man carries over two large pails. He sets them next to the barrel.

Pierre and Louis pick up the large pails. Both are filled to the brim with hundreds of leeches. Pierre and Louis look into the barrel. A terrified Eddie looks up at them.

PIERRE  
Cajun justice.



EDDIE

No! Please... Take me back to  
Holcum.

They dump the leeches into the barrel. They crawl all over Eddie's body. Eddie screams and tries to move, but cannot.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Get me the fuck outta here!

Two men step up and place a lid on the oak barrel. Slightly turn it to lock it on. They nail the lid on using the back end of ax heads.

Several Cajuns then carry the barrel to the bayou waters. They wade several yards into the water pushing the barrel along - then let it go.

The barrel starts floating away with the gentle current. Eddie's horrific muffled screams grow more faint as the barrel drifts away.

EXT. MOONSHINE STILL - DAY

Carl wanders aimlessly. His limp severe. He spots an old abandoned moonshine still with a small adjacent wood shack nestled under a tree. It is eerily quiet.

He approaches the shack with caution. He flings the door open. Empty. Dirt floor. Old shelf.

Carl carefully scans the woods around him. Listens intently for several moments. He turns his attention back to the small wood shack.

INT. SHACK - DAY

Carl enters the small shack. Shuts the door. Flips down a length of wood which is a makeshift lock. He stands still.

He leans against the back wall. Slowly slides down to a sitting position. Winces from the pain. He closes his eyes.

EXT. REMOTE FIELD CAMP - DAY

Jocelyn, Adam, and several OFFICERS get out of their Humvee. Other Humvees and police SUVs line the remote road.

JOCELYN

Okay, let's go... and remember...  
We want them alive.

Everyone disperses. They disappear into the thick brush.

INT. SHACK - DAY

Carl sleeps. Curled up in a fetal position on the dirt floor. Shadows move around the exterior of the shack. Thick white smoke quickly fills the shack.

Carl starts coughing. Moves a bit. Coughs more. He opens his eyes. Reacts. The shack is filled with smoke.

CARL

Shit!

He raises his arm to cover his face and bursts through the door.

EXT. MOONSHINE STILL - CONTINUOUS

Carl bursts out of the shack, stumbles several feet, and falls to his knees. He violently coughs and gasps for air. He suddenly stops. Terror engulfs him.

He looks up to see that eight CAJUNS have surrounded him. They form a circle. All aim crossbows at him.

Carl looks to his left. Then to his right. Just as he's about to run for it - they throw several ropes around him. Pull them tight. He's roped like a steer.

CARL

Get off!

They let Carl struggle until he loses his strength. Pierre then looks at the others. They force Carl along with them.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Nick and Mike continue their trek through the woods. Mike stops. Walks over to a tree.

NICK

What are you doing?

MIKE

Look, man. I have to take a piss. Shoot me if you want, but I gotta piss.

Nick lets out an irritated sigh. Follows. Keeps the gun closely pointed at Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What? Are you gonna watch me piss?

NICK  
Absolutely.

MIKE  
(smirks)  
Really?

NICK  
Make it quick.

Nick backs off just a few steps as Mike takes a piss. He looks out across the woods.

NICK (CONT'D)  
We should be real close to the  
gulf.

Mike slightly turns his head. Notices Nick isn't fully paying attention.

MIKE  
I think we're a few miles north.  
Hard to tell.

Mike looks down as he zips up. Sees a softball-sized rock. He quickly bends down and picks it up as he turns back around.

Nick turns at the last second. Reacts. Quickly raises his gun. Mike bashes the rock into Nick's hand - knocking the gun to the ground.

Mike drops the rock and tackles Nick. Pins him on the ground. He gets a few punches in before Nick kicks him off.

Nick rises to his feet and throws Mike to the ground. He kicks Mike in the stomach then grabs the gun.

He turns toward Mike. Looks just in time to see Mike disappearing into the woods. He fires some quick shots in Mike's direction. Pursues him.

NICK  
Oh, man... Now you really pissed me  
off!

Mike races through the woods as shots ring out behind him. He sprints as fast as he can over the rough terrain. Nick runs after him, barely keeping up.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You're dead!

Nick starts firing shots into the woods. He comes upon a clearing near a pond. Stops. Looks around. He has lost Mike. He listens, looks for movement, then sprints into the woods.

Moments after Nick is gone, Mike rises from beneath the pond's surface. He gasps wildly for air, looks around, then swims out of the pond.

EXT. BAYOU BRIDGE - DAY

Pierre and the other Cajuns walk Carl out to the middle of an old remote bayou foot bridge. It crosses over railroad tracks. A thick fog is moving in.

CARL

I don't know who you guys are, but  
I got no beef with you.

Carl's arms remain tied to his sides. They tie his ankles together, then tie the other end of the rope to the railing of the bridge.

CARL (CONT'D)

Get your hands off of me!  
(adamant)  
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!

They lean Carl back against the railing. He attempts to fight back, but it's useless.

CARL (CONT'D)

You guys have the wrong guy!

They push him off the bridge. Carl hangs upside down by his ankles. His head is about five feet above the tracks - which are increasingly engulfed in thick fog.

Carl screams out and tries in vain to wiggle free. The Cajuns calmly disappear into the woods.

Carl struggles with the rope in a useless effort to get free. He hears a distinct rumbling sound. He stops struggling. Sweat drips from his hair.

He looks down the tracks upside down. He can only see about forty yards down them before they vanish into the wall of fog.

Something barely flickers deep in the fog. It does again. Then again. It gets a little brighter.

The tracks vibrate. The sound of an approaching freight train gets louder. Carl is in a full-blown panic. He frantically struggles to get free.

CARL (CONT'D)  
 Oh God!  
 (yells)  
 Help!

The train roars loud. It speeds out of the fog just a few yards in front of him.

CARL (CONT'D)  
 (eyes widen)  
 Nooooo!

EXT. BAYOU BRIDGE - DAY

There is a loud thud. The end of the shredded rope flies back onto the bridge. Only one foot and ankle are left attached to the rope.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

Jocelyn and her group have splintered off. She walks very slow and deliberate. Her cellphone rings - startling her.

JOCELYN  
 (into phone)  
 Yeah?  
 (beat)  
 Kurt... Kurt! Slow down, you're breaking up.

INT. DETECTIVE UNIT - DAY

Kurt races up the highway.

KURT  
 (into phone)  
 I found a witness to Mike Daley's accident. She claims Sheriff Pacquette took Mike from the scene before EMS arrived. Also, Pacquette's deputy tried to kill her last night. He almost beat her to death. But here's the kicker... Pacquette and the warden are cousins. Whatever they're into, they're into together.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

JOCELYN

(into phone)

Shit. This whole thing is going to  
explode.

(beat)

I'll call you back when I get to  
post.

Jocelyn hangs up her cellphone and slips it back into her pocket. She hears leaves rustle.

She turns just as Billy slams her across the face. He knocks her unconscious. He stares at her.

BILLY

(into radio)

I got her, sheriff.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Nick moves slow. Lite fog and the shadows of late afternoon are creeping in.

The stillness is broken only by a random rustling of leaves. A snake slithering around the overgrown brush. A breeze ripping the trees.

Nick jumps at every sound. He carefully scans the woods. He stops and looks around.

More audible sounds. Wood cracking, sticks breaking, footsteps across the bayou. He quickly crouches down behind a tree.

Another crunch of wood... then another... then another. They seem to be coming from all directions. Then silence. Dead silence.

Nick cautiously straightens up. Looks around. Regains his confidence. A satisfied half-grin on his face.

Then... a strong force cutting through the air - through the tree leaves until - an arrow splits the tree just inches from his face.

He warily eyes it until another one whizzes by him. He turns and sprints into the woods.

Dozens of arrows fly from the trees... followed by a gang of CAJUN hunters determined to kill their human prey.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Mike is soaking wet. He makes his way through the woods as the day gets late. He moves with quickness and determination. He steps out of the woods onto a small relatively clear path.

He looks to his right and... no more than fifteen feet away stands Louis LaFourche. A shotgun is strapped to his back. A crossbow in hand.

Louis looks at him. Mike stays calm. Raises his hands. Gives Louis a wave off gesture.

MIKE

Hey...

Louis raises his crossbow.

MIKE (CONT'D)

No!

Louis takes aim. Mike flees down a path and ducks into the woods. An arrow whizzes behind him. He comes to a small creek, briefly stops, then sprints down the creek bank.

Louis comes to the same small creek. Slows down. Carefully searches.

ANGLE

Mike precariously straddles a tree branch overlooking the creek.

He maintains cover behind the leaves of the tree and watches from above. Louis cautiously approaches and carefully looks around.

The branch cracks - barely able to sustain Mike's weight. Louis searches near the tree. He stops directly below Mike, looks around, listens.

The tree branch cracks and the noise echoes throughout the woods. Louis looks up. Doesn't spot Mike. He takes a step forward. Another crack. Louis stops and looks up again.

This time he does spot Mike. He raises his crossbow. The branch snaps. Mike falls from the tree landing on Louis.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

They wrestle violently in the shallow creek. Louis is strong. Mike manages to get on top of him.

MIKE  
(pleading)  
I didn't hurt any of those girls! I  
didn't touch anyone!

Louis forcibly rolls Mike over. Gets on top of him. Louis grabs a crossbow arrow. He clutches the arrow in his fist. He raises it above his head, ready to plunge it into Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Don't do this, man! I don't want to  
hurt you!

Mike grabs Louis's arm with one hand. Holds the arrow at bay. He grasps Louis's neck with the other hand. He struggles with all his might.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
I'm a hostage! Do you understand?  
I'm a fucking hostage! They're  
going to kill me!

They wildly struggle with the arrow. Louis forcefully tries to stab Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Listen to me! I tried to protect  
those girls!

Mike lets go of Louis's neck and slugs him across the jaw. The punch stuns Louis long enough for Mike to throw him into the creek.

Mike jumps to his feet and tackles him from behind. He holds Louis's head under water with one hand as he unstraps a shotgun from his back.

Mike lets Louis go after freeing the shotgun. Louis quickly spins over and rolls out of the water. Mike has the shotgun aimed straight at his face.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Listen to me, please. I don't want  
to hurt you. I'm a hostage. I just  
want to get to the police.  
(points)  
Just walk away.

Louis quickly reaches for his crossbow. Mike swings the shotgun. He slams the butt of the gun into Louis' head, knocking him unconscious. Mike takes off into the woods.



Mike races through the woods. He grips the shotgun. He stops when he hears some rustling in the brush.

He crouches down, hiding behind some foliage. He sees Nick frantically race by - soon followed by a stampede of CAJUNS.

Mike immediately retreats further back into the foliage. He avoids detection. The sounds of the chase fade into the dense woods. Mike breathes a sigh of relief.

Then... the click of a gun cocking... a cold gun barrel pressed hard against his head. A look of defeat on his face.

He looks up... Sheriff Pacquette - wide shit-faced grin plastered on his face - has him dead to rights. Pacquette extends his free hand. It's gloved.

PACQUETTE

Why don't you hand me the shotgun,  
son?

Mike hesitates.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

(stern)

Listen... This ain't a negotiation,  
boy.

Mike reluctantly places the shotgun in Pacquette's gloved hand. Pacquette keeps his eyes locked on Mike in a creepy stare as he ejects all shells. He pockets them.

He then loads one shell back into the shotgun. He hands Mike a pair of handcuffs.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

Cuff yourself.

Mike reluctantly cuffs his hands in front of him. Pacquette reaches out. He checks the cuffs to make sure they're secure.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

Get movin'

Pacquette holsters his gun. He shoves the shotgun into Mike's back, pushing him through the woods. They come to small clearing. Pacquette grabs Mike and stops him.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

Here.

Billy holds Jocelyn at gunpoint with both Jocelyn's gun and his own. Jocelyn's face bruised and bleeding.

A strip of shirt is tied around her mouth and her hands are cuffed behind her. Pacquette pushes Mike forward until he's standing a few feet in front of Jocelyn.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)  
We have a way of doin' things down here. You outsiders don't mess with our ways.

He looks at Jocelyn and Mike.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)  
Let's get this done.

Pacquette steps in front of Mike. Points his gun at Mike's head. He pulls some keys from his pocket.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)  
Now... I'm going to undo these handcuffs and you're not gonna do anything stupid.

Pacquette unlocks Mike's cuffs. Mike does nothing.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)  
Look to your right.

Mike looks to his right. The river is right there. He can see it open into the gulf. The vast water shimmers in the setting sun. A small motor boat sits on the water's edge.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)  
You see that?

MIKE  
(nods)  
Yeah, I see it.

PACQUETTE  
It's yours... take it. But first you need yo do something for me.

Pacquette places the shotgun in Mike's hands while keeping the handgun firmly placed against his head.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)  
It's one tiny little thing. A favor to me.  
(beat)  
All you have to do to be free is... just shoot her.

Mike vigorously shakes his head.

MIKE

No way.

PACQUETTE

No? Think before you answer here.  
You shoot her, and you're a free  
man.

(beat)

Live the rest of your days enjoying  
life.

MIKE

Shoot her yourself.

PACQUETTE

Can't do that... Too many things  
can come back to haunt me.

Mike hesitates. His hands tremble.

MIKE

How do I know you won't kill me?

PACQUETTE

Well, boy... I certainly will if  
you don't shoot her.

Mike looks at the boat. Looks at Jocelyn. She looks truly  
frightened. Completely vulnerable.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

You have one shot. One chance at  
freedom.

He steps up close to Mike.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)

Don't disappoint me, son.

Mike firms up. Takes careful aim at Jocelyn. Holds aim.  
Severely trembles.

MIKE

(to Jocelyn)

Sorry.

Pacquette holds back a smile. Quietly places his thumb on the  
gun cock of his gun so he can kill Mike.

Mike squeezes the trigger... BLAAM!! The shotgun blasts a  
mound of dirt way over Jocelyn's left shoulder. He didn't  
come close to shooting her.

Mike instantly swings the shotgun around and sweeps Pacquette's legs out from under him. Pacquette's gun flies from his hand as he hits the ground.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
 (to Jocelyn)  
 Run!!

Jocelyn dives for nearby foliage. Mike swings the shotgun around and slams it into Billy's shins - tripping him just as he fires repeatedly at Jocelyn.

Billy grabs his gun and stumbles back to his feet. He chases Jocelyn into the woods.

Mike jumps on top of Pacquette - who viciously fights back. Mike manages to shove the shotgun in his face.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
 It's over, asshole!

Pacquette lets out an eerie chuckle.

PACQUETTE  
 What?  
 (beat)  
 You gonna shoot me?

MIKE  
 Yeah.

He squeezes the trigger... nothing but the soft click of an empty gun. Pacquette smirks. He throws Mike off of him. Pacquette rises to his feet.

Mike tries to get up. Pacquette punches him in the head. Knocks him backwards. Mike stumbles and wobbles.

Pacquette grabs him by the hair. Throws him into a puddle of shallow swamp water.

Pacquette quickly gets on top of him. Begins punching him - Throws all his weight into each punch.

PACQUETTE  
 That all you got, boy?

Mike kicks Pacquette in the crotch - momentarily stunning him. Mike jumps to his feet. He sees the shotgun lying on the ground. He runs to it. Pacquette following right behind.

Mike grabs the shotgun by the barrel. Quickly spins around. Swings the shotgun like a baseball bat.

He slams the butt of the gun into Pacquette's head. He falls to the ground - critically dazed.

Distant gunshots echo through the trees. Mike grabs Jocelyn's gun. Mike runs in the same direction as Jocelyn and Billy. The stunned Pacquette is sprawled on the ground.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Adam and officers stop.

ADAM  
(into radio)  
Shots fired! Sector one!

They rush in the direction of the shots.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

Jocelyn falls to her ass, brings her knees to her face, and pulls her arms forward over the back of her legs. Her hands are now cuffed in front.

She pulls keys out her pocket. Unlocks the cuffs. She slips her keys back into her pocket. She runs hard.

EXT. MARSH - DAY

Nick shoots out of the woods. He runs onto a large patch of thick marsh grass. He stops to get his bearings.

He spots a nearby helicopter searching with a spotlight as the late afternoon shadows and increasing fog take hold. He looks around then starts running. He hears an approaching police airboat.

NICK  
Shit!

He lays flat in the grass. Lays perfectly still.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

Jocelyn sprints through the woods. Billy pursues her. He randomly fires shots in her direction. She ducks into some brush.

BILLY  
Come out, come out wherever you  
are?

As Billy sprints past, she slams him with a rock. He falls face first on the ground. His gun flies out of his hand.

Billy woefully stumbles to his feet, bleeding profusely from his head. He staggers a few yards.

Jocelyn jumps out of the brush to flee. Billy reaches out and grab her. He violently throws her to the ground. He stumbles toward her - his face covered in blood.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
You're not going anywhere, bitch!

Jocelyn turns with her hands clasped together - forming a double fist. She slams them into Billy's head. He stumbles back. She kicks him in the gut.

He doubles over in pain. She kicks him in the head. She tries to kick him a third time - but he reaches out and grabs her leg. He pulls her to the ground.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
You die here!

He grabs her by the hair and drags her to the edge of a shrub filled incline. The incline is about eight feet high above the water.

Billy throws Jocelyn down into the water. He then jumps down himself.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Mike races through the woods. Constantly scans around him.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

Jocelyn struggles to rise to her feet in the water. Billy grabs her neck with both hands. He begins squeezing.

Jocelyn fights back with everything she has. She unsuccessfully attempts to rip his hands from her neck.

She simply doesn't have the strength to overcome Billy's iron grip. Billy looks at her. A slight sick smile on his face as he strangles her.

BILLY  
Fighting back's just gonna make you  
die faster.

Jocelyn removes one hand and reaches under water. She reaches for a case attached to the back of her belt.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 I like it when they struggle.  
 (beat)  
 It gives me a rush.

Jocelyn opens the case under water. She pulls out a knife. Billy grins wide as he looks at her.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 I been wantin' to wrap my hands  
 around your neck since the moment I  
 laid eyes on you.

Jocelyn rams the knife into Billy's stomach. He looks stunned. His eyes widen. She turns the knife, pulls it out, and stabs him again. Billy's grasp weakens. He relents.

Billy floats in the water. His stomach bleeding profusely. Jocelyn coughs and gasps for air.

JOCELYN  
 I got skills, mother fucker!

She takes a moment to regroup. She gets out of the water and struggles up the incline.

She hears splashing behind her. She looks over her shoulder. She is just able to witness Billy's horrific demise.

The profusely bleeding Billy is attempting to catch her. An alligator pops up behind him. It momentarily disappears back under water.

As Billy reaches the edge of the incline - he's violently pulled underwater. Horrific screaming as this happens. The alligator has him in a death roll. Blood flows from Billy.

Billy shoots back up. Shocked and dazed. He gasps loudly waves his arms, then is pulled underwater by the alligator for good - blood saturates the water.

EXT. POLICE SWAMP AIRBOAT - DAY

OFFICERS on the boat scan the surrounding woods. One of them spots Nick laying in the grass. He picks up his binoculars and takes a closer look. Turns to other officers.

OFFICER  
 I think I have something.  
 (points)  
 Over there in the grass.

All of the officers concentrate their attention on Nick.

OFFICER #2  
Check it out.

EXT. MARSH - DAY

Nick remains perfectly still. To his horror - the boat changes direction and heads directly for him.

NICK  
(sotto)  
Fuck!

The boat gets dangerously close. Nick suddenly jumps up. He takes off running toward the woods.

EXT. POLICE SWAMP AIRBOAT - LATE AFTERNOON

An OFFICER gets off a quick shot. The bullet hits Nick in the back of the right-leg.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

Nick jerks from the shot. He grabs the back of his leg. He's limping noticeably - but he keeps running. He disappears deep into the woods.

EXT. POLICE SWAMP AIRBOAT - DAY

OFFICER  
(into radio)  
This is boat twelve. We are in foot pursuit. Sending up a marker flare.

The OFFICERS jump off the boat as a flare is launched. They run into the woods after Nick.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

Jocelyn is exhausted. She can hear the rumble of police helicopters. Her phone and radio are gone. She has no gun.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Mike makes his way through the woods.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

Jocelyn hears movement. A bloody and very pissed off Sheriff Pacquette appears. He holds the shotgun.

PACQUETTE  
Don't move young lady. I'm afraid this is it for you.



Jocelyn stops in her tracks. She stares at Pacquette.

PACQUETTE (CONT'D)  
Any sudden moves and this shotgun  
will cut you in two. You shoulda  
minded yer own business.

He raises the shotgun at her. Jocelyn quickly looks around. She has nowhere to run. There is a shot. Jocelyn jolts from fear. Realizes she isn't shot.

She looks up. Sheriff Pacquette falls to his knees. He drops the shotgun, his eyes are distant and glossy, his hand is on his stomach. He's covered with blood.

Sheriff Pacquette gasps loudly for air. He lets out one final loud gasp - looks at Jocelyn - then falls face first. He's dead.

Jocelyn looks behind her. Mike is about twenty yards behind her. He comes out of the tree line - gun in hand.

JOCELYN  
Mike Daley... I want to thank you  
for what you've done. You are my  
guardian angel.

Mike is clearly exhausted. He hands her the gun. He extends his cuffed hands. Jocelyn removes the cuffs. They start walking.

MIKE  
There was a State Trooper with  
us...

JOCELYN  
Trooper Thomas made it out safe. He  
sustained some injuries and was  
airlifted to a hospital. He'll make  
it.  
(beat)  
Now we need to find out exactly how  
you ended up in this situation?

MIKE  
Trust me... I got one helluva story  
for you.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Nick quickly makes his way through the dense woods. His limp is much worse. His wounded leg is soaked with blood.

EXT. MARSH - DAY

Several police airboats converge on the area where Nick was first spotted. Several OFFICERS jump from their boats. They quickly rush into the woods.

EXT. POLICE HELICOPTER - DAY

The helicopter flies just a few feet above the tree tops. The powerful spotlight illuminates the woods.

EXT. BAYOU WOODS - DAY

Nick spots a CAJUN standing amongst a thick clump of trees. He changes direction. He runs a few yards, but finds his path blocked by another CAJUN. He changes direction once more.

Nick quickly makes his way through a thicket. He trips over a fallen branch. He starts to get up, but suddenly sees two legs in front of him. He cautiously looks up.

Pierre LaFourche is standing in front of him. With Pierre are several of the CAJUNS.

Nick's eyes widen with incredible fear. Two of the Cajuns grab Nick by the hair. They rudely yank him up to his knees.

NICK

I'm gonna kick your Cajun ass.

Pierre pulls out his large hunting knife. Just as he's about to cut Nick's throat - they hear approaching officers. Pierre signals to the others. They quickly vanish into the woods.

Pierre stares hard at Nick. Looks at his cat tattoo. He slices Nick's arm two more times for a total of nine slices.

PIERRE

A cat doesn't have ten lives,  
Catman.

Pierre quickly vanishes into the woods. Nick gets to his feet. He runs away, limping badly. He reaches the water. Several OFFICERS immediately spot him. He quickly turns and runs in another direction.

OFFICER #1

Freeze!

Nick turns to run. He's surrounded by officers.

OFFICER #2

Hands on your head! Do it now!

A clearly frustrated Nick finally gives up. He raises both of his arms. Officers rush him. They quickly search him. His hands are handcuffed behind him as Adam approaches.

ADAM  
(into radio)  
We have Nick Dodson in custody.

NICK  
You got lucky.

ADAM  
Not really, Nick. Just played the hunches.  
(beat)  
You should of headed north. You would be in Canada by now.

Nick shoots Adam a priceless look. He looks into the woods.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
Something in there scares you.

NICK  
Just get me the fuck outta here.

Adam motions to officers. They escort Nick away. Adam starts to follow, suddenly stops, and looks back into the woods.

Adam scans the woods and appears uncomfortable as he stares hard at a dark thicket for several moments. He turns and walks away.

EXT. REMOTE COMMAND POST - DAY

Jocelyn and Mike approach a group of about two dozen OFFICERS and EMS PERSONNEL. Two Humvees, an airboat, ambulance, police boat, and ATVs are on site. She takes Mike over to the EMS personnel.

JOCELYN  
He has a gunshot wound in the arm.  
(to officer)  
Get him water and something to eat.

Mike sits on a gurney. EMS personnel start treating his wounds. Adam sees Jocelyn. Rushes over. He notices Mike.

ADAM  
Jesus... we've been going ape shit looking for you.

JOCELYN  
Pacquette and Billy Tyler are dead.

ADAM  
You okay?

JOCELYN  
A little bruised, but fine.

ADAM  
We got Nick Dodson.

He nods over to a police boat. Nick stands beside the boat.  
His wounded leg is temporarily wrapped.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
He's a little out of it... Some  
crazy shit about people trying to  
kill him or something.

JOCELYN  
This is Mike Daley.

ADAM  
What about the others?

MIKE  
Never had a chance in the swamp.

ADAM  
Dodson has a serious leg wound.  
We're taking him out by boat.

JOCELYN  
Mr. Baronet. You need to secure a  
warrant and go arrest Warden  
Monheiler. That man will be  
spending eternity in prison.

ADAM  
My pleasure.

JOCELYN  
Mr. Daley has quite a story to  
tell, and I want to hear it.

Adam walks away. Mike's arm is finished being wrapped. His  
other wounds cleaned. He is laid slightly upright on the  
gurney. Given a large bottle of water and two baguettes.

JOCELYN (CONT'D)  
Let's get you home. You have some  
people waiting to see you.

EXT. POLICE BOAT - DAY

The officers get Nick aboard the police boat. They secure him. Because of his leg wound he can't sit down. Adam and an officer hold onto Nick. The boat moves out.

EXT. BAYOU - DAY

The end of a rifle barrel slowly sticks out of thick overgrowth about seventy-five yards away.

ANGLE

Monique LaFourche holds the rifle. She takes careful aim. Holds it.

INSERT - RIFLE SCOPE

The scope moves along the people on the boat. It settles on Nick's crotch.

MONTAGE SHOT

The oak barrel with Eddie inside floats in the bayou as the sound of a single rifle shot is heard.

FADE OUT.

MUSIC UP: CCRs Bad Moon Rising

ROLL CREDITS.

THE END