

DUCK TAPES

an original screenplay by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

The epitome of elegance, anchored by a magnificent fountain. People rush in every direction.

Guests approach the DESK CLERK, teen female.

CLERK

Welcome to the Peabody Hotel, how long will you be in Memphis?

Other Guests stand near the empty fountain, befuddled. Cameras hang from their necks.

A telephone rings. The Clerk answers before the first ring ends. Whispers urgently into the receiver.

The door to the street bursts open. PRISCILLA MALLARD-BUFFLEHEAD (50s) rushes in. If possible, she exudes more raw elegance than the lobby, all the way down to her fur stole.

She walks straight to the fountain. Frowns. Turns toward the front desk.

PRISCILLA

Where are the damn ducks! I flew all the way from Boca. Where are the damn ducks?

She grabs a passing porter by the scruff of the neck. He screeches to a halt.

She pulls him back to her and with his collar firmly in her grasp, peers into his face.

PRISCILLA (CONT'D)

Where are the damn ducks?

The porter detaches himself from her grip, looks frantically for assistance.

Priscilla looks around for the ducks. Twirls in front of the fountain, fur stole flapping like rotors on a helicopter.

Porter seizes the opportunity, escapes out the front door.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

HAWK EIDER, 30s, buff, steely eyes, ambles past the hotel. Talks to the air, a Bluetooth unit hangs from his ear.

HAWK

... and then she said -- wait, I've got another call coming in.

He puts the caller on hold and takes the other call.

HAWK (CONT'D)

Hawk Eider here.

VOICE OF THE BOSS

Good afternoon, Mister Eider.

HAWK

Hello, Sir.

VOICE OF THE BOSS

A situation has arisen involving a sleeper cell of Tennessee terrorists.

HAWK

Tennessee terrorists. Too tough to try Tango Trio I take it?

VOICE OF THE BOSS

Too tall a task for Tango Trio. Toppling Tennessee terrorists takes top training.

HAWK

So, of course, you called me.

VOICE OF THE BOSS

These terrorists are the worst kind. They've kidnapped the ducks from the fountain of the Peabody Hotel.

Hawk looks up at the Peabody Hotel marquee, which proclaims it the "Home of the World-Famous Peabody Ducks."

HAWK

No!

VOICE OF THE BOSS

And they've threatened that if their demands are not met within 72 hours they'll release the ducks into the wild just in time for hunting season.

HAWK

Bastards!

VOICE OF THE BOSS

They left a note ...

HAWK

... What do they want?

VOICE OF THE BOSS

They demand the hotel pay one million dollars in ransom.

(MORE)

VOICE OF THE BOSS (CONT'D)

They also want the Chattanooga Choo Choo and clear passage to the Bahamas.

HAWK

But, you can't ride a train to the Bahamas.

VOICE OF THE BOSS

That's what makes these guys particularly dangerous; they're desperate AND stupid. Where are you now, Mister Eider?

HAWK

I happen to be walking past the Peabody right this moment.

VOICE OF THE BOSS

Your mission, Mister Eider, should you decide to accept it, is to locate these terrorists and recover the ducks before they are released into the wild. You have seventy-two hours. As always, this message will self-destruct in ten seconds.

Hawk disconnects and strides through the doors, dodges the frantic porter on the way in.

INT. PEABODY HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Hawk reconnects to his original call.

HAWK

Something's come up. I'll have to call you back.

Hawk strides toward the front desk.

His Bluetooth earpiece sizzles and smokes.

Hawk screams with pain, yanks it from his ear and flings it into the fountain. The earpiece bursts into flames along the way. A cloud of steam erupts when it hits the water.

Hawk shoulders his way to the fountain, splashes some water into his ear. Swabs out the canal with his index finger.

He crosses the lobby and interrupts the Clerk.

HAWK (CONT'D)

I'm Hawk Eider. Where's your manager?

The Clerk points to a door off the adjacent hallway.

CLERK

In there. Are you the guy about ...

HAWK

... Yeah. That's me.

Hawk opens the door.

INT. OFFICE

The HOTEL MANAGER, 50s, wimp, sits behind his desk, wrings his hands.

HOTEL MANAGER

Oh. Are you ... ?

HAWK

... Yeah. I'm the guy. Have they contacted you?

HOTEL MANAGER

No. They left this floating in the fountain.

The Manager hands Hawk a hunter's duck decoy.

HOTEL MANAGER (CONT'D)

The ransom note's on the bottom.

Hawk turns the decoy over, reads the highlights out loud.

HAWK

One million dollars. Chattanooga
Choo Choo. Bahamas. Seventy-two
hours or duck for dinner.

HOTEL MANAGER

We don't even have duck on the menu.
(beat)
Who would do such a foul thing?

HAWK

Don't worry. We'll find them. This
says they'll be in touch. I'll need
a room with three phones. One of
them a speaker phone.

HOTEL MANAGER

Why three?

HAWK

For the other members of my team.
And when the kidnapers call we'll
transfer the call to the speaker
phone.

INT. - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A laptop computer displays a Facebook page entitled "Memphis Mob." Female hands type, "9 a.m. Saturday, Austin Peay Highway, 3600 block."

INT. PEABODY HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Hawk crosses to the fountain, cell phone to his ear.

HAWK

Cinnamon? Hawk. Got a job for us.
Grab Jimbo and get down to the Peabody
Hotel. No, I'll tell you when you
get here.

Hawk watches as guests mill about, confused by the duckless fountain.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LATER

Hawk, CINNAMON TEAL, mid-20s, trim and pretty and JIMBO WIGEON, mid-20s, trim and guy pretty, work the phones. Hotel Manager enters with a VHS tape and walks to Hawk. Hawk hangs up the phone.

HOTEL MANAGER

This just came. With a note that
says, "Play this."

Hawk accepts the video. Examines it.

JIMBO

Videotape? Dollar store cameras can
shoot digital video. Who are these
guys?

Cinnamon smiles, laughs.

HAWK

We're going to need more equipment.

EXT. PEABODY HOTEL - DAY

The marquee reads: "Welcome Elvis on Ice."

INT. PEABODY HOTEL

A dozen ELVIS IMPERSONATORS crowd the fountain.

ELVIS

We come all the way to Memphis, and
no ducks?

INT. COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The room now has a full complement of video equipment, including a large screen TV.

Jimbo plugs the tape in.

JIMBO

Okay, let's see what these featherheads have to say.

VIDEO

Snow. Then a hotel room. Picture slightly askew. The frame jerks a little as the camera is adjusted by an unseen hand.

LOUIE DEWEY (O.S.)

There. That's level.

LOUIE DEWEY, mid-30s loser, pulls a hockey mask over his face as he comes around to the front of the camera. He looks like Jason from the Friday the 13th films.

He wears a t-shirt that reads, "Yes, I AM smarter than a 5th-grader!"

LOUIE

Mumm moof debart pooterteen --

HUEY DEWEY (O.S.)

No, Louie. They can't hear you because of the mask.

Louie lifts the mask, trying to expose only his lips.

A duck bounds across the bed and flaps against his side, dislodges the mask. Louie's face is clearly visible for a couple seconds.

COMMAND CENTER

Cinnamon watches, shakes her head, amused.

VIDEO

Horrified, Louie dives for cover while the mask lands elsewhere, setting off a cacophony of quacking and flapping.

LOUIE (O.S.)

Damn! Keep those things quiet. People will hear.

A pounding against the wall.

ANGRY MALE (O.S.)

Hey! Hold it down over there. We're trying to watch Jeopardy!

LOUIE (O.S.)

See?

Louie clambers across the bed, back to the camera, to retrieve his mask. He slips it on, then adjusts so his lips show.

LOUIE (CONT'D)

Is that better, Huey?

HUEY (O.S.)

Yeah, Louie. Nice and clear.

COMMAND CENTER

Hawk, Cinnamon and Jimbo look at each other, shake their heads.

CINNAMON

(under her breath)

These guys are dumber than I thought.

HAWK

What? What did you say?

CINNAMON

I just said they're dumber than I thought.

JIMBO

Yeah. This'll be like shooting ducks in a barrel.

Hawk shoots him a disapproving glance.

JIMBO (CONT'D)

Oh. Sorry.

While watching the tape, Cinnamon and Jimbo glance at each other. Hawk picks up on it.

HAWK

What?

JIMBO AND CINNAMON

Viva Las Vegas!

HAWK

What?

JIMBO

Name of the motel they're in.

Hawk looks from Jimbo to Cinnamon and back again.

HAWK

How do you ... ?

Hawk inclines his head and shakes it, smiles.

HAWK (CONT'D)

Never mind.

CINNAMON

See that stain on the ceiling?

Jimbo peers at the tape.

JIMBO

Love Me Tender room?

CINNAMON

Exactly.

Hawk just shakes his head again.

HAWK

Okay. Go check it out.

INT. - CAR - DAY

Hand holds a smart phone down between seat and doorframe. The "Memphis Mob" Facebook page with multiple replies. Types "Brng ur own coke."

EXT. CAR - DAY

Cinnamon and Jimbo turn in to the Viva Las Vegas motel.

INT. VIVA LAS VEGAS LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Cheap motel trying for a classy Vegas look. Cinnamon takes a flirty approach with CLERK, teen male. Jimbo thumbs through a magazine.

CINNAMON

Hi, darlin'. We're lookin' for some information on a couple guys who might be in the Love Me Tender room.

CLERK

How do you know how we name our rooms?

Cinnamon gives him a slow, sexy wink.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Oh. Okay. Well ...

CINNAMON

... They would have registered today. They still in there by chance?

CLERK

No. Um. They checked out.

(MORE)

CLERK (CONT'D)

Just before I was going to ask them
to leave because of the noise.

CINNAMON

Noise?

CLERK

Yeah. Ducks. Lots of quacking.
Disturbed the other guests. And
feathers everywhere!

INT. PEABODY HOTEL - DAY

Guests crowd the fountain. Penguins toddle along the rim,
splash in the water. Guests reluctantly take pictures.

Priscilla Mallard-Bufflehead flounces in, sniffs with scorn
at the display, whirls and breezes out.

INT. COMMAND CENTER

Jimbo reaches into a pillow case and withdraws a handful of
feathers. Cinnamon and Hawk each pluck a piece of chicken
from a Popeye's box.

Hawk bites off a chunk of chicken, compares a feather to a
photo tacked to a bulletin board.

HAWK

Seems like it could be from this
duck. The clerk say where they were
headed?

JIMBO

No. Did say they were driving a
white van, but that's not much help.

HAWK

Not unless you happen to see one
with a duck riding shotgun.

CINNAMON

I'm thinking fake names, too. Huey
and Louie Dewey. Might as well have
registered as Donald Duck.

HAWK

Guess I'll cruise the motels. Look
for the van. You two stay here in
case they call.

INT. PEABODY HOTEL

Hawk strides through the lobby. Porters chase penguins, try
to herd them back into the fountain.

Men in suits and sunglasses watch, mildly amused.

MONTAGE - INT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

-- Hawk drives down Beale Street. Revelers galore but no ducks.

-- Hawk drives past Graceland. Plenty of white vans, too many to check.

-- Hawk stops at Popeye's for some red beans and rice.

-- Hawk spoons beans and rice while driving. Sees white van driving erratically in opposite lane. Pulls a U-turn, but van is gone.

-- Hawk explores motel parking lots.

END MONTAGE

INT. COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Hawk, Cinnamon and Jimbo munch on sandwiches. Hotel manager enters, carries a videotape.

HOTEL MANAGER
Any luck tracking them down yet?

HAWK
Huey and Louie Dewey ...

Hotel manager stifles a smirk.

HAWK (CONT'D)
... and we have a description of the vehicle. We should get an APB out on it.

HOTEL MANAGER
No! No, we can't do that.

JIMBO
Why not? Makes perfect sense.

HOTEL MANAGER
No, no. Nothing that will draw attention. We've got some very important guests coming. We definitely don't need any negative publicity.

HAWK
Important guests? Who?

HOTEL MANAGER
Oh, I can't say. Oh, no! Been planned for months. Very hush, hush.

HAWK

When are they coming?

HOTEL MANAGER

Tomorrow. They're going to be ...
in the area. Going to spend the
night here before flying back to ...
It would be nice to have the ducks
back by then. It would really be
nice.

The Manager hands Cinnamon a tape, spins on his heel and leaves.

Cinnamon plugs the tape into the machine and the screen immediately springs to life.

VIDEO

A wide angle of another motel room. Louie wears his mask, sits on the edge of a bed. Tiny feathers float in the background.

His shirt: A squirrel leans on a cane next to a tree. The caption says, "I'm so old I forgot where my nuts are!"

HUEY DEWEY paces in the space between bed and wall, only his torso visible.

HUEY

I'll be glad when this is over and
we get paid. These things sure make
a mess.

Huey slips, loses his balance and tumbles. He goes horizontal and disappears with a thump behind the bed.

A symphony of quacking.

Huey climbs to his hands and knees.

HUEY (CONT'D)

I think we're having pressed duck
for lunch.

He reaches to the floor and hefts a duck in both hands, still only showing his torso. The duck lies motionless.

Suddenly it bursts into action, quacks wildly and attacks the camera.

HUEY (CONT'D)

Nope. He's okay.

Louie swipes it away.

LOUIE
Keep those damn things under control!

HUEY
As soon as I catch my breath. Damn,
that hurt!

Louie adjusts the camera. Narrows the field to his masked face and shoulders. Faces the camera.

LOUIE
Okay, we've decided we don't need
the train. So here's what you do.
Put the money in two different
briefcases with combination locks.
Make the combinations ...

COMMAND CENTER

Hawk, Cinnamon and Jimbo focus on the tape. Hawk makes notes.

VIDEO

LOUIE (CONT'D)
... and we'll be watching, so if you
follow either of the homeless men,
we'll see it and the deal's off.

HUEY (O.S.)
Hey, Louie. When you're done can we
go next door and eat at Popeye's?

COMMAND CENTER

Cinnamon jumps from her chair.

CINNAMON
The Heartbreak Hotel!

JIMBO
We never ...

CINNAMON
... Get over it! It's the only motel
in town next door to a Popeye's.
Let's go.

FADE TO BLACK.

The opening strains of "Dueling Banjos."

INT. PEABODY HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Jimbo rushes from the room into the lobby, trailed by Cinnamon and Hawk.

Two men sit in a canoe in the fountain, play "Dueling Banjos."

Priscilla Mallard-Bufflehead, hands on hips, merely shakes her head.

In the background, two Men in suits and sunglasses.

Hawk and the others plunge through the door to the street.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Louie closes his clamshell phone.

LOUIE

C'mon Huey. We gotta go. Now!

HUEY (O.S.)

Okay. Help me get the cage back into the mini-van.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Hawk drives, Jimbo rides shotgun.

CINNAMON

Damn, Hawk! You need to shovel this back seat out. If the EPA saw these floorboards, you'd be on the Superfund list.

Jimbo turns and looks.

JIMBO

What you lookin' for?

CINNAMON

Dropped my phone. It disappeared into the toxic waste back here.

HAWK

Who did you call?

CINNAMON

Just checking messages.

Cinnamon plucks the phone from the trash. Something oozes down the screen. She cleans it off with a used napkin.

EXT. CAR (MOVING)

Hawk's car bounces into the lot at the Heartbreak Hotel.

INT. HEARTBREAK HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Elvis kitsch. Even a couple velvets.

Hawk approaches the CLERK, female, early 20s. Cinnamon and Jimbo peer out the window toward the parking lot.

HAWK

We're looking for two guys in a white van. Using the names Huey and Louie Dewey.

CLERK

Just missed 'em. Checked out not, 15 minutes ago. Asked me where they could find some homeless people.

INT. COMMAND CENTER - MORNING

Jimbo munches an Egg McMuffin, reviews the tapes. Cinnamon sends a text and Hawk paces.

HAWK

Damn! Yesterday makes twice we've just missed them. They're a little smarter than we give 'em credit for.

JIMBO

Yeah. They know enough to keep moving, and right after a tape is delivered.

HAWK

We've got to find 'em today. Once this ransom drop is made we're out of the picture.

CINNAMON

Won't it be enough to get the ducks back?

HAWK

No. I want these guys. It's personal now. The hotel thinks we've failed and they're out there paying the ransom right now. Won't even let us tail the money.

Jimbo clicks off the TV and turns to face the others.

JIMBO

You know, both of the motels they've used were titles of Elvis songs.

HAWK

"Viva, Las Vegas," and "Heartbreak Hotel."

JIMBO

So, if we assume they'll follow that pattern ...

HAWK

... Google it!

Hawk and Jimbo lean over the computer.

Cinnamon receives a text, reads, responds.

JIMBO

The Hound Dog Inn! Thirty-five
seventeen Austin Peay Highway.

Jimbo types into the computer.

JIMBO (CONT'D)

Google maps says it's about twenty,
twenty-five minutes away.

All three lunge for the door.

INT. PEABODY HOTEL

Hawk, Cinnamon and Jimbo race through the lobby, unaware of the half-dozen men in suits and sunglasses strategically placed throughout the space.

Two vultures occupy the fountain.

Priscilla Mallard-Bufflehead throws up her arms.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Hawk screeches to a stop in front of the Hound Dog Inn. All three pile out and run into the office.

INT. HOUND DOG INN - CONTINUOUS

A grandmotherly CLERK looks up from behind the counter.

HAWK

Anybody registered here by the name
of Dewey?

CLERK

Yeah. Two of 'em. Just got back
about 10 minutes ago. Settled up
and went back to load the van.

A white van speeds past the office.

CLERK (CONT'D)

There they go now.

Hawk spins in time to see the van turn right out of the lot.

CINNAMON

Go! I'll check the room.

Hawk and Jimbo aim for the door.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT

Hawk and Jimbo plunge headlong for Hawk's car.

Hawk cranks the engine and is rolling before Jimbo can get the door closed.

The car bounces into traffic, slides right in pursuit of the van.

EXT. AUSTIN PEAY HIGHWAY

The white van weaves between cars as traffic builds, opens a ten-car gap.

JIMBO

Heavy traffic for this early in the morning.

Hawk cuts off a car, then another. Closes the gap to seven cars.

HAWK

Everybody seems to be slowing down.

JIMBO

Reminds me of that slow-speed chase on TV. Out in Los Angeles.

INT. - MOTEL ROOM - DAY

A smart phone displays the "Memphis Mob" Facebook page. A female hand types "Now!"

EXT. AUSTIN PEAY HIGHWAY - DAY

Traffic halts. Hawk and Jimbo are stuck, seven cars away from the van.

People climb out of cars up and down the road. Hundreds of them. Each holds a bottle of Coca-Cola.

They link together, arm over shoulder, blocking all six lanes of the road and begin swaying. A FLASH MOB.

FLASH MOB

"I'd like to buy the world a home
and furnish it with love ..."

Hawk bangs against the steering wheel.

HAWK

Damn!

Huey and Louie jump from the van in the distance and dash away, lost in the mob.

HAWK (CONT'D)

Damn! These guys are good.

EXT. HOUND DOG INN - LATER

Hawk and Jimbo hike across the parking lot and approach the office.

INT. HOUND DOG INN - CONTINUOUS

Hawk leans against the counter, eyes the Clerk.

HAWK

Okay. What room were they in?

CLERK

Room One twenty-seven. But your lady friend has already cleaned it out.

Hawk and Jimbo exchange puzzled looks.

HAWK

Cleaned it out?

CLERK

Yeah. Put all those ducks in a cage in the back of a white mini-van. Then put two briefcases in the front and drove out the back way, onto Lakehurst Drive.

JIMBO

Great. Guess they panicked and left the money behind. So we recover the ducks and the money.

HAWK

But where did she get a van and a cage?

INT. COMMAND CENTER - LATER

Hotel Manager, beaming, turns as Hawk and Jimbo enter.

HOTEL MANAGER

The ducks are back! You're just in time for the procession. The Duck Master is about to lead them back into the fountain!

JIMBO

Where's Cinnamon?

HOTEL MANAGER

Oh, she dropped off the ducks and had someplace to go. A shame those horrible men got away with the money.

HAWK

Got away with the money?

HOTEL MANAGER

That's what she said. But that's okay. The ducks are back! Oh! She left this for you.

The Hotel Manager points at a small foam cooler on the table.

Hawk opens the cooler, withdraws two bottles of Coca Cola and a scale model of the Chattanooga Choo Choo.

He turns the model over and on the bottom, in a feminine script is written, "Pardon me, boys."

FADE TO BLACK.

The strains of "Hail to the Chief."

INT. PEABODY HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

The President and First Lady, flanked by Secret Service Agents and several incarnations of Elvis, beam as the Duck Master leads the ducks into the fountain.

Trailing a porter who has all her bags on a cart, Priscilla Mallard-Bufflehead flounces into the lobby.

PRISCILLA

Oh, yeah! For them, you have ducks!

FADE OUT.