

HATCHET:
THE RISE OF MR. RED.

by
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“Hatchet: the Rise of Mr. Red”
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BLACK.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – LATE EVENING

From up in the sky, we look down at planet Earth, so many miles below. A few states are visible at once.

“Washington, D.C.”

A white caption fades in.

As our angle plummets toward the ground, we focus in on Washington, D.C., the U.S.A.'s capitol city. Though it exists right off the edges of Maryland and Virginia, it belongs to neither state in particular. The caption fades away.

As we fall closer to the ground, the Sun quickly sets, and the whole city becomes golden yellow, then orange, then as dark as night. White lights begin to light up the whole city.

Our birds-eye angle continues to fly ahead over the buildings, the streets, and the nature of D.C.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – GROUND LEVEL – C STREET – NIGHT

The ground-level of C Street, at night time. Three men ride down the street together on Rollerblades. They ride in total darkness, except when underneath the light of lamp posts.

Under the light, it becomes clear that all three men are wearing red shirts, red pants, and red hair dye. One of the three is constantly twirling a black cane around with one hand.

The three men cross the street, and get ready by quickly shaking the metal cans in their hands. They get started spraying.

CULTIST 1

We gotta make it fast. And don't be seen.

CULTIST 2

I know that.

CULTIST 3

Guys! Someone's coming.

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Cultist 3 keeps a lookout for the others,
nervous, but staying on-guard.

CULTIST 3
All right. She's leaving.

CULTIST 2
Can you *help*?

Cultist 3 quickly gets to work helping the others,
writing a message we still can't see.

Soon, #3 sprays a red circle onto the white wall.
He continues to work to perfect his red circle,
filling in the closed shape.

CULTIST 3
Do you think we'll please the master?

CULTIST 2
I don't know. I hope we do.

SOON – the last of the message is finished, so
now the three men ride on ahead down the street.

CULTIST 1
Temperature rising.

Everything becomes RED. The men ride on out of sight.

CUT TO an aerial angle, above the rooftops of the
nearby buildings, looking down upon the streets
and sidewalks. The three men are still making a
fast getaway.

Soon, the red starts to wear off, so that the night time
scene in Washington, D.C. becomes normal again.

A lamp post flickers off and on a few times.
As the light goes out, all we see is BLACK.

We stay in the blackness for a few seconds.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – MORNING TIME

FADE IN on an angle flying quickly through the green
grass of an endless field. We LOOK UP to see the front
entrance of the White House, the home of the U.S. President.

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All the major sights are identified by captions in white lettering, along with small white arrows.

After eying the White House for a few moments, we LOOK RIGHT to see more green nature, and longer extensions of the White House's buildings. As we DRIFT AHEAD, before long, we find the Department of Treasury, with its vertical white poles in front, the cement surrounded by a lush green grass ground.

CUT TO a close angle looking down upon the waters of the Reflecting Pool. In the water, we can see the reflection of the Washington Monument. Although we fly ahead over the waters, we also LOOK UP to see the enormously tall white monument itself.

CUT TO an angle of the Monument in which we SPIN AROUND the entire structure, one full rotation. Beyond the monument lies endless fields of green grass, the original stretch of land from before the city was built.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – FIELDS

D.C.'s residents walk around and mingle with the tourists. A big group of high school students walk around, in an outdoor field trip, being guided along by an instructor.

On the street, horses walk along, carrying human passengers.

Kids and parents alike ride a merry-go-round, just off a street intersection.

On the sidewalk, a hot dog vendor, permanently stationed at his stand, pours ketchup onto a fresh hot dog.

A man selling bootleg DVDs holds new movies up in the air.

MOVIE BOOTLEGGER

Movies! Movies! Got em right now! Huh?

CUSTOMER

Yeah? How much for *this* movie?

MOVIE BOOTLEGGER

This one? 20 dollars. Okay, no. For *you*, 15 dollars.

CUSTOMER

15? I'm not sure . . . it's the whole movie?

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MOVIE BOOTLEGGER

Well, it's missing the first five minutes. And
the last 10 minutes.

A man runs quickly past the bootlegger, taking off
down the sidewalk. He almost slams into a stranger,
but manages to only brush past him.

RUNNING MAN

OH! Man! I'm sorry! Uhh –

STRANGER

Watch where you're FUCKING GOING, moron!

RUNNING MAN

S-s-sorry!

STRANGER

You see this guy? Faggot. *Trying* to touch me.

The running man keeps on running, and stops just short
of bumping into a second person, an old man wearing a
brown hat looking ground-ward.

The running man stays still for a second,
then continues his run onward.

The old man in the brown hat raises his head.
Another white caption appears:

“Hatchet”

64 years old, white, male, with very long hair and
facial hair. His mouth is always moving as he talks
to himself.

HATCHET

Even coming into D.C., the way you look. Who is he!

He adjusts his brown hat, which, so far, has been
concealing his head.

Besides his brown hat, his clothes are: a damaged
gray shirt, a thick brown coat, olive green pants,
and tattered black gloves.

HATCHET

I don't know . . . cause, yeah. I guess I would have, huh,
guess I just SHOULD HAVE TOLD THEM THAT.

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The caption fades away.

A couple people begin to turn their heads toward him.
He continues to walk on, not minding them.

STRANGER 1

This guy out of his mind?

STRANGER 2

Just walks around and talks to himself?

They shake their heads and walk on,
in the opposite direction as Hatchet.

HATCHET

It's a bright, sunny day, yep. Bright, sunny day.

VOICE 1

Ohhh, shit, I can't believe this. Hatchet. *Haaa* ha ha.

VOICE 2

Hmm?

LOOK AWAY, to the opposite side of the street,
where two young gentlemen are walking.

VOICE 1

Well don't look NOW, you dumb . . . well . . .

VOICE 2

That ain't him.

VOICE 1

What?

VOICE 2

You're talking bout that – “Hatchet” guy? That's
Chicago you're thinking of. It ain't him.

VOICE 1

What? How do *you* know?

VOICE 2

(*firmly, conclusively*) Look, man: *it ain't the guy.*

CUT TO Hatchet's face. Now, walking around in the
city, it occurs to him that, in a sense, he is lost: there's
nowhere to go to, and he's not sure what to do next.

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He scrunches his eyebrows. Fixes his hat.

HATCHET'S POV – first-person – he looks to his left, his right. Up at the beautiful buildings and monuments of the city.

Then up at the impossibly bright Sun.

He lowers his hat a little to provide shade. Looks down a bit while walking. Then, it's back to walking down the sidewalk. Moving through the city. Walking . . . somewhere.

FADE TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – INDEPENDENCE AVENUE

Hatchet walks down the sidewalk, surrounded by grass, tall trees of brown and green, and the bright blue daytime sky.

FADE TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – FARTHER ON AHEAD

Hatchet walks on farther down the sidewalk. To his left lie the waters of the Tidal Basin.

He starts to walk down the grass, closer to the water, and notices a couple of ducks walking. He smiles. Reaches his hand out. Pretends to throw them bread (yet really he has nothing).

HATCHET

C'mere, birdie. C'mere, birdie, c'mere!

They walk away, done with him.

He sighs.

Then walks back to the sidewalk.

FADE TO:

SOON – as he continues to walk, looking at the ground, a car slows down to pick him up as a hitch-hiker.

As the car slows to a complete stop, the window rolls down to reveal a 40-something brunette woman driving.

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DRIVER

Hey there! You need a ride?

HATCHET

Really? . . . Sure!

He starts to walk around the car.

INT. CAR – FRONT SEAT

We LOOK AROUND the inside of the very new, very comfortable car. Hatchet has a look of awe on his face.

HATCHET

This car's *amaaazing!* . . . Hey. Thanks for giving me this lift.

DRIVER

Oh, it's no problem. Need I remind you of the Book of Hebrews, 13:16: “Don't forget to do good and to share what you have with those in need, for such sacrifices are very pleasing to God”.

(tugging on a cross hanging from the rearview mirror)

Oh, yes. Devout Catholic, as you can see.

HATCHET

. . . Huh.

DRIVER

Oh yeah. It's in the New Testament. Isn't that funny? It's called the Book of Hebrews, even though it's NEW Testament.

Hatchet shrugs his shoulders.

CUT TO an aerial angle outside the car, looking down at its roof.

PULL BACK, skyward, as the two ride on down the street together, down Independence Avenue.

FADE TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – ARLINGTON MEMORIAL BRIDGE

The car drives on down the bridge.

We MOVE CLOSER to the car, until we are

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eventually completely inside the front seat.

DRIVER

Wow, so you're really homeless?

HATCHET

Yeah, I've . . . I've been homeless for years . . .
I just kind of drift from place to place, y'know.

He shrugs, looking away.

She takes in his words, and nods her head.

DRIVER

Here. I'll bring you to the Metro station. We're
about, like . . . three minutes away from it.

HATCHET

Thank you! Thank you so much.

CUT TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – MEMORIAL DRIVE

The car drives off. Hatchet is now on the sidewalk.

He starts to walk into the Metro subway station on foot.
We FOLLOW HIS MOVEMENT as he quickly checks
everything over one more time.

We MOVE AROUND to see him from the front side
as he feels for the hatchet underneath his brown coat,
without opening it up or revealing the weapon – he
simply feels his ribcage with both hands.

One circle within the brown coat FADES AWAY
to reveal a genuine metal hatchet underneath.

Then, the coat returns. Hatchet pulls it
a little tighter, closer, and walks on.

HATCHET

Can't believe you . . . would have *never*
gotten away with stuff like this!

STRANGER 1

Is that old guy talking to himself?

STRANGER 2

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What's he saying?

Hatchet walks on, entering the subway station.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – CONSTITUTION AVE – SOON

The same two voices who had noticed Hatchet earlier are continuing their walk.

VOICE 1

I'm just saying . . . what would make you think Hatchet CAN'T just come through D.C.?

VOICE 2

It's just, why *would* he? He's all about Chicago. I heard from Trey Kapster – man, he *lives* in Chicago, he's all over the –

VOICE 1

Doesn't *live* in Chicago, fool, he's homeless!

VOICE 2

No, *Trey*, I mean!

A few moments of silence.

VOICE 1

Man, that's all the way in Illinois.

VOICE 2

Yeah? So?

. . . So, YOU're the one saying he was –

VOICE 1

I'm just saying it's –

VOICE 2

(*smacking Voice 1*) Man, you *always* gotta question everything I say! *Always!*

VOICE 1

Just having a – friendly debate –

VOICE 2

No, you always gotta *fight* me on everything! I can't take it.

VOICE 1

(*holding one hand up*) Whatever, just . . . look.

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This Hatchet person . . . they say it everywhere. They say he moves like a hard drug dealer, you know, *si-lence-and-vi-o-lence* – just goes *drifting* from town to town. Doesn't actually stop in one place like that.

VOICE 2

Yeah, and what, how do *you* know, huh?

CLICK! CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY STATION – ENTRANCE

A blurry, grainy color photo of Hatchet, as he walks inside the subway station's entrance. STAY FROZEN on this for a few seconds.

PULL BACK to reveal that this is the image within the screen of a camera phone, which has just taken his picture.

The person who took the photo is in such shock about it that his whole arm is shaking. He turns to a friend that he's here with.

PHONE GUY

You think it's him, man? You think it's him?

Back to Hatchet: he seems to give us a serious glare.

The guy who took the camera phone picture stops, swallows in fear, and starts shaking again, wondering: *Shit . . . did he see me?*

Hatchet remains frozen for another moment. Then he scoffs.

HATCHET

Bunch of weirdos.

And he walks on.

The guy who took the photo looks amazed at his phone, which he's keeping low, by his pocket. Here he is – with solid gold – and now he can get away with it.

CUT TO:

INT. PHONE GUY'S HOUSE

A photograph of Hatchet's face.

The bottom of the photo seems to be pink.

We SPIN UP-SIDE DOWN to see that an 8.5"-11" sheet of paper is coming out of a printer, with Hatchet's face across it.

The guy who had taken the camera phone photo takes the paper, holds it up, and shows it eagerly to his friend.

PHONE GUY

See? See this? Swear to God, man, swear to God, I was just walking through the subway station after getting into town this morning and just *caught this*.

A moment of silence. He keeps his hands on his hips, gives the scene a few seconds.

PHONE GUY

I mean, then it kinda ran out of ink, when I was printing it, but that wasn't –

PHONE GUY'S FRIEND

Holy shit, man. This is the guy! The Hatchet! You got a photo of the Hatchet!

PHONE GUY

Yeah?

(a moment of silence)

HAAAA HA HA! Oh, good! Man, I was afraid no one would believe me! Whew.

PHONE GUY'S FRIEND

You could probably make money off this.

PHONE GUY

(hopefully) Yeah?

PHONE GUY'S FRIEND

Wait, never mind, no you couldn't. But still, though!

INT. EVENING NEWS PROGRAM

NEWS REPORTER

Folks have heard of a vigilante who calls himself Hatchet, but – right here in D.C.? It seems that the

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nationally-recognized vigilante, Hatchet, was spotted *in* the capitol, at the Arlington Cemetery Metro Station, earlier today. For more on this, we go to Jon Gray . . . Jon?

JON GRAY

Yes, Tom, the public is well aware that it has been *decades* that this (*chuckle*) “Hatchet Man”, whoever, has been walking around the country, operating as . . . ehh, well, whatever it is, that he is, exactly. A “superhero”, most of his followers seem to call him . . . a “vigilante”, perhaps, is the more legally correct term? A night prowler, a – a violent offender, even? An . . . outlaw criminal, perhaps? . . . Well, it would take a lot of words to describe him, I guess, but there *are* at least certain things we do know about him.

The news program fades to an image of Hatchet, somewhat more youthful in appearance, looking at the camera in the worst, most psychotic way.

JON GRAY (v.o.)

Some estimate it has been approximately four decades since it began. Yes, 40 years since the man they call “Hatchet” arrived on the scene. A man in his early 20s, initially, it is *now* believed that he is as old as his early to mid-60s . . .

(The news show cycles through the photos – a bunch of random stills taken over the years.)

NEWS REPORTER (v.o.)

And still up and at em.

JON GRAY (v.o.)

Yes, still *very* much alive and with us, which . . . (*ahem*) perhaps, is the most brain-spinning part of it all.

(*clears his throat*)

Uhh, as you can see here, the earliest *proof* that we have of the “Hatchet Man” dates back to the early 1970's. It is *possible* he operated under different names before, but . . . we're not sure.

Another photo shows Hatchet wearing all gray.

JON GRAY (v.o.)

The 1970's is best remembered, arguably, for disco music and for the Watergate scandal – where President

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Richard Nixon was revealed to be a big, bad wolf, by an unidentified man called “Deep Throat”. Richard Nixon, it turned out, had done some very bad things: he kept tabs on hundreds of people, and recorded thousands of hours worth of phone calls! He wiretapped and *listened in* on other people's calls! Unacceptable. Truly unacceptable.

(*a moment of silence*)

Hatchet seemed to appear at either the same time, or perhaps a little bit *before*, Deep Throat. For a while, many believed that both men – both *identities* – were one and the same. Some people believed, for a while, that Hatchet was the one who outed President Nixon!

(*ahem*)

. . . That is, until the confessions from Deep Throat himself, who revealed, about a decade ago, that he was actually Mark Felt, some kind of FBI guy.

NEWS REPORTER

Hmm. Okay, so two different folks, yeah, but . . .
but, still, Hatchet.

JON GRAY

The man with the hatchet arrived in the early 1970's, and took it upon himself to “clean up all the crime” that he saw, killing criminals as he pleased with his little hatchet, across the *entire* 1970's decade, and then all the way through the 80's, 90's, and 2000's decades. Now it's 2012, and still he walks the streets, and still he lives with us all.

Another photo: the one the eager phone guy had taken.

JON GRAY

Just WHAT is it that Hatchet does all day? Just WHERE does he sleep? He seems to be constantly on the move – constantly on the run. But *this* photo was, allegedly, taken just earlier today – that's right, *earlier today*, in a subway station in Washington, D.C., from a tourist's camera phone. It may be a bit blurry, but many are *certain* it's the same nutcase. So, if you live in the D.C. area . . .

CUT TO:

EXT. TV STORE – JUST THEN

A bunch of TVs play several different channels of programming. At least one of them: Jon Gray, talking, live.

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JON GRAY (cont.'d)

. . . well, just realize, this guy might very well show up in *your* part of town. (*Shudder!*)

NEWS REPORTER 2

Now, moving to the *weather*, not too bad-looking, all things considered, for the next few days . . .

FADE TO:

INT. TALK SHOW – EVENING

Four people sit together on chairs, on a stage, talking.

TALK SHOW HOST 1

So this guy has *got* to be pretty old by now, I'm guessing. I mean, late 40s, maybe even 50.

TALK SHOW HOST 2

Ohhhh, no, older than *that*.

TALK SHOW HOST 1

Really?

TALK SHOW HOST 2

And you have to keep in mind, also, this guy has had *gray hair* since he was young. I guess, just, uhh, the stress of what he does, you know, made him go gray much quicker than you or I. But they also say in that *book* that he's a diagnosed schizophrenic, so . . . so who knows, really.

TALK SHOW HOST 3

Yeah, the guy's a diagnosed schizophrenic, so, if anything, he's really a person in need of help.

TALK SHOW HOST 1

Heh . . . well I just think it's funny, you know, you say “hatchet man” . . . when I hear that phrase, “hatchet man”, I think of a person in a *company*, you know, in the upper-management, who does the *firing* of lower-level employees, you know, gives them the *axe*. So . . . so it's as if Hatchet is trying to say that *he's* the hatchet man, of the whole *country*, who just goes around *firing* the bad guys – giving criminals the *axe*.

TALK SHOW HOST 2

Well . . . well, except, I don't know, I think the hatchet men of a *corporation* usually just fire some employees and call

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it a day. Yet *this* hatchet man in particular seems to just . . .
“kill criminals”.

TALK SHOW HOST 3

Well, I don't know about that, you know, I might have
some secret schizo-vigilante stuff going on in *my* life too.

TALK SHOW HOST 2

Yeah?

TALK SHOW HOST 3

Yeah. The other day, you know. I'm in line at the
Starbucks. So I go . . . oh, wait, do we have
to censor that? . . . Uhh, anyway, I'm in line
the other day, someone bumps into me,
takes my place, and I go HEY!

(a moment of silence)

And, yeah! That was my vigilante action!

Mutual laughing from the other hosts.

TALK SHOW HOST 1

You're so stupid, we'll be right back with more
of this after a commercial break.

INT. BAR – NIGHT

We start out looking at the bar's big-screen TV,
still playing the talk show. An image of Hatchet
appears within the show.

PULL BACK to reveal a man watching the TV,
blinking and stretching his neck.

BAR MAN

(Shud-d-d-der!) Hate it when that guy's
face pops up on the TV!

BARTENDER

Yeah? How come?

BAR MAN

What do you mean “how come”? You *heard* what he does?

BARTENDER

Yeah! I love the guy to death! Only reason I
feel safe having my kids walk home from school!

BAR MAN

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(*shaking his head*) Guy like that – he's a total *loose cannon*. You'd *never* wanna be around him!

BARTENDER

(*patting the TV*) Ah, loosen up.
He only goes after criminals.

BAR MAN

Yeah – until he gets mad and snaps at you, and me, and whoever else is in this room. Whoever fits *his* concept of “criminals”.

BARTENDER

I don't see what you're so upset about this Hatchet guy for.

BAR MAN

You've *heard* what he does?
Why he's called “Hatchet”?

BARTENDER

Of course I have!

BAR MAN

They say he just walks around, and “kills criminals” with an *actual hatchet!*

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – 1st STREET

Hatchet emerges from the underground Capitol South subway station.

Now, rising back above the ground, to walk through the crowd of human traffic, he is back to the sidewalks and streets of the city.

He takes off his hat for a second. Reveals a mess of medium-gray hair. He scratches his head. And gives the beautiful city one more look around.

Putting his hat back on, he continues to walk down the sidewalk. To his left are the lanes of street traffic, surrounded by twin rows of parallel-parked cars. He's walking down the sidewalk . . . down the ongoing adventure.

Looking North down 1st Street, we MOVE QUICKLY down the road, traveling a minute's walk in seconds.

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We soon make the first possible right turn onto C Street.

After making a full right turn, we're looking East down C Street, also with two lanes of traffic, both heading in different directions.

We LOOK TO THE LEFT, until we have come a full 180 degrees, to see Hatchet walking down C Street, toward us.

He's been walking for a while now, so he's holding his sides with exhaustion.

HATCHET

Ohhhh. Uhhhhh. Ahhhhhh. Echh.

PASSING STRANGERS

What the fuck is wrong with this guy?

Just makes these *noises*?

Seen him talking to himself.

Just walks around all night talking to himself,
what kind of person does that?

We FOLLOW HATCHET'S MOVEMENT as he walks on. He leans down, and tries not to throw up.

HATCHET

Bwaaaah. Bwaaaah.

Pulling his head up again, he spends a few seconds staying still . . . and then leans back down and throws up, to the ground that is out of our sight.

STRANGER 1

Hel-lo! Had a little bit too much to *drink*?

STRANGER 2

(hitting her husband hard) Oh, *stop!!*

Hatchet is done. So he spits up a little bit more, then runs on, ashamed.

HATCHET

Bottle of water, anyone?

He looks around. Nothing. So he continues to walk on.

We FOLLOW HIM some more as he runs on, down

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the sidewalk of the city, farther onward.

He soon slows down his jogging to a stop. He takes a second to breathe, again.

CUT TO a farther-away view: a crowd of humans walking through the city. Hatchet is an insect here – alone.

CLOSE ON Hatchet's face again as he shakes.

He looks around again. We LOOK AROUND with him, to catch a full, 360-degree view of this part of Washington, D.C.: an amazing city, but a place where he has nobody.

He resumes his walk again.

As he walks, he looks to his left, and we LOOK LEFT with him, to see a tall white building, belonging to the Library of Congress.

He LOOKS AHEAD again, to keep walking.

But he has to stop, take a step back, and do a double-take, to LOOK LEFT again at that same white building. A message has been written over the white wall in red paint:

MR. RED IS COMING!!

He just doesn't know what else to do, at first, but to remain frozen.

HATCHET

I could *swear* I . . . “Mr. Red” . . . ?

He steps closer to the graffiti, crossing the street.
He steps close enough to get an up-close look, without touching the walls.

He swallows. Afraid.

CUT TO a farther-away angle, PULLING BACK still farther, as Hatchet remains frozen on the red warning message. Everything seems to spin a little.

FADE TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – C STREET – FARTHER AHEAD

We MOVE DOWN THE ROAD, traveling East

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down C Street.

As we continue to move, we see more of the same sights. Four-story buildings. Two lanes of traffic, headed two opposite directions, surrounded by two parking lanes. Lots of trees. Traffic is moving very slowly.

We SLOW DOWN to a STOP on one car that is carrying two folks in the front seat: a driver and a passenger.

DRIVER

Oh, man, see. I don't even *like* going through this part of the city. You know?

PASSENGER

Why? It's not *that* bad.

DRIVER

The traffic is a nightmare. And I keep hearing about this *crime rate*, the *crime* –

PASSENGER

Ohhhh, come on! You “hear things” – man, it's called not being scared of your own shadow! . . . Come on. We're like a minute away from the White House, what's really gonna happen? *Think!*

We look out the front windshield, to see the slow-crawling traffic.

On the side of the road, one homeless man approaches the slow-moving car, ready to give it a wash with a rag.

DRIVER

Yeah, NO! No. Don't want a car wash. No thanks. (*to the passenger*) See, see, this is what you have to deal with around here – these homeless people.

The homeless man moves on.

DRIVER

New York is so different from here. So different.

PASSENGER

Yeah?

The driver looks in his side mirror to see something

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behind the car: Hatchet, coming from the west,
walking in their direction.

DRIVER

What *is* it with them, anyway! Like
they work together, or something?

Another few seconds of silence, as Hatchet draws closer.

DRIVER

Oh, look, great! Here we go again. *Yeah, I
don't want a car wash! Thanks! Okay?*

PASSENGER

Yeah, I know, right? Homeless people always do –

An interruption: a much younger man
knocks on their window.

DRIVER

Oh, sh-!

And hits the barrel of a loaded firearm, very
firmly, onto the glass window.

GUNMAN

Get outta the car NOW! Get outta the car NOW!

DRIVER

Oh, shit. Oh, shit.
(he starts to breathe heavily)

PASSENGER

OHHH, MAN! Just, please! Please, don't!
You got a lot to live –

GUNMAN

Shut the fuck up and gimme your keys, your wallet!

The gunman grabs the door open. Steps forward.
Grabs the driver by the neck, holds it tightly,
and starts to pull him out of the car.

GUNMAN

Your *keys*, your *wallet* . . . this is a ROBBERY!

HATCHET

(from a distance) HEEYY!

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The gunman whips his head to the right to see the yelling man.

Then turns back to the driver and passenger of the car.

GUNMAN

This gun ain't a *toy*, man! You SEE THIS?
(*squish*)
Ohhhh –

He staggers away from the car.

And falls straight to the ground.

He's laying on his left side. A hatchet has been thrown into the right half of his head.

LOOK UP, to the car, where the driver and passenger are still unaware of the robber's death.

PASSENGER

What is it? What's going on?

DRIVER

I'm not sure . . .

The driver looks at the driver's side mirror . . . and sees HIM, the old man in the brown coat and hat, coming closer again.

DRIVER

. . . Uh-oh. Uh-oh. That ain't the cops. That's . . .

PASSENGER

What? What is it?

The driver finally looks down to the ground.

And sees the robber – the same one who was just threatening him – now lying on the ground, dead, with a hatchet piercing his head.

He gulps. Grimaces. And climbs back inside the car.

DRIVER

I think that guy . . . just . . . just . . .
got killed by *Hatchet!*

22

HATCHET

Hey! Scuse me!

The driver screams loudly, high-pitched,
as Hatchet arrives right by his door.

HATCHET

I just . . . need my thing back.

He leans down, out of view.

Several seconds later, he stands back up,
holding his weapon in his hands.

HATCHET

Got it.

He raises his hatchet for a second.

HATCHET

See? Yep. It's my hatchet.

PASSENGER

Ohhhhh, no.

HATCHET

See, just needed it back. Yep. Moving away now.

Hatchet walks on – past the car,
and the dead carjacker, further east.

His footsteps are pretty loud at first, but
gradually weaken as he gets farther away.

The driver and passenger both spend
several seconds letting the shock sink in:
it's all over.

DRIVER

Now what, man? *Now* what?

PASSENGER

Now what? What do you *mean* now what?
Now we live! Now we're alive!

DRIVER

Now there's gonna be a dead thief –

Red and blue lights flash on!

23

A very loud siren wails!

DRIVER
Ohhhhh, fuck!

PASSENGER
Just kill me now!

The driver and passenger are both convinced it's for them. They throw both hands up in the air out of instinct.

Through the back windshield, we can see it: a cop car, with double sirens on, is headed toward the two youths at a medium driving speed.

They squirm a little as it gets closer.

DRIVER
(*with one tear coming down*)
Just tell me one thing, man.

The cop car comes to a stop where it is.

The tension raises in the front seat of the now-stopped civilian car.

And then the cop car drives *around* the two almost-victims, driving against the direction of the other lane. The cop car goes left and then right to get in front of the victims' car, and continues to drive onward.

With far bigger fish to fry than them.

The after-effect of it all goes on . . . silence. Calmness. The miracle of still being alive.

PASSENGER
So, when you said, just tell me one thing –

DRIVER
(*wiping away his face*) I don't remember no more.

We PULL BACK – out of the front passenger's side window of the car – to leave the vehicle.

Then we LOOK DOWN THE ROAD, going east, to see the cop car, still with double sirens on,

24

driving on.

We MOVE CLOSER to the cop car, following its movement on its journey down the road. We MOVE CLOSER until we are completely caught up to the front seat, where a sheriff and his deputy are talking.

SHERIFF

The area is gonna have to be blocked off for at *least* a couple hours, but how long exactly . . .

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

What is it that's happening so far?

SHERIFF

What it looks like, so far, is some robbery, most certainly with a deadly weapon . . .

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

Did it succeed? Did it go through yet?

SHERIFF

Not sure yet. I think it may have.

The cop car, driving down the road, catches up with the old man, Hatchet, who is walking away.

Wheoo-WHOOO! The loud siren goes off again, as the full high-beam headlights are put on Hatchet! The car is moving at the speed of a snail, but the message is clear.

Yet Hatchet just keeps walking on, oblivious. After several seconds, he still doesn't acknowledge the car. The lights blink off and on a few times, to provide one last hint.

The moment is becoming undeniable. Finally, he stops walking, and turns around, to face the cop car.

HATCHET

(delightfully) Oh! Hello!

CUT TO his POV – looking directly at the blindingly bright white, red, and blue lights.

His head sinks. He uses his right hand to shield his eyes from the light.

25

The white light seems to somehow get twice as bright. He squirms, looking away, but the light just keeps intensifying . . .

SHERIFF'S VOICE

I think we've got him for good.

DEPUTY'S VOICE

Look at him, he's hiding a hatchet.

HATCHET

(swallowing nervously)

Fancy bumpin' into *you* here!

CUT TO an angle from inside the front seat of the cop car, looking out the windshield at Hatchet – frozen, with nowhere to run.

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

So what are the charges?

SHERIFF

So far, I'm guessing it's gonna end up being a 211, a 245, and a 417. Just hope to God it's not a 187!

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

Aye-aye-aye.

SHERIFF

He *looks* suspicious as Hell.

The cop car finally parks. Without the engine turning off, the door opens, and the driver steps out. The sound of the engine grows louder, and louder, and still louder.

The door closes shut. The driver is now on foot.

Hatchet eyes the cop car again. The words over the doors read: HATCHET.

His eyes bulge open!

He looks again. It actually reads: POLICE.

Oh. That's all. He nods his head.

HATCHET

26

Wasn't so bad, I guess.

SHERIFF

Keep your hands up, where I can see em!

Hatchet gulps.

HATCHET

(putting one hand on his chest) Me?

SHERIFF

Hands where I can see em!

Hatchet throws his hands up.
His hatchet falls right to the ground.

HATCHET

(gulp) Oh, gee, is that mine?

SHERIFF

Yeaaaaah. Yeaaaaah. There we go. All right.
(into the radio)

Okay. We got him. We got him.

HATCHET

(gulp) Is it kinda cold in here or –

SHERIFF

All right – just answer me one question.

HATCHET

I just saved the man's life!

SHERIFF

What?

Hatchet points behind the cop car.

HATCHET

The . . . the two young gentlemen down that
way . . . I just saved two people's lives –

SHERIFF

Yeah, you can just *knock off* whatever you're trying, there.

SHERIFF'S RADIO

*(chhk) Haaa, ha ha . . . classic stuff.
Everything all right there, Thompson?*

SHERIFF

(into the radio) You should see him right now, he's babbling incoherently. All right, well, I got him here, and he ain't going nowhere, for now.

Hatchet swallows as he realizes that it's all over.

SHERIFF

All right, sir, this is what I'm gonna tell you. We've got more than enough, already, to make our case. That metal object there, that just fell out? That? Yeaah. NO, NO!!

HATCHET

(throwing his hands up again) What?

SHERIFF

You're gonna try to kick it away. I saw you.
NO, NO!! Don't you try that!

Hatchet gulps. It becomes harder to breathe.

SHERIFF

Don't think I don't know your tricks!

The sheriff whips out a flashlight and shines it on Hatchet's face. Left eye. Right eye.

Hatchet's POV – confused; disoriented;
squirming away from the light.

SHERIFF

So what is it that you're on, huh? Why don't you tell me? What's that little *metal* thing for – crack? Speed? Huh, that ringing any bells there?

HATCHET

Puh . . . Pavlov?

The flashlight is done for now. The sheriff steps closer. Takes a better look at his face.

His view of Hatchet: bags under the eyes; just got done with grueling exercise, probably a fight; maybe not in the worst state of sickness right now, but certainly a bad case to see.

He tries the flashlight in the eyes one more time.
Gets the second look.

28

SHERIFF

Stop squirming around, there. Stop thrashing around and resisting so much. Keep those eyes open. Keep those eyes open.

HATCHET

It's like the power of the Sun.

SHERIFF

Now, I'm just asking you. *Nicely*, in fact. Wait, what? The power of the Sun?

A moment of silence.

He puts the flashlight away.

SHERIFF

. . . All right. I'm asking you this now, and I'm asking it only *once*. When I search you, what is it I'm gonna find, huh? Any *scales*? You know, for measuring out, weighing out, your *crack*? Or is it worse – am I gonna find some heroin needles, some freshly-cooked heroin?

HATCHET

. . . Uhhhhh . . . none that I'm aware of. At . . . the . . . the time that I'm saying this.

SHERIFF

Yeah? You *sure* about that, man? You *sure* about that?

HATCHET

(*gulping*) Puh . . . *positive*.

Hatchet looks at the bright lights of the cop car again. A new terrible idea hits him.

HATCHET

Is this being filmed?

No answer.

HATCHET

Is this an episode of COPS?

SHERIFF

I don't know, man. *You tell me*.

29

Hatchet looks at the sheriff again,
more befuddled than ever.

He waits again for an answer.

But he still doesn't get what's going on.

SHERIFF

You tell me: you want it to end that way, huh?
With you being in jail, huh? So why don't you
start coming clean, fessing up?

Hatchet gulps again.

SHERIFF

All right, that's it. It's over.

HATCHET

(motioning toward the crime scene from a minute ago)
Tell that to the carjacker over there.

SHERIFF

What??

(looking around)

Ain't nobody here but you and me and the
walls, man! Who else are you *talking* to?

HATCHET

The . . . the car . . . a few minutes ago?

SHERIFF

Huh? You need to *speak up*, pal. Look at
me as if you're *talking* to me. Yeah. Eyes up
here. Eyes up here.

Another few seconds of silence.
Then Hatchet just sags his head again.

SHERIFF

I'm just wondering what in the Hell is
wrong with you, quite honestly! That's
what *I'm* wondering.

Hatchet sighs.

HATCHET

So misunderstood.

SHERIFF

30

All right, I'm gonna search you. And I'm gonna be searching for hard drugs, and for weapons.

FADE TO:

SOON – about a minute later – the sheriff is done.

HATCHET

You didn't have to be so rough.

SHERIFF

Shut the Hell up and let me do my job, man.
All right, look, this is what I'm gonna tell ya.
I searched you high and low, I didn't find any needles. I didn't find any scales. And I know *all* your hiding spots.

Hatchet gulps.

SHERIFF

But, this one metal device did, I recall, drop out of your coat earlier. So, yes, I *am* gonna take this.

(finally examining it)

What is it, anyway? You never told me.

You into met-amphetamines, or . . .

He suddenly realizes what it actually is.

A hatchet, with blood on it.

SHERIFF

Is . . . is this yours, sir?

He looks at Hatchet again.

SHERIFF

I'm asking you, *is this yours?*

HATCHET

The hatchet?

SHERIFF

Okay, that's it. I'll ask you this *only* one time.
What are you doing, with an object like this?

HATCHET

. . . Cooking food?

SHERIFF

31

Oh, that's it. You're just asking for it.
Put your hands on that car. Now.

Hatchet moves a little shakily.

SHERIFF

Spread your legs, stand with both of em
about a foot apart. Yeah. Yeah. *Stay just
like that!* Stay like that, for about a minute.

He groans, then talks into his radio again.

SHERIFF

Yeah, we got a definite arrest going down tonight.
I'm just gonna need a minute with the two young
gentlemen driving the white Ford, first. It . . . it
shouldn't take me *too* long.

FADE TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – C STREET CRIME SCENE – LATER

Now it's midnight or so. The area is still a
crime scene, with all traffic blocked. There
are three cop cars out here now.

Sheriff Thompson is talking to the driver of the victims' car.

SHERIFF

(*to the driver*)

So what are you trying to say, man?

DRIVER

That – that old guy with the beard . . . the
homeless-looking guy . . . he, uhh . . .
Hatchet? He's the one who had *saved* us.

PASSENGER

It . . . it's true. This is our word. Hatchet
just saved us.

DRIVER

What he did, I think, was kill the carjacker
with the hatchet . . . and then pull it back
out, and walk away. To – to *save* us.

SHERIFF

Yeah? . . . That's the story, for *both* of you?

DRIVER

Yeah.

PASSENGER

Yes – it is.

DRIVER

This Hatchet, I don't know . . . I mean, I guess I'd *heard* about him a little, in the media, I don't know, the *news*, I just didn't actually *think* –

SHERIFF

(*holding one hand up*)

All right. You're good. You're good.

The sheriff looks over at his deputy, currently seated inside the car, writing on paper.

CLOSE ON the sheriff's deputy.

He takes another look.

First-person POV as he looks at the vehicle's side mirror . . . Hatchet is still standing in the same place as before.

The deputy nods his head.

DEPUTY'S RADIO

Where is the hatchet now?

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

Hmm? . . . Hatchet the *person*, or – hatchet, the weapon?

DEPUTY'S RADIO

Hatchet the weapon.

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

Not sure if it's been collected yet. It's crime scene evidence – so it *should* be. So now what? Now it goes out to the labs? So they analyze it, find out whose DNA is on it? Send it back to us? . . . And how long is THAT gonna take?

He takes one more look at Hatchet in the side mirror's reflection.

Still standing there, in his brown hat and coat
 . . . and he ain't going anywhere.

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY
(muttering angrily)
 Stupid son of a bitch.

BACK TO the sheriff, talking to the driver and
 passenger of the victims' car.

SHERIFF
 Christ. So now we *are* looking at a 187,
 right in the middle of a street!

PASSENGER
 Officer . . . you don't understand. We . . .
 we *like* this Hatchet guy!

DRIVER
 Whoever he was . . . he . . . he was the
 one who *saved* us from it all. Otherwise
 . . . I mean, otherwise, *I don't know!*

Several seconds of silence as the sheriff takes
 in the incredible news . . . that these two
 actually *like* the maniac.

SHERIFF
 All right, man, where's . . .

He turns to walk back to the old man
 who was, so far, all but arrested . . .
 except now he's gone. Vanished.

CUT TO a farther-away angle, showing a
 greater range of the area; Sheriff Thompson
 runs forth, certain he must be nearby.

SHERIFF
 Son of a BITCH! I was *positive* he wasn't *that* stupid.
(looking around the scene) Jesus, Mary and Joseph
 . . . stupid S.O.B. is actually trying to escape on foot!

The sheriff's deputy is startled.
 He had just been right there.

But now, looking again, he's gone.

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

34

What?? I was *right here*, I . . . well
. . . there's no way he can get far.

SHERIFF

You got that right.
(*into the radio:*) Dispatch! Assist officer!

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

(*pointing east*) He could only have gone *that way*.

SHERIFF

Headquarters, uhh, I think we got a good idea of
where Hatchet is running: he's heading East down
C Street. Block him off at 4th Street!

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY

Fun evening.

We FLY DOWN the road, going East, to soon
catch up with Hatchet.

Hiding down in between two parallel-parked cars.
Invisible as a ninja.

CLOSE ON Hatchet as he stays still, trying
to stay unseen. We hear the THUMP, THUMP,
THUMP-ing sound of his heartbeat picking up.

His breathing seems to be cut off –
high blood pressure kicking in . . .

He swallows. Clutches his chest.
Feels the left side, then the right
side, of his heart . . .

THUMP, THUMP, THUMP.

He crouches further down onto the street.

VOICE FROM WINDOW

HEEEEEEEY!

Hatchet looks up – to a window that
an angry woman is screaming out of.

VOICE FROM WINDOW

HEEEY, you can't do that! Nuh-uh!
You get the fuck off my car right now!

No! Not now! What rotten timing . . .

Hatchet looks around. There's clearly not a lot of options right now.

Hatchet stays low, close to the ground, and starts to *sneak* forward across the sidewalk, keeping low enough to stay hidden under the cars.

The cop car flies down the road, speeding right past Hatchet.

It cuts into Hatchet's body all at once. The fear. The shock. Blood pressure.

Hatchet gulps again. The bright red and blue lights of the car travel on ahead – leaving.

The brake lights come on. The car slows to a stop.

Hatchet gulps. Ducks down. Stays lower than ever.

He sneaks away from the cop car – back to where he had been coming from.

Another few seconds of the ongoing anxiety, stretching and dragging on, never quite done.

Then the cop car drives onward, done here. But Hatchet's not out of their radar yet: they're still searching for him. They're still looking.

And they won't stop until they get him.

VOICE FROM WINDOW

Got the COPS coming, you KNOW he did something bad.

Hatchet runs in the opposite direction as the cop car, and quickly makes a left turn onto 3rd Street.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – 3rd STREET

Walking down the sidewalk, he slows down his running speed and tries to look casual. He puts his hands into his pockets.

He starts whistling, making up some random tune. Walks down the sidewalk like anyone else.

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PULL BACK into an aerial angle of Hatchet,
at the intersection of C Street and 3rd.

PULL BACK until we are a dozen feet above the ground.

PULL BACK farther until we are another several dozen
feet up, looking down at the city. Hatchet is just a dot,
and the cop car is still driving on, looking for him –
with double sirens on.

BACK TO Hatchet, walking down the sidewalk.
Houses, trees, sidewalks, and a four-lane street
(two for traffic, two for parking) are the sights
he sees here on 3rd Street.

He runs. And runs. And crashes into a stranger.

HATCHET

OH my God! OH my God! I'm so sorry.

He notices who he has just bumped into:
a blonde woman of age 30-35.

HATCHET

Oh my God! And it's a *lady*! Where are my manners?

LADY

Just *watch* it, all right?!

She grumbles.

LADY

Jeez, why don't you watch where you're
walking sometime you little fucking moron!

HATCHET

(*gulps*) I – I'm just a screw-up or something, I guess . . .

He slowly walks away from her,
and snuffles, trying not to cry.

LADY

Look, it's all right.

Hatchet spins back around. Eyes her again.

She takes another drag from her cigarette.

37

LADY

You look kind of cold there.

HATCHET

Mm.

LADY

Could use a little *heat* . . .

Hatchet swallows. Another clue . . . ?

HATCHET

I could use a place to sleep, is more like it.

LADY

What was that? Speak up, sweetie.

HATCHET

(a little louder) I could use a place to sleep! For the night. Would be more like it. Uhhh . . . hmm.

LADY

(motioning him over) Come.

The Charles Hillside Hotel is over this way. *They* could give you a . . . a place to stay for the night.

She steps a little closer.

LADY

A . . . *room*, for the *night*.

Hatchet swallows. Hesitates. Then comes a little closer.

She stops him with one hand, drawing the line there.

LADY

One second. A hotel room, a place to sleep, ain't *free*.

HATCHET

Uhhh . . . bill me later?

LADY

(still smiling) Fraid not, kiddo. I *never* let people pay me “later” or “tomorrow”. All my clients pay me up front, or not at all. So, what's up? Time is still ticking here.

HATCHET

Clients? I didn't know you're a lawyer. Huh. Congratulations. *(reaching into his pockets)*

38

All right, all right, yeah . . . let's see . . . OH!
Hey! I didn't even know I had this 20! Can
that get me . . . one night?

LADY

One night? What do you think this is?
20 dollars? No way. Not one night, not
90 minutes. Not even a half-hour.

HATCHET

(*warily*) I *just* need a place to sleep. Really
. . . that's . . . that's all. 20 dollars if you can.

She looks at him again, starting at his toes
and moving to his head.

It finally dawns on her what truly
weary condition he's in.

LADY

All right. You know the hotel charges a lot.
I'm being nice here.

HATCHET

I understand. And – and I appreciate it.

The two walk out of sight together. Success.

WIPE TO:

INT. HOTEL – KIERRA'S ROOM – SOON

The interior of the lady, Kierra's, hotel room:
two beds, separated like a 1950's TV show,
and a window covered completely by curtains.

LOOK AROUND a little to see the small-
screen TV, playing the local news. The news
story: "WHO IS MR. RED?"

TV VOICE

So in Washington, D.C., you've got THREE cases
– count 'em, THREE – of this Mr. Red message.
This Mr. Red warning . . .

LOOK AROUND a little more to reveal
Hatchet taking off his coat and dropping
it off onto one bed.

39

He sets his weapon down onto the bed,
next to the coat. Still in his possession.
No longer wet or posing the threat of stains.

LADY

You get right down to business, I see.

HATCHET

(holding his elbows with his hands)
Not freezing to death now.

LADY

Hmm . . . you don't *look* like a cop . . .

She starts circling him, inspecting him again.

LADY

. . . but, then . . . I've been wrong before.

He finally hands her the money.

HATCHET

Here. 20 bucks, for letting me sleep here
for the night.

LADY

Now that can't be *all* you want.

Hatchet drops onto one of the two beds.

Already passed out.

LADY

. . . Seriously?

Hatchet starts snoring.

FADE TO: BLACK.

We hear Hatchet choking a little, while asleep.

FADE TO:

LATER – after he has woken back up.

Hatchet and the hooker are laying across the same
bed, doing nothing but talking.

HATCHET

40

And so I just kind of took a series of *bus rides*, and got myself here, to D.C., for a little while. Thought it could be interesting, you know? Visit the capitol. (*shrugs*) So that's it. Now I'm here in D.C. Only been in town about a week . . . haven't even really been *in* that long . . . and yet, already, look at me.

Already, I had to go ruin it.

(*sighing, shaking his head*)

I had to do the Hatchet thing again.

LADY

How so?

HATCHET

I walked around. Found a crime going on. A grand theft auto in progress, with a loaded gun. Or . . . at least, I *think* it was loaded . . .

He flinches as he thinks about it.

HATCHET

Well, anyway . . . I stopped the crime. I . . .
I . . . took down the bad guy.

LADY

“Took down”?

HATCHET

Yeah, like . . . capitol punishment.

LADY

(*thinking for a second*) . . . Ohhh.

HATCHET

Yeah. I killed one criminal, in order to *save* two young gentlemen's lives.

LADY

(*rising*) Whoa. Whoa. Certain subjects, we do *not* talk about, inside this hotel room!

HATCHET

Ohh. Uhh . . . sorry.

He squirms a little.

HATCHET

I guess I could just drop it.

41

He lays back in bed.

She lays next to him, and they both
gaze at the ceiling, side-by-side.

HATCHET

So *this* is the adult world.

He shakes his head.

HATCHET

Except don't people realize it takes *64 fucking years*
to get to "this point"? Don't people understand that,
like . . . like . . . it takes *21 years* of time, just to get to
age 21, and then people *still* call you a dumbass, or
just some little kid? I just, I don't know. Aaaaaagh.

A few moments of silence.

LADY

Well, that was kind of *random!*

HATCHET

I-I'm like that.

(*shrugs his shoulders again*)

I don't know. You know? It's like . . . you know
how, when you're a little kid . . . you see your parents
. . . and *they* are capable of anything? You know?
They can just . . . *go out to a hotel*, if they want to,
any day of the week. And they have all the answers
to everything. *Everything*. And when you're a kid,
you sit there and wish you could be an adult already.

(*he shrugs again*)

I'm just saying. You know? When you're a kid,
it seems like it would be *amazing* to just . . . like . . .

LADY

(*nodding her head*)

It just seems like it would be amazing,
to go out and get hotel rooms?

Hatchet thinks for a few seconds.

HATCHET

Yeah. *Yeah!* Basically, yeah!

LADY

Wow. I can't believe this. Hatchet. I've *heard*,
I guess, people throw that name around – "Hatchet".

42

I just thought you would look completely different!

HATCHET

Yeah, I've gotten that before.

LADY

(gulp) Wow. I – I never . . . I mean . . . whoa.
Oh my God. I'm starting to think . . . years and
years ago, when I was a little girl . . .

HATCHET

Uh-oh.

LADY

. . . I think you saved my whole family's life once.

That was a moment of seriousness neither
of the two had been ready for.

HATCHET

Are you sure? . . . I've been Hatchet for 42 years.

LADY

Pretty sure . . . I mean . . . yeah, *pretty* sure
you saved us, one time . . .
Hatchet – oh my God, man, as long as you're in
town, you *ever* need a place to sleep, you can
do it here. And don't be afraid to ask.

HATCHET

Yeah?

LADY

And I mean that. This is my hotel room. And I'll
let you sleep in it if you need a place to sleep.

HATCHET

No cops?

LADY

No . . .

(chuckling) No cops! *Last* thing I want.

HATCHET

Fhoooo . . . well, here's the thing. I'm still not
all recovered from my crazy night. So – me, out.

He passes out again.

43

FADE TO:

BLACK.

Several seconds of silence.

FADE TO:

INT. HATCHET'S DREAM

A first-person POV, looking around inside a big field. The sky overhead is cyan, and the enormous blades of grass here are green and orange.

The sky fades to red and orange. We hear the sounds of machine-guns firing.

CLOSE ON a tall blade of green grass, bigger than a person. A human hand grabs it. But the green grass becomes orange. Then it dissolves into nothing.

The color orange continues to spread, like a virus, replacing all the blades of grass nearby in an ongoing domino effect. After they turn orange, the blades of grass then dissolve into nothing.

Now we PULL BACK, floating toward the sky, still looking at the ground. This once plentiful field of grass has now become nothing but a dead circle of brown dirt. Beyond, rings of the color orange continue to contaminate the entire field, until nothing is left.

Many kinds of flying animals fall to the ground, dead and covered in an unknown white chemical.

The rain of flying animals continues.

Someone begins screaming.

He continues to scream some more.

At the ground level, a young man crawls out of a hole in the dirt ground.

He looks around again. No life is left here. Everything is gone now.

He begins to transform into an old man with

a long gray beard and entirely-black eyes.

He looks up again. In the sky, he
sees the white, glowing moon.

Except the moon takes on a double image as
a diabolical evil face, grinning with delight.

The moon's two eyes are bright orange.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL – THE LADY'S ROOM – MORNING

CLOSE ON the two eyes of Hatchet as he wakes up.

PULL BACK to reveal Hatchet, sweating,
holding his own arms around his folded
legs in a fetal position – still cold and shaking.

HATCHET
Am I still alive?

Several seconds of silence, as there is no response.

PULL BACK to reveal the entire bed.
But the lady is no longer there.

He looks at the other bed. He finds . . . nothing.

He looks at the window, still covered in blinds.

He looks toward the bathroom. The entire
place still seems empty.

BACK TO a close angle of Hatchet, who
looks more confused now than ever.

The immediate surrounding area is, right now,
his entire reach of vision. He looks across the
bed, to his left, then his right . . .

Our vision BLURS for a few seconds . . .

Finally, he manages to stand up, fully awake. He
reaches for his stomach, then realizes he's not
wearing the brown coat or hatchet at the moment.

He looks around. Sees the brown coat on a chair.

A terrible idea hits him – that his hatchet is missing.

More bags under his eyes, near tears, as he
considers the possibility . . .

He crawls across the bed. Finally gets
to the chair. Reaches for the coat.

He turns the coat over, quickly, manically . . .

. . . nothing.

He lifts up the entire coat. Still nothing. He sighs.

HATCHET
Well, fudge!

LADY
Hey!

He looks up, terrified. Red and blue lights
flash across the walls for a second.

LADY
Lookin' for this?

She holds up his weapon.

Perfectly clean, perfectly groomed.

LADY
Here.

She holds the weapon downward, toward her toes,
and walks slowly to the bed.

LADY
I – I don't know how you would want me
to set this down – but just – here.

She drops it onto the mattress.

Hatchet's eyes bulge. His prodigal hatchet is back.
Better than he's seen it in ages.

HATCHET
You cleaned my hatchet. Thank you.

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LADY

Yeah, no problem.

HATCHET

What were those flashing red and blue lights?

LADY

Hmm?

A few seconds of silence. Hatchet isn't sure how to explain it.

HATCHET

The . . . the . . .

She looks around, at the walls. Smiles.

But just can't figure out what he's saying.

HATCHET

The . . . *red and blue* lights?

LADY

. . . Like . . . were they *bright* lights . . . ?

HATCHET

Never mind, it was nothing. I'm still safe here.
Uhhh – did I ever give you that 20 yet?

LADY

Huh? Oh, hey – sleeping is free. Don't worry about *that*. I think *you* need the money for survival a little more badly than *I* do.

Hatchet finds his 20, in one of the pockets.

HATCHET

Here. 20 bucks, it's all I've got, but . . . hey. Wait. I thought I already handed this 20 to you last night.

LADY

(*smiling*) Don't worry about it, sweetie. *You* keep it, for food. For staying alive.

Hatchet remains frozen with the money.

HATCHET

. . . Really?

LADY

Yeah. But don't spend it on food *yet*.
We got free breakfast downstairs.

Hatchet sits up. Then stops to think about it.

HATCHET

Could . . . umm . . . hmm.

LADY

What?

HATCHET

. . . Would . . . *you* be able to get it, and
. . . bring it back to me?

LADY

(offended) What?! Why?

HATCHET

. . . I just . . . umm . . . kind of . . .

He's not sure how to say it.

HATCHET

. . . I get sort of uncomfortable, around people.

LADY

(genuinely) Hatchet – we're *fine* here.
No one's even up and awake right now.
No one *cares*.

Hatchet gulps again.

HATCHET

(almost whispering) Yes they do.

He raises his hand to his eyes again.

LADY

Sweetie, you're just *fine* here!
That's what I want you to see!

HATCHET

. . . Yeah?

LADY

This is just breakfast, babe, *no one's*
gonna hold a gun to your head here.

Hatchet chuckles a little.

HATCHET

Uhhh . . . yeah! All right! Heh heh!

So she opens the room's door and steps outside.
Hatchet follows her. We FOLLOW HIS MOVEMENT
as he leaves the room, entering the hallway, and watches
his lady friend shut the door, and test the doorknob for a
second to make sure it's locked.

She leads the way to a door – about ten seconds of a walk –
which she opens up to reveal the stairs on the other side. Hatchet
follows her downward travel, down two sets of staircases, where
she opens a door to reveal another hallway. She leads the way,
and Hatchet follows behind her, until he has soon arrived at the
Breakfast Room, where one dozen people are already either
standing or seated to eat breakfast.

A dozen people are there at once. It makes Hatchet nervous.

HATCHET

I gotta take a whiz. Which way's the bathroom?

LADY

(pointing) Out there. Go left. Second left. It's there.

HATCHET

It's there? Yeah? Okay. Thanks!

INT. HOTEL – HALLWAY – SOON

Inside an empty hallway, we hear the muffled sound
of somebody washing his hands.

Then we hear the sound of paper towels being unrolled.
Hands being wiped dry.

Hatchet exits the mens' room, then starts walking through
the hallway. We FOLLOW HIS WALK until he is back
inside the Breakfast Room.

There are a dozen strangers here. But his lady friend is
sitting, alone, next to an empty chair, in the distance.

We LOOK AROUND THE ROOM for a moment to see
how many people Hatchet would have to pass by to get
to his lady friend. Finally, we come full-circle back to

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Hatchet, whose throat constricts nervously.

He starts shaking. He can't face all those people.

We CUT TO a shot of the food he's walking toward, and PULL BACK a great distance to reach Hatchet's current location. This is it. He'll have to pass by everyone to get the food.

He takes one step. Another. Another. He looks away from people. He looks away again. He twists, turns. Takes more small steps.

People's voices are all echoing loudly, piling up on top of one another.

He squirms, facing away from them. He groans, growing agitated.

Finally, he grabs a cup, puts it up to the drink dispenser, and starts pouring himself some orange juice. Then he spins around and walks to the other food.

SOON – with a paper plate full of food, he begins his walk through the crowd of people.

He walks in between tables. His female friend is far ahead of him.

It's a scary and anxiety-ridden walk. When people look up and suddenly make eye contact, we hear the echoing sound of their vibrations. Their piercing stares. Their burning looks.

Hatchet swallows. His arms are shaking again.

The orange juice starts to spill to the floor.

HATCHET
Damn it!!

He's shaking again.

LADY
What's happening?

His body continues to shake.
More orange juice spills out.

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HATCHET
DAMN IT!

Tears are coming down his face.

But still, he persists. Still, he takes another step,
and another, to make it all the way to the lady.

He slams his cup down to the table. A little
more O.J. spills out.

LADY
Hey, come on, man! What on Earth
is wrong with you this morning?

HATCHET
(holding his eyes with both hands)
I just, I don't know. Mmm. Get back
to me later on that.

LADY
What? Come on, man. You're at breakfast!

HATCHET
Mm. Yeah. Did we walk the dog yet today?

LADY
What?

HATCHET
I mean, never mind.

LADY
Mm.

She starts to eat her food.

LADY
Here. I'll make you some waffles.

CUT TO – soon – as the waffle batter dispenser pours
out white batter, like a drink, into a white Styrofoam
cup. She lets it fill up 3/4ths to the top.

LADY
You ever made waffles before?

HATCHET
Can't say that I have, no. Not for many years, anyway.

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She opens the waffle maker. Pours the batter in, going for four places total, until it is filled. Then she closes it shut, and flips it around.

LADY

There. See? You just do that, and then the timer starts going. Two more minutes.

HATCHET

And then?

CUT TO – soon – as the waffle maker makes the *ding!* noise of the end, and she spins it around again and opens it up to reveal a fresh batch of waffles.

LADY

There. See?

She takes a pair of tongs, to peel the waffle off the waffle maker.

HATCHET

That is absolutely *amazing!* . . . And *they* get to see it every day.

HOTEL WORKER

Ahhh! Mmm. Let me get that.

The hotel worker starts to spray the waffle maker, before it can be used again.

LADY

Yeah. It ain't easy, hopping from hotel to hotel. Living in one after the other.

HATCHET

Really? . . . You mean, you don't just permanently *live* here?

LADY

Hmm? Oh, God, no! I wish life was that simple.

HATCHET

Wow. I mean, I just thought, maybe, like, you had lived here for months, or a year.

LADY

Nope. I just live a day at a time. Find a hotel. Check

in all my bags. Check-out by 12:00 noon. Then find some way to make money, for one more day, at another hotel . . . this game ain't easy, kiddo.

HATCHET
“Kiddo”?

LADY
Well, it's better than me calling you Grampa, right?

She pours some syrup over his waffles.

LADY
Now I'll make mine.

She pours more white batter into the same white cup.

HATCHET
Can . . . can I make yours?

LADY
Hmm?

HATCHET
You made my waffles. Can I make yours?

LADY
(*smiling*) Sure. You got it.

Hatchet, smiling as well, gives it a shot.

He pours the cup into the waffle maker –
into the center, at first.

Then he gasps, and corrects himself, pouring it into all four parts of the device. Then he closes it shut.

CUT TO – soon – as he lifts it open to reveal burned waffles.

He sighs.

HATCHET
Well, I tried.

LADY
It's all right, sweetie. At least you gave –

HATCHET

Well we can switch and trade, then. I can eat the burned one, and . . . yeah.

He smiles.

CUT TO – soon – as the two eat together at their seat. He does not mind, in the slightest, eating the burned waffle.

HATCHET

God. Wow! I can't believe I'm actually getting comfortable again. And talking to people. Wow!

LADY

Yeah, free breakfast lasts until 9. Or 10, on weekends.

HATCHET

Wait a minute. Does that mean you have hotel check-out time at 12:00 noon, today?

LADY

Yeah. Except I'll just extend it. I want to stay in the same room. Just stay put there for a while. (*gasp*) Oh! That's right! I don't know if the same room is still available! Shoot!

She stands up, gets her purse on her shoulder, and starts walking away.

HATCHET

What?? Where are you going??

LADY

I've gotta extend my room, before it gets booked by someone else. I don't feel like moving rooms, or switching hotels, right now. You know?

HATCHET

You can't just *leave* me here -!

LADY

A couple minutes here ain't gonna kill you, hon. Drink some more O.J., it's good for you.

Hatchet gulps.

CUT TO a farther-away angle. He is now alone here.

He looks left. Right.

He swallows. He can't possibly stay here.
So he gets up, and starts to walk out of the room.

INT. HOTEL – LOBBY – SOON

HATCHET
Lady? . . . L-lady?

Three faces (as two customers and someone
working behind the counter) are looking at him
. . . *sent*, just for him?

He looks quickly to the left.

VOICE 1
Oh, look, see? So he looks the other way.

VOICE 2
Trying to *act* like he's not staring.

VOICE 1
You saw that . . . *you* know what he's doing.

Hatchet sees the glass walls that show him the
outside. Some of the windows are covered in
Venetian blinds.

But one of the blinds is slightly off: it is bent
in one place. A little bit of the outside can be
seen through this slight deviation in the pattern.

Hatchet slowly begins to gravitate toward that
part of the blinds. Stepping closer, step by step,
he stays fixated on that one detail, and what it
might really mean.

He steps even closer . . .

LADY
Hey! Where'd you go?

Hatchet shakes again, startled! He
spins around, to see his lady friend.

HATCHET
(*gasp*) You're here!

LADY

Yeah. You like Icy Flakes?

HATCHET

What?

LADY

The cereal? They've got some.

HATCHET

Oh. Yeah. I was just . . . hey . . .
wait, this doesn't feel right. You
still haven't told me your *name!*

LADY

Kierra. Kierra Smithee.

She smiles, introducing herself again.
Hatchet shakes her hand.

HATCHET

Kierra Smithee.

LADY

Come on. I got the room extended for one more day.

SOON – Hatchet quickly moves the disposable
bowl to catch the breakfast cereal falling from
the dispenser.

SOON – Hatchet pours milk into his cereal,
and spills some all over the metal counter.

HATCHET

Whoops.

SOON – the two sit down at a table to eat.

OTHER VOICE 1

No! I don't want this guy just coming
right in and sitting down right next to me!

OTHER VOICE 2

This guy can't control himself!

OTHER VOICE 3

I've got grandkids! I don't want him
looking at them.

Hatchet turns to glare at some strangers.

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KIERRA
What's wrong?

HATCHET
(to her) Huh? . . . Uhhhh . . .

He looks down, at his food.

HATCHET
. . . Nothing. Never mind.

He sighs.

HATCHET
So, you get breakfast here *every* morning?

KIERRA
Yeah, I *love* it here. This place is pretty chill, pretty “nobody messes with you” kind of place.

HATCHET
Yeah? That's . . . that's good.

KIERRA
Really nice and *relaxed*.

OTHER VOICE 1
I'm not keeping my eye off this guy for a *minute!*

Hatchet tries to eat his food again, but instead hits his spoon onto a glass, loudly.

HATCHET
I don't feel right here . . . I . . . I can't be here.

He starts shaking again.

INT. HOTEL – KIERRA'S ROOM

Hatchet resumes eating while walking to the bed.

KIERRA
Seriously, though. What's wrong? You've got a place to sleep, you've got a place to eat food. You're *fine* here!

HATCHET

Kierra, there's . . .

(with one tear coming down one eye)

There's *nowhere* that I'm fine.

KIERRA

What? Is that honestly how you feel?

HATCHET

Everyone down there. Everyone in that breakfast downstairs. They wouldn't stop focusing their energy on me for a damn second.

KIERRA

(chuckling) You hear yourself? Things

aren't that bad, sweetie.

HATCHET

. . . Yeah?

KIERRA

Those folks downstairs, they all got their own lives going on. They're not sitting here talking about you, *each and every* time.

They really are not.

HATCHET

. . . Yeah?

He looks around.

HATCHET

Well, all right, then.

FADE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM – LATER

Kierra walks in carrying two 2-liter bottles of soda and a few food items.

KIERRA

Babe, I bought us a couple things . . .

She approaches Hatchet, who is holding his sides with both hands.

KIERRA

How's your stomach thing?

HATCHET

A little better . . . I could use some water . . .

KIERRA

Is fruit punch all right?

HATCHET

Yeah, that's perfect.

KIERRA

Want anything else?

HATCHET

Hmm. Uhh . . . maybe a . . . composition journal?

CUT TO – later – as Hatchet holds the black-and-white composition journal open in his hands.

On the first page, he writes, at the top:
“HATCHET WAR JOURNAL 2012”

HATCHET'S VOICE

Hatchet, War Journal, 2012.

His hand-writing is messy. Disorganized.
His markings go all over the place.

He continues to write away dutifully in the journal.

HATCHET'S VOICE

June X, 2012. (Don't Know Date.)

Dear . . . Diary. Today, I am still in this hotel room, here in Washington, D.C. Been such a *crazy week!*

SOON, Hatchet is curled up against the wall, writing.

HATCHET'S VOICE

I saved two lives recently and so I feel good.
But I took down one more criminal so I feel bad.

New page.

HATCHET'S VOICE

Really like this lady I met. It is not all a giant sexual thing, but I really like her spark of sincerity as she actually does try to convince me that things

are all right. Even if I still think they are not.

On the next page, he makes a crude drawing
of her, the way she was dressed all day. Smiling.
Adds the label “KIERRA SMITHEE”.

HATCHET'S VOICE

Can't stop having weird dreams.
Try to forget them, or shut them out.
But something always pops up that reminds me.
Nightmares of getting shot.
Nightmares of explosions everywhere.

Hatchet closes the composition journal shut.

Gives it a few seconds.

Opens it back up, and looks through what
he wrote and drew so far.

Perfect. He keeps writing where he had
left off before.

HATCHET'S VOICE

I really wish I could just call it a happy ending
right here and right now and, I don't know,
retire or something. She should not have to
stay in a hotel room forever.
But I know I can never stay in one place too long.
Can't stay here forever.
Got to move on. Keep being Hatchet.

Done. Hatchet sighs, now with everything out.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – EXT. HOTEL

The hotel goes on like normal. Hatchet is
still safe here . . . for now.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – 3rd STREET – DAYTIME

We see the ordinary daytime scene going on,
without Hatchet involved at all.

HATCHET'S VOICE

Hatchet 2012 War Journal, Entry 2. Dear . . . Diary.
Today I am not being Hatchet. So whatever goes on
out there, goes on without me today.

INT. HOTEL – KIERRA'S ROOM – JUST THEN

Hatchet is inside the hotel room, disconnected from it all, laying on the bed with a remote control. With one hand, he reaches into a bag of potato chips, dips it into the dip, and munches away, then drinks down a cup of soda. Life is beyond luxurious here.

On the TV, he sees the news story:

“BANK HOSTAGE SITUATION IN PROGRESS”

He holds one hand over his side. The number one temptation . . . he *wants* to get up for something like that . . . but he can't. He must stop and rest.

Another news report: “DANNITON CHARGED FOR LIQUOR STORE ROBBERY”.

REPORTER

The suspect was taken in for questioning.

REPORTER 2

No, no actual word, or appearance from, any such “vigilante” types, lately. Really, it's all being handled by the *proper* folks, which is to say, the local law enforcement.

REPORTER 3

And always remember. These days, plenty of folks seem to want to play “hero”. But you *don't* have to follow the examples of those outlaw figures. You don't *have* to be like those kind of people, who just can't ever work *with* the system, but only against it.

Hatchet lays back on the bed, hands and feet outstretched in a snow-angel position, relaxed to the max.

We LOOK AWAY . . . out the hotel room's window, which is mostly covered up by curtains, but which has a small space in between, through which to see the outside.

Out there – a few stories above the ground, we LOOK UP a little to see the bright daytime sky . . .

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – EXT. BROADCASTING BUILDING – MORNING

. . . and LOOK DOWN from the sky to see another

scene, elsewhere in D.C. – the building belonging to
Axxen Broadcasting.

INT. TALK SHOW SET – MORNING

BROADCASTING VOICE

We're live in five . . . four
. . . three . . . two . . .

On a wooden stage, three men are
seated in chairs, talking.

A studio audience begins cheering
and applauding wildly.

Talk show theme music plays.

SHOW'S HOST

(ahem) All right, everybody! We're back on,
and now, finally, *finally* I can introduce you all
to this very special new guest. This is the author
of a new book, it's out now, "Hatchet: The Man I
Once Knew", by author Joseph Brownson.

More applause.

JOSEPH

Thank you for having me.

SHOW'S HOST

Now, uhh, they say we all have our 15 minutes of
fame, but *your* claim is quite an unusual one.

JOSEPH

Well, not *that* unusual, I suppose. I've had two
non-fiction books published, which, that part is
pretty normal, I guess.

SHOW'S HOST

But the subject matter.

JOSEPH

(facing the audience)

Well . . . all right. Now it's been 42 years. 42 years
since the man named Hatchet emerged to run a war
on crime in this country. Except I grew up with
the guy, from *before* he was Hatchet . . . therefore,
my book, Hatchet: the Man I Once Knew.

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HOST

Now. Now. Back up. You said he's been Hatchet for 42 years? How old is the man?

JOSEPH

64 years old.

HOST

64 years old.

JOSEPH

Yes; he was born in 1948, so now he's 64 years old, *now*, in 2012. Also, he's been doing this Hatchet bit for 42 years, meaning, he started it at age 22.

HOST

42 years of wild, innocent fun.

JOSEPH

He became Hatchet in August 1970. So, pretty soon, in August 2012, he'll reach the 42-year anniversary mark, and the start of Year 43.

HOST

Huh. So he's been running the Hatchet gig for over four decades, and he's darned good at it.

JOSEPH

Yes. By this point, he's 64, and I'm 65.

HOST

And I'm 20. Now, you're saying that you go "waaaay back" with Hatchet. What was your relationship?

JOSEPH

Well . . . I mean . . . "relationship" . . . we used to be best friends, literally, starting in junior high, throughout high school.

HOST

And what was his *name*? Hatchet can't possibly be his birth name, on his birth certificate.

JOSEPH

Robert Manter.

HOST

. . . Yeah?

JOSEPH

Yep, there it is, the big “secret identity”: Robert Manter. Growing up, I just saw him as Robby, just as he saw me as Joey . . . two awkward guys in junior high, then high school.

HOST

So, then, did he display lots of Hatchet-ish behavior back then? Did he build a hatchet in shop class, or something?

JOSEPH

Ehhh, no, I don't think so . . . hmm . . . no, he never really seemed like Hatchet, back then. He was just the quiet kid, not a lot of friends, really . . . just always kinda in his own zone.

HOST

Yeah?

JOSEPH

Yeah. He was always reading those stupid science fiction books, and science fiction *comics* . . . outer space, aliens, U.F.O.s, hideous monsters of science, y'know, that kind of stuff. And also anything about *the future*, and *time-travel* . . . yeah. He always would talk about how he wanted to “travel through time, and go far ahead, into the Perfect Day, the Perfect Age” . . . Eden in the future, or something, I don't know.

HOST

So he *loves* those science fiction novels.

JOSEPH

Loves those science fiction novels, and comics. And then, y'know . . . we would talk about girls . . . neither one of us was very successful with the girls, back then. But at least, talking to each other, we could laugh, joke about things. Have a support system, y'know.

HOST

I'm sorry, what decade, again, was all this?

JOSEPH

The 1960's.

HOST

The 1960's.

JOSEPH

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Yep – except the actual Hatchet thing started in 1970. Now it's 42 years later: 2012.

HOST

Okay, so, Hatchet is something he started doing as an adult. The name on his license is still . . . uhhh . . . I forgot his name.

JOSEPH

Robert Manter.

HOST

Right. Hmm. Okay, so you've told us his *name*. You've described Hatchet back in junior high and high school in your book . . . so just say it! Just come out and say what you're here to say, this amazing untold story, of how some random quiet kid goes on to become the Hatchet!

JOSEPH

Well . . . fine, then, here it is. The full story. (*ahem*) Our entire lives were normal, up until 1966. I turned 19 years old then, and he turned 18 that same year.

HOST

Uhhh-oh.

JOSEPH

Uhhh-oh is right, because back in those days, when you turned 18, your entire life could be signed over to the U.S. government. You could be *drafted* into the Vietnam War, and you couldn't do a thing about it. This was back in '66 – a couple of years after the Vietnam Draft really launched, under President Johnson.

HOST

Right, right. Right.

JOSEPH

Yes, so . . . so you see . . . I was in college by then. So I was thought of as a whole different class of human being, compared to Robby, who was NOT in college. So of course, he turned 18, and he got *taken* into the military, *taken* into the war, by force.

HOST

Right, right. Right.

JOSEPH

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1966, he gets drafted into Vietnam. Four years of time overseas. And he comes back home in 1970, to now find that people hate him: now they have *him* pinned as the bad guy, the villain of the war. The evil, big, bad soldier, killing women and children.

HOST
Oh dear.

JOSEPH
It was too much for him to take. Now, in 1970, when he got back to the homeland, he found that I was pretty much one of his only few true friends – me, and Leslie, Robby's sister.

HOST
Wait a minute. *What?* Robert's sister?

JOSEPH
Yeah. Leslie Manter. She was younger than him. She used to be best friends with both Robby and myself. We were all close. But while he was overseas, she managed to somehow get into a coma. So by the time he got back home . . . she was in a coma, not quite dead, yet not quite alive.

HOST
Oh, no.

JOSEPH
It was difficult for me, too . . . to lose a friend, to a coma. But for Robert, to lose his younger sister, the one person that he was truly the closest with, on top of everything else . . . it really tore him apart.

HOST
What eventually happened to her . . .?
If you don't mind my asking.

JOSEPH
Uhhh, she got out of the coma, and she's alive.

HOST
Hmm. All right. So, Hatchet sort of lost a loved one, on top of everything else, at his absolutely worst time, is roughly what you're saying.

JOSEPH
Yes. And it really tore him apart . . . issues I knew or understood nothing about. He became an all-out

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diagnosed schizophrenic . . . it says in my book.

HOST

Paranoid schizophrenic. Yeah, that's what they say . . .

JOSEPH

I used to think you have to be *born* schizophrenic. But you don't. You *become* schizophrenic over time, perhaps through life-issues, like the kind he was going through. Chemical imbalances, in the dopamine area. Psychosis. Delirium. States of delusion. States of denial. And he just . . . took on this identity of Hatchet one day!

HOST

Yeah, it's funny, how people do that, huh.

JOSEPH

But I think Hatchet is just one *slice* of Robert Manter, you see . . . the part that's dedicated to the War on Crime.

HOST

So, 4 years overseas . . . 42 years of Hatchet.

JOSEPH

Yeah – after 6 weeks of boot camp. Such a small amount of time as 6 weeks.

HOST

Hmm.

JOSEPH

Yeah.

HOST

Jeez. This is so depressing. I almost feel like I should just stop talking about it all. But now we see where Hatchet was a victim, at first . . . you can't help but to feel a little *bad* for him.

JOSEPH

Well, everyone's got their problems. Right?

HOST

And yet, there's one last thing left to say. Why “Hatchet”? Why . . . “*Hatchet*”? Because, after all, there are thousands of war veterans out there, but you *don't* really see a lot of hatchet-man vigilantes around . . . so what *is* it with him?

JOSEPH

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I guess it's just role-playing, really, is what it is: maybe he figured, if he could turn himself into Hatchet, then there would BE such a thing as Hatchet . . . an identity dedicated to the War on Crime.

HOST

War on Crime, huh? Hey, this guy musta been a real fan of that Richard Nixon.

JOSEPH

Yes – yes he was, actually. *Really* into Nixon. It was President Johnson who declared the Vietnam War, so it was Nixon who simply *inherited* that war, was Robby's belief. The Vietnam War, okay, that was a big, ugly, terrible disaster, yeah, we know *that* . . . yet the War on Crime, a war going on in the U.S.A., was wholesome, it was pure. Robby just wanted to run the War on Crime, and, you know . . . kill a purse snatcher, give the purse back to the lady . . . that was his vision of things, basically.

The host holds his forehead with his thumb and pointer finger.

HOST

Yeah, *no one's* gonna disagree with you walking around the park carrying a *hatchet!*

JOSEPH

Well, the War on Crime itself was started by a Republican President, Nixon. So, it *does* all go back to politics.

HOST

Aye, aye aye, aye aye . . . so the guy's all political, too?

JOSEPH

Oh, yes, he was *very* political. Just when it came to a few key issues, including war, and the whole “crime-fighting” prospect. And he was never hesitant to announce his political views, as “100%, unadulterated Republican”.

HOST

Huh. Yeah – that's true. I remember people used to always say, Hatchet is just living under George W. Bush's wing. Hatchet is just living under Bush's wing, they would say.

JOSEPH

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What? Really? . . . Well, I mean, yeah, Hatchet is Republican – sure, maybe he VOTED for Bush – but no! No, he's not “living under George W. Bush's wing”, what on Earth does THAT mean?

HOST

Oh, I don't know – maybe that Bush's Administration was working in secret to help Hatchet? Give him places to sleep, live, that kind of thing?

JOSEPH

(shaking his head) Ohhhh, jeez. That's not it at all. No. Hatchet wasn't “living under George W. Bush's wing”, that's just stupid.

HOST

All right, so . . . so . . . this is pretty much, one man, one Republican, fighting a War on Crime for Nixon.

JOSEPH

(nodding his head) . . . Pretty much, yeah. Richard Nixon's War on Crime. And yet, at the same time, the person who had helped to take *down* Nixon – the, uhh, the Deep Throat guy . . . uhh . . . it's *not* weird . . . he, too, became an influence on Hatchet after a while. *Big* influence.

HOST

Oh yeah? What do you mean by that?

JOSEPH

Oh, you know – the mysterious shadow, lurking in the background. Brown coat, brown hat. Identity concealed. Could be anyone. Yeah. People used to think Hatchet would turn out to be a rogue FBI agent, or a CIA operative, or at least a police chief or something; they were expecting someone well-educated.

HOST

So Hatchet is all about Nixon's War on Crime, and yet, the one who helped to take *down* Nixon, is also a big influence on him. So . . . so what does *that* show.

A few seconds of silence.

HOST

Joseph's book, “Hatchet: The Man I Once Knew”, now available wherever books are sold.

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CUT TO:

INT. MR. RED'S HOME – MIDDAY

CLOSE ON “Hatchet: The Man I Once Knew” –
the front cover.

PULL BACK to reveal two hands,
as a person is reading the book.

MR. RED’S VOICE

“Man . . . man with . . . man with delusions . . .
but the delusions kept him happy . . .”

PULL BACK further. The caption “Mr. Red” fades in.
Mr. Red is a 30-year-old man so into the color red that
nearly everything he wears is only two shades of medium
and dark red. His naturally red hair is dyed with a second,
darker shade of red.

Right now, he's also wearing small reading glasses.

MR. RED

“And so, that was the man that I once knew . . .
before the days of Hatchet.” *What?* Oh,
come on, man. Give me a break.

He takes off his glasses, sets them down, and
tosses the book onto the mattress on the floor.

MR. RED

I will admit parts of it were entertaining, though.
But now we gotta get to *my* part.

He pulls a red marker from a cup on his desk.

Spends several seconds struggling to
get the cap off.

MR. RED

Yep, there, we, go.

He walks over to the book. Pulls it up from the floor.

And quickly covers the top, middle, and bottom parts
of the paper pages (with both covers closed) in red.

MR. RED

Yep, yep, yep, let's fix it all up, let's make it better!

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Pretty soon, half the paper is red.
He's satisfied, for now.

He walks away from both the book and the bed, all the way to the door. He opens the door, and steps through.

On the other end, elsewhere in his house, reside a dozen people, all wearing red shirts, with big two-digit numbers written over them in black.

Whether white, black, Asian, Hispanic, Moroccan, or anything else, every person's hair here is dyed red.

The people are all continuing to talk over loud music. It's too much noise for Mr. Red to speak and be heard.

MR. RED
Gentlemen!

Still, the noise goes on. He gives it another second.

MR. RED
GENTLEMEN!!

The talking begins to die down.

ONE CULTIST
Someone turn the music down.

Another few seconds. Then the music is put on Pause.

MR. RED
Gentlemen – *and* ladies – of the Red-Headed League.
. . . Heh. I just . . . thought that would be funny.
. . . Anyway. To be serious: gentlemen and ladies of the Color Red Cult . . . we ARE a cult . . . and we worship the color red.

CULTIST 1
That's right!

CULTIST 2
Damn straight we do!

CULTIST 3
Red is like blood . . .

MR. RED

But I'm not the real genius. No. No. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle must be the *real* genius – because *his* short story, “The Red-Headed League”, had this great idea in 1891 – a league of men all wearing the color red in their hair.

(as he clasps both hands together)

My work will be like Doyle's writings brought to life.

VOICE 1

He's onto something.

MR. RED

It would be wrong to say we're just some other random handful of jerks looking to party. No, there's a greater cause: we've gotta spread that color RED across D.C. . . . and we've gotta smear some RED across this Hatchet, this – this Sherlock Holmes . . . whose little friend, the paperback writer, serves as his Dr. Watson.

(chuckling)

Sherlock Holmes eventually sees the defeat of the Red-Headed League. But Hatchet will never see the defeat of the Color Red Cult. We're here in Caroline, Virginia, right now – but we can go back to D.C. and *do* this!

VOICE 2

He's *got* it!

Mr. Red takes a pair of contact lenses from the counter.

MR. RED

Now it's time to . . . put in my red contact lenses.
I have trouble with these things.

VOICE 1

SMEAR THE TOWN REEEEEED!

MANY VOICES
YEAAAAAAAH!

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – KIERRA'S HOTEL ROOM – THE NEXT DAY

Back to Hatchet in the hotel room.

Eating food, slowly; too distracted
to eat normally.

HATCHET'S VOICE

War Journal, Day 3. Still I stay inside this hotel room to do nothing. And it is fine with me . . .

LOOK AWAY, across the walls.

FADE BACK to Hatchet, writing some more.

HATCHET'S VOICE

Day 4. I have rested and recovered enough. And I have liked it. But now I must move on. There are other lives that need to be saved.

INT. HOTEL – LAUNDRY ROOM – SOON

Hatchet fiddles around with a snack vending machine.

HATCHET'S VOICE

It shouldn't even really bother me. Should it? Saying good-bye to one more lady: just some street hooker.

He presses two buttons. Slowly gets his snack food.

HATCHET'S VOICE

Except it does. It absolutely does hurt.

EXT. CHARLES HILLSIDE HOTEL

Outside the hotel, Hatchet and Kierra exchange a good-bye hug.

KIERRA

If you ever get back into D.C., and need a place to sleep, just let me know.

HATCHET

Yeah? I'll . . . I'll try to remember this place.

He nods his head.

HATCHET

And thanks again.

He walks off, down the sidewalk.

FADE TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – C STREET

Hatchet walks down the road, hailing a taxi cab.

He climbs inside, in the back.

INT. TAXI CAB – BACK SEAT

HATCHET

Hello.

The driver looks at him in the rearview mirror,
and nods his head.

HATCHET

Homeless shelter? Is there any homeless
shelter in the area where I could get me
some grub?

DRIVER

Hmm. Let me think. Let me think.
Oh! The Emmerson Youth Work
shelter should be just a few miles
from right here.

HATCHET

Okay. I've got 20 bucks. So – so stop when it's 20.
(gasp) We . . . we're already at 5 dollars?

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – 3rd STREET

The back of the taxi cab flies away
as we stay still.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – EXT. EMMERSON YOUTH WORK BUILDING

The taxi cab leaves, and Hatchet walks quickly to
the sidewalk. He feels across his brown coat, for a
second, to make sure his hatchet is still with him.

The sounds of hunger pains in the stomach grow loud.
He holds his stomach.

CLANG! CLANK! We hear the sounds of . . .

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER – DINING ROOM

. . . the inside of the dining room of the

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homeless shelter, where homeless men ranging in age from early 20s to late 70s pour through the place, sliding food trays across metal to get oatmeal.

SOON – Hatchet takes a seat at the end of the table, with three bowls of oatmeal.

HATCHET

Okay. Three should be good. Right?

He eats quickly. Looks around the room.

He finally realizes, at this moment, that he is surrounded by people going through the same things as himself.

VOICE 1

I'm glad we *buried* the hatchet on that one.

VOICE 2

Yeah, it feels good to have really *buried the hatchet* there. Right?

Hatchet drops his spoon out of terror. Shakes badly.

Looks up.

Notices two homeless men laughing, talking to each other.

He swallows.

BACKGROUND VOICE

I think he's *hiding a hatchet*.

Hatchet swallows again. His throat starts constricting . . .

He holds his throat. Discomfort is growing again.

He twitches a little bit.

BACKGROUND VOICE 1

What is this guy *on*?

BACKGROUND VOICE 2

Have you ever dealt with cases like it before?

BACKGROUND VOICE 1

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Oh yeah. Many times. Many times.
They come in, to a place like this, they're
on something. It gets ugly at times.

Hatchet looks around himself, already uncomfortable.

He starts to slide closer to another
homeless man, who is seated there
across from his own two daughters.

MAN AT SEAT

(. . . Listen – *don't talk* to that man.)

DAUGHTER 1

I didn't talk to him! I promise you!

MAN AT SEAT

(Look, just *don't talk* to him, all right?
We think he might be . . .)

A tear starts coming down Hatchet's eye as he eats.
He clenches both eyes shut as tight as he can.

Then, with both eyes open, he suddenly slams down
the entire food tray, and all the food, onto the table,
and leaves.

STRANGER 1

Everything all right?

STRANGER 2

Is everything all right here?

HATCHET

Yep, yep, just having some arthritis
. . . osis for a second. Yep.

He finally turns to look at the two strangers.

HATCHET

You're not a doctor!

He gives it another second.

Then he takes his bowl of oatmeal back into his hand.
He starts eating it quickly.

He takes about five more seconds to finish
the entire bowl of oatmeal. Then, when he's

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done, he throws it back down onto the tray.

HATCHET
Good night.

He leaves.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – 8th STREET – MIDDAY

Hatchet walks back out onto the road,
full of food, and ready to walk.

For the most part, he keeps low, hat covering
his upper face, coat covering most of his body.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
Brownson.

He thinks about it for a second.

The image of that book – “Hatchet: The Man I
once knew” – fades in over the scene for a second,
then back out.

He looks back down at his coat.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
And he gave me this coat. This brown coat,
as in, Brownson.

Walking down the street, he ignores traffic
completely by walking right into it. A car
slams on its brakes, to avoid hitting him.

DRIVER
What the Hell? Are you kidding me? HEY!
(*Hooooonk!*) HEY! Look at me, pal! LOOK AT ME!

Hatchet looks at him for a second. Then he
looks away, and quickly finishes crossing.

DRIVER
Out of his mind? I should shoot him.

Hatchet picks up the pace walking.
We hear the sound of a motorcycle.

CUT TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – INT. FRANCIS SCOTT KEY MEMORIAL BRIDGE

CLOSE ON the tire of a motorcycle as it speeds on down the road.

PULL BACK a little, then FOLLOW THE MOTORCYCLE as it travels down one of six roadway lanes.

PULL BACK FURTHER. Underneath the bridge: nothing but green water way down below.

BACK TO a CLOSE ANGLE on Mr. Red – wearing a red helmet with a translucent visor.

He lets out a loud laugh. Now he's in the city.

He laughs. And laughs some more.

We FOLLOW HIS MOTORCYCLE as it drives on further down the bridge, then takes a right turn onto Water Street.

He drives on down the road. But now he has to slow down his speed.

Pretty soon, he's slowed almost completely to a stop.

There is a car in front of him. But it slams on its brakes.

Then it goes into Reverse, with the steering wheel turned to the right – blocking off two lanes of traffic. Mr. Red is now being blocked off.

MR. RED
Hey! HEY!

The cars' doors open. Four robbers step out.

They approach Mr. Red on his motorcycle.

ROBBER 1
Gimme your keys.

ROBBER 2
Gimme your wallet.

ROBBER 3
Give me that fuckin' motorcycle!

ROBBER 4
You gettin' ROBBED!

Mr. Red quickly retrieves a small pistol from his left pocket, then takes the safety off.

He uses both hands to hold and aim the weapon. After aiming it at the first robber, he fires two shots in a row, to the man's forehead. Both shots hit.

Wasting no time, he goes from the first thief to the second, aiming his gun and firing away at the man's chest. The thief staggers backward, and soon falls to the ground, dead.

Mr. Red looks at the third robber, and aims the gun at him, ready to kill.

MR. RED
Did you know that ancient Egyptians used to believe thinking is done with the heart?

POW! He fires another shot.

Mr. Red aims his gun at the fourth man, who is now running away. POW!! – and he falls to the ground instead.

CUT TO – soon – as Mr. Red pulls a wallet from one of the dead thieves' pockets.

MR. RED
Oh-kay! So just allow me to “seize your funds” real quick, if you don't mind!

He opens up the wallet. Takes out all the cash.
Drops the wallet to the ground.

MR. RED
Ten – freakin' – dollars?! Ya gotta be KIDDING me!
(*looking at the corpse*) What's your excuse??

A moment of silence.

MR. RED
What?! You GUESS? No!

He goes to one of the other corpses, and quickly retrieves the wallet from the man's pocket.

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With the wallet in his hand, Mr. Red opens it up,
and sees many green dollar bills inside.

MR. RED

Hel-lo. There we go.

CUT TO – soon – as he counts all his money.

MR. RED

180, 200, 220 . . . 230. 232. Yep. 232 dollars!
Not bad for *me* getting robbed!

He stuffs the money into his pockets.

Then he climbs back onto his red motorcycle, which
was never turned off, and goes back into his
ride, vanishing down the street – leaving behind
him four dead thieves.

INT. INTERNET CAFE – SOON

The door swings open; Hatchet walks in.

HATCHET

Umm . . . hey . . . I just, uhh, need to use
the restroom, facilitation, for a second.

OWNER

Are you getting anything to eat, or drink, or –

HATCHET

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. I – I think I have some
change in my . . . pock . . . yeah. In a second?
When I finish in the . . . bathroom.

The owner gulps, not completely nervous yet, but
hesitant, as Hatchet walks away, to the bathroom.

CUT TO the exterior of the bathroom door itself, soon.

OTHER VOICES

Who *knows* what he's doing in there?
Could be doing some *really* nasty . . .
. . . really think he's jacking off in there?
I hope not! . . . But . . .

CUT TO a close angle of Hatchet's face,
looking up toward the ceiling, as we hear

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the sound of flushing.

CUT TO a close angle of the sink as Hatchet holds out his hands, and water comes out.

CUT TO him wiping himself clean with dry paper towels. At least half a dozen of them.

One last thing . . . he opens up his coat, and looks at his hatchet again.

Good. Good to go; he closes the coat.

HATCHET

I'm gonna *miss* that hooker!

Ready; he leaves.

INT. CYBER CAFE – SOON

HATCHET

One orange juice, please.

He drops six quarters onto the counter.

HATCHET

And you can *keep the change*. That's right . . . you can *keep . . . the . . . change*.

STRANGERS

Hmm? What . . . ?

Does that mean what I *think* it . . .

CASHIER

Orange juice is \$1.69 now.

HATCHET

. . . Oh, really?

He thinks about it for a second.

HATCHET

\$1.69? Really?

He feels around in his pockets.

HATCHET

How much did I give you? I – I thought I gave you \$1.50.

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CASHIER

. . . Yyyyes, which means that it is . . . 19 –

HATCHET

19 cents, right. Right. Whoops.

He feels his pants pockets again, but doesn't want to risk opening up the brown coat too much right now, and showing the hatchet . . .

He hesitates. If he moves too much, he might reveal his weapon, maybe even drop it again. He freezes, feeling like he's under the watch of the law again.

CASHIER

It – look – it's all right if you don't.

Hatchet swallows.

Then he smiles and nods his head.

HATCHET

Yeah? . . . God bless.

Another several seconds of awkwardly standing in place, swaying to the left, then swaying back to the right.

HATCHET

Yep. Uhh –

CASHIER

Boss?

HATCHET

Hmm?

CASHIER

(holding the drink in his hand) Orange juice?

HATCHET

Yeah. Oh. Thank you!

OFFSCREEN VOICE

(Fucking weirdo!)

CUT TO: a close angle on the computers in the cafe.

Hatchet sits down in a chair. Sets the drink
next to him. All ready.

CLOSE ON the keyboard as he
slowly types in his name.

“Hatchet”

A bunch of results found – who knows
what variety of content.

CLOSE ON the word “images” as he goes
to click on it.

Color photos of normal hatchets. Drawings of
normal hatchets, axes. Sometimes, drawings,
artist renderings, of the vigilante – Hatchet.

He looks down, then back up, disbelievingly, at first.

He sees two artistic visual interpretations
of him – Hatchet.

He types in something else . . .

“Mr. Red”

The first thing that pops up is Mr. Red, the mascot
character for the Cincinnati Reds baseball team.

Hatchet scrunches his eyebrows. That's Mr. Red?
But, nonetheless, it's there.

He tries typing in something else.

“Doughals Bloomington the Third”

He tries that.

He corrects himself . . .

“Doughals Bloomington III”

Nodding his head, he's content it will work now.

He skims through several results.

CLOSE ON an Internet encyclopedia
entry on Mr. Red.

A photograph of Mr. Red is included – definitely the same person, with dyed red-and-dark-red hair.

Hatchet skims through it, and pictures the words being read out loud by newscaster-like voices.

VOICE 1

“The criminal who came to be known as Mister Red is, in fact, Doughals Bloomington the Third.”

VOICE 2

“Though he is presently 30 years old (as of JANUARY 2012), all of his criminal activity as Mr. Red has been traced back only as far as 10 years.”

“CONTROVERSY”

VOICE 3

“Much of the controversy surrounding Mr. Red is that he blames HATCHET, the self-anointed vigilante who wanders the U.S. North American Territory, for most if not *all* of his actions as Mr. Red. Some, in response, argue that it could only be Mr. Red himself who can be in control of his own actions; yet his lifelong philosophy, recorded as recently as JANUARY 2012, still states his belief that all of what he does is a 'retaliation' to Hatchet's career as a vigilante.”

Hatchet has read enough, for now.

HATCHET

All right. Good day.

He grabs his orange juice and goes.

INT. ELECTRONICS STORE – SOON

Gigantic TV screens cover entire walls of the inside of this store.

Hatchet is standing, fixated on one screen.

TV SHOW HOST

We're back to “All The Wanted Criminals” on AuthoriTV, and this *next* case is just as much of a shocker as the last few. Carjackers are still in abundance in the area. There are seven known car-

jackers who are on that notorious list of the most wanted criminals, because they keep doing what they do, and they, so far, regrettably, are getting away with it.

Hatchet arches an eyebrow.

HATCHET

Now you're talking my language.

TV SHOW HOST

Our first carjacker is one Angel Boomer Backentail. But an *angel* he is not: wanted for five charges of grand theft auto and five for assault with a deadly weapon, he was last seen entering the area of Arlington, Virginia.

Hatchet nods his head, and grunts with approval.

TV SHOW HOST

And if *any* of you out there find out more information . . . please, do share it with us. But only when it's true – because nothing wastes time like a false report. And *time*, especially these days, is money.

HATCHET

Huh.

TV SHOW HOST

So get him, viewers . . .

Once again, the person on TV somehow seems to make direct, personal eye contact with Hatchet.

TV SHOW HOST

You . . . go get him.

Wink.

Fade to black – on the TV screen.

MANAGER'S VOICE

Uh, sir?

CUT TO a farther away angle: Hatchet is standing absurdly close to the big-screen TV, which is taller than he is.

MANAGER

You *might* wanna not stand so close to that TV, where

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the static electricity can, you know . . . *get* to you.

HATCHET
Oh. Yeah?

He staggers backward, crashing into a bunch of boxes.

HATCHET
Dammit, *really?* This is just not my day.

He reaches out to catch something that's falling,
but it falls anyway, out of his reach.

SOMEONE IN THE CROWD
How old are you?

HATCHET
64.

SOMEONE IN THE CROWD
(See? He's *good*.)

Another moment of confusion hits Hatchet.
What's *that* supposed to mean . . . ?

HATCHET
Hey, I'm *really* sorry about the boxes.

MANAGER
It's – it's fine. We've got it. Just . . .

Hatchet goes.

HATCHET
(*looking back at the crowd one last time*)
Yep . . . yeah.

He leaves the scene entirely.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – 8th STREET SE – EVENING

Hatchet is walking quickly down the street.

HATCHET
Arlington, Virginia. Arlington, Virginia.

CUT TO:

Hatchet asking strangers as they pass by.

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HATCHET

Hey, scuse me, uh, Arlinnnng . . . ton?
. . . Do you know the way?

PASSING STRANGER 1

What?

PASSING STRANGER 2

What's this guy talking about?

PASSING STRANGER 1

Let's go, man. This guy's probably on crack.

HATCHET

No? . . . Virginia?

CUT TO – a few seconds later, new strangers . . .

HATCHET

Arlington, Virginia? Uhh . . . would you – uhh –
happen to know, you know, uhh, the best way
. . . to Arlington, Virginia?

HATCHET

Yeah, I guess I'm lost, I'm just looking for
. . . Arlington, Virginia?

HATCHET

Yeah, just . . . can't find my way . . . uhh,
a little help, someone? Huh?

PASSING STRANGERS

This guy's an absolute fucking nutcase, Josie – let's go.

He has *no* idea what he's even saying.

He's on *speed*. He's on *speed*.

This guy's just *asking* for it.

Who dresses in a brown coat anyway?

Think this guy's gay?

Nah. No *way*, bro.

Looks kinda gay –

HATCHET

Hey, anyone know the best way to Virginia?

A taxi cab moves slowly down the road.

HATCHET

Oh, *forget* you guys!

He hurries into the taxi cab, in the front seat.

INT. TAXI CAB – FRONT SEAT

HATCHET

(pointing ahead) Arlington, Virginia!
(snapping his fingers) And make it ~snappy~!

DRIVER

Virginia? You wanna go to Virginia?

HATCHET

Yeah! . . . Yes.

DRIVER

. . . You want me to go ALL THE WAY to Virginia.

Hatchet gulps.

DRIVER

. . . East Market Metro Station. I'll bring you there. *They* can get you to Virginia.

HATCHET

Thank you!

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – EXT. EASTERN MARKET METRO STATION

The cab drives off, down the road – and we
LOOK TO THE RIGHT to see Hatchet,
approaching the Metro station on foot.

NARRATION

I suddenly have to wonder. Is this right?
I can't even write my thoughts down anymore.

INT. METRO STATION – UNDERGROUND

Hatchet jogs down the escalator,
grumbling to himself.

HATCHET

No one else would be like this.
No one else, I can't believe it.
Go figure, huh. Hmm.

He holds his coat tighter.

NARRATION

Can't write down my thoughts. Gotta remember the old days – when I was young and alert. Knew what I was doing.

Hatchet swallows.

NARRATION

I'm still just a little kid, underneath it all. I just . . . have this *impulse* . . . I was in D.C., but now I have this idea to just go to Arlington, Virginia, by myself. Okay, great. Then what? . . . *Then what?*

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN – SOON

Hatchet sits, in silence, in the subway seat.

He lets out a loud sigh.

NARRATION

What the fuck creature *am* I.

He looks solemnly out the window.

We slowly MOVE CLOSER and soon see his own reflection in the glass window as he tries to look outside.

The worn-out face of a man who has been Hatchet for 42 years is looking back at him in the reflection.

NARRATION

I'm sitting here, illegally hiding a hatchet underneath my coat. And they all know it. And they're all talking about it to each other. The hatchet in his coat. The hatchet in his coat.

HATCHET

Well, tell them to mind their own *business* then.

NARRATION

I'm sitting here, illegally hiding a hatchet. “Just to go to Arlington, Virginia, and find this criminal.”

He sighs.

NARRATION

Who am I kidding. I'm just running from the cops.
I'm just running away to Arlington. And then what,
I don't know, and then what, I don't know.

He starts shaking and convulsing badly.

FADE TO: BLACK.

FADE TO:

INT. FOREIGN COUNTRY – OUTDOOR VILLAGE – DAYTIME

An outdoor village – with plenty of daylight.
People walk around the wooden homes and trees.

NARRATION

See, Hatchet, it goes like this. If there *was*
a world . . . Earth . . . but you used a time-
traveling machine to go back in time . . .
go into the past . . . then you would erase
the way the world was.

FADE TO: BLACK.

The world FADES IN to existence again.
People are walking around like normal.

NARRATION

Every person you meet. Every person you talk to.
They would never know about that time-travel.

BACK TO Hatchet, in the subway train, as
he opens his eyes.

He swallows again.

NARRATION

Here you are, old man. You went on the amazing
adventure. You went overseas. You went to another
country and stopped the alien invasion. You stopped
the alien King. But now look. You time-traveled back,
so none of them know it.

Hatchet looks around himself again.

All he sees are ordinary people in the train.
The regular mortals.

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CUT TO a farther-away shot, as Hatchet contemplates his story, alone.

NARRATION

You went *back in time* and stopped the alien invasion from happening at all – so all they see is this. They don't even know what you did. But isn't that what you WANTED – the happy ending where Earth is saved?

Hatchet looks out the window.

Now we see the outside world through the window.
Fast-moving trees. Roads. Houses.

Hatchet smiles. Because, after all, he's still alive, and in decent health.

HATCHET

I'm *going* to Arlington!

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – TRAIN TRACKS

The train flies away from us, speeding down the railroad.

Before long, the train becomes smaller, and more quiet, as it leaves the area.

INT. TALK SHOW – FULL-SCREEN VIEW

Joseph Brownson continues to advertise his book, on a comedy/talk show.

HOST

So – so, wait a second. You've got *two* books published. Are *both* about Hatchet?

JOSEPH

Uhhhh, no, just the second book.

HOST

That is, “Hatchet: the Man I Once Knew”.

JOSEPH

Yep. You get the full story.

HOST

So now we know.

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JOSEPH

I don't know, I guess I just wanted to denounce one or two of the silly rumors out there. That Hatchet is also Deep Throat. That Mark Felt just “took the fall”. And I also remember hearing recently that Hatchet is just “living under George W. Bush's wing”, which I *know* is false.

HOST

Yeah, you know what's funny about that?

JOSEPH

Huh?

HOST

George W. Bush, he actually got the nickname of Hatchet-2 for a while. Remember?

JOSEPH

Why, exactly?

HOST

Because! Back when Bush was the Governor of Texas – this is between 1995 and 2000 – he did a *lot* of criminal executions! He was all about the death penalty! So Democrats used to call him Hatchet-2 for a while.

JOSEPH

I find that ironic. His own father, George *H.* W. Bush, was the opposite: NOT a fan of Hatchet.

HOST

No. NOT a fan of Hatchet.

JOSEPH

George H. W. . . . except, no. No. Nobody called him that back then. He was just “George Bush” for a while, has everybody forgotten that?

HOST

I haven't . . . I mean, I did, but, now that you said it . . .

JOSEPH

Anyway. George Bush, the First. He used to say, you know:
(*doing an imitation voice*)
“We need to get families *less* like the Simpsons,
and *more* like the Waltons!”

HOST

Hey, you're pretty good at that.

JOSEPH

And we need to recognize heroes, *less* as the Hatchet type . . . and more like . . . police officers, and firefighters, and emergency paramedics, you know, that kind of thing.

HOST

So George Bush the first did NOT like Hatchet.
But Bush the Second *loved* the little guy!

JOSEPH

Yeah, and in between, you have Bill Clinton. Now, Democrats liked him, because he was this big, friendly guy. Grew up poor. He feels your pain, the pain of being poor. He *understands* what it's like to be laughed at and called *fat-ass* in school. He *understands*. You know?

(*shrugs*)

So, he made this great big promise: *no more big government*. The days of big government are over. And he made this big promise: Hatchet will be put on trial, "by the end of his time in office".

HOST

Yeah, I remember that.

JOSEPH

Yeah, and you also remember, people in this country cared more about a sex scandal – more about that *hot chick he hooked up with* – than they did his promise to put Hatchet on trial! They called it the . . . the "Lewinsky-gate scandal". They called it the Watergate scandal of the 90's. Monica Lewinsky became a celebrity of her own . . . all over oral sex.

HOST

So, basically, that trial never came to light.

JOSEPH

No: it just got passed onto Bush the Second, who really did NOT put "stopping Hatchet" on the top of his priority list. Especially, though – *especially*, after the War on Terror broke out, Hatchet began to look like . . . like . . . like, I don't know, someone working for Bush, you know? Like they were just *meant* to be.

HOST

Maybe we should start asking the audience.
(pointing toward the audience)
 Uhh, yes! You there!

CROWD GIRL

Do you, yourself, *want* to see Hatchet
 put on trial? Is that what you're getting at?

JOSEPH

. . . I . . . I don't think so. No. Personally, I'm
 not really *demanding* that they put him on trial.
 I think, over the years, we've all kind of come to
 accept the idea that Hatchet is there.

CROWD GIRL

All right. Well . . . thanks.

The crowd cheers again.

JOSEPH

You're quite welcome.

HOST

Uhh, yes, you there, in the red.

MR. RED

(lowering his raised right hand)

I have a question. You wrote a book about Hatchet;
 are you planning on sharing some of your profit
 money with Mr. Robert Manter? Or are you planning
 on keeping it aaaall to yourself?

JOSEPH

(blinking) Umm. Okay. I don't see *how*
 that concerns you, actually!

MR. RED

But isn't it true that your whole book is about *him*?
 You wrote about him! You *should* give credit to he
 whom your work revolves around!

JOSEPH

Any other *questions* there, Carrot-Top?

MR. RED

Yes. Hatchet is starving. What do you spend
 your profit money on – hookers, and cheap wine?

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Ohhhhhh! The audience is feeling more energy than on a normal day!

JOSEPH

(standing up) ALL right, now you listen here!

He scoffs.

He just doesn't even know what to say to all that.

JOSEPH

Did somebody put you up to this? Ohhhh-kay. I get it now. This is all a big practical joke!

Mr. Red starts to walk through the audience, toward Joseph on stage.

The man holding the microphone follows Mr. Red, looking back and forth to his co-workers.

MICROPHONE MAN

I'm not sure! I don't know!

Mr. Red snatches the wireless microphone and runs toward the stage with it.

MR. RED

No, no, this is not a practical joke. Do not adjust your television set. I'm just here to give these fine people a wake-up call!

SECURITY GUARD 1

Is this a code red?

SECURITY GUARD 2

I'm not sure!

JOSEPH

Look, what do you *want*? Do you want me to give money to Hatchet, for food? So do you also want me to help pay for his War on Crime? He can just apply for food stamps like anyone else!

MR. RED

What do I *want*? I just want you to be honest.

JOSEPH

You have GOT to be kidding me.

MR. RED

So now you find yourself at THIS point of your life: now you've gotten your book published. Doesn't it feel great? People smile at you. They smile, and nod their heads, and say "Oh! Congratulations." But, then, you just *know* that really they're going "*Dumbass!*" within seconds.

The crowd continues to talk to each other, now growing slightly disrupted.

JOSEPH

I don't like this. Security!

MR. RED

"I hope I don't find *my* name in your book."

"I hope I don't find *my* name in your book."

"That would just be EMBARRASSING!"

That's what they're really saying. You thought you'd be popular, and loved? No. Anybody who knows you – anybody you know, at all – is ashamed to admit they know you. They're all hoping and praying you don't talk about THEM the way you talked about HATCHET!

Several people in the crowd begin to talk more loudly in their panicked reaction to Mr. Red.

MR. RED

"I hope to God I don't find *my* name in there!"

"What kind of person just writes a book, anyway?"

"What kind of person writes a book?"

THAT's what they're really saying . . . and it's what you'll have to deal with, every day of your life, until the day you die. And knowing this little fact of life will drive . . . you . . . insane.

SECURITY GUARD 1

Okay, pal – *you've gotta go*.

MR. RED

(*into the mic*) Oh, don't worry. I'm going. I'm going. I swear.

(*looking back at Joseph*)

But remember all that stuff I said.

Mr. Red sets the microphone down on the stage, and quickly begins walking away, down the aisle, leaving the studio.

INT. ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA – VIRGINIA SQUARE METRO STATION – SOON

The train travels quickly down the tracks,
leaving the area of Arlington, as Hatchet
walks through the train station on foot.

EXT. VIRGINIA SQUARE METRO STATION – FRONT ENTRANCE – SOON

Hatchet walks out of the metro station at the
front. A caption reads:

“VIRGINIA SQUARE METRO STATION
Arlington, Virginia”

HATCHET
So this is Arlington, eh?

He looks around. The caption fades away.

We LOOK AROUND, while also looking up
toward the sky, to see the sight of so many
incredibly tall buildings surrounding him on
all sides.

Finally, he picks one direction at random,
and starts walking.

INT. ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA – SOON

Hatchet walks on down the road, and
continues to ask strangers for change.

HATCHET
Spare some change, please?
. . . No? God bless.
Scuse me, uhh – spare some . . .? No.
God bless. Hey, uhh –

ANOTHER STRANGER
Here. Here's two dollars.

HATCHET
Really?? . . . *Sweet!*

He takes the two dollars and walks on.

INT. FOOD PLACE – SOON

Hatchet is standing behind the counter, ordering his food. He can't seem to stop moving, swaying from left to right, but he doesn't care.

HATCHET
Fish burger, please?

INT. ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA – STREETWAYS – SOON

Hatchet, eating his burger and sipping his drink, walks on down the city.

In the distance, he sees a liquor store in which three young gentlemen are leaving in a hurry.

It's a pretty bad-looking moment for the three who are running – dollar bills falling from their arms; big cases of liquor being carried into the getaway car, which is already up and running.

DRIVER
Just run, just run, just *run run run!*

As fast as they can, the three young men run into the car, which takes off.

The shopkeeper runs outside and starts screaming.

SHOPKEEPER
HEEEY! You can't get far! The cops is gonna track you down, man!

Hatchet finishes his food.

HATCHET
This looks like a job for Hatchet.

He opens his coat.

EXT. GETAWAY CAR

We FOLLOW THE CAR, from behind, as it drives quickly down the road. It's driving fast, having just gotten done with a robbery.

DRIVER
Whooooo, shit, I never used to *think* we could just get away with stuff like that!

ROBBER 2

Yeah – *lot* of stuff you didn't used to think!

The traffic light ahead is yellow; the driver speeds ahead to make it, but within a few seconds it's red. He slams on the brakes.

INT. GETAWAY CAR – FRONT SEAT

ROBBER 2

Ahhh, man, you just gonna sit here and *wait*?

DRIVER

Yeah, fool! Last thing I need is getting *pulled over* for running a red light!

(Through the back windshield, we can see Hatchet running closer – but he is not on their minds right now.)

DRIVER

Man, you know how this game *goes* by now, don'tcha?

ROBBER 2

Oh, what, like it ain't illegal to hold up a damn liquor store!

DRIVER

Shut up. Wait. Shut up. Wait. Wait. We're on Quincy Street. Okay . . . so . . . we don't get another right turn, until Glebe.

HATCHET

HEEEY!!

It takes them a few seconds to realize what the sound is.

ROBBER 1

That a *guy* or a girl?

ROBBER 2

That don't *sound* like a girl.

ROBBER 3

Yeah – unless it's Brenda!

CUT TO: the traffic light – as it turns green.

CUT TO: Hatchet's hand – as he throws his hatchet through the air. We FOLLOW THE HATCHET as it flies, and flies, and pierces the tire in the criminals' car, in the back, on the driver's side.

The car takes off, driving ahead, but the fast driving is sharply disrupted by the puncture of the one tire. The hatchet slams against the ground as it moves with the tire's rotations, and takes a short while to break free.

The car swerves to the left, nearly hitting another car, but swerves back to the right. *Honk! Honk!* Other cars are impatient.

We FOLLOW HATCHET'S MOVEMENT as he walks – on foot – down the middle of the road. He avoids the other oncoming cars – though he gets honked at and cursed out as he does so – while remaining fixed on his target.

Still walking calmly, he gets all the way to his hatchet, lying on the ground. He grabs it, picking it up quickly. There is some kind of black residue on the weapon.

Then he looks up at the car he just threw the weapon at.

CUT TO a farther-away angle of Hatchet and his enemy's car, standing in the middle of five lanes of road in Quincy Street. Holding his weapon, he approaches his enemy's car again.

NARRATION

Times like this I don't need the war journal.
I AM my thoughts. I AM what I do.

CLOSE ON Hatchet's face as he mumbles to himself in excitement.

HATCHET

I am my thoughts! I am.

NARRATION

Times like this, I could ignore the pain in the heart. I could ignore the feeling in the ribs like they're getting poked at. I could

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ignore these feelings and turn it all off.
Just try to bring OUT the inner Hatchet!
Reminds me of long, long ago . . .

HATCHET
Hey!!

The criminal's car door opens. The
driver slowly begins to lean out the door.

Just to aim a gun at Hatchet and begin shooting.
Every shot goes in a different direction. The
driver is firing wildly – not being too specific.
Bang! Bang! Bang!

Hatchet instinctively tries to shield himself
with his hands, and duck down, but he lives
through sheer luck alone.

The driver must be out of bullets now.
He drops his gun.

Hatchet walks closer to the car's door.

We LOOK DOWN at the fallen gun on the ground.

Then BACK UP at the car door, as Hatchet
pulls it open.

HATCHET
You and I.

Hatchet grabs the driver by the throat.
Squeezes him. Pulls him closer.

Throws him down to the street.

HATCHET
Explain yourself.

DRIVER
I ain't explaining shit to you!

Hatchet gets his weapon ready in one hand.

HATCHET
Now, we wanna do this the easy way,
or the hard way?!

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The car's other doors open up. Hatchet turns his head for a second, to see. Then it's back to the driver.

HATCHET

One question. (*slurring his speech*)
What is it you were doing back there?

DRIVER

What? Talk in English, man.

HATCHET

WHAT IS IT you were doing back there?!

The driver spits toward Hatchet – who dodges it just in the nick of time.

DRIVER

I don't snitch.

That just makes Hatchet more mad than ever.

HATCHET

(*raising his hatchet up into the air*)
I ain't asking you to snitch. I'm asking
you to *stay alive* – by talking.

A moment of intimidation, with the hatchet up.

Then, he holds it downward – for now.

DRIVER

(*gulp*) I . . . I'm just the driver . . . I'm the getaway driver for when we all make the robbery. I'll accept the fault for that part, yeah. But, come on. What're ya *really* gonna do about it now, old man . . .

Hatchet pushes the man so that he falls backwards.

He lands on his back and elbows. Hatchet steps closer and steps on his fingers. *Squish!*

DRIVER

Y-*ahhhhhh!!* You don't have to resort to excessive force!

Hatchet leans down and pulls the man up by the neck.

HATCHET

You keep talking to me like I'm a cop.

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I keep telling you, I'm Other than a cop
. . . I'm Hatchet.

The driver finally stops struggling
and thrashing, going limp.

HATCHET

Do you promise to clean up your life,
and not be a criminal, or a killer?

DRIVER

Y – yes. I do. F-from this moment on, at least.

HATCHET

And you *mean* it?

DRIVER

I – I do!

HATCHET

Then you go.

He drops the guy.

He looks up, to see more trouble than he can handle.
One problem is down, but now three young men are
stepping out of the car to approach him.

He grabs the hatchet, holding it up in the air.

But he is starting to see that they really
aren't scared of him.

HATCHET

(*gulp*) There will be no trouble. Right?

ROBBER 1

No. That's not what it looks like from here.
You don't just walk around and do *anything*
you want, and not expect trouble.

HATCHET

I just . . . wanted to foil a rob –

ROBBER 2

You don't *pierce someone's tires* for no reason. You
did it yourself. Now it's coming back to *you*.

It seems that a fight is about to start up;

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it wouldn't look good for Hatchet.

ROBBER 3

You got our *driver*, faggot. Go ahead and try to fight me without that weapon. Huh? Fist fight. Nahhh.

ROBBER 2

Nahhh. This man's *old*.

ROBBER 1

There is *no* way you're about to fight us!

Hatchet freezes again, once more unsure.

Three young thugs are approaching Hatchet. They could definitely hurt him.

A car door slams. In the background, we hear a sea of voices going off over a radio.

A flashlight shines on Hatchet. He looks to see who it is.

Red and blue lights flash on. The sheriff has stepped out of the car, and is aiming his light their way.

SHERIFF'S VOICE

FREEEEEEZE!! ALL OF YOU, JUST FREEEEEEZE!!

Hatchet stops moving. With his body locking up, he's not sure what to do.

SHERIFF

Keep your hands where I can see them and interlock your fingers behind your head! ALL of you!!

The three young thugs scatter like cockroaches.

Hatchet jerks his body for one second, ready to start running . . . but he stops himself a second later. How far would he even get.

SHERIFF'S RADIO

(chhk) Request backup, Grenzel?

SHERIFF

(into the radio) Roger that. I got visual on *three* of them, running south-bound down Quincy. Cut them off at Glebe! Expect them to run that way. Uhhh

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. . . hmmm . . . let's think. Okay. Cut them off at Quincy and 5th, also – if they run there.

The sheriff gives Hatchet a second look.

SHERIFF

(sarcastically) Yeah, you're getting a real feeling of déjà vu there, huh?

CUT TO:

INT. ARLINGTON, VA – FURTHER DOWN QUINCY STREET

All three young men from the liquor store robbery are running, on foot. So far, they're getting away.

ROBBER 1

Who's got the keys? Who's got the keys?

ROBBER 2

I've got the keys, but fuck it!

They continue to run off.

CUT TO:

Two cop cars flying down the road, sirens fully blaring, to pursue the three thugs.

BACK TO Hatchet and Sheriff Grenz. The sheriff is standing straight, with his arms folded. Hatchet is looking down, hands together, facing slightly away.

HATCHET

There's other people getting aw-

SHERIFF

Oh, we've got that covered too, don't worry. Don't worry. There's *other* people running – well, the *other* cops are getting them. But *I*, on the other hand, *I'm* just here talking to *you* now.

SHERIFF'S RADIO

(chhk) Requesting backup, Grenz?

SHERIFF

(into the radio) Negative; it's just one man.

SHERIFF'S RADIO

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(*chhk*) We're right here when you need us.

SHERIFF

(*into the radio*) Thank you. Over and out.

The sheriff's deputy approaches the sheriff.
Now Hatchet is up against two policemen.

Hatchet awkwardly moves his eyeball from
far right to far left.

HATCHET

Sssssso . . . is – is everything all r-

SHERIFF

I'm only gonna say this once. Raise your
hands where I can see them, and interlock
your fingers behind your head!

HATCHET

(*doing as told*) Okay . . . okay.

SHERIFF

You got any ID on you? Any –

HATCHET

Nope. None.

A few seconds of silence.

SHERIFF

(*sigh*) That's – that's *not* good.

(*rubs his eyes, shakes his head*)

All right, pal, well, whoever you are –
you're in a lot of trouble now, young man.

HATCHET

Oh, you had to say *that*. You had to try to torture me –

SHERIFF

(*raising one hand to cut him off*)

Yeah, you can just *knock that off* there.

He sighs, then continues to stand in place,
looking around the scene a little.

The sheriff's deputy scrunches his eyebrows
together. A possibility hits him. So he walks
up to Hatchet, to try out an idea . . .

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DEPUTY

Hmm. This is a wild, crazy world we live in, huh?

HATCHET

Oh boy, you're tellin' me.

DEPUTY

Now . . . now *you* didn't just rob a liquor store, did you?

HATCHET

No! No. I don't even have any money on me!

Swear on my life. See? Look –

DEPUTY

Okay. Okay. Just . . .

. . . hmm. You know? I was just hearing this . . . they say on TV that there's this *superhero* going around.

HATCHET

(*looking away*) Hmm, I, uhh, haven't heard that one!

DEPUTY

Yeah, they say – on TV, at least – according to the *reports*, that this superhero . . . hmm, oh, what was his name, again?

HATCHET

Who, Hatchet?

DEPUTY

Ahh! Gotcha.

Hatchet gulps.

HATCHET

Umm . . . okay. Yep. That's me. I am Hatchet.

DEPUTY

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. So, you must feel . . .
hmm, at least a *little* bit special there, huh?

HATCHET

Special? . . . W-what do you mean by “special”?

DEPUTY

What is it exactly that you're planning to *do* tonight, *Hatchet*? Tell me. What're your plans for this *Friday night*, cool guy?

HATCHET

W-well . . . uhh . . . (*clears his throat*)
Well, it started when I caught that show on
TV: “All the Wanted Criminals”. Right?

DEPUTY

Uh-huh.

HATCHET

A-and, uhh . . . and I thought I might . . . follow a
lead to Arlington, Virginia . . . to pursue Angel . . .
don't . . . remember his last name anymore . . . A-Angel
the carjacker? . . . They mentioned it on “All the Wan-”

DEPUTY

You're telling me you came here to Arlington,
Virginia, to follow a lead? To get – *involved*?

HATCHET

. . . Yeah.

DEPUTY

Do you find that legal?

HATCHET

. . . Well . . . I mean . . . uhhhhhhhh . . .

DEPUTY

What is it you think you're doing?

HATCHET

. . . Well, you know. Being a superhero.

DEPUTY

. . . A superhero.

HATCHET

. . . Yeah.

DEPUTY

You are NOT a superhero.

Hatchet gulps.

DEPUTY

You can forget that. Dressing up in a brown
coat and a hat does NOT – it DOES NOT –
make you a superhero.

Hatchet swallows.

DEPUTY

Hell, I'm a real-life law enforcement deputy – and I'm *officially* licensed! – and *I* don't call myself a superhero!

The sheriff starts laughing loudly.

SHERIFF

Wait a minute. What? Did he . . . did he . . .
just make the argument that he's a superhero?
(*he laughs loudly again*)

Oh, man! Wait till I tell them *that* one! HAAAA
ha ha! They'll get a kick outta *that* one!

The deputy walks away.

SHERIFF

What are you doing here in Arlington,
anyway, “superhero”?

HATCHET

Well – well, I told *him*. Looking for a lead.

SHERIFF

Oh. OHHHH! Now it's “looking for leads”, huh?
Well guess what, pal? You're gonna have to go find
some other place to hang out – find some *other* city to
go “looking for leads”, because nobody around HERE
wants to see you “hanging out” around here – or *any-*
where else, for that matter – EVER again!

HATCHET

Well I –

SHERIFF

You shut the fuck up. You will stop talking NOW.
You do NOT talk unless I give you permission to!
You got that? YOU don't talk! YOU – don't talk!

Hatchet is silent again.

SHERIFF

Nothing would make me happier than to see your ass
thrown away – for YEARS. And if I find any weed,
any marijuana, even a CRUMB of it, then I'll make it
into as many different charges as I can get it. And your

ass will be property of the state then!

Hatchet opens the coat suddenly, and shows everything that's inside.

HATCHET

(sigh) All right. Look. Here's what I have.

Major shock for the sheriff; the situation has suddenly escalated times three, even though Hatchet doesn't seem to realize it.

He pulls out the hatchet, holding it up in the air.

SHERIFF

(just before Hatchet is done)

No – no, NO!! Don't reach for that -!

HATCHET

See? That's all this –

SHERIFF

(aiming a gun at Hatchet)

DO NOT do that!! Drop it to the ground!
DROP IT TO THE GROUND NOW!

DEPUTY

(also aiming a gun at Hatchet)

FREEZE! FREEZE! Drop your weapon NOW!

SHERIFF'S RADIO

(chhk) What's going on over there?
And don't tell me “nothing” because
it doesn't SOUND like nothing!

Both policemen keep their guns aimed at Hatchet.

SHERIFF

DROP YOUR WEAPON! DROP YOUR WEAPON!

A momentary stand-off: Hatchet with his hatchet aimed upward, the sheriff and deputy both with weapons aimed, ready to fire . . . but not fired yet.

Hatchet turns and looks at the sheriff.

HATCHET

(motioning it toward him) See?

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The hatchet starts to fall downward, toward the ground.

POW !!!

The moment hits – the shot goes off.
The sheriff shoots Hatchet, to kill him.

Hatchet finally does drop his weapon, and
the rest of his body doesn't move, at first.
Then he falls backward.

Time seems to slow down.

We MOVE AROUND HATCHET, swinging
wildly to the left, to the right, both at once . . .
a disorienting blend of directional movements.

HATCHET

Or . . . order a piz . . . pizza (*choke*) . . .

Hatchet continues to gasp, choke, and wheeze for air.

HATCHET

Order a pizza . . . make it . . . half-cheese
. . . half-pepperoni . . . (*wheeze*) hold . . . hold the
anchovies . . . *no anchovies*.
(*passes out*)

BACK TO Sheriff Grenzell, as he stops to breathe.

SHERIFF

(*sigh*) I *really* didn't want that ugly kind of –

SHERIFF'S RADIO

(*chhk*) Grenz! What the Hell just went
on there? Answer me damn it!
(*chhk*) We're sending more units to the
scene immediately!

More sounds of sirens appear.

CLOSE ON Hatchet's face, as he lies on the ground.

The camera SLIDES DOWN all the way to his ribs –
with much blood coming out the side of his body.

We MOVE CLOSER to his side. The bloody spot.
The part where he was shot at.

The brown coat FADES AWAY for now.
Underneath, we see the gray shirt, also
covered in blood.

The gray shirt, too, FADES AWAY.
Underneath: bare skin – and a bad
flesh wound. Lots of blood.

But, only on the side. Not the heart; the chest;
the head; he was only shot in the side.

FADE TO a normal view again – fully clothed,
just with some damage dealt to the brown coat,
from the bullets, and the blood.

INT. STREETWAY – NEARBY

SHERIFF

(to a police lieutenant)

Shit. We're gonna have to work on our story, aren't we?

DEPUTY

What “story”? This man tried to run you over with
his car, and you had to shoot him – that simple.

SHERIFF

Exactly. Good one. He tried to run me over.
Hmm. But he doesn't seem to have a car around.

DEPUTY

Oh, I'm sure he does. Remember – I've
done this many times before. All you gotta
do is just take 20, 30 seconds to figure out
your cover – then, you just stick with it.

SHERIFF

Hmm. Let me think.

The two take a second to think about their cover stories.

SHERIFF

Okay, well, unless we can locate this man's car, it's
gonna be hard to say exactly how all this went down
– how and when he tried to run me over.

DEPUTY

It's not hard. Just listen to me. You just have to say it
like this . . . hmm . . . say that you never even said a *word*

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to him, and he never said a word to you either. He just tried to run you over in his brown car, because he was high on weed, and he didn't even know where he was, yes, and, uhh, and he *forced* you to take action!

SHERIFF

Got it. Forced me to take action.
Okay. I think we're clear now.
Internal Affairs can just shove it.

The sheriff looks around the area.

SHERIFF

Wait. Were there witnesses?

DEPUTY

No. Because if there were any, we can just say they're all invalidated and disqualified anyway.

The sheriff smiles. Everything seems good, so far. But then he sees his own police cruiser vehicles again, and he shakes as he remembers the cameras in the vehicles.

SHERIFF

The cameras. The cameras in the cars! We have to delete whatever video footage –

DEPUTY

I got it. I got this. All right? We'll erase the videos. It will be his word against ours – *and we will win*. I told you, I've done this before.

The two policemen take another look at Hatchet, the man they nearly killed.

SHERIFF

“Protect and serve” my ass!

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – A FEW MILES AWAY

Wheee-EEEE-oooh! The sound of an ambulance's siren fills the scene.

CLOSE ON the flashing red and white lights on top of the ambulance, in front.

The ambulance passes by us, and then we FOLLOW THE VEHICLE as it drives on

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down the road.

We slowly MOVE TO THE BACK of the vehicle, and watch as it FADES AWAY to reveal the insides: an unconscious Hatchet, being tended to by the paramedics.

We MOVE TO THE INSIDE of the vehicle.

PARAMEDIC 1

I just wish he was speaking to us.

PARAMEDIC 2

Yeah, wish he could give us a little . . . thumbs up, thumbs down . . . *something* . . . but, it's all right. This is not impossible.

PARAMEDIC 1

Yeah, I mean, if it had been about 12, 15 inches over, he could be a goner already. But hey, he's still here. Right? Still got a pulse?

PARAMEDIC 2

(nodding his head) Still got a pulse. He's not gone yet. I think we can save this one.

INT. HILLSBOUR HOSPITAL – EXT. MAIN ENTRANCE

The ambulance pulls up to the hospital.

CUT TO: BLACK.

We remain in the blackness for several seconds.

Flickers of images appear.

Ceiling light bulbs. Very dim. The lights flicker on, then blur right back out of focus.

FADE TO: WHITE.

Against the white, we see the image of the beautiful Kierra Smithee.

Smiling.

INT. HOSPITAL – HALLWAYS

Hatchet is now wearing a green hospital gown,

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laying on a gurney, being carried across the hospital hallways by paramedics. Not dead – but in the hospital.

HOSPITAL PARAMEDIC 1

God, it was a *nightmare* getting that thing on him, right?

HOSPITAL PARAMEDIC 2

Guy just kept talking to himself! Mumbling . . .

HOSPITAL PARAMEDIC 3

Making the *weirdest* noises!

HATCHET

What hups, huh.

He blinks several times. Tries to get back into focus.

Can't. He gives up and collapses again.

FADE TO: BLACK.

We hear the sound of the metal cart rolling against the floor.

We briefly OPEN OUR EYES to see two doctors talking.

DOCTOR 1

No! I can't find *any* ID at all!

DOCTOR 2

No ID at all?

DOCTOR 1

No! I *knew* there was something weird about this guy!

FADE TO: BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL – HATCHET'S ROOM – MORNING

CLOSE ON his eyes as they open, half a day later; freshly-alive again.

PULL BACK to reveal half his body as he pulls away the sheets on the bed and sits up, still wearing the green hospital attire.

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Now he's – miraculously – alive. He inspects the back of his hands. Extends all ten fingers.

He smiles. The Sun is shining outside.

HATCHET

It was because of *Jesus!*

FADE TO:

The sky – with heavenly yellow and white light pouring through the clouds to soak the land below.

EXT. HOSPITAL – VIEW LOOKING OUT INTO TREES – JUST THEN

We begin to MOVE DOWN from the clouds to find green plant life in the form of dozens of trees, looking out the window from Hatchet's room in the hospital.

We also see Hatchet's own reflection, as he sees it in the glass. This is his POV in first-person.

The blinds go down as he releases them, then looks down at his own side again.

DOCTOR 1

Sir! You should *not* be trying to stand up right now!

Hatchet has a moment of shock hit him. He finally sees two doctors walking up to him.

DOCTOR 1

Considering how recent your injury is, *wherever* the heck it came from – you should *not* be doing so much walking around yet!

HATCHET

S . . . sorry. I . . . forgot, I guess.

He stops to breathe.

HATCHET

No red or blue lights?

DOCTOR 1

N-no red or blue . . . wait, what?
What did you just say?

HATCHET

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Uhh – nothing. Heh heh.

He walks back to the bed, slowly.

HATCHET
Any food?

DOCTOR 1
Not until after the tests.

HATCHET
Baaaaaaah.

He passes out again.

FADE TO: BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL – HATCHET'S ROOM – LATER

Hatchet is laying on his back inside the hospital, and really has nothing to do.

We stay in this moment for about five seconds.

He looks to his right.

Sees a bunch of paperwork.

Arches an eyebrow.

CUT TO: soon – him going through all the papers, trying to figure out his situation.

CUT TO a close-up of the corner of the paper, revealing the logo and name of the hospital.

CLOSE ON his mouth as he mumbles to himself a little.

HATCHET
Hillsbour Hospital . . . hmm . . .

He quickly, but not savagely, sets the papers down onto the bed.

HATCHET
Dammit. Still don't really know where I am.

REPORTER'S VOICE

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Authorities are all in agreement that they are *still* searching for this guy, and they *will* not rest until they find him.

He flinches.

Looks up at the TV.

HATCHET
. . . Nah.

He laughs it off. No way they meant *him*.

REPORTER'S VOICE
Well, suppose this guy is sick. You know? Suppose this guy needs medical attention.

He arches an eyebrow.

HATCHET
What? Did you just say something, miss?

CUT TO a female doctor, facing away.

She turns around to see him.

FEMALE DOCTOR
I . . . uhh . . . oh!

It suddenly hits her that Hatchet must just be trying to check her out.

A terrible moment of discomfort hits her, and she breathes heavily, and starts to walk away.

FEMALE DOCTOR
No, I, uhh, didn't try to say anything.

DOCTOR 2
(Oh, look! See, now, the way you're breathing, he's just gonna *like* that.)

Hatchet gulps.

Looks back at the TV.

HATCHET
TV?

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NEWS REPORTER 2

I . . . uhh . . . what's that?

VOICES

(Might be watching us right now?)

(*Us?* Really? You think so?)

(*Could be, man! Could be happening . . .*)

NEWS REPORTER 2

(looking back at the camera) Uhh . . . uhh, well, then, what I *will* say now, I guess, is, yeah, there *is* a possibility of him just being medically sick. You know? I mean, it's possible that now he's in bad physical condition, in which case, perhaps, he should be getting himself to a *hospital* . . . uhh . . . (turning to someone else) What's that?

HATCHET

Okay, I . . . I . . . I can't watch this.

He grabs for the remote, and makes the motion of turning the TV off.

Then realizes there's no remote there.

Tries it again. No. The remote's nowhere in sight.

He looks left. Right.

Can't find it anywhere.

HATCHET

Dang.

He swallows.

Then, finally, he just lays back in bed and reads a magazine.

He breathes; for now, the scene is over . . .

FADE TO: BLACK.

Slowly DISSOLVE TO:

LATER – Hatchet is still lying in bed. Now, food is being brought to him on a tray.

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DOCTOR 1

So how have you been feeling?

HATCHET

Pretty much all better.

DOCTOR 1

Yeah? Any side pain, at all? Any chest pain?

HATCHET

No, uhh, no chest pain, really. Just glad it wasn't there, or – or in the *forehead*.

DOCTOR 1

Yeah. Well. That's one of your blessings, then, I guess.

HATCHET

Yeah.

DOCTOR 1

Now, we *will* release you from here, at some point, but – first – before that – and, also, before we can really give you all your “stuff” back, that you had . . . brought in with you, we, uhh, we still have some paperwork, you know, forms and such things, and *rrr-reports* to write, before we can, uhh, do all that.

Hatchet nods his head.

HATCHET

Yeah, all right. When, uhh . . . when would, exactly, I be getting my, uhh . . . well, I guess, brown coat, and . . . silver thing back?

DOCTOR 1

. . . Wwell, you understand, we just need a little more time, and we'll get to everything.

He leans a little closer.

DOCTOR 1

And, yes . . . we mean . . . *everything*.

Hatchet gulps.

The doctor leaves.

After the door closes behind him, Hatchet gets back into bed, lays down, leans back as

far as he can, and pulls the blankets up tightly
over himself.

Wondering . . . now what does he do?

FADE TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL – SOON

The outside of the hospital. The Sun is
still shining brightly, and the scene outside
is still beautiful.

A couple of ambulances pull up
in front of the building.

NARRATION

In the hospital for being shot at, by the cops.
And I don't even know where that damn
War Journal thing is that I started keeping.

CUT TO:

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. – EXT. CHARLES HILLSIDE HOTEL

A few cop cars have the scene blocked off.
The composition journal Hatchet was keeping
as his war journal, is somehow sitting outside
the hotel, on the ground.

One detective catches it from a distance.
Looks at it again. Steps closer.

DETECTIVE

Okay. Okay. I know this might turn out
to be totally unrelated, but, still, I just need
a second.

Step by step, we move, with the detective, toward
the small composition journal on the ground.

He takes it from the ground, stands back up,
and skims through it.

“HATCHET 2012”

“WAR ENTRY JOURNAL 1”

“DEAR DIARY” – and all the

rest of the words thereafter.

DETECTIVE

Yep. Yyyyyyep. We got you.

The sound of sirens come on again, as we see another flash of the red and blue lights.

INT. MR. RED'S HOME

Mr. Red is surrounded by three Color Red Cultists.

MR. RED

Very *well*, then! I had thought all this action was gonna happen in D.C. But Hatchet keeps trying to jump around, like a blip on the ol' radar, a mark on the ol' map. But that's *fine*!

He takes a red thumbtack and sticks it, on a map, into the state of Virginia.

MR. RED

Some of the funniest newspaper material I've collected in a while. Hatchet Shot By Sheriff. Hatchet Raises Weapon To Authorities. Ah, I'm sure the guy didn't even mean a threat. He's just always so out of it! Like a dog, on the loose!

CULTIST 1

So *now* what? The man's down. He's in the hospital.

MR. RED

Yeah – *Hillsbour* Hospital.

He stands up.

MR. RED

The time for action is now. I'm still way out here in D.C., but *he's* over *there* now. Virginia. You believe that? We started OUT in Caroline, Virginia! We go to D.C. *twice*, and now the sucker goes to Arlington!

He laughs loudly.

MR. RED

Hillsbour Hospital? Well then Arlington, here we come!

EXT. HILLSBOUR HOSPITAL

A man in a suit adjusts his suit and tie.
Stands up straighter, and taller. This is
Eric Cotterson, a newspaper reporter.

A lady from the hospital is having a
conversation with him.

HOSPITAL LADY

Wow! So you're *the* Eric Cotterson, Newspaper Reporter.

ERIC

(*shrugging*) Ehh.

HOSPITAL LADY

Some subject matter, huh.

ERIC

Well, hey. I can't really say I *hate* Hatchet –
I mean, if not for him, what would *I* be doing?
(*chuckles*) “Hatchet Raises Weapon to Authorities.”
The whole incident was just a dang tragedy . . .
me, I’m just here to be reporting it . . .

HOSPITAL LADY

Yes, then. Most of the time, I would say that
whatever this “Hatchet” fellow does . . . see, I
really don’t know him. So, for the most part, I might
say, it’s none of my business, and I don’t need to
know. However . . . then *we* get this patient thrown
right into our care, and, whether we like it or not . . .

ERIC

Yes, yes. I understand.

HOSPITAL LADY

But there's nothing newsworthy, really,
about the recovery process that he’s in.

ERIC

Well, sure, maybe not.

HOSPITAL LADY

Should be considered no more newsworthy than
all the *other* random folks we’ve got coming in
with injuries.

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ERIC

(wiping his forehead) Well – well, yeah, that’s true.

INT. VIRGINIA – STREETS

A red motorcycle speeds down the road.

CLOSE ON the motorcycle as Mr.
Red drives it, wearing a red helmet.

Driving incredibly fast, he swerves right and
left, around a couple of slow-moving cars.

We FOLLOW HIM on the motorcycle as he
speeds right on through a red light. From his
right side, a barrage of cars comes, but he
drives fast enough to miss them.

Lots of honking. Lots of screaming out car
windows. But he ignores it all completely.

Finally, he begins to slow down as he
moves further down the road. As he slows
down, he gets out his red cell phone and
makes a phone call.

He waits for several seconds as it rings.

CULTIST

(on the other end of the phone) Mr. Red?

MR. RED

I'm here. I made it to Arlington.

CULTIST

Very good, sir!

MR. RED

Thank you! Now, now we just gotta find this
hospital. What's the address, again?

CULTIST

1432.

MR. RED

1432? Hmm . . . all right, uhh . . .
I'll look for it.

INT. HOSPITAL – HATCHET'S ROOM

Back to Hatchet, alone, in the hospital bed. Shriveled up. Terrified. Sweating.

His blanket looks more like a straitjacket right now.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
So, how can you argue your way outta this one *now*, Hatchet?

He looks down at his blanket.

Notices the straitjacket similarity. Shudders again.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
How can you try to prove that you *don't* belong there, in the asylum . . . in the crazy house?

He sighs.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
You're not there. You're not in the mental hospital. You're on the *outside*. But what does that prove anyway – that you're a crazy guy, who just *gets away* with everything?

HATCHET
Stop it.

He lays back. Pulls the blanket tighter.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
They're not gonna let you out of here.
They are *not*.

Hatchet finally slows down.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
These are *not* your fans. These are *not* people who like you.

He starts appearing depressed again.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
Who are you fucking kidding, man. You *have* no actual fans. No actual friends.
That's just another fantasy.

He turns to lay the other way.

Remains still and silent for
another several seconds.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
Do you even know what's going on?

The camera gradually moves closer
to his forehead as he continues to think.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
42 years of Hatchet. 42 years of work.
And do *you* even know what it means.

He shakes his head.

CUT TO a slightly farther away angle. Now
we can see that Hatchet appears to just be
thrashing around under the blankets.

He takes his arms out and keeps them
above the blankets.

Both of his wrists seem to magnetically
come together.

He keeps still for several seconds.

The doctor opens the door and walks in.

HATCHET
Just get it over with. Please.

DOCTOR
Huh??

The doctor changes tone to actual concern.

HATCHET
Whatever it was they sent you to do.

DOCTOR
. . . "They"? I mean, forgive me, y'know, "they"
could mean anybody . . . "they" as in -?

HATCHET
The blue men?

DOCTOR

The . . . blue men?

HATCHET

Even if that sounds crazy – the men with all blue skin, the reason I was here in the first place. N-nobody sent you . . . ?

DOCTOR

Nnnnnnobody but the state of Virginia.

Hatchet is startled more than ever.

DOCTOR

Virginia hospital system. We're a place for good health, Mr. – uhh – “Hatchet”, you said?

Hatchet nods his head.

HATCHET

Umm . . . hey . . . when could I get my stuff back, do you think?

DOCTOR

Hmm? Oh, your things you came in with! Oh, yes, that'll all just be stuff you get on your way out.

HATCHET

Mmm.

DOCTOR

Now, just to review, one more time, I guess: your injury, not the *worst*, just sort of a *graze* on the side. But, another day or two here, and you *will* be able to be in such condition, again, that you could walk and run and . . . well, you're really gonna need to slow it down, most likely, with your exercise.

HATCHET

All right.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

He knows where my stuff is.

DOCTOR

So – umm – you hungry yet? You in the mood for some carrots, perhaps?

HATCHET

Carrots? Sure! I could go for some carrots.
Any hot dogs?

DOCTOR

Nnnno, sorry, none right now . . .

A few seconds of silence.

HATCHET

Well, all right. Carrots are fine.

DOCTOR

Yeah? It's fine?
. . . They're all right?

HATCHET

Yeah. Yes. Please. Thank you.

The doctor leaves. We FADE TO:

SOON – Hatchet eating his food in bed.

JUDGE'S VOICE

DANG IT, SON, LISTEN TO ME! This is a
REAL LIFE COURT CASE we're talking about!!

Hatchet drops his food again,
in pure terror, and looks up.

Sees the TV – a courtroom TV show.

JUDGE

Now *my* question to *you* is . . . you seem to be so
mistreating of *human beings* . . . are you as cruel
to *animals*, as you are to *people*?

The defendant on TV is older even than
Hatchet – who just shrugs his shoulders.

HATCHET

I didn't *do* nothing.

JUDGE

Look at me! As if you're talking to me. Please.
Looking over *there* ain't gonna help ya, son.

TV DEFENDANT

I'm sorry, your Honor. I'm sorry I'm not perfect.

JUDGE

No, my question isn't are you *perfect*. The question is your treatment of animals.

TV DEFENDANT

I just train dogs. That's all I do. I train them to perform incredible tricks.

HATCHET

TV . . . *off!*

He waits for it.

But the TV doesn't turn off.

HATCHET

Come on, we're in the future, what the Hell is wrong with this thing?

Another doctor steps into the room for a second.

OTHER DOCTOR

Everything all right in here?

HATCHET

Uhh, yeah, can the TV go off, please?

OTHER DOCTOR

Sure.

The doctor turns off the TV.

He starts to leave the room.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

He knows where your stuff is too.

Hatchet looks at the doctor for a second, then looks away.

The doctor keeps walking away . . . and an uncomfortable moment hits him as he wonders why Hatchet just looked at him.

He closes the door behind him on his way out.

Hatchet looks back to the door.

Hatchet gets up, and walks, slowly,
all the way to the door.

He grabs the area he'd been shot at. Walks slower.

He peeks through the door's windows, as stealthily as
he can: he's trying to see where the doctor is going.
That doctor knows where all his stuff is.

The doctor walks onward – but then walks a little
slower, as if picking up on some kind of disturbance.

OTHER DOCTOR
Oh, heeeeeeey, you all!

And he disappears, taking a sharp right turn.

DOCTOR
I don't know, sometimes, it's funny.

OTHER DOCTOR
Almost all the time, I see *nothing* funny
about this job.

DOCTOR
Yeah, but sometimes they say the most
– unexpected things.

Good – now they're making noise. Hatchet
quickly opens the door, quietly, and slips
through.

On the inside of the hallway, Hatchet closes it
gently, making sure not to make too much noise.

He sneaks forward, making sure not to be seen,
still dressed in the hospital gown. At first, all
there is, on his right side, is the bare wall; but,
after a while, there will come the little side-room,
where the doctor had made the sharp right turn,
where all three doctors are currently having
their own conversation.

He sneaks forward, and is fine, at first . . .
but the closer he gets to that gap in the wall,
where he'll be seen by all three doctors, the
higher the tension rises . . .

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His soft footsteps seem to leave progressively louder footstep sounds. His heartbeat becomes equally loud. He grinds his teeth together, left and right, as the pulsating rhythm in his head goes on.

CLOSE ON his feet as he raises his right heel, and tries to walk on his feet's front half alone to get maximum silence.

DOCTOR 3

I don't know, that's true, yeah. I remember this *one* patient, about five years ago, back when I worked in Colorado, you know . . .

DOCTOR 2

Oh? Yeah? . . . Why, what'd he do?

DOCTOR 3

Oh, well, just the fact that, first of all, he's coming back *every* single fucking day with the same old aches and pains that we all get . . . and he *realizes* this . . .

Hatchet takes a few steps back, then just walks forward smoothly, passing the doctors, looking away from them.

He gets to the door at the end of the room. And grips it more tightly and powerfully than ever.

HATCHET
(Still alive.)

He opens the door and steps through.

INT. HOSPITAL – FURTHER ON

HATCHET

Myyyy stuff's gotta be here. I just *know* it.

CUT TO a closer angle of the security camera mounted on the ceiling.

The SECURITY CAM'S POV of Hatchet, wandering around, touching everything on the walls.

HATCHET

Ohhh-kay, I'm sure it's somewhere. I mean, I *know* it is. Right? Real concerning.

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Back to NORMAL. Another doctor steps in for a second, somewhat alarmed.

DOCTOR

Hello, there! You've been seen already, I take it?

HATCHET

(minding the doctor less than his lost stuff)

Uhhh . . . yyyyyyyeah, I'm just looking for my stuff, that I came in with?

He turns to face the doctor.

HATCHET

Just – just, uhh, the clothes, and metal thing, and that's it – then I'll be gone, and you'll never have to see me again.

DOCTOR

What? . . . OHHH, ha ha! I get it! You won't have to keep coming back for more medical visits. I gotcha. That was good, man. REAL good one.

(pats him on the shoulder)

Don't worry, we'll just – we'll get that stuff for you right now. All right? Hang tight.

Hatchet gulps.

DOCTOR

A-all right. Why don't you have a seat, right here in this room. Just hold tight for a minute, you'll have your stuff back, and, uhh, after that . . . out there, to the waiting room. Do you see where the waiting room is?

HATCHET

. . . Uhhh . . . hmmm . . . uhhh . . . no.

DOCTOR

(pointing) Well, it's up that way, down the hall, all the way to the end.

HATCHET

All right.

DOCTOR

Okay. So, once again, just right here in this little room, for now . . . I'll be back.

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The doctor leaves.

Hatchet waits in the small other room.
Much more narrow and enclosed than
the other rooms.

INT. HOSPITAL – SMALLER ROOM

Five seconds of silence in this smaller room.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

You know they're just trying to *get* to you.

More silence.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

Why. What did I even *do*. Whatever I do,
people are still just gonna think worse
things . . .

He looks up at the clock.

The hands read 1:35.

FADE TO:

1:45.

Hatchet shrugs his shoulders.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

It shouldn't *be* such a big deal, right? Cause
you're an honest man with nothing to hide.

He sighs.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

One of those times you just . . . you just . . .
gotta reconsider being a superhero . . .
do you really *need* to be here? *Do* you?
. . . *Does* anyone actually care?

In his head, he starts remembering all
the different images of himself in photo
across the years.

Early 1970's – wearing all gray.

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Later – wearing all black, almost like a robber.

Later, over the years – wearing all green and brown, but differently than the present-day outfit: more like a green sweater and brown pants.

Back to reality. Hatchet sighs.

FADE TO:

Soon – the doctor re-enters.

DOCTOR
Hatchet?

HATCHET
Yes?

DOCTOR
Yes. You were wanting your . . . *stuff* back?

HATCHET
Ahh. Thank you.

DOCTOR
Your clothes, uhh . . . of course, I understand, if you want some privacy, you can just get changed over in here.

HATCHET
And, uhh, my metal thing, I guess, I'll just . . . take with me?

DOCTOR
Hmm?

HATCHET
Huh? What's-that? Oh, nothing, nothing.
Uhhhh . . . yes, then . . .

DOCTOR
Y-yeah.

The doctor leaves.

Hatchet goes to change.

CUT TO:

Hatchet putting on the brown coat. And hat.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

. . . Why? *Why* would they *let* you
have your stuff back?

He has to stop for a second to think about it.

He feels for the usual spot for the hatchet.

Doesn't find it.

HATCHET

Where would it be.

He checks the bag the doctor had handed
his clothes to him in.

There it is.

He almost touches it, but is apparently interrupted.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

No! It's another trap! Why would they
let you have all your own stuff back?

He starts pacing around the room. The
tension is building up again. Badly.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

Now what? Now you just walk out?
And pretend like everything is normal?
Just *act* like you're a normal citizen again?

Hatchet starts walking on, to the waiting room.

HATCHET

Yep. Yep. Just walkin' on to the ol' waiting room.

He walks, constantly about to fall,
and each time correcting himself.

INT. HOSPITAL – WAITING ROOM

Hatchet sits in the waiting room.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

You'd *better* sit down here. At least for a minute.

He looks around, for a second. Back to looking down.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

You're *supposed* to be seen one last time
by the doctors, right?

He looks up at the reception desk.

Freezes for a few seconds.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

Holy shit . . . you have no way of paying for this.

His eyes widen, as well as his mouth,
as it all hits him.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

“Insurance”? “Checks”? “Money”? “Cash”?
You have none of these things!

He starts shaking.

He looks to the left wall.

A large painting of all green shades
of jungle leaves, with the name
“JUST FOR YOU” written across
in white letters.

Hatchet starts shaking – the sounds of
bullets and gunfire are starting to go off.

The plants in the painting all seem
to blow around in the wind.

He shakes his head.

HATCHET

Nahhh.

He looks away, but can still hear the sounds in
his head: the gunfire. The machine gun noises.

RADIO VOICES

And you call yourself a hero??
AND YOU CALL YOURSELF
A HERO??

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He flinches again, snapping back
to the normal scene.

He stands up, then sits back down in the chair.
Looks through the two selections of magazines
available. One's front cover features a man.
The other's front cover features a woman.

He looks each one over. Then, holding the one
with the woman on the cover, he puts that at
the top of the pile, and looks at it intently for
a few seconds.

DISTANT VOICE 1
Oh, this guy's just sick.

DISTANT VOICE 2
Just sits there and has massive
amounts of pornography!

DISTANT VOICE 1
No – I'm sorry, but – in fact, no,
I'm *not* sorry, you do *not* need
that much porno!

Hatchet starts flipping through the pages,
as if speed-reading.

HATCHET
Yyyyp. Just readin' it for the articles. Mm-hmm.

He opens one up at random: a two-page article.

(HEALTH)

“DO YOU HAVE CANCER??”

A sub-headline: “YOU MIGHT HAVE CANCER,
AND YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT IT”

by Robert T. Graystrol

Hatchet's head pulls back in shock and fear.
He shivers again.

All the ink text on the two pages intensifies; a black
glow is building up across them.

CLOSE ON the name Robert T. Graystrol –

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as the T begins to bloom into an S, and the last name begins to bloom into Hatchystrol.

CLOSE ON Hatchet's face as he shakes again;
looks left, right.

OTHER VOICE 2

Oh, look at him! Just holding it out
right out in the open! All s-s-spread out!

OTHER VOICE 1

Oh, look, see? Now *you're* the
one who's talking crazy!

OTHER VOICE 2

Oh, *stop it*. You *know* what I meant.

Hatchet looks back at the article again.
The sight normalizes once more.

DISTANT VOICE 1

Which one's he looking at?

DISTANT VOICE 2

Are you *sure*?

DISTANT VOICE 3

Pretty sure . . .

The colored patterns that are part of the
magazine pages' background graphic design
seem to intensify and twirl around on their own.

DISTANT VOICE 2

No, no, not like it's a "big deal", or anything.

DISTANT VOICE 3

What's *that* supposed to mean?

Hatchet drops the magazine.

DISTANT VOICE 1

What? What's going on now?

DISTANT VOICE 2

It's *nothing*, it's *nothing*, it's – don't worry.

Hatchet quickly gets up and leaves
the waiting room.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

Hatchet, man . . . *what the Hell* were you doing here. You could have just left *the whole time*.

His face twitches a little, his lips moving a small bit, as he thinks.

He walks out, through the automatically-opening double doors.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

How long until they get you.

He leaves, quickly.

DISTANT VOICE 1

Whaaat the Hell was that?

DISTANT VOICE 2

Sooooo creepy . . .

EXT. HOSPITAL – FRONT ENTRANCE

Hatchet walks out the front of the hospital.

And notices that a police car is blocking the immediate entrance into the street. A couple of ambulances are nearby.

Hatchet seems forced to move his upper body backward in shock again.

Then, he continues to try to walk on.

We hear the sound of a helicopter building up from overhead. He looks up, skyward; we LOOK UP with him, to see the agonizingly bright Sun.

A helicopter is passing by, overhead.

BACK TO Hatchet. He shakes again as he comprehends its purpose: routine maintenance, routine security.

But always there.

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His whole body shakes again, and his breathing becomes difficult.

Hatchet gulps, puts his hands in his pockets, holds his coat tighter, and walks on, to the right, passing by the ambulances and the cop car.

He looks back at the hospital door again, then picks up the pace and walks faster, away.

BACKGROUND VOICE 1

You don't think he's gonna try and *do* anything, do you?

BACKGROUND VOICE 2

To the hospital?

BACKGROUND VOICE 3

He was just giving it a *funny look* again . . .

INT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY – VIRGINIA BORDER

A road sign with a red and black cardinal on it reads: “WELCOME TO VIRGINIA!”

Cars speed past the sign on the highway.

INT. ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA – CITY STREETS – SOON

Hatchet walks down the sidewalk. Getting away yet again.

HATCHET

But, now, where will I sleep . . . ?

FADE TO:

A few hours later. Hatchet is still walking – much slower than before, and more exhausted. He’s holding onto his sides in pain.

HATCHET

Spare some change . . . hmm . . . ?

A stranger hands him a single.

STRANGER

H-here. J-just here.

STRANGER'S FRIEND

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(Ah, what are you doing that for, man?
That guy probably smokes crack!)

HATCHET
Thank you, sir.

But, it's too late: the man who gave him
the single is already out of earshot.

FADE TO:

INT. FAST-FOOD JOINT

Hatchet stands in line at the back of the line.

Looks to his right.

Spots a bunch of people. Realizes it will
look like he's intentionally looking at them.
And quickly turns to look ahead of himself,
in the line.

Sways to the left a little.

Then, to the right.

There are several customers ahead of him
in the line . . . but, suddenly, it hits him that
it will seem like he's staring at *them*, too.

He quickly turns to the left, to look at the wall.
From here, we can see the drive-through window.

For several seconds, Hatchet stares at the wall.

Then, suddenly, realizes yet another terrible thing.

DRIVE-THROUGH PERSON
Is this guy *looking* at me?

Hatchet looks ahead, toward the cashier.

And notices another old man, possibly a decade or
two younger than himself, standing pressed all the
way up to the metal counter, swaying to the left,
and then to the right.

CLOSE ON Hatchet as his eyebrows scrunch.
He gets a closer look . . .

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What's that guy trying to say?

Hatchet's head moves around a little as
he inspects . . .

The other homeless man just kind of sways left
and right some more.

Hatchet shakes.

CASHIER
Sir!

Hatchet looks to the cashier at lightning speed.

HATCHET
Hamburger! Plain! Everything!
With two ketchups, please!

The cashier doesn't respond, at first.

Then, he blinks a few times.

CASHIER
Yyy . . . a . . . you said a hamburger?

CUT TO:

INT. ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA – CITY STREETS – SOON

Hatchet, finishing his hamburger,
walks on down the road.

Now he has an empty wrapper. He tosses
it away, to the ground, and walks on.

Several seconds later, something
new hits him.

He looks back at the wrapper. Shrugs
his shoulders. Runs forth, grabs it,
and walks it over to an actual trash can,
only five seconds of a walk away.

He shrugs his shoulders, knowing
nobody could see, but not caring.

HATCHET

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Best meal I've had in a while.

So he walks on, down the sidewalk. Now he holds one hand up in the air, with one thumb raised, to try to catch a ride hitch-hiking.

FADE TO:

“20 Minutes Later”

Hatchet is still walking.

NARRATION

On TV, people hitch-hike down the road and get picked up in *seconds*. On TV, hitch-hikers can just take their pick from five people who pull over to help.

But me . . . I walk down the road . . . what's it been, half an hour now? . . . and not one person cares. Not one.

Hatchet walks on, smiling, with one thumb up in the air, as dozens of cars pass by him. But they all drive on, and still nobody cares.

NARRATION

Somehow, I have the feeling that if I were to have a heart attack and drop dead, not one person would care about that, either.

He looks around, across the roads. Surely one person will pull over and help him.

NARRATION

Or maybe it's time to just run in front of one of these cars and simply die.

Hatchet walks on into the middle of the street.

He looks up, at all the oncoming cars. Then he looks down at the ground again, but he stays still, and waits for the cars to come to him.

The cars honk at him, and people swerve around him, cursing him out. But nobody will hit him.

He groans. Then he turns around and walks on, back to the sidewalk.

FADE TO:

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“15 Minutes Later”

Still walking by himself, Hatchet now holds his (less-tired) left hand up in the air, trying to flag down anyone that might help.

Yet, even still, nobody cares.

He even tries rubbing his nipple with one hand. Still no success.

NARRATION

Come on, man! With all the times I've helped people – not *one* person can help me out, a little bit, when I'm walking this much?

FADE TO:

“23 Minutes Later”

Even still, Hatchet walks on, now worn out, still holding one arm up. No matter how much time goes on, and no matter how many hundreds of people pass by without caring, he still won't give up.

He's still walking, but now he's growing more exhausted and worn out than ever. He's clutching his sides, having spent perhaps too much time exercising, somewhat aimlessly, with no destination waiting.

He finally stops, kneels down, and takes a second to breathe. He clutches his ribs tightly.

HATCHET

Aching so bad. Aching so bad.
Shouldn't have walked too much.

He looks back up. One car is slowing down to a stop, pulling over to the side of the road to pick him up as a hitch-hiker.

HATCHET

Yeah?

PAUL BONES

(rolling down the front seat passenger window)

Hey, man, hop right in! You trying to get somewhere?

HATCHET

(entering the car)

Just some way to sit down. Rest.
Not walk. Think I got arthritis.

PAUL BONES

(reaching for a handshake)

The name's Paul Bones. I pick up hitch-hikers.

HATCHET

(returning the handshake)

The name's Hatchet. I hitch-hike.

Finally done with being stopped on the
side of the road, Paul's car takes off again.

INT. PAUL'S CAR – FRONT SEAT

PAUL BONES

So what *is* it that brings you here?

HATCHET

Oh, just criminal work, I guess.

PAUL BONES

I . . . y-what?

HATCHET

Huh? . . . Oh. I mean: *tracking down*,
(raising both fists)
beating up, you know, dangerous criminals.

PAUL BONES

(chuckling) Ohhhh-kay. Like, what, you
mean like a bounty hunter?

HATCHET

Uhhh – uh, no, I guess more like just a
vigilante thing. It's . . . it's not very
common. Not every person does it.

A few seconds pass.

PAUL BONES

Hatchet, the vigilante?

HATCHET

(extending a handshake) In the flesh.

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LOOK AWAY, to the clock radio display.

The time is now 5:34.

FADE TO: 5:44.

LOOK BACK to Hatchet and Paul.

HATCHET

But . . . if I *do* have arthritis . . . then I shouldn't be Hatchet anymore. But . . . if I shouldn't be Hatchet anymore . . . then the criminal scum would just get their way . . . I . . . I can't let that happen.

A new idea hits him. He gasps,
turning to the driver.

And has a major, eye-opening moment.

HATCHET

I could train *you* to be my successor!
I could train *you* to kill criminals!
Be the new Hatchet for after I'm gone.

The driver shakes. He steers the steering wheel shakily. Suddenly, the entire car swerves.

Hooo-oonk! comes the sound of another car.
Paul swerves back into his proper lane.

PAUL BONES

That – that's, uhh – that's, perhaps, a little too heavy of a task for me to think of so fast.

HATCHET

Yeah? . . . Well, all right, then. That makes sense. But . . . hmm . . . just think about it sometime. Imagine how *great* that would be. Huh? Fighting crime. Taking down criminals . . .

Hatchet slows down his speech.

HATCHET

. . . No . . . no . . . I know better than that. I know that's something that's not *cool* at all. Something . . . you would rather not be a part of.

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PAUL BONES

You headed anywhere?

It hits Hatchet all at once. How bad he looks right now. That it's time for this Paul to get rid of him.

HATCHET

Uhhh . . . I . . .

He looks out the window.

For a few seconds, we see the sights out the window.

He looks back to Paul.

HATCHET

By the way, I promise no problems.

PAUL

Nah, it's all right, man. It's all good.

HATCHET

. . . Really?

PAUL

So – you – *headed* to any state in particular?

HATCHET

Uhhh . . . I'm coming *from* a hospital in Virginia . . . umm, what's the next state over?

PAUL BONES

Hmmm . . . well, I guess I'd have to look at a map. But, I'm *pretty* sure that the next state over, the way we're headed right now, is West Virginia, and then, later on, Pennsylvania.

CUT TO:

INT. LONG STRETCH OF ROAD – VIRGINIA – SOON

Zhoom! The hitch-hiking car speeds past.

A caption reads: "VIRGINIA".

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S CAR – FRONT SEAT

A caption reads: “Oakton, VA”.

HATCHET

I was walking down the road, right? Walking, walking. And I see a grand theft auto in progress.

HATCHET

Started walking away. This sheriff pulled me over . . .

HATCHET

Most paranoid breakfast I ever had, man!
I couldn't stop thinking they were all hounding me! . . . Well, at *least* I thought that *they* thought I was staring at them . . . which, I wasn't . . .

HATCHET

Mr. Red left THREE warning messages across Washington, D.C., on brick walls. He left his warning messages in THREE places in D.C.! And, I mean, I guess it all sounds kind of wild, made-up, I guess. I don't know.

PAUL

No, no. See. See. You need to stop feeling so insecure; stop focusing so much on what people think.

A caption reads: “Route 66 – Front Royal”.

PAUL BONES

Well I'm 23. Right now. Turning 24 in a couple months.

PAUL BONES

It's not really “creepy” that you and I are having this discussion. Nothing wrong with this. Ya know?

PAUL BONES

Wow, I guess I'm just now realizing how young I am, in a way.

PAUL BONES

When *I* turn 64? Heh . . . I don't *know!*
Assuming I make it there.

PAUL BONES

Dropped right out of college, man. Dropped right out, five semesters left. Just realized one day, DAMN IT, MAN, I can't take this anymore. Can't take this "degree".

INT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY – SIDE OF THE ROAD – LATE EVENING

Zhoom! The hitch-hiking car speeds past.

A caption reads: "PENNSYLVANIA".

INT. PAUL'S CAR – FRONT SEAT

A caption reads: "Route 81 – Inwood, PA".

HATCHET

I guess I just don't *listen* enough in conversations, is my problem.

HATCHET

I don't know. A "brown hat"? What's so special about my "brown hat"? It's not like I *invented* the brown hat look. I mean, a *thousand* people could wear this.

HATCHET

Ohhhh, man. So. A couple years ago. I'm walking around this one day. And I suddenly notice someone else wearing the same brown hat as me. The *exact* same brown hat! And I was *so* creeped out, at first . . .

A caption reads: "Altoona, PA".

HATCHET

But a brown hat, *and* a brown coat? . . . No. No. It *was* a signal. It *was*. That guy was making *fun* of me. Trying to say, oh, look at me, I can dress up like Hatchet too. What the FUCK!!

PAUL BONES

Craziest story I've heard in my life, man. Craziest story ever. But I *believe* you, too! That's the thing, I *believe* you on these Hatchet stories!

PAUL BONES

Wow, so *you* must get all *kinds* of

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oddballs on your job, don't you?

HATCHET

Ohhhhh my God, don't get me started.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA – EXT. GAS STATION – NIGHT

Paul pulls on the handle of the gas pump,
sets it to auto-fill, and lets go.

Paul walks away with Hatchet to take a walk, as
Paul repeatedly thwacks his pack of cigarettes
against his hand.

HATCHET

Hey, you should quit those cigarettes . . . I
know folks who have died from them, y'know.

PAUL

Oh, so what, I don't care what happens to me.

Hatchet sighs.

PAUL

Hmm. Well, I've gotta say, I've never been a
Hatchet vigilante myself . . . but . . . I think it would
be best for me *not* to be involved in it myself.

HATCHET

Yeah. That's . . . that's definitely
understandable.

PAUL

What would you say . . . uhhh . . .
I mean, at least, if you don't mind my
asking . . . what do you think was the
one *worst* case you ever dealt with?
In all your years of dealing with random
thugs and with super-villains?

HATCHET

Oh *man*, I've met some crazies over the years.
Villains that you wouldn't believe. I've dealt
with bank robbers, and with kidnappers, and
with the super-wealthy bad guys, who own
entire mansions . . . whooo . . . I've seen enough
bad guys to know they come in all *sorts* of
shapes and sizes.

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PAUL

But, if you *had* to pick one? One bad
guy that was the worst?

He has to take a second to think about it.

HATCHET

That would be Mr. Red.

INT. VIRGINIA – BAR – EVENING

Loud music is blasting inside a bar.
Dim, colored light adorns the scene.

Mr. Red sits down on one barstool, his head
sagged all the way down to the counter.

MR. RED

Yeah, I'm looking for a man called Hatchet?

The bartender doesn't hear him –
he moves on with his business.

MR. RED

. . . Hatchet? Looking for a Hatchet?

Mr. Red grows impatient.

MR. RED

That's it! I know the one way to draw out
a superhero in hiding!

INT. CITY ALLEYWAY – SOON

In an alleyway, Mr. Red is talking
to three of his cultists.

(In the background, a homeless bum
is laying next to a dumpster, dozed off,
with a beer bottle in one hand.)

MR. RED

There's *three* of you. So if each *one*
of you starts a fire, then, all *three* of
you, collectively, will have started
three fires: definitely enough to bring
Hatchet out of hiding.

CULTIST 1

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But – but wait. I thought you said
the man's in the hospital?

MR. RED

A man like *that*? He'll come out of
the woodwork to play the hero role,
once he hears that a bad guy arsonist
is in town.

CULTIST 2

Well . . . well what if he doesn't show up?

MR. RED

. . . Then we do it anyway.

CLOSE ON the homeless bum in the other
end of the alleyway.

Not actually asleep or oblivious at all –
that's just the act. His eyes twitch open
and shut several times, in response to the
terrifying things he's hearing.

INT. BAR – SOON

The homeless man from the alleyway
is talking to the bartender.

ALLEYWAY BUM

You've got to believe me. There's great cause
for alarm. I was just out there in the alleyway
and I heard –

BARTENDER

What? Either speak up or slow down, son,
cause I can't make heads or tails of what
'cher saying!

ALLEYWAY BUM

I was just outside, there, in the alleyway,
and I saw four young men discussing what
I think is their plot to do something bad!

CUT TO – soon – one random customer, a
young adult blonde lady, handing the man
several quarters.

BLONDE GIRL

Here. Try this.

ALLEYWAY BUM

Thank you, miss.

CUT TO: outside – soon – as he puts in
the last of the quarters to make a phone call.

9-1-1.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWS PROGRAM

A far-away shot of a recycling center.

Then, an explosion erupts from it.

An aerial angle of a shopping plaza.
A fire erupts across one set of roofs.

A shot of the interstate highway –
an explosion erupts from there too.

REPORTER'S VOICE

Three fires erupted today, in an area of
Virginia not *ever* normally known for such
hot weather.

DETECTIVE ON TV

Oh, we're positive at this point it was deliberate
arson. The thing these arsonists don't seem to
understand is, we *do* close in on them, and we
do find out who they are. This goes beyond just
the firefighters showing up and ending the fires
with water, that's the obvious part – but then *we*, the
law enforcement folks, find the *people* responsible, too.

PULL BACK to reveal:

INT. BAR

Mr. Red watching this footage, from a TV
inside the bar.

REPORTER

The concept of arsonists at work *is* a startling
one, indeed. Local firefighters did succeed in
taking out all three threatening fires, before
they were able to do any *real* damage. Zero

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casualties have been reported so far.

MR. RED

Haaaaaa haa haaa!! That's me!!

At first, there is no reaction from the other people in the bar. Other people are still talking to one another.

MR. RED

Ha ha! *I* did those ones!

He has to think about it again.

MR. RED

Well, *kind* of. *They* did, really. Hmm.

He turns away from the TV, finally.

MR. RED

Oh, oh well, I'm sure *Hatchet* will find the guy who did it, right?

He laughs again.

MR. RED

Yes. Yes, I'm sure *Hatchet* will come right out of hiding now!

Mr. Red takes his drink and starts chugging it.

INT. RANDOM CITY STREETS – PENNSYLVANIA – EVENING

Hatchet is sitting on the ground, back against a brick wall, doing nothing.

People pass by him on the sidewalk.
At first, he doesn't pay anyone any attention.

Then, he begins to murmur a little.

HATCHET

Spare some change . . . ?
. . . Spare some change?

CHRIS

Here.

A random stranger, Chris Preston, tosses

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him a small, one-inch plastic bag.

HATCHET

(confused) This isn't . . .
(looking closer) What is this?

CHRIS

Little bit of weed.

Hatchet's eyes bulge open.

HATCHET

Whaaaaaat? Where did you get this??
I need more of this!

CHRIS

Yeah?

(turning to his friend) Hey Danny, you think
we got room for one more head?

DANNY

Nahhh, not really . . . I mean . . .
why, who is it?

Hatchet introduces himself to Danny.

HATCHET

Uhh, hello. The name's Hatchet.

He reaches for a handshake. Danny is
too weirded out to do anything but freeze.

HATCHET

. . . And, if one of you could somehow point
me the way to, like, a dimebag more of this
stuff . . . it would be immensely appreciated.

CHRIS

. . . Hmm, well, we *are* going to the carnival
tonight, and, there should be some people there
selling it.

HATCHET

Yeah?

CUT TO:

INT. OUTDOOR CARNIVAL – ENTRANCE – SOON

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HATCHET

. . . It was the scariest hospital visit *ever*, man!!
Everywhere I was, I could just . . . I could just
. . . *hear the doctors* saying stuff like, “*Report
and Discharge Instructions*” . . . discharge
instructions?? . . . How can I prove they're not
talking about ME??

Danny is laughing.

DANNY

This guy is funny. Weirdest fucking dude we've
smoked with, but funny.

CHRIS

Hey, uhh, Hatchet, don't worry. My boy Nat
should be showing up in about . . . five minutes.
Or . . . three. Or maybe . . . hmm . . . well,
wait a second.
(*reaches for his cell phone*)

HATCHET

I don't know though, man . . . I . . . I got outta
the hospital, somehow. And, I *am* still alive.

CHRIS

(*into his phone*) NAT!!! . . . Can you hear me?

At last, the three are all the way inside the outdoor
carnival. There are a few booths standing upright,
for people to buy entry stamps at.

CHRIS

NAT!! It's Chris! . . . Hey! Hey, do you think
you can get a *dimebag*?

DANNY

Not so loud, *fool*. We're in public.

CHRIS

Ahh, forget them, they can't . . .
(*into the phone*) Oh. Yeah? Uhh . . . all right!
. . . Okay, cool! Cool. See you soon.

He flips the phone shut, and
puts it back in his pocket.

HATCHET

So what happened?

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CHRIS

My boy Nat will be here in a few minutes.
Let's wait over there.

CUT TO:

SOON – Hatchet and the two youths standing in
front of a closed store.

A car pulls up.

Chris steps forward to do his business.

The weed exchange is done.

Chris walks back; the car takes off.

CHRIS

(nodding his head) Yep. It's done.

HATCHET

Where is it? Where is it?

Chris holds up in the air the bag of weed.

HATCHET

Ohhhhhh! Ohhhhhh! Thank you!

Hatchet hands him the 10-dollar bill.

HATCHET

You're my Savior tonight, sir. I mean, hey –
I'm just a homeless guy, you know . . . youse
all are a, a bunch of youths, you know, hanging
out, getting high . . . and I just . . . wanna, you
know, have a dimebag, there's nothing wrong
with that, right?

CHRIS

Nahhhh, nothing at all! You got nothing
to worry about.

CUT TO: soon – as the two are walking across
the carnival. Walking down a dirt road, they
are surrounded on both sides by dozens of
different carnival games, each one filled with
carnie workers yelling and screaming for
attention.

BALLOON GAME GUY

Five dollars! Five dollars for *three* tries at the
balloon game! *How* bout it! *How* bout it!
Win something for your girlfriend . . .

Walking away from all the games and rides,
the three start heading toward the more
abandoned, people-free areas.

HATCHET

Carnivals . . . they just ain't the same as they
were when *I* was your age.

CHRIS

Yeah, *these* days they're *better*. *These* days they
got weed going on.

DANNY

Pffsh, not if you keep blowing the cover, man.

Hatchet shakes his head, dissatisfied.

HATCHET

Nahhhh. It ain't *quite* as good anymore.

Now all the people and rides are behind them;
they're walking through the area of empty tents.

They spot two middle-aged carnies
smoking a blunt together.

CHRIS

(*to Danny*) Hey. *Hey!* There you go.

DANNY

Let *me* do the talking.

Danny walks up to the carnies.

DANNY

Scuse me, folks. Mind if I have a hit off that?

Several seconds of contemplation.

CARNIE 1

Hmmm . . . ehhhh . . . yeah, sure.
But remember, *puff puff pass*.

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HATCHET

(pulling out some cash) Five dollars.
You have any more?

CARNIE 1

Pfffsh! What do I look like? Some kind of
– of *lowlife drug dealer*? Fraid not, kiddo.

He glares at Hatchet for a second, for talking
so obviously about it.

Then, he smiles, and nods his head. Reaches
into his pocket, and pulls out a bag.

Shows it to Hatchet for a second – then
puts it back out of view.

HATCHET

Gotcha. Five dollars.

CUT TO – soon – Hatchet and all four other
men are standing side-by-side by the empty
tents, smoking.

HATCHET

Ahhhh, man. It's been so long since I've had a hit.

Suddenly, a child runs into the scene.

LITTLE GIRL

Hey! Hey! Uncle Will!

CARNIE 2

Hey-heeeey, little Stephanie! How you doing? Huh?

The man starts to hand the blunt to her.

Hatchet arches an eyebrow.

HATCHET

What are you doing?

CARNIE 2

You wanna try this?

LITTLE GIRL

Sure!

HATCHET

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No!

The little girl looks at him. So does the carnie.

CARNIE 2

Hey, do ya *mind*? I'm with family here.

HATCHET

Yeah, I *do* mind! That blunt is something that's for you, and your adult carnival friends, and him and him and I maybe! But that's a *child* you're talking about!

CARNIE 2

It ain't *your* kid.

HATCHET

Hey, come on, man! *I've* got *problems* – I get all *psycho* every now and then – but you draw the line right there!

CARNIE 2

(*glaring at him*) I think you need to start *minding your own business*, pal.

HATCHET

(*stepping up to him*) I think you need an ass-whooping is what I think.

Neither one stops to look at their new friends' reactions. They just have a stand-off, looking at one another eye-to-eye. Very close distance – their faces inches apart.

HATCHET

(*to the little girl*) You get out of here, *now*. You don't wanna see this.

No reaction. She freezes, and doesn't leave.

It's clear that the only one she's afraid of is Hatchet.

STEPH

Uncle Will, what's going on?

Hatchet points toward the carnival games.

HATCHET

Go over *there*. Try out that ring-toss game!

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Get a prize!

No reaction, still.

CARNIE 2

Don't tell my niece what to do.

HATCHET

(to Carnie 2) Well then you and me are going over *there* to have a discussion in private.

CUT TO: soon –

Hatchet slams the carnie by his back onto the back wall of a trailer.

HATCHET

I'm *trying* not to be violent!
And you ain't making it easy!

CARNIE 2

You threatening to kill me, old man?
You trying to threaten to kill me?

HATCHET

No – just beat the blue-eyed shit outta you until the logic and sense kicks in!

He throws the carnie to the ground again.

He opens his coat, revealing the hatchet.

HATCHET

But I *do* have this! And *don't* think I won't use it if necessary!!

CARNIE 2

That's it, man. You need to leave.

A moment of silence.

CARNIE 2

Straight up. Whichever way you slice it.
You need to leave.

Tears instantly start coming down Hatchet's eyes.

He takes a few seconds to consider what's happening.

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CLOSE ON his face as it all hits him at once.
How far he took it.

HATCHET
Uhhh . . . uhh, I . . .

He looks around.

But realizes there's no winning option waiting
for him in any direction.

HATCHET
Yeah. That's fine. I'll leave.

He starts walking backwards a little.

HATCHET
But you ever try mixing *smoking* with *kids* like
that again – and I'll find you and break your neck.

He starts walking away.

Away from the carnie, away from Chris and
the others. Leaving already.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA STREETS – NIGHT

Now it's raining. Hatchet is walking alone
down the sidewalk.

He feels for the hatchet inside the coat.

Feels for the weed he just bought.

HATCHET
Okay. Okay. Whew.

He walks on.

FADE TO:

Pretty soon – he is sitting inside the bus shelter,
trying to get protection from the rain, and trying
not to ruin his own weed.

But there's no lighter.

He sighs.

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Gets up to walk around again.

CUT TO:

Hatchet walking down the sidewalk.
And walking. And walking.

CUT TO:

Hatchet, still walking, further on ahead.

HATCHET

(mumbling to himself)

Hmm, emm, yeah. I couldn't've.
Couldn't've. Wouldn't have even.

EXT. GAS STATION – SOON

In the darkness of the night, with just a few street lights to provide light, Hatchet walks on through the street, holding his sides in pain.

HATCHET

Goooot to stop walking.

For another 10 seconds, he walks across the gas station to get to the door. During this time, we hear the conversation of a couple passing by.

BOYFRIEND

Just heard about it on the news, today.

GIRLFRIEND

Where? In Virginia?

BOYFRIEND

Yeah. *Three* fires, they said. *Three* fires.

GIRLFRIEND

Oh, no! I've got an aunt, lives in Shanendoah!
Was it around there?

BOYFRIEND

Some are thinking Hatchet did it.

GIRLFRIEND

... *What?*

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BOYFRIEND

I'm just saying, *some are thinking*,
it could have been him.

CLOSE ON Hatchet as the realization
hits him of what people are saying.

He thinks about it.

Then shakes his head.

HATCHET

Nahhh.

INT. GAS STATION – BEHIND THE COUNTER – SOON

Behind the counter, the cashier is laying back,
drinking beer.

Hatchet walks by. He pops up to attention.

HATCHET

Uhh . . . a lighter and some papers, please?

CASHIER

A lighter and what?

HATCHET

Uhh . . . lighter, and some *rolling* papers?

CUT TO – soon – as Hatchet empties all his
pennies, nickels, and dimes onto the counter.

HATCHET

Uhh, \$1.43, \$1.44, \$1.45 . . .

CASHIER

You're – you're fine. Just – you're fine.

HATCHET

. . . Yeah?

EXT. GAS STATION

Hatchet leaves the gas station.

CUT TO: soon – back to the bus shelter.

Now, with the rain over, and the whole

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scene still wet from the aftermath, he
sits there and starts rolling a joint.

CUT TO – soon – as he's finishing it.

HATCHET

Yeah. Yeah. Hmm. *Yeah!*

He uses his new cigarette lighter. Tests
it out a couple times by lighting nothing.

He puts the joint in his mouth
and starts to light it up.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLEAN NEIGHBORHOOD – SOMEWHERE IN THE USA – 1966

CLOSE ANGLE on the clean gravel street.

LOOK UP to reveal two youths walking
around, talking: Hatchet, way back at age
17, as Robert Manter, and his good friend
Joey Brownson, 18.

A caption reads: “1966”.

ROBERT

Hat . . . ahh . . . CHOO!

JOEY

Gross, man! Cover your mouth!

ROBERT

Sorry.

JOEY

Well don't just say sorry *now*, just
. . . well . . . all right.

ROBERT

Well, so anyway. I was reading this book.
“Annual Book of Knowledge, 1965”.
And – and it says in there – one day,
like in the *future*, people will be living,
and working, in the frozen Antarctic.
Like . . . through human achievement –

JOEY

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(*shaking his head*)

Come on, man. The days of fun science fiction books are over.

ROBERT
What? Never!

JOEY
The war is changing things, man. No time to think about that Antarctica silliness. Not with this Draft going around.

ROBERT
Joey, look, I'm *still* telling you: The *Man* can't get to us, all *that* way.

JOEY
Yeah. Easy for *you* to say! You're 17.

ROBERT
So? You're 18. One year!
One year of a difference!

JOEY
One year is a lot.

ROBERT
It is *not* a lot! It's a lot when you're a little kid, maybe, but come on, man! 17, 18, same thing!

JOEY
No, look. We're talking about *them*, the law, here – so, they're still gonna be Nazis about it. But to the *law*, once you cross that line, of 18, you have to realize that *things change*.

ROBERT
. . . In what way?

JOEY
Well – for *one* – now you can get drafted right on into this war.

ROBERT
No way, pal. The Man can force you into *school*. The Man can make it so you're always stuck from one *stupid* deli job to the next, with a boss like Mr. Gunther. But The Man CANNOT – and

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WILL not – take it that far to me.

JOEY

(*looking Robert more directly in the eye*)
You sure about that?

The scene somewhat freezes – and
begins to SHAKE VIOLENTLY.

Smoke erupts everywhere.

We hear the sounds of loud machine guns firing
from our left side, to the middle of our view, then
all the way to our right side.

PLOW!! A grenade hits the ground.
We are right in the middle of a Vietnam
war scene now.

INT. STREETWAY – PRESENT

Hatchet snaps back to reality, inside the
bus shelter . . . shaking pretty badly.

HATCHET
J-jeez!

It takes a few seconds for him to settle down.

He sighs.

Shakes his head. Then goes back
into smoking.

HATCHET'S FATHER (v.o.)
You know, you don't really have a *life*.

INT. DELI – 1966 – EVENING

Four people are enjoying a dinner at the deli:
Robert, Joey, and their two fathers.

ROBERT'S FATHER
Okay, think about it like this. Number *one*,
you're not in college. Number *two*, you
don't even really have a job! So, you don't
even really have any of the makings of
a real life!

ROBERT

What? What're you talking about?? Just because I'm not in college, that doesn't mean I should be treated with contempt!

JOEY'S FATHER

Robert. Robert. Please, just listen. You're *not* in college: you're in the first category they're looking for. The first thing they want to find are drop-outs, people with no job.

ROBERT

People with no job?? I've worked *plenty* of jobs!

JOEY'S FATHER

But *real* jobs! Not a deli! Not a restaurant! Not a cash register! No – you have NOT worked at a job before. Not a REAL one, anyway.

ROBERT

What?? Never worked a real job before? Come on! This is ridiculous!

ROBERT'S FATHER

Sorry, Robert: I'm on Jeph's side on this one. We can just count you as never really having worked a *real* job before.

JOEY

Yeah, Robert, what he's trying to say, I guess, is just that –

ROBERT

Is that what, I'm gonna turn 18, so I can just be forced into some stupid war, against my will, by some Communist *draft* order?

A few moments of silence.

JOEY'S FATHER

We're not talking about a Communist country here.

ROBERT

Yeah we *are!* Yeah we *are*, from where *I'm* standing!

JOEY'S FATHER

They're not little boys anymore.

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ROBERT'S FATHER

No, they're not.

JOEY'S FATHER

I remember when they were each 10, 11, 12 years old. Those days are *over!*

ROBERT'S FATHER

Ha ha, you got that right.

JOEY'S FATHER

Now my little Joey is all the way 18. A *full adult!* And soon to be – to be in *college!*

JOEY

Heh. Well. I mean, *if* I choose to get –

JOEY'S FATHER

Oh, it's not much of a choice, Joey. You don't wanna be in the war, right?

JOEY

N-no.

JOEY'S FATHER

Then, you gotta take the college.

ROBERT'S FATHER

Robert . . . I would advise the exact same of you. College, over war.

ROBERT

What?? This is madness. This is insanity! I'm still not 18 yet. But when I *do* turn 18, I ain't gonna let *anyone* – even Uncle Sam – kidnap me away!

Another few moments of silence.

ROBERT'S FATHER

You know, I've got folks in the family who have told *me*, back in World War I, they did similar *draft* policies and were met with far less resistance.

JOEY'S FATHER

Youuuu basically *don't* have a choice on this one, Robert. You are *lucky* enough to be having this conversation, with someone who *works* inside an

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actual, honest-to-God college department!

ROBERT'S FATHER

Something I myself could *never* do.

JOEY'S FATHER

Look, Robert. Some short-lived job as some cashier, ain't gonna impress anyone. Unless you wanna land yourself a *real* job . . . or start hitting the books to get straight As . . . you become property of Uncle Sam.

Robert folds his arms.

ROBERT

No.

INT. SKY

A combat helicopter's POV, flying through the sky, constantly swinging wildly upward, then downward.

Blam-blam-blam-blam-blam!

CUT TO the inside of a helicopter, as one military gunman is shooting out the open window – to the diagonal-aerial view of the plains and grounds below.

CUT TO the helicopter landing slowly on the ground, and military men running out.

CUT TO the interior of a Vietnam village.

A grenade starts to go off.

EXT. BUS SHELTER – PRESENT

BACK TO reality, today, age 64:
near the bus shelter, the same grenade
explosion continues to go off.

After a few seconds, the momentary
flashback is over. The illusory explosion
dies down.

Hatchet starts convulsing for a second –
it's a little too much to handle.

He sighs again.

INT. DELI – SOMEWHERE IN THE USA – EARLY 1970s

Robert and Joey are having a conversation in a deli.
A caption over the scene reads “AUGUST 1970”.

JOEY

Four years. You had four years overseas,
but now, look – it’s over. You’re back home.

ROBERT

Yeah. *It's over*. My involuntarily
volunteerism for the war.

JOEY

Well – I’m just saying, at least you’re
saying all this from *here* – back at home.

ROBERT

“Back home.” At what cost? Home
ain’t the same to come back to.

A moment of uncomfortable silence.

ROBERT

Everywhere I go now. I’m the man who’s
blamed for the war. I’m the one who gets
crucified. I’m “The Man” to these kids now.

JOEY

Look, I understand how you must feel –

ROBERT

No you fucking *don't!* What're you talking about,
you *understand exactly how I feel?*

That seems to crash the moment in the entire deli.

A couple of pieces of silverware drop as
the discomfort ends many conversations.

ROBERT

Look . . . I mean . . . okay, you're trying to help,
and that's good. But you just . . .

He sighs.

ROBERT

If you think you've *been here* and *done this*

– you *haven't!*

He grumbles again for a few seconds.

ROBERT

Whatever. I wasn't in World War II.
Too *young* for that. But I did my time
overseas. I'm done with it.

CUT TO:

INT. ROBERT'S PARENTS' HOUSE – LATER

Robert is talking to his parents,
who are smiling and chuckling
a little as he talks.

ROBERT

The real reason for it all, it turns out. Really.
The blue men, the aliens, they were just . . .
I don't know . . . they were the ones who had
really attacked the world. Y'know? And then
I had to steal some time equipment, *from* them,
in order to get *back* in time, and into the normal
Earth I knew. Which is how I got back.

They look at each other, chuckling.
Not completely sure what he means.

ROBERT'S FATHER

Wwwwell, that sounds like . . .
quite an adventure, then!

CUT TO:

INT. BARBERSHOP – MIDDAY

Robert's usual barber is cutting his hair.
They're carrying on a conversation as usual.

ROBERT

Yeah, so, I started realizing it was all just
the aliens the whole time. The big blue men
who look mostly like people, but . . . shaped a
little bit differently, I guess. Hmm.

A momentary breather.

ROBERT

. . . So, yeah. I managed to infiltrate their office, find that time-box, set it a little bit backwards, and then I got back into the past, just enough to undo their alien invasion. So, then I came back home, and everything's been just *perfect* since!

BARBER
. . . Yeah?

ROBERT
Yeah!

BARBER
Robert Manter, how long have I been cutting your hair for?

ROBERT
. . . Uhh . . . I don't know. Have you cut my hair before?

BARBER
. . . 15 years, Robert. The correct answer is *15 years*. And I've seen you joke around a *lot*, but never *quite* like this . . .!

ROBERT
Huh? . . . Really?

Several seconds of silence.

ROBERT
Well, I'm sorry, then. I guess I just don't know when to quit talking.

BARBER
Hey, hey. It's all right with *me*. This is only your *barber* you're talking to.
. . . Hey, I'm not *offended* by your alien talk. I just . . . wasn't so sure where you were going with it, for a second.

The barber's face twitches in discomfort.

INT. CITY STREETWAY – EVENING

“SEPTEMBER 1970”

Robert and Joe are walking down the street.

ROBERT

The blue men, it wasn't right. *They* were the ones who had just conquered and invaded, and I was the one who had to go *back* in time to restore the *usual* Earth.

JOE

Robert . . . umm . . . didn't you always used to read all those *science fiction books*, back in the day, with all those alien men in them?

ROBERT

Huh?

JOE

The alien men with all purple skin, all trying to invade the Earth, but they can't or something . . . what was the book, again? . . . Well, you know, *you* were telling me about it, a lot, as kids.

ROBERT

Oh, yeah, yeah, as kids, in *junior high* and high school, yeah, sure. I was *always* reading some science fiction story or another . . . the Purple Men, the U.F.O. Night, the – the – but no. This isn't the same thing!! This isn't just me reading a book, and then *thinking* it's all real.

JOE

No?

ROBERT

No! . . . This is different.

JOE

What about the . . . the . . . Vietnam involvement?

ROBERT

Hmm?

JOE

Your time overseas?

ROBERT

What? What time overseas?

JOE

(*sigh*) Come on, Robert, you know what I mean.

ROBERT

I was never *overseas* – just *out-of-planet* for a while!

JOE

ALL RIGHT, man, knock it off with the jokes already!

Several seconds of silence pass.

ROBERT

But I'm being completely serious.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE

Hatchet is lying on his back, talking
at lightning-speed.

HATCHET

Nobody will believe me!! Nobody will believe me!!
But, seriously. If not for me breaking into that
castle and stealing that time-box . . . and for a
good reason, too . . . I wouldn't have even been
able to come back here! So how *could* I have?

THERAPIST

Slow down! Slow down! Please!
I'm having a difficult time keeping up.

HATCHET

Huhhhh . . . huhhhh . . . (*deep exhalation*)

THERAPIST

Now – now how did that name, “Hatchet”, come up?

HATCHET

Hmm. Well, Hatchet's not around often.
But, you see, that came from . . . well, that
was the *codename* the aliens had come up
with for me. The alien king started calling me
“Hatchet” after he found out I was . . . well
. . . taking down so many of their aliens.
This is *before* I actually un-did the whole
invasion, though.

THERAPIST

Hmm. And, when you say “aliens”,
you mean . . . the . . . same ones as before?

HATCHET

(*nodding his head*)

Same ones as before. Yep.

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I know you won't believe me . . .

THERAPIST

You're all right, Ro – uhh – *Hatchet*. Continue?

INT. HATCHET'S FALSE MEMORIES

A Vietnam-like scene. Except the sky is two unreal shades of red and lavender.

HATCHET (v.o.)

You see . . . hmm . . . well, the aliens, they were having kind of a hard time with English, I guess. Which is understandable, y'know, cause they're aliens. They spoke a language not known to *anyone* in Earth.

THERAPIST (v.o.)

(*writing on the notepad*) Mm-hmm.

Many blue, five-foot-tall alien men run out into the scene.

A younger Robert Manter is running around holding a hatchet.

HATCHET

So, they see *me* running, this one day, running around with a hatchet I had found lying on the ground! . . . And I figured, hey, the laser-scanner was all out of ammo anyway. Couldn't even use it. So . . . why *not* just improvise, use this hatchet, this one time in my life.

THERAPIST

Uhhh . . . “use a hatchet” . . .

Back to reality: Hatchet on the couch.

THERAPIST

. . . “use”, in what manner?

HATCHET

Well, the laser-scanner was out. I was gonna use the hatchet as a weapon!

A moment of silence.

HATCHET

Well – well not actually to *hurt!* Just,

you know, to *scare*, to *startle*, to get the bad guys away! Same idea, as if you were sitting in your own house, and a burglar breaks in, and you grab for the family rifle, and you scream some loud threatening words – you know, just to *scare*, just to get the bad guys to run away.

THERAPIST

Well – well, this is mostly a separate argument, but . . . hmm, okay. I think I see your point.

HATCHET

. . . Okay. So, like I said, I got a whole herd of aliens in front of me, it's down to just the hatchet, and so I start waving it around and, I guess, trying to think of some way to threaten to use it if I had to. I keep telling them: “hat-chet, hat-chet”. And after a short while they figured out how to pronounce that right, and so *they* started calling *me* Hatchet! So – so, eventually, their King gets word, and I'm known as Hatchet to them now!

He chuckles.

HATCHET

It was a bad time in my life. I'm just – I'm just so glad it's over. I'm not “Hatchet” anymore.

Another several seconds of silence.

The therapist is just plain shocked. Still trying to figure out if he means what he says, or is just joking around.

THERAPIST

Well! This is *quite* a story!

CUT TO – later – the same place, on a different day.

“NOVEMBER 1970”

THERAPIST

Five therapy sessions. And you honestly don't feel better yet . . .?

HATCHET

I feel better!! I feel all better about the alien thing! They can't get to me no more!

THERAPIST

Yes, the . . . the “alien thing” . . . that's what I wanted to discuss with you, Robert.

THERAPIST

One use of the term “aliens” is “illegal aliens”, non U.S. citizens . . . was that the context you meant?

THERAPIST

Space aliens, literally? Do you *truly believe* there were space aliens involved in this?

THERAPIST

Sometimes people believe some crazy things.

THERAPIST

There are some people, who will just *insist* – and sound very logical about it!

THERAPIST

But sometimes people need help.

THERAPIST

Sometimes people *say* they're fine, but they just don't understand, at that time, that, really, they're in need of legitimate, professional help. There *are* experts, who are here to help you, Hatchet . . . and that's the keyword here. *Help*.

INT. OTHER DELI – LATER

Joey has an eyebrow arched as Robert explains his belief of the situation to him.

ROBERT

(in a much lower, raspier voice than before)

And no one's gonna believe me. No one's gonna believe my *crazy stupid story* about being Hatchet. You know WHY?? You wanna know WHY no one will believe it?? Cause, just by going back in time like that – and, oh man, I was WARNED not to interfere with the stream of time, too! – well, now just by going back and undoing the bad present,

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NOW there's no evidence of that "bad present" even being there! So the only one who even *remembers* it all was ME!

JOEY

Robert . . . Robert, this is getting more serious than I thought. A *lot* more serious.

ROBERT

You see, it's a *good* ending. Because the day is saved. *Way* better to have that than to have the aliens owning it all. But it's still bad, in a way, because . . . now . . . now there's no proof that I am right . . . no proof that I took on the alien king *myself*.

He sighs. And tries not to cry.

INT. ROBERT'S PARENTS' HOUSE – LATER

Robert, Joe, and Robert's Dad are talking again.

ROBERT'S FATHER

We heard you talking about the aliens for years. We thought you were just . . . well . . . you know. Being *funny*.

ROBERT

Nobody's believing me. My God damn therapist just wants to lock me up forever!!

JOE

Robert . . . sometimes we just want to help you.

EXT. ROBERT'S HOUSE – LATER

Robert is walked away – in a straitjacket.

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL – LATER

Hatchet is in a straitjacket.

FADE TO: a farther-away angle. We
PULL BACK further.

FADE TO: a still farther away angle.
We still PULL BACK.

FADE TO: BLACK.

Then, another caption fades in:

“DECEMBER 1970”

EXT. MENTAL HOSPITAL

TALKING LADY

Well, you've done your time. If you are sane now, then you are *good to go!*

INT. BANK – MIDDAY

Hatchet talks to a teller.

HATCHET

I'd like to withdrawal some money from savings, please.

INT. TAXI CAB – FRONT SEAT – MORNING

Hatchet talks endlessly to the taxi cab driver.

HATCHET

I brought *myself* outta the fire, though. I thought to myself, I'll take on the *whole entire alien army* if I have to! . . . It's almost hard to believe, y'know, this *whole alien mob* is being led by just *one* king!
(*changing the subject to traffic*)
Oh – oh – it's the hotel *that* way.

EXT. HOTEL – SOON

Robert enters the hotel from outside.

INT. HOTEL – RECEPTION DESK – SOON

ROBERT

(*to a random stranger*)
Hello. I'd like to rent a hotel room here?

RANDOM STRANGER

Uhhh . . . I'm not the guy who works here?
(*pointing to the receptionist's desk*)
I think maybe *they* could help you.

INT. HOTEL – ROBERT'S ROOM – MIDDAY

He throws some clothes onto the bed.

ROBERT (v.o.)

It's time for something new.

EXT. BUS SHELTER – NIGHT – PRESENT

Back to Hatchet in the bus shelter. Nodding his head. Mumbling to himself.

HATCHET

Mmm-hmm. Mmm-hmm.

FADE BACK TO:

INT. HOTEL – ROBERT'S ROOM – MIDDAY

Mid-20's Robert is pacing around, in endless circles, in the hotel room.

ROBERT (v.o.)

Crime War Journal, Entry 0001. This is gonna be a different kind of war.

CUT TO: inside the bathroom – Hatchet puts on an all gray shirt.

ROBERT (v.o.)

I cannot be Robert Manter anymore. Tired of being him. Gotta be someone new. Someone better.

He wraps a black bandage around his eyes, somewhat concealing his identity.

ROBERT (v.o.)

I keep having these dreams where I'm out there fighting this war on crime. Where I'm just . . . Hatchet . . . the crime-fighting man in America. And all I use, in these dreams, is just an ordinary hatchet.

The early version of Hatchet looks himself in the mirror.

ROBERT (v.o.)

I just have to keep reminding myself.
I want to be Hatchet.
I want to be Hatchet.
I can't do this as Robert Manter.

INT. CITY – STREET – LATER

“December 10”

A carjacker holds a gun to a random person's face, who is in the passenger seat of a still car.

CARJACKER

Gimme your money, and you *won't* get shot at!

PASSENGER

N-no! Please!

ROBERT (v.o.)

I'm getting tired of seeing crime everywhere.
I'm getting tired of seeing the bad guys just win all the time. Not in the war overseas – not in the War on Crime.

YOUNG HATCHET

HEEEEEY!!

The carjacker turns to look.

There's Hatchet – in an early outfit, wearing all gray, with a black bandage around the eyes. His hair is still all brown, with a little gray.

He pulls out his hatchet.

CUT TO a full-screen news report.

REPORTER 1

Another crime-versus-crime homicide today.

REPORTER 2

Strangely enough, it was actually the *carjacker* who was found dead at the crime scene – by a man the two witnesses call “The Hatchet Killer”.

REPORTER 3

Why did he not pursue the two witnesses? Why did he not try to eradicate them, too? Perhaps he was hasty to make a getaway.

REPORTER 4

When it comes to violent criminals taking on

other violent criminals, the outcome can *never* be good. The worst part of it all is being a civilian caught right in the middle of the cross-fires. Of course, one safety tip is to avoid all such psychopaths and violent offenders altogether.

EXT. JAZZ BAR – EVENING

A caption reads: “1979”.

Hatchet is now sporting an all black outfit. The letter H is painted over his chest in white.

We're outside of a jazz bar. Much of it is still on fire.

Hatchet grabs a thug and slams his back against the wall.

HATCHET

Did *you* start this fire??

THUG

Yeah, I did. I did it to prove a point. You wanna do some good? There's *always* gonna be some jerk like me starting fires!

Hatchet throws the man down to the ground.

HATCHET

Let me show you why they call me Hatchet.

He raises the hatchet.

HATCHET

What do you think *now*? Huh? Still wanna be a criminal?

THUG

(*smugly*) You ain't prepared to use that thing.

HATCHET

Don't. Try me.

INT. NEWS REPORT – FULL-SCREEN VIEW

REPORTER 4

Another three arsonists caught, and left for the police. An officer who happened to be patrolling the area around that time is now in agreement that Hatchet is a man working *on* the side of the law, against the side of crime. Of course, there are *many* others, who would tend to disagree.

FADE BACK TO:

INT. PENNSYLVANIA STREET – NIGHT

CLOSE ANGLE on Hatchet's face:
present day, age 64.

He murmurs to himself a little as he returns his mind to the present-day.

He sags his head, then sighs, still weary.

FADE TO:

BLACK.

Finally, things are calm and silent again. With the journey re-lived, he moves on, walking aimlessly down the street.

FADE TO:

EXT. BAR – BACKSIDE – NIGHT

Mr. Red is standing up, talking, to ten of his cultists.

MR. RED

Now, as we all now, the Color Red Cult is . . . well, it's *more important* than just any old cult. You don't have to *pay* to get in. You don't even really have to *donate*.

The other cultists chuckle.

MR. RED

It just sucks having nothing more for a house, a base of operations, than standing around at *bars*. What we need is more money. And fast.

CULTIST 5

Well – you know how it is – it all takes time.

MR. RED

Yes . . . but with some patience, and some perseverance, and the color red, we will all prevail!

He laughs.

MR. RED

In the Chinese Zodiac, Hatchet is a Rat. People don't like *rats*. But I'm a Dog. Dog is Man's best friend!

(to his followers)

What does that say about myself, and Hatchet – the dog, and the rat?

CULTIST 5

I'm an Ophiuchus! The – the 13th Zodiac sign?

MR. RED

Inside. Let's start drawing up plans.

INT. BAR – EMPTY BACK ROOM – SOON

The ten cultists, and Mr. Red, get themselves set up inside an otherwise empty back room.

MR. RED

Chaos . . . the word “chaos” . . . what *is* the chaos theory? I think it's the theory that chaos wins! There *is* no true “order”! You try to take a survey . . . you try to measure what you know . . . and you always end up getting something wrong. Nothing can capture the full hundred percent of all the factors; nothing can encompass *everything*.

(sigh)

Even then! Even then! So what, if we DO have order? Think to a bigger scale, think across millions of years, and we used to be cavemen! Cavemen living in caves and hunting animals – and what was the order in THAT? The order to US is still the order of animals – increasingly intelligent animals, but animals nonetheless.

CULTIST 1

You are really fucking stupid sometimes, you know that?

Mr. Red sighs.

MR. RED

See? Even *that* is chaos. The disorganization, when six and a half billion human beings all have free will and can wander around the world at once.

Cultist 1 shakes his head, leaving the scene.

Mr. Red walks up to a chessboard on a table, with all the pieces neatly arranged to start a chess game.

MR. RED

See this? A normal chess game: the pieces all set up, the way they *should* be.

Then, he begins to randomly, quickly, without order, move the different pieces around, rearranging the chess board.

MR. RED

And *now* what?? Now it's more disorganized. More chaotic. Can chess go on like this?!

CULTIST 2

Mr. Red?

Mr. Red turns to glare at him.

CULTIST 2

Or . . . or do you prefer Dougahls –

MR. RED

Mr. Red will be fine. What's your – question?

CULTIST 1

. . . What *are* you accomplishing? Cause all *I* see is just you moving around a bunch of pieces of plastic.

Mr. Red, after a few seconds of silence, sighs.

MR. RED

It's time to focus our work on tracking down Hatchet. Only *then* can we say the Color Red Cult really did something significant. Unfortunately, this Hatchet is a most . . . formidable foe.

(*glaring*)

But I'll have his soul.

He starts pacing around as he talks.

MR. RED

Okay. I've got it. A three-step plan. Ready?
... Step One: get \$10,000.

CULTIST 2

Pff. You and everyone else, pal!

MR. RED

Step Two. Offer this money to the public –
in the form of a *cash reward*.

CULTIST 2

... Reward?

MR. RED

A reward for anyone who would provide information
that could lead to the downfall of Hatchet. \$10,000.

CULTIST 3

... No. I don't know. I mean, everyone's
heard of some other *scam*. No one's gonna
actually want to *take the time* for this – you
know? Only a dumbass.

MR. RED

Scam? What do you mean? It will be
real money ... remember Step One?

CULTIST 4

“Get ten thousand dollars”. Well, *how*?
That's not just some simple *thing*.

MR. RED

(*snapping his fingers*) Right! I like your thinking.
Step One, therefore, is divided into three sub-
steps: three different bank robberies, going on
at exactly the same time. Altogether, the three
robberies will earn us \$10,000.

CULTIST 4

... Okay.

MR. RED

You don't believe me, when I say people will
go mad? You'll see. You'll see how everyone
has the inner animal, the inner psycho.

CULTIST 6

Hey, hey, no need to sound so *down*.

CULTIST 7

The three operations in Virginia, that part was pretty *hard*.

CULTIST 8

But we did it!

CULTIST 7

We *did* it, yeah, but still. Three bank robberies, at *once*? Can we really take on such a challenge?

Mr. Red smiles.

MR. RED

Of course we can!

EXT. BANK – MORNING TIME

A red car pulls up, and stops. Seven of Mr. Red's cultists step out, and walk up to the bank.

EXT. SECOND BANK – SOON

A black car pulls up, and stops. Seven more of Mr. Red's cultists step out.

EXT. THIRD BANK – SOON

A blue car pulls up, and stops. Seven more of Mr. Red's cultists step out.

CULTIST 1

We're in a *cult*!

CULTIST 2

We're in a *cult*.

Ch-chhk! We hear the sound of weapons being cocked.

EXT. BANK 1 – SOON

The sirens and alarms are all blaring at full volume. The men are all running out of the bank, each carrying separate

pillowcases full of money.

The red car swerves into the scene to get them – and so does a second getaway car. The robbers all run and run to get into the two cars.

EXT. BANK 2 – SOON

The entire gang is walking quickly, away from the bank, to the getaway car that's supposed to be showing up; one cultist is in the back of the group, facing the bank, holding two pistols toward it constantly as he walks backwards.

CULTIST 1

Yyyyep, he should have arrived by now.

CULTIST 2

This is *not* looking good.

CULTIST 1

You're *right*, this is *not* looking good.

CULTIST 3

Oh, shut the Hell up!

Errrrk! The two getaway cars swerve into view – already being trailed by a cop car, with the sirens fully blaring!

CULTIST 1

Trouble.

CULTIST 3

(bolting like lightning)

MOVE! MOVE! MOVE!

They run to make some kind of exit.

EXT. BANK 3 – JUST THEN

CULTIST 1

WHY DO YOU INSIST we're fine?!

CULTIST 2

Because, nimrod! The police are too busy and preoccupied with the *other* two robberies,

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there will be far fewer left to come for *us*.

CULTIST 1

(*glaring at him*)

Don't be so sure about that, man. *Don't* be.

CULTIST 2

Wow, you need to relax and loosen up.

EXT. STREETWAY

The two getaway cars from the second bank robbery, now out on the open road, are still trying to get away.

One of the two finally stops, and pulls over.

The police car puts all of his focus onto this car.
Pulls him over.

But the other of the two – he's now taking off, against a red light. And getting away.

The officer in the nearby cop car starts to gas it – then stops. Realizes it's best, for the moment, to just remain here.

OFFICER'S VOICE

(*into radio*) Yeah, we got a visual on him, headed south-bound down Cunnill Ave.

EXT. NEW BAR – BACK ROOM – NIGHT

Men in the Color Red Cult dump out pillowcases full of money.

CULTIST 1

WHOOOOOO!! Whooooo,
hoo, hoo, hoo, hooooo!

CULTIST 2

Like a kid on Christmas morning, ain't you?

CULTIST 3

Boys, it is *Halloween night!*

CULTIST 4

And this is the candy.

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MR. RED
GENTLEMEN!!!

They all turn toward him.

MR. RED
Three bank robbery operations. All three
were successful. But the getaways . . .
all six getaway cars . . . five got out,
but ONE is down!!

CULTIST 1
Ooooooh. Marcus.

CULTIST 2
Even *told* him, don't be speeding, man.

CULTIST 3
Speeding's just gonna get you caught.

CULTIST 4
Ohh . . . pshhh! Don't bullshit me!

CULTIST 5
You liar. "Bullshit artist".

CULTIST 6
Ohhhhh, man . . . my stomach is
killing me . . . feels like a *bee* sting . . .

MR. RED
All right. So . . . you can't . . . really make an
omelet without breaking a few eggs. So, we
lost one car. We lost a few faces here, gentlemen.
Let's at *least* be respectful for one *second* and
remember them.

A good 7, 8 seconds of uninterrupted
silence and concentration.

MR. RED
But, the rest of us are still here . . . therefore,
what are we?

ALL CULTISTS
STRONGER!!!

MR. RED
And?

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ALL CULTISTS
MORE POWERFUL!!!

MR. RED

Not *too* loud, now, not *too* loud. But.
You see. You see. We were supposed
to have \$10,000 by now. \$10,000!
And NOW – now, thanks to Number 17 –
now we're down to just 9,000.

He scoffs.

MR. RED

Well, then. For good luck, let's make it
a *three*-part plan to make another thousand
dollars. Let's think of three crimes. Hmm.
Grand theft auto wallet robbery. Liquor
store robbery. TRAIN robbery! Okay.
Any volunteers?

Everyone raises their hand.

MR. RED

Your homework for the night is . . .
come back to me with \$1,000.
Any way you have to get it.

FADE TO:

Soon – as he remains alone in his
chair, the rest of the men gone.

There is only one cultist left,
who didn't go with them.

MR. RED

What's wrong? Are you tired, or something?
Not going out with them yet?

NUMBER 21

(*sigh*) I just . . . I don't know. I don't think
I wanna go out there tonight.

MR. RED

Okay, then.

NUMBER 21

To be quite honest . . . I suspect

they won't *all* come back.

INT. CITY STREETS – MIDNIGHT

Two cultists from the Color Red Cult sit, perched, on opposite sides of the street – waiting for the next prey to walk by.

A green car passes by.

The two cultists bolt forward, each approaching the car from opposite sides.

NUMBER 6

Gimme your money! Now!

NUMBER 15

All the money you got!

All the money you got!

BRIGHT WHITE SPOTLIGHTS

shine on the scene.

The two cultists look away, at first. Then they see who is shining the light.

The cops. Closing in again.

INT. LIQUOR STORE – SOON

SECURITY CAM'S POV of the man behind the counter.

Two Color Red Cultists are standing behind the counter with him, dancing around.

NUMBERS 4 & 8

Haaaaaappy biiiiiiirthday tooooo yooooou!

Haaaaaappy biiiiiiirthday tooooo yooooou!

Haaaaaappy biiiiiiirthday Mir ehh uhh mm hmmm

. . . Haaaaaappy biiiiiiirthday tooooo yooooou!

CASHIER

W-what do you want? W-what do you want?

Please just tell me! I'm scared!

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NUMBER 4

Look, man, we just want the *money*, and we'll be *gone!* That's it! Just a quick n' easy cash withdrawal of \$400!

NUMBER 8

We *promise*, we're not gonna beat you up!

CASHIER

P-please – just – just take it and run!

CUT TO – soon – Number 4 opens the door to the outside.

Where two police officers are already waiting. Several cop cars, with sirens fully blaring, are parked in the distance.

SHERIFF

Hey there! Goin' to jail?

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN – SOON

Three Color Red Cultists are walking down the subway train, playing guitars.

NUMBER 3

We're the Anti-Hatchet Band . . .
yeah, the Anti-Hatchet Band . . .
ohh, the Anti-Hatchet Band . . .
whoa-ohhh, oh!

NUMBER 4

Now accepting monetary donations.

CUT TO – soon – in the next boxcar over –

Number 5 bolts into the subway,
holding up a knife.

NUMBER 5

Money! Money! Money! I want \$500 now!

People gasp. Some crouch down in fear.

CROWD PERSON 1

Ohhhh, no.

CROWD PERSON 2

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Doesn't look good.

ONE SUBWAY GUY
Hey, pal!

Number 5 turns to look.

Then, just as quickly as he does so, the
one random guy slams his palm just above
Number 5's right eye.

He staggers back, and drops the knife accidentally.

CUT TO – the other two cultists, still waiting
in the subway's next cart over. They're
waiting impatiently, tapping their feet.

BACK TO Number 5 – crouching down
on the ground, getting the knife back again.

A security guard grabs him, and quickly
locks him into a grab that he can't get out of.

He gives it several seconds.

Number 5 passes out.

The security guard lets go.

CUT BACK TO Numbers 3 and 4 – as the
subway doors open, and the guard approaches
them.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey there. Your friend here's under arrest – or at
least he *will* be by the time the cops get here. And,
they're on their way. So, basically, all three of you
are under arrest.

FADE TO:

INT. MR. RED'S HIDEOUT – EARLY MORNING

Mr. Red's base of operations – but at
7:30 a.m. A caption tells us the time.

Three cultists come back.

CULTIST 1

We lost a *lot* more of us, man.

CULTIST 2

Those damn cops is *closing in*. Tight.

CULTIST 3

They were *not* playin' around tonight.

Mr. Red growls.

MR. RED

Rrrr . . . rrrrrrr . . . HATCHET!! He's doing this to us again!! I've told you all before how he orchestrates these devious plots –

CULTIST 1

Actually . . . umm . . . we're convinced it wasn't even him.

CULTIST 2

Just the po-po on this one.

MR. RED

What? . . . Well, look, did you guys get *any* money, at all, whatsoever? Because thank God I kept the rest of the 9,000 with me and Number 21 here.

CULTIST 3

Oh, yeah. We got some money, all right. But . . . but . . . man. Now I don't even *want* it the way I did last night.

MR. RED

Yes, it is upsetting to see our own brethren falling. And they just keep dropping, more and more, because of Hatchet. But that ends now. How much did you get??

CULTIST 3

Uhh . . . well . . . we got the thousand *and a half*. Which was our starting goal – kind of – but . . . *not really*.

Mr. Red closes his eyes, and remains silent for several seconds.

MR. RED

Then we post the reward money notice *today*.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA STREETS

Mr. Red attaches a red posted notice
on the wall.

Then stops, to look it up and down, reading it.

“POSTED NOTICE”

“REWARD MONEY: \$10,000”

“For anyone who can provide information
regarding the outlaw vigilante HATCHET”

Two black-and-white photos are attached:
Hatchet's mug shots, from jail.

“Guilty of too many crimes to list here;
please provide any information you have
to Mr. Red:

“(202) 555-0961”

INT. PENNSYLVANIA STREETS – MORNING TIME

Mr. Red walks around with a few of his cultists.

MR. RED

See, my students? This is Day One. I've put up
the notice, but nobody has noticed it yet. BUT . . .
but, wait until Day Two – and then, Day *Three* –
and the suggestions will sink in farther.

He starts giggling maniacally.

MR. RED

And *this* was Step Three of the great plan all
along, my students. Step One, we *got* the money.
Step Two, we put up the reward notice. Now,
Step Three . . . just watch as the human population
descends into chaos.

He remains still for several seconds.

MR. RED

But, we still have more work to do. A *lot* more work.
This is only Day One of Three.

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He turns the other way and walks off.

PAN AWAY, as we FADE TO:

EXT. BAR – BACK AREA – MORNING

Many different cultists are busy talking
to each other.

CULTIST 1

I've been getting reaaaal paranoid about
this whole police crackdown thing, man!

CULTIST 2

(*shivering*) Yeah! They've been taking down
more and more of us Color Red folks!
That's so *corrupt* . . .

CULTIST 1

And any time I hear someone say the word
"red", I start getting real panicked.

CULTIST 3

I don't know, I mean, I was thinking about it
today. Does it look like I'm trying to make a
statement? Like I'm trying to say I'm with the
Bloods gang? . . . Cause, I'm not.

CULTIST 4

Oh, I thought that too, once! I was walking
around and it suddenly hit me, damn, it *really*
looks like I'm trying to say I'm *in* with the Bloods.
And I'm *never* actually trying to say that!

CULTIST 5

I don't even *like* to listen to loud music anymore.

CULTIST 6

Really?

CULTIST 5

It's just – does it *need* to be so loud?

CULTIST 7

(*into a telephone*)

Uhhh . . . yeah . . . I . . . I will.
I'll – I'll call you a little later.
When I can. All right?

...
Uhh – o-okay.

...
L-love you too.

...
A-all right. Love you too. Night.
(*hangs up*)

CULTIST 8
I don't know, man, I didn't even used to
be like this.

CULTIST 9
How so?

CULTIST 8
I never used to just “socialize” like this!
I don't know how to explain it . . .

CULTIST 10
Hey, who you think he's on the phone with?

CULTIST 11
Lucy?

CULTIST 10
Or, you think it's something *else* going on?

CULTIST 11
Nahhh, nah. It's Lucy.

CULTIST 10
. . . You sure?

CULTIST 11
Pretty sure.

CULTIST 12
It was my first time in my *life* actually
hooking up with an – an *older lady* . . .

CULTIST 13
Worrdd?
(*high-fives #12*) They're the best.

CULTIST 12
I mean, prior to that, I had just been
joking around about it . . . and now
. . . now I just can't . . . whoo!

CULTIST 13

Yeah, your first time with an older lady will
do that to you – make you all – fluttery.

CULTIST 14

(*pacing around in circles*)

Where can I get acid?

CULTIST 15

(*putting a hand on #14's shoulder*)

You need to slow down, pal.

MR. RED

(*walking into view*)

Ahhhh!! All this money, and riches, and *still*
our base of operations is this crummy old bar!

I thought I'd be *happy* with \$10,000!

CULTIST 1

“Crummy old bar”? Listen, Mr. Red, what
more could you *want*? The owners of the *bar*
just *let* us have this whole back area, as long
as we leave their business alone, I say this is
a pretty *fine* set-up, man.

MR. RED

Well, not forever. There's not enough
creative or artistic freedom here.

CULTIST 1

Oh, will ya shut up already about
the creative *freedom*? What, to paint
the walls red, man. I get it. Okay.

I get it. The color red.

Several seconds of awkward silence pass.

CULTIST 1

I mean, I was just *saying*.

Mr. Red positions his right hand like a gun,
which he aims at the cultist.

Pretends to shoot him.

MR. RED

But, don't worry. With the posted notices out, we wait for *them* to come to *us*. And someone or another *will*. This is only Day Two.

CULTIST 2

Yeah, like who, the Feds? The FBI?

MR. RED

(shaking his head) It's Hatchet who will be the villain. Hatchet who will be talked about. I've got nothing to fear! . . . You get what I'm saying?

INT. CITY STREETS – ACROSS THE DAY

We're moving down the road, with a row of stores on either side. Looking at one row face-on, we see people go about their usual business in barbershops, hobby shops, and other such places.

Mr. Red walks down the sidewalk, followed shortly by three cultists.

He stops in at a hobby shop.

INT. HOBBY SHOP – SOON

Mr. Red walks around the store.

For right now, he appears to be nothing more than some random guy, walking around indecisively.

CASHIER

(smiling, nodding his head) Morning, gentlemen. Looking for something?

MR. RED

Uhhh . . . you got any paper planes?

CASHIER

(pointing)

Paper planes? Yeah, we have some kits over that way.

A moment of silence.

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CASHIER

Heh heh. You fellows in a band?

MR. RED

Huh? Oh. Heh heh! *Trying* to be!

CUT TO – a hand hitting a model airplane kit onto the counter.

PULL BACK to reveal that it is Mr. Red.

MR. RED

I *should* feel all right. About the music, and all. But I don't know! Every day, I just get more and more concerned about that “Hatchet” guy!

CASHIER

Who?

CUT TO – pretty soon – as the two are immersed pretty deeply into a conversation.

CASHIER

Well, I *did* hear something about that, the other day. Some sort of *comment* that he made, recently, about . . . what was it? . . . that every time he turns on the radio, or the TV, he thinks it's talking about him?

MR. RED

Yes, it's very *concerning*, to see someone being that way. I mean, this “Hatchet” always seems to be so *paranoid* about things. *Paranoid* that people are just out to get him. Must be too much *drugs*, get what I'm saying?

CASHIER

Yeah, drugs'll do that to you.

MR. RED

Yeah! Yeah! Exactly! I mean, the guy has an open and outright history of marijuana abuse. Now, there are *lots* of studies that show a distinct correlation between marijuana use and paranoia.

A moment of silence.

MR. RED

Very concerning.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT – SOON

Mr. Red is talking to two cashiers.

MR. RED

Well, just think of it like this. Have *you* ever turned on the radio, and just *thought* everyone is talking about you?

CASHIER 1

Can't say that I have.

MR. RED

Exactly. So imagine walking around one day, and you hear a person say that!

(*scoffs*)

A very simple case, really, of too much *drugs* getting into his head. He sits there and smokes his *pot*, and then just starts *thinking* everything's turning against him. And there are *plenty* of studies to back up what I'm saying –

CASHIER 2

Heh heh, hey, you don't have to convince *me*. I've actually been the one saying Hatchet was a loose cannon for a *while* now. I've always thought that, ya know? . . . How, you can't *really* just have a guy try to kill “the bad guys” with a hatchet, and expect it to *stay* at that . . . only next logical point is, turning against *everyone*.

MR. RED

Huh. You got *that* right. He should be sent to *rehab*!

INT. BOOKSTORE – SOON

A caption reads: “DAY TWO”.

Mr. Red is holding two books in his hand, while talking to yet another cashier.

MR. RED

Well, see, this book I'm buying right now, kind of gives a good example. Of how someone could just be a normal person, then start smoking that *pot*, and just slowly start descending, and descending, and descending into *paranoia*. Quite frankly, I don't see why *anyone* would start in with pot!

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CULTIST 1

Well then why did *you* start smok-

MR. RED

(angrily, to Cultist 1)

Shh . . . that's not the issue!

(to the bookstore cashier)

Oh, and you know what *else* I heard? Just the other night, I was walking around in a movie theater, and I saw the guy again! And I'm *positive* I heard him say, "Man, some days I wish I could just use this hatchet on *everyone!*"

The bookstore cashier shudders.

BOOKSTORE CASHIER

That's . . . that's kind of creepy.

MR. RED

Right? "Use it on everyone!"

A few moments of silence.

MR. RED

(Siiiiiiiiigh) . . . well, have a good day!

He walks away.

The other cultists follow him.

INT. BOOKSTORE – OTHER PART – SOON

CULTIST 1

Hey. Dougahls.

No response.

CULTIST 1

Hey. Mr. Red.

MR. RED

(spinning around) Yes?

CULTIST 1

That one remark you said, from Hatchet, about "using it on everyone"?

MR. RED

Yeah?

CULTIST 1

Is that *really* what he said?

MR. RED

Well, it *sounds* like something he'd say.

CULTIST 1

Oh.

They walk out.

EXT. CHURCH – MIDDAY

A caption reads: "DAY THREE".

Without stepping inside the church, Mr. Red stands at a distance from it, talking to strangers as they pass by. The whole time, he is holding open a pamphlet, with a photograph of Hatchet's face attached, with the words "CITIZEN CONCERN".

A husband, wife, and son slow down while passing by.

HUSBAND

Hey, uhh, what *is* this, I guess, that you're all about?

MR. RED

Hmm? A mission of genuine concern, that's all: concern for my fellow citizen. Concern for my fellow *human beings*. Because we live in very dangerous, uncertain times, my friend. We live in times where people think it's *acceptable* for a Hatchet man to walk around.

WIFE

Hatchet? That guy's not so –

MR. RED

That guy, should not be allowed on the streets!
That's *my* whole point.

A few moments of silence.

MR. RED

I mean, sure, *one* minute he seems normal, *one* minute he seems fine. But then he smokes that *pot*. He gets into that *marijuana abuse*. And that makes him paranoid. So

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he starts thinking there's all these grand, terrible plots against him! I mean – with someone who smokes *pot*, you just never know – he might think you're one of the lizard-people!

INT. BAR – BACK ROOMS – NIGHT

Mr. Red slams a few books onto a table, then sits down in a chair.

The other cultists begin walking around the room in circles.

MR. RED

Okay. This is Day Three. I think by now we've done enough.
(*siiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiigh*)

Several moments of silence.

CULTIST 3

That sounds *kind* of sexual –

MR. RED

Money! If genuine concern alone doesn't finish the job, then the motivation for money will. Those posted notices . . . the \$10,000 we earned . . . watch how much the phone line will ring *now*.

He laughs again!

INT. CARNIVAL – NIGHT

Back to Chris Preston and Danny, walking around the carnival with a third youth, Jessica.

CHRIS

Miss Morales. I *swear*, I wouldn't just say all this, unless I really actually *had* smoked with Hatchet myself.

JESSICA

Heh heh. Yeah. I've smoked with some homeless folks a couple times. Sometimes they're really not so bad.

CHRIS

Yeah. In a way, he's just like us – just

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looking to get a little high!

They continue walking. A familiar crowd of friends and acquaintances surrounds them in the outdoor carnival.

A fourth person, Marty, walks up to them.

MARTY

Is it really true you smoked with Hatchet?

CHRIS

What? You heard?

MARTY

Yeah I heard! You know what they're saying about that guy?

CHRIS

Yeah! Ha ha!

MARTY

Yo, man. I *wouldn't* have, if I were you.

CHRIS

Huh?

MARTY

You don't want yourself being right next to that guy, with God knows how many *diseases*! And who knows, man!

CHRIS

Ohhhh, come on, you worry too much.

MARTY

Nah. You haven't heard what *I've* heard.

CHRIS

Will ya give the guy a break? He's completely homeless, completely broke. No money at all.

MARTY

Nah. Don't listen to that.

Another moment of awkward silence.

MARTY

If he tells you he's all broke, he's all broke, he's

homeless, no money – don’t listen to that lie. What *I* heard is, he’s connected to that . . . what was it called, Robert Manter Estate. Like . . . *Estate*. I’m hearing that he actually comes from this ultra-rich family, and he’s just trying to cover it all up.

JESSICA

Oh, yeah.

(*narrowing her eyes, in a paranoid way*)

“You guys all just want my money!!”

MARTY

(*laughing*) Yeah. “You’re all just *scheming* to take my money!!”

CUT TO – fairly soon – all four friends sitting on the ground, gathered together in a circle.

MARTY

I heard the word going around is, Hatchet has an outstanding warrant out for his arrest.

DANNY

Well yeah, that’s kind of *obvious!*
He probably always does.

MARTY

Yeah, but, the keyword here . . . umm . . . *yeah*. The cops are *not* just messing, playing around with this anymore. It’s getting more serious. They’re issuing some kind of reward money, for anyone who could be responsible for his capture, is what *I* heard.

CHRIS

(*offended*) What? Leave the guy alone, he’s trying to do some good!

JESSICA

Huh. Yeah. Do some good.

MARTY

Yeah. Exactly. You don’t see *me* walking around trying to “take it all into my own hands”, by, what? Just walking around *by himself*, talking to himself all night? Or, what, breaking and entering into a . . . man, who *knows* what the guy would do.

Jessica looks to her left.

To her right.

Back to her friends.

JESSICA

You know what, maybe, we should do . . . ?

MARTY

You thinking what I'm thinking?

JESSICA

Turn . . .

JESSICA & MARTY

Turn him in.

MARTY

Turn. Him. In.

CHRIS

What?? No way!

MARTY

It's been getting to me . . . I've been thinking about it.

We hear the sound of rumbling thunder.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA – NEAR BUS STOP – SOON

Two women are talking to a police officer.

WOMAN 1

We *saw* him, sitting here. Sitting *right* here, at this bus shelter, just *by himself!*

WOMAN 2

Completely by himself! And he just kept on mumbling to himself the whole time!

WOMAN 1

(scoff) Probably doesn't have a single thought in his head. Just off daydreaming.

OFFICER

All right. All right. But – did he make any threatening gestures or comments to you, personally?

WOMAN 2
Hmmm . . . well –

WOMAN 1
Well that's not *quite* the issue here. We saw
him sitting here, smoking *crack!*

WOMAN 2
Yeah! Right out in the open, at this bus shelter!

WOMAN 1
Or . . . or *maybe* he was smoking speed . . .

WOMAN 2
. . . yeah, well, *either way* is not too good, huh?

OFFICER
(*nodding his head*) All right. I understand.
But you're *convinced* it was one of those two?

The two women look at each other again.

WOMAN 1
. . . Wwwwell, maybe I don't quite have, like,
a plastic *evidence bag* that I could bring into
a courtroom and show . . . but . . . well, there
have been more people than just us, making
the same complaint.

WOMAN 2
This guy doesn't care *where* he is, he'll
just smoke his crack anywhere.

INT. RADIO BROADCASTING STUDIO – EVENING

The host of a political radio talk show is
on the air, and talking furiously.

RADIO HOST
Yeah, we're back on the air, here at 1030 AM Radio,
and now . . . now . . . this is making me furious. My
job, *as* a political talk show host, is to be talking about
politics, and now, piece by piece, people are starting
to lose track of the politics, and make it all more about
Hatchet, and now, a *little* bit, about this Mr. Red.

A long, exacerbated groan.

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RADIO HOST

Folks . . . folks . . . we should all just *give Hatchet a chance*. I have been on this radio show for more than 50 years, so I've seen the show of U.S. politics go on before even *he* came on. And *my* diagnosis is, he is a good-intentioned American hero. Some call him a *superhero*. Others, leave it at just hero. Or, perhaps, vigilante. But he is by no means a politician – and so I really don't understand how HATCHET becomes the center of discussions about POLITICS!

A moment of silence.

RADIO HOST

Now taking our next caller – this is Jill W. from Wyoming. Jill?

JILL

Yeah, you say people are *interrupting* your precious politics to talk about Mr. Red and Hatchet – well this *is* a political issue! Because what *has* Obama ever done to stop Hatchet? In all four years!

RADIO HOST

Now, now, granted, back in 08, 09, I was always more of a McCain guy myself.

JILL

Okay.

RADIO HOST

However, even *I* will say that our current President, Obama, was not the . . . not the SOURCE of the Hatchet problem . . . and neither was George W. Bush. Neither one is RESPONSIBLE for Hatchet – but every President, you know, inherits the wars, and the domestic social issues.

JILL

Yeah, okay, well, our current President, Obama, *inherited* this “Hatchet problem”, and . . . you know what, Hatchet is OLDER than the President! You ever think of that?

RADIO HOST

Well . . . anyway. Like I said, I've been doing radio for 50 years. So I've seen the days of Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Bush, Clinton, Bush, Obama . . . look, I've seen both red and blue Presidents come and go, so I can tell you, my honest belief of it is, there really *is* no relationship between Hatchet and the President. Just two different folks, doing

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their jobs.

JILL

Well, except, my point still stands! Obama is in office NOW. Is he gonna DO something about Hatchet, or not? Because if his Administration would put half as much energy into tracking down Hatchet as they do –

HOST

I'm sensing a lot of *anger* here.

JILL

Well . . . my point still stands.

HOST

What's Obama going to do to *put his foot down* and say “HEY! . . . You can't be Hatchet no more!”

JILL

Exactly! When will Washington *do* something about this man trying to play the role of a “superhero”?

RADIO HOST

. . . Hmm. Obama *did* comment on it, very briefly. I believe his official word went something like . . . “Oh, we trust the local law enforcement to do their jobs on the Hatchet situation, and to do so in a timely and orderly fashion” . . . something like that . . . I don't know, you know, just the usual speech.

JILL

(scoff) If this was gonna get done, it would be *getting done* by now. And it's *not*. So, my bottom line is, where the Hatchet issue stands, Obama is doing nothing about it.

RADIO HOST

Hatchet, himself, is *not* on the same party as Obama, however – keep that in mind. He's an unchanged Republican.

JILL

Yeah – which just makes your party look even *worse*.
(hangs up)

The radio host is silent for a second.

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RADIO HOST

Ouch, some hurtful words. I'm just guessing
Hatchet can't *hear* us.

A moment of silence.

RADIO HOST

(*in a very high-pitched voice*)
. . . *Can* he?

Another moment of silence.

RADIO HOST

Well, whatever. I understand what a bad personal
insult it is, to not only be classified a nutcase, a
whack-job, but a disgrace to one's own political
party of choice . . . and . . . ouch. Those moments
really *hurt*. But, Hatchet . . . wherever on Earth
you are, if you ever somehow hear this, you're
all right, guy – you've done your Hatchet routine
pretty well for these last four-something decades.

And to all the folks saying he's no better than
these Color Red creeps that have been popping
up . . . please. He's better than they are. He's not
the asshole here. He wants to be the hero, fighting
the war on crime. Fighting Mr. Red, the killer.

Another sigh.

RADIO HOST

Wow, and now *I'm* getting sidetracked from the
politics of it all! That lady caller just hung up angrily,
after dissing and insulting my Republican party!
Gotta get this back on track.

The host starts pressing some buttons on his equipment.

RADIO HOST

Our next caller, is one Daniel Wilmington, in Virginia
. . . Daniel?

DANIEL

Yeah, I just saw Hatchet, *earlier today*, this exact day,
at the grocery store where I work, here in Virginia!

RADIO HOST

Oh! Really?

DANIEL

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Yeah! I work here at the . . .

(*swallow*)

Uhh . . . at, the . . . well, y’know, the, the Food Titan, in northern Arlington. And just earlier today, I’ve seen him walking around right here in Arlington –

RADIO HOST

Now, wait. Now wait. What did he *look* like?

DANIEL

Brown coat, gray hair, you know, not all that hard to miss.

RADIO HOST

Was he wearing a hat?

DANIEL

No. No, he wasn’t. *So what?* How hard is *that* to do, take your hat off?

RADIO HOST

Well I’m just saying, it’s possible it’s not the same guy.

DANIEL

Oh, please, what are you *defending* him for? What, are you two *dating* now?

RADIO HOST

Look – do – do you wanna somehow relate this to U.S. politics, please? Before I take you off the air?

DANIEL

Uhhh, actually yeah, I’d like to say this. Our President, Obama, his “official comment” on Hatchet . . . oh, please. If Obama actually DID care about the Hatchet thing, he would actually talk about it for more than just ten seconds, enough to get everyone away. If he *cared*, he might actually *do* something!

RADIO HOST

But, I guess he’s not. And now we’re going to our next caller, a man by the name of Milkington Puss, in Virginia . . . errr . . . Milk?

MILKINGTON

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Hello! Have you ever gotten that strange, bizarre feeling, where you just turn on the radio, and it sounds like they're talking about *you*?

RADIO HOST

Heh heh. I'm only in the *radio* business. I've had those moments.

MILKINGTON

Because when I called your show, the name Milkington Puss was merely an alias, as my *real* name is in fact Mr. Red . . . and you are my *favorite talk show host!*

RADIO HOST

(*gulps, pulls on his collar*) Wow, really? A compliment? Heh heh, gosh, I don't even know what to do!

MILKINGTON

No? You're normally a man of politics. Right?

RADIO HOST

Well, hey. All politics aside, for just one second. Folks, who are listening to this show right now – you see, we usually have this *screening process*, before a caller can actually get onto the show. It basically means that people can't just call and get on, right away, in one second – they actually have to go through a few questions first. . . . Yeah. Little *exclusive insider knowledge* there. . . . Umm . . . so, I have to wonder just what Mr. Red said, to those few questions in the screening.

MILKINGTON

Oh, you know. I lied. I bullshitted them. I said I wanted to talk about Obama's role in the capital punishment issue. I called him a hypocrite on the capital punishment front – and on foreign affairs. I said I wanna stress the need to re-structure the Social Security program. And I don't really *care* about these things.

RADIO HOST

Wow. So, then, I'm *live*, with Mr. Red.

MILKINGTON

In the flesh.

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RADIO HOST

And why are you calling me?

MILKINGTON

I have a question for you. Have you ever,
in your life, wanted to kill someone?

RADIO HOST

What? What kind of question is that? Of course not!

MILKINGTON

Oh, come, now. Tell me the truth. In your
lifetime . . . haven't you EVER wanted to
just . . . kill someone? Someone that was
picking on you too much? Someone that
was hurting you?

RADIO HOST

Listen – I'm just here to talk about U.S. politics. Okay?

MILKINGTON

But U.S. politics all revolves around killing.

RADIO HOST

What?

MILKINGTON

You heard me. U.S. politics all revolves around
killing. It's true! You know how many millions
of innocent natives were killed, so that Washington
could be built on a basis of flesh, blood, and killing?
And here you are, on the radio, talking about politics.
The politics of blood.

RADIO HOST

Listen – that was in the past. Those
natives were killed over 200 years ago.
The people that –

MILKINGTON

Still, you have to admit: Washington, *today*, is
in power, based on the outcome of killing.

RADIO HOST

Well . . . *I* never killed any natives to get *my* job.

MILKINGTON

Now I'll repeat my earlier question. Have you –
or have you not – ever wanted to kill someone?

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RADIO HOST

Well I sure feel like killing *you* right now!

MILKINGTON

Good answer!

Milkington laughs, over the radio.

The host swallows again.

RADIO HOST

Why, Mr. Red? Why do you want to kill?

MILKINGTON

Why? Because I got sick and tired of being trampled on, that's why. Sick and tired of the fact that I could never even go out to a movie, or get some fast-food, without somebody screaming at me, torturing me, with their insults, their words. I got real sick of people asking me, why am I here? Why am I buying food, when nobody wants me around? And being told that nobody wants me around – ever since I was a little kid – is the reason I grew up to kill.

The radio host swallows.

RADIO HOST

I don't suppose killing *me* is part of your agenda.

MILKINGTON

It *is*! It *is* part of my agenda! I *do* plan on killing you!!

Now shaking, the radio host pulls on his shirt.

RADIO HOST

They'll find you, you sick son of a bitch!

MILKINGTON

That's Mr. Red to you.

RADIO HOST

Mr. ED?

MILKINGTON

What? No! . . . NO!

I am ***not*** Mr. Ed!!

RADIO HOST

Uhh – well hey, take it easy, I –

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MILKINGTON

Mr. Ed is a talking HORSE! I am a PERSON!

RADIO HOST

Wow, jeez, didn't realize I'd hit such a sensitive spot.

MILKINGTON

Well now you doooooooo.

Mr. Red hangs up.

INT. ORDINARY SUBURBAN HOUSE – JUST THEN

Two random young folks are laying around, listening to the radio.

RADIO HOST

Folks, what the (*cha-ching!*) was that?

YOUNG PERSON 1

Yo, turn that shit off.

RADIO HOST

Never quite had that happen before . . .

And the radio goes off.

INT. MR. RED'S BAR HIDEOUT – NIGHT

Mr. Red is sitting in a chair, with his veins becoming visible in his anger.

MR. RED

That just makes me MAD! That people can just go around and say, oh, he's like Mr. Ed, he's like Mr. Ed!! I am NOT –

CULTIST 1

It's all right, it's all right. Look, just chill out.

CULTIST 2

It's not even worth it.

Mr. Red sighs.

MR. RED

Someone fetch me three small alcoholic drinks.

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CULTIST 1

You got it.

INT. CITY – STREETWAY – NIGHT

Two police detectives are standing upright, leaning against a parked police car, talking to the sheriff.

DETECTIVE

“War journal”, he calls it. “2012 War journal”.

Yeah.

SHERIFF

Wow.

DETECTIVE

Always so “tormented”, so miserable.

SHERIFF

Yeah, I had encountered him *once* recently, in this D.C. area . . . at first, I was thinking, y’know, probably just another ordinary crackhead, y’know, looking for the next car, the next house, to steal money from. (*shrugs*) But then I learn it’s all a big “war on crime”?

A – a giant *plight* to do a Richard Nixon-type War on Criminals?

(*shakes his head*)

Hey, pal, that doesn’t sound very stable to *begin* with. And the aliens, the blue men, the time travel explanation *really* didn’t help!

DETECTIVE

(*shakes his head*)

Nuh-uh. I’m starting to believe that all his so-called psycho-babble about the aliens, the alien King, the *nasty encounter* he had with the bad guy aliens . . .

I’m starting to think it’s just another bullshit lie.

SHERIFF

What – he *doesn’t* believe he’s being hounded by blue men?

DETECTIVE

(*shaking his head*) No. He doesn’t actually believe one damn word of it. Always tries to pull these real tear-jerkers.

SHERIFF

Do you think it’s possible he’s sometimes not self-aware?

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DETECTIVE

Yeah, I've pondered that before . . .

SHERIFF

Because if he's Hatchet and Robert . . . if he's two people . . . does that mean he has multiple personality disorder? That when he's one, he has no memory of the other?

DETECTIVE

(nodding his head)

That's what's said in that book by his "best friend", Joseph Brownson.

SHERIFF

Uh-huh. Except?

DETECTIVE

Except Hatchet has been doing this for 42 years.

SHERIFF

And?

DETECTIVE

And it's only been within the last decade or so that newer evidence came up . . . and the *modern-day* belief has gone on since . . . that multiple personality disorder, really, doesn't actually exist.

SHERIFF

(shaking his head)

Mmm-mm.

DETECTIVE

So, he was a classified *multiple personality case* back then, in the 70s, a diagnosed paranoid schizo, a diagnosed case of *delusions*. But, by now, today, we realize there's no way he could have spent these 42 years *actually going* back and forth between the Jekyll and the Hyde faces, not aware. No. We're in 2012 now – he *must* have had enough time, by now, to find his one constant balance, his one constant self.

(shrugs)

Well, whatever, the war journals portray everything. Everything.

SHERIFF

Actual tears, can come only from a conscience.

(shaking his head)

But the very fact that he *keeps* staying Hatchet, is proof that there's no conscience in there. No actual *real* tears. It could be eye drops, that's not too hard. Really, even those words, "War on Crime" . . . how can we be convinced that *that's* what he's doing?

A moment of silence.

DETECTIVE

Now he's *falling in love* with a hooker.

SHERIFF

So, okay, what – he's been running the War on Crime since 1970. Well, by what definition? The war against "the bad guys" – the bad guys, as *his* opinion dictates?

DETECTIVE

Yeah. "The bad guys." What, just anyone he disagrees with?

SHERIFF

And who knows just who meets his criteria of "the bad guy".

In the distance, a couple are walking by.

The boyfriend suddenly shakes.

BOYFRIEND

You hear the stuff they're saying?

DETECTIVE

Well, at least it answers one question. The whole Mr. Red graffiti. I'm not stupid . . . when I saw that "Mr. Red Is Coming", I didn't forget it.

SHERIFF

Is it still up? Been cleaned off yet?

DETECTIVE

Who knows. I had to think, for the longest time, that Hatchet had put it there.

SHERIFF

What – that *he* would be Mr. Red?

DETECTIVE

(nodding his head)

Yep. It seems to fit that whole *multiple personality* – or, should I say, *dissociative identity* – disorder thing.

(shrugs)

Except, if that's just an outdated belief, and there *is* no back-and-forth memory loss going on . . . then, I guess the Mr. Red one really *wasn't* him.

SHERIFF

No. No. Don't discount the idea yet.

INT. CITY – STREETS – NEXT MORNING

People are still walking about, minding their daily business.

But now the patience in the air has worn thin – the tolerance has gone all the way to the end.

FEMALE RADIO VOICE

Uh, yeah, am I on the air?

MALE RADIO VOICE

Uhh, yes, you are – would you mind, please, turning down whatever you've got in the background?

FEMALE RADIO VOICE

Huh? Oh – sure. I just have the radio on.

MALE RADIO VOICE

Yeah, yeah. You call up a radio show, and you have the radio still on, *live*. But, please, it makes it difficult in our communication to each other.

FEMALE RADIO VOICE

Right. Sorry. Uhh – I'm just calling because I live in Sussex, Maryland, and I'm –

MALE RADIO VOICE

Did you say SUSSEX??

(a moment of silence)

I'm sorry, I'm being immature again. Go on?

FEMALE RADIO VOICE

Yyyyyeah, well, it's *not* such a joke to certain folks. Like myself. So first he was in D.C. for a while, and then we get reports on the news that he's in Virginia, and now Maryland?

MALE RADIO VOICE

Wait, wait – Maryland? Who said Maryland?

FEMALE RADIO VOICE

ME!! I did! I only *live* in Sussex County, and I've seen him walking down the road here!

MALE RADIO VOICE

Where, exactly?

FEMALE RADIO VOICE

What, “where, exactly”, I don't know, I'm just saying, I know it was him!

MALE RADIO VOICE

Was he wearing the brown coat, the hat?

FEMALE RADIO VOICE

No, he was wearing a red sweater!
 . . . And I'm not being sarcastic, either,
 he really was.

MALE RADIO VOICE

You know, it *might* not be the same guy.

FEMALE RADIO VOICE

No, no, *minus the hat and coat*, he was a 99% match.

MALE RADIO VOICE

99%, you say.

The sounds of the radio are over; Mr. Red moves into view, walking down the sidewalk, followed in a straight line by his Color Red Cultists.

MR. RED

What's strange is that the very same path as which my enemy has . . . I, sometimes, find some parallels to in mine own . . . you see, now *I* have to keep moving from place to place. Can't ever stay put now, once the action's all up and running. Cause then I would only be *thrown into a cage* again.
(shudders)

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I've gone from D.C., to Virginia . . . but still,
somehow, he's somewhere else . . . he moves,
then I follow.

NUMBER 21

So *now* what do we do?

MR. RED

Now, now that we're presented with this giant
obstacle, we break it down: *wherever* he is,
whichever miserable state, he'll start getting
worn thin, worn down. He'll have more factors
wearing him out than he'll be able to count.

Let alone handle.
(*nodding his head*)

NUMBER 21

We *still* haven't managed to *find* Hatchet.

MR. RED

Yeah, that really *sucks!* I really thought
we'd get him at that hospital in Virginia!
. . . But we'll still get him.

NUMBER 21

(*gulp*) I – I'm getting nervous. I mean –
the cops – they're not only closing in on
Hatchet, they're coming for us, too.

MR. RED

Noooo, no, no! Nonsense! *Hatchet*
is the one true villain. *I'll* be the hero
in this public image.

NUMBER 21

You saw for yourself how many cultists
we've been losing. Arrests made. Losses
to the cult – the cause.

MR. RED

The cause ain't over! Fine. Let them get
caught. The more of them do . . . the less
eyes on me.

NUMBER 21

What??

MR. RED

Think about it. If we lose ten cultists . . .

well, less of *me*, in the cops' radar. That'll buy me some time.

NUMBER 21

What?? You . . . you sick –

MR. RED

Hey. Hey. Relax. Come on. This is only *Mr. Red* you're talking to.

NUMBER 21

These are your own folks.
Your own Color Red men!

MR. RED

(shrugs) So a few goats had to be sacrificed along the way.

(laughs) The only part of the Bible I *do* believe in.

NUMBER 21

Mr. Red, you're going insane.

MR. RED

(laughs) You are way-heh-heeey late on that one!

He remains silent for a second.

MR. RED

What? It's not like I'm *killing* them. Just *letting* them get caught, for their own involvement in this cult.

NUMBER 21

And you? What about *you*?

MR. RED

They won't catch me till after it's too late.

CUT TO –

A far-away, distant shot of Mr. Red and Number 21 – with all the tall buildings of Virginia a silhouette against the dark night sky.

We remain here for a few seconds.

INT. BARBERSHOP

Three cultists are inside, handing pamphlets
to the barbers.

CULTIST 1

Well of *course* we're a *real* religion! I . . .
I mean . . . at least, our state of philosophy
is just that the color red can *enlighten*
your life, if twisted the *right* way. Through
good ways. But not these *bad* ways, like
bloodshed, from this Hatchet vigilante!

CUSTOMER 1

Ehhhhh . . . well . . . I mean, you know,
if there were *no* superheroes at *all* . . .

CULTIST 1

Well, hey. I don't hate on *all* the superheroes.
But *Hatchet*, man? *Hatchet*? Do we *need*
such violence? Do we *need* such bad things?

CUSTOMER 1

Hmm . . . well . . . well, actually, I think
that makes a lot of sense!

CULTIST 1

Heh heh.

CUT TO: later – after they're gone.

The barber tosses the pamphlet in the trash.

BARBER

How many times I gotta keep telling these
whack jobs, *no soliciting*, man. NO SOLICI-
TING. But they just keep on coming.

CUSTOMER 1

Yeah, I gotta say, enough is enough!

BARBER

And, I mean, that's just a *nice* way of
saying, please, please . . . you're weird,
and we're not buying your . . . product.
Whatever you're even trying to “sell”
or “market” or ohhh damn it, ohhhh man,
now I'm just getting a headache.

BARBER 2

No you're not. No you're not.

It's all right. Just relax. Chill.

FADE TO:

INT. STREETWAY – AERIAL ANGLE

The cultists move on down the street.

FADE TO:

INT. BARBERSHOP – LATER

Two barbers are sweeping up for the night.

One stops.

BARBER 1

No . . . he *was* right on *one* thing.
What he said about Hatchet.

BARBER 2

Yeah?

BARBER 1

Yeah. *Do* we really “need” to have Hatchet
around? Of course not. How long can we
all just *live* with . . . *knowing what he does*?
That fucking loser.

FADE TO: the next morning.

BARBER 1

No. I *do* just feel like calling it in. Filing a
police report on him. And maybe collecting
some of that *reward money* in the process.

BARBER 2

“Reward money”? There ain't any.

BARBER 1

Well, that's not what *I* heard.

He's silent for a few seconds.

BARBER 1

Well, I mean, I . . . I guess I just heard from
Mike last night, that . . . there was a whole
\$10,000 of a reward for him.

BARBER 2

Why?

BARBER 1

Why? Because he's got a *lot* of charges out on him, and he's got an outstanding warrant out for his arrest, is why. Had it around for God knows how long.

Barber 2 isn't sure.

BARBER 2

Hmm . . . I mean . . . I guess I haven't really *seen* Hatchet for myself . . .

BARBER 1

But, at least we can stay on high alert for *the future*. Whatever it is he tries to pull – we'll get him!

INT. PENNSYLVANIA – GROCERY STORE – SOON

Hatchet, still dressed in the full outfit, walks down the aisle of a grocery store.

He walks slowly, whistling a little.

He turns, and sees the sight.

Two employees, on full alert, completely ready for his tricks.

HATCHET

What?

Another moment of silence.

Hatchet goes back to looking for food to buy from the shelf.

He takes one bag of chips from the shelf.

Holds it to his ribs, with one arm.

. . . Turns to look back at the two employees.

HATCHET

What?

He finally looks down, toward his own feet.

HATCHET

Oh. Okay. All right. I get it.

He removes his brown coat.

HATCHET

Okay. *My brown coat* looks suspicious, huh??
Cause it looks like a big, giant coat you could
easily steal stuff with??

He drapes the coat over his shoulder. Now he's
down to wearing the gray shirt.

CUT TO – soon – as Hatchet starts moving a
shopping cart down another aisle, with the
brown coat kept in the cart.

EMPLOYEE 1

(a little loudly)

Oh, yeah, we have *no patience* for shoplifting.

EMPLOYEE 2

(equally loudly)

Nuh-uh. Not in *this* store.

Hatchet looks again. Another two employees.

EMPLOYEE 1

Shoplifters, I say, are prosecuted to the
fullest extent of the law.

Hatchet reaches into one pocket.

Fumbles around in it a little.

Pulls out a dollar bill.

EMPLOYEE 1

Oh, see, this is where he . . .

Hatchet looks again.

Everything freezes.

. . . And Hatchet walks on.

CUT TO –

Fairly soon – as Hatchet is racking up more cheap foods to get, on a limited budget.

He scratches an itch on his left leg,
with his right foot, a few times.

RANDOM PASSERBY
Oh, *see?* *See what I mean?*

Hatchet makes eye contact with the guy.

HATCHET
What? What do you want, man? I'm just
scratching an itch!

A moment of awkward silence.

HATCHET
What, so I have an itch on my left leg! That *sucks!*
So I go to scratch it. NOT scratching it ain't no
picnic! And, what, if I scratch it with my *hands*,
then you'll just complain then, too, won'tcha! And,
what, if I scratch an itch with my foot, then what,
what, what, what does it automatically say about
me? What's your great big complaint *this* time?

Another few moments of silence.

BACKGROUND VOICE 1
(*gasp*) This guy really *is* weird!

HATCHET
Even when I'm by myself! Even when I'm
completely alone, *by myself*, you won't fucking
leave me alone!

He drops all the items he's holding.

Then sighs.

HATCHET
See what you made me do.
(*shaking his head*)
It's *just* like that breakfast in the hotel.

He starts scooping up his own items.

The passerby walks away with his wife,

talking to her in a foreign language.

Hatchet gets everything back in his hands,
and throws it all back into the cart.

CUT TO – soon – as he waits in line.

Leans to the side, for a second, to look ahead
of the line.

Goes back into place.

CASHIER 1

But I don't know. If *that's* the guy . . .
then, I thought he was in Maryland?

CASHIER 2

Huh?

CASHIER 1

Well, I had heard, you know, on the radio this
morning, on that Earl Winston show, that they've
seen this guy, *eye witnesses*, in Maryland.

CASHIER 2

But *we're* here in Pennsylvania.

CASHIER 1

Well, that's what it had said – earlier today,
he was seen in Maryland.

CASHIER 2

So, what, he was there earlier, and he just
drove in, got in town to Pennsylvania *today*?

CASHIER 1

I don't know. I don't think I wanna just
call a radio show and get involved in it
myself. I don't know.

Hatchet nervously, shakily hands the cashier
his ten-dollar bill.

Looks away, waiting for a few seconds.

CASHIER 1

Sir?

He looks back. Smiles. Gets his change.

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HATCHET
Good night, now.

He takes his grocery bags and walks off.

CASHIER 1
He just said good *night*?

CASHIER 2
Good *night*? What's *he* thinking he's gonna get?

CASHIER 1
You think it's the same one?

CASHIER 2
I think he *is*. Just got in from Maryland.

CASHIER 1
But I don't know, I don't just wanna ask him,
either, and get this diseased freak all pissed off.
You heard him screaming at the one Japanese guy?

CASHIER 2
Yeah, "*Even when I'm completely by myself!*"

A moment of silence.

CASHIER 1
Wait. What? "*Even when I'm completely bi myself?*"

CASHIER 2
Those were his words!

CASHIER 1
He *said* that?

INT. PENNSYLVANIA – STREETWAY – SUNRISE

Mr. Red continues to walk down the road
with his cultists.

MR. RED
Okay. This is Day *Five*, so by *now*, people
have *got* to be going insane.

NUMBER 21
Look, man! Nobody has called your phone!
All right? You don't actually have anyone

calling you up, desperate for your reward!

A moment of silence.

Mr. Red clenches his teeth angrily.

NUMBER 21

Your “posted reward” notice got taken *down*.
Removed from the scene. So that kinda shows ya.

MR. RED

Doesn’t matter. The notice is down. But Hatchet –

NUMBER 21

Hatchet *what?*

Another moment of silence.

MR. RED

Hatchet can only be going downhill from here.

NUMBER 21

Meaning, *now* what?

MR. RED

Now we find Hatchet – wherever he got to –
and have the fight already.

NUMBER 21

Yeah, you’ve *talked* about it for long enough.

MR. RED

He’s a hard find, sometimes. But no matter.
Wherever he goes to – someone will see him.

Someone will talk about it.

(pointing down the road)

Quick – let’s find a TV at a bar or somewhere!

INT. ICE CREAM PLACE – SOON

Mr. Red and Number 21 sit down in a
chair, fixated on the wide-screen TV.

NEWS REPORTER

Hatchet was last seen entering a bar in
Pennsylvania.

MR. RED

Bingo.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY – SOON

Mr. Red speeds down the highway
on his red motorcycle.

REPORTER'S VOICE

Local residents have filed many *complaints*
about the threatening nature of his appearance.
Although it is difficult to *prove* harmful intent,
very few – if any – doubt it.

CLOSE ON Mr. Red – listening to a portable
radio while driving.

RADIO VOICE

Yeah, hi, I'm a big fan of the show, and I'm just
calling to contribute my *own* little two cents, that
no I'm *not* all right with this guy just walking in
places. I'm trying to go to the grocery store the
other day, you know, to get some food for the
house. And I see him, outside, as I'm on the way
in. I had to freeze, at first. Wait for him to pass by.
Be gone. And *then* I walked in with my kids.
But it is *not* a good feeling! It was *not* cool!

RADIO VOICE 2

Well can you *prove* he was thinking about *you*?

RADIO VOICE

Pff, okay, what, no, I can't *prove* it 100%,
but come on, man! I'm in there with my
two little kids! How do I know he's not just
gonna flip out and decide *they're* "the bad
guys" too, along with me? And *then* what?
And then out comes the hatchet?

Mr. Red starts laughing.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA – STREETS – SOON

The motorcycle continues to tear down
the road. Gradually, it comes to a stop.

Mr. Red hops off the vehicle.

INT. CITY ALLEYWAY – SOON

Mr. Red spray-paints more red paint
onto the alleyway wall.

“MR. RED”

CUT TO – soon – as he finishes the next
line of graffiti –

“IS LOOKING FOR HATCHET”

He spins around, and turns to the opposite wall.

And sprays a second red message on that one.

“07/02/12 MON 7PM”

He breathes, exhausted.

Then, he reads the message out loud,
mumbling, moving his lips a little.

MR. RED

7, 2, 12, Monday, 7 p.m. . . .
(*nodding his head*) Yep.

He walks away.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA STREETS – MORNING

Hatchet walks down the road, by himself.

Hands in his pockets, whistling a tune, he eats
and drinks the goodies he got from the store.

He continues walking.

HATCHET’S THOUGHTS

Hatchet . . . you have no friends.
No helpers.

. . . He sighs. He hadn’t wanted to remember
the depression again.

HATCHET’S THOUGHTS

Absolutely nobody looking out for you.
You started out alone – and that’s how
this is gonna end.

He walks by a street-corner outdoor newsstand.

Turns to look at the day's magazines
and newspapers, for a second.

Something catches his eye. He steps closer.

That paranoid feeling is building up again.
He snags one newspaper from the wall.
Looks closer at it.

There's a black-and-white drawing of him –
a political cartoon. A greatly exaggerated
caricature.

In the single-panel cartoon: Hatchet is holding an
enormous, oversized hatchet way up into the air.

Asking: "Why do you bad people keep unfairly
accusing me of being not-all-there?"

In the cartoon, he's talking to two random
folks, who appear scared and weirded out,
leaning away from him.

Above Hatchet's head: a thought balloon,
containing all kinds of crazy random images:
U.F.O.s, spirals, the word "cuckoo", a small
cuckoo bird coming out of a cuckoo clock,
and an alien-space-monster caricature of the
two normal folks he's talking to.

Underneath the one-panel cartoon is a caption:

"HATCHET, ON A GOOD DAY"

CLOSE ON Hatchet, the person, as
he shakes from what seems like
extreme cold.

BACK TO the cartoon. Whether this is all
in his head or not, he doesn't know.

An EXTREME CLOSE-UP of the comic strip's
name: "POLITICAL FIELD . . . by James Tasmun".

Hatchet slaps the newspaper against his own face.

Then throws it to the ground.

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HATCHET

What on Earth. What on Earth.

He turns to look at the man selling the magazines.

HATCHET

What are you trying to *do* to me??

He takes several steps closer.

HATCHET

(sweating profusely)

You selling cartoons with my face on em??

You think that's funny??

NEWSSTAND GUY

What? Sorry – I didn't hear you. *What?*

HATCHET

What, you make these yourself? In PhotoShop?

NEWSSTAND GUY

I don't understand you, pal.

HATCHET

What's going on here??

Hatchet is silent after that.

He wipes some sweat off his forehead.

Then turns away and walks down the sidewalk.

NEWSSTAND GUY

Hey, you wanna *pay* for that magazine that you just threw on the ground there, pal?

Hatchet holds up two middle fingers while continuing to walk.

NEWSSTAND GUY

(shrugging his shoulders)

What on Earth did *I* do?

CUT TO – soon – after Hatchet has gotten about half a minute's walk ahead.

CLOSE ON his face as his eyes open wider.

A loud, echoing sound comes down over the scene, starting from the sky and shooting down Hatchet's body.

He shakes again.

HATCHET
I can't be here.

CUT TO a farther-away aerial shot – from a few hundred feet up in the air.

We can see much of the city from here.

Hatchet is only an ant.

CLOSE ON his face – shaking, shivering, sweating.

HATCHET
Just someone tell me what on Earth is going on.

INT. CYBER-CAFÉ – LATER THAT DAY

Hatchet staggers through the cyber-café, and finds his way to a computer.

CUT TO – soon – as he slowly types on the keyboard.

OTHER PERSON
Oh, yeah, look at him. Just has to *jump onto the computer* like a crackhead.

Hatchet stops, rolls his eyes, shakes his head, and carries on with his business.

CUT TO – soon – as he pulls up a page.

“Hatchet? Mr. Red wants to kill Hatchet.”

Hatchet freezes.

CLOSE ON the words on the screen.

“Alleyway graffiti.”

“Just caught it this morning on my way to work . . .”

Hatchet pulls up the photos. The graffiti.

He shudders.

But keeps looking.

(He imagines people's voices to accompany the words he reads.)

RANDOM LADY'S VOICE

"Looks like Pennsylvania is becoming a 'weird state', too. We're getting some of our *own* red-colored cult members now as well! Looks like you guys in Virginia are not alone! Talk to you later, honey!"

Hatchet nods his head.

HATCHET

Fine. Fine. He wants it. He can have it.

He fixes his brown hat.

Stands up, and gets ready to leave.

INT. GAS STATION – SOON

HATCHET

Uhhh . . . I'd like to buy a map?
And also ask for directions, a little.

CUT TO – soon –

INT. PENNSYLVANIA – STREETS

Hatchet, holding the map with both hands,
walks on down the street.

HATCHET

There. *There.*

He looks up from the map.

And sees it. The alleyway.

He walks closer.

Inside the alleyway, he walks around,
and sees the sight for himself.

SECOND HOMELESS MAN

Hey.

Hatchet turns to look.

SECOND HOMELESS MAN

It's not good to just walk in here
dressin' up like that Hatchet guy.

HATCHET

Oh? . . . But . . . but I *am* Hatchet.

SECOND HOMELESS MAN

Look, pal. I've got connections to *every* branch
. . . and, believe me, I mean *eeeeeevery* branch
. . . of both the military and government. Oh, yeah!
Yeah. Yeah. I could call up the mayor of New York,
if I wanted to, and get him to change the laws.
If I really wanted to. Yeah.

Hatchet, without moving, darts his eyes away.

Then, slowly, back to this new man.

SECOND HOMELESS MAN

(*holding up his beer bottle*)

Huhhhh, huh-huh, I haven't even started in with
these stories yet. You know, I used to be a *real*
big, important man in this country. Once upon
a time. Mm-hmm.

Hatchet doesn't talk, but continues to feel uncomfortable.

SECOND HOMELESS MAN

I mean, *then* the government tried to *bust* me.
Cause they knew I was such an expert hacker,
they just couldn't contain me. COULDN'T
CONTAIN ME! Pfwwhoooo! Heh heh. They
were the days.

Hatchet starts to slowly turn away.

SECOND HOMELESS MAN

(*motioning him back in*)

THIS ONE TIME, they tried to throw me in prison!
Tried to throw me in prison! *Right?* . . . For some-
thing I didn't even *do!* Some . . . some "grand
larceny deluxe" or something . . . I . . . I don't know,
it's beside the point, the point is, we get about half-

way there, the bus ride to the prison, and *already*.
(slaps his kneecaps)
Already, I had made the phone call. And got the
whole prison order *canceled*.
(throws his hands up into the air)
 What else can I say! Huh! I mean, am
 I right? . . . AM I RIGHT??

Hatchet slowly turns away again, now feeling
 more awkward than ever.

As weird as Hatchet is . . . there's something
 different about seeing someone *else* being weird.

SECOND HOMELESS MAN
 BUT ALREADY!! . . . Already, the full moon is
 almost out. Almost out. And when the full moon
 goes out I swear I become a *werewolf!* And I can
 just *eat* all these people whole, then! But it's not
 what I want. No. It's not what I want

HATCHET
(shrugs, chuckling) Heh, well hey, ya know, who
 am I to judge . . .

SECOND HOMELESS MAN
 REAL-LIFE werewolf! You know how you can
 tell? Know how you can tell??
 . . . Because it's in the EYES. That's how. If
 you have the green . . .
 . . . oh, wait, let me see your eyes?

Hatchet starts getting uncomfortable again.

HATCHET
 Yyyy-uh, well, I don't know . . . I-I'm
 kind of late for this "dinner" thing . . .

SECOND HOMELESS MAN
I just want to see it.
 I just want to see it.

Hatchet, still ridden with anxiety, stays still,
 and lets the other homeless man come closer.

Holds his breath for five seconds.

HATCHET
 . . . Uh.

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SECOND HOMELESS MAN
Ohhhh, no, you're actually *not* the werewolf!

HATCHET
Heh?

SECOND HOMELESS MAN
It's only when I have alcohol that I can really transform, though. Only in the longest hour of the drunken haze.

He starts drinking from the bottle again, then hands it to Hatchet.

SECOND HOMELESS MAN
Want some?

Now we LOOK AWAY – toward the graffiti.

07/02 MON 7PM

FADE TO:

INT. BAR – NEXT MORNING

CLOSE ON a calendar on the wall.

Monday, July 2nd. Someone draws a black X over the present date.

CLOSE ON a clock up on the wall. 9:15 a.m.

FADE TO: 12:00 noon.

FADE TO: 3:30.

FADE TO: 5:00.

INT. ALLEYWAY

Hatchet, lying asleep on the ground, wakes up.

HATCHET
Where 'm I.

FIRST-PERSON POV, looking up directly at the Sun.

CLOSE ON Hatchet's face. It's too much – his eyes start tearing up. He shields himself from the Sun with one hand.

He stands up. Starts walking around.

FADE TO:

Hatchet, walking down the sidewalk.

Then, turning around and walking right back – back to the alleyway.

He looks at the graffiti one more time.

Now he notices something new!

“MR. RED” on one wall.

A new arrow points from the D toward a new graffiti message:

“IS A FAGGOT AND SUCKS MAD DICK”

Hatchet looks on.

An arrow points from the K at the end of that message, into another new red posted notice:

“\$10,000 REWARD FOR ANYONE WHO CAN GIVE ME THE PERSON WHO WROTE THAT”

“Not Lying At All, Straight-Up Cash”

Hatchet's lips move a little as he reads the notice.

Behind him, at a far distance, Mr. Red walks into view.

MR. RED

Well, well, well. I've been looking *everywhere* for you!

Hatchet still says nothing.
He grabs for his heart.

243

Spins around to face Mr. Red.

MR. RED

It's been a while, hasn't it?

HATCHET

You bastard.

MR. RED

Now, now. I'm not such a *villain*.
(*smirking*) I'm not the one holding a
hatchet.

HATCHET

(*raising his weapon*)

Why, you wanna *wear* it?

MR. RED

Ohhh. A threat, huh?

HATCHET

This would make a nice *forehead*-band.

MR. RED

Oh, come on, you're either gonna
kill me right now or you're not.

Hatchet hesitates. Stays frozen,
with his weapon up in the air.

Mr. Red makes eye contact with him again.

Hatchet stays frozen . . .

. . . Mr. Red turns his head a little to the right,
but still maintains eye contact.

MR. RED

What do you wanna do *now*?
Prove them all right? And *kill* me?

HATCHET

I *should*.

MR. RED

So, you *do*, then.

A moment of silence.

244

Hatchet thinks about it.

He sets the weapon back down
to his side, for now.

MR. RED

We have reached a stalemate.

HATCHET

Like Hell we have!

MR. RED

Well, it *must* be that . . . at least a – a
temporary ceasefire, right? Remember,
you and I are the nuclear warheads.

The two begin to circle each other while walking.

HATCHET

It's been 10 years.

MR. RED

I remember.

HATCHET

I shoulda killed you when we first met.

MR. RED

But you *didn't*. Keyword there. You let me *live*.

HATCHET

You can't win.

MR. RED

Oh? Why not? When my goal is to watch you
topple, watch you fall, then how can I *not* win?
I've watched you deteriorate.

HATCHET

You *know* you won't win.

MR. RED

Hatchet, let me remind you of three
important little things.

(stepping closer)

Number One, *you* are the ax-wielding
maniac with the hatchet. You basically
are wearing a straitjacket right now.

245

Hatchet becomes further worn down.

MR. RED

(circling around Hatchet)

Number Two – we’re meeting when *I* am
at the top of my game . . . my peak . . .
and you are at your worst.

He starts laughing. Hatchet moves backward,
and leans against a dumpster. Seems to have
a little difficulty standing up.

MR. RED

And NEED I remind you . . .

He approaches Hatchet and punches
him in the ribs!

MR. RED

YOU are 64 years old . . . and *I* . . .
(kicking Hatchet in the side)
I am still 30!

Hatchet grabs for his side – thankfully,
not the same one he was shot at.

He feels his new injury. It hurts.

He looks at his *other* side. The bullet holes
are still there from getting shot at.

He runs forward and jabs his fist into
Mr. Red’s temple.

Mr. Red staggers back. Hatchet runs forward
again and hits him a second time. And a third.

He opens the coat and grabs
for his weapon again.

HATCHET

Now you’re dead.

MR. RED

Then what? How many cultists do I have
working under me now? You can’t stop
the fire once it starts spreading.

246

HATCHET

You're one man.

I'm one man.

Mr. Red arches an eyebrow.

HATCHET

And soon there will only *be* one man.

MR. RED

Okay, that's it. You made a death threat.

(chuckling)

You can't expect to *win* this way.

You just made a death threat –
you're done.

The hatchet drops.

Mr. Red quickly kneels down and grabs it.

Stands back up, with the weapon in hand.

MR. RED

Ohhhhhh, the nostalgia, huh? The uncountable
criminals you've taken down with this thing!

(stepping closer)

But . . . but, really . . . are you *sure*?

Hatchet gulps.

MR. RED

All those cases. All those criminals. Are
you *sure* you took down the right people?

HATCHET

What are you doing?

MR. RED

How do you know you didn't make some
mistakes along the way? Go for an innocent,
in your mission against the guilty?

HATCHET

No. Stop.

MR. RED

And you can't disprove any single one of these
things that I say, either. That's what I find the
most amusing. There is *nothing* that you have.

Nothing that you can say.

Hatchet swallows again.

MR. RED

You came to this state, what, expecting to be praised, to be celebrated as the hero? Well keep dreaming. And then, at some point, *wake up*, and see how it really is: turns out, all you *really* are, is a wild dog out on the loose.

HATCHET

You need to go.

MR. RED

(*whispering*)

You wanna know the *worst* part?

Hatchet shakes a little.

MR. RED

I'm gonna blow up *three bridges* – and on this Fourth of July fireworks show that's coming up soon.

HATCHET

What?

MR. RED

Three bridges. Boom. On July 4. You've got two more days. Now watch: you know about it . . . yet you can't stop it from happening.

Hatchet reaches to get his weapon back.

But Mr. Red pulls it up, out of his reach.

MR. RED

Ohhhhh, don't worry, the games are still going on. But *you* may not be around, by the time the bridges come down.

HATCHET

You psychopath. You're gonna go down for this.

MR. RED

Like I said before . . . not until *after* it's too late.

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He laughs.

MR. RED

Stick around. This is gonna be an interesting day.

HATCHET

Live it cause it's your last.

MR. RED

Pfff. Okay. Okay, old man . . . you can *have* your little weapon back.

Mr. Red gently tosses Hatchet the weapon back.

It lands on the ground. Hatchet runs to pick it back up.

MR. RED

And now I make my getaway.

HATCHET

No you *don't!*

MR. RED

Watch this. The third red car! The third *red car* that passes by, I will . . .
(*giving it a second thought*)
. . . hmm. No. The color *red*, I'll leave alone. But the third BLUE car! Yes. Yes, the *third blue car* I see, I'm gonna steal for myself!

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

Gotta be precise. Gotta get it exactly right.

Mr. Red suddenly crouches down on the ground.

A second later, the hatchet flies through the air, above him.

It misses him. He stands back up.

Looks back at Hatchet, smiling.

MR. RED

249

Don't tell me that was your *only* one.

Mr. Red walks out of the alleyway,
and into the street.

Traffic is passing by, lightly.

Mr. Red gives it several seconds.

Several cars pass by. Finally, we see
one blue car.

MR. RED
One!

He starts walking down the street.

After several seconds, he sees it: the second
and third blue cars.

He gives it a moment.

Then, walks right into the middle of the street.

Some cars honk at him. Some slow down.

Mr. Red stays where he is.

The third blue car slows down to a near-stop.
Mr. Red walks closer.

BLUE CAR'S DRIVER
Heeeeeeey! Get outta the road!

Mr. Red suddenly springs forward, runs all the
way to the driver's side door, and grabs it open!

MR. RED
Awright, OUTTA THE CAR!

CUT TO – soon – as Mr. Red speeds down
the road in his newly-acquired vehicle.

MR. RED
Whoooooo, hoo hoo hoo!

INT. PENNSYLVANIA – ALLEYWAY

Inside the alleyway, Hatchet looks out

250

into the city.

Completely defeated.

Completely over with.

Head sagging in defeat, he sits down
on the ground, not knowing what
else to do.

We stay here for several seconds.

INT. CITY – STREETWAYS – SOON

Hatchet walks down the road.

HATCHET'S VOICE

No War Journal anymore. Can't really
write it all down. Can't do that anymore.
Have to just *think* it to myself.

He grumbles.

HATCHET'S VOICE

Three bridges.
Three bridges.
He promised to blow up three bridges.

He turns the other way.

HATCHET'S VOICE

I've *got* to warn the police.
Got to tell them.

A FLASH of an image
appears in his head.

A cop car; the flashing red and blue
sirens; a police officer, slowly raising
his pistol . . .

BACK TO the present moment.

HATCHET

NO!!

HATCHET'S VOICE

Can't do *that!* Can't just *tell*
the police about this!

251

HATCHET

(mumbling)

Beh, hmmm. Uhm. Egh.

. . . How can I do this.

He shivers again.

Another FLASH of an IMAGE
in his head:

Two policemen talking inside a
hallway, the moment lit impossibly
bright with white, Heavenly light.

POLICEMAN 1

How do we know this isn't
Hatchet trying to blow up
the bridges?

POLICEMAN 2

Why should we trust him?

POLICEMAN 3

How do we know he won't
just *go off the edge*?

BACK TO the present moment.

HATCHET'S VOICE

Can't tell them. I can't just tell them.
They wouldn't believe me.

He turns around to walk the other way again.

HATCHET'S VOICE

What *can* I do?

FADE TO:

Hatchet walking on further down the sidewalk, alone.

FADE TO: a time of day when the sky is
a sunset shade of orange.

Hatchet continues to walk on, alone.

FADE TO: a little later – when the sky
is a little darker.

252

Hatchet finally stops walking.

He has arrived at the front entrance
of a police station.

He stops. Freezes. Looks the place over.

Yep – the word POLICE is written in
black over two white light posts.

He gulps.

HATCHET'S VOICE

What were the odds.

He shakes his head.

HATCHET

No odds.

He remains frozen for another
several seconds.

HATCHET

Well. All right.

He still remains frozen.

HATCHET

Time to do it, then.

He approaches the front door,
and knocks on it.

INT. POLICE STATION

Inside, Hatchet talks to an officer.

HATCHET

Now, *yes* I am Hatchet. Hatchet, the vigilante.
Hatchet, the hero, I try to be, I don't know . . .
but . . . I'm coming here to warn *you* that Mr.
Red – or, Dougahls Bloomington the Third – is
planning to blow up *three* bridges soon.

POLICEMAN

Uhhh . . . hmm. Well, tell you what. Why
don't you just have a seat right over here

253

for a minute. We'll – we'll get you someone
who can help out with all this.

Hatchet gulps.

CUT TO – Hatchet sitting in a chair.

Waiting.

Both of his wrists come together again.

He sags his head, looking at the floor,
depressed again.

A tear comes down one eye.

FADE TO: BLACK.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
Hatchet . . . come on. Get real.

. . .
. . . You have *nobody*.
Nobody but yourself.

FADE TO: reality again.

Tears are coming down Hatchet's eyes again.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
What are they gonna look up on you?
What are they gonna find out about?
What are they gonna *think*?

He grabs for his heart again; the
anxiety is building back up . . .

OFFICER
Hatchet?

Hatchet looks back up.

INT. POLICE STATION – OTHER ROOM – SOON

Hatchet talks privately to two officers.

HATCHET
He told me what he plans to do. He plans
on blowing up not one – but *three* – bridges
at once. And I say this only because he's

done similar activities before, in Virginia – three at once. Except this time, it's gonna be during the 4th of July fireworks show.

OFFICER 1

(nodding his head)

To tell you the truth, I was *very* alarmed when I learned about the recycling plant, the highway, and the shopping strip arson attacks in Virginia. But you're saying *that* was all Mr. Red.

HATCHET

(nodding his head)

Yeah.

OFFICER 1

(folding his arms)

Then answer me this. If we *do* go after this guy . . . why should we not just arrest *you* right on with him?

Hatchet freezes.

After several seconds, he swallows.

HATCHET

(looking away)

I was afraid of hearing that.

Another few seconds.

HATCHET

I don't know. I don't know. I guess not. I guess there *is* no reason.

He shakes his head.

HATCHET

I don't know.

More silence.

HATCHET

Look. I am Hatchet. I admit to that. I've always *been* Hatchet. Ever since the days of the alien attack . . . but . . . but that's not even important right now. It's . . .
(sigh)

255

. . . what I'm trying to say is that I might be Hatchet, but I'm on the side of good. I'm out here to stop the true bad guys out there. The guys like Mr. Red.

It finally becomes clear.

How worn-out Hatchet is. How weary he's become, both in his physical appearance and his voice.

OFFICER 1

All right, look. Now. We're not placing you under arrest, right now this second. We *would* like to investigate this whole "bridge" thing first.

OFFICER 2

But . . . my question to *you* is . . .

A moment of silence.

OFFICER 2

. . . when the time comes, will you go peacefully?

Hatchet isn't sure what to say.

He thinks about it.

Looks away. Swallows.

Then looks back at the two officers.

HATCHET

Yeah. Sure.

Another moment of silence.

OFFICER 1

So, let's go find him, then.

INT. POLICE STATION – DETECTIVE'S ROOM – SOON

One detective is using computer equipment to study the case.

On the wide computer screen: a map of the U.S.A.

256

DETECTIVE
Map of the U.S.

It zooms in to a map of just the
Pennsylvania area.

DETECTIVE
Map of Pennsylvania.

Stars appear over every bridge.

DETECTIVE
Every single bridge there is in the state.

Some stars flash red.

DETECTIVE
The most likely estimated targets.

(shrugs)

Perhaps there *is* no foolproof plan, except one –
get em all on high alert for any sightings of Color
Red cultists. No matter what they say the intents
and purposes are – whether it’s the “religious
organization”, or “the band”, or “the political
protest” – *whichever* of the approaches he tries
this time.

INT. BRIDGE SITE 1 – NIGHT

Two security officers stand guarding
the entrance to the bridge, 100% ready,
100% alert.

In the distance, seven Color Red cultists
are walking down the street, carrying
political protest signs: “HEALTH CARE
LAWS UNFAIR”, “NO COVERAGE
FOR THE POOR”, and the like.

One guard arches an eyebrow.

INT. BRIDGE SITE 2 – SOON

Several cars drive through the entrance
of the bridge.

Traffic has slammed to a halt. The police
have got it completely blocked off.

Cars are slowing down. Coming to a complete stop.

Officers are standing with both hands raised, like traffic guards, using hand motions to allow some to pass and others to instead pull over.

INSIDE the front seat of one car, the driver's eyes widen in horror. All five people in this car are Color Red cultists.

DRIVER

What? What's going on?

FRONT SEAT PASSENGER

They're not really *blocking* everything, are they?

DRIVER

It looks that way.

FRONT SEAT PASSENGER

No. That *can't* be right.

DRIVER

Do you think it's possible the cops are all working for Hatchet?

FRONT SEAT PASSENGER

What? No! Don't be ridiculous!

He thinks about it for a second.

FRONT SEAT PASSENGER

Well . . . possibly *with* him, yeah.

INT. BRIDGE SITE 3 – SOON

Three Color Red cultists go walking down the sidewalk toward the bridge, carrying backpacks.

They continuously look around while walking.

No trouble yet. They walk on.

INT. PENNSYLVANIA – STREETWAY – EVENING

Deputy Sheriff Marin escorts Hatchet into the cop car.

258

He waits as she walks around the car,
and enters the driver's side.

Before long, they're driving down the road.

HATCHET

So which of the bridges are you taking me to?

SHERIFF

The one we think Mr. Red is planning to appear at.
The difficult part about this is, sometimes he has a
tendency to appear at the crime scene itself . . . but,
with those Virginia triple-fire attacks, he made no
personal appearance at all. Still, at this point, we're
reasonably convinced he'll show up at *one* of these
three bridges. And, if not, we'll still track him down!

HATCHET

(*groan*) He's been at this for one decade now.
He's *way* past due to be taken down.

SHERIFF

Oh, we know.

A moment of silence.

HATCHET

How long till you think we get there?

SHERIFF

Bout 10 minutes.

Another moment of silence.

HATCHET

It's good, you know? How we can just have
a minute like this to have a conversation.

SHERIFF

(*smiling*) Hmm, well, I don't know, aren't you
still *falling in love* with that one hooker?

Hatchet's heart tugs.

HATCHET

What?

He feels his forehead with both hands.

HATCHET
How did you . . . ?

SHERIFF
(chuckling) It's all right, Hatchet. Heh heh.
It's . . . it's all right.
(more restrained chuckling)

Hatchet looks on out the road.

Time seems to slow down.

He looks back to the sheriff. And pictures
her face transforming into a blue alien beast.

ALIEN VOICE
You still remember the alien attack!

He shakes his head. Returns to normal.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS
Just remember . . . *the alien stuff is finished.*
At least you don't have *that* stuff going on
no more.

HATCHET
Hmm. Where would *I* go, if *I* were Mr. Red?

SHERIFF
Ahh, good question. Good question. You see,
that's exactly it: sometimes, in some cases, you
try to get into the bad guys' heads. Try to come
to an understanding of just what kinda stuff
really is out there. And often there are some *bad*
people in the world, but still . . . you just . . .
you still have to *know*.

Hatchet nods his head.

SHERIFF
That includes thoroughly researching and looking up
many, *many* kinds of bad subject matters. When you
wanna know what you're up against – you have to
look into the people with intent to detonate explosives,
the people with rape desires, the people with rape and
homicidal fantasies. This Mr. Red . . . so far, what
we're learning about his ways is *not* good. The three
fires in Virginia isn't the end of it.

260

HATCHET

Yeah. He specifically told me, he was gonna blow up three bridges, just cause he *knew* there would be nothing I could do about it . . . like . . . I can't just go to the police! Was his train of thought, I guess . . .

SHERIFF

It's all right. Heh heh. We ain't gonna let this be a repeat of the Virginia triple-crime. No. *This* crime spree will be cut short.

INT. BRIDGE SITE 1 – SOON

Color Red cultists are still waving around political protest signs.

Finally, they all begin to set the signs down on the ground.

Each individual cultist begins to pull different parts and pieces of explosives out of their pockets.

CULTIST 1

Hook it all up.

CULTIST 2

Put all these pieces together.

CULTIST 3

You remember how it goes, right?

INT. BRIDGE SITE 2 – SOON

The car full of Color Red cultists is pulled over, to the side of traffic.

A cop is talking to him, outside the car.

CULTIST DRIVER

What did I *do*? What could I possibly be getting ticketed for?

OFFICER

Well, you tell me. Tell me if you have any *drugs* in this car. Or, in fact, *anything illegal* that I should know about: any weapons, any firearms, any explosives.

261

CULTIST DRIVER

(slapping his cheek with one hand)

Me? I could never touch drugs!

OFFICER

Well, *if you do*, then now's the time to tell me.

A moment of silence.

CULTIST DRIVER

All right. I'll talk with you over there for a minute,
and I'll confess to you *everything*.

OFFICER

No, you'll talk to me right *here*. Ain't no reason
I should have to go over *there*.

A moment of silence.

CULTIST DRIVER

Fine, then.

CUT TO – the inside of the cultist's car –

All the other cultists are growing nervous, their
hands moving fast and shakily.

CULTIST 2

Get the explosives together.
Get the explosives together.

CULTIST 3

Quickly. While the cop's busy talking to *him*,
assemble the rest of this.

CULTIST 4

We'll blow it up from inside this *car*
if we have to.

CULTIST 5

What?? That ain't the plan!
The Hell you talking about?

CULTIST 4

Uhhh – I mean – you know, from right
outside this car.

CULTIST 5

Yeah, and then how are *we*

supposed to get *away*, huh?

A moment of silence.

CULTIST 4

What, you got *cold feet* now?

INT. BRIDGE SITE 3 – SOON

Mr. Red himself walks around,
with some of his fellow protestors,
all wearing backpacks.

Like in the other bridge sites, they are all
assembling explosive devices together.

MR. RED

Three. *Three* bridges, all in one night!
Whoooo! I'm still at the top of my game!

CULTIST 5

Butcha know Hatchet will come to us.

CULTIST 6

You know he'll just *show up* again.

MR. RED

So? *Good!* Let him! I'm not
even *scared* of him!

INT. POLICE CAR – FRONT SEAT

Sheriff Marin and Hatchet continue
to speed on down the road, in pursuit
of Mr. Red.

HATCHET

Oh, man, I hope all the information is right.

SHERIFF

I hope so, too.

HATCHET

I guess this also means a lot of folks
are gonna have some time wasted,
in those other bridges. But . . . oh well.
This'll just have to happen anyway.

SHERIFF

263

We're just about here. And, yep, this
is it . . . *this* would be the bridge.

In the distance, they can see several men
standing around, dressed in all red.

SHERIFF

Now *don't* just jump to action first.
I need to talk first.

CUT TO – soon –

SHERIFF

(*yelling out the driver's side window*)
HEY! Excuse me! You there!

She parks the car, and steps out.

Starts walking up to the cultists.

SHERIFF

Mind telling me what you're all up to?

MR. RED

We're not up to anything at all!
Nothing but drinking bottled water!

Hatchet opens the door and steps out.

Walks, with much struggle at first,
to Mr. Red.

HATCHET

Take down three bridges?

One cultist begins to run up to Hatchet.

Who throws the hatchet right into
the cultist's forehead.

The enemy falls backward – and is soon
lying on the ground, on his back.

Hatchet leans down, puts his left hand
on the guy's forehead, and uses his right
to pull the hatchet out.

Stands back up, and walks around the body.

Sheriff Marin aims her gun at the cultists.

SHERIFF
FREEEEEEEEZE!!

Mr. Red throws his hands up into the air.

Hatchet runs up to him and starts fighting –
one punch, a second, a third.

Mr. Red responds with a punch of his own –
to Hatchet's right cheek, his jaw.

Hatchet grabs for his cheek with one hand. Flinches.

Mr. Red jabs him in the ribs.

Hatchet gets him back with a fist
between the eyes.

Mr. Red staggers backward.

Hatchet opens up his coat,
revealing the hatchet.

HATCHET
I'm ready. I'm finally ready.

SHERIFF
FREEEEEEZE! You freeze too, Hatchet!
You freeze too!

He looks at her, still holding the hatchet.

Back to Mr. Red.

MR. RED
It's now or never.

A moment's hesitation.

Mr. Red runs up to Hatchet again.

BLAM, BLAM, BLAM! Marin
opens fire on Mr. Red!

Hatchet staggers backward, reacting
as though *he* were shot.

265

But then he realizes . . . it was only Mr. Red.

Mr. Red is now lying on the ground.

Hatchet approaches him.

Mr. Red starts groaning loudly. He's not dead yet – just momentarily taken down.

Hatchet inspects his own weapon again.

Looks it over for several seconds.

Then drops it to the ground.

SHERIFF

What are you gonna *do*, Hatchet?

Hatchet approaches Mr. Red's still-living body.

HATCHET

You know, I could finish you off right now.

MR. RED

But you're not gonna.

Hatchet scowls.

He walks back to the hatchet.

Takes it into his hand again.

And throws it, quickly, into Mr. Red's chest.

Squish! Hatchet looks away, not witnessing this one for himself.

Finally, after a few seconds, he does look back.

Mr. Red is down. Permanently.

Hatchet steps closer to him.

Takes his hatchet back.

HATCHET

I guess I've done it.

SHERIFF

266

Hatchet. Hatchet.

HATCHET
Yeah?

She stops him, putting both hands on
his shoulders.

SHERIFF
This is still a *very* complicated night.
I *thought* we were gonna need medical
attention for these Color Red guys.

HATCHET
But?

SHERIFF
But now, instead, we're gonna need bodybags.
Well – except for everyone who is still alive
– *they'll* go under arrest.
(*raising one hand*)
And you *keep* it that way -!

HATCHET
(*nodding his head*) Fair enough.
(*pointing*)
But there's still the two other bridges.

SHERIFF
Exactly. *Now*, by this point, we have pinpointed
which bridges are *not* under attack, and which
ones *are*. We did this by examining which ones
did have the people wearing red outfits in large
groups walking around, and which ones did *not*.
So, now we know where *not* to waste our man-
power – and which exact sites to give full,
complete attention to.

HATCHET
So, then, you . . . you narrowed it down to the
last two bridges Mr. Red has his men at?

SHERIFF
(*nodding his head again*)
Indeed, we have. We know *exactly* which two
they are, and the double-crime is in progress
right now as we speak, no doubt.

HATCHET

267

If I am to get there, I would need a ride.

SHERIFF

Well, you won't get it from me.

A moment of silence.

SHERIFF

There were three crimes going on tonight.
You've already done your job with one.

HATCHET

But I could also help with the second and third.

SHERIFF

(shaking her head) No need, pal. We're already got
a lot of men, and women, on the case right now.

(pointing toward Mr. Red)

And now that Mr. Red is down . . . no doubt,
his little cult will be disbanded.

She motions toward a cop car.

SHERIFF

Tell you what – why don't *you* go in that
car right there, and just have a seat in the
front row, passenger's seat?

Hatchet gulps.

HATCHET

Permanently?

SHERIFF

Perma – what?

Hatchet gulps again.

SHERIFF

Look, just . . . just have a seat there, all right?
Relax. We'll talk when I get back there.

HATCHET

Uhh – all – all right.

He walks toward the cop car.

Touches the door. Looks back at the sheriff.

268

She's still looking at him. He nods his head.
Gets into the car.

INT. COP CAR – BACKSEAT – SOON

Hatchet sits alone, uncomfortably, in the seat.

After a few seconds, he starts thinking again.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

And *now* what?

Another moment of silence.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

The man was gonna blow up *three bridges*.
You *had* to take him down.

Another moment of silence.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

But they're gonna throw you in jail too.

FADE TO:

About 10 minutes later – as Sheriff
Marin is driving off into the night again.

HATCHET

Mr. Red is down. Mr. Red is down permanently.
I almost can't believe it myself.

SHERIFF

Tell you what. You've already done
quite a bit tonight. What about . . .
what do you think about just retiring
for the night, and letting the cops take
on the rest of the case ourselves?

HATCHET

Really? You sure?
. . . I – I mean . . .

SHERIFF

(*smiling, putting a hand on Hatchet's shoulder*)

Hey. You got Mr. Red down. And
you alerted *us* as to what he was
doing. You deserve *some* break.

269

Hatchet nods his head.

HATCHET

Yeah. Yeah. All right.

She turns on the police radio.

POLICE RADIO

Copy that. The final verdict, *all* the Color Red cultists were arrested. One was killed by Hatchet. So was Mr. Red. Total number of runaways is four – just four men who ran away on foot and are still getting away.

Hatchet nods his head.

HATCHET

Got em *all*.

POLICE RADIO

Altogether, the total number of successfully detonated explosions is zero. One was starting to go off on one of the bridge sites, and it did do *some* damage to the bridge, but not enough to collapse it . . . repairable job, overall . . . the bridge ain't gonna be the same for a few weeks, at *least*, and it's just gonna cost an *awful* lot of money to fix . . . however, zero casualties reported so far, from the explosive devices.

Hatchet sighs with relief.

HATCHET

So . . . so.

He clears his throat.

HATCHET

So the . . . so the day *was* saved, after all.

SHERIFF

Well, okay. I can't think of anyone who's gonna be too *thrilled* about the damage done to the bridge. Or all the traffic that's been blocked, cut off. Or even the bridges who had a little bit of time wasted in this investigation. But, you're right on that one thing: we should just be thankful it wasn't worse. Not a repeat of the triple-crimes from Virginia.

HATCHET

But the second and third bridges are
still out there.

SHERIFF

Oh, trust me, I'm sure the cops over there
are taking the men down now as we speak.
I mean, everything can't *truly* be confirmed
until they have their courtroom trial – until
after we see the final outcome of how that
trial goes. But, I'm pretty sure, with all the
facts of this case, it won't be looking good
for them. I'm sure they'll be honest, admit
to their role in it . . .

HATCHET

Yeah – well – you ain't gonna be hearing
an awful lot from Mr. Red again.

Another moment of silence.

SHERIFF

Yeah, certainly no *courtroom verdict* for him.
This *might* complicate the courtroom case a
little. You see, now that he's dead, we won't
be able to get *his* word on whether it was a
conspiracy to commit a domestic *crime*, or a
threat to the level of national security – con-
spiracy to commit acts of domestic *terror*.

HATCHET

(*shrugs*)
Meaning?

SHERIFF

Meaning, now it's up to the guys who are still
alive – when they get to trial – to give their word
on which of the two it is. Well, either way, all
those roads lead to federal prison.

Hatchet sighs, looking down.

SHERIFF

You okay?

HATCHET

I don't know.

SHERIFF

271

Why? Why not?

HATCHET

I never know whether or not I'm on your
Most Wanted Criminals list.

Sheriff Marin chuckles.

SHERIFF

Some folks like you. Some folks hate you.

HATCHET

(shrugs)

That's just the way it works, I guess.

SHERIFF

Well, how it's working right *now*, is this.

(deep breath)

After you get out of prison, you're allowed
one free bus ride, to anywhere in the country.

Hatchet shudders.

SHERIFF

Consider this your bus ride.

Where are you headed to?

Hatchet shrugs.

HATCHET

Where? I don't really have family to go to.
Don't have many friends' houses either, really.

(shrugs)

I just go on bus rides, usually, and see where
the road takes me. Down a state or two.

SHERIFF

Hmm, well, okay, I may not be willing to go
so far as *out-of-state*, right now, but, there *are*
some nice homeless shelters that can do you
some good for a while.

HATCHET

(nodding his head)

That'll do just fine.

SHERIFF

Now, wherever you go, and whatever *crazy*,
winding roads the journey takes you on . . .

Hatchet gets serious.

SHERIFF

You know you are not to overdo this.
Not to take this past the limit.

HATCHET

I won't.

SHERIFF

And you know that the criminals are the enemy,
and the innocent civilians are the ones to protect,
to save.

HATCHET

Oh yeah.

SHERIFF

Then so long as it stays that way –
I don't have a problem with you.

HATCHET

Yeah?

CUT TO – soon –

– as Hatchet is standing outside the cop
car, on a sidewalk curb.

HATCHET

(waving good-bye) Good night, now!

And the cop car takes off.

Hatchet walks, slowly, down the road.

He breathes in, deeply. Then back out, deeply.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

Ain't got no War Journal right now, so I
gotta just keep track of this in my own head.

He pulls his coat tighter.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

This is Hatchet: Year 42, and I'm still alive
and kicking.

He chuckles.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

Though with a lot more aches and pains than I used to get back in the days of Year One, Year Two, Year Three.

Hatchet shrugs.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

But it's all just fine now. Still living as Hatchet. Still not been erased from the scene yet.

He chuckles again.

Now the camera FREEZES as he walks on down the sidewalk, into the night.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

Huh. You know what's funny? I became Hatchet in August 1970. 1970 was Year One of me being Hatchet. So August 2012 . . . that will be the start of Year 43. Next month.

He pulls his coat tighter again.

HATCHET'S THOUGHTS

I remember telling this one guy, this one time . . . you've got me all wrong. You keep talking to me like I'm a cop. I'm Other than a cop . . . I'm Hatchet.

BLACK.

(The Beatles song "When I'm 64" begins to play.)

ROLL CREDITS.