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Vacancy 2: The First Cut

By Mark L. Smith

Hey, hey, you're gonna kill us.
If I wreck my brother's car...
Let's just wait.
No, I can't wait.
You can't wait either.
I told you to take it easy
with that champagne.
- You take it easy with...
- Hey! Hey!
Okay.
- You're on private property.
- Sorry, we're just lost.
And you figured she might have a map
tucked up under that dress.
Don't feed me that bullshit.
I know what's going on.
Go do it someplace else.
Hello?
Hello?
- Evening.
- Hey, what's going on, man?
We're on our way down to Danville.
I was wondering if you had a room
where we could rest up?
Maybe like an hourly deal
or something?
Sorry. It's nightly rates only.
But I do have a nice room
for you to rest up.
Cool.
Baby, hurry up!
Baby!
- Come on!
- Keep the change.
Honeymoon suite.
Hurry up.
Let's get to work.
I wasn't shy before we were married.
No reason to start now.
Come on.
- What happened?
- I don't know.
What's going on?
It's okay, babe.

- I don't know. Old wires maybe.

- That was freaky.

We should go back to the car.

Are you kidding me? Now?

Come on, I'm dying here.

Come on, babe.

Please?

Remember, till death do us part?

That got a better view.

Newlyweds are always the best.

Newlyweds and cheating husbands.

- Hurry up!

- I'm coming.

Hey, hey, get your feet off the dash!

Hang on, babe! Hang on!

That kid better slow down a bit.

Hustle back and fold up the sheets
in case we got another.

Welcome to the Meadow View.

I'd like a single for the night.

Got a room open.

- Can I have a print of your ID?

- I left my ID in the car.

The name's Smith.

Not a problem.

You know, I think the pipes
are backed up in 2.

It's number 6. Down on the end.

Enjoy your stay, Mr. Smith.

I'm in lousy shape, man.

I couldn't even make her out.

Is she worth watching?

You gotta put in a new microphone.

- Yeah.

- We can barely hear this.

He don't...

He don't trust your housekeeping.

Probably one of them germ freaks.

Where do you want me?

I want you on the bed.

Face down.

Should I take this off

so it doesn't get wet?

What...? What is that?

I can get you a hundred copies
by the morning.
Make it 25.
Sales are slow.
Same old shit. It's getting old.
Are you kidding me?
Look at her.
What you have here is classic.
Twenty-five.
- What's going on?
- We have a problem.
- Reece!
- This guy...
- What's the problem?
- It's nothing we can't handle.
Jesus.
What the hell is this? This shit real?
Oh, yeah.
Damn.
Where's this guy here?
Right... That dude.
We have no idea what to do with him.
Did he know her?
Who's the lady?
She must have killed herself
when I checked in.
You in the habit
of murdering strange women?
We got it all on video.
All of it. Everything.
Just my luck, huh?
A couple of peeping Toms.
Should we call the cops?
This is... This is a murder scene.
You call the cops, all right,
they start asking questions.
You run the risk
of exposing your operation.
We could kill him.
We yank the camera.
We heard screams,
but we couldn't get there in time.
- Or you could untie me.
- What was that?

You could untie me.
Put my skills to use.
You've got a...
You've got a setup here.
It's a real moneymaker.
Nobody buys porn anymore.
But killing...
Killing is different, you know.
Watching somebody die...
...I mean, that's rare. It's valuable.
We could work together.
We could sell 10,000 copies easy.
Well, you know...
...there is a market
for this type of deal.
As soon as we untie him
he's gonna take off.
Getting paid to kill. What better deal
am I gonna get than that?
Who said anything
about getting paid?
Well, I am doing the dirty work.
I get equal cut.
You got big demands
for a fella tied to a chair.
Equal.
Otherwise, wrap me up with her
when you're finished.
Give me the knife.
Gordon, what's to keep him
from wrapping us up in plastic?
You get out of line...
...someone anonymously drops
that tape off to the police.
He's gonna have another copy,
so if something happens to us...
...well, he'll take care of the rest.
Now, let's get something straight.
I run the show here.
I wouldn't have it any other way.
Are you sure about this?
If it doesn't work,
empty your shotgun into him.
Let's shut down for a few days.

Get everything in order.
Let's go bury
our first star someplace.
Eight hundred miles.
It's a long way from home.
Home is where the heart is, Caleb.
Don't you ever forget that.
I thought you were serious.
I was about to jump out.
Don't do that. They might not
find your body out here for weeks.
This was a mistake.
You're over-thinking again.
Everything is gonna be fine.
I mean, what if your father
doesn't like me?
Why would he not like you?
You're almost perfect.
- Almost?
- Yeah.
Yeah, everything except for
that weird sideburn defect you have.
- Hey, my sideburns.
- They're never even.
You don't know the difference between
a socket and crescent wrench.
And there's that little issue of you
stealing his only daughter away, but...
- I'm sure it'll be fine.
- Oh, Jesus.
This is such a mistake.
Yes, this is a mistake! So turn back.
Go back now, dude.
Let's just go back. Let's go home.
You promised you were gonna be
sleeping the rest of the way.
How can I sleep
when my best friend is about to...
...disappears into
the Virginia wilderness?
- It's North Carolina.
- Same difference.
All outhouses and corn bread
and damn AM radio.

- You're an idiot, you know that?
- That's irrelevant.
I bet you that at some time
during your youth out here...
...your old man taught you
how to hunt.
Didn't he? Come on, tell the truth.
I know you know how to hunt.
Right? Come on, didn't he?
Hunting does not
make somebody a hillbilly.
I knew it.
I told you, what'd I tell you?
Why are you even here?
To help my boy Caleb
with all this shit back here, remember?
Because you're not supposed to do any
heavy lifting in your present condition.
Reason number 27 why Daddy's
not gonna think you're perfect, dude.
He's just messing with you.
Tell her you're just fucking around.
- I am just fucking around, man.
- Thanks.
So, what's our ETA into Hooterville?
A few more hours, Tanner.
Well, I'm not the smartest guy, but it
might not be the best first impression...
...waking up the family
at 3 in the morning.
- What do you think, Jess?
- Whatever you want, babe.
It'd give me a chance to shower.
Even out these sideburns.
You know what?
You're right.
It's going to be perfect.
Meadow View, great.
Add it to the list of other
high-class motels we passed.
Prairie View, River View,
Mountain View.
Somebody should come up
with Titty View.

Now, that is a joint
I wouldn't mind staying in.
That sounds nice. Titty View.
You have to make it so easy
for her to see you're an idiot?
- What?
- Stop trying to press her buttons.
It's hard not to, dude. There's just
so many damn buttons to push.
Hey. Tanner's just pissed
because I'm leaving.
All right? Don't worry about it.
We've been hanging out
since the first grade.
I'm like the only friend he's got.
That's a shocker.
Why don't you remind him
that you guys aren't 8 anymore?
Meadow View.
Hello?
Hello?
Sorry for the wait.
A little too much iced tea tonight.
No problem.
We're just looking to grab a room.
Oh, we have some of those.
It's for the two of you?
The couples' rate is 49 a night.
Includes air and cable.
- Well, we actually need...
- No, that's it. Sounds good.
Where are you folks moving from?
The trailer.
Oh, yeah. Chicago.
We're on our way to Beulah.
That's where my family's from.
Oh, you're not far now.
It's beautiful, very peaceful.
Feels like you're in
the middle of nowhere.
- Great.
- So you're in room 6.
Just down near the end.
- Thanks.

- Thanks.

I hope you enjoy your stay.

And if you need anything,

don't hesitate to scream.

So we get to have a room

with Tanner again.

We'll stick him on the floor.

It's only for a couple hours.

Where'd he go now?

We didn't pass any bars

coming in, did we?

No, not that I saw. But he has, like,

a special radar for those places.

Fuck him, he'll find us.

Oh, God. See that squirrel?

That was gross.

Oh, my God. What a mess.

It'll be fine.

We'll fix it when we get there.

Yeah.

You up for a little dip before bed?

It's all yours. Go first.

The least we could do

is grab the squirrel for your dad.

Save him having to

hunt down lunch tomorrow.

I'll tell him that you said that.

Did I mention he's 6'5"

and used to box?

- Oh, that's it. You're going in.

- No, Caleb! No, no, no!

This is actually pretty nice.

Yeah, it's not bad.

Better tell Tanner not to make

a big entrance when he shows up.

- I got nothing.

- Yeah, me either.

It's the middle of nowhere.

Why do you need to call him anyway?

He'll find us. He always does.

Let's hurry.

We don't want to waste

what little privacy we've got.

Are you sure we're doing

the right thing?
We'll get cell-phone reception
as soon as we get into town, I promise.
No, I'm talking about
everything else.
Living around your family,
me working for your father.
Chicago's not going
anywhere, Caleb.
And if you're not happy,
we'll go back.
What if you're happy?
I won't be. Not if you're not.
"If you need anything, just scream"?
What?
Didn't it seem like
a weird thing for that guy to say?
I don't know, it's the same as,
"If you need anything, just yell. "
Scream is different.
You're over-thinking again.
Sexy.
What is that?
I don't know.
Shit!
There's nobody out there.
- Shit!
- Caleb, wait!
Fuck! Caleb!
Caleb, open the door, man. Shit!
What the hell are you doing?
Counting the broken bones in my hand.
What's the matter with you?
I gave you the whole big warning knock
and everything. Shit!
- We didn't know who it was.
- Well, who else would it be, man?
Man, I think you gave me
a concussion too. Don't touch.
How did you get in there?
There was an open window
in the back.
So you just decided to crawl in?
It's not like there was anybody else

in there. Saves me the price.
- You're just gonna sleep in there?
- Better than sleeping in here.
I can't get a good night's rest
listening to you two cuddle all night.
I'm gonna take a shower
before he gets us all kicked out.
You do that.
See? What'd I tell you?
She always getting pissed
about something.
I wonder why.
But that's how your life's
gonna be from now on.
God bless you.
Spending 10 hours a day selling rakes
in her old man's hardware store.
And don't forget, dinner with
the in-laws, huh? That'll be fun.
She'll get pissed because you don't
really like Mom's jerky and pinto beans.
Not exactly the dream life
we always talked about, dude.
But, you know, maybe you'll like
turning into Daniel Boone.
Yeah, or just keep hanging out
at Wrigley and getting drunk...
...at North Side bars until we're 50.
We're about to go in and that son
of a bitch started banging on the door.
He must have snuck in the back.
We gotta put up some exterior cameras
so this does not happen again.
What do you want to do
with this bunch?
We hold off.
It's just too risky with three.
Where's Smith at?
He's still out there.
He's keeping an eye on things.
- Hey, come on.
- This shit is hard as hell.
Hey. Hey!
Hey. Gordon says

we're a no-go for tonight.

Why?

In case you didn't notice, there's
three of them in there instead of two.

Hey! Hey!

Did you hear me?

Gordon says to call it off.

No, listen to me.

Gordon calls the shots around here.

I don't need anyone

to tell me how to do this.

Try to get a non-smoking room.

How are you, sir?

It's a long day of driving?

Very. My wife and I are looking for
a soft bed if you got one.

Afraid we don't. Not tonight.

We're doing a little maintenance
on the place. Sort of like a remodel.

Really?

You might wanna turn that off, then.

Save folks the trouble.

That's totally my fault.

I'll get to that soon enough.

You know,

there's the Alpine Motor Lodge...

...just down the road.

It's about a 20-minute drive.

Come on in, I'll call them for you.

See what they got open.

I'm just checking to see if you have any
rooms available tonight.

- Non-smoking.

- Oh, and no smoking if possible.

I'm so sorry for the inconvenience.

Well, hopefully this other place
will take us in.

Oh, that sounds good.

Lucky I got something for you.

We should be up and ready
in a couple days...

...so if you need a place to stay
on your way back, come on by.

I'll give you our special room

for half off.
Why aren't we staying here?
I already found another place.
What in the hell were you two doing?
He wouldn't listen to me.
I told him you called it off.
He was gonna kill them.
When I say a plan has changed,
the plan has changed.
- What's the fucking difference?
- All...!
All it takes is for one to get away.
Now, no one's going anywhere.
But if you're getting
a little squeamish...
...just say so.
- Get out.
- That's all I can...
I'm kind of tired.
Well, I guess back to my free room.
Better hope nobody
walks in over there.
Not unless it's the
Squirrel Creek Community College...
...cheerleading bus showing up.
All right. Good night, Tanner.
I really don't like him,
you know that?
Why didn't you
say something earlier?
It's just one more day, okay?
Come on.
Are you sure you're tired?
Not funny.
- Jesus!
- What the hell you doing, man?
Normally I wouldn't stop
a good porno flick.
- Can you please get out?
- I'm the good guy, okay?
Listen to me, all right?
I'm not the only one
watching you two.
- What?

- What are you talking about?
Caleb, come here. Come here, man.

- Look at this.

- What is this?
I don't know, but it sure as hell ain't pay-per-view.
Caleb, what are you doing?
He's watching us.
What? Who's watching us?
- And that's that.
- Who's watching us?
The guy up in the office.
He's got cameras all over this room.
- Are you serious?
- Yes, he is, darling.
If we're gonna do this,
you better get there before they bolt.
Let's do this fast.
- We go in and out, yeah?
- Hold on.
Look how scared she looks.
- I like watching them squirm.
- They'll take off.
No, we won't let them,
but Smith's right.
We shouldn't be
in such a hurry to finish.
Let's play with them for a while.
What the hell are you doing?
Wanna scare them?
Let's scare them.
How do you know he's watching us?
I saw your ass, but once I knew
it was yours, I stopped looking.
I turned it off almost immediately.
I knew I'd find you two together.
If I hadn't, Elsa, I might have gone on
playing it your way.
There's nothing on here.
It might be one of those perv joints
where you can check in...
...and watch the action
in the other room.
- I'm going over to kick that fucker's ass.

- No, the dude's watching us.
He knows we found the cameras.
You go there, the dude's
waiting with a shotgun...
...and some fucking K-Y Jelly.
We call the cops and wait for them.
Dude, the sheriff's probably
his cousin or something.
Call the cops, they show up,
we get corn-holed.
Fuck that idea, let's just go.
We're leaving, right?
- Assholes!
- Caleb, let's just go.
Dude, like always, your beautiful
fiance's dead-on. Come on, dude.
Caleb, get in the car.
- Now!
- Come on, dude.
Shit.
I'm telling the cops
soon as we get back.
Whatever, man,
let's just get the hell out of here.
- What?
- You've got to be kidding me.
Fuck.
- You leave the light on or something?
- No.
Great. You gonna go ask
Norman Bates for a jump or should I?
I know I didn't leave
the lights on, okay?
What the fuck is that?
They're headlights. It's a truck.
- Shit. Come on, Tanner. Come with me.
- What are you doing?
- Fuck!
- Caleb, get back inside. Get back.
Go out the other side!
Go, go, go! Go!
Shit!
I'm calling the cops, man.
Oh, my God!

Damn! I can't get a signal!
Shit, this is not funny anymore.
Oh, my God. What is he doing?
Can you all scream
a little louder for me?
I'll fucking kill you!
I seriously doubt that, Caleb.
- Fuck!
- Where is he going?
Maybe to get a better view.
- A better fucking view of what?
- Where is he going?
Oh, shit!
- We have to get out.
- Where are we gonna go?
- Fuck!
- Hey!
Go, go!
Come on. Come on. Come here.
This has gone way past some porn
video. What the fuck is happening?
- They tried to kill us.
- They could have if they wanted to.
- They're just trying to scare us.
- No.
They're not just trying to scare us.
This is more than that.
They wouldn't go through that
if they planned on letting us walk.
Oh, my God. He said your name.
What? What?
You didn't say your name
when we checked in.
Oh, my God.
They can hear us.
All right, you guys.
You guys, come on. Come on.
Tanner, grab the door.
All right, so, what else did we say?
Who gives a shit? It's not like there's
gonna be a pop quiz at the end.
We told him that we were
coming from Chicago.
We're on our way to Beulah.

He knows we don't know anybody here,
or where to run for help.
Caleb, it doesn't matter where we run,
let's just run.
- I need to get to the trailer.
- Fuck that. Let's just go.
Jessica's right.
They're not gonna let us run out.
Yeah, but they're not gonna
just let us sit in here either.
We need something to fight with.
There's a bunch of stuff
in the back of the trailer.
There's kitchen stuff, knives, tools...
No, no, no. I like our chances
better if we just run.
How did you say
you got in here again?
There was an open window
in the bathroom.
But you told us that in our room.
They must have heard you.
Maybe not. It's worth a shot anyway.
Come on.
Let's go.
You guys stay.
All right, Tanner.
You go first, then Jess.
We don't know
what's out there, man.
We know what's gonna be in here
in a second. Now, let's go. Come on.
Careful.
Easy does it. Easy does it.
No!
Run, Jess!
No! Caleb!
Caleb! Caleb!
- We have to go back!
- You can't!
- They'll grab you too!
- No!
Come on. Come on.
- Hold him.

- No! Caleb!
- Tie him. Tie him.
- No!
Where'd they take him?
Caleb! Caleb!
- Caleb!
- What about them?
They won't run. Not yet anyway.
- Caleb! Caleb!
- Not while he's still alive.
Jess!
Caleb!
No! Caleb!
- How many do you see?
- I don't know. I think there's two. Caleb!
- What are they doing?
- Stay here.
Keep banging. Keep banging.
- Where are you going?
- They'll think we're both here.
Caleb!
No!
No!
No! They're killing him!
- Caleb! Caleb!
- Oh, my God.
No!
- They're out here.
- Come on! Come on!
Don't let them
make it out of the trees.
And make sure to get it on camera!
- No. I can't do this.
- No, they'll kill you. Come on.
We have to go back for him.
He would go back.
Listen. Listen to me.
We cannot go back, okay?
We just have to get to the cops.
You see anything?
Oh, shit. Come on.
What was that? I heard something.
Okay, let's go.
Shit.

Shit.

Reece!

- Okay. Let's go. Let's go.

- Come on.

Stop moving!

Tanner, Tanner, come on. Come on.

Are you okay? Come on.

Where'd they go?

Where did they go?

Oh, Jesus Christ.

I told you we should've waited.

The chase is half the fun.

We're gonna go this way.

You take the road.

No, no, no. I know these woods.

- Me and Reece...

- Take the road.

You, move. Let's go.

Come on!

What are you doing?

Maybe we should just hide
until daylight.

- See where we're going.

- No, I am not waiting here.

There'll be cars in the morning.

Somebody will help us.

I don't care. I'm not waiting here
while Caleb is there.

- Caleb is dead, okay?

- Fuck you!

You don't know that.

You don't know that.

Yes, I do know that.

And you know too.

I'm sorry.

Let's just keep going, okay?

Let's keep going. Let's go.

Let's keep going.

Over there. Over there.

- Somebody!

- Hello?

Hello? Please help us.

- Over here.

- Hello?

- Somebody?

- Please.

Hello?

Hey, Tanner! Tanner.

- We need your help.

- What do you think you're doing?

- Men were trying to kill us.

- What men?

One of them works at the motel.

Meadow View.

The Meadow View?

Why would they do that?

- We don't know why the fuck...

- You watch your mouth, son.

- You are disturbing a Christian home.

- Sorry, there's somebody out here...

No. No, no, listen.

No, listen, he's sorry, okay?

We need to use your phone
to call police.

Like we're gonna let strangers
into our house.

- How stupid do you think we are?

- Otis.

For all we know, this is an act
to get in here and rob us.

We don't give a fuck about
the shit in your house.

Be quiet, okay? Be quiet. Listen.

You could call them yourselves.

Please, just call the police. Okay?

All right, but you go on
and get off the porch.

Okay. Okay.

- Hillbilly.

- Don't say anything else, okay, please?

They could turn off
the damn spotlight.

Okay, just shut up. Come here.

- Shit.

- Oh, God.

You two. Hey, hey.

Why don't you wait inside
until the sheriff comes?

Doris, what the hell are you doing?
Jesus would let these two in here.
But he knows if they slit his throat,
he'd be back.

- Otis, that is blasphemy.
- And this here is crazy.

Oh, I don't know what you're
worried about. You're trifling.
Honey, why don't you come in the back
and have some coffee?

- No, it's okay.
- Nonsense. Come on.

Let's go, son. Come on.
How much longer do you think?
Don't know. We're a long ways out.
Time enough to tell me
what brought you two our way.

- We told you, the guys from the motel...
- I was asking her.

We were on our way to Beulah,
that's where I'm from.
Lot of good people in Beulah.
What's your family's name?

- Pruitt.
- Not Jack and Sarah Pruitt?
Sounds like the sheriff.

- What if it's not?
- Oh, I'm sure it is. Otis, go get him.
There's nothing to worry about, honey.
Not anymore.

Christ, what's taking them
so long, huh?
They're probably talking about
what happened, that's all. Otis.
Bring them back here, Otis.
There's been a change.
Gordon'll take them.

- No!
- That's fucking them!
- The guys we were telling you about!
- I appreciate you calling me, Otis.

These are the two who robbed us.
What? No, he's lying!
They're the ones that killed Caleb!

Hold on, now. Who's he?
- Christ, can we just do this?
- He just... He works for me, Doris.
Is that right? Why don't you tell me
what it is you say they stole?
What's it matter?
Gordon said they robbed him.
I take his word over strangers.
That fella there,
he's a stranger to me.
Call the sheriff. Call him, Otis.
Gordon.
You know what?
You guys held him for us.
That's more than enough. We'll take...
- We don't have time for this shit.
- Now, Otis.
No! Shit! No!
- What the hell are you doing?!
- Cleaning up my mess.
No!
Otis trusts me.
She would've called the sheriff.
- Let's run.
- Where do you think you're going?
He shot twice.
He doesn't have any shells.
Go! Go! Get them!
No!
No! No!
No!
No!
No! No!
Do it. Shit.
We need to find a phone.
Look for a phone, Jessica.
There's no phone!
There's a car, there's a car!
Go, go, go!
Jessica, come on!
Come on. Come on.
It's right over here. Come on.
No, no. Shit! Fuck!
Tanner, look out! No!

- I got them!
- No!
- I got them!
- Get off me!
Start filming.
Please!
They'll find those bodies...
...so let's make sure
they don't find anything of ours.
Go on. Go on. Make it look like
a fucked-up burglary. Go on!
Here. Give me that.
Move.
Move!
Go!
This moviemaking shit
is a lot harder than it looks.
Please.
I can't breathe.
What happened?
He murdered them both.
What are we gonna do, Gordon?
Go!
- Haul his ass to the truck.
- No.
I'll take care of her. Come on.
No, no, no!
No!
No! No!
- No!
- Well, time to go back to work.
Are you sitting this one out too?
You've done the rest on your own.
Might as well make it a clean sweep.
Well, it makes me wonder
what I need you two for.
Let's have some fun.
I don't like this anymore, Gordon.
What are we gonna do?
No!
No!
No!
We'll just let it play out.
I mean, he's the only one

who's killed anyone tonight.
We'll wait till the time's right
and we'll pin the whole thing on him.
- What are you two talking about?
- Nothing.
Not that either of you
have got the balls to use it.
If you start getting a brave feeling...
...I'd be real careful.
You enjoy your nap?
Why, you looked like
a little angel sleeping there.
I'm gonna try something
a little different this time.
Unless you can
convince me different.
Wait, wait, wait.
You remind me of a girl
I picked up in Tulsa.
Or Little Rock. I can't remember.
Wish I got to know her better.
She had the damnedest scream.
Almost made my ears bleed.
I wonder what you sound like.
Get over there!
You bitch!
- Shit!
- Get in here, you fucking bitch!
Fuck!
Fuck!
Fuck. Fuck.
Get her! Get the fucking gun!
- Maybe we should...
- Go get her!
Where is she?
Find her.
Find her!
Caleb.
Caleb.
Caleb.
You have to be quiet.
Jessica.
Just keep looking up here, okay?
Tanner.

Tanner.
Shit.
Shit.
Reece!
Stupid asshole.
Reece!
Hello, angel.
No!
No!
No! No!
Shit!
Back off! No!
No! No!
Shit!
Please. Stop.
Please stop!
Sheriff, somebody tore the shit
out of this place.
- Well, she said there were cameras.
- They're not here anymore.
Yeah, no bodies either.
You get ahold of the owner?
Yeah. Lives in Florida.
Says Gordon Jenks
runs the business for him.
I know Gordon.
Seems decent enough.
Not if you buy the girl's story. Do you?
All I'm buying
is some folks are dead.
Sure would make it easier if we could
find out what happened to her friends.
So how many do you want?
As many as you can make me.
I'll start burning some copies.
How long before
you can have a new one?
A few weeks.
Just as soon
as I get the place fixed up...
...put the cameras in...
...we'll be open for business.
All right.