

WISEACRE

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1

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

1

A pair of cowboy boots are walking down a country road. They are old, weathered, and barely holding together. A set of hooves follow behind in a slow trot.

The boots belong to **RIP WISEACRE**, a rustic Caucasian male in his late 60s. Boots up, he wears sun-bleached torn jeans, a white pearl-buttoned long-sleeve shirt (also torn), a long white beard, and a tattered white cowboy hat stained brown around the brim with sweat and dirt.

Rip recites a story to the horse, **BALTHAZAR** on their stroll with a SMILE on his face.

RIP

... and I swear, I stopped at the exact same spot every day for three months to try and find that damned pocket watch. I'd hop off Rocinante and dig through the weeds for an hour to no avail. Well, one day I decided I had had enough of it and stayed saddled and you know what? I swear to you, I found it dangling right there in the tree: the gold shimmering in the sunlight. It turned out when Rocinante bucked me off, it flew straight out of my front pocket into the branches...

2

EXT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY

2

Rip turns onto a short, dirt driveway past a nice homestead. He leads Balthazar past a hand-painted sign "Strangers Welcome" next to a dilapidated shed (Rip's House) with broken windows and a missing roof.

Next to Rip's House is an old wooden barn. Rip opens the gate, and escorts Balthazar inside.

3

INT. RIP'S BARN - DAY

3

Rip sets Balthazar in a pen and departs.

4

EXT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY

4

Rip opens the front door to his shed.

5 INT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY

5

The floorboards CREAK beneath Rip as he steps inside.

There are three rooms: the back bedroom, the atrium/ kitchen, and the library. Every inch of the library's walls is covered by a book. There are book shelves but even they cannot hold all of the books and several are stacked on the ground.

His stomach GRUMBLES.

Rip opens a small set of cabinets to see that he has no edible food. With a SWISS ARMY KNIFE he opens a CAN OF BEETS. He brings it up to his nose and SNIFFS. Rip GAGS. He sets the CAN down and heads for the door.

6 EXT. RIP'S HOUSE

6

Rip grabs a KEY CHAIN off of a hook on the exterior of the door frame that has a small handwritten sign, "Bring it back with a full tank of gas."

He gets into beat-up **1991 FORD F150**.

7 INT. RIP'S TRUCK

7

The F150's engine ROARS to life and the RADIO CRACKLES on a COUNTRY SONG.

8 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD

8

His truck floats upon a mirage of high desert heat. Occasional hills interrupt the flat plane.

The truck stops. Rip hops out and grabs an ALUMINUM CAN off of the ground and (O.S.) tosses it in the back of his truck.

Rip steps back into his truck. As he pulls back out onto the road, CANS RUSTLE in the truck bed.

9 EXT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY

9

Rip pulls up to the country store and sees a couple walking out the entrance. Rip instantly recognizes **BRET** (male, 30s) and **BONNIE** (female, 30s) dressed in designer clothes. Rip lightly HONKS his HORN and YELLS at them in a familiar fashion as he parks.

After he's parked, he jumps out of his truck and jogs towards them as they quickly PEEL OUT of the parking lot.

Rip halts and stands alone in the parking lot, unconscious to the hurt he feels.

10

INT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY

10

Rip enters the deserted store with a SHOPPING CART full of USED CANS.

He approaches a **STORE EMPLOYEE**, a 20 year-old woman with a GREEN APRON.

STORE EMPLOYEE
Cash or store credit?

RIP
Either's fine.

STORE EMPLOYEE
K, it'll be waiting for you at the checkout.

Rip steps up to the Jefferson Lottery station and fills out a form.

Next to the lottery station is a bookshelf. A HANDWRITTEN SIGN reads "Local Authors." Rip picks up a BOOK from the shelf and reads the back, ultimately taking it with him.

He grabs a different CART and starts down the aisles. He grabs CANNED FOOD from the shelves as he goes.

Rip turns into a new aisle and spies a **COWHAND** grabbing some CAKE MIX. Rip begins to walk towards him.

The COWHAND sees Rip walking towards him out of the corner of his eye and walks the other direction.

Rip approaches the check out counter. **DAISY**, a teenage cashier wears a GREEN APRON UNIFORM.

DAISY
Hello, Rip. How's it going today?

RIP
Excellent my dear child. How much did the cans total up to?

DAISY
Four dollars and 65 cents.

Rip sets the items on the conveyer belt.

RIP
... and a pack of Chesterfields if
it pleases you?

Daisy grabs a KEY and walks over to a cigarette shelf. She opens the door and pulls out the last pack of CHESTERFIELDS for \$5.

Daisy returns and scans the CHESTERFIELDS.

DAISY
That will be 86 dollars and 64
cents.

Rip sees a box filled with RED APPLE CIGARETTE PACKS. They have a SIGN which reads "\$3." Rip gestures to the sign.

RIP
What's the deal here?

DAISY
Oh, the store can't get rid of
them. They're normally so expensive
that no one wants 'em.

RIP
I bet they're selling like hotcakes
now.

DAISY
Not really. No one'll touch them
because they don't want to come off
as pretentious for smoking them.

RIP
Hmmm.

DAISY
Ok. This all going on your tab?

Rip lifts the scribbled ticket.

RIP
Did you include this?

DAISY
No.

Daisy takes the ticket, runs it through the scanner, hands Rip his printed version, and recalculates the total.

DAISY (CONT'D)
That'll be 89 dollars and 64 cents.
Tab?

RIP
Yes please?

Daisy pulls out a LITTLE PLASTIC BOX from under the register and opens the lid.

INSERT:

The cashier sifts through the names and comes to Wiseacre with a note written on the front, "No credit. No checks. See Manager."

11 INT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY

11

DAISY
Sorry, I can't put it on your tab.

RIP
What?

DAISY
There's a note here from the manager...

RIP
That's ridiculous. I've been using that tab here for decades.

DAISY
I'm sorry, Rip. I'm just telling you what I see here.

RIP
Ah, the Nuremberg Defense strikes again. Hell, I'll just write you a check instead.

Rip pulls out a LEATHER BILLFOLD from his jacket. Daisy stops Rip before he can begin to write a check.

DAISY
The manager says we can't take a check from you neither. Cash or card, Rip.

With grace, Rip folds his LEATHER BILLFOLD and tucks it away.

RIP
Don't move my cart. I'll be back in two shakes of a lamb's tail.

Rip moves past the Daisy and saunters down an aisle towards the back of the store.

12 INT. COUNTRY STORE (BACK AREA) - DAY 12

Rip walks into the back and turns towards a small set of stairs that lead the manager's office.

Rip KNOCKS politely with the back of his hand trying to be nonchalant.

No answer.

Despite being in an isolated stairwell, Rip looks around before he KNOCKS again. This time, slightly louder.

No answer.

RIP
Martin, let's be civil about this,
please.

No answer.

Rip POUNDS the door with a hard fist.

13 INT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY 13

Daisy looks over her register down the aisle towards the back.

14 INT. COUNTRY STORE (BACK AREA) - DAY 14

The door FLIES OPEN and Rip is pulled in forcefully.

15 INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY 15

The manager pulls Rip away from the door and pushes him towards a chair. **MARTIN**, the manager, is a man in his early 50's, and with a toupee off-kilter from grabbing Rip.

Martin adjusts his toupee and walks around to his desk chair without a word. His appears friendly, but agitated.

Neither speaks expecting the other to go first. Rip begins.

RIP
What's this about my tab being shut
off?

MARTIN
Well, I would have thought that
would be obvious.

RIP
I pay my bills.

MARTIN
You paid off your last tab two years ago. You haven't put a cent towards paying off your current one since then.

RIP
That's not true.

MARTIN
It's not? Would you happen to know what your bill total's up to right now?

Rip shifts around in his chair and holds an awkward beat.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Over two grand.

RIP
(softly)
You know I'm good for it.

MARTIN
No, quite the contrary. I've been charitable with you, Rip. Far more than I should've been and I can't keep letting the store clothe and feed you. Even if I wanted to send your debt to collections, there'd be no point. What would they even take? Your truck? I'm amazed it even runs. I'm sorry, Rip. Unless, you pay off your current balance, I can't extend you any further credit.

Martin RISES and opens the door. Rip looks at Martin with apologetic eyes and sulks out.

16

INT. COUNTRY STORE

16

Rip returns to Daisy's register and pats his chest.

RIP
How much I have again?

DAISY
\$89.64

RIP
I mean the cans.

DAISY
Oh. Four dollars and 65 cents.

Rip reaches out into his pocket and pulls out a two dimes, two nickels, and three pennies. Rip reaches into the "Take a Penny" tray and grabs two pennies. He slides it all to Daisy.

RIP
Just the Chesterfields, I guess.

Rip starts towards the door when Daisy notices that Rip is still holding the LOTTERY TICKET.

DAISY
You'll have to leave that.

Rip looks at the LOTTERY TICKET and his CHESTERFIELDS. He sets down the CHESTERFIELDS and picks up a pack of RED APPLE.

Rip exits the store.

17 EXT. COUNTRY STORE 17

Rip pulls out a CIGARETTE from out the RED APPLE box and a MATCH from a SMALL BOX. He STRIKES THE MATCH on the bottom of his boot and LIGHTS HIS CIGARETTE.

RIP (TO SELF)
Breakfast of Champions.

18 INT. RIP'S BARN - DAY 18

Rip BRUSHES Balthazar with a WOODEN BRUSH.

RIP
I don't know Balthazar. He had me pretty off-guard. What would you have done?

(O.S.) A **1996 DODGE RAM** pulls into the dirt driveway.

Rip stops mid-brush, then exits the barn.

19 EXT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY 19

The WINDOW ROLLS DOWN to the truck. Inside, two blue-collar men, **BUCK** and **CRAPPIE**, brothers (both mid 20s) sit.

BUCK

Howdy, Rip! I thought you weren't supposed to see the bride before the wedding?

Rip, confused for a moment, then chuckles.

RIP

The Fellas. What brings you by to my neck of the woods?

BUCK

Oh, just passing by. We were on our way back home from the hardware store and we saw your truck out here rusting away and we thought, hey, we should rip ol' Rip a new one.

RIP

That's pretty good but you ain't busted my balls yet.

BUCK

I might if we had the time to but we ain't got it. We don't want to lose the sun and we only have two sets of hands. See ya later, Rip.

RIP

Hey now, not so fast fellas. What's it you're fixing to break?

BUCK

We ain't looking to break shit, Rip. Gotta fix a few things, paint a shed, and some other shit.

RIP

Well you're both liable to do more damage than repair. You'd have to down a six pack to get your hands steady and, by then, we'd have nothing left to celebrate with afterwards. How 'bout I come out and help out a bit.

BUCK

Nah. Thanks, we'll take care of it ourselves.

RIP
 Ah, come on now, fellas. We'll all
 get a cold one in town afterwards.
 What d'you say?

Buck looks over at Crappie and smirks. Then, he turns back.

BUCK
 Sounds like a plan.

20

EXT. BROTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

20

The brothers are sitting down taking a smoke on the back of their truck when they see Rip's truck pull into their driveway. They toss their cigarette butts and start to unload stuff as if they've been working the whole time.

Rip's car parks and he gets out with a RED TOOL BOX.

RIP
 Jesus, Mary, & Joseph! Mighty good
 thing I showed up or nothing would
 ever get done.

CRAPPIE
 If you're just goin' to criticize
 us the whole fuckin' time then you
 can just leave.

RIP
 Sorry, no offense intended. What's
 first on your list?

BUCK
 Well we've got to get this fence up
 before sunset...

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF IMAGES shows the three of them working. Rip puts in a lot of effort as the brothers slack off. Rip takes over their duties, and they sit back and watch as Rip does all of their work for them.

21

INT. COUNTRY BAR - DUSK

21

The three nurse beers at a round table - Rip, dirty from the day's effort, and the brothers clean.

CUT TO:

The minute hand on the clock rotates twice completely around ending at 10:00 PM.

CUT BACK TO:

22

INT. COUNTRY BAR - LATER

22

The brothers tug at their scruffy beards in boredom as Rip speaks.

RIP

And my favorite fact about the Aztecs is ...

CRAPPIE

Check!

RIP

But the night is young, fellas?

CRAPPIE

Yeah but we've got work in the morning.

RIP

Ah, say no more, I understand. Got to bring home the bacon.

The bartender, AUTUMN (late 20s), brings the BILL over.

RIP (CONT'D)

Here, hand it over.

CRAPPIE

Alright then, Rip. Thank you much.

Rip pulls out his LEATHER BILLFOLD. As Rip pulls out a pen, Autumn interjects in sympathy.

AUTUMN

We don't take checks no more, Rip.

RIP

Don't take checks!?! They're legal tender, Autumn.

AUTUMN

Not my bar, not my rules. You'll have to take it up with Cindy.

RIP

I will at that!

(gets up)

(MORE)

RIP (CONT'D)

Fellas, I shan't be but a minute.
Nothing to fear.

Rip goes up to the bar and waves down CINDY (30s), the owner.

CINDY

Yeah, Rip?

RIP

Yes, I seem to have had a
miscommunication with your
apprentice.
(laughing)
He seemed to be of the impression
that checks were not legal tender.
I tried to explain ...

CINDY

We've had too many checks bounce,
Rip. Many of which came from you.

RIP

Yes, I understand but I've got the
funds to back it this time and, you
see they are, in fact, considered
legal tender in a court of law...

CINDY

As long as stores choose to accept
them. And we don't take 'em
anymore. Got it? There's even a
sign on the door as you come in.

RIP

I didn't see any such proclamation.

CINDY

That doesn't mean it's not there.
Now we accept all major credit
cards or cash.

RIP

Well, then we're going to have a
problem.

CINDY

Not 'we,' you.

RIP

Well give me a second to explain it
to the fellas.

Rip turns around to sees that "the fellas" have left. Rip
turns back around to the expected face of Cindy.

23 INT. COUNTRY BAR KITCHEN - NIGHT

23

Rip cleans dishes with an stained apron.

A SMALL TELEVISION blazes overhead as he cleans a few glasses. The lottery is announced.

The numbers read 54,16,32,98,65 & 15.

Rip feels jittery. He wipes his hands on his apron, and reaches his right fist into his pocket.

He pulls out the LOTTERY TICKET.

INSERT:

The numbers read 54,16,32,98,65 & 15.

24 EXT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY

24

Rip parks the car and hops out. As walks towards the entrance, he sees a GREEN TOYOTA COROLLA with a newspaper sticker, **THE JEFFERSONIAN**, stuck on the side of the door.

25 INT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY

25

Rip enter the store and sees that the manager, Martin, talking to a PHOTOJOURNALIST (30s) with a big camera around his neck.

MARTIN

... certainly. Rip has been a regular for as long as I've worked here and long before that too. As many of the shops do in town, we deal with credit on a daily basis. Rip has had a harder life than most and we've always been there for him.

(sees Rip approach)

Rip! Come on over here.

Rip walks over, sheepish.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Rip we've got your groceries ready for you here...

(looks at the photojournalist)

...as we always do...

The photojournalist loses interest in Martin's ramblings and focuses on Rip.

PHOTOJOURNALIST

Rip, I've heard a few rumors that you were instrumental in getting The State of Jefferson approved but got passed over for Governor when the time came.

Rip holds his breath, embarrassed.

RIP

No. That's a different person.

PHOTOJOURNALIST

I'm sorry, isn't your legal first name "Conrad."

RIP

No, you've got me confused. Sorry.

With a confused look, Rip spies the shopping cart and sees the exact items he attempted to buy the day before.

MARTIN

Rip, we've already put it on your tab so you are good to go.

(looks back at the photojournalist who is still looking at Rip)

Rip comes in like clockwork every week, same time, same list of groceries.

Rip pauses to process the blatant lies.

RIP

You forgot one thing.

Martin, nervous, braces for Rip's next phrase.

RIP (CONT'D)

The horse feed.

Martin sighs in relief.

MARTIN

Aw. Is it not under on the bottom of the cart?

Martin makes an overexaggerated effort to look underneath.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
You're right, Rip. We'll get right
on that.

Martin looks past Rip and yells at Daisy.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Daisy! You forgot the horse feed!

Daisy glares back but resigns off to an aisle.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
(to photojournalist)
Say, how 'bout we get a photo of me
& Rip?

PHOTOJOURNALIST
(eyes Rip)
Certainly.

Martin grabs Rip around the shoulder.

MARTIN
Ready when you are?

The photojournalist lifts his camera to his eye but then
lowers it without taking any shots.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Is something the matter?

PHOTOJOURNALIST
(looking at Martin)
No, not particularly. It's just
that ... I'm not sure our editor
would like the front page to have
(shifts gaze to Rip)
a man dressed like a vagabond.

MARTIN
Aw, I see. What do you suggest?

PHOTOJOURNALIST
Well, let's just dress him up a
little. Are there any clothing
stores nearby?

MARTIN
Yeah, Joannie's down the street has
a great selection.

INSERT:

A newspaper front page showing Rip in the FINER COWBOY WEAR, complete with a SILVER BELT BUCKLE and a NEW FELT HAT. The wardrobe is gaudy, ostentatious, and overall completely unlike the Rip we have seen up until now. The title reads, "Former Politician Wins It Big"

26

INT. RIP'S BARN - DAY

26

Rip pours a bag of oats in a trough for Balthazar, who guzzles it down.

RIP

Wow now, slow down boy. You'll give yourself a stomach ache. Besides, I've got another surprise for you.

He pulls out an RED APPLE.

Rip leaves Balthazar with his feast and walks back to his shed.

27

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

27

Rip walks Balthazar with new vigor. He waves at cars as they pass who now honk and wave back at him.

Rip escorts Balthazar back to his pen, past a BRAND NEW FORD F150, PRICE STICKERS still in the window.

28

INT. RIP'S BARN - DAY

28

Rip feeds Balthazar with the new oats when he sees the brothers pull into the driveway.

29

EXT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY

29

Rip approaches their truck.

BUCK

Hey, Rip!

Rip's chipper, but reticent.

RIP

How's it going?

BUCK

Oh, good...good. Crappie and I were driving by and ... ah hell, Rip.

(MORE)

BUCK (CONT'D)

There's no beating around the bush,
we're sorry about the other night.
If we knew you were short of cash,
we would've gladly paid the bill,
you know that right?

RIP

(unsure, but wants to
believe)
Yeah, I know.

BUCK

What happened was, we went outside
for a smoke when you were takin'
care of the bill. When you didn't
come out, we assumed that you were
chattin' up the bartender like you
do so we went home.

RIP

Look, all's forgiven, you need
worry no further.

Pause.

BUCK

Say, how's you say we make it up to
you. Let us take you out for a
drink tonight.

Rip's reticence gives way to a hearty smile.

RIP

It's a deal.

30

INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT

30

Rip marches into the bar. A sea of faces flash by in stark
contrast to the near-vacant establishment a few days prior.

BUCK

Rip! The man of the hour himself
has arrived.

RIP

What is all this?

CRAPPIE

It's a celebration. With some of
your closest friends here to share
in your company.

Rip looks around and doesn't recognize anyone, save for the "fellas".

RIP

I don't know anyone here.

BUCK

Of course you don't. They're from out of town helping build that bridge in Zenith. They're our friends, but, tonight, we're sharing them with you.

Rip narrows his eyes slightly. He holds the gaze on Buck for a moment before his cautious visage melts away.

RIP

I'm flattered, fellas.

Buck jumps up on the bar and signals for Rip to join him.

BUCK

I've got a special guest here for you all and I wish to make a toast. This is Rip Wiseacre. He's been one of Crappie's and my dearest friends for years. He is just about the nicest, most caring man you could ever meet. He is, as some of you may recognize, the very same Rip Wiseacre that was on the news for winning the largest state lottery in the United States of Cascadia of all time.

CHEERS.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Now... Now... I'm not quite finished. In addition to his kindness, he's also one of the most generous men I've ever met. So generous, in fact, he's graciously offered to buy all of the drinks for the entire night.

CHEERS EVEN LOUDER. Rip glares at Buck, angry at being tricked.

Rip signals that he has something to say himself.

RIP

Friends... countrymen... hicks!

ROARS OF PRIDE.

RIP (CONT'D)
Drink heartily, the libations are
on me!

CHEERS.

INTERCUT:

A SERIES OF IMAGES shows Rip drinking and socializing with
all of the people and they are being friendly and receptive.

31 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 31

Rip shoots a pool cue with a FARMER (20s).

FARMER
Could you loan me some money?

RIP
How much?

FARMER
Hard to say. It's for a new
tractor.

RIP
I don't see a problem with that.

32 INT. COUNTRY BAR - LATER 32

Rip play at the slot machine and talks with a RANCHER (30s).

RANCHER
The roof on my barn's just about
ready to fall off.

RIP
Well we can't have that now can we?

33 INT. COUNTRY BAR - LATER 33

Rip drinks from a tall mug of beer as a CARPENTER (30s) asks
a favor.

CARPENTER
I lost most my tools in the
divorce. I really could use a new
table saw.

RIP
What's your favorite cut? Crosscut
or a rip? Haha yeah, sure thing.

34

INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT

34

The bar is empty save for Rip, asleep on the table. A hand reaches out and shakes Rip. His face PEELS OFF the table as he looks up to Autumn. Still drunk, Rip slurs his speech.

AUTUMN
The total came to 851 dollars and
some change, but I'll round down to
850 for you.

RIP
Can I write a check?

AUTUMN
You see the sign when you came in?

RIP
(jokes)
Nope.

AUTUMN
(smiles)
Neither did I.

Rip pulls out his LEATHER BILLFOLD & WRITES HIS CHECK.

RIP
You mind holding off on cashing
that for a few weeks. The checks
haven't started to come in yet.

AUTUMN
Sure.
(extending her hand)
Here, give me your keys. I'll drive
you home.

RIP
Nah, I slept most of it off
already. I'm good.

AUTUMN
You're no such thing. Hand them
over.

With reluctance, Rip puts the keys in Autumn's hand.

RIP
Can I use the lou before we head
out?

AUTUMN
It's all yours. I've got to close
up shop anyway.

35 INT. COUNTRY BAR (BATHROOM) - NIGHT 35

Rip sways back and forth up to the urinal and leans against the wall as he pees.

36 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 36

Autumn is behind the bar counting dollar bills next to the register when TWO AGGRESSIVE MEN (30s) walk into the front door.

AUTUMN
Sorry guys, we're closed.

The two just look at Autumn and she grows concerned at the silence. A urinal FLUSHES in the background and the two start walking.

Autumn looks at the bills and then looks around her. She spots a mop next to her and grabs it quickly.

As she assumes a defensive position in front of the register, she sports a confused look at as she sees them walk past to the rear bathroom. She shrugs and sets the broom back aside and turns around to finish closing the register.

One of the two grab a GLASS BEER BOTTLE.

37 INT. COUNTRY BAR (BATHROOM) - NIGHT 37

Rip washes his hand in the sink when he notices a smudge on his new hat. He dries his hands and then pulls off the hat and wets a PAPER TOWEL to rub the stain.

38 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 38

Rip stumbles out of the bathroom with his head down looking at his stained hat as the beer bottles SMASHES over his head.

39 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 39

Autumn's head whips around at the crash and she peers over the bar but her view is obstructed. She grabs the bar's PHONE and dials 911.

40 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 40

The two men begin to rifle through Rip's pockets.

41 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 41

Autumn is talking to the police.

911 OPERATOR
...I'm sorry but all of our officers are either off duty or out answering other emergencies. I'll call Klamath for help but it will be at least half an hour before they can get there...

Autumn hangs up and thinks to herself for a second. She hops off and runs off towards the back.

42 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 42

The assailants find Rip's LEATHER BILLFOLD, a BOX OF MATCHES, and his RED APPLE CIGARETTES.

Autumn runs by but the two ignore the motion and continue with their action.

43 INT. COUNTRY BAR (OFFICE) - NIGHT 43

With trembling fingers, Autumn struggles to open a safe.

44 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 44

They look through the LEATHER BILLFOLD and become angry when there's nothing inside. One holds Rip's hat and cigarettes in each hand. He extends his hand to offer the cigarettes but the other declines them with a dismissive wave of the hand so the first tosses them on Rip's chest. They gaze down at the body in frustration when the first rubs his thumb across the brim of Rip's hat and notices the expensive brand. He then looks back down at Rip's unconscious body.

INSERT:

45 CU - SHOT OF SILVER BELT BUCKLE 45
CU - SHOT OF NEW LEATHER BOOTS

46 INT. COUNTRY BAR (OFFICE) - NIGHT 46
The safe SWINGS OPEN and a REVOLVER is waiting there inside.

47 INT. COUNTRY BAR - NIGHT 47
Rip, devoid of shoes, hat, or belt rises from the floor.
Bracing himself on a nearby shelf as he does. He reaches his
hand up and notices blood on the back of his scalp.
Autumn explodes from the back office.

AUTUMN
Freeze! Hands in the air!

Rip, stunned, obeys.

Autumn stands with the gun pointing at Rip and then lowers it
ashamed at her lack of speed.

Rip lowers his gaze heartbroken.

Autumn sets the gun down and inches forward to embrace him.

48 INT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY 48
Rip is laying down at his bed leisurely reading a book. His
clothes are beat up from the day before and his SHOES ARE
BEAT UP NIKES.

A KNOCK sounds from the front door.

Rip grabs a BOOKMARK from his night-stand and closes the
book. He rises from the bed and meanders to the door.

49 INT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY 49
The farmer from the night before holds a bag of horse feed.

FARMER
Have you heard anything from the
bank yet?

RIP
Huh?

FARMER

For my tractor? I went ahead and ordered it since you said you'd cover the cost.

RIP

Oh yeah. Should be any day though.

50

INT. RIP'S HOUSE - LATER

50

The rancher from the night before holds a bag of feed.

RANCHER

I have a crew out there right now and I was wondering how you were planning on covering the cost?

RIP

Oh, I don't know. The money hasn't come in yet.

RANCHER

What about your truck?

RIP

They sold it to me on credit for now.

51

INT. RIP'S HOUSE - LATER

51

The carpenter from the night before holds a bag of feed.

CARPENTER

I spent some of the money I'm supposed to use for alimony on buying the saw to get started. Could you spare some at the moment?

RIP

Sorry. It hasn't come in yet.

Rip closes the door behind each person and finally rests his head on the door frame after the third person leaves.

52

EXT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY

52

Rip takes down the hand written sign, "Stranger's Welcome" and replaces it with a store bought "Trespassers Forbidden," and replaces the "Bring it back with a full tank" sign with one that reads "No solicitation."

- 53 INT. RIP'S HOUSE - MORNING 53
- Rip secures his house. He pulls weathered 2x4s from a woodpile in the barn. He grabs a CAN OF NAILS off of the wall of the barn and boards them up over his windows one at a time with a HAMMER.
- 54 INT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY 54
- Rip reads in his house all blocked off from the world.
- 55 INT. RIP'S BARN - DAY 55
- Rip gives some more feed to Balthazar.
- 56 INT. RIP'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 56
- Rip wakes up, yawns, and stretches. Rip pulls on his weathered sneakers and steps outside.
- 57 INT. RIP'S BARN 57
- The barn door opens and Rip slips through the gate and notices that Balthazar isn't standing.
- Flies buzz over his head and he nears the pen.
- Rip towers over the lifeless corpse of a fly-ridden Balthazar.
- 58 INT. RIP'S HOUSE 58
- Rip stands in the doorway to his library and looks at an overturned room. His chest pulls in heavy breaths and sweat beads from his brow.
- Rip moves over the wreckage and goes to a fallen writing desk. He opens a drawer and pulls out a SMALL BUDDLE OF CLOTH and unwraps it to reveal a REVOLVER.
- 59 INT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - DAY 59
- JOEL (late 70s) is cleaning his dishes when a GUNSHOT cracks through the room.
- Joel jerks down to the ground and hears a several more GUNSHOTS. After the shots have stopped, he gets up slowly and walks towards the window.

Joel peers outside and sees Rip walking back to his shed.

60 INT. RIP'S HOUSE - DAY

60

The front door is KICKED IN and a POLICE OFFICER walks into the small shed.

He approaches Rip who sits on the ground in his library. He toys with the REVOLVER as the police officer takes careful steps towards Rip.

61 EXT. RIP'S HOUSE - LATER

61

Rip is escorted out of the shed in HAND CUFFS and led to the POLICE CAR.

62 INT. POLICE HOLDING CELL - DAY

62

Rip sits in the holding cell, silent. The cell door slides open.

POLICE OFFICER

Rip, Dr. Kurusz is here to see you.
He's not exactly legal counsel but
we'll look past it this time.

DR. KURUSZ (50s), a veterinarian, walks into the cell and sits opposite Rip.

Dr. Kurusz nods to the police officer and the cell door slides shut.

RIP

(downcast)

So, what kind of poison was it?
Strychnine? Ricin? They must've put
it in one of the bags of feed...

Dr. Kurusz raises his hand to silence Rip's rant.

DR. KURUSZ

You never had Balthazar vaccinated,
did you?

Rip's head pulls back in slight shock at the question.

DR. KURUSZ (CONT'D)

That's what I thought. Balthazar's
insides were ravaged by parasites,
Rip. Worms.

(MORE)

DR. KURUSZ (CONT'D)

He must've had them crawling around in him for years but you never noticed because he had a hard enough time living on the meager meals he could find himself that there was nothing left for them. The high nutrition of the oats allowed the worms to multiply and fester.

RIP

...so it was the feed that killed him?

DR. KURUSZ

In a way, yes. The nutrient-rich food was too much of a shock to his system. I'm sorry, Rip.

(pause)

Do you want me to call a lawyer for you?

RIP

I made my own bed.

Dr. Kurusz shrugs and exits the cell.

The police officer CLOSES THE CELL GATE behind Dr. Kurusz.

63

INT. POLICE HOLDING CELL - SOME TIME LATER

63

The police officer comes back and Rip has not yet moved. He unlocks the door and opens it.

POLICE OFFICER

Alright, Rip. It's time to leave. Your neighbors decided not to press charges and I've got to get home.

Rip rises and drags his body to the cell gate and exits.

64

EXT. POLICE STATION - DUSK

64

Rip looks out at the sunset and pulls out his RED APPLE CIGARETTES. He opens it up and pulls out a cigarette and pulls out the original lottery ticket rolled up.

Rip unrolls it and stares at the numbers for a long while. He finally reaches down and strikes a match on the bottom of his boot.

He lights the lottery ticket aflame and then lights his cigarette with the burning ticket.

Rip drops the lottery ticket to the ground where it SMOLDERS.

65

EXT. RIP'S HOUSE - NIGHT

65

Rip stands resolute before a burning shed. The camera rises to the sky and ends on the constellation Cassiopeia.

THE END.