111 MINUTES

(The timing in each chapter represents the length of the scene – almost as if this was a movie)

* 3:10. Molly Rourke, thirty-eight, runs into her son’s high school. Students scatter, but they also stare at her. (Much of the book is Molly’s first-person narration). Her son is lying in the main hallway. Alex. Fifteen years old. He’s OD’d on drugs (RESEARCH). Molly is intelligent and strong willed, but she’s nearly overcome seeing her young son this way. Her brothers, Hank and Stevie, arrive. They stand over Alex’s lifeless body. We feel the moment with them. We like the Rourkes. This is how we might react ourselves. Stevie calls out, “Who sold Alex drugs? Who did this? Somebody better talk to me.”
* 1:40. That night Hank and Stevie drive into the McKinley compound on a nearby farm. The brothers are armed. So are the McKinleys. At least a dozen men with guns. The McKinleys are the area’s big meth dealers – very bad hombres (they’re responsible for Alex’s overdose and death). Steve and Hank don’t back away from the McKinley’s artillery. Abe McKinley appears on the porch. They tell McKinley they hold him responsible for Alex’s death. McKinley drawls, “Stevie, Hank, thanks for stopping by. Appreciate the visit. Don’t come back again. You do, I’ll bury you out back with the dogs. Sorry for your loss.”
* 2:45 – Three months have passed. The scene starts at the end of a tense Rourke family meeting. They’re going to lose the family farm. Everything that matters to them. Present are Molly, Stevie, Hank, Hank and Stevie’s wives, and two friends who served in Afghanistan with Stevie. There’s a plan on the table. It’s desperate. It’s time for a vote. Each of them says whether they’re in or out. A few of them add a sentence or two for clarification. The vote is unanimous. One of the wives asks, “Where are we going to get $75,000 and pull this thing off?”
* 4:50. This is Step 1 of the desperate plan. The Rourkes have traveled three counties away from home. They enter a Key bank. It’s very dramatic and suspenseful (RESEARCH). They’re here to rob the bank. They all wear masks. They order everybody “to put up your hands and keep your hands held high. That means everybody. Hands held high.” The robbery goes off like clockwork.
* :17. Until it doesn’t. The young, dumb security guard tries to play hero. Stevie has no choice – he has to shoot him. But only in the arm. Stevie leans in and says to the guard, “You just got shot for bank money. Sorry about that.”
* 3:05 . We introduce Mason Randolph, our heroic FBI agent. He’s at the Key bank and he’s gotten all the info he can. He tells a subordinate, “We got nothing. That wasn’t worth the trip. Except we know that they’re good planners. We’ll get them anyway.”
* :45. Back at the Rourke farm they finishing counting the money. A little over $82,000. Stevie says, “I’ll buy. Taco Bell. Double Decker Taco Supremes for everybody. ” Molly says, “No way, I’m cooking tonight.” Molly hasn’t cooked a meal since Alex died.
* 1:00. Molly visits Alex’s grave. She remembers a couple of touching details. We like Molly and feel her grief. She seems very real to us.
* 1:00. Two more months have passed. Now comes Step 2 of the plan. Most of this continues to be Molly’s first-person narration. The Rourkes have been staking out a very large farm in another part of Texas. The stakeout phase is done. This is the big one.
* 1:00 – Molly applies makeup to Stevie’s face. She’s good at it. He looks twenty-five years older. Unrecognizable as himself. Then comes the wig. “Wow, what an improvement. You never looked so good in your life.”
* 31:20.

1. The reader still doesn’t know what’s going to happen – but has gotten the sense that it involves a large private sale of very expensive horses. The sale is all-cash. When the Rourkes arrive inside a massive tent or barn, Stevie says to Molly, “Those guns better be inside here. Otherwise we’ll be the only folks in this tent who aren’t carrying.” To gain admittance, Molly has to show $75,000 in cash. She shows $82,000.
2. The Rourkes walk around looking at the horses. They know horses. The Rourkes all wear heavy makeup and wigs. Molly did an amazing job. All of this has to play very realistically.
3. Hank and one of the vets go and collect the guns from where they had been hidden. We learn that the Rourkes had some inside help. We don’t know from whom. The guns are state-of-the art machine guns. Impressive and scary.
4. The actual hold-up takes less than 9 minutes on the clock. Everyone in the tent is ordered to put their guns on the ground. Then “hands held high – and keep them up”. The Rourkes collect the cash from the players.
5. The head of security warns them as they’re leaving. “No chance you get away with this. We’re going to hunt you down. I’m going to hunt you down. No chance you’ll get away with this bullshit.”
6. The Rourkes switch cars and trucks twice in the next 15 minutes. Then it’s done.

* 3:30. There was never much doubt, if any, that Mason Rudolph, the FBI agent we saw earlier at the bank, would be assigned to the robbery at the horse farm. He’s that good, the Bureau’s go-to guy in the southwest. Mason meets with the head of security at the horse farm. He can’t stand the guy, but he handles him. Mason is very impressive.
* 3:05. The next day, Mason sums it up for a group of cops and FBI agents attached to his case. He’s convincing, smart. They’re going to get the robbers.
* 1:15. Molly is working the family farm in a Deere tractor. She’s always loved this – riding a tractor on their land. She spots a caravan of black SUVs passing on a nearby state road. She’s pretty sure it’s police. Shit.
* 2:30. Mason Randolph’s smarts and obsessiveness is starting to pay off. He’s traced the robbers to a specific county in Texas. He’s going there now. But first he has to make a stop. Mason is at the front door of his parents’ house in a neighboring county. The greeting is very warm. Smiles and tears. Mason comes from good stock.
* 1:30 – It’s Molly’s wedding day. Her second wedding day actually (her first husband died in Afghanistan). She’s making her vows to the man she loves. We’re not interested in who he is for now. She’s very happy -– but she’s afraid her family’s going to get caught. “I do,” she says in a sweet whisper, “I absolutely do.”
* 2:30. Mason Randolph’s certain he’s in the town where the robbers live. He’s also sure he knows who they are. They’re about to go down. He’s addressing his strike force. He’s inside a VFW hall outside the town. He tells his team that the bad guys are good with guns. He hopes no one is going to die – but it’s definitely not going to be anybody from this team.
* :50. Late that afternoon Mason is walking downtown in the village. He bumps into a vaguely familiar woman. She’s very friendly - recognizes him from the wedding. “You’re Mason. You’re the one who married Molly Rourke.” This kind of puts Mason in shock. It should do the same for the reader. Jaws should drop.
* 2:00. And keep dropping. Mason and his heavily-armed force have the farm surrounded. He calls out to whoever’s inside with a bullhorn. Makes a short, smart speech. Shots are fired back from inside. This isn’t going to turn out well.
* 7:40. The exchange of light gunfire has been going on for hours. Now it intensifies. A decision is made that the strike force is going inside. Flash grenades are thrown into the house…Finally -- people start to file outside. Not the Rourke family. The meth dealers from early in the book—the McKinleys. The dopers who killed Molly’s son…It becomes clear that not only did Molly set up the robbery at the horse farm, she set up the dopers to take the fall for the robbery. Mason – her new husband – was in on the plan from the very beginning. He was part of the “outsider help”.
* 1:00. Molly watches the whole scene from a nearby hill. She says a prayer for Alex.