

COLLISION COURSE

by Daryl Henry

FADE IN:

EXT. SANDY BEACH - EARLY MORNING

Clear green water climbs a golden beach, sparkles a moment in the sun, rolls lazily back down to the sea. Gradually the murmur of the surf is overtaken by the CHUG of a motor boat.

EXT. MOTOR BOAT - SEEN FROM SHORE - EARLY MORNING

Ghosting around a rocky promontory, hugging the coastline. On her stern is her name: *Tammy Veer*.

TAMMY VEER - ANOTHER ANGLE

Viewed downhill through stately fir, she noses into a harbor slowly thickening with fog.

EXT. THURSDAY HARBOR - ESTABLISHING

A San Juan Island community with the rich smells of low tide and tall green trees, in the sun belt between Washington State and British Columbia.

AT THE DOCK

The Tammy Veer's only occupant is a weatherbeaten MAN who makes the boat fast. This is WESTY GAULT, 40, all knotted muscle and contrary jaw. We follow him as he climbs into a mud-splattered Sheriff's PATROL CAR, sets off uphill.

FOLLOW THE CAR

Past a gas station, post office, seafood cafe, general store and the Sheriff's office, up a rutted road toward:

EXT. LOG HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

A rough-hewn cabin in a rocky, tree-shadowed clearing has a cedar roof, a crooked chimney, stacks of cordwood nestling under moss-eared eaves. In the yard:

A NEGLECTED SAILBOAT

In a sea of wood shavings behind the house, an ocean-going double-ender up on chocks. Along her sides, a row of PORTHOLES. On her stern, her faded name: *Tahiti Belle*.

CLOSER

A great tall gentle youth, TRISTAN GAULT, stands some distance from the sailboat, concentrating hard on hitting HOCKEY PUCKS through her open portholes. Taking great swipes at them with an aluminum stick, sending one through each port in turn, not missing.

The fog is congealing to warm rain as Westy arrives, parks, climbs down, waits for the barrage to stop.

Tristan smiles up. Only 18, his face already has the look of hard use: nose pushed to one side, scar on his chin.

WESTY

The boat checks out good, Tris.
Let's go.

TRISTAN

I'm not sure we've got the weather,
dad.

Westy squints at the murky sky from under woolly eyebrows.

WESTY

If I can see the top of the trees,
it's good enough.

TRISTAN

Okay, but before you sail the Belle
to Tahiti, you'd better upgrade your
forecasting skills.

WESTY

I won't need to-- I'll have you
along, right?

TRISTAN

Not unless Tahiti gets a hockey team.

They start toward the house, both a little bow-legged.

EXT. SEAFOOD CAFE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The town's main eatery. Needing paint.

INT. SEAFOOD CAFE - DAY

Red and white plastic tablecloths on empty tables. At the counter two CUSTOMERS drink coffee and talk logging. A skinny WAITRESS looks out the window as she dries her hands on her apron. This is ANALIESE, 17, bright shy chestnut eyes.

VOICE FROM KITCHEN

Any sign of them yet?

ANALIESE

They're comin' now, momma.

ANALIESE'S POV OUTSIDE

Tristan and his father drive over the hill, park at the:

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Both climb out. They're dressed for fishing now-- heavy sweaters, woolen caps. Hanging from their belts are long serrated fish-cleaning knives.

Westy enters. Tristan waits outside. Analiese comments:

ANALIESE (V.O.)
He's puttin' his pistol away.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

An angular DEPUTY looks up from a magazine, uncoils from his chair, all knees and elbows.

DEPUTY
Mornin', Westy.

WESTY
Mornin', Goose. Keep an eye on
things for me, will you?

Westy removes a .38 caliber Colt REVOLVER from his pocket, stows it in a locker.

GOOSE
Sure. Catch me an' Harriet somethin'
for the freezer, okay?

Westy gives him a thumbs up, exits.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Westy joins his son. They continue on foot down the street toward the cafe.

ANALIESE (V.O.)
He's tellin' Tristan he could've been
a deputy by now.

WESTY
I sure wish you'd followed in my
footsteps. You could've been a
deputy by now.

Tristan smiles.

WESTY (CONT'D)
With your brains you could've gone
down to Seattle and been a *detective*.

ANALIESE (V.O.)
Tristan is tellin' him he's going to
play for Detroit.

TRISTAN
I'm going to play for the Red Wings.

WESTY
Hockey pucks break noses.

TRISTAN
Policemen get shot.

Westy loves his son even if he is difficult.