

BITCH SLAP

Excerpt from the
Action / Thriller

Screenplay By

P.K. Silverson

pkilverson@hotmail.com

REGISTERED WGAw No. 1561754

FADE IN:

EXT. PRODUCE PLANT, STEINBECK, CA - SUMMER MORNING

Four huge refrigerated container trucks idle against open shipping bays at a massive central valley factory, ready to load. Two from supermarket chains, one railway shipping company. The biggest, flashiest... KayCee Jonz SuperStores.

A sleek sedan glides off the spare rural access road, parks. The HITTER, 35, slithers out like the deadly viper he is. Circles the plant. Spots WORKERS in matched white smocks on a smoke break. Men in hair nets. Catty women sport bandannas: MONA, 45, fading. BARBI, 33, clueless. JESS, 58, dried out.

MONA

I still can't believe the look on that peckerwood's face.

JESS

I always said he had it coming.

BARBI

Still, I never saw the like of it.

MONA

I'll say one thing... I never expected such excitement from a little old birthday party.

BARBI

More than one way to blow out a candle, I guess.

BEEP! End-of-break horn. RALPH, 60, affable rotund guard, holds the door. The Hitter falls in step, last in line.

RALPH

Ladies, have a wonderful morning.

JESS

You, too, sweetheart.

Ralph blushes. The Hitter almost slips past.

RALPH

Can I help you, partner?

HITTER

I'm here to meet Tina for lunch.

RALPH

Don't know any Tina. Try around front.

Ralph turns to close the door, guard down. Big mistake. The Hitter slams him hard into the wall, cracks his skull, drops him to the ground. He bleeds out as the Hitter slips inside.

INT. PLANT, PROCESSING FLOOR - MORNING

Workers file to their stations through the building's cavernous belly. Conveyor belts growl as they move produce past lines of sorters, washers, separators and cutters.

The catty women take their places around a fleet-fingered woman coring heads of lettuce from a stainless steel bowl. She feeds them onto a fast moving belt which carries them into spinning blades. Down the line, the results mix into packaged salad bags. Oblivious to her returning associates...

KRISTINA, 27. Co-workers know her as Krissie. Her smock a size too large, carefully chosen to conceal an agile tigress ready to respond to threats real or perceived. Her waifish, make-up-free face and mousy hair color a not-entirely-successful bid to blend in. Eyes too intelligent to be plain. Her concentration a shield against curious glances.

PLANT, LOCKER ROOM

The Hitter lurks until workers have filed out to the floor. Slides into their changing room. Finds clean smocks on a rack. Slips one on.

PLANT, PROCESSING FLOOR

Ignored by busy workers, the Hitter eases through the din of processing machines. Spots Kristina on the salad line. Glides toward her, draws a vicious knife from under his smock.

The blade's gleam reflects in Kristina's steel bowl. She spins out of sheer reflex. Hurls her bowl into the knife before the Hitter can strike, knocks it loose. Pushes off the frame of the conveyor, bulldozes into the Hitter.

MONA

Look out. She's gone bat-shit again!

The Hitter has a gun in his hand before other workers can reach them. Workers SCREAM and scatter.

HITTER

We tried the quiet way.

Kristina pulls over a pile of steel bowls. Knocks the Hitter's aim off just enough. BANG! The shot goes wild. She kicks hard before he can fire again. Catches the side of his knee, buckles his leg. Grabs, spins him toward the conveyor belt.

He struggles to bring the gun down on her head. She's in too close. Knees him hard between the legs. Then again and again. He staggers, swings wildly. She sidesteps, throws him over her hip onto the conveyor. Lands on his back, winded. The belt screams in protest, drags as he grabs at her smock.

Kristina slams another steel bowl down on his head. Then again and once more. Dazed, the Hitter lets go. The conveyer drives him head-first into the grinding steel blades of the chopper. The machine jams as his shoulders catch between the savage blades. Salad bathed in blood flows into plastic bags.

Exhausted, Kristina lunges at the kill switch, shuts down the belt. Sinks to the floor. Her eyes search the confused, horrified expressions of her co-workers as the fresh corpse twitches on the conveyer.

KRISTINA

Shit.

INT. PLANT, HALL OUTSIDE THE BREAK ROOM - NOON

The burly PLANT MANAGER leads a uniformed Marshall past traumatized plant workers too numb to speak...

RONNIE PHELPS, 30, carries himself like the former Navy Seal he is. Friendly eyes offset a vestigial military bearing. A fine physical specimen... except for the limp, a permanent reminder of his last mission.

PLANT MANAGER

She's in here, Ronnie.

JESS

She kilt that man,
Sheriff.

MONA

What about poor Ralph?

RONNIE

All right, all right everybody. Let's try to keep it together. I'll find out what's going on.

BARBI

I knew she was trouble the day she showed up.

RONNIE

No need to jump to conclusions, Ma'am.

BARBI

Don't you Ma'am me, Ronnie Phelps. I dated your big brother in high school.

RONNIE

Let me do my job, Barbi.

She nods. The crowd lets him pass into the break room.

PLANT, BREAK ROOM

Alone, Kristina sits in a corner, her knees tucked into her arms, her head rests on them, eyes vacant.

RONNIE

Miss Lamn? Can you talk about it?

KRISTINA

The man was trying to kill me. What else is there to talk about?

RONNIE

This is the second time in four days, right? I'd call that more than a coincidence. I heard about your little tussle from the County Deputies who questioned you.

KRISTINA

I told those officers everything. I was dragged to that bar after work when somebody in human resources Twittered how it was my birthday.

RONNIE

I know Sam Callan well enough to see how he might misbehave... possibly enough to have a beat down coming. But this is new to me. I never saw anyone's head in the chopper before.

KRISTINA

He came at me with a knife and a gun.

RONNIE

Nobody's saying you started it. But you sure did finish it. You seem to attract a lot of unpleasant attention.

KRISTINA

All I ever wanted was to do my job, go home and be left alone.

RONNIE

What do you say we go somewhere more private and talk this through?

KRISTINA

Like where?

RONNIE

My office. I promise you'll be safe there.

KRISTINA

Am I under arrest?

RONNIE

Let's not get ahead of ourselves.

She nods. Stands. He reaches for the handcuffs on his belt.

KRISTINA

Do we have to use those?

RONNIE

I'm conflicted here.

KRISTINA

If you're not placing me under arrest...

RONNIE

Okay. No cuffs.

He gestures toward the door. She leads him out.

EXT. PLANT, PARKING LOT - NOON

Hesitantly, Kristina approaches the police cruiser. Ronnie moves stiffly to open the back door. Speaks into the car...

RONNIE

Possible 187. Suspect in custody.

KRISTINA

I'd rather ride in front.

RONNIE

I'd feel safer with you in back.

KRISTINA

What happens now, Marshall?

RONNIE

We'll go over what happened while I run a background check. It's painless. I've already started the process. This baby's voice is linked to the office.

KRISTINA

Pretty slick.

RONNIE

Thanks. I rigged it myself. Turns out I'm fairly handy with cars and gizmos. There's a camera in the cruiser to send your photo to the database while we're in transit and...

Distracted... gives Kristina all the opening she needs. She lunges, knocks Ronnie into the cruiser. Before he can gather himself, she kicks him in the gut, knocks the wind out of him. Slams his head against the car door. He goes down hard.

KRISTINA

Sorry. I can't let that happen.

Kristina relieves the Marshall of his keys, slams the back door on her way around the car. Gets in the driver's seat. Smashes the camera, guns the cruiser out of the lot.

EXT. MAIN STREET, STEINBECK, CA - DAY

Kristina revs the patrol car down the lazy, typical small town main street. Bank, diner, pharmacy, bar, pizza joint, barber shop. Not much foot traffic. Blazes past TWO BARBERS watching the day roll by from rockers on their sidewalk.

FIRST BARBER

Looks like ol' Ronnie's in a hurry.

SECOND BARBER

That wasn't no man... unless ol' Ronnie's up and had one of them sex change dealies.

FIRST BARBER

What the hell are you talking about?

SECOND BARBER

No wonder nobody lets you cut their hair anymore. You're flat blind!

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Kristina turns off the main drag. Rolls past aging homes. Approaches the end of the lane cautiously. Car parked across the street from a big house which backs against a wide field.

KRISTINA

Not good.

Turns the cruiser around at the end of the lane. Rolls slowly down the street, stops a couple of houses down. Gets out. Glances carefully in all directions. Quiet. Maybe too quiet.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Kristina lets herself in the back door. Cautiously...

KRISTINA

Mrs. O'Leary?

Eases down the hallway to the stairway. A table lamp knocked over. She listens. Rustling upstairs.

KRISTINA (CONT'D)

So not good.

Slides to the front apartment. Turns the handle and holds the door to keep it from squeaking as it swings open.

BOARDING HOUSE, LANDLADY'S APARTMENT

Chairs tipped over, rugs bunched on the floor. A struggle took place here. Empty now. She tiptoes to the kitchen. Opens a drawer. Pulls out steak knives.

KRISTINA

And this will stop who?

Drops the knives back into the drawer. Opens a cabinet. Dry goods, cereal boxes. Tries another. Liquor bottles.

KRISTINA (CONT'D)

That's what I'm talking about.

Fishes kitchen matches out of a drawer. Tears a dish towel. Stuffs it into the neck of a half-empty whiskey bottle. Takes a full gin bottle as well.

BOARDING HOUSE

Creeps back to the bottom of the stairs. Listens as she pads up each stair slowly.

BOARDING HOUSE, KRISTINA'S APARTMENT

Trussed and gagged in a wooden chair by the kitchen nook, Landlady O'LEARY. Struggles against her bonds and GROANS. Seated on Kristina's unmade bed...

GOON ONE, 38, flashy hitter who loves the sound of his own voice. His partner... GOON TWO, 45, a taciturn mountain of death, stares out the window from his hidden perch behind the wall.

GOON ONE

Take it easy, lady. It's going to be all right. Just be calm. Like him.

Goon Two ignores Goon One.

GOON ONE (CONT'D)

You could reassure her. She'd be more cooperative if she wasn't so scared.

Goon Two's eyes don't move. Goon One checks his watch.

GOON ONE (CONT'D)

We should be getting that call any minute. We'll be on our way right after that, so don't worry. Okay?

He smiles at the landlady. She nods, too frightened not to agree.

GOON TWO
I don't like it.

GOON ONE
You worry too much.

GOON TWO
I get paid to worry too much.

BOARDING HOUSE, STAIRWAY

Kristina listens carefully, reaches for the door handle.

KRISTINA
Don't kill her. Please don't kill
her.

KRISTINA'S APARTMENT

Bored, Goon One stands.

GOON ONE
Probably all over by now. You see
anything?

GOON TWO
Cop car. Came and went.

GOON ONE
Nice. These people know how to live.
The law looks out for them. Ain't
that right, lady?

The landlady shakes as she nods.

GOON ONE (CONT'D)
Aren't you comfortable? Let me fix
that.

GOON TWO
Stay put.

BOARDING HOUSE, STAIRWAY

Kristina lights the towel. Holds the bottle in her weak hand.
Turns the knob slowly, tenses.

KRISTINA
Be a good boy. Go help her.

KRISTINA'S APARTMENT

Goon One walks across the room to adjust the landlady's bonds.

GOON ONE
She's just a harmless old...

BLAM... the door slams open. Caught off his guard, Goon One spins, his gun explodes uselessly. Kristina scoops up the gin bottle. Hurls it at Goon One before he can gather his senses. Goon Two spins. Fires. Kristina dives through the door. On the ground behind Goon One, hurls the flaming bottle at Goon Two.

Goon Two neatly sidesteps the bottle. SMASH! Shatters against the wall. Drapes on fire. Kristina up behind Goon One. Pulls him in front of Goon Two's next barrage. Goon One dances like a puppet as the bullets slam into him. Kristina shoves him into Goon Two, wedges him into the flaming corner.

Terrified, O'Leary SCREAMS into her gag as Goon Two's jacket catches fire. Kristina grabs a carving knife from the kitchen nook. Zips it across the room, catches Goon Two square in the neck. His eyes bulge with surprise and pain.

Kristina doesn't hesitate. Rolls to Goon One's gun. Comes up blasting. Flames engulf Goon Two as jolts back. CRASH! Out the window. Dead before he hits the ground.

With icy determination, Kristina pats down Goon One, fishes car keys out of his pocket. Strides to her closet. Packed duffel on the floor. Sparse clothes on hangers. She takes the duffel, leaves the rest. O'Leary's eyes widen as Kristina finds a steak knife and comes at her. Kristina uses it to slice the ropes off her landlady's wrists.

KRISTINA

I'm paid up through the end of the month. Find another boarder. Here, cut yourself loose.

Hands the knife to her landlady, turns and abruptly leaves.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Kristina points the remote key at the car across the street. Presses the button. A car beeps up the street... a rental concealed behind another house.

KRISTINA

Wow. Not so stupid after all.

A MAN drops out of a back window in a house across the street. Looks around cautiously. Walks casually to the street. Opens the car Kristina thought belonged to the goons. Smiles sheepishly as he realizes Kristina is watching him.

KRISTINA (CONT'D)

Guess this was somebody's lucky day.

Kristina cringes as the sound of her landlady's HORRIFIED SCREAM pours from the house behind her like a siren. The man across the street spots the smoldering corpse. Ashen, he peels away.

Kristina calmly walks to the goon car. Opens the trunk to drop in her duffel. Sniper rifle, scope, lots of ammo.

KRISTINA (CONT'D)

Who's a big bad boy? Come to Mommy.

Takes the gun, slams the trunk, gets in. Passes the abandoned patrol car on her way out of town forever.

EXT. HIGHWAY, RURAL OREGON - EVENING

The goon car keeps pace with normal traffic as daylight fades.

INT. GOON CAR - EVENING

Relentless eyes fixed on the darkening road, Kristina checks the dash. Fuel gauge near empty. Scans for a rest stop.

EXT. OREGON TRUCK STOP - EVENING

Kristina follows a line of trucks leaving the road to refuel. Passes rows of parked rigs. As if to ignore two KayCee Jonz rigs slotted at the prime end of the lot, she locks focus on the fuel pumps ahead. The store's slogan easy to read on each truck: *Nobody Beats KayCee Jonz... Nobody!*

The goon car pulls up to an empty gas pump. Kristina warily scans to make sure nobody's watching, then opens the trunk. Stands the duffel upright, fishes out a wallet. Slams the trunk. Checks her funds.

KRISTINA

Okay then.

She strides to the pay booth. The ATTENDANT, a high school kid with his nose buried in an Ipad. She KNOCKS on the glass. Waves a pair of twenties at the attendant.

ATTENDANT

Put it in the slot. Which pump?

She checks. He takes the cash.

KRISTINA

Six.

ATTENDANT

You're good to go. Need change?

KRISTINA

We'll see how much it takes.

He salutes her, turns back to the book. She walks away. A notion strikes him. He watches her slide the nozzle into her tank. Clicks his Ipad to a YouTube video. Shakes his head.

ATTENDANT

Cannot be. No way. Get a grip, dude.

INT. TRUCK STOP RESTAURANT - EVENING

Spacious, woodsy decor. Filled with hungry TRUCKERS. Busy WAITRESSES bus heaping plates food to their tables.

Kristina surveys the room from the side of the door. Sidesteps a pair of truckers on their way out. They barely glance at her. She finds an empty stool at the counter. Checks with the SCRUFFY TRUCKER on the next stool.

KRISTINA

This seat taken?

SCRUFFY TRUCKER

It is if you take it.

KRISTINA

Thanks.

Picks up a menu. Down the row, a YOUNG TRUCKER and a BULL TRUCKER stare at a notepad screen and LAUGH.

SALLY, a motherly waitress, pulls up in front of Kristina.

SALLY

Coffee, hon?

KRISTINA

Just water for now, thanks.

SALLY

Suit yourself. Long day?

KRISTINA

I've had worse. What's good here?

SALLY

Everything, hon. If you're tired and hungry, you've come to the right place. Just tell me what to bring and if you're not satisfied, it's on the house.

SCRUFFY TRUCKER

How come she gets a deal like that?

SALLY

You have any complaints about the food?

SCRUFFY TRUCKER

Well, no.

SALLY

Then shut up and eat.

She waddles away.

KRISTINA

Friendly.

SCRUFFY TRUCKER

To a point. Do I know you?

KRISTINA

Sorry, I'm flattered, but not interested.

SCRUFFY TRUCKER

Oh, no... I didn't mean it like that. It's just you look so familiar.

KRISTINA

Guess I've got that kind of face.

SCRUFFY TRUCKER

It's a nice enough face, little lady. Sorry to have bothered you.

He gets up, puts money on the counter, tips his cap and walks toward the door. Sally returns with a water glass.

SALLY

So, what'll it be, hon?

Kristina looks at the menu. Sally fixates on Kristina's face.

SALLY (CONT'D)

I'll be damned.

KRISTINA

I got dirt on my nose?

SALLY

Is it really you?

KRISTINA

What is it with people around here?

The two truckers down the line LAUGH at the notepad again.

BULL TRUCKER

That shit never gets old. Play it again.

YOUNG TRUCKER

If only I could get a hit count like that on my web page.

BULL TRUCKER

How bad you want your ass kicked?
Maybe that pretty girl down there
can oblige you. Hey, miss. You got a
minute?

He gets up from his stool, takes a step in Kristina's
direction. She glares at him. He freezes in his tracks.

BULL TRUCKER (CONT'D)

It can't be. Hey, boy... look at
this.

YOUNG TRUCKER

Oh, man. Best mind your manners.

BULL TRUCKER

I need to get back on the road.

YOUNG TRUCKER

Miles to go. Schedules to keep.

The pair hastily puts money on the counter. The Young Trucker
snaps his notepad and follows his colleague out.

KRISTINA

What the hell was that all about?

SALLY

If it ain't you, honey, you sure are
a dead ringer.

KRISTINA

Dead ringer for who?

SALLY

Just about the most popular clip on
the net.

KRISTINA

I'm not on the net.

SALLY

Dead ringer then. I'm guessing you're
from Bountiful or someplace like it.

KRISTINA

Never heard of it.

SALLY

Commune up Idaho way. Built by drop
outs from hippie days. Don't hold
with technology.

KRISTINA

Like Amish?

SALLY

Like dopers. Make their music, make their own fun.

KRISTINA

Sounds too rustic for my taste. I like a hot tub and a spa day every now and then.

SALLY

Amen, sister.

A GANGLY TRUCKER in a KayCee Jonz baseball cap ambles up to the counter. Pulls his cap off, clenches it in his hands.

GANGLY TRUCKER

I don't mean to trouble you, miss. Could I have your autograph?

KRISTINA

You've got the wrong girl, friend.

SALLY

Don't be pestering the lady. New customers ain't so easy to come by.

GANGLY TRUCKER

I didn't mean nothing by it.

He stalks away.

KRISTINA

What the hell is going on?

SALLY

You really don't know, do you? Wait a tick.

She slips off through the kitchen doors. Kristina looks around. The room deathly quiet. All eyes on her. She glances toward the door, calculating whether she can make it out of there. Sally comes back carrying a laptop computer. She opens it on the counter. Turns the screen toward Kristina.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Watch this honey. I think it's called Hottie Bitch Slaps Red Neck.

Horrified, Kristina watches a phone cam video posted to YouTube. Recognizes the bar she was in just four nights ago.

INSERT COMPUTER SCREEN VIDEO - BAR - NIGHT

Kristina surrounded by Barbi, Jess and Mona. Stares across the bar. Everybody around her having a great time. A small town stud approaches... SAM CALLAN, 28, too arrogant for his own good even with his ripped body and perfect teeth.

SAM

Hey, baby... I got a special birthday present for you.

Kristina doesn't bother to turn around.

KRISTINA

Fuck off, jerk.

SAM

That ain't particularly sociable.

KRISTINA

I ain't particularly interested.
Take a hike.

SAM

I know you're new in town, bitch,
but we got a little thing around
here we call manners...

He grabs her shoulder. Without warning, she pulls him over onto the bar, slams his face hard into the surface. Grabs his hair, repeats the beat down twice more before hurling him backwards. People around her too astonished to intervene.

Kristina tosses Sam backwards into a table. Drinks sail everywhere, drenching those seated around it.

SAM (CONT'D)

Bitch I'll kill you.

He never gets the chance. Kristina charges him. Kicks his ass sideways, up and down. Humiliates him as she totally demolishes him. Still, he refuses to stay down. He staggers toward her, daggers in his eyes.

KRISTINA

You wanna dance? Okay cowboy.

WHOOMP! A quick, hard kick between his legs. Everybody in the bar winces as Sam crumples to the floor. From behind the phone cam, the voice of the person recording the action, just some guy in the wrong place at the right time, his voice pitched high from the tension of the moment.

PHONE CAM OPERATOR

I don't believe it. She just kicked
his fucking ass! So fucking awesome!

Unaware of the recording, Kristina backs toward the bar door, her eyes daring anyone to try and stop her. They don't.

PHONE CAM OPERATOR (CONT'D)

Totally fucking awesome!