

END OF THE LINE - TEASER

Written by

Nickolas Gilbert

DRAFT - 25_218

DARKNESS

The sound of heavy mechanical breathing fades in, then is punctured by a loud SPLASH.

CHYRON:INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The breathing continues through the abyss as the moon offers just enough light to get our bearings through a brass diving helmet.

The DIVER (HARRY BENNETT) brushes away carnage and we get a glimpse of a WWI U-Boat that sits marooned at the bottom of the sea, snapped in half by a torpedo.

HENRY FORD (V.O.)
You are my piper Bennett... My
piper.

Bennett touches the u-boat and our ears are blown by a piercing siren. The cacophony prelaps with...

EXT. ROUGE. ESTABLISHING - DAY

The abrasive sounds of a massive factory fade up. Then we see the largest industrial complex ever created: 95 buildings with 16 million feet of floor space. 100 miles of railroad tracks. Docks. Steel mills. Power Plants.

HENRY FORD (V.O.)
I gave them the milk, and now they
want the whole darn farm...

INT. ROUGE. FORD'S WORKSHOP - DAY

HENRY FORD (lanky, but rugged and virile for his seventy plus years) sits at this workshop desk, the glow of a single lamp highlights his weathered face. He places a note in an envelop marked: SERVICE DEPARTMENT.

HENRY FORD (V.O.)
A machine doesn't complain. I
machine doesn't strike.

INT. ROUGE. - DAY

QUICK FLASHES:

Three-story-tall blast furnaces cough out fire and smoke.

Thousands of WORKERS on the moving assembly line attach the same part over and over.

They are kept in line by hundreds of Service Department THUGS, who watch over them.

A WORKER places a metal sheet into a massive thirty ton press.

Sparks fly like fireworks.

HENRY FORD (V.O.)
The line never stops. Ever.

A Service Department THUG hands the envelop to a FOREMAN. The Foreman speeds up the line.

The worker can't keep up. Can't get his arm out of the press in time. Just before the press crushes his arm we...

SMASH TO:

DARKNESS

WORKER (V.O.)
(screaming)
He lost his arm! Help! We need help
over here!

INT. ROUGE. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Henry Ford and EDSEL FORD (about the same age as Bennett, but more the yin to his yang) argue in an elegant conference room in front of several EXECUTIVES. A projector playing a newsreel back-lights Henry Ford.

EDSEL FORD
They were tired. Now they are exhausted and angry, and they are going to use this accident to gain sympathy for their organizing efforts.

HENRY FORD
It's this depression son... But this is still a family run company, and it will always be that way.... Get me Bennett on the line.

INT. ROUGE. FORD'S WORKSHOP - DAY

A tinkerer's dream with every tool imaginable. Henry Ford talks with HARRY BENNETT. Bennett's short, but in incredible shape, earning all of his forty something years. He wears a slick suit, complete with fedora, his signature bowtie, and piercing blue eyes.

HENRY FORD

This union business will grow like a cancer... Cut the tumor out... No matter what it takes.

HARRY BENNETT

Yes Mister Ford.

INT. ROUGE. BLAST FURNACES - NIGHT

Bennett threatens WALTER REUTHER. Reuther's dangerously close in age to both Bennett and Edsel. He wears dirty overalls, but judging by the way he carries himself, we can tell he's someone not to be fucked with.

HARRY BENNETT

Don't use that kid's accident to fuel your fight. This isn't about safety... it's about power.

WALTER REUTHER

And you'll do anything to keep it yourself, won't you, Bennett?

EXT. CASTLE - DAY

Establish Bennett's castle/mansion - It literally looks like a medieval European castle.

INT. CASTLE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Bennett and his ex-wife MARGARET (a few years younger than Bennett, with flaming red hair and the Irish drawl to match) in a heated argument.

MARGARET BENNETT

Just don't do anything your daughter wouldn't be proud of.

INT. CORKTOWN BREWERY. UAW MEETING HALL - NIGHT

A UAW banner hangs in the backroom of the brewery as Reuther stands and speaks to/inspires a group of UNION MEN.

WALTER REUTHER
We're not asking. We're taking.

INT. CASTLE. GERTIE'S ROOM - DAY

Bennett and Margaret sit around six-year-old GERTIE who is sick in bed.

HARRY BENNETT
Daddy's going to make everything better.

INT. CASTLE. DUNGEON - NIGHT

The old castle boat house converted into a den for lions and tigers. Bennett scares the shit out of Dr. Stratton (a distinguished man in his late sixties) with his pet lion FANG.

INT. FOX THEATER - NIGHT

The balcony of an elegant movie palace. Edsel stands and talks to Reuther and his men. We get a glimpse of his plan coming to life on the screen behind him.

EDSEL FORD (V.O.)
It's time we draw a new line.
Together.

INT. ROUGE. BENNETT'S OFFICE - DAY

Bennett and Henry Ford shoot targets in Bennett's office.

HENRY FORD (V.O.)
I gave them jobs. I gave them dignity.

INT. DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

In front of Diego Rivera's famous mural DETROIT INDUSTRY, Bennett and Reuther antagonize each other.

HARRY BENNETT
You don't get to rewrite history.

WALTER REUTHER

The morning I don't walk through
that gate a hundred thousand men
walk out.

INT. CASTLE. GERTIE'S ROOM - DAY

Bennett and Margaret stand around Gertie in her bespoke iron lung. It looks similar to a rocket ship.

MARGARET BENNETT (V.O.)

Gertie's the only good thing you've
ever done.

EXT. GROSSE ILE. PAGODA HOUSE. DOCK - NIGHT

It's a large boat house on the Detroit River, with an asian inspired pagoda roof. The TRUANT, Bennett's yacht, is docked near the house.

Bennett drinks on the dock next to the Truant.

EXT. FAIRLANE. AVIARY - NIGHT

Ford walks through an aviary next to his palatial estate on the Rouge River. There are cages with hundreds of BIRDS.

EXT. ROUGE. OVERPASS - DAY

A bridge over Miller Road with the perfect view of a giant FORD MOTOR COMPANY sign. On the other side, a massive parking lot full of Model As.

Reuther and his union men hang pro-union banners and prepare to hand out leaflets.

EXT. ROUGE. OVERPASS - DAY

Service Department thugs emerge from the factory side of the overpass. They carry blackjacks and batons.

INT. ROUGE. EDSSEL'S LAIR - DAY

Henry Ford, hammer in hand, examines Edsel's model 40 SPEEDSTER prototype. It's eight cylinders of red, stylized, aerodynamic sex. Ford gently runs his fingers over her curves.

EXT. ROUGE. OVERPASS - DAY

Reuther and his union men realize they have been double crossed and prepare to be serviced.

INT. ROUGE. EDSSEL'S SECRET LAIR - DAY

Henry Ford lines up with the hammer and he smashes the hell out of the Speedster.

INT. ROUGE. OVERPASS - DAY

Service Department thugs beat Reuther and his men as a PHOTOGRAPHER takes pictures. Flashbulbs POP.

EXT. GROSSE ILE. PAGODA HOUSE. DOCK - NIGHT

Bennett's yacht explodes, violently throwing him into the water.

EXT. FAIRLANE. AVIARY - NIGHT

Henry Ford takes a few beats then methodically opens the door to each cage and sets the birds free.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

Bennett sinking to the bottom, debris from his yacht all around him, the hull burning on the surface.

HARRY BENNETT (V.O.)
Sometimes there isn't a line left
to cross.

CHYRON: END OF THE LINE - COMING SOON

CUT TO BLACK.