

Cheney on the run

by James H. Smith

"Cheney On The Run" is a farce and a satire on American presidential history. It is inspired generally by the popular culture interpretation of the current Vice President Dick Cheney, and specifically on an image frequently seen around the internet called "Ten Ways Dick Cheney Can Kill You". When I wrote the script I tried and failed to identify the author of the image.

Establishing shot: DICK CHENEY runs toward the camera. It's a dull, rainy day and he's running through a leafy neighborhood.

Cut to: full shot of CHENEY from behind, still running.

Cut to: medium shot of CHENEY from the side.

Cut to: shot of NEWSREADER at desk, facing the camera.

NEWSREADER

"Reports are coming in stating that the Vice President Dick Cheney, who was charged this morning with six counts of perjury, five counts of fraud, and two counts of obstructing justice, has escaped custody. The White House has yet to make a statement, but a spokesman in the Metropolitan Police Department has confirmed that the black vehicle that caused a pile-up on Highway One three hours ago was the 2005 Buick Rainier belonging to the Vice President. Whether the Vice President himself was at wheel, or even in the vehicle, remains unknown."

Fade to black. Open in an office. It's the CIA headquarters. Long of a man in a shirt and tie sitting at desk. His desk is a mess and he looks stressed. We hear a knock at the door.

Cut to: close up of the man.

BAKER

(looking up)

"Come in."

Cut to: medium shot of a younger man entering the office. We follow him as he walk into the camera, toward the desk.

GRANT

"Cheney crossed the border. He's in British Columbia."

Cut to: full shot of both men from the side.

BAKER

(lifting his phone)

"I'm going to need to speak with the RCMP."

GRANT

"I just got off the phone with Busson. She's putting all her officers in the Lower Mainland on duty."

BAKER

(nodding)

"Good. I want our own agents there too."

GRANT

"Yeah, but who? Cheney's been on the run for sixty nine hours now. He made his way right across the country. We've got at least seven people dead. What's it

going to take to bring this guy down!?"

Cut to: close up of BAKER. He strokes his chin.

GRANT

"Sir, the President wants this cleared up right now. It's just about the most embarrassing thing he can imagine."

BAKER

"He should do it himself."

Cut to: close up of GRANT.

GRANT

(looking confused)

"What....?"

Back to BAKER.

BAKER

"The vice president is the number two man in the country. If we want to take him down, we need the number one."

Cut to: medium shot of GRANT.

GRANT

(taking a step backward, and looking very uncomfortable)

"You're talking about Project..."

Back to BAKER.

BAKER

"Don't say it!"

Back to GRANT. He still looks uneasy.

Back to BAKER.

BAKER

"Don't!"

Back to GRANT.

GRANT

"Sorry. It's ... very tempting."

BAKER

"Hold it in."

GRANT nods. Cut to: full shot of both men from the side, a little more angular than last time.

GRANT

"So who are we going to get?"

BAKER

"I think Reagan is an obvious choice."

GRANT

"Yeah, but I don't think it's a good idea. What if.... what if he failed."

BAKER

"What?"

GRANT

"Well.... if he.... if he couldn't do it, or... or if something went wrong, he'd be ruined. The Republican Party stands on his shoulders. He's the foundation."

Cut to: close up of Baker. He takes off his glasses and lowers his head. He's exhausted.

BAKER

"All right. Who's next? Carter?"

GRANT

"Carter's still alive."

BAKER

"What? Ohh, he wrote that..."

GRANT

"Yep."

BAKER

"Nazi! And he's coward. He wouldn't hurt a living creature. Probably doesn't even hunt. His farm is a peanut farm. What kind of farm is that!? I bet he's never seen the inside of a slaughter house. Couldn't stomach it."

Cut to: GRANT trying not despair.

BAKER

"He's got that stupid smile. No one likes him. Loser. Telling me I can't...."

Cut to: close up of BAKER.

BAKER

(looking up suddenly)

"uhm, who's next? Ford?"

Back to GRANT.

GRANT

"Heh! Ford!"

Cut to: medium shot from behind BAKER.

BAKER

"Yep! What about Nixon? He was one ruthless chief."

GRANT

"Nixon had those big cheeks. Easy target for Cheney."

BAKER

(pointing with his pen)

"You're right. We're the CIA, that's the kind of thing we should be thinking about. Good work."

GRANT

"Thank you, sir."

BAKER

"JOHNSON! I want Johnson. Big guy, six three, Texan, he'll know how to handle to Cheney."

GRANT

"Sir, he was a heavy smoker."

BAKER

"I don't care. He fought in the Big One."

GRANT

"He didn't actually see combat."

BAKER

"Don't care."

GRANT

"He was addicted to Fresca!"

BAKER

"Don't care."

GRANT

"He's more..."

BAKER

"Don't care."

GRANT

"But he's..."

BAKER

"Don't care."

GRANT

"Sir."

BAKER

"Yes?"

GRANT

"Johnson was..."

BAKER

"Don't care."

Cut to: close up of GRANT.

GRANT

(sighing)

"All right. But can we consider the others?"

Cut to: close up of BAKER.

BAKER

(nodding)

"I guess so. Who else do we have?"

Cut to: medium shot of GRANT.

GRANT

"Eisenhower."

Back to BAKER.

BAKER

"Hm. That's a possibility. He was a good general. Kind of... funny looking. I could say the same about Truman. He wore glasses. So does Cheney."

Back to GRANT.

GRANT

"He was also a vice president."

Cut to medium shot of BAKER.

BAKER

"Yes, but I seem to recall that he said the VP was about as useful as a cow's left teet. He'd be a little embarrassed if he saw this."

GRANT

"Next would be Franklin Roosevelt."

BAKER

"FDR? He was in a wheelchair!"

GRANT

"We could give him an electric one. Put a big engine on it."

BAKER

"No. It'd take too long to train him on it. The president told me he wants this done yesterday, and that was yesterday. It certainly wasn't two weeks from now."

Cut to medium shot of GRANT.

GRANT

"Hoover?"

Back to BAKER.

BAKER

"Hoover was opposed to income tax. He'd probably want to marry Cheney. And I'll say the same for Harding, which is a shame because he looked damned scary."

Back to GRANT.

GRANT

"Coolidge came between those two."

Cut to close up of BAKER.

BAKER

"Coolidge. You want to send in a man called Coolidge."

Back to GRANT.

GRANT

"Uh.... okay.... Wilson?"

Back to BAKER.

BAKER

"Wilson. Wilson. (laughing) Wilson! He'd probably consider crossing the Canadian border and illegal intervention, even though the Canadians are aproving it. We've got to deal with the UN because of that stupid mule."

Cut to full shot of GRANT.

GRANT

"Okay. Wilson was preceded by Taft."

BAKER

"TAFT?"

GRANT puff out his cheeks and mimicks a fat man.

Cut to full shot of from behind GRANT. BAKER is laughing almost uncontrollably.

BAKER

"I'd love to see it! Man, we need a bigger budget. I want to talk to Rob Portman when this is over. Who was before Taft?"

GRANT

"Roosevelt, sir."

BAKER

"You already said Roosevelt."

GRANT

"Ah, no, the other one, sir. Theodore."

BAKER spins around in his chair.

Fade out, and cut to a low angle full shot of CHENEY. He's standing. Like before, it's rainy.

Cut to: full shot of a WOMAN walking. Her eyes suddenly get wide. She looks away from whatever she was looking at and continues walking. She takes a cell phone from her bag and dials three digits. We see a hand seize her phone. She turns and an expression of fear appears on her face.

Cut to: a low angle shot, like before, from behind the woman. CHENEY is standing in front of her. In silence, he chokes her. She collapses. The camera slowly pulls back. A MAN walks past.

Cut to: close up of the MAN. He looks confused, and then shocked.

Cut to: Full shot from behind CHENEY of him and the dead WOMAN. The MAN runs into frame.

Cut to: medium shot of the MAN looking down at the WOMAN.

MAN

"Is she okay?"

CHENEY headbutts the MAN. The MAN is knocked to the ground. Sirens begin to be heard. The camera pulls out as CHENEY runs, and then moves back in to show the MAN's dead body laying over the WOMAN's. Fade out.

We open in an industrial area in late afternoon. The sun is on it's way down.

Cut to full shot of the two CIA agents from earlier. The camera follows them as they walk.

GRANT

"I'm starting to get doubts."

BAKER

"This is the only way. The list of victims is growing. But I know it's scary. I never thought I'd be doing this."

The men stop as they reach a door. There's a code-lock on the wall next to the door.

Cut to: close up of the buttons. BAKER's fingers hit the numbers 070417761826.

Cut to: very wide shot from several meters away. Both men head inside the door. Very slowly fade out.

Open in a park in the very early morning. Full shot of CHENEY running. He stops as a POLICE OFFICER stands in front of him with a gun pointed in his face.

Cut to: close up of the gun. Pan across to show CHENEY'S face.

Cut to: full shot of the two men facing each other. CHENEY is motionless for a moment until he takes a knife from his pocket and stabs the OFFICER in the chest.

Cut to: high angle shot looking down from behind Cheney's shoulders. The OFFICER slowly falls.

OFFICER 2
"FREEZE!"

Cut to: medium shot of a SECOND OFFICER pointing a gun at something just off camera.

Cut to: medium close up of CHENEY as his head spins around. His eyes are wide. He raises his right hand.

Cut to: full shot of the SECOND OFFICER flying away from CHENEY.

Cut to: full shot of the SECOND OFFICER hitting the grass. The camera stays on him and he doesn't move.

Cut to: shot of the park with a figure riding a horse in the distance. The figure slowly approaches. Eventually, we see that it is THEODORE ROOSEVELT, dressed in turn of the century clothing and a Panama hat. He stops.

Cut to: close up of CHENEY enraged.

Cut to: full shot of ROOSEVELT dismounting. He stands in front of his horse.

ROOSEVELT

"Vice President Cheney. From what I understand, you are running one of the most inept and destructive executives in the history of our great republic. You conquered a nation based on the theory that it had powerful weapons that threatened the United States and her allies. It became clear that this nation had none of the weapons you supposed that it had. Now one hundred and fifty thousand American soldiers are trapped in a foreign civil war almost as bloody as our own. You are a disgrace to your flag."

Back to CHENEY. His expression has changed to one of amusement.

CHENEY
"Heh!"

Back to ROOSEVELT. He starts walking toward CHENEY.

Cut to: Full shot of CHENEY. He opens his jacket and pulls out a shotgun.

Cut to: wide shot of both men from the side. ROOSEVELT dives into some shrubbery.

The screen turns black and a shotgun blast is heard.

Fade into full shot of CHENEY walking toward the camera holding his shotgun like a hunter searching for his prey. We hear a sound of birds flying off some branches above.

Cut to: close up of CHENEY looking up. His eyes move around the tops of the trees.

Cut to: full shot of CHENEY facing the camera. He's stopped and he's looking around. Suddenly Roosevelt leaps out of the bushes. He seizes CHENEY's shotgun and hits him the stomach and then across the face with the butt.

Cut to: full shot of CHENEY staggering backward.

Cut to: medium shot of ROOSEVELT pointing the gun just off camera. He shakes his head and tosses it aside. He walks forward into the camera.

Cut to: full shot from behind ROOSEVELT. He clasps his hands together and strikes CHENEY with a Captain Kirk-style double-fisted punch.

Cut to: full shot of CHENEY staggering again. He regains his balance and forms a Karate pose.

Cut to: full shot from the side of both men. CHENEY blocks a punch from ROOSEVELT with his left and slices him across the belly with his right hand. He Karate chops ROOSEVELT's right shoulder, causing him to collapse onto the grass.

Cut to: high angle medium shot looking up at CHENEY. He begins hammering his fists down, hitting Roosevelt's body just below the frame. When he finally stops we move in for a close up of his evil smile.

Cut to: full shot from a few steps behind CHENEY. We see ROOSEVELT slowly rise. CHENEY steps back, perhaps in fear. ROOSEVELT brushes the dirt from his suit. He looks up. CHENEY turns and runs. ROOSEVELT chases.

Cut to: shot of CHENEY running toward the camera, which is on the ground looking up. He runs past with ROOSEVELT just behind him.

Cut to: full shot of CHENEY running from just in front of him, following him as he runs. He looks over his shoulder, and we can just see ROOSEVELT.

Cut to: shot from behind ROOSEVELT. He catches up with CHENEY and leaps on him. CHENEY falls to the ground. He struggles, but he can't get free. ROOSEVELT handcuffs him. He stands up and looks down at CHENEY, shaking his head. Then he looks up to the sky and salutes.

Cut to: shot of the Stars & Stripes flying in a clear sky.

Credits.