

# Thelma and Louise – the analysis



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

THELMA AND LOUISE In the opening scene, Louise is serving coffee at her diner and advises her customers against smoking as it kills one's sex drive. This can be seen as a fertilization symbol. The movie starts with two best friends, Thelma and Louise, planning a road trip. It is shown how condescending and inconsiderate Thelma's husband Daryl is. Thelma decides against telling him about the trip. Louise arrives at Thelma's in a light blue 1966 Thunderbird convertible. The fact that the car is a convertible works slightly to their advantage at one point in the future. Thelma carries her gun.

This shows how insecure and paranoid she is. Thelma is very excited about the trip. Louise, however, is composed and indifferent. Soon, Thelma insists that they stop at a bar and Louise, after some persuasion, agrees to make a quick stop. A man named Harlan flirts with them. Thelma dances with Harlan. She starts to feel unwell and goes outside with Harlan. Harlan attempts to rape Thelma. Louise reaches there in time, holding Thelma's gun to Harlan's head. Just when Thelma and Louise turn around to leave Harlan starts saying offensive things to them. This makes Louise very angry and she shoots him.

They flee from the scene of crime. Louise blames Thelma and this makes Thelma upset. Meanwhile, a detective named Hal Slocumb starts the investigation of the murder. Louise calls her boyfriend Jimmy and asks him to wire \$6,700 to her. Thelma meets young and handsome guy called JD who asks for a ride. Louise decides that she wants to escape to Mexico but she doesn't want to go through Texas to get there. They meet JD again and decide to give him a ride. They arrive in Oklahoma City to pick up the money and find Jimmy waiting for them. Jimmy proposes to Louise.

Meanwhile, with the money in her room, Thelma has a wonderful sexual experience with JD. This is a fertilization symbol. In the morning, however, JD steals the money and takes off. Till this point we find Thelma vulnerable, passive, immature and irresponsible, doing what Louise asks her to do. But when Louise breaks down and is on the verge of giving up, Thelma takes charge. From this point on we see Thelma grow as a character and show her strong and responsible side. Thelma robs a convenient store. From this point on they are more relaxed and jovial. It almost feels like they are having fun.

They meet a sexist truck driver. He makes gestures with his tongue. This can be seen as a yonic symbol. He also makes hand gestures which suggest masturbation. This can be seen as a phallic symbol. Thelma figures out as to what happened to Louise in Texas. They meet the sexist truck driver again. They lure him to a deserted place and ask him to apologize for his behaviour. When he refuses to do so, they blow up his truck. The police find them. After a long car chase they arrive near a small underpass. Thelma and Louise's car passes through the underpass as they are driving a convertible.

The police cars can't pass through. They reach the Grand Canyon and are soon surrounded by the cops. Louise doesn't want to give up and Thelma suggests that they drive off the cliff. They kiss and Louise steps on the gas. Hal runs behind the car in an attempt to stop it. In the closing scene, Thelma and Louise hold hands and the car flies off the cliff. Analysis: It is not known exactly as to what happened to Louise in Texas. All we are sure of is that she was raped in Texas. It's not clear whether she filed charges and if there was a trial. But it is understood that whoever raped her got away with it.

This explains why she loses her cool when Harlan is unapologetic and starts abusing her verbally after trying to rape Thelma. During the course of the movie we see that Louise knows a lot about the law. It is rare for someone to know so much about how the justice system works unless they have undergone a trial. Later on in the movie Detective Hal tells her on the phone that he knows about the incident in Texas. He couldn't have known about it unless charges were filed. It is possible that Jimmy told him but it's highly unlikely that Jimmy knew about it considering how secretive and clammed up Louise is.

This suggests that there was a trial and clearly Louise was denied justice due to the loopholes in the system. This explains why she doesn't trust the cops and decides against going to the police after the shooting even though Thelma suggests it. Knowing what exactly happened to Louise could have made the movie slightly better. Thelma's life story is known to the viewers and that helps to connect with her. Louise's character on the other hand is kind of mysterious. Only her current status is known. This makes it a little hard to completely understand her and connect with her.

It would be unlike Louise to tell Thelma or anyone else about Texas since she is tight-lipped and obviously still disturbed by it. But the film makers could have shown it as Louise's memory flashback or a nightmare to make it easier for the viewers to sympathize with her more than they already do. The intention of the movie is to show how anti-feminist the society is and how the justice system back then and maybe even today fails to protect the women. The message is loud and clear. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. Or worse, two women scorned.