# THE LAST VICTIM

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Based on a story by

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"The present is whatever it is only because of what is going to be and because of what it has been."

- W.T. Jones (*A History of Western Philosophy*)

1 EXT. CRACKED RURAL ROAD - NIGHT 1

A RED AND WHITE FORD BRONCO drives down the road in the early morning, pre-dawn glow of the dark blue sky.

JAKE (V.O.)
I've lived long enough to see what happens when progress marches through town. It rarely stops long enough to let everyone catch up. And if you're not paying attention... got caught up in your own problems... well, sometimes it just rolls over you.

The BRONCO PASSES a LINE OF OLD, ABANDONED BUILDINGS -- BOTH HOMES and BUSINESSES.

JAKE (V.O.)
It doesn't wait for your concerns. It doesn't stop to count the bodies. And now, at night, you can see the big cities all lit up from space. Glittering like a virus, spreading across this diseased planet. Fueled by greed and corruption, being driven by the elites of society and the tyrants of history -- people playing us all like pawns on a chessboard. Well what happens if those pawns don't do as their told? What if they were to move to whatever space they want? Would the kingdom crumble?

The BRONCO'S HEADLIGHTS PIERCE THROUGH THE DARK as the YELLOW DASHES on the BROKEN ASPHALT WHIZZ BY.

JAKE (V.O.)
In the end, all we have are our principles... and an insult left unanswered festers like an infected wound. You have to cut it out or it never stops eating away at you.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. HOG HEAVEN RESTAURANT - NIGHT 2

Surrounded by RED MOUNTAINS IN THE DISTANCE, a SHABBY BAR-B-QUE JOINT that used to be a CARPET STORE sits along the CRACKED ROAD in a forgotten SOUTHWEST TOWN -- once part of a major road, now bypassed by progress.

It's the only thing with LIGHTS ON for miles.

Behind the OLD BBQ JOINT, a DIRT ROAD leads to an OLD HOUSE, barely holding together.

The DARK SKY has a SLIGHT PRE-DAWN GLOW -- the sound of Tammy Wynette singing "Stand By Your Man" plays faintly.

SUPER: Negacion, New Mexico - Population: 209 (as of 2010).

In the CRISP AIR, a lone STREET LAMP illuminates a HOMEMADE PAINTING OF A PIG -- HIS SMILING FACE SURROUNDED BY PRICES for the PULLED PORK SPECIALS.

CHEAP DECORATIONS try to hide what the place used to be -- a GAS STATION whose business dried up years ago.

A beat-up ORANGE CHEVY SILVERADO is the only vehicle in the GRAVEL PARKING LOT.

The LOW HUM of an OLD DIESEL ENGINE, GROWS LOUDER as it approaches from a distance.

An OLD RED AND WHITE FORD BRONCO speeds down the road -- headlights reflect off of the black asphalt. It COMES TO A SLOW as it approaches HOG HEAVEN.

The BRONCO pulls into the EMPTY PARKING LOT -- moving to park in the spot DIRECTLY NEXT TO THE ORANGE SILVERADO.

JAKE SAMUELS (48, with a deep-lined face that tells the hard story of his life) steps out of the PASSENGER SIDE DOOR, tucking an OLD REVOLVER into his TORN AND PATCHED BLUE JEANS.

MONROE (35, with greased hair and a dirty DINNER JACKET over an OLD TEE-SHIRT that hasn't been washed for a month) pops out of the BRONCO behind Jake. A HANDGUN ADORNED WITH CHARMS peeks out over his belt.

SNOOPY (32, sickly and scrawny with an unrelenting grin that shows his missing teeth) stays in the driver's seat -- he leaves the motor running.

Jake OPENS THE DOOR, announcing his presence with the friendly CHIME OF THE HANGING BELL.

Monroe waits patiently outside. He lights a cigarette near a FLICKERING "OPEN 25 HOURS" SIGN.

3 INT. HOG HEAVEN - CONTINUOUS 3

The HARSH FLUORESCENT LIGHTING bounces off the FAKE WOOD WALLS -- contrasting against the dark sky outside.

4 C/U: JAKE'S WELL WORN COMBAT BOOTS COMES TO A STOP. 4

A SIGN -- "PLEASE WAIT TO BE SEATED" -- on the left -- SMALL ITEMS FOR SALE -- to the right -- A CHEAP RESTAURANT.

The COUNTER UNDER THE CASH REGISTER is covered in PRO-GUN STICKERS, SIGNS and POSTERS -- NEGACION COUNTY GUN CLUB MEMBER, SOUTHWEST QUICK DRAW ASSOCIATION, etc... including one that says "YOU CAN HAVE MY GUN WHEN YOU PRY IT FROM MY COLD DEAD FINGERS".

A WOMAN'S VOICE comes through the SERVICE WINDOW from the KITCHEN in the back.

WAITRESS
Sit anywhere ya like.

Jake looks over to see the WAITRESS (28, but has had a hard life) with her MESSY HAIR in a bun and GREASE STAINS on HER CLOTHES -- preoccupied with scraping something off the grill in the KITCHEN.

He walks towards the only other person in the room -- MANNY RANDOWSKI (26, a man who cuts both his own hair, and the sleeves off his shirts) -- sitting with his BACK TO THE DOOR.

Manny devours his PULLED PORK SANDWICH with his head down.

Slowly, THE CHAIR across from him is PULLED OUT.

Manny looks up as Jake sits down.

As Manny realizes who it is, his face goes white. The words dry up in his mouth -- which is covered in BARBECUE SAUCE.

JAKE
How you been, Manny?

Suddenly, MANNY STANDS, hoping to make a break for it --

He isn't even out of his chair by the time he notices MONROE standing guard outside the FRONT ENTRANCE.

Jake simply waits for Manny to sit back down.

His pulse never raises.

Manny's so fucked he smiles for a moment. It fades fast. He slowly sits back down, trying to hide his fear.

COUNTRY MUSIC fills the long silence.

Jake reaches across the table and grabs Manny's CUP OF SODA.

JAKE (CONT'D)
So?

Jake takes a long sip and sets the CUP back down, in front of himself, this time.

JAKE (CONT'D)
How’ve you been, Manny?

MANNY
...Alright.

Jake waits, expecting more. When nothing else comes, he keeps the conversation going.

JAKE
Well, that’s good to hear.

Jake smiles at Manny like they’re best friends. Manny nods.

MANNY
Yeah.

Jake gestures to his mouth.

JAKE
You got a little...

Jake hands him A NAPKIN.

Manny slowly takes it and wipes the edge of his mouth.

MANNY
...Thank you.

Jake winks at Manny -- TENNIS SHOES squeak with UNEVEN STEPS across the yellowed linoleum floor -- the WAITRESS WALKS WITH A LIMP, her KNEE IN A BRACE.

WAITRESS
Sorry about the wait, there, can I get you anything?

She pulls a pencil and pad out of her pocket as quick as a magician and waits -- Jake looks up, delightful, as always.

JAKE
I tell you what, it smells so good in here, I’ll just have what my friend here is havin’.

WAITRESS
Sure thing. You want somethin’ to drink with that?

Jake raises the CUP OF SODA he's confiscated.

JAKE
Thank you, no. I'm all set.

The Waitress glances at Manny -- who won't make eye contact.

WAITRESS
Be out in a minute.

The Waitress turns back towards the KITCHEN and waddles away.

Jake watches her rear as she goes. He takes a long sip and sets the cup back down.

JAKE
So life's good?

Manny doesn't want to play this game anymore...

Jake pulls out a CIGARETTE -- he toys with it in his fingers.

MANNY
Look, Jake, whatever it is you think I did --

JAKE
I don't think you did anything.

Jake puts the cigarette in his mouth. He lights it.

Manny watches the TIP BURN for a moment.

MANNY
I... c'mon, man, I'm tellin' you, I don't know what you--

The DEEP FRYER SIZZLES TO LIFE as a basket of fries is dropped in -- Manny flinches at the sound.

JAKE
What's wrong, Manny? You know, I'd like to think that after all this time, you can tell me anything...

MANNY
Look, I just... I-- I'm really sorry, alright? Truly. I really am.

Jake EXHALES A CLOUD OF SMOKE as he speaks.

JAKE
Well I gotta say, that's nice to hear. But it don't really make much of a difference.

WAITRESS
(from the KITCHEN)
You can't be smokin' in here, mister. You gotta take it outside.

Manny glances at the waitress and back to Jake.

Jake never looks away from Manny. He takes another drag.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
(from the KITCHEN)
Hey? Are you listenin' to me, sir?

The waitress leaves the kitchen, heading towards their table.

MANNY
Look... what happened with me an' Donna --

Jake glares at him in disbelief.

JAKE
Are you fuckin' kidding me? I don't give a shit about that, Manny.

The waitress stands over Jake with her hands on her hips.

WAITRESS
Mister, I ain't gonna ask you again...

She waits, hoping the man won't call her bluff.

Jake takes another drag...

...then drops THE CIGARETTE in the CUP OF SODA. It fizzles. He winks at the uncomfortable woman.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
Th-- thank you.

Intimidated, she hobbles back to the KITCHEN. Jake turns his attention back to the conversation.

JAKE
Donna ain't my wife no more. You're an a-dult. She's an a-dult. Ya'll can make your own decisions.
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
In fact, that's what makes this country great. Freedom. Of. Choice. You can do whatever the hell you want with your life. Be a lawyer and get rich -- be a hooker and get rich fuckin' lawyers... Whatever you want. But see, here's the other side of that coin...

MANNY
Jake, please, man...

Out of their view, the waitress PICKS UP THE PHONE IN THE KITCHEN AND DIALS... she glances back nervously.

JAKE
...when you go and use that miraculous god-given freedom to do something stupid, I now have the freedom to right that wrong.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. HOG HEAVEN - HIGHWAY 5

After a moment... a LIGHT TURNS ON in a WINDOW of the OLD HOUSE behind HOG HEAVEN.

BACK TO:

6 INT. HOG HEAVEN - CONTINUOUS 6

Manny starts to break -- he knows he doesn't have much time.

MANNY
Jake-- look, if this ain't about Donna--

JAKE
Don't you fucking bring her up again, Manny.

MANNY
I--I don't know what the fuck you're talking about, then, man! I don't know what the fuck this is! Just tell me what you want, man! I didn't do anything, I swear to god, man! Whatever the fuck I did, I didn't fucking mean it, man!

Jake thinks.

He looks at Manny. He lets out a sad smile.

JAKE
I believe you. I do. But... it's the principle of the matter, and in the end, all we have are our principles, Manny.

Manny takes a DEEP BREATH to start his plead...

Jake pulls the REVOLVER from the back of his waistband.

From the KITCHEN SERVICE WINDOW, the waitress turns just in time to see -- TWO BRIGHT FLASHES -- THE SOUND OF A CHAIR FALLING BACK WITH A THUD. She gasps.

Manny's LIFELESS BODY LAYS ON THE FLOOR COVERED IN CRIMSON.

His legs dangle over the chair -- he almost looks relaxed.

Jake turns to see the waitress through the SERVICE WINDOW -- still FROZEN WITH FEAR.

He walks swiftly to the KITCHEN ENTRANCE -- the waitress quickly hobbles from view -- not fast enough.

Jake enters the KITCHEN.

FRAMED BY THE SERVICE WINDOW, Jake resembles one half of a Victorian pistol duel...

THREE POPS -- SOFTER THAN YOU'D THINK -- ACCOMPANIED BY THREE BRIGHT FLASHES. Then A THUD.

Jake moves towards the UNSEEN WAITRESS leaving the SERVICE WINDOW FRAME EMPTY.

A FLASH OF LIGHT -- ONE MORE POP.

All is QUIET -- except the OLD COUNTRY MUSIC STILL PLAYING -- the sudden contrast in the environment is heavy.

Quick and calm, Jake walks out of the KITCHEN and back to the DINING ROOM, where he comes to MANNY'S CORPSE.

He leans down to search MANNY'S POCKETS when --

A SHOTGUN BLAST SHATTERS A CAR WINDOW -- SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE.

Jake TURNS TO THE SOUND.

ANOTHER BLAST. He watches the FRONT WINDOW...

Partially obscured by the PAINTED PIG, Jake can barely make out an OLDER MAN IN A DIRTY UNDERSHIRT AND BOXERS with a SHOTGUN POINTED AT SOMETHING -- obscured by the WINDOW.

Behind the PAINTED PIG, the OLDER MAN PULLS THE TRIGGER -- THE BLAST LIGHTS UP THE NIGHT FOR BRIEF MOMENT.

Jake ducks behind the counter.

JAKE (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Shit.

Satisfied, the OLDER MAN turns his attention back to the RUNDOWN RESTAURANT.

The OLDER MAN MOVES FOR THE FRONT DOOR -- the STRAP DANGLING FROM HIS SHOTGUN WILDLY as he searches for targets.

Jake frantically TRIES TO SLIDE A BULLET INTO ONE OF THE EMPTY CHAMBERS of his REVOLVER...

The SHOTGUN COCKS -- A RED CASING FLIES OUT -- bouncing off the ground.

The TINY BELL ABOVE THE DOOR RINGS.

7 C/U: JAKE SLIDES A BULLET INTO THE REVOLVER'S CHAMBER. 7

The OLDER MAN SWINGS HIS GUN UP --

A SHOT IS FIRED -- this time from Jake -- HITTING THE OLDER MAN DIRECTLY IN THE CHEST.

The man FALLS TO THE GROUND coughing up blood.

Jake scrambles to stand up.

Half unconscious, the man FIRES -- missing Jake by a mile.

Jake quickly LOADS ANOTHER ROUND INTO HIS REVOLVER as he quickly and calmly moves across the restaurant to DYING MAN.

Without a pause, Jake fires down at the man once again.

The older man twitches... then stops moving.

And then... after all of the violence, screaming and shooting, there is nothing but COUNTRY MUSIC and the rhythm of Jake's BREATHING.

He looks around at the mess -- the BODIES ARE LAID OUT as if they were merely posing for a Renaissance painting -- if it weren't so disturbing, it would be beautiful.

The BELL RINGS -- Jake raises his GUN.

SNOOPY STUMBLES IN, holding his HAND TIGHT ON HIS BLOODY CHEEK AND NECK -- trying to CLOSE the BUCKSHOT WOUNDS scattered on THE LEFT SIDE OF HIS FACE like POLKA DOTS.

His WORDS come out with A SLUR.

SNOOPY
Howwlly scchhhitt... Whaatthhe fuck happanned?!

Jake tucks the gun back into his waistband.

JAKE
Grab the bodies.

SNOOPY
Whaatthe fuck are wu talkin' aboww!? Wook at Monroe, man! Wook at ma goddam face! I gotta getto a hospitaw!

Jake looks at Snoopy -- red trickles from the polka dots.

His calm demeanor never changes.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a HANDKERCHIEF -- pressing it to Snoopy's wounds, almost gently.

He looks directly into Snoopy's eyes.

JAKE
You'll be fine. We ain't goin' to no hospital.

Snoopy looks around the room at the mess -- Manny, and the OLDER MAN -- CRIMSON STREAKS, SPARKLING SHARDS OF GLASS and overturned chairs.

JAKE (CONT'D)
We'll take care of it ourselves. For now, you gotta grab a body and start pullin', alright?

Snoopy then turns to see Monroe's lifeless body -- outside through the dirty window. He stares, still in shock.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Alright?

Snoopy nods and takes over holding the handkerchief.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Okay.

Jake grabs MANNY'S BODY and starts pulling -- THE BELL CHIMES as he drags Manny out the FRONT DOOR, leaving a RED TRAIL and one less subject in the frame.

The door shuts.

Snoopy tries to stop his shaking as he pushes the FRONT DOOR OPEN -- the BELL CHIMES, again.

Now alone, the OLDER MAN'S DEAD EYES stare straight ahead.

Through the FRONT WINDOW, Snoopy struggles to grab MONROE'S LEG while still holding the HANDKERCHIEF to his face.

He stops for a moment, noticing MONROE'S GUN.

Snoopy looks back to see if Jake can see him, before he quickly pulls the REVOLVER from MONROE'S HAND -- leaving his LIFELESS TRIGGER FINGER EXTENDED.

He tucks the DEAD MAN'S PISTOL INTO HIS WAISTBAND, before dragging MONROE'S BODY across the gravel towards the truck.

THE BELL CHIMES -- Jake re-enters.

He looks up into the corners, scanning until he spots a SECURITY CAMERA.

JAKE (CONT'D)
(annoyed, to himself)
Christ on a fuckin' cracker.

Jake follows the CORD CRUDELY STAPLED ALONG THE CEILING, back to A DOOR MARKED "PRIVATE".

He moves to it.

JAKE KICKS THE DOOR.

It cracks.

He smashes into it again.

THE DOOR FLIES OPEN.

8 INT. PRIVATE ROOM - CONTINUOUS 8

In the MESSY OFFICE, an OLD TV GLOWS IN THE DARK ROOM -- the screen is SPLIT INTO FOUR B&W CAMERA ANGLES.

Jake spots a DVR DEVICE resting on top of the OLD TV. He yanks the cords from it. The FEED GOES BLANK on the OLD TV.

Jake takes the DVR BOX with him as he exits.

9 INT. HOG HEAVEN - DINING ROOM 9

Jake rests the DVR ON THE MAN'S BODY as THE BELL CHIMES.

Snoopy comes back inside.

JAKE
Drag him out, too. And don't let that fall off.

Snoopy nods and grabs the OLDER MAN'S BODY by the arms. He drags the body out while Jake heads to the kitchen.

FRAMED BY THE SERVICE WINDOW, Jake stops to EXAMINE THE MESS.

He walks to the UNSEEN WAITRESS -- he HEAVES as he drags her.

10 EXT. HOG HEAVEN - CONTINUOUS 10

Jake drags the WAITRESS' BODY out the door. Snoopy moves from the BACK OF THE BRONCO to help Jake.

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE
Just start the truck.

Snoopy turns back to the BRONCO -- SHATTERED GLASS sparkles under the BUCKSHOT-DOTTED driver's side DOOR -- MATCHING THE PATTERN ON HIS FACE.

A moment later -- THE ENGINE ROARS TO LIFE.

Jake tries to MAKE THE BODIES FIT in the back of the BRONCO.

He shoves MONROE OVER and CLOSES THE TAILGATE -- which SHUTS HARD ON MONROE'S LIFELESS HAND -- BRUTALLY SNAPPING OFF HALF OF HIS EXTENDED TRIGGER FINGER.

Jake notices the FINGER IS MISSING.

JAKE (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Shit.

He searches around the DARK GRAVEL, now painted in swashes of blood, but he can’t see the PIECE OF FINGER.

He bends down to search...

SNOOPY
(from the truck)
Whaat’schh wwoong?

One last glance...

JAKE
Nothin’.

Jake jogs to the PASSENGER SIDE DOOR and hops inside.

The BRONCO PULLS OUT and DRIVES OFF into the night, until it’s out of view, leaving us right where we started:

A barbecue joint with a LONE SILVERADO TRUCK in the gravel parking lot and COUNTRY MUSIC filling the night air.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: THE LAST VICTIM

CUT TO:

11 EXT. BAIT'S MOTEL - EARLY MORNING 11

There are no ocean views to be had here -- the EARLY MORNING SKY is silhouetting DUSTY MOUNTAINS in the distance.

SUPER: Colera, New Mexico - Population: 152 (as of 2010)

CUT TO:

12 INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - EARLY MORNING 12

A TO-DO LIST made out in neat handwriting lays on the NIGHT STAND next to an EXPENSIVE SMART PHONE -- which suddenly wakes to life as an ALARM CLOCK when it switches to 5:00 AM.

A PERFECTLY MANICURED HAND reaches out and slaps the alarm OFF before it can get ONE FULL BUZZ OUT.

The hand grabs THE PEN resting on the TO-DO LIST and CROSSES OFF the first thing: “5:00 AM - WAKE UP”.

CUT TO:

13 C/U MONTAGE: 13

-- The ALARM CLOCK BUZZES: 5:15 AM -- she TAPS IT OFF.

-- A HAND GRABS A DOG COLLAR.

-- THE HAND crosses off “TAKE OUT WALDO” from the LIST.

-- DOG COLLAR is PUT AWAY in a DOGGY DUFFLE BAG.

-- ALARM CLOCK: 5:30 AM -- she TAPS IT OFF.

-- A SHOWER HANDLE TURNS

-- WATER SPUTTERS OUT OF THE HEAD.

-- THE HAND crosses off “SHOWER” from the LIST.

-- ALARM CLOCK: 5:45 AM -- she TAPS IT OFF.

-- A YOGA MAT is UNFURLED

-- A DROP OF SWEAT ON THE MAT.

-- THE HAND crosses off “MORNING YOGA” from the TO DO LIST.

-- ALARM CLOCK: 6:15 AM -- she TAPS IT OFF.

-- A SHOWER HANDLE TURNS OFF in a STEAMING SHOWER

-- THE HAND crosses off “AFTER-YOGA SHOWER” from the list.

-- ALARM CLOCK: 7:00 AM -- she TAPS IT OFF.

-- A COFFEE MAKER BEGINS TO DRIP.

-- THE HAND crosses “MAKE COFFEE” off the list.

-- ALARM CLOCK: 7:15 AM -- she TAPS IT OFF.

-- An EXPENSIVE PAIR of TOM’S SHOES slip onto SUSAN’S FEET.

END OF MONTAGE.

CUT TO:

14 INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - MORNING 14

SUSAN ORDEN (30's, perfectly kept, but all business) sits near the window, peeking between the DIRTY BLINDS -- looking at a WOMAN SITTING ON THE CURB, smoking a cigarette.

She sips coffee from a disposable MOTEL CUP in her perfectly-planned "road trip clothes" -- EXPENSIVE DENIM WITH PERFECTLY-PLACED RIPS and a well-faded N*SYNC T-SHIRT.

Her husband, RICHARD (30's, lovably scruffy, because he can afford to be) continues to sleep peacefully on the motel bed.

WALDO -- a SMALL, CHEERFUL DOG -- heads towards her CHAIR.

SUSAN
(whispering to Waldo)
Who's a good boy? It has to be you because there are no other good boys here. No there aren't. That's right. Yes it is.

Richard stirs in the bed. He turns to face her, still half-asleep and buried in pillows.

RICHARD
I heard that...

SUSAN
Well, I said it out loud.

Richard rustles around to look up at her. She smiles at him. He smiles back from the pillows.

RICHARD
Do I smell coffee?

Susan takes a sip.

SUSAN
I'm not sure, actually. It's definitely *coffee-like*.

RICHARD
That's alright. I have surprisingly low standards.

Richard glances coyly at Susan.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
But you already know that.

She throws the CHAIR PILLOW at his head. He jumps out of bed and grabs a PILLOW to throw back.

Susan laughs but holds up her FREE HAND quickly.

SUSAN
Whoa, hey! I have hot... coffee-like-beverage in my hand. Time out.

Richard puts the pillow down.

RICHARD
That's a forfeit. I win.

He smiles at her and heads to the BATHROOM.

The BATHROOM DOOR shuts.

JUMP TO:

15 EXT. BAIT'S MOTEL - LATER 15

OFF THE OLD INTERSTATE and nestled between EMPTY BUSINESSES and IMPOSING MOUNTAINS, is the BAIT'S MOTEL , which hasn't been updated since the 1980's.

In the lonely parking lot is a dented hatchback and a BLACK AND YELLOW FJ CRUISER with a BLACK TRAILER attached.

The TRAILER has "BRONZE BULL RENTALS" PAINTED ON ITS SIDE. The BLACK AND YELLOW monstrosity sticks out like a bumblebee.

16 INT. FJ CRUISER - CONTINUOUS 16

Susan waits in the DRIVER'S SEAT, anxiously tapping the steering wheel -- she scans the PARKING LOT, noticing a RUNDOWN WOMAN having her MORNING CIGARETTE on the curb.

The WOMAN makes eye contact with Susan -- for a flash of a moment, Susan sees herself as the SMOKING WOMAN...

The REAL SMOKING WOMAN stares back at Susan with disdain. Susan quickly turns away, embarrassed.

Susan pulls out her SMARTPHONE and starts typing a TEXT MESSAGE: *"What's taking so long??"*

She hits SEND and waits, trying to avoid accidental eye contact with the smoking lady.

Her PHONE BUZZES: "*Almost done*"

She checks the clock: 8:08 AM.

Susan begins to drum anxiously on the wheel, again.

After a short drum solo, she turns the RADIO ON -- seeking through static-filled stations until she finds a COUNTRY SONG coming in clear... Tammy Wynette singing “Stand By Your Man”.

She leaves it there.

She checks the clock: 8:08... 8:08... 8:09 AM.

Letting out an anxious sigh, she reaches for her PHONE -- the DOOR to the FRONT OFFICE swings open.

Richard steps out with a handful of TRAVEL BROCHURES for local attractions.

RICHARD
(to the lady inside)
Alright, you too!

He jogs over to the FJ CRUISER -- the PASSENGER DOOR OPENS.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Okay, all good to go.

He kisses her on the forehead -- it didn’t work.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Hey, I know... I’m sorry for holding us up.

Still upset, Susan shakes her head.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
C’mon, it was like five minutes.

SUSAN
Nine minutes.

RICHARD
Sorry... nine minutes.

She thinks about responding for a long moment... then shifts the car into reverse.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Hey, hold on. Look, I’m sorry, okay? Really.

She opens her mouth to talk... and shakes her head.

SUSAN
Let’s just go.

RICHARD
No, hey, what’s going on?

SUSAN
(upset)
Nothing. We're wasting time.

RICHARD
Look, I'm sorry for holding us up. I really am. I just sometimes get caught up when I'm talking to people, you know? And I...

SUSAN
Just... forget it.

RICHARD
Don't do that...

Susan looks away and out the window.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry for keeping us. I really promise I'll try to keep it... tighter... in the future.

SUSAN
It's not that... I mean... it is, but, just... look, I'm sorry. I've been trying to just go with the flow and all that shit, but... it's just the last few days... I mean, I'm always anxious, but, ever since I took this job, I feel like I'm not even in control of myself anymore, you know?

RICHARD
So... tell me that. Let me in on what's going on. Maybe I can help instead of... just watching you brood silently.

She takes a deep breath to preemptively stop her oncoming panic attack... she unthinkingly RUBS HER THUMB AND FOREFINGER TOGETHER to calm herself down.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Hey, it's alright.

SUSAN
It's like I've been... like, floating around on an ocean, hoping the current is pulling me in the right direction, you know?

RICHARD
I get that... but you're not floating aimlessly. We're... pioneers, pressing on towards a new land.

She lets out a slight smile as her heavy breathing calms.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
And, look, maybe sometimes we can't control where the current takes us, but wherever it is, I'll be floating right there with you.

They look at each other tenderly.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
You okay?

SUSAN
Yeah. I think this place is getting to me. It's whole deal... just kinda creeps me out. I'm ninety percent sure it's haunted.

RICHARD
Hey, now... You watch your mouth, missy. This place is the highest rated overnight accommodation service in the entire town... And that's really saying something, so yeah, hit it. Let's get the fuck out of here.

She puts the car in reverse and backs out.

17 EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS 17

The BUMBLEBEE pulls out of the MOTEL PARKING LOT and ONTO THE OLD CRACKED HIGHWAY -- surrounded by BARREN ROCKY LANDSCAPE.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. HOG HEAVEN - DAY 18

...THE SUN SHINES DOWN on the RESTAURANT as the POLICE TAPE blows in the wind.

A CLEAN, OLDER PICKUP TRUCK with the NEGACION COUNTY SHERIFF'S LOGO pulls into the GRAVEL LOT.

The POLICE TRUCK parks next to a VERY DIRTY SQUAD CAR.

The only other car in the parking lot is the BEAT UP ORANGE CHEVY SILVARADO from the night before.

19 C/U: WELL-USED COWBOY BOOTS PEAK OUT UNDER BEIGE POLICE TROUSERS AS THEY STEP ONTO THE GRAVEL PARKING LOT. 19

SHERIFF HERMAN HICKEY (62, permanently annoyed in a PERFECTLY PRESSED uniform) climbs from the truck with a small struggle.

The boots walk towards the DIRTY SQUAD CAR.

His DARK AVIATORS REFLECT a RED AND WHITE “D.A.R.E.” BUMPER STICKER on the TRUNK.

He looks down from the dirty car and notices something. His expression changes to morbid curiosity. HICKEY slaps a LATEX GLOVE on his hand and reaches down.

He picks up ONE THIRD OF A BLOODY FINGER and examines it.

He drops it in an EVIDENCE BAG and moves towards the FRONT DOOR OF HOG HEAVEN.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. LONELY NEW MEXICO HIGHWAY - DAY 20

The FJ CRUISER makes its way down the empty highway...

21 INT. FJ CRUISER - CONTINUOUS 21

Richard brushes the KALE CHIP DUST from his hands as he PUTS THE HALF-EATEN BAG of EXPENSIVE GREEN TORTILLA CHIPS away and reaches for something else near his feet...

RICHARD
So...

Susan glances at him.

Richard fans out the HANDFUL OF BROCHURES.

Susan lets out her words with annoyed exhaustion.

SUSAN
No...

RICHARD
What?

SUSAN
We're not doing another two hour detour to see the world's biggest chair or the world's shittiest ghost town...

RICHARD
No, I've got a good one this time.

SUSAN
C'mon, I'm already nervous about showing up on time--

RICHARD
S.U. isn't even expecting you to start for another three weeks. Even if we stopped to do nothing but drugs for a week, we'd still have a week and a half to spare.

He sorts through the BROCHURES until he comes across one that says: YAJ OOLAL OVERLOOK NATURE PRESERVE. He flips it open.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Plus, it says in here that at this Yag...yalljj...Yeggy Oh-Lala place, they once filmed an episode of *The Outer Limits*.

Susan perks up.

SUSAN
Really?

RICHARD
No, I just made that up.

She seems actually upset by this revelation.

SUSAN
Why would you do that?

RICHARD
Because it should be enough that it's a beautiful, unique, natural wonderland that we'll probably never get a chance to see again.

SUSAN
It's not... I'm not really... feeling--

He cuts her off...

RICHARD
When our hypothetical children hear the story of our voyage across this great-land-tis-of-thee, what are we gonna hypothetically tell them, huh? That we followed our GPS along the fastest route and nothing that interesting happened? Or are we gonna blow their little hypothetical minds with amazing tales of wild west adventure?

Susan thinks for a moment.

SUSAN
Were you really lying about the *Outer Limits* thing?

RICHARD
Yeah.

SUSAN
Damn.

RICHARD
I know. I'm sorry I raised your hopes like that.

The BUMBLEBEE drives down the road as it curves INTO THE BRIGHT SUN, bursting through the DARK GRAY CLOUDS...

CUT TO:

22 INT. HOG HEAVEN - CONTINUOUS 22

Hickey steps inside and looks around at the grotesque scene -- BLOOD AND GLASS EVERYWHERE, but no bodies.

He looks over to DEPUTY MINDY GABOON (29, Caucasian -- young and interesting face, perky ponytail and a mix of sweet innocence and snarky attitude) who's SNAPPING PHOTOS of a perfect STREAK OF BLOOD.

He walks across the restaurant, carefully avoiding stains.

HICKEY
Why the hell is your car always so damn dirty?

GABOON
'Cause we live out in the middle of nowhere. Why's yours always so damn clean?

HICKEY
Because I give a shit.

He looks around at the aftermath of the night before... his eyes go around looking at all of the EMPTY TABLES and landing on the one with FOOD AND A DRINK.

He moves towards the table with the TILTED CHAIR... he sees the BLOOD STAIN from MANNY'S HEAD on the GROUND.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Where is everyone, Ga-boooon?

Deputy Gaboon twists the CAMERA and SNAPS ANOTHER PHOTO.

THE FLASH is like mechanical lightning.

GABOON
Stop sayin' my name like that.

HICKEY
Ain't no other way to say it. "Mindy Gaboon". Sounds like a children's party clown.

He chuckles to himself as he notices the HALF-EATEN PORK CHOP SANDWICH -- he notices the CIGARETTE BUTT IN THE SODA.

GABOON
As opposed to an adult's party clown?

Hickey shakes his head.

HICKEY
Again, I ask: where is everyone?

She snaps another grisly photograph.

GABOON
Well, Chet and Kelly are still out over in Fort Hafan at that conference.

HICKEY
Having themselves a boys night out with the Mayor is more like.

They both snicker.

GABOON
You got that right.

FLASH -- another photo.

GABOON (CONT'D)
And today is Dale’s day off. I’ve been trying to get a hold of him all morning, but he ain’t pickin’ up.

HICKEY
That sounds about right. Remind me to fire him when this is all done with.

GABOON
Why don’t you just fire him now?

HICKEY
‘Cause you can’t get a hold of him.

They both chuckle, again.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Who’s truck is that, outside?

GABOON
I ran the plates earlier... said it belongs to some fella named Manny Randowski. I don’t know if he was a shooter or a victim.

Hickey looks around.

HICKEY
Where the hell are all the bodies?

GABOON
There ain’t none.

HICKEY
Well where’d this come from?

Hickey holds up the BLOODY FINGER wrapped in plastic.

GABOON
What the hell is that?

He tosses it to her -- she catches it with one hand.

Gaboon examines the contents of the bag and lets out an involuntary DRY HEAVE.

She tosses it back to Hickey.

GABOON (CONT'D)
Don’t ever toss me a finger again.

HICKEY
I can’t make any promises.

Hickey notices the SECURITY CAMERA in the CORNER. He follows the WIRE stapled along the ceiling to the BROKEN OFFICE DOOR.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Any security footage?

GABOON
Nope. All the surveillance stuff was cleared out. Nothin’ back there but frayed wires and an old TV.

The sound of A CAR DRIVING BY catches their attention.

They both look out through the PAINTED-PIG FRONT WINDOW to see a BLACK AND YELLOW FJ CRUISER WITH A TRAILER pass by.

HICKEY
What in the hell is that supposed to be?

GABOON
Looks kinda like a yellow jacket.

CUT TO:

23 INT. FJ CRUISER - CONTINUOUS 23

Susan and Rich slow down as they drive by the crime scene.

RICHARD
I wonder what happened there.

SUSAN
Looks like a robbery or something.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. OLD TRAILER - BAD LANDS - MORNING 24

AN OCCASIONAL SKINNY TREE manages to shoot out from the ROCKY GROUND around the ROTTING YELLOW AND WHITE DOUBLE-WIDE TRAILER with a RED TARP AWNING, surrounded by RUSTING JUNK.

Super: Ganga, New Mexico - Population: 17 (as of 2010).

A SHOT RINGS OUT and slowly fades away.

ANOTHER SHOT -- A TIN CAN POPS.

25 EXT. BEHIND THE OLD TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 25

An OLD TOWING TRUCK is parked on a LONG DIRT ROAD that disappears around a bend. The truck's painted-on DECAL: "BROKEN WHEEL TOWING AND SCRAP" is CHIPPING AWAY.

THE OLD TRAILER is a poor man's mansion -- a COUCH and ARMCHAIR under the RED TARP AWNING -- a GENERATOR with ORANGE POWER CORDS running through a window into the house -- a POOL TABLE covered in dirt and missing half the balls.

Hiding in the shadow of the RED TARP is AN OLD DINING TABLE with a CASE OF CHEAP BEERS resting on it.

BULL (29, he could pass for "cuddly" if he never talked) takes aim with an OLD RIFLE, holds his breath and fires.

A GLASS PICKLE JAR SHATTERS from on top of a FENCE POST about twenty yards away.

BULL
What'd I say?

Bull grabs a BOTTLE OF BEER and takes a swig.

TAD (26, skinny and awkward, with long greasy hair) takes off his DIRTY BASEBALL CAP and scratches his greasy hair.

TAD
Damn.

He squints down range at the empty fence posts. Bull rests the RIFLE on the TABLE.

TAD (CONT'D)
One more round?

BULL
Alright. Go set 'em up. I gotta take a shit.

Bull drinks the rest of his beer and hands the EMPTY BOTTLE to Tad.

BULL (CONT'D)
Here.

TAD
I ain't your maid.

Bull smacks his brother upside the head.

BULL
For the fuckin' fence post, shithead.

TAD
Don't fuckin' hit me.

BULL
Don't be a goddamn moron.

Tad snatches the EMPTY BOTTLE from Bull and starts walking to the FENCE.

The RUSTY SCREEN DOOR SMACKS as Bull steps inside. Tad ignores it and keeps moving across the ROCKY LANDSCAPE.

The heels of his boots dip into the dry dirt as he marches towards the WOOD and BARBED WIRE FENCE.

Tad puts the BEER BOTTLE on a FENCE POST.

He wanders down the line, collecting bullet-ridden TIN CANS of every variety -- TUNA, SOUP, COFFEE and even old OIL CANS.

He perches them atop the FENCE POSTS, like relics on display at a museum, in a straight line.

Tad admires his work before turning to start the long trek BACK TO THE TRAILER

Halfway there, HE STOPS.

Tad turns to look back at the BEER BOTTLE. He pulls a REVOLVER from his BELT and checks the chambers.

All six are loaded.

Tad raises the gun, pointing at the BEER BOTTLE.

He fires -- he misses -- A CLUMP OF DIRT bursts up from the dry ground.

Smoke drifts through the air between him and the BOTTLE.

He fires, again -- he misses, again.

He fires THREE MORE TIMES -- two more TINY ERUPTIONS burst up from the DRIED GRASS -- one bullet SPLINTERS THE WOODEN POST.

Tad marches to the BEER BOTTLE.

He puts the BARREL OF THE REVOLVER to the glass.

He pulls the trigger -- nothing happens.

Confused, Tad opens the cylinder, emptying the chambers into his FILTHY OPEN PALM -- there are FIVE EMPTY SHELL CASINGS and ONE COMPLETE BULLET -- now with a SMALL BLACK MARK where the HAMMER OF THE GUN STRUCK.

He puts the EMPTY CASINGS in his FRONT SHIRT POCKET, then slides the COMPLETE BULLET back into the chamber.

HE SNAPS IT CLOSED, and arranges the bullet to be fired. Tad aims the REVOLVER point blank at the BOTTLE, again. He winces, just in case... and pulls the trigger.

Nothing happens.

He brings the REVOLVER back up to inspect, pops it open, and pulls the DUD BULLET from the chamber to examine it.

He looks at the TINY BLACK HAMMER MARK.

Tad moves to put the BULLET in his SHIRT POCKET, but stops when he gets an idea...

He looks towards the YELLOW AND WHITE TRAILER -- the RED AWNING FLAPPING IN THE BREEZE.

Tad starts the trek back.

CUT TO:

26 INT. OLD TRAILER - BATHROOM 26

Bull pulls his pants up and fidgets with his COWBOY BUCKLE -- in the unused SHOWER, a dirty BUCKET OF WATER waits.

The bucket is dumped into the bowl, until everything washes down with a gurgle.

Bull moves to the SINK and dips his hands into another bucket, filled with soapy water. He dries his hands on his jeans and opens the BATHROOM DOOR.

27 INT. OLD TRAILER - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 27

Leaning against the COUNTER, Tad waits, looking through the empty chambers of the REVOLVER.

BULL
You set ‘em back up, shit for brains?

Tad reaches into his SHIRT POCKET -- HE PULLS OUT A BULLET. He slides it into one of the SIX EMPTY CHAMBERS.

TAD
I thought of a better game.

BULL
Yeah, what's that?

Tad flicks the chamber closed.

TAD
Well, it's more of a magic trick, I guess.

In one motion, he spins the chambers, aims at Bull's leg and pulls the trigger.

CLICK.

Bull flinches, then loses it.

BULL
Hey, what the fuck are you doing, you little piece of shit?!

Tad aims at Bull's arm...

TAD
Don't worry, I know where it is.

...and pulls the trigger.

CLICK. Bull flinches -- he MARCHES TOWARDS Tad...

Tad aims the gun at Bull's face -- Bull stops in his tracks.

TAD (CONT'D)
Hold on, now. You don't want me to mess this up.

His finger tightens around the trigger.

BULL
I'm gonna fuckin' kill you...

TAD
Famous last words, huh?

Tad pulls the trigger.

CLICK.

Bull charges.

TAD (CONT'D)
Wait! It was a fuckin' jok--

Bull rips the REVOLVER from Tad's hand and smacks him hard across the face with it, spattering the IVORY HANDLE with several RED DOTS.

Blood pours from Tad's nose.

TAD (CONT'D)
You piece of shit! It was a fuckin' dud, man!

BULL
I don't fuckin' care! Don't you ever point a goddamn gun at me again, you hear me?

Bull smacks him across the face one more time. They both breath heavily.

Bull stares at Tad for a long moment while blood drips onto the carpet.

BULL (CONT'D)
There's a cold pack in the ice box. Go put it on your face 'fore it gets swoll-up.

Tad nods and looks away, still upset.

Bull drops the BLOODY GUN on the DIRTY CARPET and heads to the FRONT DOOR. It SMACKS as Bull exits.

Tad grabs the REVOLVER from the newly stained carpet and moves to the KITCHENETTE.

He places the gun on the COUNTER and opens the CABINET UNDER THE SINK.

He grabs a MILK JUG FILLED WITH TAP WATER and a CRUSTY WASHCLOTH from a pile of rags -- both sitting near A TRAY OF CUT-UP CACTUS PARTS and A PICKLE JAR full of GEL-CAP PILLS -- the LID is STAMPED with a RED DHARMA WHEEL.

He wets the WASH CLOTH and WIPES THE BLOOD from his face -- RINGING OUT the watered-down CRIMSON DOWN THE DRAIN.

Tad opens the FREEZER and grabs the ICE PACK. He carefully presses it to his SWOLLEN NOSE.

Outside, he hears an ENGINE SPEEDING down the DIRT ROAD.

Tad moves to the WINDOW -- parting the RATTY OLD SHEETS being used for blinds with his fingers.

Down the LONE DIRT ROAD, A DIRTY BRONCO approaches the TRAILER with a LARGE CLOUD of DIRT trailing behind.

28 EXT. OLD TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 28

Bull waits with his arms crossed as Tad steps outside.

TAD
I wonder what took ‘em so long.

BULL
Well it prob’ly wasn’t ‘cause they stopped to get us breakfast.

The DIRTY BRONCO stops in front of the TRAILER -- the brothers can SEE THE DAMAGE from the night before. They approach with a bit of caution.

BULL (CONT'D)
Well, just outta kitten killin’ curiosity, what the hell happened to ya’ll?

Jake steps out of the DUSTY BRONCO.

JAKE
Things got complicated with Manny.

BULL
What do ya mean, “complicated”?

Snoopy gets out next, holding a BLOODY T-SHIRT to his face. Tad cringes when he sees him.

TAD
Holy shit.

JAKE
You got any rubbing alcohol?

Not waiting for an answer, Jake walks past Bull and towards the TRAILER. Snoopy scurries behind him.

BULL
Nope.

JAKE
Then where’s the liquor?

BULL
Don’t touch the Jack Daniels.

Bull looks around, expecting more people.

BULL (CONT'D)
Where’s Snake and Monroe?

JAKE
Snake got called into work last night.

Jake opens the SCREEN DOOR.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Monroe’s in the back of the Bronco.

The SCREEN DOOR SNAPS SHUT as Jake and Snoopy enter. Bull moves his attention back to the SHOT-UP BRONCO.

He makes his way towards the vehicle... finally opening the TAILGATE to see an OLD BLANKET -- spattered with dirt and crimson specks.

He pulls the BLANKET UP, revealing all of the BLOODY BODIES.

Bull immediately shakes his head and drops the BLANKET back over the lifeless passengers.

BULL
Bullshit.

He slams the TAILGATE SHUT. He marches towards the TRAILER, past Tad who seems to be waiting for permission like a child.

TAD
What is it?

Bull ignores him and throws the SCREEN DOOR OPEN.

BULL (O.S.)
(already inside)
Get the fuck out of here, man.

The DOOR SNAPS SHUT. Tad walks to the back of the BRONCO.

He opens the tailgate and gags a bit at the smell. He folds back the BLANKET for a better look.

After a moment, he bends and pukes.

29 INT. OLD TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 29

Jake rubs a vodka-drenched washcloth onto Snoopy’s face. Snoopy lets out a yelp of pain.

JAKE
You have a sewing kit?

Jake begins to DIG A FEW PELLETS from Snoopy's FACE with a small, old POCKET KNIFE -- Snoopy WHIMPERS.

BULL
It don't matter if I do, you can't stay here, you gotta take that truck-full of dead bodies and drive on away from my home, alright?

Bull turns away in frustration -- Jake grabs him.

BULL (CONT'D)
Hey!

JAKE
I ain't gonna ask twice.

Bull pushes him away.

BULL
Get the fuck off me! This is my fuckin' house! This is my fuckin' property!

Bull breathes heavily for a moment. Just when we think he's calmed down...

BULL (CONT'D)
And Monroe's dead, now?! And for what?! You know you didn't *need* to kill that boy, you *wanted* to fuckin' kill him! I told you that before you fuckin' left!

JAKE
You think it was about revenge?! Don't you get it yet?! It was about the fucking principle of the matter! That's what everything we do is about!

Bull looks Jake up and down... his anger slowly fades.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Sometimes the earth needs to be tilled before it can be sowed, right?

Bull stays silent, brooding. Jake's voice becomes calm.

JAKE (CONT'D)
But you... you are absolutely correct. This is your house.
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
Your property. I should treat you with the respect you deserve...

Bull stares back at the man, still on edge...

JAKE (CONT'D)
I apologize.

Bull licks his teeth... and nods in acceptance.

He moves to the KITCHEN and searches through a DRAWER. After a moment, he tosses a SMALL SEWING KIT onto the ratty chair near Jake.

BULL
Here.

Jake picks it up and pulls out a NEEDLE AND THREAD. He licks the thread and slides it through the needle.

BULL (CONT'D)
Now... what the fuck happened last night?

He cuts the thread with his teeth and begins to tie the knot.

JAKE
You saw the back of the truck.

Bull bites his tongue and composes his thoughts.

Jake starts sewing shut a small hole on Snoopy’s face. Snoopy WINCES as the NEEDLE GOES IN.

SNOOPY
Oww, schhitt.

JAKE
Quit whimperin’.

BULL
Who killed Monroe?

JAKE
The old man layin’ on top of him.

Bull takes a moment.

BULL
Alright.

He clears his throat. Bull hides his true feelings deep down.

BULL (CONT'D)
Good. Where’s his gun?

Jake looks to Snoopy. Bull follows his gaze over, as well.

Snoopy looks away nonchalantly. Bull holds out his hand.

BULL (CONT'D)
C’mon. I gave it to him.

Snoopy relents, pulling the CHARM GUN from his waistband. He hands it to Bull.

Bull looks at it mournfully. Jake notices how affected he is.

JAKE
Look, like I said, we ain’t here for vengeance. We just need your help gettin’ rid of the bodies.

Bull shakes his head and tucks the CHARM GUN away in the back of his blue jeans.

BULL
Oh, *is that all*?

JAKE
And the Bronco.

BULL
Look, Jake, this is all gettin’ to be a little too much for me, I... I really think you shou--

Jake waves his hand, cutting him off.

JAKE
I know. I really, honestly do, Bull. I get where you’re comin’ from. But you’ve gotta trust me on this, or we are *all* going down. You got me?

Bull stays quiet.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Once it’s all taken care of, then it’s out of our hair. No truck, no bodies, no conviction. Straight and simple.

Bull tongues his teeth while he thinks...

JAKE (CONT'D)
C'mon Bull. I'd never lead you to the wolves, brother.

He shakes his head.

BULL
God... dammit. Fine. What do you need?

Jake goes back to sewing up Snoopy's face.

JAKE
Just some supplies... and somewhere the cops won't ever go lookin'.

BULL
Well... I think I got a place that'd work. I used to use it to dry out them cactus buttons. Good air for it, and no one around for miles.

JAKE
And where's that?

BULL
This empty area around an old mine. We've taken to calling it "Purgatory".

JAKE
Purgatory?

BULL
'Cause of the way the borders are mapped out, it ain't really in any of the local po-po's jurisdictions, so they all just kinda ignore it. We could even torch the Bronco out there and no one would see it... hell, chances are, no one would even find the burnt-up chassis for a couple of years.

JAKE
Where is it?

BULL
A little ways outside that old nature preserve. I can't pronounce the fuckin' name. It's one of them Indian words. I got it marked up on the map up in my room.

Bull starts heading for the back, motioning to Jake.

JAKE
(to Snoopy)
Hold tight for a minute.

Jake gets up and follows Bull to the back of the OLD TRAILER, leaving the thread and needle DANGLING FROM SNOOPY'S FACE.

Snoopy looks around at the drab interior... he spots the BLOOD-SPATTERED, IVORY HANDLED REVOLVER on the counter. He looks around to make sure he's not being watched.

Snoopy moves to the gun and picks it up -- admiring the work.

THE RIDGES OF THE IVORY HANDLE...

DISSOLVE TO:

30 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - DAY 30

....BECOME THE RIDGES OF MOUNTAINS as the BUMBLEBEE follows a lonely curving road.

RICHARD is now driving as the two passengers take in the AMAZING VIEWS rather than ruin the moment.

Richard notices a RUSTING, ABANDONED STRUCTURE among all of the ROCKY NATURE in the distance.

RICHARD
Hey... check that out.

Susan glances at the OLD STRUCTURE.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Maybe we should hike over to it, huh? Take some pics? Maybe take my shirt off, huh? Show off the cobblestones?

He gestures to his stomach.

SUSAN
Eh, I don't really feel like getting tetanus today.

RICHARD
Well, maybe later, I guess.

She gives a sly smile.

JUMP TO:

31 EXT. YAJ OOLAL OVERLOOK NATURE PRESERVE - TICKET BOOTH - DAY 31

Richard brings the CAR to a slow as it approaches an OLD WOODEN BOOTH guarding an EMPTY GRAVEL PARKING LOT.

The CHIPPED RED AND WHITE “YAJ OOLAL OVERLOOK PRESERVE” sign is dangling on its side.

A THICK METAL CHAIN blocks the LOT ENTRANCE.

The DECAYING BOOTH is empty. Rich and Susan stare at their reflection in the dirty window.

SUSAN
You’ve gotta be fucking kidding me.

RICHARD
Maybe it’s... their lunch break or something.

Susan shakes her head and drops her face into the waiting palms of her hands.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Hey, don’t freak out... it’s okay.

SUSAN
We wasted three fucking hours coming out here...

Susan breaths into her hands like they’re a paper bag.

RICHARD
No, we didn’t.

Richard maneuvers the BUMBLEBEE around the CHAINED ENTRANCE.

SUSAN
Whoa, what the crap are you doing?

He smiles at her.

RICHARD
Getting our three hours back.

Susan clinches her jaw tight while the BUMBLEBEE narrowly pulls between the BROKEN CHAINS and into the PARKING LOT.

SUSAN
No... c’mon, I’m not... really feeling this...

The CAR PARKS and comes to a stop, alone in the gravel lot.

He smiles at her and KISSES HER HAND.

RICHARD
It'll be okay.

She smiles back.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Okay?

She takes a deep breath and... nods.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Okay.

Susan and Richard step out of the car and EXAMINE THE AREA around them...

He PUTS THE KEYS -- with a RED AND WHITE "BRONZE BULL TRAILER CO." RENTAL KEY CHAIN in his BACK POCKET.

Susan pulls a BACKPACK from the backseat and puts it over her shoulder as she shuts the door.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Ready?

Susan turns to him and smiles.

SUSAN
Yeah.

They start hiking down a TRAIL.

JUMP CUT TO:

32 EXT. YAJ OOLAL OVERLOOK PRESERVE TRAIL - LATER 32

The SERENE LANDSCAPE is broken by Susan and Richard's silhouettes coming over the horizon -- sweaty and exhausted as they PASS A SMALL, ROCKY RIDGE.

With the bag slung over her shoulder, Susan sets the pace while Richard follows behind, holding Waldo by the leash -- as they walk the TRAIL towards an AMAZING OVERLOOK SPOT.

SUSAN
Holy shit... are you seeing this?
This looks like a good spot, huh?

RICHARD
(between breaths)
Really? I could go for another...
twenty or thirty miles, you know...

SUSAN
Oh, yeah?

RICHARD
Yeah.

Richard pauses to catch his breath. Susan gives him a look while she waits.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
But, you're right. This is a good spot.

Susan pulls a BLANKET from her BAG and lays it on the dirty ground, overlooking the gorgeous view.

She starts searching through the bag for something...

Richard sits down and immediately kicks off his shoes.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
That feels good.

Susan pulls out a ONE-HITTER WEED PIPE. She takes a hit and passes it to Richard.

He slides the DOG LEASH over his foot and onto his ANKLE.

WALDO sniffs around dead grass -- Susan exhales.

SUSAN
Alright. You were right. I'm glad we did this.

Richard moves slightly as he reaches for the THE ONE-HITTER, lifting his foot -- THE LEASH slips off his ankle.

WALDO quickly goes running.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Shit!

RICHARD
I got him!

In a flash, Richard runs after Waldo, wearing only his socks.

It only takes a few moments for the small dog to disappear around the corner of the ROCKY RIDGE behind them.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Waldo! No!

Richard soon disappears around the corner as well, leaving Susan alone with the HAUNTING HOWL OF THE WIND.

She notices the TIP OF A YELLOW TARP BLOWING in the wind from AROUND THE ROCKY RIDGE CORNER.

She waits.

And waits.

Until...

WALDO COMES RUNNING back, towards Susan.

Susan tries to grab the leash, but can't -- Waldo continues PAST HER, sprinting in the opposite direction.

SUSAN
Shit!

Susan chases their dog as it sprints towards the CLIFF -- just as she gets near the EDGE... it does a ZIGZAG BACK through her legs.

RICHARD (O.S.)
Run!

Susan looks up to see Richard BURST OUT FROM AROUND THE ROCKY RIDGE, stumbling as he runs.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Go!

SUSAN
What's --

Before she can finish her question, A RED BURST erupts from the front of RICHARD'S FACE -- his body INSTANTLY FALLS FORWARD, sliding unceremoniously across the dry land.

It comes to a stop.

Before the shock sets in, BULL COMES INTO VIEW, standing twenty yards behind Richard, holding Monroe's CHARM GUN.

Without missing a beat, BULL SHOOTS...

Her body reacts before she can -- dropping to the ground as a SECOND BULLET is fired.

LIGHTER and ONE-HITTER still in hand, Susan scrambles towards THE SHARPLY SLOPING EDGE OF THE OVERLOOK.

In a panic, she ROLLS OVER -- TUMBLING several feet down an UNEVEN, STEEP ROCKY CHASM, disappearing in a CLOUD OF DUST.

33 EXT. ROCKY LANDSCAPE - CONTINUOUS 33

Landing hard as ROCKS and DUST FALL AROUND HER, she quickly, painfully CRAWLS THROUGH THE DUST CLOUD to a ROCKY AREA where the ANGLE of the CLIFF blocks the view from above.

As the MINOR AVALANCHE she caused continues to RAIN DUST AND ROCKS down the side, Susan notices the BRIGHTLY COLORED PLASTIC LIGHTER a few feet in front of her...

She reaches for it as the DUST AND ROCKS SETTLE around her to an UNNERVING SILENCE -- leaving her under a LAYER of DIRT.

She stays completely still.

34 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - CONTINUOUS 34

Bull JOGS TOWARDS THE STEEP SLOPE as Snoopy and Jake come from around the RIDGE behind him. He can’t see much as the DUST CLOUD settles.

After noticing RICHARD’S BODY, Jake and Snoopy quickly make their way towards Bull, who is looking over the EDGE.

There’s no way of getting down easily.

Looking down from above, there’s no sign of Susan.

JAKE
What’s goin’ on?

BULL
Someone else was here. A woman.

Snoopy glances at the BACKPACK and BLANKET on the ground.

SNOOPY
Where’d she go?

BULL
I don’t know.

JAKE
Did she see anything?

BULL
Yup.

Snoopy kicks up a patch of dirt in frustration.

SNOOPY
Christ, man!

Jake remains terrifyingly calm as he searches the landscape.

JAKE
Quit hollerin'.

35 EXT. ROCKY DITCH - CONTINUOUS 35

Trying to stay out of sight, Susan tries to stay still under the cover of a PROTRUDING ROCK, fighting the pain of the fall -- a CUT ON HER FOREHEAD drips CRIMSON as she breathes.

36 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - CONTINUOUS 36

Jake scans the landscape for signs of movement... nothing.

JAKE
She couldn't have gotten much further than fifty yards or so. She's probably closer.

BULL
Hell, the fall might of killed her already.

JAKE
Don't tell me what might of happened... go find the goddam body.

Jake gives Bull a look of disdain. He turns, ready to go.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I'll head west. You go east out to the flatlands, see if she was dumb 'nough to make a run for it. Snoopy, you stay here in case she doubles back. If ya'll spot somethin', yell out like supper's ready, and I'll come runnin'. Ain't nobody around to hear it but us.

Bull nods as he begins to tie some rope to a ROCK in order to lower himself down the steep, rocky slope.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. SMALL DITCH - LATER 37

Covered in dirt, and with the LIGHTER IN HAND, Susan slowly, carefully, moves as flat to the ground as she possibly can, hidden from view by a ROCKY DITCH a few feet deep.

She struggles to PULL HERSELF ALONG THE ROCKY GROUND, careful not to pop her head over the short edge that's hiding her.

As she crawls, she fights the panic building in her body...

She stops for a moment -- footsteps moving in a steady rhythmic marching pattern...

With nowhere to hide, the best Susan can do is to stay quiet.

She HOLDS HER BREATH and stares down at the dirt inches from her nose as the FOOTSTEPS MARCH CLOSER.

They slow... they linger.

Susan is SO DESPERATE TO BREATHE that her face goes calm -- she's about to die or she's reached a state of enlightenment.

Her face drips A SMALL DROP OF BLOOD from the CUT ON HER FOREHEAD onto the ROCKY GROUND.

Finally... the footsteps MARCH AWAY.

Susan continues to hold her breath, too afraid to let it out.

After a long moment, she finally exhales. She buries her face in her arms to silence her heavy breathing...

After another long moment, her breathing calms and she finally CHECKS HER SURROUNDINGS...

She doesn't see anyone.

Susan can either make a run for it EAST towards the DRY FLATLANDS... or CRAWL among the ROCKS, TOWARDS a THIN, DEEP CREVICE along the SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN...

She STARTS CRAWLING TOWARDS THE CREVICE, CAUTIOUSLY, leaving the DROP OF CRIMSON on the ROCKY GROUND BEHIND HER.

Susan reaches the THIN CRACK IN THE EARTH and slowly LOWERS HERSELF INTO the SMALL SPACE, trying not to MAKE A NOISE.

JUMP TO:

38 INT. SMALL CREVICE - EVENING 38

Susan tries to calm her shaking in a DRY NOOK. Tears stream down her cheeks while she calls 911.

THE PHONE HAS NO SIGNAL. The call won't go through.

Susan rocks back and forth with anxiety.

SUSAN
(whispering)
Please. Please. Please...

She tries again in vain.

No luck.

THE BATTERY ICON FLASHES RED -- IT'S AT ONE PERCENT.

Susan stops. She exits THE KEYPAD -- back to the HOME SCREEN.

She clicks on PHOTOS.

She SCROLLS THROUGH PHOTOS OF RICHARD -- she can barely contain her sobs as she looks at a PHOTO OF A TRIP THEY TOOK.

She stares at it, holding back unimaginable sadness...

The PHONE SUDDENLY DIES.

The moment seems to last forever.

Susan sits -- staring ahead in a daze.

Slowly, she begins to breath harder and faster, her pace continuing to quicken until she begins to shake and hyperventilate -- the shock is setting in.

She struggles to breathe as a panic attack begins to set in. She tries to fight her body, but she's losing.

She falls to the ground ROCKING BACK AND FORTH, taking deep, panicked breaths.

MATCH JUMP TO:

39 INT. SMALL CREVICE - NIGHT - LATER 39

Dirty and SHAKING FROM THE FREEZING COLD, Susan is curled up with her knees to her chest, staring ahead -- the BLOOD DRIED ON HER FOREHEAD.

Her hand rests on a SOFT-BALL SIZED SHARP ROCK.

The WIND HOWLS THROUGH the rocks -- HER HAND TIGHTENS on the ROCK -- ready to use it as a weapon.

She looks up cautiously towards the THE OPENING ABOVE, bright MOONLIGHT flows inside.

She takes a deep breath and looks at the patch of dirt in front of her, lit by the pale light.

Trying to steady her hand, she reaches out and SMOOTHS THE DIRT IN FRONT OF HER as her FROSTY BREATH catches the light.

Using her A ROCK, she begins to WRITE OUT A LIST in the DRY DIRT with her SHIVERING HANDS.

<u>She writes one item at a time as tears form in her eyes</u>:

1. WAKE UP

2. TAKE OUT WALDO

3. TAKE SHOWER

4. MORN--

She stops herself... she stares at the HALF-WRITTEN WORD.

Susan’s BREATH FOGS as she SHAKES IN THE COLD AND BEGINS TO HYPERVENTILATE, again -- she tries to calm her stilted breaths, but it keeps coming...

Fighting it as hard as she can, slowly, her breathing goes back to normal.

She pats down her pockets... and finds the LIGHTER.

She FLICKS IT ON and looks around at the walls of the CAVE as they DANCE IN THE ORANGE GLOW.

As her EYES ADJUST -- she LOOKS UP AT THE TOP OF THE CAVE -- she can see A FADING, <u>ANCIENT-LOOKING, PETITE, DARK RED HANDPRINT</u> on the ceiling.

She PLACES HER HAND ON THE ANCIENT HANDPRINT.

The moment lingers...

She looks down at the list in the dirt.

Susan ERASES THE DIRT LIST with her hand.

She begins to write a new list:

1. WAKE UP

2. FIND KEYS

3. FIND CAR

4. SURVIVE

She stares at the list in the moonlight...

CUT TO:

40 EXT. ROCKY RIDGE - NIGHT 40

With BINOCULARS AROUND HIS NECK, Bull marches back towards the ROCKY RIDGE -- a YELLOW TARP BLOWS in the wind near a pile of trash.

The RED AND WHITE BRONCO and the BROKEN WHEEL TOWING TRUCK are parked nearby.

Bull heads towards the YELLOW TARP blowing in the wind.

41 INT. ROCKY NOOK - CONTINUOUS 41

Wind bellows in the ROCKY NOOK -- a part of the mountainside that has eroded from the wind in the shape of a horseshoe -- leaving it out-of-sight from most angles.

Lit by FLASHLIGHT and LAMP-LIGHT, Jake and Snoopy dig A PIT that can fit six bodies.

Bull comes inside -- pushing past the YELLOW TARP that is strung up, partially obscuring the entrance to the nook.

JAKE
Did you find anything?

BULL
Does it look like I fuckin’ found anything?

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE
Shit.

Snoopy continues to dig while Jake climbs out of the PIT and grabs THE BINOCULARS from Bull.

He marches towards the EXIT.

42 EXT. ROCKY RIDGE - CONTINUOUS 42

Coming out of the YELLOW TARP, Jake climbs up to higher land to get a better view.

The BARREN, UNENDING LANDSCAPE, is lit brightly by the MOON.

MATCH JUMP TO:

43 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - LANDSCAPE - EARLY MORNING 43

THE MOON becomes the SUN -- the empty landscape goes on for as far as the eye can see -- PINK and RED fill the sky.

HEAT WAVES RADIATE up from the ground.

44 EXT. ROCKY RIDGE - EARLY MORNING 44

FROM ABOVE -- THREE FIGURES SMALLER THAN ANTS emerge from the YELLOW TARP into the early morning sun.

45 EXT. ROCKY RIDGE - CONTINUOUS 45

Still too far away to hear the words -- Jake, Snoopy and Bull are getting their gear together.

Snoopy asks something... Jake SHAKES HIS HEAD “NO” and points back to the ROCKY NOOK.

Snoopy KICKS UP DIRT, angry over the decision. Jake says something to him. It calms him down. Snoopy nods his head, now understanding.

Jake and Bull head off into the wilderness -- Snoopy heads back through the YELLOW TARP and into the ROCKY NOOK.

JUMP TO:

46 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - WEST - DAY 46

Jake’s BOOTS MOVE ALONG THE GROUND as he searches through nooks and crannies of the ROCKY LANDSCAPE around the BOTTOM OF THE CLIFF.

With his GUN DRAWN, he casually pokes his head around each CREVICE and ROCK.

CUT TO:

47 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - SOUTHEAST - DAY 47

BULL marches across the DRY FLAT LANDS -- nothing except the occasional RUIN or PILE OF TRASH -- as he keeps searching for signs of life.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - WEST - DAY 48

Jake moves to the next ROCKY CREVICE...

He investigates another HIDING SPOT -- nothing.

He notices something on the GROUND...

FAINT FOOTPRINTS -- which he tracks to a DRY DROP OF BLOOD.

He follows the DITCH TO A ROCK FORMATION... as he turns he realizes it's a SHARP, DEEP CREVICE... the one that Susan SLIPPED DOWN INTO EARLIER.

He looks down into the chasm... before SLOWLY SLIDING in.

CUT TO:

49 C/U: WE SEE THE SWEAT DRIP DOWN SUSAN'S DIRTY FACE AS SHE HIDES IN THE ROCKY CREVICE, HOLDING HER BREATH. 49

BACK TO:

50 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - WEST - DAY 50

Jake follows more FAINT FOOTPRINTS towards THE SMALL NOOK SUSAN has been hiding in -- he moves towards it with quiet steps that crunch.

CUT TO:

51 C/U: SUSAN STRUGGLES TO BREATHE SILENTLY. 51

BACK TO:

52 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - WEST - DAY 52

Jake approaches the SMALL NOOK with his gun drawn...

One foot in front of the other, he gets closer and closer. As he nears it, he slows and readies himself.

He swings around with his GUN DRAWN --

The spot is empty.

The LIST WRITTEN INTO THE DIRT is now mostly brushed away -- the only word that is still legible is: SURVIVE.

He stares at the HALF-ERASED WORD... as a slight smile manages to crawl across his frustrated face.

CUT TO:

53 C/U: SUSAN STARES STRAIGHT AHEAD. 53

PULL BACK SLOWLY TO REVEAL: SUSAN IS HIDING IN THE...

54 INT. ROCKY NOOK - BURIAL PIT 54

Behind the BURIAL PIT, Susan hides in silence, watching as Snoopy POURS GASOLINE over the BODIES IN THE PIT -- MONROE, THE OLDER MAN, THE WAITRESS, MANNY and RICHARD.

She stares at Richard's body with anger and sadness... then her eyes move to his BACK POCKET -- the TIP OF HIS <u>RED AND WHITE "BRONZE BULL" RENTAL KEY CHAIN</u> is sticking out.

As Snoopy pours, he suddenly gets an idea. He puts the GASOLINE DOWN and gets down on his knees.

He reaches into the PIT and grabs RICHARD'S BODY. He notices something...

Angry tears fill Susan's eyes as she watches Snoopy pull the WEDDING RING from her husband's finger and PUT IT ON HIS OWN. He then takes the KEYS and WALLET from Richard's BACK POCKET and examines them for a moment.

No cash... he throws the wallet back in the pit.

Snoopy looks at the KEYS and thinks to himself... he puts them in his pocket.

He moves to A SMALL PORTABLE RADIO and flicks it ON.

The static-filled sound of TAMMY WYNETTE SINGING "Stand By Your Man" begins to play in the DARK MINING TUNNEL.

Snoopy goes back to his GAS CAN and continues POURING THE GAS over RICHARD'S BODY.

Susan begins to shake -- her body a mix of unrelenting anger and unbearable sadness.

Then... a passionless expression falls across her face.

The shaking stops. She moves her gaze to the SHOTGUN slung across Snoopy's back.

Snoopy pulls out a PACK OF MATCHES and slides the flap open.

Behind him, Susan quietly and somewhat nervously emerges from the shadows like a young Leopard on its first hunt...

Snoopy strikes the match -- as SUSAN GRABS THE SHOTGUN -- pulling back hard on the NYLON STRAP.

The MATCH FLICKERS AWAY on the ground.

Snoopy is yanked TO THE GROUND along with Susan -- she tries to grab the SHOTGUN, but Snoopy's ARM IS CAUGHT IN THE STRAP.

His FREE ARM STRUGGLES TO REACH BEHIND and grab her.

With every ounce of strength she has, Susan TWISTS the SHOTGUN, TIGHTENING THE LONG NYLON STRAP -- creating a large tourniquet from his armpit to his neck and back.

His arms flap like an injured bird as he struggles to extract himself from the NYLON CHOKE-HOLD. He gasps for air.

She TWISTS AGAIN, but Snoopy twists with it -- Susan moves with him, not letting him wiggle away -- she presses her weight into his back, pinning him down.

Snoopy reaches around wildly for a handful of her hair... which he finds.

He YANKS HER HAIR as hard as he can, taking a CLUMP WITH IT.

Susan's scream echoes off the chiseled stone walls as she knees into his RIBS.

He grabs a FIST OF DIRT and throws it into her face.

She spits it out, but never lets go of the SHOTGUN -- with the STRAP AROUND HIS NECK, she TWISTS THE WEAPON OVER AND OVER AGAIN, PULLING TIGHTER EACH TIME.

His face TURNS PURPLE as the NYLON STRAP DIGS INTO HIS NECK. She yanks hard enough to arch his back into a CRESCENT MOON.

He grasps desperately...

Her hands are turning RED AND RAW on the NYLON, and she TWISTS AGAIN...

THE SHOTGUN GOES OFF -- startling them both.

She drops back but manages to hold on -- there are NO SOUNDS BUT THE RINGING IN HER EARS as Susan TIGHTENS THE STRAP.

He reaches into his waistband and pulls out A REVOLVER WITH AN IVORY HANDLE... before he can aim, she SMASHES HIS FACE into the GROUND, sending the REVOLVER flying, then she TWISTS THE SHOTGUN like a medieval torturer TIGHTENING HIS GARROTE.

Snoopy gags.

SHE TWISTS HARDER -- he grasps at the dusty ground.

SHE HOLDS TIGHT -- his eyes glaze over.

HER HANDS ARE BLOODY -- a final whimper of air.

The life exits from Snoopy with a gurgle...

SHE WON'T LET UP HER GRIP -- SHE PULLS TIGHTER.

SHE STARTS TO SHAKE... TEARS FLOW DOWN HER FACE. Her expression never changes.

SHE HEARS SOMETHING -- FOOTSTEPS FROM OUTSIDE GET CLOSER.

She grabs the RED AND WHITE KEY CHAIN from Snoopy's POCKET and tries to UNRAVEL the SHOTGUN -- but she doesn't have enough time -- SHADOWS APPROACH BEHIND THE YELLOW TARP.

She lets go and quickly runs in the opposite direction -- towards the DEAD-END of the NOOK.

Unable to find an exit, Susan hides against the rocky wall, out of view -- just as Jake and Bull comes through the TARP.

Jake stops... he silently takes in the ROCKY NOOK, searching as BEAMS OF SUNLIGHT catch the dust from above.

A SMALL NOISE -- ROCKS TUMBLING somewhere in the rear of the ROCKY NOOK.

Jake and Bull quickly move towards the noise...

...they come to the CURVED, ERODED, DEAD-END of the NOOK -- there is no sign of Susan.

MORE ROCKS FAINTLY TUMBLING...

Jake turns to the noise to see there is a small crack that has ERODED AWAY, forming a SLENDER SPLIT between the ROCKS that is nearly invisible from the side.

JAKE
(almost impressed)
Goddam...

The crack is too small for Jake and Bull -- they HEAR MOVING through the RUBBLE.

Jake EXAMINES THE SMALL HOLE -- then quickly puts the SHOTGUN INTO THE CRACK AND FIRES.

CUT TO:

55 INT. SLENDER SPLIT IN ROCKS - CONTINUOUS 55

In COMPLETE DARKNESS -- the PELLETS MOMENTARILY SPARK ALONG THE ROCKS -- then back to darkness.

BACK TO:

56 INT. ROCKY NOOK - CONTINUOUS 56

Jake pulls the SHOTGUN BACK, unable to get a good shot.

JAKE
Shit.

BULL
Goddammit!

Bull runs back out through the ROCKY NOOK.

CUT TO:

57 EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - CONTINUOUS 57

The serene landscape is broken by the sound of SMALL ROCKS TUMBLING to the ground.

Soon... Susan SLOWLY EMERGES from the SMALL DIRT OPENING on the side of the STEEP CLIFF -- REBORN.

She runs into the flat wilderness as fast as she can -- disappearing as she heads downhill.

BACK TO:

58 INT. ROCKY NOOK - CONTINUOUS 58

Jake follows Bull -- but stops for a moment as he looks down at SNOOPY'S LIFELESS BODY, then follows the MARK IN THE DIRT to the GUN laying a few feet from his body.

He moves to it... and picks up the IVORY-HANDLED REVOLVER.

CUT TO:

59 INT. HICKEY'S HOME - KITCHEN / DINNING ROOM - EVENING 59

GLENDA (64, she's weathered like the home itself, wearing an OLD DONALD DUCK SWEATSHIRT and JEANS) dumps ready-made MASHED POTATOES from the LARGE POT and into a SERVING BOWL.

She walks past the PORCELAIN KNICKKNACKS and a CHEAP, FRAMED PICTURE OF "THE LAST SUPPER" HANGING ON THE WALL.

Their son, GENE (28, lean and fit, wearing an OLD HOODIE and FADED JEANS, both STAINED FROM FARM WORK) is finishing up setting the table.

GENE
That smells amazing.

Hickey is STARING OUT THE WINDOW, looking at the BRIGHT, CLEAR SKY -- something is troubling him.

GLENDA
You doing alright, Herman?

HICKEY
Yeah...

She plops it down in the center of the table along with a few other dishes -- green beans and roasted chicken -- and she takes a seat.

GLENDA
You sure?

HICKEY
Yeah...

Hickey continues to stare out the window.

GLENDA
Alright... c'mon, now, let's eat.

Hickey, Glenda and Gene all sit around the TABLE.

Hickey helps himself to a HEAPING SCOOP of MASHED POTATOES. Glenda reaches for the POTATOES.

GLENDA (CONT'D)
Hey, now. Leave us some.

GENE
Yeah, stop Bogartin' the potatoes.

HICKEY
You know the rules, first come first served.

Hickey grins at his family as he SCOOPS ANOTHER HEAPING SPOONFUL onto his plate.

GENE
This is why I only come over once a week, now. I always end up having to get another supper when I leave.

HICKEY
Oh, cry me a river about gettin' free food.

GLENDA
Alright, c'mon, hand 'em over.

Hickey passes the BOWL OF MASHED SWEET POTATOES to Glenda, who helps herself to A LARGE SCOOP.

GLENDA (CONT'D)
So... anything new, Gene? How's it at goin' at Lionel's?

She passes the BOWL to Gene.

GENE
Not much. Same old, shi... stuff.

He PUTS A FEW SCOOPS on his plate.

GENE (CONT'D)
Mark's still actin' an ass every time I see him. It's really startin' to get on my nerves.

HICKEY
He’s prob’ly just too embarrassed to say he doesn’t know what he’s doing. I knew that boy’s father, and let me tell you, it’s a miracle he was able to get a job in the first place after what he put Frankie through over at the processing plant.

GENE
Even when he’s not wastin’ time messin’ with me, he’s wastin’ time doin’ somethin’ ‘else.

HICKEY
I don’t understand why Lionel doesn’t fire that dumb boy.

GLENDA
Well, I keep asking you the same thing about Dale...

HICKEY
You got the right of it, there. I swear it gets worse every damn day. Files go missing from the drawers, reports get deleted off the computer... I swear, sometimes, I think he’s doin’ it on purpose.

GENE
Oh, c’mon. Dale ain’t nothin’ but a dumbass. He ain’t doing anything on purpose. Hell, last time we went out to Stone Lake, he nearly hung himself in the damn tire swing.

GLENDA
That’s bull honkey. I think he’s just tryin’ to make you look bad. He’s always had his eye on bein’ Sheriff.

GENE
It don’t matter if he’s got his eye on it. He’s too stupid to ever get it. And, I mean, besides... everybody knows Mindy does all the work for both of you down there. If anyone’s gunnin’ for your job, it’s her.

Gene chuckles to himself with a shit-eating grin. Hickey rolls his eyes.

HICKEY
Alright, no more “work talk”.

Hickey takes a bite. They all eat in silence for a moment.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
With the case I’m doin’ right now, work is last thing I wanna think about.

Hickey’s weary eyes stare ahead as they slowly become...

DISSOLVE TO:

60 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - NIGHT 60

....A PAIR OF BINOCULARS, reflecting the BRIGHT MOON in both lenses like pupils on large eyes.

Jake searches the dark landscape with the BINOCULARS, hoping for any signs of movement.

BULL (O.S.)
You ready?

Disappointed, Jake lowers the BINOCULARS. He stands next to the BROKEN WHEEL TOWING TRUCK.

JAKE
Did you pull the tags off?

Jake turns around to see Bull pouring the last bit of GASOLINE over the RED AND WHITE BRONCO, about ten yards away.

BULL
Yup. And I scratched off the VIN. You wanna do the honors?

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE
Be my guest.

Bull searches his pockets for MATCHES.

BULL
Aren’t you worried she’s gonna see it? Know where we are?

Bull finally finds the MATCHES and pulls one out.

JAKE
It doesn't matter where she's hiding now. I know where she's gonna be next.

Bull strikes the match.

Jake begins searching through the BINOCULARS, again.

THE MOON slowly becomes...

DISSOLVE TO:

61 EXT. NEGACION COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - MORNING 61

... THE MORNING SUN, shining over Sheriff Hickey's CLEAN POLICE TRUCK, which is parked between a DIRTY SQUAD CAR and a CLEAN SQUAD CAR.

62 INT. NEGACION COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 62

Sheriff Hickey walks towards DEPUTY DALE (36, no one will ever be able to tell if he's a lazy idiot or a lazy genius), who has his legs up on the desk, reading *National Geographic*.

When Sheriff Hickey finally gets to DALE'S DESK, he stops and stares at him, waiting for Dale to look up from the magazine.

After a moment...

Dale FLIPS THE PAGE -- Hickey PULLS THE MAGAZINE OUT OF HIS HANDS AND THROWS IT ACROSS THE ROOM.

Dale shoots up, startled. He looks up at Hickey.

DALE
What the hell are you doin'?

HICKEY
You find any matches to that fingerprint yet?

DALE
Whose fingerprint?

HICKEY
Whose goddam fingerprint? The print from the goddam finger we found at Hog Heaven. What do you mean *whose goddam fingerprint*?

DALE
Ain’t no need to get snippy, Sheriff.

HICKEY
Pack up your desk and get outta here. You’re fired.

Hickey walks away, continuing in the direction he was going.

Dale watches in stunned silence. He starts to say something, but he knows it’s no use.

CUT TO:

63 EXT. NEGACION COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT - PARKING - MORNING 63

Deputy Gaboon is sitting on the curb in the middle of a mundane sounding phone call.

GABOON
Yeah, well, Maybe. I don’t know, you know? I think we’re just gonna have to play it by ear, depending on how far along this whole thing gets --

THE HEAVY DOOR SWINGS OPEN. Deputy Gaboon turns to see Sheriff Hickey.

GABOON (CONT'D)
(into the phone)
Hold on, I’m at work.

She covers the receiver.

GABOON (CONT'D)
What can I do for you, Sheriff?

HICKEY
I need you to run that print from the finger we found at Hog Heaven.

GABOON
Why? I thought Dale was supposed to do that.

HICKEY
He can’t do it. He’s too busy being fired.

He waves her inside.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
C’mon, you can chat with your boyfriend later.

GABOON
(into the phone)
I’ll call you back.

She HITS “END” and stands up with an exhausted sigh.

He holds the DOOR OPEN FOR HER as SHE HEADS INSIDE.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. NEW MEXICO BARREN LANDS - LATER 64

Covered in SWEAT AND DIRT, Susan trudges on, slowly.

In the distance, she sees something... COLORS popping in the middle of the beautiful BARREN LANDSCAPE.

She moves closer and closer until she can finally make out what’s in front of her...

A TENT... probably from the 1990’s, COMPLETELY DESTROYED, blowing in the wind and hanging on tight to a SHRUB.

Susan searches the ABANDONED CAMPING SITE...

Everything is SHREDDED, either by animals or time.

Nothing is useful... just bits of OLD TRASH and TORN FABRIC, both faded hard from the sun. She lets out an exhausted SIGH.

Turning, something catches her eye...

THE BOTTOM CORNER OF A COOLER, almost completely HIDDEN IN A NEARBY BUSH. Susan’s face lights up with hope.

She moves towards it.

She throws OPEN the LID of her TREASURE CHEST...

Nothing.

She stares at the empty cooler, about to break. Before it can set in, her sadness turns to ANGER.

She KICKS THE COOLER.

SUSAN
Fuck!

HER WORDS ECHO across the landscape.

She thinks for a moment... she shouldn't have done that.

Susan breathes for a moment. She stares at the CAMP SITE. Something catches her eye.

She moves towards a STRIP OF TENT POKING UP FROM THE GROUND. It looks ridged.

She picks it up... it still has A TENT POLE inside.

She pulls the TENT POLE out of the NYLON SLEEVE and examines it. The TIP is BLUNT.

Susan looks around the ground until she spots a ROUGH ROCK the size of her PALM.

She picks it up and examines it, before she starts to SHARPEN the TIP with the ROUGH STONE.

DISSOLVE TO:

65 EXT. BARREN LAND - LATER 65

The sun beats down on Susan as she struggles to keep her feet moving through the open, bleak terrain.

In A CRUDE BELT made from a COLORFUL NYLON STRIP of TENT, she carries her NEW WEAPON -- A SMALL SPEAR made from the TENT POLE, which has been SHARPENED to a POINT.

She hears something... her pace quickens.

Up ahead she sees the land is changing, becoming more ELEVATED AND ROCKY.

The sound becomes more clear -- FLOWING WATER.

With what little energy she has, Susan starts to jog.

66 EXT. SLIM WATERFALL CREVICE - CONTINUOUS 66

Looking down into the small CREVICE, Susan notices the life-giving SPARKLE OF WATER, dripping down the rocks.

The only way to get to it, is to get to the bottom, about EIGHT or NINE FEET below her.

Susan looks for a way down to the bottom of the TIGHT, SHARP CREVICE, but there is no easy way down to the TINY STREAM...

Looking down the TIGHT SPACE causes an ANXIOUS SHIVER.

Taking a DEEP BREATH to calm herself... she grabs a tight hold of the cliff side, Susan begins her slow descent.

Susan lowers her way to the bottom. She winces in pain... the skin on her hands already raw from dealing with Snoopy.

After a few more feet, Susan makes it down THE TIGHT SPACE to the BOTTOM, to find a SMALL STREAM of FRESH WATER.

She runs to it and brings the WATER TO HER MOUTH joyfully.

She DRINKS AS MUCH WATER AS SHE CAN.

Susan soon THROWS UP -- DRY HEAVING THE WATER OUT OF HER SYSTEM -- it was too much too fast.

She washes the DRIED BLOOD and DIRT from her face.

Then --

BOOTS CRUNCH AGAINST THE DIRT -- her head snaps to the sound.

They MOVE CLOSER AND CLOSER...

JAKE (O.S.)
I knew you'd find it.

Susan looks up to see JAKE'S FEET SWING OVER THE EDGE as he SITS ABOVE THE SHORT, TIGHT RAVINE.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Things get pretty dry out here in the summer. Bull tells me it's the only drinkable water for ten miles or so. Did you know humans can smell water? Well... they, ah, they have the ability to.

With the SUN DIRECTLY BEHIND HIM, his silhouette takes on an otherworldly quality as he sits on the EDGE OF THE RAVINE, looking down on Susan from above.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I suppose they just have to want it bad enough.

Susan tries to remain calm, but her breathing quickens. Her eyes are a cocktail of fear and anger.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Well... don't let me stop you.

Jake pulls an OLD BOY SCOUT CANTEEN from his belt and raises it as a toast.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Drink up.

He TAKES A DRINK OF WATER.

Susan clinches her jaw shut, nearly shaking with a mix of anxiety and rage.

Jake smiles at her.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Let me ask you a question, slightly off-topic. Do you think that money can truly buy happiness? And I don't just mean hookers or cars or anything like that. I mean, true, honest to god, joy in my heart kinda happiness. What do you think?

She doesn't answer.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Yeah I don't know, either. I will say, a lack of it sure seems to bring a lot of misery, though. I mean, I can't speak for everyone, but just, logically, if you need some... medical operation to save your life, but you can't afford it... money would make you happy, right? If you were homeless and suddenly you had the money to buy a house and some food... that would make you pretty happy, right?

Susan can't look at him. He waits. She stays silent.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Ah, I get it... you're thinkin' that's not true happiness, it's fleeting, momentary joy. Happiness comes from fulfillment... Well *that*, I agree with. But of course, how can you be fulfilled if you don't have the money to live?

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE (CONT'D)
And thus is life. Complicated, partial and unjust till the end.

From the BOTTOM OF THE RAVINE, Susan watches as Jake PULLS OUT A IVORY-HANDLED REVOLVER while his BOOTS DANGLE from the edge of the DIRTY RAVINE.

JAKE (CONT'D)
You have any thoughts on the subject?

Silence.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Goddamnit, lady. Speak up for yourself. Say something. Anything. Don’t you even care that you’re about to die?

Long beat.

SUSAN
(whisper)
Please.

JAKE
(leaning in)
I’m sorry, what was that?

Long beat.

SUSAN
(slightly louder)
Please don’t do this.

JAKE
You’re gonna have to speak up, there.

SUSAN
Just go... and I’ll go and we’ll never see each other again. Please, please, please...

Jake opens the CYLINDER to find there is ONE BULLET -- with a BLACK HAMMER MARK -- already in the IVORY HANDLED REVOLVER.

JAKE
Well, now, there you go, see, you bring up a good point. Bargaining. See, here’s the thing with money: it only works if the other party is willing to accept it.
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
For instance, right now, you could offer me a million dollars to let you go, and I still wouldn't take it, because what would make *me* happy is to... well to not go to jail.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a HANDFUL OF BULLETS. As he speaks, Jake slowly adds FIVE MORE BULLETS to the FIVE EMPTY CHAMBERS as he talks...

JAKE (CONT'D)
So, we're left with a conundrum, aren't we? In this particular scenario, there's no way that we can both be happy. In this situation, we have to revert back to our most precious of instincts. The one that overrides morals, and philosophy and laws. The one that tells us to survive at all costs. In a way it's so simple and uncomplicated that it's beautiful. Life's not complicated, till we make it that way. Money has no place in it. Society's artificial rules have no place in it. Because the truth is, in your world, the thing that matters most is you. And in my world, the thing that matters most is me.

Back around to the FIRST BULLET with the BLACK HAMMER MARK -- he closes the CHAMBER SECTION into the gun.

JAKE (CONT'D)
In the end, when you take away all of the phony incentives and bogus scare tactics, you're left only with your principles. That's who you really are. Good or bad. Right or wrong. There's always an answer if you have principles to guide you.

SUSAN
Please...

JAKE
(annoyed)
Goddamn, is that really the only thing you can say?

She stays silent... her breathing gets harder.

He shakes his head, almost disappointed in her.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Alright.

He AIMS THE REVOLVER at her.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I do apologize for this.

SUSAN
You...

Intrigued, Jake waits...

Susan is shaking with a mix of anxious rage, unable to stop.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
You... you *apologize*?

Jake watches the woman: shaking, crying and now... laughing.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
I guess that makes it all okay, right?! It's all just part of your fucking... man's man dumb-ass philosophy or whatever the fuck you keep shitting on about? You're fucking sorry?! Fuck you! You don't get to fucking apologize to me to make yourself feel better!

Jake continues to observe as she breaks hysterically. He lowers the gun and waits.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
You don't get to hide behind your... fucking "principles"-- like you're some sort of righteous fuck! You can't fucking murder someone and say it's okay because of your fucking principles! You're just... You're pathetic. You're goddamn pathetic.

Jake smiles, genuinely impressed.

JAKE
That's good. That's very good.

Jake points the gun at the helpless woman standing below him.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I think I would have liked you.

SUSAN
I bet.

Jake PULLS THE TRIGGER -- THE DUD FINALLY GOES OFF, EXPLODING THE GUN IN HIS HAND -- he lets out a pained grunt.

THE GUN FALLS DOWN INTO THE RAVINE.

Susan is SHOCKED MOTIONLESS for a second...

Jake quickly reaches for HIS OTHER REVOLVER, now tucked into a holster on his BOOT.

SHE PULLS OUT the SHARPENED TENT POLE and SPRINTS AT HIM...

Jake PULLS THE REVOLVER from the BOOT HOLSTER just as Susan LEAPS, STABBING THE TENT POLE into the side of his LEFT BOOT.

HE TRIES TO STAND, but she holds on -- Jake is IMMEDIATELY PULLED DOWN.

He LANDS HARD IN THE ROCKY RAVINE and the SECOND REVOLVER BOUNCES OUT OF HIS HAND, a FEW FEET AWAY.

JAKE TUMBLES -- HITTING HIS HEAD HARD ON A ROCK -- he's nearly unconscious.

THE IVORY REVOLVER RESTS IN A TIGHT CREVICE -- Susan looks to the BROKEN GUN -- then over to the OTHER REVOLVER -- laying next to Jake, half-unconscious and fighting to pull himself off the ground.

She stares at the REVOLVER resting near his hand -- weighing her options...

Susan searches the ground and quickly finds a SHARP ROCK.

Jake's hand SEARCHES for the lost REVOLVER -- only a foot or two away. He growls in pain as he rolls off of his INJURED LEFT FOOT -- the TENT POLE still sticking out.

She picks up the improvised weapon and considers the ramifications of attacking the dazed man as he pushes himself to stay conscious.

She takes a cautious step towards Jake and the gun...

Now on all fours, Jake's hand finds THE REVOLVER... he points it back towards Susan and SHOOTS OFF a HAIL MARY ROUND as he fights to keep his eyes open...

The aimless bullet miss -- exploding on the rock wall.

Susan stumbles back quickly and turns to the ROCK WALL.

Jake tries as hard as he can to pull himself up from all fours as SUSAN BEGINS TO SCALE THE SHEER CREVICE WALLS.

STRUGGLING TO HOLD HIS AIM -- Jake takes another WILD SHOT.

The BULLET HITS THE ROCK near Susan -- closer this time.

Susan makes herself continue up the rocky wall.

He SHOOTS AGAIN -- MISSING by inches as HIS EYES get HEAVIER.

Susan CLIMBS UP AND OVER.

67 EXT. SLIM WATERFALL CREVICE - CONTINUOUS 67

Susan runs as fast as she can -- pushing past her limits -- leaving the SLIM CREVICE behind her in the distance.

ANOTHER WILD SHOT echoes in the background -- but she's not stopping, not looking back.

CUT TO:

68 EXT. DIRTY SQUAD CAR - COLERA, NEW MEXICO - DAY 68

...Hickey sits behind the PASSENGER SIDE WINDOW -- LOOKING OUTSIDE as they DRIVE ALONG A LONELY DIRT ROAD surrounded by HAZY MOUNTAINS.

There isn't a structure in sight for miles.

69 INT. DIRTY SQUAD CAR - CONTINUOUS 69

Deputy Gaboon drives, while Sheriff Hickey continues to stare out the window.

HICKEY
Where the hell is this place?

GABOON
Should be just another few minutes up the road, I think.

HICKEY
I feel like we've been driving for hours.

GABOON
Well, sorry I haven't been able to keep you thoroughly entertained, Sheriff. Want me to sing a song?
(MORE)

GABOON (CONT'D)
Maybe I can recite some Shakespeare for ya?

HICKEY
Yeah, you know *Hamlet*?

GABOON
The one about the old guy who collects skulls?

HICKEY
Yeah, that's it.

GABOON
Sorry, I only know the plays from his early period.

HICKEY
Oh, damn.

GABOON
Yup. Sorry 'bout that.

GABOON'S PHONE RINGS -- she pulls it out and glances down to see who's calling. She hits "Ignore" and puts it back.

HICKEY
(sarcastic)
Your boyfriend callin' again?

GABOON
Yeah, but don't worry, I won't tell him about us.

In the distance, TAD AND BULL'S TRAILER grows nearer.

GABOON (CONT'D)
Looks like this is the place.

CUT TO:

70 EXT. BARREN LANDS - LATER 70

Susan TREADS ACROSS THE OPEN LAND.

Her shirt is TORN and WRAPPED AROUND HER SHOE-LESS FOOT.

Finally, she stops and collapses against A LONE TREE.

She swings her gaze around, taking in the view. Something hits her... the landscape looks familiar.

She notices an ABANDONED RUIN in the distance, among the all of the ROCKY NATURE... SHE'S SEEN IT BEFORE.

Exhausted, she PULLS HERSELF UP and climbs to get a better view... squinting, she can barely make out THE BUMBLEBEE.

Nervously, she gives herself a PAT DOWN until she FINDS HER KEYS, still in her POCKET -- she lets out an anxious laugh.

Susan takes a calming breath and starts MOVING TOWARDS THE YELLOW AND BLACK SPECK IN THE DISTANCE...

DISSOLVE TO:

71 EXT. OLD TRAILER - DAY 71

...Hickey and Gaboon MOVE TOWARDS THE OLD TRAILER.

He KNOCKS ON THE DOOR. Gaboon STANDS BEHIND.

HICKEY
Sheriff's department.

After a few moments, he knocks again. They wait. Something RUSTLES AROUND INSIDE. Hickey rests his hand on his GUN.

He motions for Gaboon to move AROUND TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OLD TRAILER.

She nods and draws her weapon as she slowly makes her way to the SIDE WINDOW, cutting off an escape attempt.

Hickey KNOCKS AGAIN.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
C'mon out now. We just wanna talk.

Silence.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
I ain't gonna knock again.

Silence.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Alright, then.

Hickey PUTS HIS HAND ON HIS HOLSTERED WEAPON and waits...

The DOOR OPENS.

Tad STANDS IN THE DOORWAY looking dirty, sweaty and sheepish with his RIGHT HAND RESTING ON THE DOOR FRAME.

Tad notices Gaboon come back around to the front.

TAD
What do ya'll want?

HICKEY
Hi, there. We're looking for a fella named Monroe. It seems we have one of his fingers. We were wonderin' if he wanted it back.

Hickey glances at Tad's FINGERS -- all five are there... his gaze then shifts to Tad's BROKEN NOSE.

Tad swallows nervously.

TAD
Monroe... don't live here no more.

HICKEY
Is that so?

TAD
I don't have no roommates no more.

HICKEY
Well, damn. That is a shame.

Hickey looks back at Gaboon.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Ain't that a shame, Deputy Gaboon?

GABOON
A cryin' shame, sir.

HICKEY
Yes it is. Well, damn. You wouldn't happen to know where he's moved out to, would you?

TAD
No, sir.

HICKEY
No? No forwarding address? Nothing?

TAD
No, sir.

HICKEY
What's wrong? You two have a fallin' out or somethin'?

TAD
No, sir. I mean... I don’t know what to tell you.

HICKEY
Alright, well, you’re not Monroe, so, that would make you...

Hickey pulls a NOTE PAD from his SHIRT POCKET and glances down for a moment...

HICKEY (CONT'D)
...Jon-David Lorn? Is that right?

TAD
That’s my brother.

HICKEY
Your brother?

TAD
Yessir.

HICKEY
He live with you?

TAD
Yessir.

HICKEY
I thought you didn’t have any roommates no more.

TAD
Well, I mean, apart from him.

HICKEY
Your brother?

TAD
Yessi--

HICKEY
I’m sorry, do you mind if we step inside? It’s been hot out today.

TAD
It’s hot out everyday...

HICKEY
Ain’t that the truth?

Hickey motions into the OLD TRAILER.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
May we?

Tad pauses for a moment to weigh his options.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Unless there's some reason you don't want us to come inside?

Tad shakes his head sheepishly.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Great.

Hickey steps inside, slightly pushing past Tad.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Thank you very much.

Gaboon tips her hat to Tad politely and follows Hickey.

72 INT. OLD TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 72

Hickey gives the messy trailer a once-over as he steps inside -- he NOTICES THE SEMI-CLEANED BLOOD STAINS ON THE CARPET.

He looks up at Tad's SWOLLEN NOSE.

HICKEY
By the way, where is your brother? He got a job in town? Maybe we can catch up with him there.

TAD
No, sir.

HICKEY
"No, he ain't got a job" or "No, we can't catch up with him"?

TAD
He ain't in town.

HICKEY
Then where is he?

TAD
I don't know.

HICKEY
Then how do you know he's not in town?

TAD
I... well...

HICKEY
Hey, before I get side-tracked, what's your name, son?

TAD
It's, ah, Tad.

HICKEY
Tad... Lorn?

Tad nods sheepishly.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
That your full name?

TAD
Theodore.

HICKEY
But you go by Tad?

TAD
Yessir.

HICKEY
Alright, well, you can call me Sheriff Hickey, this here is my Deputy...

Hickey glances at Gaboon.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
...Mindy.

Tad nods at Gaboon nervously.

GABOON
Pleasure.

Hickey walks to the BACK, glancing at the nooks -- he notices the SEWING KIT on the TABLE... he looks up and smiles at Tad.

HICKEY
You mind if I take a look around, son?

TAD
Well, I'd -- I mean... ain't much to see.

HICKEY
That's alright, I'm very easily amused.

Hickey reaches the BACK OF THE OLD TRAILER and opens the BEDROOM DOOR...

73 INT. OLD TRAILER - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 73

Hickey pops his head in the DIRTY BEDROOM. He gives a disgusted look to the clutter in the small space.

BACK TO:

74 INT. OLD TRAILER - LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS 74

Deputy Gaboon casually looks around the KITCHENETTE.

HICKEY (O.S.)
My God. It looks like your car back here, Gaboon.

She looks UNDER THE SINK to find a TRAY COVERED WITH A RED and WHITE RAG -- she lifts it up to find CUT UP CACTUS PARTS.

She catches his eye for a moment -- he looks away nervously.

75 INT. OLD TRAILER - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 75

Hickey LOOKS AT THE LOCAL MAP PINNED TO THE WALL...

76 C/U: AN AREA NEAR YAJ OOLAL NATURE PRESERVE IS CIRCLED IN RED 76
INK. INSIDE THE CIRCLE ARE A FEW AREAS MARKED WITH "X".

BACK TO:

77 INT. OLD TRAILER - LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS 77

Gaboon shuts the cabinet and stands up.

Tad suddenly looks to Hickey, who's now walking back.

HICKEY
There's a surprising amount of space back there.

TAD
Yeah, it's a double-wide.

HICKEY
My aunty Maurine’s got a little place just like this, but her’s is a little smaller. Doesn't need the space. It’s just her and her iguanas now. God bless their tiny little souls. Alright, well, we’re gonna go ahead and get out of your hair, now.

TAD
Alright.

HICKEY
And you’re sure you don’t know where your old buddy Monroe moved off to?

TAD
No, sir.

HICKEY
Well, that’s alright. He’s got nine other fingers.

Hickey laughs -- Gaboon raises her eyebrow.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Alright, well... we best get goin’.

Hickey moves towards the FRONT DOOR. He stops.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Oh, hey, I was just thinkin’, if ya’ll need another roommate, I know a fella over in Hasford who’s been lookin’ for somethin’ like this.

TAD
Well we’re not lookin’ for roommates.

HICKEY
Ya’ll already have one? I thought you said no one else lived here.

TAD
Yessir, I mean, no, sir, no one else but my brother.

HICKEY
But your brother’s gone out today?

TAD
Yeah.

HICKEY
And where is he, again?

TAD
I already told you I don’t know.

HICKEY
Are you worried about the cactus parts you got hidden all over this place?

Tad looks away.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
I don’t really care about that, to be honest. I understand what it’s like living out here, I get it. And maybe I can look the other way.

Tad bites his tongue.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
So, where’s your brother?

Tad looks at Gaboon, she stays stern.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Now I feel like I’m being fair about all this. Ain’t I being fair, Gaboon?

GABOON
Very fair, sir.

HICKEY
Now, if you don’t think that’s a fair deal, that’s fine, too. I can just drag you on down to prison along with a handful of those cactus parts and see how long Judge Redmond feels you need to sit behind them bars and think about what you’ve done. We can do it that way. All the same to me.

Tad glances at Hickey, with quiet rage, then at Gaboon.

TAD
He’s... he went into town.

HICKEY
No he didn’t, you already told me that, don’t you remember? Where’s your brother? He’s out in the desert somewhere, ain’t he?

Hickey watches Tad try his best poker face.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Out in that old nature preserve area?

Hickey continues to study Tad’s silent face.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Boy, you’d better start nodding or shaking your head, or I swear to Christmas I will work overtime just to make sure your life is a living hell while I got you locked away in a county cell.

Frightened and holding back childish anger, Tad nods.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
(motioning to Tad’s head)
What’s this mean?

Tad forces the words out for his own preservation...

TAD
Yes... he’s... he’s out near... that Ya-ag... Oo-Lala place... or whatever that stupid word is.

HICKEY
I know it.

TAD
Hey...

Hickey puts his hat on.

As Tad begins to speak, his eyes drift to Gaboon.

TAD (CONT'D)
Don’t tell him I was the one that told you, alright?

Hickey gives him a curious look then glances at Gaboon -- she returns his look with a bit of a shrug.

TAD (CONT'D)
Please.

Hickey turns to exit.

Gaboon follows, giving Tad one final glance -- rolling her eyes as she goes.

78 EXT. TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 78

The TRAILER DOOR SLAPS SHUT.

Hickey and Gaboon walk towards the SQUAD CAR.

GABOON
You really wanna go all the way out there and search around? Why don't we just wait for him to come back here?

HICKEY
Well whatever it is that this boy's doing out there, he won't be doing it for long, so I'd like to get out there while he's still doing it.

GABOON
That preserve's a pretty big hunk of land, you know.

HICKEY
I think I got an idea where to start looking.

GABOON
What about dumbo in there? We just gonna leave him?

HICKEY
I gave him my word, didn't I?

She gives him a curious look.

They get into the SQUAD CAR -- doors slam shut -- the ENGINE REVS TO LIFE.

DISSOLVE TO:

79 EXT. YAJ OOLAL NATURE PRESERVE - PARKING LOT - DUSK 79

...LIMPING, Susan leaves UNEVEN FOOTPRINTS IN THE GROUND as she nears her prize -- THE YAJ OOLAL GRAVEL PARKING LOT where the BUMBLEBEE is PARKED -- thirty yards away.

Her pace quickens. HER ONE SHOE-LESS FOOT leaves a RED FOOTPRINT BEHIND as she limps near the FJ CRUISER.

She fumbles, trying to UNLOCK THE DOOR with her swollen, shaking hands... but eventually, it slides in.

80 INT. BUMBLEBEE - CONTINUOUS 80

A GASP OF RELIEF -- she slides into the car, immediately LOCKING THE DOORS.

For a brief moment, she appreciates the leather of the seats. Her breathing slows back to normal.

She looks down at the HALF-EATEN BAG OF KALE CHIPS in the passenger seat. It holds her attention for a long moment.

She pushes THE KEY into THE IGNITION and TURNS THE ENGINE OVER -- it squeals.

The look of relief is soon replaced with anger as she again tries to TURN THE MOTOR -- MORE SQUEALING.

SUSAN
C'mon! Goddamit!

A THUD.

Susan looks up to see a BULLET HOLE in the HOOD of the car.

After a split second of shock -- Susan DUCKS DOWN.

Covering her head, she hears ANOTHER SHOT -- SHATTERED GLASS FALLS ON HER HEAD.

She STAYS DOWN.

ANOTHER GUN SHOT -- Another THUD from the HOOD as she covers her head with her hands.

ANOTHER SHOT echoes out -- ANOTHER THUD.

It could be from anywhere.

Susan cowers in the floor as more BULLETS POUND THE CAR in RHYTHMIC THUMPS...

She stays down. The silence is deafening.

Susan slowly reaches for the DRIVER'S SIDE DOOR HANDLE -- she OPENS THE DOOR...

THUMP -- THUMP -- THUMP

The bullets slam into the DRIVER'S SIDE DOOR. She scrambles over to the PASSENGER SIDE DOOR and reaches for the HANDLE...

81 EXT. YAJ OOLAL NATURE PRESERVE - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS 81

She grabs it and ROLLS OUT OF THE CAR -- HEARING MORE BULLETS hit the SIDE OF THE CAR as she uses the vehicle for cover.

She scrambles down the car.

Susan makes it to the BACK OF THE TRAILER -- which seems to be BLOCKING HER FROM THAT ANGLE.

THE SHOOTING STOPS -- as the silence taunts her, Susan struggles to swallow down the panic attack starting to rise.

Her chest is tightening...

POP! -- A SMALL ERUPTION OF DIRT EXPLODES NEAR HER.

With nowhere to run, she REACHES FOR HER KEYS and STRUGGLES TO UNLOCK THE TRAILER -- A BULLET WHIZZES BY HER HEAD as she PRIES OPEN THE LATCH.

She CLIMBS INSIDE as the SOUND OF MORE BULLETS RAIN UPON IT -- she shuts the DOOR.

82 INT. BRONZE BULL TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 82

The FIRING STOPS.

In the darkness, she waits in silence. She tries to calm her breathing as it echoes around the small space.

83 EXT. BRONZE BULL TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 83

GASOLINE pours from a SEVERED LINE, drenching the GRAVEL, and forming a small river on the already damp ground, running away from the car.

After a long moment...

BULL stands up about a hundred yards away, revealing where he was hiding with his HUNTING RIFLE.

He looks around. He makes his way to the TRAILER.

A few feet away from it, he stops. He reloads the RIFLE and points it at the TRAILER.

84 INT. BRONZE BULL TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 84

Somewhere in the total darkness, Susan waits in silence.

A BULLET HOLE SUDDENLY BLASTS a BEAM OF LIGHT into the PITCH BLACK TRAILER.

Silence.

ANOTHER BLAST -- A SECOND BEAM OF LIGHT.

From outside, Bull unloads the entire clip -- EACH BULLET piercing through the METAL SHELL, adding a new BEAM OF LIGHT.

Silence.

Outside the tin box -- the sounds of Bull CALMLY RE-LOADING THE RIFLE -- CLINK, CLINK, CLINK, CLINK.

FOOTSTEPS -- he moves around to the BACK OF THE TRAILER.

WITHOUT THE LATCH SHUT, the TRAILER DOOR simply SQUEAKS OPEN... THE BRIGHT SUNLIGHT REVEALS:

BOXES, FURNITURE and EVERYTHING ELSE you would take when moving across the country -- Susan is nowhere in sight.

Bull glances around hoping to spot her, but he sees nothing. He climbs into the TRAILER -- it dips with his added weight.

Susan LUNGES AT Bull with an UNCOVERED LAMP.

CUT TO:

85 EXT. BRONZE BULL TRAILER - CONTINUOUS 85

Bull SCREAMS as THEY BOTH FALL OUT THE BACK OF THE TRAILER -- hitting the ground hard -- Bull’s FACE IS CUT AND BLOODY.

He DROPS THE RIFLE.

The two roll in the gravel -- both gripping and struggling over the SHATTERED, UNCOVERED LAMP -- while trying to grasp for the RIFLE A FEW FEET AWAY.

Susan HITS BULL’S BLOODY FACE, yet again with the LAMP -- it provides her enough time to REACH FOR THE RIFLE.

She SCRAMBLES -- GRABS IT -- SWINGS BACK AROUND --

TO SEE Bull STANDING RIGHT BEHIND HER. He GRABS THE BARREL OF THE GUN -- struggling to keep it away from his body.

She pushes him back -- HE STUMBLES -- catching himself on the back of the trailer. Suddenly everything stops...

Susan HAS THE RIFLE TRAINED ON Bull as he slowly stands up.

SUSAN
Get in the trailer.

BULL
Fuck you.

She SHOOTS THE TRAILER DOOR inches from his head -- HE FREAKS OUT, as he did with Tad and the DUD BULLET REVOLVER.

BULL (CONT'D)
Hey! What the fuck are you doing?!

She aims at his face.

SUSAN
Get in the fuckin' trailer!

Bull GLANCES AT THE GUN -- he climbs into the TRAILER.

Susan shuts the door, LOCKING IT UP. She backs away.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
I guess... you can just wait in there... till someone finds you.

BULL (O.S.)
Fuck you, you fuckin' cunt!

Susan stares at the trailer. She takes a moment.

Bull POUNDS FROM THE INSIDE. Susan puts the RIFLE AROUND HER SHOULDER and walks away.

BULL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
When you finally wake the fuck up and realize what shit you're in, you're gonna wish you had opened this fuckin' door!

She keeps walking. BULL POUNDS HARDER. IT SOUNDS LIKE A THUNDER STORM -- it suddenly stops.

Silence apart from Susan's footsteps.

BULL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Every minute I'm locked in here, I'm gonna tally up, girl.
(MORE)

BULL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
And when I get out, that’s how long I’m gonna keep you alive for while I peel your goddam skin off with a pair o’ pliers. That sound good to you? At least your boyfriend was quick, huh?!

Susan stops.

BULL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Or was he your husband?

She EYES THE TRAIL OF GASOLINE pouring out from the vehicle.

BULL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I didn’t see a ring, but Snoopy prob’ly stole it ‘fore I could notice.

Susan searches her pockets.

BULL (CONT'D)
Yeah, you fuckin’ bitch. Wanna come get me? Huh? Come fuckin’ get me, cunt...

SHE PULLS OUT THE LIGHTER

BULL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Let me the fuck out, you fuckin’ bitch!

Bull’s POUNDING inside the trailer WORSENS.

Susan contemplates.

BULL (CONT'D)
I’m gonna kill you and anyone you’ve ever fuckin’ talked to in your whole goddamn life, you hear me?!

Her face is a twisted mess of anger, sadness, and disgust for what she’s about to do.

She STARES AT THE LIGHTER as Bull BEATS AGAINST THE WALLS, SCREAMING INCOHERENT THREATS...

JUMP TO:

86 EXT. WINDING ROAD TO YAJ OOLAL NATURE PRESERVE - DUSK 86

Susan walks along the cracked, forgotten road -- a few miles from the YAJ OOLAL NATURE PRESERVE parking lot.

In the FAR DISTANCE is a FAINT CLOUD OF BLACK SMOKE rising up and dissipating in the sky.

She stumbles in the heat and FALLS TO THE GROUND.

She's been fighting for so long... she CLOSES HER EYES...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

87 EXT. WINDING ROAD - NIGHT 87

A LIGHT IS BLINDING... Susan opens her eyes to see TWO DARK FIGURES STANDING OVER HER -- SILHOUETTED BY A BRIGHT LIGHT FROM BEHIND -- one shape is CARRYING A GUN.

She reaches for HER RIFLE, but it's gone -- she SHOOTS UP, ready to run...

HICKEY (O.S.)
Hey, it's alright, now.

...to find Sheriff Hickey and Deputy Gaboon standing over her in front of the SQUAD CAR. Gaboon is holding THE RIFLE.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
There she is...

Gaboon leans down.

GABOON
How you doin, there, ma'am? Are you alright to move?

Susan gives a tired nod.

GABOON (CONT'D)
Yeah? Let's get you to the car.

They both help her as she limps to the SQUAD CAR.

HICKEY
Lucky we found you, out here. I hope you have a good story to tell us.

Susan's cracked lips part, but she can't make the full words she needs. She swallows to wet her mouth.

GABOON
Don't try to talk just yet, alright? Let me go get the first aid kit.

THE FLASHLIGHT BEAM BOUNCES as Gaboon moves around the car.

Hickey OPENS THE BACK DOOR for Susan, while Gaboon goes OPENS THE TRUNK.

Susan gets in the car and lays down across the vinyl seat. Deputy Gaboon SHUTS THE TRUNK, now holding a BOTTLE OF WATER and a FIRST AID KIT.

88 INT. SQUAD CAR - BACKSEAT - CONTINUOUS 88

Susan stares ahead, shaking.

Gaboon reaches into the BACKSEAT and hands the WATER to Susan, who tries to sip slowly.

Gaboon slaps on a pair of LATEX GLOVES and OPENS THE FIRST AID KIT. She grabs an ALCOHOL WIPE and begins to clean away the DIRT AND BLOOD from a few cuts on Susan's face... she smiles at Susan.

GABOON
It's alright, now.

She OPENS A BANDAGE and puts it over a LARGE, now CLEAN, CUT on the top of Susan's forehead.

SUSAN
Thank you.

Gaboon smiles and nods knowingly as she opens her hand -- TWO RED AND BLUE PILLS and ONE CLEAR GEL-CAP. She hands them to Susan.

GABOON
These'll make you feel a little better 'till we can get you to the hospital, alright?

Susan nods. She takes the pills into her hand.

GABOON (CONT'D)
Save your strength, alright? We're gonna have a lot of questions for you.

She drinks the pills down with the water as Gaboon SHUTS THE BACK DOOR and turns back to Hickey.

GABOON (CONT'D)
We'd best get a move on, getting her back to town. It'll prob'ly take an ambulance two hours to get all the way out here, if they can even find it.

HICKEY
Yeah, I suppose you've got the right of it.

Deputy Gaboon walks to the driver's side. Hickey moves to the PASSENGER SIDE.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE ONLY SOUND IS THE HUMMING OF A CAR ON THE DIRT ROAD...

CUT TO:

89 INT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT 89

Driving down A LONG DIRT ROAD -- Hickey is HALF ASLEEP and FIGHTING TO KEEP HIS EYE LIDS UP as Tammy Wynette sings "Stand By Your Man" through the car speakers.

GABOON'S PHONE BUZZES and LIGHTS UP in the DRINK HOLDER -- A NEW TEXT MESSAGE.

Hickey OPENS HIS EYES WIDE -- he clears his throat and sits up. It's too dark to tell what the landscape is like outside.

HICKEY
How much longer we got?

GABOON
'bout twenty minutes.

HICKEY
Shit, that's a long time. Where are we? Aren't we headed to the Summerhill Clinic?

GABOON
I told you, Summerhill'd take too long, we'd have to circle all the way 'round Eaton.

HICKEY
Oh, right.

The sheriff shakes his head...

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Well, this week has been an ever-escalating shit show, huh?

GABOON
Yup.

Silence... the car drives.

HICKEY
Reminds me of a case back in eight-seven. Hadn't heard a peep for weeks, apart from your speeding tickets and what nots, then one night I get a phone call at three a. m.... double homicide... right down the street, couldn't of been more than a mile from my hou--

Gaboon's PHONE BUZZES AGAIN -- another TEXT MESSAGE.

She glances down at the PHONE for a moment --

HICKEY (CONT'D)
Not while you're drivin'.

She lets go of the PHONE and moves her eyes back to the road.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
God forbid anything should ever happen to that thing, I doubt you'd be able to make home from work, without it telling you where to go, huh, Gaboon?

GABOON
You know what "Gaboon" means, Sheriff?

HICKEY
Can't say that I do.

GABOON
It's a snake.

HICKEY
Is that right?

GABOON
That is right.

HICKEY
Isn't it the one that's famous for not cleaning its car?

Gaboon laughs along with a tired Hickey.

GABOON
Well, funnily enough, it's actually famous for its camouflage.

HICKEY
Is that right?

GABOON
That is right.

Calmly and quickly, DEPUTY GABOON PULLS OUT HER PISTOL and SQUEEZES THE TRIGGER --

90 C/U: A THIN CRIMSON STREAK SPREADS ACROSS THE WINDSHIELD --90

HICKEY SLUMPS OVER.

THE SHOT WAKES SUSAN UP... it takes her a second... the world is muffled and hazy...

Struggling, she pulls herself up from the VINYL SEAT and rubs her dry, red eyes as she notices HICKEY and the BLOOD ACROSS THE DASHBOARD AND WINDOW.

Her breathing quickens as the shock settles in. Her drugged expression belies her actual fear -- she twitches slightly.

SUSAN
(dazed)
What... what happen...?

Deputy Gaboon ignores her. Groggily, Susan LEANS CLOSE TO THE CAGE that separates the front and back seat.

She struggles against her RUBBER BODY to get a better view of the carnage in the front seat. Her eyes are heavy.

SUSAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Where are... what's happen... happen... why are...?

Her HEARTBEAT grows LOUDER AND LOUDER. She tries to snap out of it... but she's fading fast -- heavy eyelids around BLOODSHOT EYES.

GABOON
Awww... what's wrong, darlin'? You feelin' okay?

Susan is looking pale.

91 C/U: HER PUPILS ARE LARGE. 91

SUSAN
What... is... did you do...?

GABOON
Sweetie, I'm tellin you, you ain't makin' a lick of sense. But there ain't no need to worry, that's just the pills startin' to kick in. Just a little insurance policy. From everything I've heard about you, you're a tough little son of a bitch.

Susan looks nauseated.

GABOON (CONT'D)
I figured you'd have a harder time runnin' away, again, if you were trippin' balls on fifty dollars worth o' peyote.

The CAR STARTS TO SLOW DOWN on the DARK DIRT ROAD. SUSAN tries to make out where they are...

GABOON (CONT'D)
Boy howdy has Jake got somethin' planned for you. He's gonna make a statement with you, girl. A real work of art, I tell you what.

In the distance, TAD AND BULL'S OLD TRAILER starts to come into view as the SQUAD CAR APPROACHES.

Jake is OUT FRONT -- SKINNING A DEER with his HUNTING KNIFE.

GABOON (CONT'D)
We're finally ready to tell the world we're here... and you're gonna be our calling card.

As the SQUAD CAR APPROACHES the TRAILER -- Jake SLOWLY stands up and WIPES the DEER BLOOD FROM HIS BLADE.

He POURS VODKA OVER THE BLADE and wipes it down, waiting.

Deputy Gaboon puts the CAR IN PARK and PULLS THE KEY from the ignition as she STEPS OUT OF THE CAR. She swings the KEY-RING AROUND HER FINGER as she shuts the front door.

She slips the keys onto her BELT CLIP, then rests her HAND ON HER GUN as she moves to the REAR DOOR.

GABOON (CONT'D)
C'mon.

She motions for Susan to slide across the seat and come out of the car. Susan continues to slightly rock back and forth in her seat.

In the background, THE OLD TRAILER DOOR SMACKS SHUT as Jake walks towards the SQUAD CAR with a limp, followed meekly by Tad who's carrying a SHOTGUN.

GABOON (CONT'D)
I ain't gonna ask again, darlin'.

Susan doesn't move.

GABOON (CONT'D)
Goddammit, girl!

Gaboon reaches in to GRAB Susan -- who GRABS Gaboon BY THE COLLAR and IN AN INSTANT, LIGHTS the woman's HAIR ON FIRE with the LIGHTER.

Gaboon panics in the back seat, trying to pat her hair out.

Susan GRABS THE CAR KEYS from Gaboon's belt in the CHAOS and KICKS HER IN THE CHEST, OUT THE OPEN DOOR.

Gaboon stumbles back, rolling on the ground to put her hair out as Susan quickly SLIDES INTO THE OPEN DRIVER'S DOOR.

NERVOUS, Tad SHOOTS -- A POCKMARK EXPLOSION hits the SQUAD CAR -- almost hitting Gaboon.

GABOON (CONT'D)
Hey Fucker!

Susan gets inside the SQUAD CAR and LOCKS THE DOOR.

Jake quickly turns around, QUICKLY HOBBLING WITH A LIMP to THE NEARBY BROKEN WHEEL TOWING TRUCK.

Gaboon pulls herself up, off the ground.

The SQUAD CAR starts to PEEL OUT -- Gaboon quickly grabs the OPEN REAR DOOR and manages to HOLD ON AS THE CAR MOVES --

92 C/U: GABOON'S SHOES DRAG ALONG THE DIRT ROAD BEHIND THE SQUAD CAR, KICKING UP DUST FOR A LONG TIME... 92

93 EXT. DIRT ROAD - CONTINUOUS 93

Finally... she rolls onto the hard dirt road behind the car as the RED SQUAD CAR TAIL LIGHTS move away, into the distance behind a CLOUD OF DUST.

Her tumbling body comes to stop on the road.

She struggles to pull herself up...

...as SPEEDING HEADLIGHTS BARREL TOWARDS HER.

No time to react...

94 C/U: DUST SETTLES AS THE BROKEN WHEEL TOW TRUCK LEAVES A TRAIL OF DEPUTY GABOON'S FRESH BLOOD ON THE DRY DIRT -- LIT CALMLY BY STILL MOONLIGHT. 94

95 INT. BROKEN WHEEL TOW TRUCK - CONTINUOUS 95

SPEEDING DOWN THE EMPTY ROAD, Jake searches the CLOUD OF DUST in his HEADLIGHTS -- no sign of life or movement.

The LIGHTS continue to pierce through the DUST AND DARKNESS to no avail... until the DUST IN THE DISTANCE begins to GLOW RED -- with an ORANGE LIGHT BLINKING ON AND OFF.

He slows the truck down as the CRASHED SQUAD CAR comes into view -- the BRAKE LIGHTS and ORANGE EMERGENCY LIGHTS keeping an uneasy and quiet rhythm.

Jake stops the truck.

96 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - CONTINUOUS 96

The THE ILLUMINATED DUST CLOUD between the CRASHED SQUAD CAR and the PARKED TOWING TRUCK continues to change from RED to ORANGE in rhythm.

After a long moment, THE TOW TRUCK DOOR OPENS.

After another long moment, JAKE'S SILHOUETTE HOBBLES OUT of the front seat and CROSSES THE PULSING DUST CLOUD.

He LIMPS TOWARDS THE SQUAD CAR, PULLING A HUNTING KNIFE from its sheath.

97 INT. SQUAD CAR - CONTINUOUS 97

In a DAZE and surrounded by BEAUTIFUL GLITTERING FRAGMENTS OF WINDSHIELD -- Susan struggles to snap out of it...

The RED and ORANGE LIGHTS FLOOD the interior as she tries to move her head from the airbag on the steering wheel.

CUT TO:

98 INT. OLD HOUSE - LONG HALLWAY - DAY 98

Susan is no longer injured. Her clothes are SMART AND CLEAN.

The HALLWAY has only ONE DOOR, which is at the END of the pristine, narrow stretch...

Susan stares at it cautiously.

A CLASS BELL RINGS.

She walks towards it...

BACK TO:

99 EXT. SQUAD CAR - CONTINUOUS 99

FINALLY -- THE SQUAD CAR DOOR OPENS. SHATTERED GLASS falls to the ground.

Bloody and battered, Susan gets out of the SQUAD CAR as Jake limps through the GLOWING DUST -- towards her with the KNIFE.

She turns to him.

The LARGE KNIFE shines in the moonlight.

JAKE
I gotta say... you put up one hell of a fight. Hell, I can't even be mad at you. But this has to end with one of us dyin', and I know you hate apologies, but I am truly sorry about that.

Susan runs as fast as she can -- her entire body in pain -- as the area around her expands and contracts with the pulsing of the EMERGENCY LIGHTS -- until she suddenly TRIPS...

CUT TO:

100 INT. LARGE WHITE ROOM - DAY 100

Susan lays in the corner of the UNNATURALLY CLEAN SPACE.

She pulls herself up and looks around at the EMPTY ROOM, only to find RICHARD standing NEXT TO HER as she turns around.

Their breath is visible as they speak -- as if the warm-looking room is very cold.

RICHARD
Hey.

SUSAN
Hi.

Richard hands her a TO-DO LIST.

He holds her face in his tender hands...

RICHARD
You missed one.

Susan looks down at the TO-DO LIST...

#1: Wake up.

#2: Take out the dog.

#3: Fix the car.

#4: Call the exterminator.

The FIRST FOUR are CROSSED OUT WITH A RED PEN.

The last one isn't:

#5: Take a shower.

Susan looks up as BLOOD FLOWS from RICHARD'S MOUTH.

He falls to the ground...

Behind him is JAKE, NOW EIGHT FEET TALL, SPARKLING like a RAINBOW DISCO BALL with a METALLIC FACE MASK.

JAKE
(distorted)
I am truly sorry.

Jake brings his KNIFE DOWN, SLASHING AT SUSAN --

She dodges just in time, falling onto her back.

BACK TO:

101 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - CONTINUOUS 101

On the other side of the RAVINE, Jake PINS HER DOWN. Tired and injured, he RAISES THE KNIFE to finish the job...

Susan holds her HAND UP TO PROTECT HERSELF and dodges her head out of the way as Jake STABS DOWN, burying his KNIFE in HER HAND, PINNING IT TO THE GROUND.

BACK TO:

102 INT. LARGE WHITE ROOM - CONTINUOUS 102

In a WHITE DRESS Susan lay on the WHITE FLOOR with her HAND PINNED TO THE GROUND BY THE KNIFE -- instead of blood, RED SILK FLOWS GRACEFULLY from the wound, blowing in the wind.

JAKE
(distorted)
This ain't about you. This ain't about me. This is bigger than us.

SPARKLING LIKE AN ANGEL, Jake holds her down as she struggles in vain with her FREE HAND.

Susan feels around the SMOOTH WHITE FLOOR -- her hand searching for something...

She finds it... A SHARP ROCK, THE ONLY THING on the floor of the COMPLETELY EMPTY ROOM.

She GRABS THE ROCK and SMASHES IT INTO JAKE'S FACE.

BACK TO:

103 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - CONTINUOUS 103

In the PULSATING RED AND ORANGE LIGHT -- Jake is on the ground, writhing in unimaginable pain, HOLDING HIS FACE as BLOOD POURS BETWEEN HIS FINGERS.

Susan grabs the KNIFE and slowly -- painfully -- manages to PULL IT FROM HER HAND as she SCREAMS IN AGONY.

Susan turns just in time to see JAKE POUNCE, ready to strangle her with his bare hands as...

...THE KNIFE ENTERS HIS CHEST.

CUT TO:

104 INT. LARGE WHITE ROOM - CONTINUOUS 104

Sparkling like a rainbow, Jake writhes in agony above her.

INSTEAD OF BLOOD, CRYSTAL CLEAR WATER POURS FROM HIS WOUNDS, SHOWERING HER.

She PUSHES HIM TO THE GROUND and climbs on top.

Susan stabs his chest over and over and over again, until she can no longer lift her arms...

Exhausted, she drops the KNIFE.

She sits on Jake's dead body, watching CRYSTAL CLEAR WATER POUR FROM HIS WOUNDS.

She stares into the GASH IN HIS CHEST.

After a moment, she reaches in and pulls out...

A SMALL BIRD.

She smiles at the bird, which chirps and flies away.

And suddenly, everything catches up to her...

She falls over, onto Jake's body.

BACK TO:

105 EXT. NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS - DAWN 105

COMPLETELY COVERED IN BLOOD, Susan lays on top of Jake's lifeless body. Tumbling from her hands -- HIS HEART.

They both lay unmoving on the ground as the SUN BEGINS TO RISE IN THE FAINTLY PINK AND YELLOW SKY -- ILLUMINATING a GORGEOUS VIEW OF THE MOUNTAINOUS LAND in the background of the gruesome scene.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: Stanley University, Acepta, CA - Pop. 23,451 (as of last semester)

FADE IN:

106 INT. TEACHER'S OFFICE - STANLEY UNIVERSITY 106

Somewhere in a MESSY OFFICE, someone breathes in and out.

POST-IT NOTES with MUNDANE LISTS are scattered all over.

Susan lays asleep on the paperwork covered desk. A PHOTO OF HER AND RICHARD is framed among the trash and knickknacks.

HER HAND has a LONG, THIN SCAR IN THE MIDDLE.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

WENDY (O.S.)
Hey...

Susan WAKES UP -- her hair is short and manageable, now -- even so, it's still a mess.

SUPER #2: 18 months later.

The DOOR OPENS -- WENDY (29 and in KHAKI'S and A PONYTAIL) LEANS INTO THE OFFICE ON THE DOOR HANDLE.

WENDY (CONT'D)
You alright?

Susan tries to get her bearings.

SUSAN
Yeah.

WENDY
Your class is about to start.

SUSAN
(still waking up)
Thanks, Wendy.

Wendy winks at her and walks away.

Susan stretches and grabs a few PAPERS AND HER LAPTOP and SHOVES THEM INTO A BAG. With her SCARRED HAND, she takes a gulp of COLD COFFEE and heads out the door.

CUT TO:

107 INT. ANTHROPOLOGY CLASSROOM - LATER 107

Fluorescent lights HUM QUIETLY above the students, who fill ABOUT HALF of the available seats in the classroom.

SUSAN
...and that's what we're talking about today.

BEHIND Susan is a PROJECTION:

***"Execution Methods by Culture, Time and Religion: What They Tell Us About Our Past, Our Present, and Our Future."***

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Today we're talking about the methods of execution that have been used at various times -- more specifically, we'll be talking about why each particular group chose the method that they did, and what it says about the way we were and the way we may someday be.

She CLICKS -- moving the SLIDE SHOW along as she speaks. VARIOUS IMAGES ARE PROJECTED BEHIND HER:

1. An execution by FIRING SQUAD in Mexico.

2. A MEDIEVAL GARROTTE DEVICE.

3. An ancient Greek BRONZE BULL.

4. An 18th century BREAKING WHEEL crushing a woman.

5. A MAYAN SACRIFICE -- cutting out a human heart.

6. A PERSON ON THE ELECTRIC CHAIR, near an OFFICER who is ON THE PHONE, maybe taking a call from the governor.

As she clicks through, she continues...

SUSAN (CONT'D)
I think most people tend to see history as a sort of straight line of evolution -- we were dumb, now we're smart, in a hundred years, we'll be smarter -- but I think of it more as a never ending spiral. With each progression being the result of previous regression and vice-versa. That's an over simplification, but I'll get into that later.

JUMP TO:

108 EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT 108

The DENTED HATCHBACK is PARKED IN THE LOT with a few OTHER CARS scattered around.

The OLD BUILDING has the unmistakable look of the 1970's.

109 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - CONTINUOUS 109

Susan sits in a circle of FOLDING CHAIRS -- along with a variety of other people from MILITARY VETERANS to SCRUFFY TEENAGERS and a few odd spots in between.

The LOUD HUM OF FLORESCENT LIGHTING fills the room. She sips on a coffee.

A STERN MAN -- with the outward appearance of someone who's been through basic training and come out the other side -- CONTINUES SPEAKING from his chair.

STERN MAN
Well... anyway, I -- I just said "No." You know? And I... I just left. I had to. I couldn't be around it anymore. And I... the worst part is trying to explain it to them, you know? Something so... you know, so small.

An OLDER WOMAN, more put together than the rest, leans in.

OLDER WOMAN
I think we can all understand that. But the important thing is that you made an effort to confront those feelings. That's a big deal. Okay?

The MAN nods.

OLDER WOMAN (CONT'D)
Thank you, Dominic.

Everyone in the circle claps.

OLDER WOMAN (CONT'D)
Would anyone else like to speak?

The OLDER WOMAN searches the room for a volunteer... Susan sips her coffee and avoids eye contact.

JUMP TO:

110 EXT. SUSAN’S HOME - NIGHT 110

Susan SHUTS THE DOOR of her DENTED HATCHBACK, holding a MESS OF BOOKS and PAPERS as she walks towards the front door of her MODEST HOUSE is in a ROW OF SIMILAR HOMES.

CUT TO:

111 INT. SUSAN’S HOME - FOYER - CONTINUOUS 111

Through the stained glass window in THE FRONT DOOR, SUSAN’S SILHOUETTE finds the lock and SLIDES THE KEY IN.

The KNOB TURNS and Susan pushes the door open as she moves into the house. She gently kicks the DOOR SHUT and TOSSES HER KEYS into a bowl.

SUSAN
Waldo? Where’s my good boy?

Susan drops her things on a CHAIR as she turns the corner from the FOYER into the LIVING ROOM.

112 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 112

Susan stops abruptly.

TAD sits on her COUCH, HOLDING WALDO with one hand and MONROE’S CHARM GUN with the other. They look at each other for a LONG MOMENT IN SILENCE.

TAD
Hey there.

She stares at the dirty man, an unsettling calm on his face.

TAD (CONT'D)
Would you mind, um, takin’ a seat, for me?

Susan doesn't move.

He motions with the GUN.

TAD (CONT'D)
Please.

Unflinching, she weighs her options, but he’s the one with the gun. Susan SLOWLY MOVES to the ARMCHAIR across from him.

She sits, trying to read his twitching face.

TAD (CONT'D)
I...

Tad is JITTERY -- he's having trouble putting his thoughts together. Susan glances FOR POTENTIAL WEAPONS as he speaks...

TAD (CONT'D)
I, um... I've been lookin' for you for a while, now. But, I suppose you prob'ly figured I was.

Anxiously, Tad RUNS HIS FINGERS OVER THE GUN feeling its curves and mechanics.

He sniffles. Susan notices that he's also TEARING UP.

TAD (CONT'D)
Everyone who meant anything to me is dead. My brother, my best friend... the closest thing I'll ever have to a pa... you killed 'em all, lady.

They catch eyes... he MOVES THE GUN -- IT CASUALLY POINTS AT HER HEAD as he looks at her with RED, WATERY EYES.

TAD (CONT'D)
And believe it or not, I don't even blame you for doin' it... but... I didn't have much to begin with. And I ain't got nothin' now. And I'm... I'm sick of it, girl...

He SUDDENLY EXPLODES...

TAD (CONT'D)
I am sick! You hear me?! I am sick of this shit!

Tad BURSTS UP -- FLAILING THE GUN AROUND.

TAD (CONT'D)
I'm sick of sleepin in parks and beggin' for my goddam food! I can't remember the last time someone looked me in the goddam eye and I am sick of it!

He paces nervously as his ANGER GROWS... He's starting to lose his mind as more mixed emotions come to the surface.

He POINTS THE GUN AT HER HEAD with his SHAKING HANDS.

TAD (CONT'D)
Do you hear me?!

He PRESSES THE GUN FIRMLY TO HER TEMPLE.

TAD (CONT'D)
I can’t do this anymore! I can’t fucking do this any fucking more! I can’t! Okay?!

Susan nods warily... not sure what’s happening.

Tad’s FIRE-FILLED EYES slowly break down in tears.

Susan starts to get up... a FLASH OF ANGER FROM Tad as he POINTS THE GUN at Susan, again.

TAD (CONT'D)
No! Don’t you... don’t you fuckin’...

His tears CONTINUE TO STREAM DOWN HIS FACE... he shakes... the gun shakes...

The GUN LOWERS -- he slowly falls to the floor -- his head at Susan’s KNEES as he SOBS.

Tad takes Susan’s hand and puts the GUN in it as he continues to CRY -- he wraps her fingers around the handle, gently with his own hands.

He GUIDES HER HAND TO BRING THE GUN TO HIS HEAD.

He HOLDS THE BARREL TO HIS TEMPLE as he sobs.

TAD (CONT'D)
Please.

Susan doesn't know what to think.

TAD (CONT'D)
You could say it was self-defense. Please. I can’t do it myself... I’ve tried... I just -- I need this to end. I need you to finish this. Please.

Susan’s mind racing a mile a minute -- she GRIPS THE GUN as her eyes SQUINT.

Her FINGER TIGHTENS AROUND THE TRIGGER...

Tad closes his eyes...

TAD (CONT'D)
Please... Please just do it...

SUSAN
Shut up.

TAD
I jus--

Susan SMACKS HIM ACROSS THE FACE.

SUSAN
*Shut up*!

Susan GRABS THE SCARED MAN BY HIS TORN COLLAR.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
You know what *I* have to live with?! Huh?! Do you?! Every time I shut my fucking eyes I see someone die! Every moment of silence, I hear screaming in my fucking head!

As she speaks, Susan presses the GUN INTO HIS TEMPLE with FORCE while keeping one hand on the man's collar.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
All I want to do is close my fucking eyes and see my goddamn husband, but I can't even do that without watching him die again! And you think I owe *you* something?!

<u>SUSAN PULLS THE TRIGGER -- Tad's BRAINS EXPLODE OUT THE BACK OF HIS HEAD</u> -- AN INSTANT FLASH OF A DAY DREAM -- and BACK TO REALITY -- Tad isn't DEAD.

SHE stares at the man... then she SMACKS HIM AGAIN with the butt of the gun, letting the rage get a hold of her. Tad BREAKS DOWN like a sobbing child.

She can't stop -- she HITS HIM AGAIN...

TAD
No...

...AND AGAIN.

TAD (CONT'D)
(through sobs)
Stop!

Susan makes herself stop... she's starting to shake as TEARS CONTINUE TO STREAM OPENLY DOWN HER FACE.

SUSAN
You...

She STARES INTO HIS FRIGHTENED EYES.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
*Every moment of every day I have to relive it. Silently. Quietly in my fucking head. I did things I can't--*

Unable to finish her words, she TWISTS HIS COLLAR TIGHTER, the anger behind her eyes taking over...

Tad's face is a mix of fear and sorrow while he stares into Susan's eyes.

TAD
Pull the trigger... please...

She grabs his face with rage and PUSHES HIS HEAD BACK AGAINST THE COUCH CUSHIONS -- she BRINGS THE GUN TO HIS TEMPLE.

The rage in her eyes pulsates. She PUSHES THE BARREL OF THE GUN INTO HIS FACE -- struggling not to pull the trigger.

With tears streaming down his face, Tad CLOSES HIS EYES and waits for it...

Finally -- she stares at him, still FIGHTING THE RAGE THAT'S BEEN BUILDING UP for so long.

Susan forces herself to pull the gun away and steps back, LETTING GO OF TAD.

She FIDGETS WITH THE GUN -- not sure if she's going to use it or not.

Susan stares at Tad. He waits in silence.

The moment lasts forever, until...

Susan walks away, across the floor to the OPEN KITCHEN.

She puts the gun on the counter.

SUSAN
In a few minutes, I'm gonna call the cops. I'm gonna tell them what happened, and I'm gonna give them this gun.

Tad watches her with a mix of fear and sorrow.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
You can use that time to start running if you want... see how far you can get...

Susan eyes the SLIDING GLASS DOOR.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
...or you can wait here with me.

Tad wipes his running nose. He looks to the GLASS DOOR.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
So...

He looks to Susan, but won't make EYE CONTACT.

After a LONG MOMENT... Tad finally looks up at Susan.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
...can I get you something to drink?

Susan waits for his response...

CUT TO: BLACK

113 THE SOUND OF TAMMY WYNETTE SINGING "STAND BY YOUR MAN" 113
FILLS THE BLACK SCREEN.