

JEWEL OF THE SILENT PLAIN

Written by

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Nothing. Pure black. Out of the void, a voice:

VOICE OVER

I smoked my first crack rock before
I was seven ... A bit early. My
momma was cookin' tub crank with me
in the womb. Payin' survival dues.
Weren't much else out in the Piney
Woods then. I would've figured I'd
been different. Myself, turnin' in
and around all it.

Aether rolls over, pulsating with luminescent crests and
troughs of waves cyclically ... folding in on themselves.

An ascending container breaks the medium. It's shell
reflecting the light of the sun cresting over the horizon.

A craft parts the waves, weathered hands descend into the
depths, extracting the plastic coated package from the tide.

The tide turns into bubbling sludge, we're inside a metal
pot. A large spoon stirs the compound, turned by a pair of
labor scarred hands. Day light strikes down from above.

VOICE OVER

Mosta her dealers used to refuse to
sell impure product. The folks now
don't care what they consume. One
of 'em had a problem with bein' her
little errand boy. He burrowed into
her like a botfly. I didn't know
what he did was wrong ... He always
told me I was good. Took a few
weeks 'til he raped me. I'd stop
cryin' after a couple times. Might
as well been dead.

Brahman heifers chewing, watching masked vaqueros donning
charros, hiding their eyes from the steaming black goat.

Three men work in unison, their skin glistens as the sun
punishes them.

One turns the pot, one packages the product, one keeps an eye
down towards the long dirt road.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

Those few years of hell taught me more about life than I ever woulda learned alone. All the same to me. He didn't care that rock killed folks. Ma started cookin' with drain cleaner. But he told me they'd be too high to notice. That they was carried along in a daze. That their wanderin' minds were steered by the helplessness in their chests ... Deaf and blind at the same time.

A man sets the sludge package under an acacia tree. Bike pedaling grows louder -- the spinning chain comes to a grinding halt. A boy grabs the container and pedals away.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

Called them in-distinguishable, in-distinguishing crowds. Endlessly collapsin' back into the underworld. He met his end chasin' tail ...

3 EXT. LAREDO - BORDER TOWN - NIGHT

3

A ramshackle corrugated metal structure on an empty street. A minivan slugs to a stop by the shack -- its door grinds open.

VOICE OVER

The drugs flow through even faster now, couldn't name most 'em.

The boy exits the van, his arms hugging the sludge bag as he stands in the now cracked sliding door of the structure.

4 INT. LAREDO - BORDER TOWN - LAB - NIGHT

4

A man in the doorway trades the bag for paper dollars. The boy returns to the van, it peels off. The man closes the garage door -- opens the shack's interior door and walks into a dingy kitchen, a hard top table in its center.

VOICE OVER

It's not my fault that they die. I used to think it was the quality of the product that mattered to them.

The cook looks up at the man, thumbs through the bag in the man's arms, brings up a plastic bin beneath the table.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

And ... I don't wanna make some new
bunk that will free them from being
slaves to their sensations.

The bag plops into the container, the bin slides back under.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

So, if it steers the longing of
their souls ...

On the removal of the bin, on the kitchen counter behind the cook -- piles of plastic bags bursting with blue pills.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

They'd have to probably just ... Be
... on the one real thing itself.

The man exits the lab. As the door closes the cook pours chemicals from a barrel into a glass container ...

Our entire world is obfuscated by smoke spiraling upwards ...

5

EXT. TEXAS - RED RIVER FORK - DIRT ROAD - DUSK

5

A girl, 9, sits in between the legs of a woman, Hispanic, late 30s, on the edge of the water.

Their palms held in one another's, the river passing through and over their hands. The woman nuzzling her chin into the crack of the girl's neck. The woman rises with the girl.

Together they walk a few paces towards a 2001 Honda CRV.

The girl gets in first. The woman closes the door and gets into the front passenger's seat. In the driver's seat, a silhouette of a man. The door closes.

The car passes over the Texas highway under the moonlight.

Cicada chatter drowns out the silence.

6

EXT. AMARILLO - SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

6

The girl watches from the passenger seat of the CRV as it sits under a makeshift awning beside a modest home, the rear glass ajar -- the woman tosses a plastic bin into the back.

The man follows suit with a bin of his own -- he turns and enters the house. The woman bends down, brings up another bin, covers it with a blanket.

The man exits the house, stumbling with four saran wrapped bricks in hand -- shouldering the woman aside, he crams the last brick through the glass, closes the hatch back.

As he does this a heavy-set bearded man exits the house, his gaze narrowing at them ...

BEARDED MAN
The money, cabrón.

MAN
The money?

The man swiftly pulls out a gun -- the crack -- of a single, deafening shot. The bearded man collapses onto the pavement.

7 INT./EXT. HONDA CRV/AVENUE - NIGHT

7

The man frantically wipes blood from his eyes, struggling to make sense of the darting lines of the passing road.

The woman, stares at the man. How has she trapped herself and her child in the middle of this? What caused all of this?

From the back seat, the girl stares at both the adults --

A powerful engine roars from behind their SUV.

A violent impact.

The CRV fishtails ferociously -- careening to a standstill as its rear end wraps around a telephone pole. The girl -- thrown from her seat, her frame contorts into the floorboard.

Smoke plumes from the rear tires, the accelerator pinned by the weight of the unconscious man slumped over the wheel.

Squeals from a black Ford Ranger cut through the night as it U-turns back to the CRV. The truck driver exits his vehicle.

Machine pistol rounds shatter the front glass.

The man and woman's bodies riddle with bullets.

The accelerator lets up ... The tires cease their spinning.

The truck driver strides to the rear, pries open the deformed hatchback and transfers the bins and bricks into his truck.

The girl peeks up, looking into the rearview mirror --

A bone thin man is grabbing at the bins.

His name is NOÉ MALDONADO, early 30s, long dark hair, lugs the bins to his truck and throws them into the truck bed -- Plugs something with a metal resonance into the tail hitch.

Noé returns to the driver's door of the CRV, struggles to bare the weight of the gurgling man's body, pulls him out from the car ... and fastens a chain to his ankle.

Noé steps back around to the front of the truck ...

The door slams shut --

The ignition turns over -- Tires squeal ...

The truck tears off.

Echoes of the thuds and skidding of the body trails down the suburban streets as its flesh disintegrates into pavement.

The girl watches.

8 EXT. RED RIVER - CATTLE CAR - GOLDEN HOUR

8

Rays of sun scream through the perforations of a steer-less rusted cattle car bound to a locomotive hurdling full speed southbound over the Red River.

The piercing roar of the engine moves ahead of the train, splitting the boundless void of the flat lands.

Water starved vegetation peppers the berms, the only thing flowing in that river are the dendritic cracks of ferric mud.

9 INT. RED RIVER - CATTLE CAR - GOLDEN HOUR

9

The striking brown eyes and sun scorched face of a strung out sleep deprived woman in her early twenties, her grimy blonde hair hangs limply flowing down a weathered white tank cloaked by a mud caked green jacket.

This is SAGE LOCKHART.

Jammed into her ears -- sound isolating white wired earbuds descending down into an inner pocket in her jacket.

Her vision shifts back and forth between the unconscious man in her lap and two vagabonds, one of them talking to a held out camera phone, on the opposite side of the car.

A jolt -- from the train brings the man in her lap to consciousness. Sage's hand retracts from his coat ...

Sage's eyes, fixed on the others, then -- darting to the man.

She utters:

SAGE
Be still.

The car jolts -- again, erupting the two drifters, MARA, mid-twenties tiktoker and CLAY, teenage crust punk, into howls.

Sage tries the pocket again --

A small dust covered dime bag with something green inside makes its way into Sage's coat pocket.

Mara's yelp snaps the unkempt shaggy haired man in Sage's lap, BODIE, to wakefulness.

BODIE
(grinning)
Good mornin' ...

Sage glances at him -- her eyes shifting back to the others.

SAGE
Mornin'.

Bodie acclimates to consciousness ... fixating on Sage's eyes. He pulls away, wrinkling his nose at her breath.

He crawls over to the others, joining in with their giggles.

She thumbs her reward inside of her coat pocket, hiding her dimpled smile from the others as they wrestle one another.

She stands and jacks her headphones out of the phone which crashes to the floor.

She stoops and puts it in the fanny pack snug to her hip.

10

EXT. QUANAH - TOWN STREET - NIGHT

10

The quartet on foot ... the chugging wheels of the train dissipating into the shadows.

Sage follows behind, studying the steps of the others. Her strides drag. Her pair of broken soled shoes, unlaced.

The empty liminal back streets of the town echoes ...

Centuries of burnt orange brick buildings loom, the paved cement battling with the encroaching foliage.

The two men quietly carry on a fiendish conversation.

Clay, impishly blurts:

CLAY
We gone get high as shit!

Mara, out front of the other three, suddenly stops --

MARA
Will ain't giving y'all free shit?

BODIE
We hopped off to get high--

MARA
Don't let that chap your broke ass.

BODIE
...We'll see you in Amarillo, Mara.

Bodie and Clay exchange sour glances. Turn and head back towards the train ... Still getting their rocks off.

Sage unglues her earbuds, watching the back of the bobbing heads of Bodie and Clay trailing off into shadows ...

SAGE
(walking off)
Well, I got some money.

She turns around and follows the path Mara has made.

11 EXT. BACKLOT - PERIMETER - NIGHT

11

Sage rounds the corner of a dilapidated building.

She scans ahead of Mara, a few paces ahead.

Parked vehicles: An unhitched Prowler travel trailer in the midst of two late 90's pickup trucks, a Chevy and a Ford.

Not much to see except scattered junk and what looks like a human body on a cheap lawn chair by the front of the trailer.

Movement by the Chevy -- a silhouette -- jogs down the alley. Mara slows to a stutter, watches. Sage studies its form.

Mara sprints towards the vehicles.

12

EXT. BACKLOT - NIGHT

12

Sage is walking cautiously up to the campsite ... She circles around the perimeter of the first truck as Mara beelines it to the door of the trailer.

The modulating breeze of the damp night has stilled to a breathless silence ... Coolers, piles of stained clothes, beer boxes, broken bottles and other remnants of the night lie scattered atop the blacktop, their presence illumined by the deep glow of street lights above.

She walks past the body in the chair. A Kwahadi man, his hair flowing to waist length, unconscious, face drowned in tears.

Sage peers into the first truck. A woman, unconscious in the passenger seat, the interior blanketed in piles of garbage. She revolves back around the outside the bed of the truck.

A rattling clatter inside the camper breaks the still air. The dim, shaking cabin light beckons from the camper ... Sage approaches its open side door.

13

INT. PROWLER TRAVEL TRAILER - NIGHT

13

Mara hunches over a man laid across the kitchenette booth. She violently shakes his body.

MARA
Will!? Baby??

WILL, lanky with dark shaggy hair, his body contorted in the bench of the booth -- foaming at the mouth and writhing.

MARA (CONT'D)
He needs some water!

Sage stares at the ordeal from the door steps.

SAGE
He don't need no water.

Sage enters into the camper. She digs in the front zipper of the fanny pack on her hip. She takes out a small bottle of naloxone. Mara looks at it. Sage looks at Mara, then at Will.

Sage straightens Will's torso across the table, enough to cradle his head back and towards the left of the booth.

She pulls down on the lapels of the bottle sending the spray into Will's nasal cavity.

His respiratory depression ceases. His body is still.

Mara stands behind watching.

Sage crosses to the back of the camper and opens the door.

A large bag on the bed lays open, clothes, small candies and a few dollars inside, seeming to be missing something.

Sage grabs the four dollars out of the bag -- stuffs them in her jean pocket. Crosses back to the kitchenette booth.

Mara stares at the man, she's poured water on him.

MARA
Is he dead?

Sage looks at him -- clasps her hand over his wrist.

MARA (CONT'D)
You have another woman here? You
better tell me if you're cheatin'.

SAGE
... No he's got a pulse. I can
feel it. Let him breathe--

As Sage touches him, Will's eyes lull open. Mara persists:

MARA
Baby what'd you pop? What happened?

Will, weakly nods his head in confirmation of life.

Sage turns to the open side door. She looks at the alley way extending back from the campsite. She thinks for a beat ...

SAGE
Must've been somethin' worth
takin'.

Sage looks back at Mara shaking Will, his gaze locked on her.

MARA
Will baby ... Wake up ...

SAGE
(walking off)
Better off asleep.

Sage stops to look down the back alley.

The shadows, unmoving.

A voice emanates:

VOICE
The woman that came before ... she
had something weighing herself
down.

She doesn't see anything. Nothing is moving. She listens.

VOICE (CONT'D)
...But. If you saw her ... you
wouldn't be here.

Sage locks eyes with a hooded man in the shadows ...

Sage descends deeper down the alley.

15 EXT. EDGE OF THE ALLEY - NIGHT

15

Sage squats, scanning the fence line.

A POINT-OF-VIEW

A handful of tents and ramshackle shelters piled up on each other against chain link. One tent, illuminated by lamp light, two silhouettes grappling. Another tent emits a pulsating blue light and billows of smoke.

She studies the unzipped door of the smoke filled tent.

Muffled outbursts echo from within the lamp lit tent.

WOMAN
Get off me!

The woman creates distance, bursts out of the tent, runs down the street. A large man follows, jogging.

MAN
Don't you go whinin' to no one!

Sage watches the two leave, fixing her attention back on the pulsing light of the screen.

The howls of the couple grow deeper into the distance ...

Sage looks down, checks her phone, looks back up again, fixes her attention back on the smoke filled tent.

The shadows inside of the tent are earthbound, no movement. She gets up and draws towards the jittering flashing light.

16

INT./EXT. TENT/STREET - MOMENTS LATER

16

Sage arrives at the mouth of the tent.

A woman, hallucinating like a moth to a flame, rapidly scrolling downwards on the screen.

Her sleep deprived eyes, darting.

Sage parts the mosquito net cover, occluding another woman.

Unconscious, cradling a bag around her waist. Filled to the brim with bags of blue pills.

She slides the bag away from the clutches of the woman.

Sage and the hallucinating woman exchange stares.

Sage rummages through the duffle bag. Lifts up a bag of blue pills, measures the weight.

The voices of the man and woman returning. Drawing near.

She stands and takes off with the duffle bag.

17

EXT. QUANAH - GAS STATION PARKING LOT - NIGHT

17

Sage approaches the passenger side door of a parked propane service truck in an empty parking lot. The mercury vapor lights of the otherwise empty gas station etch out the profile of the driver, a weathered man.

SAGE

Hey, where you headed?

The man takes a moment to examine her.

PROPANE TECHNICIAN

Lubbock--

SAGE

That's on my way. You drop me off in Paducah?

PROPANE TECHNICIAN

You got any money?

SAGE

Four dollars.

He hesitates, then reaches across the cab, opens the passenger side door.

18

EXT. PADUCAH - LOCKHART TRAILER - EARLY MORNING

18

The truck stops on the shoulder alongside a single lane road on the outskirts of Paducah, Texas. A single wide trailer, a chain-link enclosure out front. Sage gets out of the truck, gathers the bag, and closes its door. The truck continues on.

She steps through the thicket and up the drive. A woman in her mid-seventies, NACONA LOCKHART, in a gown, feigns interest in Sage's presence as she waters a plant on the porch. Sage shoulders by Nacona as she opens the door.

19

INT. LOCKHART TRAILER - EARLY MORNING

19

Sage pushes into the living room. A woman in her forties wearing denim and a halter top, NORA LOCKHART, stands by the stove hovering a pot over the open flame. Surrounding her on the counter top, aluminium foil, funnels, plastic bottles, lithium scraps. The home, a muted shell of its former self.

NORA

Think you live here?

SAGE

(gestures down the hall)
That my room there?

NORA

Not no more.

Sage is walking to a back bedroom. Before she disappears inside, smoke from the bathroom door spews out as it swings open. A burly greaseball of a man in his forties, holding a small beaker with prongs, clad in a lab technician's getup, steps through the doorway, his name is RICKY DEAN JOHNSON.

RICKY

Now, where'd you come from
sunshine?

SAGE

I was up in Childress--

Sage back peddles -- returning back into the main corridor, she plops down in the couch, wedging the bag behind her.

NORA

D'you meet any new regulars?

Ricky emerges from the bathroom without his chemistry gear, makes his way into the kitchen, and examines Nora's work.

SAGE

Nah. Ain't been datin'.

RICKY

Sage, ya shoulda called, told us
you was comin'.

SAGE

Why'd I do that?

RICKY

It's the right thing to do.

SAGE

What do you know about the right
thing, Ricky?

RICKY

Now, what are you talkin about?

NORA

Well you're ass ain't welcome here
if you ain't payin' no rent.

SAGE

Yeah? Pucker up.

20

INT. BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

20

Sage lies still in bed, eyes closed. Ricky steps down the
hall ... leans against the doorway, his hand over his belly.

RICKY

Good mornin'.

Sage sees him -- grabs the bag and gets out of bed.

21

INT. BATHROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

21

Nora crouches, working over the lip of the bathtub.

Sage appears in the doorway, looking well rested.

SAGE

Nora.

NORA

What?

SAGE

How about you take me with you?

Ricky rubs past behind Sage ... goes into the living room.
 Close on a scrubber and Nora's gloved hands scrubbing away.

NORA
 Take you where?

SAGE
 Amarillo, I got somethin' to sell.

Nora turns, rests her hands on her knees, looking at Sage.

NORA
 Why'd I go there? Whaddaya got?

SAGE
 I'm fixin' to tell you when we get
 in the car.

Sage starts out the front door -- passing Ricky on the couch.

RICKY
 If she's got meth to sell then she
 is goin'.

NORA
 (from the bathroom)
 Lord, whatever you say, Ricky.

SAGE
 (from the front door)
 Nice knowin' you, Nacona.

Nacona's eyes glued to the television ...

22 EXT. AMARILLO - GAS PUMP - NIGHT 22

Hands resting on top of a duffle bag run alongside a phone.

Sage is studying the bag's zippers in the passenger seat.

Nora leans against the driver's side door of an early 2000's P.T. Cruiser as she waits for the tank to fill.

Off in the far distance, a haze of trucks and trailers, gaseous revolutions in the night ...

After a beat, Nora removes the gas nozzle and clanks it on the hook. She peers through the open window at Sage scrolling rapidly on her phone.

Nora hops in. The car chugs off.

23

EXT. TRUCK YARD - NIGHT

23

The P.T. Cruiser pulls off the side road to the edge of the lot. The exhaust filled air spindles above the dozens and dozens of freight haulers.

Sage is pulled through pools of headlights, street lights and gazes from men of the road as if she is being drawn towards a familiar force ... as if the fiery combustion engines form the very path in the ground she walks on.

Walking across the pavement, Sage nears the backsides of Bodie and Clay, stood by a freightliner's opened driver's side door.

Sage turns and watches the shape of the P.T. Cruiser, silhouetted on the road by the glow of the city light, fading off into the distance.

Sage scans them as they engage with the driver.

She softly shifts her bag to her backside.

The men shake hands and the driver closes his door.

The other two turn around.

Sage catches eyes with Bodie who looks her up and down.

Sage creates distance, falling back around the rear side of the trailer parked to the side of her.

Sage covers behind the trailer.

She raises her phone, typing.

She eases her head out for another look.

Stood stupefied, Bodie and Clay.

BODIE

Oh okay. How you doin'.

SAGE

Mara ain't here?

BODIE

She's still down in Quanah from what I know.

SAGE

Oh all right ...

Bodie and Clay lunge towards Sage, ushering her away from the truck, deeper towards the back edge of the lot.

Her elbow, clinching the bag to her waist, in the grasp of Bodie. Clay jabs a 9mm pistol into her hip.

SAGE (CONT'D)
Get the fuck off me!!!

They grab her by the arms, her phone knocked out of her hand, her feet dragging through the rocks of the now unpaved gravel.

A scruffy young man hangs out the driver's window of a 1990s Lincoln sedan that rolls up in front of them. This is HUNTER.

HUNTER
Howdy y'all!

Clay waistbands the gun, reaches to the passenger door behind Hunter. Sage's fear transforms into terror. The door opens.

SAGE
GET THE FUCK OFF ME!!!!

Bodie brute forces Sage into the car --

He follows in behind her, slamming the door --

Clay rounds the front and hops in the passenger side.

SAGE (CONT'D)
NGHAAAAAAA!!!!!! HELP!!!

Her primal scream vanishes into the roaring truck engines.

The Lincoln peters away taking a sharp right turn onto the interstate heading towards the city lights.

The Lincoln swerves around the unmanicured back roads. Potholes bouncing the passengers into the sedan's headliner.

The night is endless.

Sage lies sprawled in the tiny backseat atop the torn leather.

The bag on the far passenger side near the door, underneath her head.

CLAY
OH YOU AIN'T GIVING IT UP TONIGHT?

Bodie, sprawled on top of her, struggles to unzip her jeans.

Sage kicks him square in the face --

Bodie laughs, blood coming from his nostril.

Clay, from the passenger seat, stretches back in an attempt to control Sage. Unsuccessful, he goes for the gun --

SAGE
WHAT DO YOU WANT!?!?

Hunter giggles from the front seat, the car wildly swerving.

She reaches up and pops the manual backseat lock --

Sage turns and rolls out of the moving vehicle as another car passes by.

The bag, an arm's length away.

CLAY
(to Hunter)
YOU DUMBASS HICK!

Clay fires a round out from his seat, whizzing over Sage's head as she stumbles to her feet.

Sage picks her head up, gasping and looks back as she backpedals.

Another gunshot from the car --

Hitting the fence line to the left of Sage.

Sage sprints off, doubled over, perpendicular to her previous path.

She hits the ground, pressing into the earth, head between her forearms --

Bag in hand --

Bodie leaps out of the car in pursuit.

The Lincoln tears away as two on-coming vehicles draw near.

Sage hurls her body over the fence line into a salvage yard.

Mountainous tons of decaying scrap metal fills the lot.

25

EXT. SALVAGE YARD - NIGHT

25

Sage sweeps around a salvage pile, finds her footing -- snatches the bag off her shoulder and flings it up the pile.

She staggers up the angle of repose, searching for a tool.

Bodie's boots thud closer.

Sage yanks a jagged rebar pipe from the pile -- tears off an outer shell of congealed plastic from its length.

As the bag hits the top, Bodie turns, fixating on Sage struggling to stand. He bounds across the aisle.

Sage raises the rebar, shifting her weight upwards. Bodie lunges and tackles her, his weight bearing down on her.

Bodie grabs her wrists, ripping the rebar away. As he grapples with her arms, he lunges, stabbing at her lower ribcage, nearly breaking the skin of her hip.

Sage sweep kicks Bodie's lower foot out from under him.

They tumble down the pile, metal clattering around them.

Sage gains top control, forcefully grabs Bodie's arm with the rebar, and guides it to his eye. She drives her entire weight onto the rebar, grinding it into the back of his skull.

Bodie's body skids down the junk heap, jerking and gurgling.

Sage stumbles to her feet.

26

EXT. TRAIN YARD - FENCE LINE - NIGHT

26

It's a few hours before sunrise.

Sage has walked beyond the confines of the salvage yard, now replaced by stagnant stretches of rail cars.

Sage has tied her jacket around her waist. Her hand pressed against her ribcage, she slowly rubs the serrated wound.

She stops walking --

Her POINT-OF-VIEW:

A woman stood out front of a tent encampment below a skinny single lane underpass, staring at her ...

Sage reaches into her fanny pack, rips open a candy bar, and starts chomping as she approaches the woman.

27

EXT. CHILDRESS - TIRE SHOP - NIGHT

27

It is full night. An isolated dusty crossroad. The shop surrounded by mountains of rubber tires along it's rear side. Noé is walking past a dirt bike into the opening of a tire shop, a MECHANIC, early-twenties, female, scrawny, dirty and blonde hunches over a tire changer. The rear of a trailer seen off further behind the shop.

28

INT. TIRE SHOP - NIGHT

28

Noé stands at the tire changer across from the dingy woman.

He digs underneath his fingernails ...

NOÉ
How much longer?

MECHANIC
'Bout fifteen minutes.

NOÉ
And the others?

MECHANIC
He goin' through any weigh
stations?

NOÉ
Is he the one driving?

MECHANIC
I guessed that was the case.

NOÉ
And you're not driving?

MECHANIC
I'm assuming that's the deal.

NOÉ
That's worth assuming.

MECHANIC
I was figurin' for your load ...

A beat.

MECHANIC (CONT'D)
Well if that's the case. If you
don't measure what you got - don't
come belly-achin' when he's pulled
over.

Noé stands picking his cuticles, staring while the woman fine tunes the sheath pouch, snuggly fitting a plastic wrapped brick inside of it.

MECHANIC (CONT'D)
... Well is it not the case?

NOÉ
Well that depends. Is it worth measuring?

A beat.

A TRUCK DRIVER, mid-fifties, haggard and road worn, he limps into the shop with a cane, watching the two of them.

Noé stares at the mechanic.

MECHANIC
Am I not clear?

NOÉ
Well that depends.

MECHANIC
On what?

NOÉ
Is that what you're asking me? Is there something worth measuring?

The mechanic looks up at him, uncomfortable, looks back at her work ...

MECHANIC
Well is this all there is?

NOÉ
Yes, just focus on the wheel.

DRIVER
Well ... I gotta hit the road.

Noé gestures over to the mechanic.

NOÉ
Are you watching this?

DRIVER
Yessir.

NOÉ
Which way are you going?

DRIVER

However the phone takes me.

NOÉ

However the phone takes you. Which way are you going?

DRIVER

The access roads, I can take them.

Noé stares, chewing on his nails.

NOÉ

You don't know how you're getting there, do you?

DRIVER

Huh?

NOÉ

You don't know how you're getting there.

Noé chews, turns to the mechanic now finished with her job, the wheel spins.

NOÉ (CONT'D)

Why are you just spinning the wheel?

MECHANIC

Huh?

NOÉ

You have everything inside. Why are you spinning the wheel?

MECHANIC

Ah ...

A pause.

MECHANIC (CONT'D)

Fixin' to put the tire on it. Just seeing how it goes.

NOÉ

This is a simple receptacle.

MECHANIC

It's gotta have it's original use--

NOÉ

That's enough.

The mechanic lets off the pedal. The machine stops spinning.

MECHANIC
There, I'm done.

He continues to stare, chewing ...

MECHANIC (CONT'D)
Ok ... lemme get the rubber.

NOÉ
You servicing any others tonight?

MECHANIC
I could be.

NOÉ
What else they have you pushing?

She begins fitting the tire around the wheel.

MECHANIC
Whatever they pay me for. Depends.

NOÉ
It depends on what?

MECHANIC
I pass along what needs to be
passed along ... That's it.
Couldn't count the number of folks
come through here ...

NOÉ
You think the product is clean?

MECHANIC
If it's all comin' from the same
source--

NOÉ
If it's all comin' from the same
source?

The tire changer rapidly spins. The mechanic, smoothing out
the air bubbles of the pocket. Her eyes follow the spiral.

Noé turns to the Driver --

NOÉ (CONT'D)
You gonna make your way back to
this state?

DRIVER

Huh?

NOÉ

This state. Can you make your way back?

DRIVER

I probably could. I'd need pay ...

The mechanic walks past the two, pulling the tire on a dolly.

NOÉ

Name a price ...

DRIVER

A price?

NOÉ

Yes.

DRIVER

For what?

NOÉ

Gimme a number ...

DRIVER

Well, I'd need a real number to know what we're lookin' at here.

NOÉ

You tell me how much. I can't give you a number. There's no chance.

DRIVER

I'm asking how much work.

NOÉ

I know that. You don't need to know how much. You just need to drive where I tell you to drive. Do you know what's in front of you?

The mechanic rides the lift gate up, rolls the tire into the trailer.

DRIVER

No ...

NOÉ

Generational wealth. Built off of the addiction of thousands in this region alone.

And you either drive or you don't.
And it's up to you. No brainer.

DRIVER

Look ... I got to know what you're
willin' to pay.

NOÉ

Whatever.

DRIVER

How's that?

NOÉ

Whatever the cost, I'll pay it in
full ...

The mechanic returns from inside the trailer, walks out to
the lift gate with the dolly, grabs the remote and lowers
herself down.

MECHANIC

All right--

NOÉ

Well, okay ...

Noé turns to walk away.

NOÉ (CONT'D)

(to the Driver)

Don't you pick up that phone.

DRIVER

What?

NOÉ

Don't answer a phone call. From
anyone else

DRIVER

Well where you wanna meet me?

NOÉ

Anywhere. Not around here ...

Noé turns to his dirt bike and goes.

The driver and mechanic watch him.

29

EXT. AMARILLO - DOWNTOWN UNDERPASS - MORNING

29

Dawn's first light filters through the underpass. A WOMAN, late 50s, peeks out of her tent.

Sage, cloaked in a tarp, thumbs through the woman's cart.

Sage slinks out from around the cart, holding a jacket.

WOMAN

...Now. You cain't touch that.

30

EXT. DOWNTOWN UNDERPASS - LATER

30

The woman pulls a pot of oatmeal off a canister stove and hands it, along with a spork, to Sage.

SAGE

Paducah.

WOMAN

Where in the shit is Paducah?

SAGE

'Bout three hours, Southeast.
Little ole cattle farmin' town.

WOMAN

And you're out here killing a man?

SAGE

Listen, that ain't no concern of yours. Weren't the first time he put his hands on me. Someone'll find his body a few hours from now and the police'll come. The men he was with'll show up here.

WOMAN

Well, then you ain't got long now.

SAGE

Sure, you know what price I can get for a couple pounds worth a synthetics?

The woman stares, thinking ...

WOMAN

You ain't got someone to call to pick you up?

SAGE

Not anyone that wouldn't do
nothin'. They're all lost in
themselves.

WOMAN

Miss--

SAGE

You got any fruit. Anything to
sweeten this bland chalk shit up
will do.

The woman begins peevishly tossing things out of her bag.

WOMAN

Things is gonna come back around on
you.

SAGE

Yep, always do. Outta my hands ...

31 EXT. QUANAH - TOWN ROAD - MORNING

31

POINT-OF-VIEW OVER HANDLEBARS

It is still. No other vehicles on this gnarled road.

Our bike turns off and rolls towards a circle of vehicles in
a parking lot. Slumped on the side of a Prowler travel
trailer lays a woman in a cheap lawn chair.

Noé steps off from his Yamaha.

Mara rises from the chair -- makes her way close to Noé.

MARA

(whispers)

Will is restin'.

32 INT. PROWLER TRAVEL TRAILER - MORNING

32

The camper bounces with Noé's steps as he climbs inside.

Noé stops at the kitchenette table, thumbs around a naloxone
bottle and a condom with a strange cowboy stamped on it's
wrapper, the words "Howdy Doody" below it ...

NOÉ

These his?

Mara follows behind, poking her head in through the doorway.

MARA
Sorta.

He is rummaging through cabinets, makes his way to the bedroom door, opens it.

NOÉ
Got another bottle?

Will writhes in a stupor, limbs contorted above his head, breath shallow and irregular.

NOÉ (CONT'D)
...Who cut his shit?

MARA
Some locals maybe. It weren't ours.

33 EXT. SIDE ALLEY STREET - DAY

33

The trio makes their way towards a tent along the fence line.

WILL
That's the one right there.

NOÉ
Is it now?

Noé approaches a woman on her phone smoking a cigarette squattin' outside her tent.

Next to her -- a go bag on the ground.

NOÉ (CONT'D)
...Where's the other bag?

WOMAN
Ain't got one.

MARA
It ain't buried inside there?

NOÉ
Slide that over.

He bends down and unzips her duffle bag, digs through it, pulls out various items. Slams it.

NOÉ (CONT'D)
...You pulled anything outta this?

WILL
That ain't the bag.

Noé turns back to the woman --

NOÉ
You're not the girl?

WOMAN
Nope. Some string bean blonde
bitch.

NOÉ
All right ... hand me that.

Noé stands and holds his hand out for her cell phone.

She hands it to him. Noé turns to Will -- jabs him with it.

As Will stumbles, Noé continues to bludgeon his skull with the device. Mara and the woman watch.

34

EXT. PADUCAH - LOCKHART TRAILER - AFTERNOON

34

A goat slurps through the chain-link fence as Nacona, lips puckered around a cigarette, feeds it turkey slices.

Ricky, slumps up from his porch seat, walks down the steps to the sight of Nora, pulling the P.T. Cruiser up the drive.

RICKY
Thought I said get back here last
night?

NORA
Yeah, well I got a room. Sage tryna
sell shit slowed me down.

RICKY
Dumb girl ... When is you not gonna
just start mindin' what I say?

Nora looks past Ricky, blocking her in, and gazes at Nacona.

NORA
Hey Ma.

Nacona looks over while feeding the goat inside the pen.

RICKY
I sure as shit woulda liked to
know.

NORA
She's gone now.

Nacona pulls out the last turkey slice. She feeds the goat.

RICKY
What'd she have?

NORA
She ain't have shit.

RICKY
She's gone get hurt.

NORA
She ain't hurtin'.

RICKY
She don't needa be alone.

NACONA
(hollers)
Well, whyn't you find her?

35 EXT. QUANAH - BACKLOT - AFTERNOON

35

The P.T. Cruiser lulls up to the truck parked next to Will's camper.

A group of roadies huddle by a fire grilling weenies.

Ricky gets out and joins Will, slowly rising from the lawn chair. Mara sits on the steps in the Prowler's door way.

Ricky looks Mara up and down, admiring her ... Mara walks over to Nora and Nacona in the car.

RICKY
Ain't take you to be a spelunker.

WILL
Shiner. I fell down a few days ago.

RICKY
It looks like pink eye to me, bud.

WILL
It sure ain't.

RICKY
I say sure. Not a doubt in my mind.

WILL
You tryna short me again tonight?

RICKY

Nah, I wouldn't do that. I got told
 Sage come through here, stole your
 drugs, 'fore she came to my home,
 then she run off in Amarillo. And
 so I'm here, willin' to make up the
 loss in your supply.

WILL

That's awfully kind, Ricky.

The men stare at Mara, standing at the car talking to Nora.

RICKY

Wouldn't mind talkin' prices, Will.

WILL

Anyways. Yeah, Sage came with Mara.

He nods down the alleyway past the roadies.

RICKY

Uh-huh ... Paid for 'em both?

A beat.

Will turns and walks towards the alleyway.

WILL

Come look.

RICKY

Oh, and one more thing. Anyone else
 you know needs anything I can cook
 up just about the best god damn tub
 crank you're gonna find out here.

The two men walk towards the back of the lot, approaching the roadies. Ricky is studying their outfits.

RICKY

It's the same story circlin' back
 on around. Caught with your pants
 down. Can't be the first time.

They pass them by, Will in front a ways, now standing still,
 looking down the alley.

He gestures down the alley ...

WILL
Tent was just down there.
Somebody's gone and stole what she
had left of it.

Ricky looks up, catches up to Will.

RICKY
Two homeless gals fooled you. You
oughta be just sour.

The tent along the fence line is rummaged through.

WILL
Your girl's homeless?

RICKY
That's how she lives.

A beat.

WILL
You still think I'm buyin' off you?

RICKY
Figured I asked kindly 'bout it.

WILL
Tub crank ain't helpin' my ass.

37 INT. BINGO HALL - NIGHT

37

Ricky and Nora walk through the bingo hall with plated nachos.

NORA
Christ, they gave me jalapeños ...

They walk towards the nearby table where Nacona is sitting. A dozen others scattered around the room.

NORA (CONT'D)
Well this is just a waste of chips.

Nora sits besides Nacona.

RICKY
Appears they're wasted on you.

Ricky grabs the nachos off Nora's plate, transfers them to his plate.

NORA
Don't you got to go sell, Ricky?

RICKY
I cain't do that here. Not at
bingo.

Ricky strolls between a table of bingo players as he chomps away.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Nobody in this hall got more'n
twenty dollars ...

NORA
Well, why do you think Will didn't
buy nothin' off you?

RICKY
I don't know ...

Ricky parks against a column next to Nacona's table.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Evidently he can't hang on to
nothin'.

NORA
Sage knew that. Mara's the one
dumber'n him.

Ricky walks over to a nearby table.

He signals to Nora and gestures towards an older couple.

NACONA
(to Nora)
I think we were talkin' to a couple
morons. Absolute fools.

Ricky nods down at the two -- whispers into their ears.

NORA
(to Nacona)
That's a businessman right there.

The couple shoos him away.

Nacona, fixed on the board, wets the dried marker with her tongue and marks her card.

NACONA
(to Nora)
That ain't no man at all.

Ricky strolls back to the ladies' table. Still chomping.

NORA

(to Ricky)

She's liable to be dead ... You
can't even sell nothing ... No
difference if she stole off with
however much money's worth.

RICKY

She's a tough girl ...

NORA

Well whadda we gone do?

RICKY

Well ... I'mma go hunt Sage.

A beat.

NORA

This ain't good, is it Ricky?

RICKY

It's as good as good is gonna get.

38 EXT. CHILDRESS - MALDONADO HOME - SIDE FENCE - MORNING 38

We follow Noé up the driveway of a modest suburban 1970's ranch home, around the side to a canopied back gate.

Noé stops at the gate, peering at the back of a young girl, CAMILA MALDONADO, as she sits perched on a concrete slab, carving chalk into rock.

A short beat.

Noé reaches his hand over the chain-link, swiftly unlatches the gate.

A sharp release --

The gate swings slowly in behind Noé as he stands back watching her play ...

He closes the gate --

He looks around the yard.

He drifts in, drawing closer to her ...

She looks back towards the gate as he approaches, recognizing him.

She looks back down, returning to her drawing.

Noé grows closer, squats down, places his hand on her shoulder, brings his head towards her ear ...

NOÉ
Where's your father?

CAMILA
Inside.

39 INT. MALDONADO HOME - MORNING

39

Noé enters into the home through the back garage door, entering into the kitchen. He looks around, then to a man, this is MIGUEL MALDONADO, mid fifties, half dressed in an officer's uniform, on the couch, drowsily unlaces his boots.

They stare at one another as Miguel kicks off his boots.

He wallers back into the sofa. He grabs the open beer bottle off the side table. He drinks ...

He looks at Noé as he unbuttons his shirt ...

MIGUEL
What do you want?

NOÉ
Will's lost ten pounds of
synthetic.

MIGUEL
Did you go visit him in Quanah?

NOÉ
I saw him.

MIGUEL
Well good luck finding it. You
think I'm going to help you?

NOÉ
There's this.

Noé holds up the Howdy Doody's branded condom --

MIGUEL
Okay. There's that.

NOÉ
Howdy Doody. Know any lot lizards?

MIGUEL
Howdy Doody's.

NOÉ
Do you know the girls?

MIGUEL
I got other shit on my plate.
That's all I know.

A door slams behind Noé -- Camila shoulders past.

Her footsteps lead to her room.

Noé's eye tracks Camila ... He looks at Miguel.

He turns and opens the door and leaves.

40 EXT. AMARILLO - TRAIN YARD - DAY

40

Some of the rail cars chugging along. Sage shifts the duffle bag from around her waist as the woman walks beside her.

WOMAN
Why you gettin' off in Childress?

SAGE
I needa make some money.

WOMAN
You ain't got any?

They come to a stand still.

SAGE
I'mma make some there. Get a bus ticket.

WOMAN
How come?

SAGE
Figure I'd go to Florida.

WOMAN
You're already in a clusterfuck.

SAGE
That don't make no difference.
Things'll sort themselves out. You oughta find some work yourself.

WOMAN

It comes my way when I wander
around long enough.

SAGE

(snorts)

WOMAN

Doesn't take no thought neither.

SAGE

Well, you just gotta show up.

WOMAN

Ain't just that, panhandlin's work.

SAGE

Sounds like a lot of effort to do
nothing ...

Sage turns and starts towards a train passing behind --

WOMAN

Honey?

SAGE

Yes ma'am?

WOMAN

You know how you're gonna get out
of this?

Sage tightens the duffle bag's strap against her chest.

SAGE

I'mma vanish.

41

EXT. PADUCAH - SOPHIA'S HOME - DAY

41

Ricky pulls the car into the drive, parks and gets out of the car. He walks up on a man, this is CASH, mid-thirties, burly, sunburnt, king of the crop-topped field laborers, who is stood staring at a small burn pile on the side of his house in front of his garage shed ...

RICKY

Hey there Cash buddy.

Cash looks at Ricky as he approaches. Cash gestures over.

CASH

Look at that fire.

They both look into the abyss of the fire ... A beat.

RICKY
What's goin' on?

CASH
Burnin' stuff with fire.

Cash adjusts his belt ... adjusts his shirt ...

RICKY
Wanna make money?

CASH
How we gone do that?

Cash turns and walks towards the porch.

42 EXT. SOPHIA'S HOME - PORCH - DAY

42

Nora stands talking through the screen door to SOPHIA, mid-thirties, daycare commando, resting someone's TODDLER on her hip, running her hand through her son's, ELI, 8 and portly, chili bowl hair as he devours a popsicle --

Screams come from inside the house ...

Kids chasing each other.

Cash steps onto the porch, nodding to Nora.

Cash turns back to Ricky.

Ricky inspects the termite gnawed siding on the house.

CASH
Ricky what's goin' on?

RICKY
Lil ole Sage stole off with a bag
of fetty.

Cash plops down on the porch chair.

CASH
How much though? --

RICKY
Oh, I'm not sure.

CASH
Might be worth somethin' ...

Ricky leans against the porch column, wanders, looks around.

RICKY
That's likely so.

CASH
So where's she at now?

RICKY
(squints to Nora)
I don't know. Amarillo?

A beat.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Nacona. She can't afford a coffin.

CASH
Alright?

RICKY
Well I'm just sayin' ... You wanna
help her out?

CASH
I suppose we can do that.

NORA
Could use one now.

Ricky is agitated.

A bicycle bell rings --

Two pre-teens on bicycles pedal down the street past the
front yard ...

NORA (CONT'D)
Look, Ricky. Momma don't --

His eyes track the boys ...

RICKY
Sophia, seems like your babysittin'
operation is missing out.

Sophia doesn't respond.

NORA
Yeah sure --

He skips off of the porch.

43

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY

43

RICKY'S POINT-OF-VIEW

The two boys pedal through an empty unkempt street. The sound of their bike chains catching on itself clouds the ambience.

Wider shows Ricky riding Cash's bicycle trailing the kids.

RICKY

Hey, where y'all boys goin?

As they look back, he speeds ahead of them cutting them off --

RICKY (CONT'D)

Lookin' for something fun to try out?

The boys stare at him. Ricky holds out what looks like a pen.

BOY #1

Mister, what's in that?

RICKY

A dose of yourself.

BOY #2

What in the hell does that mean?

RICKY

It's free. I'll hold it for you.

Ricky checks his surroundings ...

BOY #2

You think we're just gonna put our mouths on this pen a yours? Without even knowin' what's in it?

Boy #1 cock eyed looks at Boy #2

Ricky holds the pen up to Boy #1's mouth ...

RICKY

Now don't move. Just breathe in

Boy #1 takes a long inhale ...

RICKY (CONT'D)

Now just hold still a second - just keep your lips over that. Yeah.

44

EXT. CHILDRESS - SIDE STREET - DAY

44

Sage disengages her straddle from the chain-link fence, trains pass along the rail yard behind her.

A man stands on the curb of the access road, cars rolling by.

The man stares at her --

SAGE
You keep on lookin'.

MAN
You got some change?

SAGE
Nah, can't do that.

45

INT. HOWDY DOODY'S - CAFE - DAY

45

Sage stares at the laminated menu, its cover stamped with the cafe's Highway U.S. 287 address and grinning cowboy mascot:

Burger \$19.99

Quesadilla \$14.99

Fries \$9.99

Drink \$5.99

Voices play off:

VOICE
Girl, pick your damn order.

SAGE
Who the fuck is payin' this?

Wider shows that we are in a cafe dining room. A woman, AMBER, early twenties, scraggly bleach damaged hair, gaunt features, stands over Sage, sat at a small table in the middle of the room. She has handed her the stained menu.

AMBER
... Sage you ain't comin' here
full a shit and not tippin' me--

SAGE
I ain't got no money ... Y'all
gotta break room?

41.

46 INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY 46

Cramped. Lockers. Dry goods on shelves.

Sage sits on a bucket with an ashtray and a basket of fries on a card table in front of her.

Amber's phone to her ear.

It rings five times ...

Nacona's automated voicemail.

47 INT. REST ROOM - DAY 47

Sage hunches over the sink, face inches from the mirror, adjusts a glued on lash. She tugs a new top into form.

She walks into the kitchen and stops. Looking around. She looks slowly at the door of the walk-in cooler ...

48 INT. KEG COOLER - DAY 48

CLOSE ON A BOX

The box is ripped open --

Wider shows us Sage, standing inside near the door, removing the remaining bottles from the box.

49 INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY 49

She goes to the break room and grabs a roll of duct tape as Amber and another waitress bullshit.

50 INT. REST ROOM - DAY 50

Sage returns to the restroom, unzips the duffle, stuffs her old shirt and fanny pack on top of the drugs.

She zips the duffle closed --

51 INT. KEG COOLER - DAY 51

She returns to the walk-in, puts the duffle bag in the open box, and tapes it shut ...

She stacks her box on a short pile in the corner, placing three other boxes on top of hers.

She rolls a dolly in front of the stack of beer boxes. She kicks the dolly up, pushes the dolly into the corner and rolls a keg in front of it.

52 INT. KITCHEN - LATER

52

Sage stands in the back kitchen with Amber and MARTHA, her manager, they're sipping the beers she removed from the box.

Sage stares at the automobile gas pumps out the back door ...

A man by a Ford Ranger with a salvage heap twice the size of the cab fumbles with his credit card, drops it on the ground.

Sage tosses her beer into the trash and removes herself from the lip flapping. She walks out the back door.

53 EXT. AMARILLO - TRUCK YARD - AFTERNOON

53

From high up we see the expanse of the truck yard, bustling with activity, barbecue smokers are out, small groupings of travelers and truckers stood talking around the semis.

Within the middle of the yard, next to one of the smokers Ricky and Cash stands across from Clay and Hunter who is smoking a cigarette as he pokes hot dog weenies with tongs.

HUNTER

She tore ass out the car and that was it ...

RICKY

And she didn't mention nothin' earlier?

CLAY

Nothin'.

RICKY

Well we're tore up about her missin'.

HUNTER

My guess she's blowin' some turbine hauler.

RICKY

Likely so ...

54

INT. CHILDRESS - MOTEL ROOM - BLUE HOUR

54

Sage is standing in front of the mirror of the room cleaning her hair off with a wet wash cloth. The salvage driver lays sprawled out on the bed, his pants around his ankles.

SALVAGE DRIVER

Time for payin', yeah?

SAGE

Yeah. You gotta make up for the shirt, two fifty.

SALVAGE DRIVER

All right.

SAGE

You stayin' in town?

SALVAGE DRIVER

Just here tonight.

She snatches up his wallet and keys off the side table.

SAGE

I'mma shower. You mind takin' me back?

55

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - BLUE HOUR

55

Sage is sitting in the bathtub, her first bath in a week. Her clothes and his wallet and keys rest on the toilet. She pours two in one body wash shampoo into her face and hair ...

56

INT./EXT. TRUCK/HOWDY DOODY'S - NIGHT

56

The truck rolls to a stop in front of Howdy Doody's Cafe. Sage reaches for the driver's wallet in the cup holder but pauses, noticing two familiar figures standing in the cafe dining room.

Will and Mara ordering at the counter.

SAGE

Not here. Drop me off 'round back.

DRIVER

Do what now?

SAGE

Just drop me off around back.

57 EXT. HOWDY DOODY'S - BACKLOT - NIGHT 57

The truck passes behind Sage as she heads to the back door.

Her point-of-view through the open door --

Will and Mara standing at the register, speaking with Amber.

SAGE

It just keeps going. Shit don't stop.

Sage slinks back behind the wall, meets eyes with the, DISHWASHER, late teens and lanky, on his smoke break.

He takes a drag from the cigarette. Scrolls on his phone.

SAGE (CONT'D)

You gettin' off?

DISHWASHER

Well, yeah I'm waitin' on my ride.

SAGE

I want you to take me home tonight.

DISHWASHER

Let me think about--

Sage raises two hundred and fifty bucks up to the dishwasher.

SAGE

You're takin' me and I'll make it worth it to ya.

The dishwasher takes the bills and looks back to his phone.

58 EXT. CHILDRESS - ROADSIDE - NIGHT 58

Noé hovers over Amber, women dot the fence line behind them.

Some cars roll by, men looking for a connection ...

AMBER

Cowboys ain't the only ones wranglin'.

NOÉ

What's her name?

AMBER

Sage Lockhart.

NOÉ
She with anyone?

AMBER
She's probably turnin' another
trick. Why? You interested?

NOÉ
Where is she?

AMBER
...Come see me at Howdy Doody's
tomorrow.

Noé stares for a short beat, then hands her cash ...

Noé watches a woman talking to a man through his car window.

59 INT. PADUCAH - LOCKHART TRAILER - BACK PORCH - MORNING 59

Nacona sits across from Sophia at the back porch table,
staring at the field worker's toddler in her lap.

Nora comes through the open back door, tosses a bundle of
cooking supplies into the trash.

SOPHIA
Ricky 'n Cash took your car up to
Amarillo.

NACONA
They didn't bring it back?

SOPHIA
They didn't say so.

Nora leans on the door frame, cleaning glassware ...

NACONA
Cash ain't got one?

SOPHIA
No ma'am. We don't.

NACONA
Sophie, how in the hell you let a
man without a car give you a kid?

SOPHIA
No rubber--

NACONA

(to Nora)

I told you Ricky weren't to take
that damn car no more.

NORA

Yes momma ...

NACONA

You're sayin' I gotta walk to the
corner store when I run outta
smokes here in ten minutes?

NORA

Momma, you know how Ricky gets--

NACONA

I don't give a damn.

A beat. Ended by Nacona dragging from her cigarette ...

SOPHIA

Y'all ain't worried 'bout Sage?

Nacona's disengaged look swings on to her.

NACONA

--Driftin' is all that girl knows.

NORA

Roughnecks and truckers are keeping
her off the streets. You think
she'd have her union card.

NACONA

(to Sophia)

I don't know. Do you think that
girl's got any sorta plan?

SOPHIA

No ma'am.

NACONA

Well, then it don't matter. Rather
watch my westerns, don't need
nobody else botherin' me.

Sage and the dishwasher sit in the backseat of a 1983 Oldsmobile Omega, the DRIVER, mid forties, shaggy, cranes his neck out of the driver's side window. The mobile home door opens, a woman appears, they get out of the car.

61

INT. MOBILE HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

61

The WOMAN, late-twenties, exuberant, a new age hippie, hands Sage a homemade pipe from the kitchen counter, completely covered with glass jars, Amazon products, air purifiers, and various doo-dads.

WOMAN

You done this before? Seventy five grams.

Sage looks the pipe over.

SAGE

Uh-huh. Done it lots.

WOMAN

This'll blast you off.

The woman hands her the lighter.

SAGE

Y'all got any candy?

62

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

62

The quartet sitting on zafus around the coffee table, cluttered with glass bongs and pipes and dragon figurines.

The driver stares at Sage.

DRIVER

Jacksonville? You got gas money?

SAGE

Somethin' like that ...

The dishwasher rips a dab pen-- He ceases all motion.

DRIVER

Well after you screw me just tell me where you're headin' and I'll make sure you get there ... one way or another.

SAGE

Never mind. How 'bout Witchita Falls?

DRIVER

(tilted)

How much money you got?

SAGE
 (nods to the dishwasher)
 However much he's got.

63 INT. HOWDY DOODY'S - RESTROOM - AFTERNOON

63

Sage cranks out paper towels from the dispenser, covers her hands, plunges her arm into the trash can and rummages.

MINUTES LATER

She walks along the stall doors, pushing each one open, checking the insides.

She unwinds toilet paper from the dispenser, slides the divider, ducks her head below and digs around inside.

Sage sits on the toilet lighting half a cigarette with a match. A dollar from the trash bin on her lap.

64 INT. CLERK'S COUNTER - AFTERNOON

64

Sage enters the store approaches Martha, behind the counter.

SAGE
 Y'all sell singles?

MARTHA
 Mmm ... Dollar each.

Martha turns around to the cigarette rack and pulls the saran wrap off of a red and white cigarette box, opening it.

SAGE
 Martha, lemme get another beer?

MARTHA
 You want more free beer?

SAGE
 No, I think we should both get another beer--

MARTHA
 I'm on the clock ...

SAGE
 Ma'am, that ever stopped you from boozin' before?

She cranes her neck towards the cafe looking for Amber.

MARTHA

Well, yeah once or twice.

Martha pulls out a cigarette and hands it over.

SAGE

That's right.

Sage unfolds the dollar bill -- swaps it for the cigarette.

SAGE (CONT'D)

How 'bout a Shiner bock?

MARTHA

How bout you get on outta here or
I'll get the police on you for
loiterin'. How bout a holdin' cell
in twenty minutes.

SAGE

No thank you ma'am, a cig'll do.

65 EXT. PARKING LOT - GOLDEN HOUR

65

Sage crosses the truck side of the parking lot, wrapping around towards the backside kitchen door.

She looks further down the parking lot towards the gas pumps.

A Prowler travel trailer -- hitched to a Chevy at pump #7.

66 INT. KITCHEN - GOLDEN HOUR

66

SAGE

Sage is peeking outside through the kitchen door. She goes across the kitchen, towards the expo rack, leans against the server's side and pulls down the tray of tomatoes, tears off the saran wrap and removes the separate tray underneath.

67 EXT. HIGHWAY U.S. 287 - DIRT BIKE - GOLDEN HOUR

67

NOÉ

Driving slowly down the highway with oscillating glances to the vehicles to the left and right of him. "La Llorona" by Chevela Vargas beckoning from the radio.

The dirt bike chugs along through and around other vehicles.

Noé slows and looks at the buildings lining the highway.

68 INT. KITCHEN - GOLDEN HOUR 68

SAGE

Sage reaches through the shelves, brushing against Amber.

69 EXT. HIGHWAY U.S. 287 - DIRT BIKE - DUSK 69

NOÉ

The music is dying slowly as the bike creeps along.

Up at a distant intersection is Howdy Doody's.

He turns into the front lot towards a row of gas pumps.

70 INT. KITCHEN - DUSK 70

SAGE

Sage rips a sweet potato wedge in half with her teeth. She finishes the other half. She grabs another wedge.

AMBER

Oh. You workin' here?

71 EXT. PARKING LOT - DIRT BIKE - DUSK 71

NOÉ

He is slowly driving in the parking lot, the music dissipates to silence. Noé stops the roll of his bike in the center of the front pumps -- something in his periphery ...

A row of perpendicular pumps with more vehicles.

Will -- stood beside his Prowler travel trailer pulled by a Chevy truck -- next to pump #7. Talking to Mara.

Noé pulls the clutch, rolls into the parking spot in front of the cafe. Inside, faces watch Noé park.

72 INT. KITCHEN - DUSK 72

SAGE

Sage pulls a chef's knife off the magnet board. She takes the saran-wrapped tray bound tomatoes from the rack in front of her and starts slicing them in halves and quarters.

73 INT. CAFE - DUSK 73

NOÉ

Noé stands across the counter from a drowsy Martha who looks at him, waiting. He is frowning at the prices on the menu.

74 INT. KITCHEN - DUSK 74

SAGE

Amber rips a ticket out of the POS printer.

She walks out the kitchen's back door.

AMBER
Keep tryin' me ...

Sage slows her cutting -- watches Amber leave.

75 INT. CAFE - DUSK 75

NOÉ

Noé slowly walks his tray into the dining area.

He stands in between its dividing wall.

He scans for a table and finds one directly to his left.

He walks up to the table as he looks out towards the gas pump with the trailer.

He slowly sets the tray down.

76 INT. KITCHEN - DUSK 76

SAGE

She cuts a final tomato, slowing her motion to a halt.

77 INT./EXT. P.T. CRUISER/BACK PARKING LOT - DUSK 77

RICKY

He's rolling the car up through the lot, hanging out the driver's side window. Scouting the vehicles. He spots Will's trailer. He pulls past a parking spot -- reverses into it.

Cash -- on his phone in the passenger seat.

78 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 78

SAGE

Sage shifts her weight off the rack, drops the knife against the POS terminal and walks towards the back of the kitchen.

She rolls a keg out from in front of the door, opens the door and peers into the dark keg cooler.

79 EXT. BACK PARKING LOT - NIGHT 79

RICKY

His sloppy gate carries him around the hood of the P.T. Cruiser. He hollers to the driver in the spot next to his.

RICKY
Looking for something different?

He judges the man's gaze. He walks to the next parking spot.

80 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 80

SAGE

She lurches into the keg cooler. Checking behind her.

81 INT. CAFE - NIGHT 81

NOÉ

Noé stands, stares out the window, pops fries into his mouth.

82 INT. KEG COOLER - NIGHT 82

SAGE

Inside: Sage closes the door behind her. Watching her back.

83 INT. CAFE - NIGHT 83

NOÉ

From a hot dog boat, he pulls out more fries, feeds them into his mouth, looks outside as more bodies enter the cafe.

84 INT. KEG COOLER - NIGHT 84

SAGE

Sage standing in the dark, crowded amongst kegs now, she reaches to the light switch, turns it on. Stares for a beat.

In front of her -- three dollies, each stacked with eight boxes of beer bottles, block the stack hiding the duffle bag.

Between the stacks of boxes on the dollies, she sees her box.

85 INT. CAFE - NIGHT 85

NOÉ

He stands over the table, crinkles his napkin on top of the tray. He walks over to the trash can -- dumps all of it.

86 EXT. SIDE PARKING LOT - NIGHT 86

We track from behind on Noé's boots crossing the black top.

87 INT. KEG COOLER - NIGHT 87

SAGE

Inside the cooler: Both shoulders awkwardly squeezing through the gap between two of the dollies, one hand supporting herself, the other stretching downwards ...

She straightens and feeds the rest of her body through the gap, sliding towards the floor.

She is on the ground as the dolly to her right nearly tips over -- She pulls the stack to her. Halting it's topple.

88 EXT. SIDE GAS PUMP - NIGHT 88

NOÉ

He nears the row of pumps, slowly turns behind pump #6, and stops square behind two familiar voices at pump #7 ...

89 INT. KEG COOLER - NIGHT 89

SAGE

She pulls the dolly back to door. She struggles into the gap.

Sage gets a handle on the duffle bag box and drags it near. The stacks above lean and sway. The bottles violently rattle.

90 EXT. GAS PUMP #7 - NIGHT

90

NOÉ

He eases himself against pump #6 ...

With the weight of his body he pushes off of the gas pump and curls around pump #7, raising a pistol.

RICKY nears the backside of the trailer.

The asphalt scrapes pull Amber's lean off the driver's side. She is scrambling for a pistol in her belt on her rear side.

Noé fires four quick shots, ringing out over the blacktop.

Ricky collapses into cover. Amber hits the side of the trailer and spirals -- lifeless -- to the ground.

91 INT. KEG COOLER - NIGHT

91

SAGE

Head and shoulders still in the gap -- frozen ... listening.

92 EXT. GAS PUMP #7 - NIGHT

92

NOÉ

Also frozen -- against the near side of pump #7, looking at Amber. Hardhats fleeing, cars tearing out of the pumps. Cafe goers -- clinging to cover, others sprinting to their cars.

After a beat, he straightens up.

He diverts his attention to the truck cab. Levels the gun.

Inside the cab: no movement ... He advances -- Mara swings up from the driver's seat -- firing a shotgun. The buckshot splinters across the underside of the awning.

Noé returns rapid fire into the cab. A long beat. Shattered glass. Bullets spray out from the cafe into the pumps. Peppering the hood and front glass of the Chevy.

Immediately -- bullets from the pistol blows glass inwards.

A shot hits Will.

93 INT. KEG COOLER - NIGHT

93

SAGE

Echoes of gunfire and bursting glass pierce the keg cooler.

Sage holds still as the faint screams and commotion reverbs.

94 EXT. GAS PUMP #7 - NIGHT

94

NOÉ

Gun fixed on the cafe. Again -- no movement ...

He advances towards the shattered glass window of the cafe, scanning the gun over people as they flee. Noé angles his eyes down to Will on the floor. A machine pistol at his feet.

Noé uses his free hand to support himself on a frame as he vaults into the dining room, through the glass over a booth.

95 TNT, CAFE = NTGHT

95

The bullet has incapacitated Will to the point of near immobility. He is sprawled out on his back on the dining room floor. Surrounded by knocked over tables and chairs.

He is crabbing backwards as the nose of Noé's gun draws near, whimpers begin growing. Noé hovers over Will.

Will pushes away the chamber of Noé's gun.

WILL
It weren't our choice.

Noé floats downwards -- inches from Will's face.

Will tremble in terror, legs sprawling for distance.

NOÉ
Whose was it?

WILL
It weren't our choice.

Noé reaches with his free hand and smothers Will's face.

He cranks Will's head to the left and jams the nose of the gun into his temple and fires twice.

As this happens, thunderous bottle shatters from the kitchen.

96

EXT. GAS PUMP #7 - NIGHT

96

Ricky emerges from behind the trailer. His hat, by his feet. He sits up, collects his hat, peels himself off the pavement. He rises and walks over to Amber's stilled body. He squats. His hand nuzzles her chin. Her eyes open and empty. He steps back from his crouch and checks the bullet impact and brain matter -- smattered across the side of the trailer. Ricky peers into the truck's cab, keeping his distance ... No movement. He looks around, lingering on the cafe window. Distant sirens whoops rapidly growing louder. Ricky scuttles out of the pumps back to the P.T. Cruiser. He approaches the car and opens its door. As he stoops to get in we see a scuttle off in the distance. Two bodies converging into the form of one gnarled shadow.

CASH
(sharply)
Ricky.

97

INT./EXT. P.T. CRUISER/BACK PARKING LOT - NIGHT

97

He settles into his chair, his attention directed in front of him. In the reflection of the windshield we see Noé forcing Sage onto the dirt bike. Jutting something into her side.

The whirling sirens -- even louder. Their glow now infesting the gas station's ambience. The dirt bike tears off.

Ricky's look lingers.

98

EXT. MEMPHIS - HIGHWAY U.S. 287 - DIRT BIKE - NIGHT

98

Sage, duffle bag slung over her, clinging to Noé's neck from behind ... desperately grasping for something to ground her... Eyes fixed on the road, Noé grimaces.

The bike cuts through the purple haze of the highway.

A beat.

Sage gazes at the perpendicular horizon.

99

EXT. PADUCAH - RODEO ARENA - MORNING

99

Red rusted railing encircles a tiny podunk rodeo.

A scattering of early risers sit in the bleachers watching a couple lopers inside making use of the slow morning hours.

100

EXT. BLEACHERS - MORNING

100

Sophia and Nora sit in the oxidized bleachers as they watch Eli playing on his phone. He's locked in, full tech neck.

SOPHIA

You know if Ricky said he was gonna
call you?

Nacona sits a row above, her demeanor flummoxed. She rests a foot on the row below her, massaging a knee.

NORA

No, he never tells me what he does.

SOPHIA

(to Nora)

Why you datin' that fool?

NACONA

(to Sophia)

Same -- why -- I saw the men I did.

SOPHIA

(to Nora)

Any of these fools can make money.
You can't do no better?

NORA

He's sweet on me ... Is that ole
Burk from Estelline down there?
Can't miss that nose of his
... Weird seeing him here. He was in
Childress few weeks ago.

The women gaze at the man. He nods.

NORA (CONT'D)

(to Sophia)

Classic old timin' larper. He quit
stopping by once he got what he
wanted from her, after the force
let him go.

NACONA

Yeah.

The man looks at the young teen, THOMAS, appraising. He nods again and tightens the boy's clasp around the reins.

NORA

Well, this reunion could be your last chance to get a lil more than social security come your way ...
Ain't worth shit.

Nacona stands and walks down to the man stood by the horse.

101 EXT. FENCE LINE - MORNING

101

BURK, late sixties, broad shouldered, in a regal buttoned down, leads the horse towards Nacona. She leans on the fence.

NACONA

If your arena were any good you wouldn't be down here.

BURK

What's that?

NACONA

How well do you know the county officers?

BURK

You heard somethin' 'bout all that?

Burk shrugs.

NACONA

I just wanted to catch up with you Burk. Good to see you. How're your folks doing?

BURK

Which folks you mean? Don't talk with the men on the force no more. Keeping Thomas out of trouble keeps me busy. There's plenty of mess 'round here.

NACONA

I read today ... they flushed the prison system last week. Every inch of it swimming in nothing but corruption, even out here.

BURK

Buddy a mine told me ...

NACONA

You are keepin' up then. He tell
you 'bout a local girl runnin' off
with a bag of drugs?

Burk straightens.

BURK

Which one is this now? I see it is
not that daughter of yours. Your
grand baby?

The incorrigible mare, jerks its head.

Burk yanks the reins.

BURK (CONT'D)

I'm supposin' ...

NACONA

Yeah?

BURK

She's got that much it's the cartel-

Nacona gazes.

NACONA

No. That can't be the case, not
here.

BURK

Could be ...

Burk pulls away from the fence, turning the horse around.

A beat.

NACONA

Well, if it were my granddaughter
I'd be more concerned ...

BURK

Okay.

NACONA

If you hear anything-

BURK

I'll keep an eye out.

102 EXT. MEMPHIS - DESOLATE PROPERTY - MORNING 102

A small unkempt property. A black Ford Ranger parked next to a small house. Sage is smoking a cigarette, leaning against a chain-link fence, her sunken hollow eyes watching the rising sun. Along the fence line, a small work shed, its door open.

103 INT. WORK SHED - MORNING 103

Sage enters the shed. Behind a work bench, Noé sits rifling through a tool box, his free hand - typing on the phone.

NOÉ
Bus stops a ten minute hike.

SAGE
That'll be good news tomorrow ...

NOÉ
You on a bender?

Noé swivels around and lifts the duffle bag out from his lap, pressing it against the work bench in front of Sage.

SAGE
You ain't kill me yet. I'll be gone
by mornin'--

Noé looks up from the bag.

NOÉ
You think they'll blink twice at
the sight of your dead whore
carcass? Do you think a single damn
soul will care?

Sage looks at Noé's forearm under the bag.

A bandaged wound.

SAGE
You gotta bed?

104 INT. NOE'S HOME - MORNING 104

Sage enters the house: a small kitchen with overhead cabinets and a sofa and television to her left. Noé follows, hurls the bag into the near cabinet, watches her as she walks down a hallway to a set of doors. The door in front of her open.

She stops at the door to her right.

105 INT. GUEST BEDROOM - MORNING 105

Sage enters a room with a wired bed frame, a thin mattress with a single bed sheet and a Mexican rose quilt.

She slides a single night stand with a lamp in front of the door. The room is otherwise empty.

She locks the door, sits on the bed, and takes off her shoes.

Cicadas clicking rattles against the sheer covered window.

106 INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT 106

The house is dark. The clicking is gone.

Sage lying, clothed, on the bed.

After a beat she grimaces. Her eyes open.

SAGE
Oh what the hell--

She sits up and moves the side table from the door.

107 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 107

The bedroom door cracks open. The door to her right closed.

Sage slips through shoeless and inches into the kitchen. She reaches for a cabinet handle over the fridge -- nothing. She pulls another cabinet open, then another, then another --

-- Mountains of pill bags -- more than she could ever run off with -- front and center -- the duffle bag.

A long beat.

From somewhere -- the lull of rubber turning over gravel. The rolling is hard to read, a car on the road, maybe further.

The sound has brought Sage's look up. She is frozen ... Listening ... The rubber churning rubber stalls out a couple feet from the front door. Two doors thwap open ... Footsteps.

Sage releases hold of the handle, leaving the cabinets open.

We hear shuffling around the outside of the kitchen now.

She goes to the window by the sink, looks out, but hesitates.

She ducks below the frame, raises her ear above the lip and listens. Sage's gaze darts around the room. She returns into the kitchen.

Hissing ... A puncture. She follows the sound -- against the window by the fridge -- Another puncture -- the Ford wobbles.

She rises and turns to the front door, pulls a drawer next to her open. Empty. Another drawer. A t-shaped corkscrew.

Sage steps over to the door, applies her weight against the wall. She looks to the door handle. It's locked ...

Outside: the exhausted depression of wooden planks. A beat.

We gradually become aware of two shadows emerging obstructing the single overhead porch light. The knob violently rattles.

She vaults to support the flimsy door, grasping for the knob.

The door explodes open. Cash recovering from a breach kick.

Sage is thrown to the floor, the corkscrew skittering into the middle of the room. Cash, pistol raised, clears the room. Ricky follows behind, eyes locked on Sage ...

Ricky straddles over her as she clammers for the cork screw. Blows rain down from above, incapacitating her resistance.

He gets into full mount -- cinches her neck into a vice grip, starts choking her and slams her head into the wooden floor.

RICKY

Shh-Shh-Sh-It's okay ... It's okay.

Sage panicking -- rageful screams -- Her feet flailing.

RICKY (CONT'D)

You're okay--

Cash gawks at the open kitchen cabinets, he utters sharply:

CASH

Ricky!

Ricky ceases his assault, keeping his strange hold around her neck, he pulls Sage to her feet.

The house stills ...

Ricky stares at Cash who pops on the overhead kitchen lamp as they stare into the abyss of the cabinets. A beat.

-- Buckshot sprays through the kitchen and living room. --

The thud of a body.

Ricky breaks his grasp, fracturing the chain around Sage's neck, as he turns and dives out the front door.

Sage recoils free. She winces, clasping her throat.

She hits the floor gasping for air.

It is all strange ...

Sage looks at the wooden floor: at the foot of the kitchen table -- Cash writhing in agony, reaches into his belt line.

The shotgun blast roars across the room again and for an instant turns the room orange.

The chewed-up kitchen cabinets disintegrate into pieces.

The door wobbles back against the jamb and creakily bounces.

Sage has already risen from her prone, now on elbows and knees and is sprawling towards the front door.

108 FROM OUTSIDE THE DOOR

108

Sage crawls to the edge of the couch throwing herself through the door as orange muzzle flash strobes the room.

Her body lands on the wooden deck of the front porch.

109 EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

109

Sage climbs to her feet and straightens.

She is at the steps of the porch, standing in the pool of lamp glow from a lone telephone pole.

She plunges down the steps towards the P.T. Cruiser as a pistol thumps and a shot chews the wooden porch column.

110 EXT. FRONT YARD/DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

110

Sage hurries across the yard.

The commotion inside the house has stilled ...

A glance to one side: Ricky, sprawling to cover by the hood of the P.T. Cruiser, his shoulder shredded with buckshot.

Sage slows approaching cover around the hatchback of the car.

She risks a look back towards the house.

Clusters of struggling grunts echo from inside the house.

Multiple gunshots illuminate the interior.

Sage sags.

She looks back across the driveway to the chain-link opening.

Sage quickly jogs towards the mouth of the gravel drive.

111 EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

111

She is at a sprint when we hear a Ruger tock, accompanied by a muzzle flash from the hood of the P.T. Cruiser, and the gravel kicks up behind her.

Sage rounds the dumpster at the driveway.

She stops and covers.

112 EXT. DRIVEWAY/UNPAVED ROAD - NIGHT

112

Close on Sage panting.

She takes stock, readies herself, painfully feeling at her neck where Ricky's hands were clasped, She gutturally sighs.

She listens ...

No noise ...

Wide: dark, desolate dirt road, peppered with untended homes.
Sage, a lone figure resting at a dumpster.

She spins back and runs a short distance and rounds another dumpster and stops to rest.

113 EXT. UNPAVED ROAD - DUMPSTER - NIGHT

113

She waits for her breath to slow.

She swings out to look back towards the street.

More echoes of struggling and pistol fire from the house.

She waits, at the ready for whatever might emerge from the driveway, a short run away.

Long beat. Stillness.

A panicky thought brings her look swinging back around behind her: a contiguous pulsating light and audio transmission.

An open garage connected to a modest home.

Two homes: Sage doesn't know where to look, which way to go.

Quiet hesitation ...

Now, a sound: shouting.

An overhead light from the garage pops on.

A figure obscured by foliage shuffling inside.

Sage lowers her head, strides out and around the row of brush up towards the neighbor's gravel drive.

She approaches, offering the woman her lowered open palms.

114 INT./EXT. NEIGHBOR'S GARAGE/DRIVEWAY - NIGHT 114

A small den for entertainment amongst a washer and dryer set.

Sage nears the mouth of the garage.

The middle aged woman in lounge clothes gapes at her, frightened, wielding a double barreled pump action shotgun.

SAGE

Listen now, don't kill me. I need
you to call the police-

The back garage wall cracks ...

A round seems to have caught a neon sign above the woman's head: her roar followed by the chug of her shotgun.

Sage, quicker to react, has already ducked below the firing line, diving into the interior of the garage, frantically groping behind the television for cover.

Three rounds whizz into the garage, peppering the drywall --

Another blind chug.

The gunfire stops.

Sage raises her head enough to see Ricky groaning, crawling on his hind end. The Ruger at his feet.

A tremendous pressured gurgle comes out of the woman laying in the middle of her garage, blood pooling out of her.

Sage rises to get a better look at Ricky.

RICKY
Don't you fuckin' grab that.

His agony turns into whimpers as Sage swoops to grab the gun.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Put that down.

He looks at her.

Sage raises the gun and fires two rounds into Ricky's chest.

He collapses into gravel, sucking for air. Sage drops the gun and scuttles over, going right to digging in his pockets.

Empty. No keys.

She turns and looks at the woman, mouth agape -- still -- covered in blood and pale.

A beat. Sage stares.

She backpedals and runs.

115 EXT. NOE'S HOME - NIGHT

115

She returns to the dumpster at the mouth of the drive.

Silence ...

Cash, behind the P.T. Cruiser, pelts the front door of the house with two rounds. He dashes to the truck to get closer.

Sage breaks for the P.T. Cruiser and sprawls on her knees to its opened driver's door. No key in the ignition.

She fumbles around the floorboard and the cupholder. Nothing.

She rises from the nook in the door jam and looks through the front windshield. Along the fence line next to the shed -- Noe's parked dirt bike.

Gunshot screams into the kitchen side window from the truck parked on the side of the house.

Noé, weakly returns pistol rounds from within.

Sage kneels up into the front seat of the car.

Another burst of rounds from outside --

Noé walks out onto the porch -- pistol drawn, circling the bed of the truck, Cash fires from the hood.

Sage pauses, looks at the open front door ... Runs for it --

Noé struggles reloading his pistol from the truck bed.

Cash fires twice from the hood at Noé.

116 INT. NOE'S HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

116

Sage's grip now on top of the shredded duffle bag in the overhead cabinet, its interior contents remaining intact.

She pulls it out, throws the strap over her shoulder.

She cranes her neck out of the front door --

Noé fires towards her, hitting the top of the door frame.

Sage ducks for cover back inside.

Cash shoots at Noé, forcing him back into cover.

117 EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

117

Noé fires at Cash, he skirts around the truck bed and sprints into cover against the hatchback of the P.T. Cruiser.

Sage looks out at the bike, looks at the two vehicles.

She steadies herself against the doorframe.

Heavy breathing fills the silence ...

Footsteps outside.

Hollow boot clicks traverse across the yard without hurry.

They draw towards the pickup.

Noé is rounding towards the right corner of the bed.

Approaching the pickup, shotgun unsteady at the tires.

His steps slow ...

Slowing to a halt, he sees:

Blood pooling underneath the far side of the truck bed.

Cash rises and fires --

Sage bursts out from inside and sprints to the dirt bike.

Noé fires, back-peddling --

Buckshot peppers the truck, shattering glass and body alike.

Noé retreats behind the driver's door of the P.T. Cruiser.

She mounts the bike, tightens her grip on its clutch and kick starts it -- Nothing.

Noé, inside the front door frame.

Cash advances down around the bed of the truck.

Cash fires twice -- pistol shot claws up the P.T. Cruiser's driver side door and its hood.

Sage, looking back behind, frantically kick starts the bike again -- this time rolling over. Its engine shrills alive.

Noé crouches up from his squat to get a better look at Sage.

Pistol fire shatters windshield, twice at her, one hits the work shed, the other, kicks up ground in front of the bike.

Cash unloads his clip into the front of the P.T. Cruiser.

Noé covers behind the door and fires a single shot at Cash.

Cash crosses back behind the truck into cover.

Noé falls behind the P.T. Cruiser's hatchback. Dry heaving.

Noé's eyes follow the sounds of rubber tearing through dirt.

He looks out into the night ... Nothing to see ...

118

EXT. ESTELLINE - PASTURE - NIGHT

118

Minutes later. Sage tracks up the repose of a small hillside, the dirt bike kicking back dirt.

She wobbles down the berm.

At the top of the mound, the bike hits a barbed wire fence, the impact jerking it violently as the throttle catches.

The front tire punctures, a siphon of air hissing out.

Sage battles to regain control of the bike.

The tire loses traction, wire whirling around its axle.

The bike crashes, catapulting Sage over the handlebars.

She lays face down in the dirt yards away from the bike. The bag -- more yards out in front of her.

A twisted contortion of wire claws into her lower body.

She digs herself out of the dirt, supporting herself on her elbows, enough to rip out the wire from the skin of her legs.

Sage limps, grabs the bag, wading into the pasture's depths.

She turns and looks. A dull dinging bell sound grows ...

A herd of cows are approaching from the void. Charolais ready for slaughter, they are grazing and walking unsteadily.

As they approach, they gape at Sage, covered with blood.

Five late night roamers stare at her ...

The two parties exchange stares at length. Sage inches forward, rubs the snout of the fat one in the center.

The herd remains indifferent and continues on their grazing.

Sage watches them disappear ...

MINUTES LATER

Sage walking further into the endless pasture. The babbles of a brook nearby. Wind stirs the brush surrounding her.

She is not yet near the source ...

She looks down:

Mounds of Yucca block her walking path, the groupings of three to five each smatter the untilled pasture.

She nears one of the Yucca groupings. Examines a burrow.

She drops the bag down next to the hole.

A few paces away, she grabs a dead Yucca.

On her good knee, she kneels, claws out dry soil, widening the hole. She slides the bag over and packs it into the burrow and covers it with the dead Yucca.

Sage huffs, recovering from the strain of the work. She eases herself up to her feet and traces the barbed wire.

She digs at her knee. She inspects the wounds on her thigh, an inch deep. Blood laps weakly out. Something stops her.

She falls to her hip.

119 EXT. SMALL BROOK - NIGHT

119

There is the porch glow of a bunk house at the end of land.

In front of her ... a small waist high brook.

Sage staggers in, bringing water to her wounds.

She passes through to the other shore.

120 EXT. PASTURE - DAWN

120

Cicadas sing.

A saddled horse trots in rhythm with booted spur clicks of a man. Sage cradled on roots leading to the trunk of an acacia.

A cowboy beams down at her, twirling the metal chained lead of the horse in spirals.

Sage struggling to support herself against the trunk. Back to the cowboy, WYATT BLACK, mid-fifties, skeletal frame, bone dry skin, approaches, the spur rings fall silent as he slows.

His squint fades into a gaze. He is looking quizzically down.

The silence of the morning fills with robin and raven chirps.

Sage's hand raises up to her face, catching a length of barbed wire. Her pants are gnarled open, exposing her bloody thighs and shins. Her look up is glazed.

Wyatt stares. Sage pulls at the wire.

WYATT
Well, howdy sunshine.

121 INT. MEMPHIS - WORK SHED - DAY

121

Noé, standing in the doorway, looking out at his bullet torn truck. The exterior of the home in worse condition.

He goes inside, pulls out a gallon-sized polyethylene tub labeled "hydrofluoric" from a black trash bag and grabs a mini chainsaw and a hacksaw from the table.

122 INT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 122

Noé opens the neighbor's garage door into her living room.

Vertiginous black smoke hovers in the space ...

He walks over towards a hearth, setting down his bag and tool, bends down reaching over and grabs a poker.

As he tends to the flames, poking and digging at something oblong and strange amongst the logs ...

He saunters back from the fire, he grabs the mini chainsaw and starts it, he lowers it and hacks away at something -- Blood shoots upwards splattering across the ceiling ...

He takes a moment to look at his work ...

We go wide to reveal the space. A ramshackle abode, partially covered in plastic tarps, a dismembered torso at his feet.

He tosses what's left of it into the fire.

123 EXT. BACKYARD - DAY 123

Water funnels down out of a hose cleansing the bloodied tools. Noé drops the hose, wading shoulder deep into her pool, black smoke billows from her open backdoor and windows.

124 INT. NOE'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY 124

He steps through his front door, walking towards the kitchen, his cabinet pill stash destroyed in a pulverized blue form smattered across the kitchen. He grabs a tall cylindrical glass out of the cabinet, and plops it on the kitchen table.

He opens the only closed untouched cabinet in the kitchen and grabs a bottle of wine, scoops down to the corkscrew on the floor and penetrates the shell of the cork spiraling it inwards as he walks over and sits at the table ...

The cork pops out, he lets it fall to the floor.

He pours a tall glass of wine.

125 INT. PADUCAH - COTTLE COUNTY COURTHOUSE - OFFICE - DAY 125

Nacona is hunched over, cleaning an office desk. She hollers:

NACONA
Heard from those lawyers yet?

A female voice from the office across the hall:

LOIS

Nacona, I tried callin' back, their
office was closed. Those folks
ain't gonna do nothing pro bono for
your estate.

Another janitor, LOIS, mid-sixties, gaudy jewelry and beehive
hair, exits the nearby office, walks past the cleaning cart,
and appears at the doorway.

LOIS (CONT'D)

That attorney you liked had moved
out to Dallas. How 'bout if I
scrape together some money to get
you a storage unit?

NACONA

No. Hell no.

She holds up the picture of the judge.

NACONA (CONT'D)

Quite the savant.

Lois walks into the office to get a closer look.

LOIS

That preacher called about you. You
don't want to talk to him?

NACONA

I'm gonna pass 'fore I dip m'toe in
those waters.

LOIS

He's stoppin' out on by your
trailer here when we get off, I
wanted y'all to meet.

Nacona is putting things in their place on the desk.

She turns to Lois.

NACONA

Well, that's forward of you. Heaven
only knows that I'm beyond
salvation. Suppose it's polite that
he's willing to stick around ...

A beat.

NACONA (CONT'D)
 Can I get you to go over to
 Laramie's and get me a twenny pack
 a reds? I can't make that walk.

LOIS
 Sure, Nacona.

NACONA
 I'll pay you double for the trip.
 I'd pay you now but I'm waitin' for
 my social to come through. Should
 be enough.

Lois pushes the cleaning cart past the doorway.

LOIS
 Wanna wait for me so I can take ya?

NACONA
 No I cain't. I gotta scuttle on
 over home to catch my shows, I'll
 make that walk.

Nacona trails her out into the hallway.

NACONA (CONT'D)
 What is that Newman quote again?
 The one to Redford?

LOIS
 Boy, I got vision, n'the rest of
 the world wears bifocals.

NACONA
 I could stare into that man's
 dreamy blue eyes for eternity.
 Couple inches from my face ...
 Wouldn't need glasses for that ...

A 1990 Rolls Royce Silver Spurs peters to the curb in front
 of the open court house doors. Nacona's eyes meet the
 Father's beaming gaze.

NACONA (CONT'D)
 Now, what the hell?

Nacona sits next to the Father, they drive in silence. His
 Masonic pinky ring clanking against the steering wheel.

127 INT./EXT. LOCKHART TRAILER - FRONT PORCH - DAY 127

The car parked in the drive. Nacona steps onto the porch, the Father a few steps behind, toupee bobbling with each step.

FATHER

Ma'am?

They're both at the front door. Nacona fits the key into the hole, turns the key and then the door knob.

NACONA

It's kind to stop by but get the hell-

Nacona whips open the door to expose Nora laying wallered in the carpet, foaming at the mouth.

NACONA (CONT'D)

What in the goddamn hell.

NORA

I think them pills been spiked.

NACONA

How many of them did you swallow?

NORA

I just took one of 'em, Mama.

NACONA

Couldn't you just smoked some dope instead?

NORA

We didn't have no good dope here.

Nacona pulls a water pot off the porch and dumps it on Nora.

FATHER

Looks bad. You want me to take her up to the hospital in Childress?

Nacona slams the watering pot onto the table.

NACONA

(to Father)

Get the hell off my damn porch.

128 INT. ESTELLINE - BUNKHOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY 128

Sage, in bed, wakes to the dry scraping of the door jam.

VOICE

Mornin' ...thought you were a
corpse out in the pasture.

Sage hazily gazes at Wyatt Black's hands, holding a hat.

Sage shifts against the headboard. Checks under the blanket.

Wyatt smirks at her from the doorway.

WYATT

Easy now. Your pants are gettin'
patched up, what's left of 'em.

SAGE

All right, seen something you like?

Wyatt is baffled.

WYATT

Barb wire got up in the crotch of
your jeans. Tore off a pant leg.

He shakes his head, dazed.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Ain't touch you otherwise.

SAGE

You saved me, Rooster Cogburn.

WYATT

That's not what I'd call it.

SAGE

What would you call it?

WYATT

Junkie inna K-hole. Indigent
trailer trash, lost out to pasture.

SAGE

Ketamine?

WYATT

K2. Carfentanil. Whatever you took?

SAGE

I don't touch that shit.

WYATT

Fentanyl.

SAGE

I didn't take nothing. I was just
out in the pasture.

WYATT

In cow shit ...

SAGE

In cow shit.

WYATT

You took part of the fence with
you.

SAGE

Rest of it's still out there --

WYATT

You ain't seein' it.

Wyatt shifts his weight against the side table.

WYATT (CONT'D)

...Where do you live?

SAGE

No where.

WYATT

How's that?

SAGE

I drift along.

WYATT

You sell yourself, your body?

SAGE

Depends ... they got that thousand
yard gaze. Sure.

WYATT

You think you control them?

SAGE

Yes.

WYATT

That ain't wise of you --

SAGE

I don't got no wisdom.

WYATT

You can do all that on the phone.

SAGE

Why would I use a phone?

WYATT

Ain't you Nora's girl?

SAGE

No. She's my aunt ...

WYATT

She's worked for me.

SAGE

Well, I ain't aparta your MLM.

Wyatt wrings his hat. A beat.

WYATT

Listen. You tell me if you stole
from Will. Your life depends on me
gettin' what's mine.

SAGE

Yeah. I stole it. Sold it off to a
local dealer. Probably a couple
states over by now.

Wyatt's grip on the hat releases. A beat.

WYATT

You know how this synthetic shit
passes through the state?

Sage glares at him. A beat.

SAGE

Why would how make a difference?

WYATT

Folks want the thing, it comes...

Another beat.

SAGE

Shovelin' enough shit down their
throats'll change their diet.

WYATT

Say it how you want to, we're all
just playin' our part ...M'name's
Wyatt Black.

Wyatt nods politely.

Sage doesn't oblige.

WYATT (CONT'D)

As far as whatever was chasing you goes, you're across the river now. You can stay here another day but I'm havin' you watched.

SAGE

If I even stole your drugs why in the hell would I be on your front doorsteps?

WYATT

You got no clue what you're in the middle of. You can't hardly walk. Even if I gave you the freedom to leave now you'd be hunted by someone else after that shit ... I'm a sensitive fella. It's part and parcel to my natural state. Sensation ... Something that people've lost touch of in today's age. Blind doglike reactive will's gonna be the end of us ... You're lucky that Mexican ain't touch you.

SAGE

Yeah, well, rather it be a murderer than some hick.

129

INT. PADUCAH - SOPHIA'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

129

Nacona and Nora sit diagonally across from one another at Sophia's dinner table. Sophie comes into the room with somebody's toddler on her hip and a cup of coffee in her other hand. She sits and slides the cup across to Nacona.

Nacona smirks.

NACONA

Thank you little missy. I needed this fix.

Sophie frees the kiddo in her lap. He runs off.

SOPHIA

Boutta get these kids burgers. What'd you wanna see me for?

NACONA
Has Cash called you yet?

SOPHIA
No he hasn't ...

NACONA
(to Nora)
Ricky?

NORA
Him neither ...

NACONA
(to Sophia)
Can you look after Nora?

SOPHIA
Well, I don't know. Need me to
babysit a forty-year-old?

NACONA
She's more like a teenager.

SOPHIA
(chuckling)
Did she shit the bed again?

NACONA
It's that Shake n' bake horse shit.

NORA
Momma, I can look after myself--

NACONA
Wrong. Nora, We're gettin' you
medication.

NORA
Prescriptions don't work in no way.

NACONA
I wish I could put up with this but
I got financial matters to address
with Ricky gone.

A beat.

SOPHIA
They ain't gone nowhere ...

Nacona looks at her.

After a beat:

NACONA

My daddy was a farmer. Land was out
there north of Chalk.

Nora shakes her head, shrugs.

NACONA (CONT'D)

We harvested different crops
dependin' on the year, well what we
could afford ...

Nora rolls her eyes.

NACONA (CONT'D)

And he wound up settlin' on cotton.
So here it's nineteen-eighty-two and
daddy got me and a single harvester
workin eighty five acres ... A
ranching conglomerate came and
lobbied with the state,
gerrymandered most of the
surroundin' land away from the
farmers. We couldn't operate above
cost with how much we gave up. They
paid us some ... There was seventy
farmers in Paducah then, think
there's four now. The extra free
time with his new job at the
gasoline plant led to him picking
up other hobbies ... So then we got
the trailer ...

She takes a sip of coffee, leaving room for Sophia to
interject if inclined.

She does not.

NACONA (CONT'D)

Holler when Cash calls, just ask
him 'bout Ricky and Sage.

Nacona sets down her finished cup of coffee.

Another beat.

NACONA (CONT'D)

Well, dry-land cotton farmin'
during drought season wasn't the
brightest idea to begin with ...

NACONA (CONT'D)

Couldn't get an abatement for the
boll weevil ...

Another beat. Nora stares at Nacona.

NORA
Why you cryin' about your pappy?

NACONA
Ain't we talkin' parasites?

130 EXT. ESTELLINE - PASTURE - AFTERNOON

130

Late Day. Wyatt walks along the outer edge of the pasture.

He grabs a hold of the tree trunk to hoist himself onto the horizontal sloping trunk of the adjacent acacia.

He stands atop it, scanning the fence line on the horizon.

He climbs down and crosses the pasture, past the cubby hole, heading towards the fence line.

When he nears the gap in the fence he looks closer: shredded Yucca and the remnants of Noé's bike.

131 EXT. CHILDRESS - T.L. ROACH PENITENTIARY - DUSK

131

Miguel smokes outside of an exit door in the parking lot.

Wyatt heads towards Miguel. Miguel looks at him sideways.

132 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

132

Wyatt appears around the corner.

Miguel follows silently behind him.

He stops and opens a door to his right.

After a few steps Wyatt stops, frowning, he turns.

MIGUEL
This is the one. Let's step right
in here.

133 INT. MIGUEL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

133

Miguel sits into a chair behind a desk sat across from where Wyatt sits against the wall.

WYATT

Know you don't want me comin' here.
Will's dead. We're at the end of
our rope.

MIGUEL

Will's dead.

WYATT

Shooting over at the Howdy Doody's.
Half a million in pills stolen.
Police Report said Noé was the
gunman. All over some girl.

MIGUEL

Half a million.

WYATT

I know where the girl is.

MIGUEL

You wouldn't be here if you knew
where the drugs were.

WYATT

We could find it if you brought in
some help. Burk could use a hand.

MIGUEL

You would have told Burk, if you
knew.

WYATT

How's that?

MIGUEL

This doesn't make any difference to
me.

WYATT

Why's that?

MIGUEL

The cartel has been flushed out,
I'm being sent to Laredo.

Wyatt takes his hat off, wipes his mouth.

WYATT

You don't know what that ranch land
means for us. Two days' time 'nd we
would find it.

MIGUEL

You're deluded to think that its yours. And I do know what it means to you, Wyatt. You should admit you're shit cattle traders. Be easier to drop your charade.

WYATT

If you believe that.

A beat.

MIGUEL

No. I don't believe at all. If all this came about from the one thing, would it not be the case that it's all leading back to itself?

Another beat.

WYATT

Do you think indifference is gonna get it back?

MIGUEL

Well, I already have all I need.

Wyatt swallows chaw. Miguel looks at him equably.

Wyatt holds his look.

WYATT

... Miguel, you just don't make no sense.

The door opens. Wyatt looks at the door. Noé looks at Wyatt.

Wyatt looks at Noé, his eyes wide open.

The flat pop of his pistol.

Miguel sits frozen in his chair, watching Noé. Noé looks back, enters the office, and shuts the door.

He sits down in the chair next to Wyatt's body and looks at Miguel without speaking.

After a beat:

NOÉ

... Well.

MIGUEL

Yes?

Another beat.

NOÉ
He pushing for you?

MIGUEL
Not at this point.

Noé doesn't answer. Miguel gives him a beat, and then:

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
... I need you to leave now.

NOÉ
Why's he here?

MIGUEL
You know why he's here. Was.

A beat.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
... You need to leave right now.

NOÉ
I just want to talk to you--

MIGUEL
I don't think you do. Do you know
who you need to talk to?

NOÉ
Why would I care to talk to someone
else?

MIGUEL
Do you know who caused all this?
Give him the gun ...

No answer. Noé cocks his head, wiping the muzzle and grip of the pistol. He adjusts Wyatt's fingers, clasping them around the gun. Borrowing Wyatt's pistol from his waistband.

On the wall where Wyatt's head rests, blood sinking down.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
... I know where you can go.

NOÉ
Yeah? Where's that?

MIGUEL

That old ranch behind Jonah Creek.
But that's not going to help you.
You know what's going to help you?

NOÉ

Yeah. I know who to speak with.

MIGUEL

All right--

NOÉ

You know she won't be there.

MIGUEL

It doesn't make any difference
where she is ...

NOÉ

Why won't you just trust me?

A beat.

MIGUEL

You don't know... This machine has
no mercy for you.

NOÉ

I don't know ...

MIGUEL

I lost myself in it too. I've had
to make sacrifices for Camila. To
protect what's mine. I won't tell
you you can save yourself because
you can't. That's the closet thing
to a partnership you'll get from
me.

A beat.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

He came here looking for a hand out
and the world gave him his answer.

NOÉ

It comes for all of us in different
forms. Sure. Sometimes its the pure
light others a muzzle flash, this
time it happened to be mine. Keep
an eye out for me.

Noé stands and leaves. Miguel scans Wyatt's body.

134 EXT. PADUCAH - LOCKHART TRAILER - BACK PORCH - MORNING 134

Nacona sits at her spot on the back porch, with an empty cigarette box and her hair up in a bun. She's squinting at her phone screen but is now peering over the screen up at Lois, who is sat across from her.

NACONA

Well, good mornin' to you.

Lois nods.

LOIS

I went to the constable, about Sage. Officers up in Amarillo 'n Memphis lookin' for her.

NACONA

That's a hot. Spread hundred fifty miles apart. To find her.

LOIS

Well ...

NACONA

Now, Lois, did you think to ask them about Ricky?

LOIS

Yes. I asked about him too.

NACONA

Okay.

LOIS

You wanna hear this now?

NACONA

No, don't wanna hear nothin'. I imagine he's in jail. And for what it's worth he could be dead.

LOIS

Why's that, Nacona?

NACONA

Always a matter of time for men like him.

LOIS

I see.

NACONA

Jesus, Lois, this ain't real. Tell me how I got so lucky. I ain't ask for this ...What else is comin'?

She unties her bun.

NACONA (CONT'D)

... Around ten years ago her mother passed. She just kept spiralin' down around this empty - never ending cycle of strife. Right into the void. I couldn't tell you where she got it from. Her daddy wasn't around damn near long enough for her to get it from him. She got used to burnin' the candle at both ends ...

She clings to her phone. Sets it back down.

NACONA (CONT'D)

... Perpetually shooting herself in the foot, not able to see she was holdin' the gun. She couldn't build up the courage to ask for help. Then she took her life.

She looks over at Lois who returns a look of feigned dismay and nods.

Nacona picks up her phone again.

NACONA (CONT'D)

... That's what it took for me to notice. Couldn't pay enough to help her. Hollerin' at her didn't do no good.

Lois swallows a retort.

Nacona stares at her for a long beat, dead still.

NACONA (CONT'D)

... Just like that. Too afraid to speak her mind.

She goes back to her phone.

NACONA (CONT'D)

... Ain't no other way this would've turned out.

135

EXT. ESTELLINE - RANCH - MORNING

135

Oats pour down from above, ricochetting into a rusted trough.

Two mares dig in.

Sage, covered in a ragged coat is standing across the fence from a green Thomas along the coral outside the bunkhouse.

Her jeans, tattered, beatnik-esque.

Her new loaner boots -- oversized.

Burk's boy, Thomas, who resembles an ailing foal, is vaping.

He takes a long hit, staring at Sage.

He finally exhales vapor and picks at his face.

THOMAS

Illuminate this for me ... You know what keeps these mares hooked on the ranch?

SAGE

Oats. Barbed wire.

THOMAS

Barbed wire. What if that don't hold em' inside?

SAGE

They run out the fence.

THOMAS

And I chase after 'em. Can you ride a horse?

SAGE

I can't.

THOMAS

Five miles of line to ride. If there's a break - that's more I gotta fix. Alone. And they left me here without an auger. You gone look after these ones for me?

SAGE

I could ...

THOMAS

If it weren't barbed wire that cut you to hell what was it?

SAGE

Couldn't say. I can walk that fence line for you.

THOMAS

You can use a post digger?

SAGE

I can.

THOMAS

You can't use no post digger.

SAGE

If you say so.

THOMAS

You a thot?

SAGE

I'm a local.

THOMAS

BFE?

SAGE

Yep.

THOMAS

Which town?

SAGE

Paducah. Momma grew up in Knox City. We had an alpaca once. Just goats now.

THOMAS

Shit.

He inhales another hit from his vape.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Start out pasture side, I'll catch up. Ain't no line to walk, just a circle.

Sage stumbles up from her knees out of the Yucca patch, duffle bag in hand.

137

EXT. MEMPHIS - RAIL YARD ENCAMPMENT - MID DAY

137

A stupored man sits on his phone in squalor along a fence line as rail cars shuffle on the tracks.

Sage is walking up in her beatnik jeans & jacket.

SAGE

Lemme use that.

Her voice pulls the man's neck up from it's stupor.

The man holds out his phone.

MAN

Two hundred bucks.

SAGE

You think that's about what comes out to an ounce of fetty?

MAN

(puzzled)

... Well shit, I can do that.

138

EXT. RAIL YARD - EXCHANGE - MID DAY

138

Sage is walking along the rail as a train comes through the yard, one hand holding the phone as she dials, the other resting on the duffle bag across her mid-section.

The man is tripping over himself, stumbling behind:

MAN

(hollers)

She ain't gonna pick up.

SAGE

Yes she will. Watch this.

MAN

Hey, you got any more of this?

SAGE

I don't got no more and don't you keep followin' me over my phone.

MAN

Technological addiction ... I don't want that shit--

The man stops and trails off into the aether.

NORA

Hellur?

SAGE

Hey Nora ...

NORA

Where the hell's Ricky?

SAGE

I dunno, he ain't called you?

NORA

He went lookin' for you. Whole damn
panhandle is after-

SAGE

Why they lookin' for me?

NORA

Why the hell you think? Are ya
lost? Where are you?

SAGE

I couldn't tell you nothin'.

NORA

Couldn't tell me nothin'?

SAGE

Listen, I'm stoppin' off in Fort
Worth, cause I'm gonna find
somebody with cash trade off this
bag for. Riddle that to Nacona,
tell her take me out the will.

NORA

Sage, that's the dumbest shit you
could say.

SAGE

No. Not how I see it. I'll sell the
drugs for a bunch a money, won't no
one find me. Shit I'll have enough
for a car. Rent a lil condo in
Florida.

NORA

Florida? How in the hell you
gettin' to Fort Worth?

SAGE

I gotta train.

NORA
You gotta train?

SAGE
It ain't mine but I'mma ride it ...

139 EXT. ESTELLINE - STABLE - NIGHT

139

A TROUGH

Noé's boot sinks into the feed slop.

Wider: Noé turns and steps down off the pen, out of the trough, into the fenced in holding, carrying Wyatt's pistol.

A ramshackle stable, fighting the wind. Noé's still. Nothing but the clicks of cricket and chatter coming from within.

He floats quietly to the one cracked door twenty feet away.

140 INT. STABLE - NIGHT

140

He enters.

Thomas, his back turned, mounts a saddle to the wall. Burk stands in front of him. On seeing the pistol Thomas drops the saddle and reaches for his gun.

Pa-pop - the pistol double taps Thomas into the stable wall. The horse rears but Burk pressures its halter. His pistol on his side.

Burk steadies the horse and turns, very slowly, as if to advertise that he is not a threat.

Noé ignores the nervousness of the horse and approaches Burk.

After a beat.

BURK
Why the boy?

A long beat.

NOÉ
... Him?

BURK
Yes.

NOÉ
I missed.

Noé looks at Thomas's body.

BURK
Miguel gave us everything we had.

NOÉ
He gave you ...everything. Thought
I was working alone.

He still has not moved.

BURK
That's nonsense. You can't do
nothin' alone.

NOÉ
I see.

A beat.

NOÉ (CONT'D)
... Aren't you scared of me?

Noé looks at Burk.

BURK
I see clear through you.

Burk stares at him for a beat. Smirks.

141 INT./EXT. PADUCAH - SOPHIA'S HOME - BACKYARD - PORCH - DAY

Two kiddos run around a crickety play set, hootin' n'
hollerin' as they wrestle with one another.

NORA
Ricky always was lousy enough to
leave me in the dark. We got some
loser men.

Nora and Sophia scroll on their phones while sitting on a
couch on the back porch watching the kids play.

SOPHIA
Hasn't even been three days since
they left.

NORA
Three days 'n they coulda got all
the pills and sold 'em.

NORA (CONT'D)

And we're just here. Wastin' our time watchin' the children of field workers that can't hardly earn fifteen grand a year. Four hundred and fifty thousand dollars worth of damn pills. Don't even make sense.

A beat.

NORA (CONT'D)

Would you give me that phone a yours? Nacona ain't gonna pickup if she sees me callin'.

SOPHIA

No, Nora.

Nora's hands shoot out for Sophia's phone.

Their arms flail, crashing against the window behind them.

NORA

Give it bitch.

142

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

142

Inside the living room, Eli is asleep on a blanket pallet on the floor, the ricochet of the sound knocks him awake to the sight of a crack pipe underneath the couch.

ELI

What the hell?

A beat.

ELI (CONT'D)

What is this?

143

EXT. BACK PORCH - DAY

143

The struggle has stopped outside.

Nora has the phone in her hand, the children in the yard are seen wrestling in the window's reflection.

A small welt above Sophia's brow grows.

SOPHIA

You got it Nora.

Nora stands up from the couch.

NORA
I didn't see no other way.

SOPHIA
Just give it back later.

NORA
Well yeah of course, whatever.

SOPHIA
Well I need a smoke. Look here.
Just give me a minute and I'll be
back with ice for that.

As Nora enters the house, Eli comes out in his pajamas.

His hair is a mess, frizzin' via electro-static cling.

ELI
Momma, what is this?

Eli brings the crack pipe up to his face.

SOPHIA
What the shit. You don't need to
know what this is. Give that thing
here. Where in the hell did you
find that baby?

ELI
Why cain't I have it?

He gives it up.

SOPHIA
That shit ain't yours, Eli. Don't
ask me why ...Oh lord have mercy.
I've got to get you out of here. I
can't stand to see you livin' like
this no longer.

ELI
Well, Where is there to go? Momma,
where is Daddy? I miss him.

144 INT./EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY

144

Nora is smoking in a foldable chair on the front porch alone.

After a short wait, the phone picks up. A filtered:

NACONA
Soph, is that you?

NORA

Momma, I gotta bad feelin' about
Ricky --

NACONA

Now why's that? Why would you feel
bad? Well look just call the
police. They'll take care of it.
Ain't no damn use in worryin' about
small problems you can't solve.

NORA

Yeah, sure ... Momma, I know how
you can make some money ...

145 INT. LOCKHART TRAILER - LIVING ROOM - DAY

145

We intercut Nacona watching Westerns in her recliner chair.

NACONA

What baby?

NORA

If I told you Sage called and she's
still got those drugs, 'n headed to
Fort Worth. Would you go there? No
way I'm chasin' her.

NACONA

Is this how come you called?

NORA

Sage ain't never gonna come home.
She ain't never had much of one.

NACONA

Nora, if I needed the money I'd go--
You're the one that needs savin'.

146 EXT. CHILLICOTHE - TRAVEL REST STOP - DAY

146

A driving POINT-OF-VIEW:

Approaching Noé, who leans against a double decker cattle trailer. Reverse shows the driver from the tire shop.

Junk food wrappers jump and fly around inside the cab.

The driver slows and rolls his window down to lean out.

DRIVER

You were prettier last I seen you.

MINUTES LATER

The driver has pulled his truck over, parked opposite of the others in the lot.

He's tip-toed reaching into the open hood. His voice comes out muffled:

DRIVER (CONT'D)
Yup, consubstantial for pneumatic
chug.

NOÉ
You know this state well?

The man emerges with a clogged air filter.

DRIVER
Texas born. Lived here all my life.

He hands the filter over to Noé.

NOÉ
Where's the nearest interstate?

DRIVER
Huh? South or North?

NOÉ
South.

DRIVER
How far down South?

NOÉ
The border. Laredo.

DRIVER
Circlin' back on home, huh? Well, I
ain't been that far.

He reaches into his door, pulling out two honey buns and a fresh filter.

He hands a honey bun to Noé. He rips his open. Bites in.

DRIVER (CONT'D)
... It's a pretty long drive.

He tiptoes back into the hood with his clean air filter.

On his back:

DRIVER (CONT'D)

... The main stretch is 35. Faster to head through Abilene ... but I gotta drop off a load in Fort Worth. Half day's trip.

He turns back around to face Noé who stands there, still holding his honey bun.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

... You gonna finish that?

Noé is looking at him blandly.

NOÉ

How bout I help you with that shipment?

The driver stares at him. Adjusting his belt.

DRIVER

Which one you talkin' about?

147 EXT. RHOME - HIGHWAY U.S. 287 - ROAD SIDE - DAY 147

Tamales steaming in a pot in the open backdoor of a minivan.

Noé and Driver eat elote, the truck behind them on the shoulder.

A mid-fifties woman stood outside the minivan stares at them.

148 EXT. FORT WORTH - BRUSH - NIGHT 148

Sage wades uphill through the overgrown brush alongside an onramp tent encampment. The echoes of a train grinding below recedes. Out of it, a voice:

VOICE

Howdy barn owl.

Sage looks.

A man wallers in a cheap lawn chair against the tent. Silhouetted by a light from the interstate.

SAGE

Nah, ain't no howdy.

The man, late-sixties, gangly with sparse hair and kind eyes. His voice carries a hollow tone, muffled by the branches of the canopy.

MAN
(jokingly)
You preyin' on me?

SAGE
Depends, could be.

Sage leans against an oak and sets the bag on the ground.

MAN
Gotta spot for your head to rest.

The man holds up his left hand to show the ring.

SAGE
I'm only ridin' freight tonight.

MAN
... That so. They powerin' trains
off bluestem now?

SAGE
Sorta.

MAN
Works like that?

SAGE
All burns the same.

MAN
Sure. See where that leads you ...

A beat.

MAN (CONT'D)
Weineys. That's what the foreman's
burnin'. I'll bring you some. You
can stay there.

Building exhaust roars from a distant passing train.

SAGE
Sir, I don't have no interest.

The man wheezes and coughs. Before the roar overwhelms him:

MAN
None here either, miss.

149 INT./EXT. GREYHOUND BUS/FORT WORTH - NIGHT 149

It's midnight. Nacona sits hunched in the window seat of an aged charter bus as it drones uphill along the avenue.

Out her window: some pedestrians gather amongst each other, prospecting for work - others - folded over and writhing.

Something -- perhaps, someone catches her attention.

The clack clack of distant motors brings her look around.

A beat.

Another clack.

The chatter of muffler-backfire.

Serpentine belts squealing past.

Nacona grips the seat in front of her as the bus halts.

150 EXT. LANCASTER AVENUE - BUS STOP - NIGHT 150

Nacona steps out of the bus, the driver watches her.

Sat on the bench, a hooded man watches Nacona.

The bus engine seems to be the only thing moving.

Nacona steps downhill, indifferent to her surroundings.

The bus door closes, and it drives away.

151 EXT. LANCASTER AVENUE - NIGHT 151

Nacona walks into the decline of the sidewalk, cars skidding past at half speed. We hear hoots and hollers. Laughter.

POINT-OF-VIEW: Tents tucked into the crack of the underpass.

Nacona jogs towards a weathered man, watching her approach.

Behind the man on the decline of the hill is the silhouette of a person, limply crawling.

A woman in a tank top.

Nacona is still jogging.

A glance -- to the opposite side walk.

POINT-OF-VIEW: Men gazing at her, talking amongst themselves.

Voices ... some screams ... some shouts ... all noise.

POINT-OF-VIEW: Dead ahead -- a scrawny blonde woman on her hands and knees on the pavement, writhing and coughing.

Nacona arrives ...

The woman is face-down, mostly incapacitated. Her hands and forearms are a mosaic of tissue perforations and necrosis.

Nacona hollers at the back of her cracked bleeding skull.

NACONA

SAGE??

Nacona bends down, places her hand on the young woman's shoulder, now lying, and turns the woman onto her back --

NACONA (CONT'D)

Dammit girl.

Nacona stands, looks towards the tents, and raises her phone.

A beat.

NACONA (CONT'D)

We'll get that stomach pumped ...
pebble in the stream.

152

EXT. LANCASTER AVENUE - UNDERPASS - NIGHT

152

A small tent encampment within the repose of the underpass.

Emergency vehicles block the right lane of the avenue.

People huddle around the whooping light, gathered in groups.

Nacona watches from the sidewalk. A car approaching from behind attracts her look for a moment. Belt clicks.

Paramedics strap the body of the woman onto the gurney.

A social worker exits the car, stands behind the driver's side door. She walks behind Nacona, taking in the scene.

Nacona's eyes track the paramedics as they lift the gurney and roll it towards the ambulance, loading it inside.

The paramedics close its doors.

153 INT. CLINIC - NIGHT

153

Nacona stands beside the woman, now donning a medical gown. Sat on a medical bench in a dull incubation tank of a room.

A TECHNICIAN tends to the medical equipment behind the woman.

Wires running out from all different parts of her body.

A long beat. The women exchange lifeless glares.

154 EXT. SHELTER - NIGHT

154

The social worker, KALI FIELD, mid-fifties, African-American, stands smoking under the shelter's covered sidewalk.

A few night loiterers sit nearby.

Nacona emerges from the building.

A long beat.

KALI

Thanks for helping our gal. You up
for pancakes?

155 INT. PANCAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

155

Kali and Nacona face each other over face sized pancakes in the dimly lit, wooden interior of a small twenty-four hour diner. Nacona is surrounded by a few empty coffee mugs.

The restaurant is sprinkled with night owls, their quiet conversations blending into the background hum.

NACONA

She have money to stay somewhere?

KALI

She'll make a couple hundred
tomorrow, money isn't her problem.

NACONA

Oh that so? Seems she's been
gettin' by fine alone.

A beat.

KALI

That's the nature of the beast,
Nacona. It's common sense. This is
all that we can do.

How else could she function? How
else would she live?

Another beat.

KALI (CONT'D)

There's hundreds of millions being
made off of people like her,
siphoning tax dollars, all kinds of
fraud and embezzlement, you name
it. The last thing they're going to
do is help.

NACONA

I think once your main trade is
human capital you're bound to
collapse. Sensation and the senses.

KALI

Bound by the mask of sensation.
It's the same story.

A beat.

NACONA

It's all the same thing.

156 EXT. PARKING LOT - DAWN

156

The two women are walking out.

KALI

None of that explains your grand-
daughter though. She sounds like a
bat out of hell, Nacona.

NACONA

I ain't sure she's out of hell.

KALI

Well, where do you think she is?

NACONA

I don't know. She's carried as far
as her desires'll take her.

KALI

She's gonna be alright.

NACONA

Yeah sure.

KALI

All that killing up y'all's way.
Thoughtless. It's beyond words.

NACONA

Yeah, she knows how to stay hidden.

KALI

That don't hardly say it. Some
immigrant shoots up the gas
station, runs off to the next town
and murders a retired widow.

They have reached Kali's car and she gets in.

NACONA

It's hard to believe ...

KALI

Disappears after her uncle is
murdered. Why in the hell would
someone get killed trying to help
her? Well, hop in Nacona. I wish I
could help your grand-baby.

Kali is turning the key in the ignition.

Nacona stands beside the door, She makes no move.

157 INT./EXT. KALI'S CAR/CENTRAL TRAIN STATION - MORNING 157

Now golden out, the downtown streets are empty of civilians.

The city is asleep, a lone service truck drives past.

Kali's car peters down a cross section of street along the
train station.

Just out of the glint of Nacona's eye -- a blonde woman by a
tent encampment along a side street.

Nacona gestures ahead to the curb.

NACONA

Pull over. I'll get out here ...

KALI

Okay ... All right --

NACONA

Yeah thanks.

She gets out of the car and closes its door shut sharply.

Kali steers the car off the curb and lulls away ...

Nacona takes a step towards the station, takes a moment to get her bearings, then looks down towards the side street.

158 EXT. DOWNTOWN SIDE STREET - MORNING

158

Nacona steps along the vacant street, tents hobbled amongst each other along construction fencing. One sticks out ...

POINT-OF-VIEW: She nears the tattered tent in question.

It's worn sun-scorched-mud-stained fabric, covered by tarp.

As Nacona draws close to the tent, she slows ...

Nacona stands staring at the tent.

Very quiet ...

Wind kicks up nearby trash. The tent flaps, break apart --

Someone talking from within.

Still.

A woman inside, seemingly familiar, blonde, scrawny, her disposition restrained, her utterances terse.

There's an emptiness to it all, something missing.

The motion inside is still. Then a low vibration.

Nacona approaching the tent, through the slit in the zipper, the woman is looking at something in her hands.

Nacona takes another step closer.

The wind kicks up, pushing the flaps back open.

THE WOMAN'S POINT-OF-VIEW: Nacona through the slit.

The tent stills.

Nacona, her hand grazing against the polyester tent flap, as her face draws close the chatter inside ceases.

She extends her hand to open the tent ...

The tent's zipper door fluidly tears open --

Nacona is a deer in the headlights --
The woman from last night.

Sharply:

WOMAN
Bitch, do you need help?

NACONA
No thank you.

A beat.

Nacona steps away, retracing her steps slowly.

The streets are beginning to bustle.

There is a man inside the tent now looking out at Nacona as she walks towards the train station.

Her feet drag, kicking up concrete.

159 EXT. CENTRAL TRAIN STATION - MORNING

159

The station, with a lone train boarding, is nearly empty.

Nacona gropes slowly along the pavilion of the station.

The train doors open. Inside: an orderly cleanliness compared to where we've been. Nacona squints. A beat.

She steps up to a kiosk, scans her phone ... Processing ...
She looks into the screen of the kiosk. She looks into the black mirror of her phone ... Ticket purchased.

160 INT. TRAIN CAR - MORNING

160

Nacona steps into the passenger car from the station.

She sits heavily onto a bench seat. She looks around, not for anything in particular.

Her look catches something odd, just in front of her: People huddled together in the adjoining car file past her.

Nacona stares through them ...

At length she eases into her seat. On the far side of the car, a daughter in her father's lap, asleep.

The father staring at his phone.

161 EXT. DALLAS - HARRY HINES BOULEVARD - ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

A ride share van is pulling over to a curb, trailing exhaust fumes. Scattered sun faded powdered pastel businesses line the boulevard coated their, windows cased in steel bars.

A small attorney's office sandwiched in between other businesses pokes out.

162 INT. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

162

The small ring of the door kicking in brings us into a cramped pastel yellow lobby, a modest entrance area.

Nacona enters.

A YOUNG WOMAN behind a clerical desk, a portly gentleman leaning against its counter, this is CHARLIE POWERS, mid-sixties, he looks up and beams in amusement.

CHARLIE

Now that's somethin'.

NACONA

Not expectin' me here?

CHARLIE

Thought you'd been cremated by now.

NACONA

Fried to a crisp ...

Charlie, gestures over to the open door of his office.

CHARLIE

Good seein' you, Nacona.

NACONA

Can't say the same. You're doin' well for yourself.

163 INT. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

163

He gestures to a chair.

CHARLIE

What made you come up here? I was waitin' on a call from you.

NACONA

Somethin' else drug me down here. Better to do this in the flesh.

She sits. Charlie closes the door.

CHARLIE
I know it. Always better that way.

Nacona stares at him.

NACONA
Got a quote on those funerary
expenses?

CHARLIE
For the plot? Well, Depends what
you got. Some of 'em need half
upfront, rest of 'em only take it
in full.

A beat.

Charlie sits across from her.

NACONA
I can't put that on credit,
Charlie?

CHARLIE
Defaults to one of the girls. If
that's what you want.

NACONA
That's fine with me.

CHARLIE
Lois gave me a call. She's quite
the character. Dementia's not
stopped her from yappin' much.

NACONA
Couldn't hold her lip before it ...

CHARLIE
Told me Sage'd run off--

Nacona pulls a floating sphere from off the desk.

NACONA
Now what's this?

CHARLIE
...Some magnetic anti-gravity
globe.

Nacona, holding the globe, passes her free hand through the pedestal.

NACONA

Oh, she's standin' in God's holy
fire ...

CHARLIE

Quite the thingamjig. That sphere
there--

NACONA

That cadaver option with the
college.

CHARLIE

It's free, sure.

NACONA

What'd you think I should do
instead?

CHARLIE

No difference in what you decide.
Leads to the same point.

NACONA

If that's the counsel you're
offerin' ...

Charlie signs her will, spins it around to Nacona.

CHARLIE

Well ... What's the matter in
pining after the decay of your
corpse? All those ideas, thoughts,
experiences, feelings, and
sensations you clung to'll burn
away. Your pa would've never wanted
you to stay out there. You chose
that your self ... Lois told me
Sage'd run off. How come she done
that?

Nacona signs her will.

A beat.

NACONA

Time was up. She lost herself. I
figured once I became a burden my
babies would have means of their
own to support me. They don't. And
it's my fault. The one I do got
left wouldn't bother with buryin'
me --

CHARLIE
Y'all couldn't afford no coffin.

Nacona plants the globe back into its place, stands and walks over to the closed door. Leans back against it.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I'll get these over to the wife to notarize, send you a copy. My son's over at her office. She ever tell you what brought her folks out to Paducah?

A beat.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Drowned out by her own blood. She had a crackpot older brother. He'd crawl into her top bunk at night when they were kids. Have his way with her. She never told no one 'til we married. He went into the service. Discharged. Moved in with a girlfriend out in the suburbs. Went on a rampage in the neighborhood on the fourth of July. Elderly woman called the police after the first rounds went into the girlfriend and a buddy of hers. Walled himself off from the police, wounded a couple of them, that 'ole gal too. Her daddy was a bug man. the boll weevil led him to Paducah.

NACONA
She didn't ask for help?

CHARLIE
She got a hold of 'em--

NACONA
No, your wife. All those years and she didn't talk to no one?

CHARLIE
That's a question ... The final gunshot led them to his faceless body in a neighbor's backyard.

A beat.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Ain't no first cause. Not to any of it. It's not on you.

That behavior isn't your burden to bear. Man ain't never been one to control himself ...

164 EXT. LAREDO - PANADERÍA - MORNING

164

We hear the fumes of a mid-nineteen-fifties iron oven releasing. Miguel and Camila sit across from each other at a roadside panadería's picnic table.

Miguel's face, weathered from his overnight shift.

In her hands, a buñelo: smothered in powdered sugar.

Camila buries her face into the buñelo -- Miguel, amused.

165 EXT. SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE - MORNING

165

Miguel and Camila stand by the mailbox of a small house.

A rusted school bus pulls in front of the driveway.

Camila steps onto the bus. Miguel watches her leave.

166 INT. BATHROOM - LATER

166

Miguel leans against the sink, feeding water to his face.

He looks in the mirror. Behind him, the bedroom door is cracked open.

167 INT. BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

167

Miguel shifts up out of bed, he slips into a pair of house shoes, their clicks trail into the empty kitchen.

168 INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

168

Miguel freezes.

Noé sits on a bar stool in the shadows of the kitchen.

A beat.

NOÉ
You didn't tell me you moved.

Noé stares into Miguel's soul.

NOÉ (CONT'D)
Did they shuttle you here?

Miguel stands as far away as he can possibly get.

NOÉ (CONT'D)
What little courage you had left is
gone. They're not able to protect
you from your nature. Natural for
you to hide.

A beat.

NOÉ (CONT'D)
...You need to have a seat.

Noé nods at the chair next to him and Miguel sits down.

MIGUEL
You got no business being here ...

NOÉ
You look like a scared boy ...

Noé stands up and inches over to the table, sitting
uncomfortably close. Miguel exhales.

MIGUEL
...Like a scared boy?

NOÉ
To me, tío.

MIGUEL
There's nothing I can do for you.

Miguel nods as his lip quivers. Clinging to his dignity.

NOÉ
Pray to me.

MIGUEL
I can't do that.

Noé clasps the back of Miguel's skull by his hair, pulls out
a knife from his belt and brings it to Miguel's gullet.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
God.

NOÉ
Would you have me kill you just to
do it?

MIGUEL

I won't.

Miguel whimpers.

A beat

A tear falls from his face. Noé brings up his free thumb wiping it away, caressing his chin and face.

NOÉ

C'mon. Do it.

Miguel rapidly whispers to himself in his native tongue. His breathing growing erratic.

Sweat dripping from his brow.

Noé watches. Empty.

Noé pulls the knife from Miguel's neck, blood trickling down, rips the blood-covered cross pendant from his neck, and steps back from the table.

NOÉ (CONT'D)

You should've hid away in a small town ... where fear is conditional.

Noé wipes the tip of the blade with his shirt and sheathes the knife into his waistband.

NOÉ (CONT'D)

But you know that yourself.

He examines the blood covered cross in his hands, rubs the blood into his palms and tosses the necklace on the floor.

NOÉ (CONT'D)

... You lost sight of God ... And you don't even know what you are.

169

EXT. LAREDO - SIDEWALK - GOLDEN HOUR

169

Minutes later.

Noé walks along the sidewalk.

A school bus rolls up to the curb a few houses behind.

He pauses and keeps walking.

170 EXT. GHOST TOWN - SIDEWALK - GOLDEN HOUR 170

He is walking along a path, tattered pavement to his left, an auto shop to his right.

His point-of-view: coming upon a pedestrian bridge, a man leaning over the railing, a loogie pooling out of his mouth.

Back to Noé. He shoulders past the loogie man.

A gunshot.

A pickup truck to Noé's left has slammed on its e-brake and a man jumps out of the passenger seat.

Another round.

The truck accelerates away, its passenger door ajar. Through its rear windshield, the brim of a sun-worn trucker's cap.

Noé jumps into the abyss.

171 EXT. SEWAGE GUTTER - GOLDEN HOUR 171

After a beat he staggers back, heavily favoring one snapped ankle, bloody at the shoe. Noé reaches, pointing his gun upwards and pulls the trigger twice.

The shots reverb through the tunnel.

A body falls. The loogie man.

Noé staggers to his feet and looks up.

The Gunman from the truck, aiming a machine pistol.

Noé turns and runs as a full clip unloads into concrete.

Noé hurdles around the bend of the repose.

172 EXT. SEWAGE GUTTER - BLUE HOUR 172

Noé unbuttons his shirt. Clean through.

His gut leaking blood from two different exit wounds.

His breathing grows heavy. He struggles to his knees.

He drags his body along the concrete, checking above and behind as he crawls to the tunnel ahead.

After a beat, he pauses.

Dry heaving ... Silence.

The gunman, mid-stride on the pedestrian walkway, skids to a halt, weapon drawn, scanning for Noé around the bend below.

The gunman skirts around the guardrail, covers against it, and looks down around the corner to his left.

Noé emerges from the repose. He unloads his pistol.

Three shots wallop into the gunman's torso.

He drops to his rear, crashing against the guard rail.

Noé sprawls up the repose on all fours.

NOÉ

How would you save your life?

The two men look at each other.

NOÉ (CONT'D)

Who sent you? I'll spare yours.

The man, blood spewing from his carotid artery.

Noé applies pressure, all his body weight on the man.

GUNMAN

Look at that fuckin' blood...

NOÉ

... Just tell me.

GUNMAN

How isn't going to be any use to
me. I've been dead and gone.
Dumbass fool...

Noé grinds the man's head into the cement.

His knuckles, white around the dying man's throat.

NOÉ

Tell me. Tell me their names and
they'll find your body ...

The man chuckles through a bloodied smile.

GUNMAN

...No sir.

Noé scales up the repose, limping off.

We can just hear the choking and final exhale of the man.

173 EXT. PADUCAH - LOCKHART TRAILER - FRONT PORCH - DAY 173

Nacona sits on the patio tending to a bushel of red corn poppies in a glass jar on the small side table.

Nora walks up the porch with a Shiner bottle, sits down beside her, and takes a sip.

The P.T. Cruiser sits in the driveway, its hood pock marked with bullet perforations.

The fence enclosure absent of the turkey slurping goat and its shelter.

In the front lawn, a scattered assortment of second-hand consumer items and home decor are arranged haphazardly, flanked by a makeshift garage sale sign.

NORA

Maybe you needa garden.

NACONA

Maybe not.

NORA

Well how come?

NACONA

Cultivatin' growth is not my forte.

NORA

It'd get you one step closer to the grave.

NACONA

This jar'll do me just fine.

A beat.

Nacona looks out to the front lawn.

NACONA (CONT'D)

Maybe you can just sell to the neighbors ... What's left of it.

A beat.

NORA

I'd rather not ...

Nora sips her Shiner.

NORA (CONT'D)
Byron still in Knox City?

NACONA
I don't know. Byron. The second ex-husband?

NORA
Well who else you know to call?
Anyone else?

Another beat.

NACONA
Him and Ricky coulda been twins.

Nora looks at Nacona.

NORA
Momma, I'm tryna be good.

NACONA
He wouldn't have the money. Bet he's dead now ... I met him in Odessa when I was twenty. Had your sister a year later. He was older than me by a decade. I didn't have no business rushin' into marriage again but he said he money. He was handsome. I was a flower girl up at the honky tonk. He hated seein' me work, so he kept me in the house. I got to watchin' more westerns that way. Anyways, Byron couldn't keep food on the table. Head in the clouds. Factory jobs, trade jobs. Wasn't worth a damn. 'Round that time he knocked me up with you. He got to drinking as that year drawled on. It brought him cycling down to the hollow core. Maddie came to me one day, told me she woke up next to him in bed. There wasn't nothing for me to do. No where to go. Think she was nine. Vile. Complete nonsense. I screamed howlin' at him 'til my blood curdled. 'Til I seen pure darkness. Then the sensation to escape burst outta me. Took her out the house a few minutes later. Moved back to Daddy's. That was the last I saw him.