

DEEPENING THE DIVIDE

Written by

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FADE IN

EXT. CEMETERY - AFTERNOON

A rural cemetery in the desert. Old tombstones, a wrought iron fence that sways in the wind, and patches of tall grass over the more neglected graves, surrounded by mile after mile of flat, desolate land stretching into the horizon.

SCOTT HEWITT, early 20s, Caucasian, thin but muscular, handsome, brooding, stands in front of an open grave, staring in, tears in his eyes, fighting not to cry.

Beside him is his devastated mother, ROBERTA, mid 40s, Caucasian, once pretty now haggard. She clings to his brother CHAD MICHAEL's, mid 20s, Caucasian, tall, imposing, heavily tattooed, muscular arm. Leaning against him for support.

Behind them, the reverend and mourners are getting in their beat-up old cars and pickup trucks and driving off.

Chad Michael leads Roberta toward his truck, an oversized pickup covered with Trump/MAGA bumper stickers.

Scott stares into his father's open grave a moment longer.

SCOTT  
Good-bye, Pops.

He starts to cry but quickly composes himself, then hurries to catch up to Chad Michael and Roberta.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Chad Michael's pickup speeds down the straight, two lane road that cuts through the vast, sprawling desert. Flat. Barren. Desolate. Nothing around for miles. Only the occasional cactus or clump of sage grass to break up the bleak scenery.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)  
The President's on her way back  
from the summit in Brussels, and is  
expected to address the matter at a  
press briefing later this  
afternoon. And, in a sign of the  
ever increasingly divided country  
we live in, comes this story. An  
interracial couple driving through  
rural Oklahoma claim they were  
accosted at a local gas station.

The pickup turns onto a dirt road that leads from the highway, across the rocky terrain to an old, rundown house, surrounded by a rickety wooden fence. The name on the beat-up mailbox reads "HEWITT".

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

While the owner and customers present dispute the claim, Keith and Gwendolyn Sawyer assert they stopped at the Quick-Stop just off I-40, and were subjected to racist slurs and threats.

EXT. HEWITT RESIDENCE - AFTERNOON

Chad Michael parks next to Scott's smaller pickup. Beside that is Roberta's beat-up hatchback. In the side yard is an old clunker up on blocks, that someone's been restoring.

The yard is mostly dirt, only a few patches of brown grass. The paint on the house is peeling, the boards warped. Some of the windows have been broken and taped back together. A yellow piece of paper's been stapled to the front door.

Scott, Chad Michael, and Roberta get out of Chad Michael's truck. Scott heads toward the old clunker.

CHAD MICHAEL

Where you going?

SCOTT

Gonna work on Dad's truck.

CHAD MICHAEL

Not in your good clothes, you ain't. Go on and change first.

He walks Roberta, who leans against him, toward the house. Scott follows.

He notices the paper on the door.

SCOTT

What's that?

Roberta and Chad Michael look around.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

On the door. Someone leave a card?

Roberta and Chad Michael see it.

ROBERTA  
Those son's of bitches!

She strides toward the door. Chad Michael and Scott follow.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Mama, --

SCOTT  
What is it?

CHAD MICHAEL  
Never mind, just go on in and--

Roberta rips the notice off the door.

ROBERTA  
Goddamn greedy Jew bastards!

SCOTT  
Mama, what's--

CHAD MICHAEL  
I said go in and change. Now!

Scott rushes to the door.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

A clean home filled with old worn-out furniture, that was cheap when new. Family photos cover the walls.

Scott steps in, closes the door, and steps to the side so they can't see him through the window, but he can still hear them. He fights to keep his emotions in check as he listens. Trying to look tough, stoic, despite the grief and fear.

ROBERTA  
Jew bastards knew we was burying  
your Dad today!

CHAD MICHAEL  
Mama, --

ROBERTA  
What more are they going to take  
from us!?

She cries into Chad Michael's chest.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

I can't take no more, Chad Michael.  
They took your dad, now they want  
our home.

CHAD MICHAEL

Sh. It's going to be alright, Mama,  
don't you worry. Now, why don't  
pull yourself together, and go on  
in and fix supper. And, Scott, you  
best be changing and not standing  
at the door listening.

Scott hurries to his bedroom.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, DINING ROOM - EVENING

Scott, Chad Michael, and Roberta sit at the table, quietly having their supper. Roberta, her mind a million miles away, picks at her food while Chad Michael concentrates on the mound of food on his plate as he shovels it in.

The radio on the counter plays as they eat.

FISHER (V.O.)

So, during the break, a caller  
asked a very good question. She  
wanted to know if I think our  
president, our traitor in chief,  
the demon, yes demon, in the White  
House. She wants to know if I think  
our Demon in Chief sent those  
deadly tornadoes down to Alabama to  
thin out our numbers--

Scott stares from Roberta to Chad Michael, desperately wanting to talk. To tell them something. Neither notices, they're too busy eating and listening to Fisher.

FISHER (V.O.)

And the God's honest truth is, I  
don't know. How pathetic is that? I  
don't know if our own president,  
the leader of the free, for now,  
world is creating lethal storms--

INT. HIGH-END ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Wealthy, well dressed patrons mingle as they stroll around, looking at the photographs and paintings on display as uniformed servers, carrying trays of champagne and hors d'oeuvres, circle the room.

Artists, trying not appear too eager, stand in front of their works, chatting up prospective buyers.

PAM SUTTON, late 20s, Caucasian, stylish, trendy, stands in front of one of her photographs, a fake smile in place as she chats with MR. and MRS. MASON, mid 60s, Caucasian, wealthy, and dressed to impress.

Her fiancé, THEO JONES, early 30s. African American, handsome, muscular, stands quietly beside Pam.

MR. MASON  
Pam, we truly love your new pieces.

MRS. MASON  
Love? Adore. We positively adore your work. The way you capture the city. Taking things that are so, well, mundane or--

She glances with disdain at a photograph of a homeless person in the park, laughing as they play with a dog.

MRS. MASON (CONT'D)  
Downright repulsive, and make it, oh, what's the word?

MR. MASON  
There's a beauty, an optimism. You can take even the most sad and pathetic subjects and turn them into works of art.

MRS. MASON  
Yes, that's it, exactly.

Out of things to talk about, they awkwardly smile and sip their drinks, trying to think of small talk.

MR. MASON  
I hear your fiancé's a filmmaker.

PAM  
Yes. In fact, Theo and his best friend, Muhammad, just formed a production company.

MRS. MASON  
Well, isn't that exciting. And what are they working on?

THEO  
Nothing at the moment, but we're up for a travel documentary.

PAM  
Ghost towns of the desert.

THEO  
Yeah, it's part of a Halloween--

MRS. MASON  
Isn't that wonderful.

She holds out her empty glass to Theo.

MRS. MASON (CONT'D)  
Cranberry whiskey sour.

Mr. Mason slips a twenty dollar bill into Theo's shirt pocket, and gives him a wink.

MR. MASON  
Make sure they know who it's for.

Pam and Theo, not sure how to respond, stare a moment.

Mrs. Mason impatiently RATTLES the ice in her glass, trying to get Theo to take it.

PAM  
Um, this is Theo.

Mr. and Mrs. Mason give her blank stares.

PAM (CONT'D)  
My fiancé. The filmmaker.

Mr. and Mrs. Mason burst out laughing.

MRS. MASON  
Well, isn't that the funniest thing. I assumed he was the waiter.

Theo tries to hide his embarrassment. Pam isn't sure how to respond so she just smiles.

Mr. and Mrs. Mason laugh for a moment more.

MRS. MASON (CONT'D)  
Well, I guess I'll have to get my own drink.

MR. MASON  
Maybe you can get him a drink. Make it a complete role reversal.

He and Mrs. Mason laugh as if that's the funniest thing.

Theo tries to stay calm and smile.

THEO  
I'm good, thanks.

Mr. and Mrs. Mason, still laughing, walk toward the bar.

PAM  
Theo, I--

THEO  
It's fine, Pam.

PAM  
It's not. I should've--

THEO  
I get it. You need the sale.

PAM  
I'm sorry.

Theo nods.

PAM (CONT'D)  
How about we get out of here? It's still early, we could--

THEO  
You should stay. Schmooze.

PAM  
Are you OK?

Theo smiles.

THEO  
I'm fine.

He kisses her.

THEO (CONT'D)  
I'll see you back at the condo.

PAM  
I love you.

THEO  
Love you too, babe.

Feeling guilty, Pam watches Theo make his way through the crowd heading toward the exit.

Another wealthy couple walk over, and look at Pam's photographs, so she puts on her fake smile, and walks over to greet them.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, SCOTT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

A small, sparsely decorated room devoid of personality. A neatly made single bed with a plain blue quilt. The only things on the walls are a crucifix and a family photo.

Scott stands at the window absently gazing out at the seemingly endless desert that surrounds them, his mind a thousand miles away, mulling something over.

SCOTT

Well, I can get it over with, or stand here worrying about it.

He stands there, trying to muster his courage.

HALL

Scott steps out of his bedroom. He HEARS a man's voice, and glances down the hall, into the kitchen.

FISHER (V.O.)

Assaulted? Victims? These liberal degenerates just happened to be out there? In rural Oklahoma?

Roberta stands at the sink, washing dishes as she listens to Fisher on the radio.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, HALL - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Scott, still in his pajamas, steps out of his bedroom, and walks down the hall, toward the kitchen, where Roberta stands at the stove, cooking breakfast.

KITCHEN

As Scott walks in, WYATT, mid 50s, Caucasian, obese, wearing overalls and a red baseball cap, steps up behind Roberta, and slips his arms around her.

Roberta turns around, and wraps her arms around Wyatt's neck. They stare into each others eyes a moment, then kiss.

SCOTT

Ick. Get a room.

WYATT

Why? I have a whole house, and, if you keep this up, we may just do it right here.

Roberta laughs, then turns back to the stove.

SCOTT

There's an image I'll never get out of my head.

Wyatt laughs.

WYATT

Your welcome. Say, how do you stop a bull from charging?

SCOTT

Duh. Take away his credit cards.

Wyatt smirks. Roberta laughs.

ROBERTA

You're going to need some new material, Wyatt.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, HALL - MORNING (PRESENT)

Scott struggles to maintain his composure as he stares at Roberta's back, desperately wanting to talk to her yet terrified of doing so.

FISHER (V.O.)

Can you say staged? They're just like the fags, dykes, and trannies.

Scott tries to hide how much that hurt. He walks down the hall to his brother's closed bedroom door.

FISHER (V.O.)

They shove their filthy, perverted lifestyles in normal people's faces. Act as disgusting as they possibly can, then boom.

He can HEAR Fisher's voice coming from Chad Michael's room. Scott raises his hand to knock, hesitates, losing his nerve, then finally musters the courage, and KNOCKS on the door.

FISHER (V.O.)

They're the victims and we're just a bunch of rightwing--

Fisher's voice is muted.

CHAD MICHAEL (O.S.)  
Come in.

CHAD MICHAEL'S BEDROOM

Bookshelves crammed full of conspiracy books and gun magazines. A twin bed with a gold bald eagle quilt. The walls covered with American, Confederate, and Trump/MAGA flags, as well as white supremacist posters.

Scott opens the door, and timidly pokes his head in.

Chad Michael sits at his desk. On the computer monitor behind him, a muted FISHER DOUGLAS, late 30s, Caucasian, obese, balding, and angry, sits at his desk, ranting and raving.

SCOTT  
You busy? I could come back.

Chad Michael's a hard man. Stoic, difficult to read.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
You know what, it's nothing. Sorry  
I bothered you.

He starts to step out.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Wait.

Scott steps back in.

Chad Michael nods at his bed.

Scott walks over, and sits on the edge, facing Chad Michael, but with his eyes fixed on the floor.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
What's on your mind, Scott?

Scott, eyes on the floor, takes a second to gather the strength to tell him.

SCOTT  
Um, nothing. It's just, what with Dad gone and all, I, um, well, I wanted to tell you, ah, talk to you about, um...

He fades off. Eyes locked on the carpet. Concentrating on it. Trying to muster the courage to continue.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Scott, look at me.

With great difficulty, Scott pulls his gaze away from the floor, and looks at Chad Michael.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
I know what you're going to say.

Scott's both relieved and afraid.

SCOTT  
You do?

CHAD MICHAEL  
Duh. I'm your big brother. Who knows you better than me, huh?

Scott, not sure he knows, nods.

Chad Michael gives Scott a warm, loving look.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You're gay. I know. We all do.  
Always have.

Tears fill Scott's eyes.

SCOTT  
And you're OK with it?  
(starts to cry)  
You don't hate me?

CHAD MICHAEL  
Hate you?

He stands.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Get up.

Scott, unsure and afraid, slowly stands.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You really think I could hate you,  
little brother?

Scott sobs uncontrollably. Letting out years of shame and fear. He nods yes.

Chad Michael steps over, wraps his arms around Scott, pulls him close, and gives him a big hug.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
I love you, Scott. Ain't nothing  
going to change that. Not ever.

Crying, Scott hugs Chad Michael. Holding him tight as he sobs  
into his chest.

CHAD MICHAEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
You coming in or what?

CHAD MICHAEL'S BEDROOM

Scott's still standing in the doorway. Chad Michael's sitting  
at his desk. None of that happened, it was in Scott's mind.

CHAD MICHAEL  
You OK?

SCOTT  
Yeah.

He walks over to the bed, sits down, and stares at the floor,  
trying to work up his nerve.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Something on your mind?

Scott nods.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Scott, look at me.

Scott forces himself to look at Chad Michael.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
I know what you're going to say.

Scott's both hopeful and afraid.

SCOTT  
You do?

CHAD MICHAEL  
Course I do. Trust me, I get it.  
You're scared. Everything's  
changing. Dad died. Looks like  
we're going to lose the house. You  
don't see a future or way out.  
Always feels like something's  
holding you back.

(MORE)

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Like the whole world's moving on,  
passing us by while we just sit  
here and watch, because there ain't  
no place in that new world for  
people like us.

Scott tries to hide his disappointment. He nods yes.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
I feel that way too. Lot of us do.  
In fact, got some people I think  
you should meet. I think it's time.

SCOTT  
For what?

CHAD MICHAEL  
To learn the truth.

SCOTT  
About what?

CHAD MICHAEL  
About everything. About what's  
really going on in this country.  
The world. You ready for that?

Scott timidly nods yes, which makes Chad Michael grin.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You know, you turning out real  
good. I'm proud of you. Dad was  
too. Told me so, before, well.

Too emotional. He gives Scott a tough guy look, then nods at  
the door.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Go on and finish your chores. Take  
you to meet Houston after lunch.

Scott nods, walks to the door, then looks back. Wanting  
desperately to tell Chad Michael something.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Something else on your mind?

Yes. Scott shakes his head no, then slips out, closing the  
door behind him.

Chad Michael turns back to his computer and watches Fisher  
silently rant a moment before turning up the volume.

FISHER

But why do the liberal scum hate us so much? They have a near pathological need to destroy us. To desecrate our God, mock our beliefs, belittle our way of life. But for God's sake, why can't these vile libtards just let us live our lives in peace.

Chad Michael nods in agreement.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO, LOBBY - MORNING

Pam walks her sister, URSULA, mid 30s, Caucasian, and her children, WALKER, 9, and VIOLET, 7, out of the back. Ursula and her children are expensively and conservatively dressed. Obviously well off, and proud of it.

ZOE, late 30s, Latina, plump with a warm smile, Pam's co-worker, stands off to the side. Leaning against the counter, reading a magazine while eavesdropping.

URSULA

You're overreacting. It was an honest mistake.

PAM

It was a microaggression. They saw a black man and automatically--

URSULA

Oh For God's sake.  
(to the kids)  
Thank Aunt Pam for taking your picture, guys.

Pam turns to the kids, to say good-bye.

Walker gives Pam a snide look.

WALKER

Why? Didn't you pay her to?

Pam fights to keep her fake smile in place.

Embarrassed, Ursula laughs.

URSULA

Walker.

WALKER

(to Pam)

Dad said if idiots like you would stop voting against their own interests, we'd have a good conservative as president, then you'd be able to get a real job.

Pam, fake smile in place, turns to Ursula.

PAM

He's adorable.

Embarrassed, Ursula laughs nervously.

URSULA

He hasn't had lunch yet.

She gives Pam a quick hug, slips her a couple dollars, then ushers the children out the door, and into the store.

URSULA (CONT'D)

(to Walker)

What did I tell you about--

WALKER

Dad said it's true.

URSULA

Of course it's true, it's just rude to say it to her face.

Pam waves good-bye then walks over to Zoe.

ZOE

Your sister seems nice.

PAM

She's evil incarnate.

Zoe laughs.

Pam's cell DINGS. She pulls it out and checks her messages.

ZOE

Everything OK?

PAM

Mind if I take first lunch? Theo says he has news.

ZOE

Good news?

Pam lets out a worried sigh.

PAM  
I hope so. He really needs this.

EXT. GAS STATION/CONVEIENCE STORE - MORNING

A rural, rundown station in the middle of the desert. There are three gas pumps. A deputy's cruiser is parked at the first, an old Subaru the second. Scott parks his pickup at the third, and gets out.

He sees DEPUTY WHEELER, late 20s, Caucasian, tall, rugged, holding a coffee, walk out of the store, and towards him.

Scott waits for him, but remains stoic. Guarded.

DEPUTY WHEELER  
Hey, Scott.

Scott nods hello.

SCOTT  
Deputy Wheeler.

DEPUTY WHEELER  
You doing alright?

Scott shrugs.

SCOTT  
Reckon.

An uncomfortable pause as Deputy Wheeler tries to think of something to say.

DEPUTY WHEELER  
My brother's inside.

SCOTT  
Seen his car.

Both are quiet.

DEPUTY WHEELER  
If you ever need to talk.

SCOTT  
Ain't nothing to talk about.

Deputy Wheeler nods. Not sure what to say, he gives Scott a supportive pat on the shoulder, then walks to his cruiser.

Scott steps to the pump, puts the nozzle in his tank, then absently gazes out at the seemingly endless desert. Lost in thought as he fills his tank.

KYLE, mid 20s, Caucasian, short, lean, handsome, well dressed, carrying a coffee, comes out of the store, sees Scott, and walks over.

Scott notices Kyle coming, but doesn't look over, trying to ignore him.

KYLE  
I'm sorry about your dad.

Scott, staring off, nods.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
I tried to call.

The pump STOPS.

SCOTT  
I got your messages.

He turns his back to Kyle, takes the pump out of his truck, and hangs it back up.

KYLE  
Can we talk?

Scott turns around, but can't look at Kyle. He stares past him, trying to hide the hurt, and yearning.

SCOTT  
Don't call me no more.

He steps around Kyle, and walks to the driver's door.

NOAH, early 30s, Caucasian, tall, muscular, a shaved head, covered in tattoos, holding a coffee, and AUSTIN, late 20s, Caucasian, tall, overweight, wearing overalls, a nametag, and a red baseball cap, step out of the store.

They stand by the door, watching Kyle and Scott with disdain. Sneering at Kyle.

KYLE  
Scott, please. I miss you.

AUSTIN (O.S.)  
(shouts)  
There a problem over there?

Scott turns to Austin and Noah, both seem hostile. Angry.

SCOTT

Kyle's offering his condolences is all.

NOAH

Bet that ain't all he's offering.

He and Austin SNICKER, which makes Scott feel self-conscious. He sneers at Kyle.

SCOTT

(loud so they can hear)  
Appreciate it, faggot, but I don't need your concern.

Austin and Noah HOWL with laughter.

NOAH

You tell that pervert, kid.

A hurt, humiliated Kyle stares at Scott, who's trying to look tough. Hateful.

AUSTIN

You got your coffee, why don't go on? Leave normal people alone.

Kyle finally turns away. He walks over to his Subaru, then glances back at Scott.

SCOTT

Just leave me alone.

Kyle gets in, SLAMS the car door, STARTS the engine, then drives off.

AUSTIN

Your mama doing alright?

Scott looks over and nods.

NOAH

Tell her Austin and I was asking after her.

Scott nods again, then opens his pickup's door.

INT. SCOTT'S PICKUP - MORNING

Scott gets in, CLOSES the door, then STARTS the engine.

He glances in the rearview mirror; Noah and Austin are standing in front of the store, talking. Every so often they glance at Scott's truck with disapproving looks.

Scott catches his eye in the rearview mirror.

SCOTT  
(to himself)  
You got the balls of a mosquito.

INT. UPSCALE BISTRO - AFTERNOON

Pam and Theo sit at booth, enjoying an expensive lunch.

PAM  
So you guys are going to scout  
locations this weekend?

THEO  
We were kind of hoping you'd come  
along, take some pictures. Like you  
did for that short.

Pam smiles, trying to hide her dismay.

PAM  
To the desert?

THEO  
Yeah, that a problem? It'll be fun.  
Like Palm Springs only more rustic.

Pam, forced smile in place, tries to sound enthusiastic.

PAM  
Sounds fun.

THEO  
You sure you're OK with it? Might  
be a little more, well provincial  
than you're used to.

Pam tries to look natural.

PAM  
No, it's fine. Really.

THEO  
Great. Muhammad said Marcie, that's  
the executive producer, wants to  
leave early Friday morning. That  
should get us there around Noon.

Pam keeps her forced smile in place, and her fear hidden.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Scott sits at the table with Chad Michael and Roberta, having lunch. Everyone's quiet. Lost in thoughts and grief.

Scott looks at Roberta, whose eyes are red from crying. She stares off. Absently eating.

He desperately wants to tell her, but can't bring himself to.

He looks at Chad Michael, who's oblivious. He concentrates on the mound of food on his plate as he shovels it in.

Scott stands.

SCOTT

May I be excused?

Roberta absently nods.

CHAD MICHAEL

Where you going?

Scott shrugs.

SCOTT

Figured I'd work on Dad's truck for a bit.

CHAD MICHAEL

Alright, but don't get too dirty, we're leaving in an hour.

Scott nods, walks to the back door, grabs a box off the counter, then steps out.

EXT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, SIDE YARD - AFTERNOON

Scott carries the box over to the old junker, then pulls out his gravity knife, and uses it to cut open the box.

As he pulls out the carburetor, he glances back at the house.

Roberta stands at the kitchen sink, talking to Chad Michael. Both look serious. Upset.

Scott stares at them. So desperate to tell them that tears fill his eyes.

SCSOTT  
(softly, to himself)  
Hey guys, I'm gay. Little Scottie's  
queer, and so fucking lonely.

He stares longingly at Roberta and Chad Michael, but neither notice him.

Scott tears his gaze away, steps to the old junker, and opens it's hood.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Chad Michael and Roberta stand at the sink, talking.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Mama, I said I'll take care of it.

Overwhelmed, Roberta starts to cry.

ROBERTA  
How!? You got some mound of money I  
don't know about? Because I sure  
don't. Barely had enough to bury  
your Dad. I. I'm sorry, I shouldn't  
lay this on you, I just don't know  
what I'm going to--

Chad Michael takes hold of her hands.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Because you don't have to. You been  
strong long enough. My turn now.

ROBERTA  
But how? We owe--

CHAD MICHAEL  
You let me worry about that, OK?

Roberta opens her mouth to protest.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Last thing Dad said to me was, if I  
don't make it, you take care of  
your mama and little brother, or  
else I'll come back and haunt your  
sorry ass.

Roberta smiles.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Better.

He kisses her on the forehead.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Got some calls to make before I  
take Scott to meet Houston. Not  
another word about this, OK?

Roberta smiles and nods yes.

Chad Michael walks down the hall to his bedroom.

Roberta waits until she hears his bedroom door CLOSE, then  
she looks up to Heaven.

ROBERTA  
Wyatt, if you're listening, I sure  
could use your help. Don't know how  
much more I can take.

There's a portable radio on the counter. Roberta turns it on,  
and listens as she hand washes the dishes.

FISHER (V.O.)  
Spying on us. Yes, spying. And I'm  
not just talking about the NSA  
reading your emails and peeking at  
your computer's browser history  
neither. I'm talking actual plants.  
Any strangers been lurking around  
lately? Any casual acquaintances or  
long lost friends suddenly show a  
renewed interest. Anyone asking--

A KNOCK at the back-door, then TREBBIE, late 30s, Caucasian,  
tall, obese, always smiling, steps in. Roberta dries her  
hands with a towel, then turns off the radio.

ROBERTA  
Come on in, Trebbie. Coffee's made,  
if you want.

Trebbie walks over to the table and takes a seat, so Roberta  
walks over and joins her.

TREBBIE  
Oh, I'm fine, can't stay but a  
minute. Just wanted to pop over,  
make sure you and the boys were  
doing alright.

ROBERTA  
Been better.

Trebbie nods understandingly.

TREBBIE  
If you all need anything.

ROBERTA  
Appreciate that.

An awkward pause as Trebbie hesitates, working up her nerve.

TREBBIE  
Roberta, I hate to ask, but--

Roberta gives her a knowing smile.

ROBERTA  
Need me to cover for you down at  
the motor lodge this weekend?

TREBBIE  
You mind? I'm not leaving until  
after lunch Friday, be back right  
after brunch Sunday.

ROBERTA  
Suppose I can do nothing there same  
as I can here.

TREBBIE  
Actually booked a few rooms, so  
going to be busier than usual.

ROBERTA  
One of them hippie art festivals  
going on?

TREBBIE  
Nah. Think they're just coming to  
sight-see and stuff. Visit the  
ghosts towns.

ROBERTA  
Who?

TREBBIE  
Some Jewish guy booked a few rooms.

At the sound of Jewish, Roberta becomes suspicious. Paranoid.

TREBBIE (CONT'D)  
Real polite. You know, I think he's  
the first Jew I ever spoke to. Not  
at all what I expected.

ROBERTA  
What did you say?

Trebbie's oblivious to Roberta's reaction.

TREBBIE

That he was real nice. I don't know what I was expecting. He didn't have a New York accent or nothing. Sounded just like a regular person.

ROBERTA

How do you know he was Jewish?

TREBBIE

His name's Schwartz, and he booked the rooms under Eidleberg.

ROBERTA

What they coming out here for?

TREBBIE

To see the sights. Asked all sorts of questions. You know, he didn't even try to Jew me down on the rate or nothing. Paid full price, just like a normal person would.

ROBERTA

What questions this Jew ask?

Chad Michael comes down the hall.

CHAD MICHAEL

Hey, Trebbie.

He sees the grave look on Roberta's face and hurries over.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Mama, what's wrong?

ROBERTA

We got trouble.

She turns to Trebbie, who now seems concerned as well.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

Tell Chad Michael what you told me, word for word.

Bracing himself for the bad news, Chad Michael lowers himself into his chair.

EXT. THEO'S PARENT'S HOUSE, BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

The fenced-in backyard of an upper middle class family, decorated for a party. Theo's family and friends have gathered to celebrate.

Theo and MUHAMMAD QURAISHI, early 30s, Iranian American, handsome, well dressed, stand in the center of the jubilant crowd, who congratulate and toast them on their success.

Pam sits over on the swing-set, lost in thought, quietly swinging while she sips her wine cooler.

Theo's sister, EVE, early 20s, African American, bubbly, warm/caring, notices Pam, excuses herself, then walks over, and sits in the swing beside Pam.

PAM

Eve, before you ask--

EVE

You're fine?

PAM

Yes.

EVE

You mad at Theo? I know my brother can be a jackass sometimes, but--

PAM

Theo and I are fine.

EVE

Then why are you over here sulking, and not over there--

She points to Theo, Muhammad, and the partying clan.

EVE (CONT'D)

Having fun. Celebrating the good news. This is good news, right?

PAM

Of course it is.

Eve gives her an "I know better" look.

PAM (CONT'D)

It's just--

EVE

An interracial couple and his Muslim best-friend driving through--

PAM  
That's not it.

Eve gives her that look again.

PAM (CONT'D)  
We're not exactly going to fit in.

EVE  
You don't know that.

PAM  
It's a very rural, conservative  
area. There's a lot of hate and  
prejudice out there.

EVE  
Seems to me, might be a little bit  
of that right here too.

That gives Pam pause. She's quiet as she thinks it over.

Eve gets off the swing.

EVE (CONT'D)  
People are people, Pam. Give them a  
chance, they'll give you one. It's  
the only way things are ever going  
to get better.

She walks back to the others, leaving Pam to contemplate.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - AFTERNOON

Chad Michael's pickup travels along the dirt road that cuts through miles of flat, barren desert. Nothing for as far as the eye can see. Finally, way off in the distance, a fenced in "compound" appears.

As they get closer "the compound" becomes visible. Two old campers inside a high chain-link fence that's topped with coiled barbed wire. Several large satellite dishes, a doghouse, and a storage shed.

HOUSTON, mid 50s, overweight, and LOGAN, lanky, early 30s, both Caucasian, rednecks, stand just inside the gate, watching the approaching pickup through the scopes of their automatic rifles. A snarling guard dog stands between them.

INT. CHAD MICHAEL'S PICKUP - AFTERNOON

Chad Michael pulls through the open gate and parks.

Scott looks out the windshield; Houston and Logan, rifles held ready, stand there, trying to look tough. Intimidating. The snarling dog stands between them.

Scott nods hello, but they just stoically stare back.

CHAD MICHAEL  
You ready?

Scott, trying to look tougher than he feels, nods yes, then shoves open the door, and climbs out.

The dog stops growling and, tail wagging, races over to Scott to get petted.

INT. HOUSTON'S CAMPER - AFTERNOON

A cramped, one room trailer with a filthy efficiency kitchen. The unmade bed's behind a curtain. There's no TV, but there are numerous radios, computers, and other electronic gadgets. Books, charts, and papers are scattered everywhere.

One wall is covered with large sheets of paper. Intricate graphs and flowcharts dedicated to different conspiracies. Some show links between the Rothschild's, The Federal Reserve, NATO, the US Government, the New World order, etc.

Houston stands in front of one of the charts, having just explained all the "connections" to Scott, who sits at the table, quietly digesting the new information. Studying the charts and connections.

HOUSTON  
Make sense?

Scott, still thinking, shrugs.

SCOTT  
I guess. It's just, well...

HOUSTON  
Ain't what they taught in school?

SCOTT  
No. It's the opposite of everything  
I been taught.

HOUSTON  
And just why do you suppose that  
is? I mean, who benefits from their  
lies? Why can't they just teach us  
the truth?

(MORE)

HOUSTON (CONT'D)  
Why make up lies like slavery or  
the Holocaust, or any of that other  
woke horseshit?

Not sure, Scott shrugs.

HOUSTON (CONT'D)  
Ever hear of the Federal Reserve?

SCOTT  
Yeah. They print money, make  
regulations, and stuff.

HOUSTON  
Thing is, it don't exist.

SCOTT  
What do you mean?

HOUSTON  
There's not a Federal Reserve.  
There are twelve banks the  
government designated to be federal  
banks, and they handed complete  
control of our economy over to  
them. And who controls the banks?

Scott answers without a second's hesitation.

SCOTT  
Jews.

HOUSTON  
Damn skippy they do.

SCOTT  
We gave control to them? Why?

HOUSTON  
They're Jews. Greedy bastards just  
take whatever they want.

SCOTT  
What's all this have to do with us?

HOUSTON  
Ease your horses, kid, I'm getting  
to it. Got to know your history,  
otherwise you just going to be  
ignorant. Besides, can't fight the  
enemy till you know who they are.

SCOTT  
Thought you said it was the Jews.

HOUSTON

Jews is the masterminds, but plenty of good Christians been fooled or coerced into helping them. Not to mention the Atheists love suckling up to them. And the Muslims been used by them Zionist. They riled them Arabs up so bad, they bomb, rape, and cut anything that moves.

SCOTT

They're trying to distract us with terrorism so we won't notice what they're really up to.

Houston smiles proudly.

HOUSTON

You learn quick.

He thinks of something.

HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Come on. Got something I want to show you.

INT. CONDO, LIVING ROOM - EVENING

A bright, cheery room. Large windows and sliding glass doors offer a view of the clean, sprawling city just outside the nicely decorated home of a professional couple.

Pam sits at the table, watching a show on her laptop. She's worried, afraid.

On screen, YVONNE MOORE, mid 40s, African American, wearing a brightly colored African headwrap and dress, sits on the sofa in her beautifully decorated living room.

YVONNE (V.O.)

Hate crimes are up over 25% since the election. We're literally under attack, yet all we hear from the right is my rights, my beliefs. Well, guess what, you narrow-minded bigots, not everything is about you. Your rights end where ours begin. You may have a right to a gun, but I have a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit--

Theo OPENS the front door and walks in.

THEO  
Babe, I'm back.

Pam quickly closes her laptop, forces herself to look calm and happy, then goes to greet Theo.

EXT. DESERT - EVENING

The sky is ablaze with color as the sun dips beneath the horizon. Vibrant reds, oranges, and yellows with shades of purple illuminate the brown, barren ground below.

Houston's old, windowless van's parked on the side of the highway. Houston stands off in the desert, staring through binoculars. He adjusts them, studying something.

Scott, confused and a little nervous, watches Houston.

SCOTT  
What's out there?

Houston offers Scott the binoculars.

HOUSTON  
You tell me.

Almost reluctantly, Scott takes the binoculars, raises them to his eyes, and stares off at something in the distance.

A tall, chain link fence with coiled barbed wire on top. A sign. Can't make it out. Scott adjusts the binoculars.

The sign comes into focus. "Government Property. No Trespassing under penalty of Federal law."

HOUSTON (CONT'D)  
Well? What do you see?

Beyond the fence is nothing. Just mile after mile of flat, barren desert. No base. No vehicles or buildings of any kind. Just mile after unending mile of desert, completely surrounded by the tall fence.

SCOTT  
There's nothing out there. Just...

He trails off, trying to figure out what he's looking at.

HOUSTON  
Just what?

Scott has no clue. He gives Houston a questioning look.

HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Why would the government come all the way out here and fence off thousands of acres of nothing but desert? What do they need all that empty space for?

SCOTT

Camps?

HOUSTON

Internment camps. Mass graves. Weapons storage. Whatever they need. Without nobody but us to watch over them.

Scott stares at Houston as the implications set in, then presses the binoculars to his eyes, and stares back at the government compound.

HOUSTON (CONT'D)

If we don't stop them. If we don't take a stand, here, now. If we don't fight them with everything we got, that, out there, is where we're all going to end up.

INT. TRENDY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Theo, Pam, Muhamad, Eve, and her date, JAMAL, mid 20s, African American, fit, handsome but reserved, sit at a table having drinks.

Pam's quiet. Pretending to follow the conversation. Her fake smile in place.

Jamal raises his glass to toast.

JAMAL

To our fledgling filmmakers. The Scorsese's of tomorrow.

THEO

It's just a travel doc, Jamal.

MUHAMMAD

But, Marcie said if she liked it--

THEO

Let's not get ahead of ourselves.

EVE

This is a huge opportunity, Theo,  
don't run it down.

THEO

You're right.

EVE

As always.

Theo smirks.

THEO

Look, Eve, it's not that it's not a  
great opportunity, I just don't  
want to get too excited about it.

EVE

Why the heck not?

THEO

Because, well,...

MUHAMMAD

We've been here before only to  
crash, burn, and be left  
brokenhearted with nothing but  
humiliation and doubt.

THEO

But this time's different?

MUHAMMAD

Marcie's the real deal. Besides,  
her assistant, Joel, I think he's  
her nephew. Funny as fuck. You'll  
meet him, he's coming with us this  
weekend. Anyway, he told me Marcie  
was really in a bind. Crew she  
originally hired to do this bailed--

Pam abruptly stands.

PAM

Excuse me.

THEO

Babe, you OK?

Pam, obviously upset, nods yes, then hurries through the  
dining room toward the ladies room.

Worried, the others watch her. Eve stands.

Theo starts to get up.

THEO (CONT'D)  
I should--

EVE  
Yeah, but it's probably about you.

She hurries after Pam.

LADIES ROOM

A nervous Pam paces in the large, opulent room.

A concerned Eve steps in.

EVE  
Pam--

PAM  
Don't.

She steps to the sink and checks her make-up in the mirror.

Eve walks over.

PAM (CONT'D)  
You know, I've never not been in a city? I mean, I've been other places. New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Vegas, but it was always a city.

EVE  
Are you really that nervous about going somewhere people might be a little different? How are things ever going to get better if we stay so separate?

PAM  
Did you know that hate crimes are up over twenty-five percent since the election? They were already at an all-time high, and--

EVE  
Then don't go.

PAM  
I couldn't do that to Theo.

EVE

Then stop being as bigoted as the people you're afraid of. People are people, not statistics. Stop worrying so much.

PAM

You're right. It's just...

EVE

I know, believe me I do, but things can't change until we all do.

She pats Pam's shoulder then walks out.

Pam stares at her reflection, thinking about what Eve said.

EXT. HOUSTON'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Several folding chairs have been set up around a firepit. Scott, Chad Michael, Houston, and Logan sit around the fire, having a beer and talking. The dog sits beside Scott, who pets her as he mulls something over.

LOGAN

Damn, boy. Houston done showed you where they going to build them FEMA camps. You seen it with your own two eyes, what more proof you need?

SCOTT

There wasn't anything there.

LOGAN

Exactly.

CHAD MICHAEL

Look, Scott, I know this is a lot to take it.

HOUSTON

But this here ain't just a crash course, it's preparation.

SCOTT

For what?

Houston gives him a solemn, conspiratorial look.

HOUSTON

A Jewish government agent rented some rooms down at the motor lodge.

(MORE)

HOUSTON (CONT'D)  
Said they was coming to inspect the  
ghost towns or something.

LOGAN  
Probably heard we was doing  
maneuvers, getting ready. We're  
becoming too much of a threat, and  
they're coming for us.

SCOTT  
Why?

The others look at him like he's crazy.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
I mean, um, how would they even  
know what we're doing out here?

LOGAN  
Oh, they got their ways. Believe  
you me, they watch everything, but,  
what they don't know is, we watch  
them too.

He nods at the array of satellite dishes.

Scott gives him a bewildered look.

SCOTT  
I thought those were for cable and  
internet.

Logan and Houston laugh condescendingly.

LOGAN  
Hardly. Houston got his own little  
monitoring station. Can check all  
the networks, chat rooms, message  
boards, and social media places all  
at once. Houston's got his finger  
on the pulse of everything. Ain't  
nothing happens without him hearing  
about it first.

CHAD MICHAEL  
What you hear about our visitors?

Houston gives him a grave look.

HOUSTON  
Not one word.

SCOTT

Isn't that good? I mean, maybe it is nothing.

HOUSTON

No. There is always talk. Speculation. Rumors. Bunch of Jewish government agents coming to the desert, and there's no one speculating as to why? That alone is frigging scary as hell.

LOGAN

Fact no one is talking about this proves how big it really is. How high up the cover-up goes.

Houston, Logan, and Chad Michael quietly, and solemnly, sip their beers, lost in thoughts of war.

Scott, starting to have his doubts, pets the dog as he stares up at the sky, and the billions of bright twinkling stars.

EXT. CONDO, TERRACE - NIGHT

Pam, in her pajamas, stands by the railing staring out at the bright lights of the sprawling city that stretches out for as far as she can see.

Theo, wearing boxers, steps up behind her. Pam leans back into his chest as his arms wrap around her waist.

THEO

You OK?

Pam nods.

THEO (CONT'D)

You should get some sleep. Marcie and Joel will be here pretty early.

Pam stares out at the city.

PAM

I'll be in in a minute.

THEO

You know, Pam, you don't have to--

She turns to face him.

PAM

I love you.

THEO  
I love you too.

PAM  
It's just, I'm tired. Tired of  
wondering if it's safe for us to go  
here or there. I'm tired of  
wondering what people will think or  
say. I just, it's not right, and  
it's not fair. We shouldn't have to  
worry about things like this.

THEO  
Babe, you've been dealing with this  
for four years.

PAM  
You've been dealing with it your  
whole life.

THEO  
And worse. Much, much worse.

Pam looks hurt.

PAM  
I'm sorry, Theo. Sorry you had to  
go through that. Sorry--

THEO  
Stop apologizing, Pam.

PAM  
I, I just--

Theo, truly in love with her, smiles.

THEO  
Want everything to be equitable and  
for people to be accepting?

PAM  
Is that so wrong?

THEO  
Wrong? No. Naïve? Maybe.

Pam looks a little hurt.

THEO (CONT'D)  
It's one of your more endearing  
qualities. You have a good heart.

A lascivious wink.

THEO (CONT'D)  
A nice ass too.

Pam slips her arms around his neck.

PAM  
Why thank you.

Theo's arms go around her waist. They pull each other close and kiss.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Built in the late 1970s, never updated and only sporadically cleaned since. Just after eight, Roberta and Chad Michael are the only customers. They sit at the counter speaking with the waitress, ALICE, late 50s, Caucasian, short, thin, tough.

ALICE  
Sure I can't get you something.

ROBERTA  
We're fine, Alice.

ALICE  
Been meaning to stop by, but, well,  
you know how it gets.

ROBERTA  
I appreciate that. We're getting  
along fine.

An uncomfortable pause.

ALICE  
As for that other thing--

ROBERTA  
All we're asking is, when they come  
in, you sit them by the window.

She gestures to the tables by the large plate glass windows which overlook the parking lot, and desert beyond.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)  
That's not asking so much, is it?

ALICE  
What if they don't want to sit  
there? I can't force them.

CHAD MICHAEL

Miss Alice, you ever known Jews to  
come inspect the desert before?

This gives Alice pause to think.

ROBERTA

We just want to listen in on what  
they're saying. Make sure they're  
not up to something they shouldn't  
be, is all.

Alice is skeptical, but only slightly.

ALICE

You sure? I don't want no trouble.

CHAD MICHAEL

Neither do we, which is why we're  
doing this. All you have to do is  
seat them by the window. Houston  
and me can sit out in the van, and  
hear everything they're saying,  
without them ever even knowing.

Alice thinks.

ALICE

Well, suppose it can't hurt none to  
keep an eye on them.

ROBERTA

Exactly, and if they have nothing  
to hide, no harm, no foul.

Alice, not happy about it, thinks a moment, then begrudgingly  
nods yes.

AFTERNOON

Lunch over, the diner's empty, except for Scott, who sits at  
the counter having a cup of coffee. Alice is behind the  
counter, staring out the front window at the parking lot then  
desert beyond. She seems nervous.

A phone's mounted on the wall behind the counter. It RINGS.  
Alice stares at it a moment, almost as if she's afraid.

Finally, she steps over to the phone and answers it. Her back  
turned to the counter, she listens for a moment, nods as if  
agreeing, then hangs up, and turns to face Scott.

ALICE  
That was your mama.

Noah stands in the kitchen, at the pass-through window, listening.

ALICE (CONT'D)  
They checked in and are heading this way for a bite, just like she figured.

Noah grins, a cruel, predatory grin.

EXT. DINER, PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Pam and MARCIE EIDLEBERG, mid 50s, Caucasian, wealthy, a well dressed business woman, chat as they walk across the parking lot. Theo and Muhammad are behind them. JOEL SCHWARTZ, early 20s, Caucasian, gay, stylish, cute and knows it, follows.

PAM  
So if--

MUHAMMAD  
(Teasing her)  
We stick to my very detailed and precise schedule.

MARCIE  
(To Pam, teasing)  
You're right. He can be more annoying than Joel.

MUHAMMAD  
Ouch. That was mean.

JOEL  
And fuck you all very much.

They laugh. Marcie stops at the sidewalk, and faces Pam.

MARCIE  
So, the schedule?

PAM  
I did some research online. There are five towns we really should check out.

(MORE)

PAM (CONT'D)

The sun doesn't set until about seven thirty, so we should be able to hit at least two today, the other three tomorrow, then we can go over the slides, and revisit any we want Sunday before we leave.

Impressed, Marcie smiles.

PAM (CONT'D)

I'm a bit of an over planner.

MARCIE

Never apologize for being efficient, kid.

She walks up the front walk. Pam smiles at Theo, who gives her a "you did it" grin.

As they approach the diner, Scott's on his way out. He opens the door, and holds it for them.

MARCIE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Scott nods. Marcie leads the others in. Joel's last. Scott doesn't pay attention to any of them, until Joel, who he definitely notices. Young, handsome, fit.

Scott's captivated by Joel. He can't look away, so he tries to look disinterested, casual, but Joel knows better. He flashes Scott a coy grin and winks as he passes him.

INT. DINER - AFTERNOON

Scott's eyes follow Joel, who smiles at him as he walks past, then stops.

JOEL

Oh crap. I left my cell at the Motor Lodge.

SCOTT

Wouldn't do you any good anyway.

JOEL

No signal? Seriously?

SCOTT

Not till you reach town. About thirty miles.

He nods at Alice, who stands behind the counter, making a fresh pot of coffee.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
If it's an emergency, sure Alice  
will let you use the landline.

JOEL  
Thanks, it can wait.

SCOTT  
Well, you all have a good one.

Scott nods good-bye to the group, gives Joel an awkward smile, then hurries out.

MARCIE  
(to Joel)  
See, not everyone here is a  
conspiracy minded bigot just  
waiting to vent the frustrations of  
their failed lives on anyone  
slightly different.

Pam gives Joel a surprised look as Alice grabs a few menus and walks toward them.

PAM  
(to Joel)  
You actually said that?

MARCIE  
You actually sound surprised.

JOEL  
She's new.

Marcie laughs.

EXT. DINER - AFTERNOON

Scott walks over to his pickup, opens the driver's door, then stares back at the diner.

Through the plate glass window he can see Alice leading Marcie and the others toward a booth by the window. Pam and Joel are last. They laugh and chat like old friends.

Joel glances out the window. His eyes meet Scott's. Joel grins. Self-conscious, Scott looks away.

His eyes survey the parking lot; Marcie's luxury SUV, Noah's oversized pickup, Alice's jeep, then, off to the side, parked by itself, is Houston's windowless van.

The sight of it fills Scott with fear, dread. He turns back to the diner.

Inside, Pam, Theo, Muhammad, Joel, and Marcie sit at the table. Drinks in front of them, they chat as they wait for their food. Pam and Joel have really hit it off. They joke with each other, cracking the others up.

Scott watches Joel laugh. Captivated by him. Enamored, he stares a moment, then he turns to look at the van, and his face goes hard.

His true feelings buried deep, Scott hops in his pickup, CLOSES the door, and STARTS the engine.

INT. VAN - AFTERNOON

Houston, wearing headphones, sits in back holding a transmitter with a microphone, which is attached to a large receiver pointed at the diner. Roberta and Chad Michael sit beside him.

ROBERTA

That faggot still talking about my Scott. As if any son of mine would--

CHAD MICHAEL

Mama, maybe you shouldn't--

ROBERTA

I need to be here. To be part of it. They've taken too much, Chad Michael. I can't just sit and do nothing. I have to fight back.

HOUSTON

While we still got something left to fight for.

ROBERTA

Amen to that.

CHAD MICHAEL

Then why are we just sitting hear listening to these libtards. We need to get one of them alone, interrogate them.

Houston flashes him a knowing grin.

INT. DINER, KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Noah, wearing his cook's uniform, stands at the counter in the kitchen, a few burgers, salads, and a bowl of soup are on the counter before him.

He nonchalantly glances around, to make sure no one's looking, then he pulls a small plastic bag, containing a white powder, out of his pocket.

Another quick look around, then, with a malicious grin, he sprinkles the powder into the soup, and stirs it in.

NOAH  
Choke on that, faggot.

He puts the plates on the pass-through to the dining room, then RINGS the bell.

EXT. MOTOR LODGE - AFTERNOON

Theo and Muhammad stand at the edge of the parking lot. Theo stares out at the seemingly endless desert that stretches out for as far as the eye can see.

Muhammad's admiring Marcie's SUV.

MUHAMMAD  
How much you think this thing cost?

THEO  
Don't.

MUHAMMAD  
Don't what?

THEO  
Start spending all the money you  
think we might make.

Pam and Marcie walk out of one of the rooms and toward them. Roberta stands in the open door, watching them.

MUHAMMAD  
I have a good feeling about this.

THEO  
You had a good feeling about--

MUHAMMAD  
Man, shut up. You have to think  
positive. Good things are coming.

MARCIE

Listen to him, Theo. I have a good  
feeling about you two.

Theo grins, then realizes something.

THEO

Joel isn't feeling better?

MARCIE

Worse. Poor kid's got it shooting  
out of both ends now.

MUHAMMAD

Should we call--

PAM

Roberta's going to stay with him.  
She'll call a doctor if he doesn't  
get better.

They glance back at the door.

Roberta smiles and waves.

MUHAMMAD

She's really nice.

PAM

Yeah, I, well, I was so wrong about  
the people here. Everyone's been so  
sweet, and helpful.

Theo slips his arm around Pam's waist and pulls her close.

THEO

See, people are people.

Roberta watches from the doorway, trying to hide her disgust  
as Theo leans down and kisses Pam on the lips.

ROBERTA

(under her breath)

Race trading whore. I'd skin you  
alive if you was one of mine.

She forces a smile, waves good-bye, steps back into the room,  
and closes the door.

EXT. GHOST TOWN, MAIN STREET - AFTERNOON

Theo and Pam walk down a dirt road, lined with dilapidated wooden buildings. She holds her camera, taking pictures as they stroll down what was once Main Street.

A general store, barber shop, restaurant, saloon. The Post Office and Sheriff's station. Abandoned over a hundred years ago and neglected since. Broken windows, missing and warped boards. Tumbleweeds. No sign of life.

THEO

Marcie said she definitely wants to work with us again. She really likes you.

Pam smiles.

THEO (CONT'D)

You know, if we get that feature, we can finally afford a proper wedding. Big old church, country club reception. Horse drawn carriage. The works.

Pam stares at his face. Into his eyes. She smiles.

PAM

I don't need any of that.

THEO

No? Wouldn't it be nice, just this once, to be able to show off to your sister?

PAM

Honestly, I don't care, and I'm tired of her games.

An idea forms. She gives him a mischievous grin.

PAM (CONT'D)

I just had a great idea.

THEO

Now, I'm really afraid.

PAM

I know the perfect place for us to get married.

Theo gives her a questioning look.

THEO  
Do I want to know?

Pam points to the end of the street, at the old church. A dilapidated building with rotting boards, broken windows, and a rickety steeple that rises high above all the other buildings. Once beautiful, it has a foreboding look.

THEO (CONT'D)  
That's not funny.

PAM  
Who's kidding?

THEO  
You want to tell our kids we got married in a condemned building just to spite your sister?

Pam grins.

THEO (CONT'D)  
What?

PAM  
I thought you didn't want to bring children into a dying world filled with hate and uncertainty?

THEO  
Yeah, well, you said you never wanted to go to the desert, yet here you are.

PAM  
Are you saying...?

Theo smiles.

THEO  
Yeah, I am, if you still...

Excited at his change of heart, Pam grins.

PAM  
Yes. God, yes.

She takes his hand.

PAM (CONT'D)  
Now, let's check it out. Show the kids how hip and nonconforming Mom and Dad were before we became suburbanite drudges.

She tries to lead Theo away, but he won't budge.

THEO  
Not only no, but Hell no.

Pam laughs. Teasing him.

PAM  
Come on. It'll be fun.

THEO  
Getting cut by broken boards,  
bitten by spiders and scorpions,  
having a building fall in on us.

PAM  
I thought you loved all things  
horror and spooky.

THEO  
Horror and spooky yes. Tetanus and  
hepatitis, not so much.

Pam pulls on his hand.

PAM  
Stop acting like an old lady and--

She stops joking. Drops his hand. Nervous, feeling someone watching her, she looks around. Slowly turning in a circle. Her eyes scouring the creepy old buildings.

THEO  
Pam?

She stares between the buildings, out into the vast desert the surrounds them on all sides. Nothing. No movement. Just abandoned buildings and barren desert.

THEO (CONT'D)  
Babe, what's wrong?

Pam sees nothing. Embarrassed, she tries to shake it off.

PAM  
Sorry. Someone must've walked over  
my grave.

THEO  
Excuse me?

PAM  
Just something my grandmother used  
to say. Come on. I've seen enough.

Theo gives her a teasing smirk.

THEO  
Place getting to you?

Pam looks around. Nervous. Afraid. Unsettled.

THEO (CONT'D)  
Babe, what is it?

PAM  
I don't know, but can we go. Now.

THEO  
Sure.

He slips his arm around her, and walks her back toward the parking area.

EXT. DESERT - AFTERNOON

Chad Michael, dressed in desert camouflage, lays flat on the ground, watching the town, which is a ways in the distance, through his rifle's high powered scope. Houston's van is parked behind him. It has camouflage netting draped over it.

Houston, also wearing camouflage, rifle in hand, hunches low as he hurries back from town, and over to Chad Michael. Then lays beside him.

HOUSTON  
They won't be going nowhere.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Still don't see why we can't just take them out. You know they wouldn't hesitate to kill us.

HOUSTON  
We have to know what they're up to, see who's monitoring them. Leave them stranded for a few hours, if no one comes for them, we know they just scouts on their own.

CHAD MICHAEL  
I didn't think of that.

Houston, feeling superior, grins.

HOUSTON  
Being a true warrior's more than just fighting.

CHAD MICHAEL

Yeah, well, I'm better with the  
fighting than the planning.

HOUSTON

Which is why we make a great team.

CHAD MICHAEL

Agreed. What do we do now? Wait?

Houston nods at the cooler behind Chad Michael.

HOUSTON

And eat. I'm so hungry I could eat  
the ass end out of a cow.

Chad Michael gives him a teasing grin as he gets the cooler.

CHAD MICHAEL

After dating Angie Thompson, eating  
out a cow's ass would be a step up.

HOUSTON

Ha, ha. Shut the hell up and get me  
a sandwich.

Chad Michael laughs as he opens the cooler.

INT. MOTOR LODGE, BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Joel kneels on the floor in front of the toilet. He closes  
the lid, then, with great difficulty, stands, FLUSHES, and  
steps to the sink.

The room spins. He puts his hands on the counter to steady  
himself, and stares at his reflection in the mirror.

JOEL

God, I look like shit.

Dizzy, he puts his hand on the wall for support as he steps  
to the door, and pulls it open. He stares into the bedroom.

Roberta, Scott, and Logan stand by the bed. Talking. They  
stop, and look over at Joel. Something about their faces  
seems odd. They look angry. Disgusted. Menacing.

ROBERTA

Feeling better? Jew.

Something's wrong. Joel, suddenly terrified, tries to close  
the door as Roberta, Scott, and Logan charge toward him.

Joel gets the door almost closed when someone slams into it. He leans against the door, desperately trying to use his body to wedge it closed, but he's too weak.

They shove against the door so hard it slams open. Smacking Joel in the face, and sending him stumbling backwards.

Roberta, Scott, and Logan storm in.

Frightened, Joel backs into the wall.

JOEL

What do you want?

ROBERTA

The truth. For a change.

JOEL

I don't understand--

ROBERTA

Get him.

Scott and Logan stride over to Joel, grab him by the arms, and roughly drag him toward the bedroom.

JOEL

No!

Too weak to struggle, Joel looks up at Scott. Their eyes meet. Joel gives him a frightened, pleading look.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Please--

Roberta's right behind them. She WHACKS the back of Joel's head as hard as she can.

ROBERTA

Shut up, faggot.

EXT. GHOST TOWN - AFTERNOON

Pam, Theo, Muhammad, and Marcie walk out of town, and toward the parking area where their SUV's the only vehicle.

MUHAMMAD

We have time to hit another town,  
or should we head back?

Marcie glances at her watch.

MARIE

We still have a few hours of  
daylight left.

THEO

Besides, not like it's going to be  
all that hard to find our way back.  
There's only one highway, and the  
land's so flat--

He sees something and is both shocked and angered.

THEO (CONT'D)

Shit.

Everyone looks around.

PAM

What is...?

She follows his gaze, then she sees it too.

PAM (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

The SUV has four flat tires. They race over, and walk around it. Gaping at the tires, which've been slashed to ribbons.

MUHAMMAD

Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck.

PAM

Who would do something like this?

They look around. The desert's so flat that they can see for miles. There's nothing. No signs of a car, or people. Just flat, barren land stretching into the horizon.

Pam starts to freak out.

PAM (CONT'D)

Oh my God. Oh my God.

THEO

Babe--

PAM

Don't say it's going to be OK,  
Theo. We're miles from nowhere, no  
cell service, and someone slashed  
our tires.

Theo looks her in the eye, and speaks calmly.

THEO

Pam, we don't know that.

MUHAMMAD

Yeah. They could've all  
simultaneously, and silently,  
exploded for no apparent reason.

THEO

You're so not helping.

Marcie takes charge.

MARCIE

Look, there has to be a rational  
explanation. So we just need to  
relax, take a deep breath, and  
assess our options.

MUHAMMAD

Options? We have no weapons, no way  
to defend ourselves--

MARCIE

And no reason to assume we might  
need to.

Muhammad points at the SUV.

MARCIE (CONT'D)

We've been all over this town,  
there's no one else here.

THEO

(to Pam)

Babe, you--

Muhammad loses it.

MUHAMMAD

What!? You saw someone?

PAM

No. I thought I felt someone  
watching us.

MUHAMMAD

And you didn't say anything?

PAM

I didn't think--

MUHAMMAD

That it was important!? Well, they  
slashed our fucking tires so I--

Theo steps between Muhammad and Pam.

THEO

Back off. She didn't see anyone.  
OK?

Realizing he went too far, Muhammad calms himself down.

MUHAMMAD

Yeah.

(to Pam)

I'm sorry.

Pam smiles to show everything is OK, then realizes something.

PAM

When we don't make it back, Roberta  
will send someone. Won't she?

MARCIE

Of course she will.

MUHAMMAD

What about whoever slashed our  
tires? That's not exactly a  
friendly gesture.

Pam remembers something.

PAM

The old church. The steeple's the  
tallest building in town. We could  
see for miles.

MUHAMMAD

Worth a shot.

He, Pam, and Marcie head towards the church.

THEO

This is a really bad idea.

Muhammad stops, and looks back. Marcie and Pam continue on.

MUHAMMAD

You have a better one?

No. Theo sighs, then jogs to catch up.

INT. MOTOR LODGE, JOEL'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Joel's tied to a chair, hands behind his back. His shirt's been ripped open, his face and chest are bruised and bloodied, and he's been crying. He's also vomited a few times. There's some on his shirt and the floor.

A furious, barely under control Roberta, who wears rubber gloves covered in Joel's blood, stands before him.

Scott stands meekly in the corner. Wanting to help Joel, but genuinely afraid of Roberta, and her finding out his secret.

ROBERTA

Why did you kill my husband? Why target my family? What the hell are you people up to? Answer me!

JOEL

Please. I told you. I don't know--

ROBERTA

Liar!

She SLAPS him as hard as she can. Joel's head whips to the side. Blood sprays the wall.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

Now, you tell me the truth or--

JOEL

Please, I'm not who you think--

Roberta SLAPS him. Again and again. Over and over. Harder and harder. Slowing losing control.

ROBERTA

You!

(slap)

Lying!

(slap)

Murdering!

(slap)

Bastard!

SCOTT

Mom!

Her face a mask of rage, Roberta whirls around to face him. She has several drops of Joel's blood on her face.

ROBERTA

What!?

SCOTT

I thought, ah, um, maybe you need a break. You got his blood on you.

Roberta holds up her gloved hands.

ROBERTA

And why the hell do you think I'm wearing these? A damn fashion statement? You think I want go get infected with that fag's AIDS?

SCOTT

But you got some on your face.

Roberta looks in the mirror, sees the drops of blood on her face, wipes them off with her forearm, then gives Joel a menacing glare.

ROBERTA

When I get back, you are going to tell me what I want to know. Understand me, Jew?

She storms out.

Scott waits until the door SLAMS shut, then he hurries over to Joel.

SCOTT

Please, you have to tell Mama what she wants to know.

Joel starts to cry.

JOEL

I don't know what the hell you want me to say.

SCOTT

The truth.

JOEL

What do you think that is? Just tell me what you want me to say.

SCOTT

Mama says you're a government agent.

JOEL

Do I look like a god damn secret agent? I'm a fucking unpaid intern, for Christ's sake.

He stares pleadingly up at Scott.

JOEL (CONT'D)  
Help me.

Scott stares down at Joel's bruised, terrified face with sympathy. Remorse? Feelings of infatuation? Longing? There's a connection between them. They both feel it.

JOEL (CONT'D)  
Please.

The door SLAMS open. Roberta, holding an iron, and Logan, a cruel anticipatory grin on his face and a rifle in his hands, stride in.

ROBERTA  
Time to up things a notch.

Logan seems practically giddy at the thought. Roberta flashes Joel a menacing glare as she walks over to the outlet.

Joel pleadingly stares up at Scott, who's frantically trying to think of a way to stop this.

JOEL  
Please, help me.

He watches with large, fearful eyes as Roberta plugs the iron in, then turns it on high.

JOEL (CONT'D)  
Scott, please, you can't let her--

Roberta's suspicious eyes fall on Scott.

ROBERTA  
My, but you two have certainly gotten awfully chummy.

Torn, Scott gives Roberta a pleading look.

SCOTT  
Mama, I was thinking--

ROBERTA  
Were you now? And what were you thinking? That, oh I don't know, maybe we should let him go? And just how long do you think it'd be before he leads one of them black OP teams back here to kill us like they killed your father.

SCOTT  
Dad had a heart attack.

Roberta SLAPS him across the face as hard as she can.

ROBERTA  
That's what they want you to think!  
You can't let them get inside your  
head. You got to--

Outside, a pickup truck HONKS its horn insistently.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)  
Oh, what fresh hell is this?  
(to Logan)  
Keep an eye on them.

She gives Scott a suspicious look.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)  
Both.

She storms out.

Logan, gun held up for show, gives Scott a taunting sneer.

LOGAN  
The queer Jew get to you? Maybe you  
turning Fag. That it, huh?

SCOTT  
Shut up, and get over here.

LOGAN  
Why? You want to kiss me or  
something?

Scott gently pushes Joel's head forward, then holds it there with one hand, while the other parts the hair on the back of his head.

SCOTT  
The Jew's got the mark of the beast  
on him.

Excited, Logan races over to take a look.

LOGAN  
Holy shit! Means we caught us one  
of them top level Luciferians,  
maybe even--

As he leans in to look, Scott headbutts his face so hard he shatters Logan's nose.

Logan screams in pain. He staggers backwards as his hands fly to his broken, bleeding nose.

Scott, having picked up Logan's rifle, bashes the butt of the gun into Logan's head, knocking him out. His body crumbles to the floor at Scott's feet.

Surprised and unsure what to do, Scott just stands there, gaping down at Logan's unconscious body.

SCOTT  
I think I killed him.

JOEL  
Who cares? Untie me.

Scott snaps out of it, sets the rifle down, then quickly unties Joel, and helps him to his feet.

They stand there a moment. Scott's hand on Joel's lower back to steady him. Their eyes meet. They gaze at each other, sharing a moment.

Roberta shoves open the door, strides in, sees them gazing at each other, and stops dead in her tracks.

Scott freezes. His frightened eyes meet Roberta's confused stare. She stands there, trying to process what she's seeing.

ROBERTA  
Scott, what are you... You're  
helping him?

Scott finds his strength, and defiantly stares back at Roberta, his hand on Joel's back, both to support as well as protect him.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)  
But why? Why would you--

SCOTT  
You know why.

Roberta, desperate to deny the truth, shakes her head no.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Yes, Mama, you do.

ROBERTA  
I don't know what you're--

SCOTT  
Mama, I'm--

Frantic, her mind reeling, knowing she has to stop him from finishing that sentence, Roberta yells out:

ROBERTA  
Noah! I need you boys in here. Now!

His heart breaking, Scott turns away from her, grabs his rifle, and, as fast as he can, helps Joel to the bathroom.

ROBERTA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Scott!

He stops at the bathroom door, and turns back. They stare a moment, both their hearts breaking.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)  
Please, don't do this. You got to resist him, baby.

BATHROOM

The room's small, with no other doors, and only a window above the toilet.

Scott helps Joel in, then closes the door.

ROBERTA (O.S.)  
Please, baby, you got to fight him!

SCOTT  
The window, go. Go.

He LOCKS the bathroom door, as Joel, groggy from the drugs and beating, stumbles over to the window, unlocks it, and struggles to open it, but it's no use. It's stuck.

Roberta BEATS on the bathroom door.

ROBERTA (O.S.)  
Scott! Think about what you're doing! Please, it's not too late.

Scott notices Joel having trouble, races over, and tries to open the window, but it won't budge.

NOAH (O.S.)  
What the--

ROBERTA (O.S.)  
Scott attacked Logan, then helped the prisoner escape.

Scott gives up, and grabs his rifle.

NOAH (O.S.)  
Where they at?

Using the butt of his rifle, Scott SMASHES the window, then uses it to clear out the broken glass.

ROBERTA (O.S.)  
Answer your question?

FOOTSTEPS as the men race across the room. Joel tries to climb out the window, but is too woozy.

Scott hears the men approaching, and shoves Joel out the window as Noah SLAMS his shoulder into the door.

Joel falls out the window as the door BREAKS. Noah SMASHES his way through the broken door.

Noah gives Scott a look of disgust as he raises his gun. Scott dives out the window.

EXT. BACK OF MOTEL - AFTERNOON

Noah sticks his head out the window, and sees Scott, arm around Joel to support him, racing towards Scott's pickup, which is parked at the end of the building.

NOAH  
Scott. Scott!

Scott walks Joel to the driver's door.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
We have to hunt you boys down,  
going to make it worse on you both.

Scott yanks open the door, helps Joel in, then turns back.

SCOTT  
You don't got to do this, Noah.

NOAH  
You turned your back on your  
family, someone's got to pay.

SCOTT  
Let us go. Please.

NOAH  
You know I can't do that. Give us  
the fag, and maybe--

Scott jumps into his pickup, SLAMS the door, STARTS the engine, shoves it into gear, and takes off.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Damn it!

He ducks back inside, and races towards the bedroom.

NOAH (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
They're getting away. Move it!

EXT. DESERT - AFTERNOON

Chad Michael and Houston lay on the ground, watching the town through their rifle scopes. Chad Michael's talking on a handheld radio.

ROBERTA (O.S.)  
He must've, I don't know, used some kind of mind control to turn your brother queer. It's the only thing I can think of.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Fisher Douglas warned us they might stoop to that.

ROBERTA (O.S.)  
Still, you never think it'll happen to one of your own.  
(starts to cry)  
Feels like he stabbed a knife right into my heart. Oh, Chad Michael, what am I--

CHAD MICHAEL  
I'll take care of everything, Mama.  
Don't you worry, just get somewhere's safe.

Chad Michael turns off the radio, hangs it from his belt, then looks at Houston, who absently gapes back at him, trying to digest what he's heard.

HOUSTON  
Scott, queer?

Chad Michael, rage building within him, glares back at the town as he nods yes.

HOUSTON (CONT'D)  
Jesus. Never saw that one coming.

Chad Michael gives Houston a cold, hard look.

CHAD MICHAEL  
You know what we got to do.

HOUSTON  
But he's your brother. He's--

CHAD MICHAEL  
One of them. He chose his side.  
Chose to break Mama's heart.

Houston suddenly looks nervous. Unsure.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
It's happening, Houston. The storm.  
It's here. They already come for my  
Dad, our land, now they take my  
little brother. Uh uh. This is  
where we draw the line. Here.  
Today. No more. Time we take it  
back. You with me?

Houston's terrified, but tries to look brave.

HOUSTON  
I ain't just here to cosplay.

A nervous laugh that he quickly suppresses

HOUSTON (CONT'D)  
No sir, I came to fight.

Chad Michael stares at Houston, assessing him. Making Houston even more nervous.

HOUSTON (CONT'D)  
I'm with you, Chad Michael. One  
hundred and ten percent.

CHAD MICHAEL  
You best be.

He glares at him a moment, then turns his attention back to the town. Surveying it. Deciding how to approach, then, hunched low, he runs off. Making his way through the desert terrain as if he were approaching enemy territory.

Houston watches him a moment, afraid, unsure. Finally, he musters his courage, and jogs after Chad Michael.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

A long, flat two lane road that stretches through the barren desert. Mile after unending mile of nothing but blacktop and sand, with only the occasional cactus to break up the desolate scenery.

INT. SCOTT'S PICKUP - AFTERNOON

The truck's stopped in the middle of the highway. An incredulous Joel sits in the passenger seat gaping at a terrified Scott.

JOEL  
Brokedown?

SCOTT  
You think I stopped here for shits  
and giggles. Damn it.

He stares out the back window.

JOEL  
You see them?

SCOTT  
No, but they can't be far behind.

Joel notices the CB.

JOEL  
Can't we call someone on that?

SCOTT  
And let them know where we are?

JOEL  
Shit? What are we going to do?

Scott tries to think.

JOEL (CONT'D)  
Scott.

Scott grabs the rifle mounted over the back window, then nods at the glovebox.

SCOTT  
There's a box of shells in the  
jockey box.

Joel opens the glove compartment, and takes out the shells.

JOEL  
Where are we going?

SCOTT  
There's a safe house a few miles  
from here.

He opens the driver's side door.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
If we hurry, we might make it.

JOEL  
Might?

He opens his door.

JOEL (CONT'D)  
Oh, that's comforting.

Both he and Scott climb out of the truck.

INT. CHURCH STEEPLE - AFTERNOON

A small wooden steeple. The bell long since gone, it looks more like a covered gazebo. A waist high wall, the boards warped and rotting. Arches on all four sides provide panoramic views of the dilapidated old town.

Marcie stands in one corner, Muhammad the other, so, between them, they have a clear view of the entire town, and the sprawling barren desert that surrounds them. The trap door leading down to the church is open.

MARCIE  
See anything?

MUHAMMAD  
Yeah.

They face each other.

MUHAMMAD (CONT'D)  
Sand. More sand, then way over  
there. Sand.

MARCIE  
Pam was right about you.

Muhammad flashes her a flirtatious smile.

MUHAMMAD  
Charming and irresistible?

MARCIE  
Annoying and full of yourself.

MUHAMMAD  
Ouch.

Only teasing, Marcie smiles.

MARCIE  
But cute.

Muhammad takes that as her flirting.

MUHAMMAD  
Thanks.

When Marcie turns back to stare out the arch at the town,  
Muhammad takes a moment to take in her trim figure.

MUHAMMAD (CONT'D)  
So, ah, Marcie, what do you say  
when we get back to civilization,  
you and I--

Flattered, Marcie smiles at him.

MARCIE  
Thanks, kid, but--

Muhammad gives her a teasing, flirty grin.

MUHAMMAD  
Too old for you?

Marcie laughs, then points at the wedding ring on her finger.

MARCIE  
Too married for you.

MUHAMMAD  
Can't blame a guy for trying.

Pam and Theo come up the ladder into the steeple.

MUHAMMAD (CONT'D)  
Find any weapons?

PAM  
Have you ever been inside a church?  
A Mosque? Pagan shrine? Anything?

MUHAMMAD  
I meant that we could use as  
weapons.

THEO

Uh huh.

(to Marcie)

How about you two? Anything?

Marcie smiles.

MARCIE

Just your friend over there--

(smiles at Muhammad)

Hitting on--

The BLAST of a high-powered rifle cuts her off mid-sentence. A split second later a bullet hits the back of Muhammad's head. It explodes. Splattering the others with bits of bone, brain, and blood.

Pam, Theo, and Marcie all scream in surprise, fear, and disgust. Muhammad stands there a moment, headless but still staring, then crumbles to the ground.

Pam, covered in blood, keeps screaming. Another BLAST of the rifle. The bullet zips past Pam's head, missing her by less than an inch.

Theo tackles her. Knocking her to the floor, and covering her body with his own to protect her.

Terrified, Marcie sinks to the floor. Pressed against the wooden wall. Shaking. Her frightened eyes meet Theo's. Neither knows what to do.

EXT. GHOST TOWN, MAIN STREET - AFTERNOON

Chad Michael stares through his rifle's scope, frustrated he doesn't have another shot.

He lowers his gun, then looks back at Houston, whose face is pale. Body trembling. Sweat covers his brow. He's scared. Petrified. The crotch and leg of his camouflage pants are soaked with urine.

HOUSTON

You, you killed that sand monkey.

Blowed his damn head clean off.

Chad Michael gives him a disgusted look.

CHAD MICHAEL

What the hell did you think we were going to do?

Houston, almost in shock, gapes at him.

HOUSTON  
You, you killed someone.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Casualty of war.

HOUSTON  
Call it what you want.

He drops his rifle at Chad Michael's feet.

HOUSTON (CONT'D)  
I'm out.

He turns and walks away. Down the street, towards his van which is parked at the far end of town. Terrified. Desperate to be anywhere else, he keeps his eyes fixed on his van.

Chad Michael watches him through the scope of his gun.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Houston.

Houston stops and turns around. He stares at Chad Michael, who holds his gun up, ready to fire.

They stand there, eyes locked a moment. Feeling confident Chad Michael isn't going to shoot, Houston nods his thanks, then turns to walk away.

A loud BLAST as Chad Michael fires the gun. The bullet hits the back of Houston's knee, shattering it. Blowing off the entire bottom part of his leg.

Houston shrieks in agony, and falls to the ground. Wriggling in pain. Crying. Screaming. Blood spurting from his stump.

Chad Michael walks over, and stares down at Houston. Looks him right in his wide, terrified eyes.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You fucking poser.

Another BLAST from the rifle. Houston's other kneecap explodes. Severing the leg. Houston shrieks in pain.

Chad Michael leans down, pulls the pistol from Houston's waistband, and aims it at his chest.

HOUSTON  
Please, don't kill me.

CHAD MICHAEL  
I ain't going to kill you.

He FIRES twice in rapid succession. Hitting Houston in both of his shoulders. Shattering each shoulder socket.

Houston, blood pouring from his shoulders as well as spurting from his stumps, wails in agony.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Going to let you bleed out while  
the vultures eat you alive. Heard  
they peck out your eyes first.

(winks)  
Let's see if that's just an old  
wives tale, what do say? Huh? Bet  
it's true.

He gives Houston a cruel wink, then turns and walks towards the church.

HOUSTON  
You can't just leave me like this.

Chad Michael turns and glares at him.

CHAD MICHAEL  
It's better than you deserve, you  
traitorous piece of shit.

He looks up at the church steeple to see Theo, Pam, and Marcie staring down at him.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You all come down, I promise to  
kill you quick. You make me come up  
there and--

He motions over his shoulder at Houston. In too much pain to speak, he just cries and screams.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
I'll make you beg to die.

INT. CHURCH STEEPLE - AFTERNOON

Theo, shirtless, Pam, and Marcie gape down at Chad Michael, looking like an armed madman standing in the street. A sobbing Houston lies bleeding a few feet behind him.

CHAD MICHAEL  
You've got five minutes, then I'm  
coming in.

Theo, Pam, and Marcie kneel down, out of site. Muhammad's headless corpse lays on the other side of the steeple. Theo's shirt draped over it's torso.

The wooden trapdoor's up. Marcie SLAMS it down, then slides the bolt. Locking it.

PAM

And what's that going to do?

MARCIE

I don't know, but I have to do something. We can't just sit here.

THEO

We have to get out of here.

MARCIE

How? Jump? Fly?

PAM

We're trapped.

They're all quiet, desperately trying to think of a plan.

EXT. SCOTT'S PICKUP - PARKED - AFTERNOON

Noah leans in the open driver's door, talking on the CB.

NOAH

Engine's still warm. Couldn't have gotten far.

BUCK (V.O.)

On foot, only one place to go.

NOAH

We got this, Pa.

BUCK (V.O.)

Meet you out there, and Noah.

NOAH

Yes, Pa.

BUCK (V.O.)

You fuck this up, boys going to be using you for target practice. You ten four that?

Knowing it's no bluff, Noah nods.

NOAH

Yes, sir. Won't let you down.

BUCK (V.O.)

You do, it'll be for the last time.

Noah drops the receiver, then turns to face Logan and Austin.

NOAH

We find them, kill them, and leave  
no fucking trace.

Logan and Austin WHISTLE and CHEER in excitement.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Most of the windows have been shattered. Only the old pews and altar remain. All are covered with decades of cobwebs and dust. Some of the floorboards are warped, many are broken. A ladder against the far wall leads up to the steeple.

Chad Michael, rifle held ready, kicks open the double doors just as Pam and Marcie start down the ladder. Pam's part way down, Marcie's just started.

Chad Michael and Pam make eye contact. She looks terrified, like a deer caught in headlights.

CHAD MICHAEL

Gotcha.

He rises his rifle, and takes aim.

PAM

(to Marcie)

Go back, go back!

Marcie scrabbles back into the Steeple. Pam quickly follows. Climbing up as fast as she can. Just as she reaches the top, the BLAST of Chad Michael's rifle rattles the building, scaring the birds roosting in the rafters.

As the birds SHRIEK and fly off, Marcie yanks Pam up into the steeple. The bullet sails past, narrowly missing her. They SLAM the trapdoor down, and BOLT it.

CHAD MICHAEL

(chuckles)

Oh yeah, that'll protect you from  
fucking bullets.

With a predatory grin, he strides down the main aisle towards the ladder in back. Eyes constantly on the lookout.

Surveying his surroundings. Listening intently, but the only sounds are his FOOTSTEPS, and the CREAK of the floorboards.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to the Ceiling)

Come on, you make this easy on me,  
I give you my word, as a gentleman,  
I'll make it as quick and painless--

Theo lies on the floor, underneath one of the pews, waiting. When Chad Michael passes, he leaps out behind him.

Chad Michael spins around. Theo grabs the rifle. They struggle. A BLAST as the gun accidentally fires.

The bullet sails across the church, and blows a hole in the ceiling in the far corner. Both Marcie and Pam SCREAM

THEO

No!

He lets go of the gun, and hits Chad Michael with a right-hook that sends him stumbling backwards.

Chad Michael tries to recover and raise his rifle, but Theo's on him. Pummeling him with a barrage of punches.

The hits come fast and furious. Chad Michael drops the rifle, and throws his hands in front of his face to protect himself.

The rifle hits the floor. Another BLAST. This time the bullet knocks a hole in side the wall.

Theo hits Chad Michael with a powerful punch that knocks him down. He lands on his back with a loud THUMP.

Theo dives on top of Chad Michael, meaning to pin him to the ground. Instead, his eyes fly open wide. He gasps, struggling to draw a breath.

Chad Michael, having plunged his hunting knife deep into Theo's side, grins as he shoves Theo off him, then stands.

He grins down at Theo, who lies on his back, the knife shoved in practically to the hilt.

Chad Michael leans over, and plucks the knife out of Theo, who screams in pain.

CHAD MICHAEL

(winks)

Sorry, but I ain't done playing  
with that yet.

He leans close, so he can whisper in Theo's ear.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Don't worry, boy. I'll fuck your  
woman proper before I carve her up.  
The old Kike too.

THEO  
(Weakly)  
I'll kill you.

Chad Michael laughs.

CHAD MICHAEL  
Boy, you going to arrive in Hell  
long before I cum in your woman.

With a wink, he stands.

THEO  
You sick bastard.

He struggles to get up, desperate to save Pam, but he just  
doesn't have the strength.

CHAD MICHAEL  
At least you get to listen to me  
fuck her while you die, boy.

He turns to walk towards the ladder. Pam stands right in  
front of him.

CHAD MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Hey, darling, I was just coming to--

He notices a shard of broken window in her hand.

Before he can react, Pam swings the glass. The jagged edge  
tears open his throat. Slicing his carotid. Blood spurts out.

Chad Michael's hands fly to his throat. Desperately trying to  
cover the wound, but it's no use. Blood seeps through his  
fingers. Spilling down his arms and chest.

Glass held ready to strike again, Pam watches as Chad  
Michael, a confused look on his face, drops to his knees.

He tries to raise his knife but doesn't have the strength. He  
topples over. Sprawled out on the old wooden floor. Blood  
seeping from his wound. His breathing becomes ragged.  
Shallow.

Pam races over to Theo, who tries to sit up.

PAM  
Don't.

She takes off her outer blouse, and presses it to his wound.

THEO  
Marcie?

Marcie, her shoulder bloody, walks over.

MARCIE  
Just grazed my shoulder. You?

THEO  
I don't think he hit anything  
major. Hurts like fuck though.

MARCIE  
Can you walk?

THEO  
I can try.

Marcie and Pam help Theo, who struggles and grunts, but manages to get to his feet. Pam has her shirt pressed against his wound the whole time.

Theo nods at Chad Michael, who's still alive, but barely.

THEO (CONT'D)  
What about him?

Marcie notices the pistol strapped to Chad Michael's waist.

She strides over, grabs the gun, and SHOOTS Chad Michael in the chest several times.

MARCIE  
(to Theo)  
There. Problem solved.

THEO  
Remind me not to piss you off.

Marcie smiles, tucks the gun into her waistband, then helps Pam walk Theo toward the door.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE, KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

The house is old, but clean, furnished, and well stocked.

Both Joel and Scott are sunburnt, sweaty, and exhausted. Joel, his face and chest wet, leans against the counter, sipping a glass of water while Scott leans into the sink, splashing cool water on his face, chest, and hair.

He finishes, then turns to Joel, who picks another glass of water off the counter, and hands it to him.

JOEL

What now?

SCOTT

There's a CB in the basement. We barricade ourselves down there, call for help, and pray they get here before Noah and his boys.

JOEL

That's your plan?

SCOTT

Afraid so.

He down his water, sets the glass on the counter, and picks up his rifle.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Come on.

He starts for the hall, that leads to the basement door then living room.

JOEL (O.S.)

Scott.

Scott turns around.

Joel's standing by the counter, looking pensive.

JOEL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. If we hadn't come here--

SCOTT

Don't.

JOEL

It's just, well, I know what you gave up.

Scott takes Joel's hand.

SCOTT

If they can't accept me, I guess I never had them to begin with. Now--

(MORE)

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
(nods at the hall)  
Come on, best get downstairs.

He leads Joel across the kitchen, toward the hall.

As Scott steps into the hall, Noah lunges out of the shadows, and hits Scott in the face as hard as he can.

Momentarily stunned, Scott staggers back. Noah rips the rifle out of his hands.

Scott tries to throw a punch, but Noah easily bats it away, and hits Scott with another powerful jab to the face.

His nose and lip busted and bloody, Scott stumbles backward. He turns to Joel.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Run!

He launches himself at Noah. Punching with all his might, but Noah's stronger, faster, and a better fighter. He easily bats Scott's punches aside, and counters with his own stronger, more powerful punches, all of which land.

Joel races to the back-door, unlocks it, and yanks it open.

Logan and Austin stand right outside the door.

LOGAN  
Going somewhere, faggot.

Joel tries to slam the door shut, but Logan grabs the edge, to stop it. Instead Joel slams the door on Logan's fingers.

LOGAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Motherfucker!

He SLAMS into the door, forcing it open and sending Joel stumbling a few feet.

Joel turns to run the other way. Scott, beaten and bloody, lies unconscious on the floor.

Noah stands over him, grinning at Joel, blocking the hall.

NOAH  
You ain't going nowhere, faggot.

Austin comes up behind Joel, and grabs him. Arms around him, holding him in place.

AUSTIN  
Gotcha.

Joel grinds his butt into Austin's crotch.

JOEL  
I can feel you cock.

Disgusted, Austin shoves Joel away.

Joel stumbles into the counter, grabs the toaster, and, with all his might, swings it.

The toaster SMACKS Austin in the head, sending him stumbling.

Logan charges at Joel, who kicks him in the face with a roundhouse kick, then spins around and hits him with a jab to the face.

Joel shoves Logan out of the way, then races toward the back door, but Noah grabs his shoulder, spins him around, and hits him in the face so hard Joel staggers backwards.

Scott comes to, sees Noah charging at Joel, and grabs his leg, tripping him.

As Noah falls, Scott yells.

SCOTT  
Run!

Joel rushes to Scott, to help him up.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Just run!

Before he can, Austin and Logan each grab one of Joel's arms and yank him to his feet. Joel struggles and kicks at their legs, but they hold on.

Noah glares at Joel.

NOAH  
Pretty tough, for a faggot.

Scott stands.

SCOTT  
Leave him alone.

NOAH  
Awe, you sweet on him?

He laughs as he punches Joel in the face, hard.

SCOTT  
You bastard.

Noah hits Scott in the face, again and again.

JOEL  
Leave him alone!

Noah hits Scott, this time so hard Scott falls to the floor.

Joel struggles, desperate to help.

JOEL (CONT'D)  
You fucking coward!

NOAH  
(to Austin and Logan)  
Get that out of my sight.

Austin and Logan drag a struggling Joel out the back door.

Noah sneers down at Scott, who glares up at him through swollen eyes.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Get up.

He kicks Scott repeatedly until he struggles to his feet, then, in great pain, shuffles toward the back-door.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE, BACK YARD - AFTERNOON

Scott and Joel kneel on the ground. Logan and Austin stand behind them, rifles aimed at their heads. Noah stands in front. Rifle over his shoulder, pistol in hand.

NOAH  
You two perverts have been found guilty of crimes against nature, and of trying to undermine these here United States of--

Scott's resigned. Joel defiant.

JOEL  
Found guilty by who? You inbred fuck! What gives you the right--

NOAH  
Shut up, faggot.

He swings his pistol at Joel. Smacking him across the face so hard his cheek's ripped open, and he's knocked to the ground.

Scott tries to leap to Joel's defense, but Noah presses his pistol against Scott's forehead, and COCKS the trigger.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
You freaks are going to die. Now,  
on account I'm a Christian, I'm  
willing to kill you quick, but--

SHERIFF BUCK TAYLOR, late 60's, tough, weathered, comes  
around the side of the house, sees them, and, disgusted,  
walks over.

BUCK  
Noah, just what in the Hell--

Joel sees Buck and breathes a sigh of relief.

JOEL  
Oh thank God.

BUCK  
Do you boys think you are doing?

NOAH  
We--

JOEL  
They kidnapped us.

SCOTT  
(whispers)  
Don't.

BUCK  
(to Noah)  
Well, boy?

NOAH  
Just doing what you told me to.

JOEL  
What the fuck!? You're a cop,  
you're supposed--

BUCK  
(glares at Joel)  
Faggot, you in enough trouble. Now,  
you want to die with all your parts  
still attached, I suggest you shut  
your perverted pie-hole.

Stunned, Joel just gapes at him.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
(to Noah)  
Boy, you really are an idiot. I  
told you to get rid--

Joel leaps up.

JOEL  
What the hell's wrong--

Scott grabs Joel's hand, and pulls him down.

BUCK  
That's the first sensible thing you  
done all day.

He shakes his head in disgust.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
As if your poor mama hadn't  
suffered enough.

He spits at Scott, hitting him in the face.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
You make me sick.  
(to Noah)  
I told you to make sure there was  
no trace of them.

Noah nods at a few gasoline cans over by the shed.

NOAH  
Was going to burn them.

BUCK  
Burn them?

Noah nods.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
You planned on burning the bodies?  
Now, isn't that a dandy idea. Just  
fine and dandy.

Noah, thinking he's about to be praised, smiles.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
Of course, you've got the smoke and  
God awful stench to try to explain,  
and then you've still got the  
problem of what to do with the damn  
bodies you were trying to get rid  
of in the first place. Or was you  
just planning on leaving their  
charred bones laying around?

Noah thinks, then timidly answers.

NOAH

We could bury them in the desert.

BUCK

Oh, I see. So, you kill them, burn them, transport the bodies, then bury them? That's brilliant, just fucking brilliant, if you don't mind leaving forensic evidence all over the place. Not to mention, you ain't never going to get the stank of burnt fag out of your truck. No.

He thinks a moment.

BUCK (CONT'D)

Take them out into the desert and bury them. Deep.

He gives Scott and Joel a cruel grin

BUCK (CONT'D)

And don't waste no bullets on them neither.

Noah, Logan, and Austin CHUCKLE. A loud HONK from the front yard. Someone frantically HONKS their horn over and over.

NOAH

What the--

BUCK

Never you mind that. I'll take care of it, just get this--  
(nods at Scott and Joel)  
Mess cleaned up.

He walks towards the corner of the house, but stops, and looks back.

BUCK (CONT'D)

(to Logan and Austin)

And you two numbskulls, get rid of that--  
(nods at the gasoline)  
And make damn sure you clean up any blood inside. I don't want no trace of those two--  
(nods at Scott and Joel)  
Anywhere. Got it?

He turns, and strides off. Rounding the corner of the house.

Logan slings his rifle over his shoulder, and jogs over to the gas cans while Austin hurries inside to clean up.

Noah grins down at the petrified Scott and Joel.

NOAH  
You heard Dad. Time to be going.

He reaches down, and grabs Scott by front of his shirt, meaning to yank him to his feet.

Scott pulls his gravity knife out of his sock, flips it open, then, as Noah pulls him to his feet, Scott stabs the knife upwards with all his might.

The long sharp blade of Scott's knife stabs into the flesh under Noah's chin, goes straight through his mouth, and deep into his brain, killing him.

Noah's body crumbles to the ground, dropping his rifle, which Joel quickly scoops up.

Logan hears the commotion, spins around, and raises his rifle, too late.

Joel stands there, Noah's rifle aimed at Logan.

LOGAN  
(chuckles)  
Boy, we both know you couldn't hit  
the side of a barn if you--

Joel FIRES the gun. The bullet zips past Logan's head and hits the light on the shed behind him. The bulb SHATTERS.

Joel aims the gun at Logan's head.

JOEL  
It's been a real long day, so,  
don't fuck with me, OK?

Scott watches with an amused grin as a disgusted Logan drops his rifle and raises his hands.

SCOTT  
(to Joel)  
Now, where the hell did a city boy  
learn to fight like you?

Joel, his rifle trained on Logan, gives Scott a flirty grin.

JOEL

Uncle Dave was a Marine. He always said I was too fabulous not to be able to take care of myself.

Scott laughs. A gun FIRES. A bullet hits Joel in the back and flies out his chest. Blood shoots from the wound as the impact throws him forward.

As if in slow motion, Scott sees Joel stagger a few feet before collapsing onto the ground.

SCOTT

No!

He turns as Austin, standing on the back porch, aims his rifle at Scott.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE, FRONT YARD - AFTERNOON

The van's parked in the driveway. Marcie, her shoulder bandaged, and Pam stand by the open driver's door. Pam leans in, and HONKS the horn over and over until they, finally, see Buck come walking around the house.

MARCIE

Thank God.

They race to the back of the van, and wait for Buck.

As he approaches, they hear a gun FIRE.

MARCIE (CONT'D)

What was that?

BUCK

Slight rodent problem. Now, tell me, what is so all fire--

PAM

My fiancé, he's hurt real bad.

Buck hurries over.

BUCK

My word, what happened?

He sees Marcie's shoulder, and is concerned.

BUCK (CONT'D)

You're hurt. Let me take a look at--

MARCIE  
I'll be fine, but Theo, he's in  
rough shape.

PAM  
Please. You have to help him.

BUCK  
Certainly do what I can.

Pam yanks open the back-door, looks inside, and screams.

PAM  
No!

Theo, having died on the way over, lies on his back. Blood's soaked through his bandage. Arms lay limply by his side. His eyes stare blankly up at the ceiling.

PAM (CONT'D)  
Oh God, no.

Marcie wraps her arms around Pam to console her, and walks her away as Buck steps up to take a look.

He stares at Theo's body a moment, then turns to Marcie, who holds a crying Pam.

BUCK  
Sorry for your loss, miss, but, if  
it makes you feel any better--

He draws his pistol, and aims it at them.

BUCK (CONT'D)  
You're both about join that negro  
in Hell.

He COCKS his gun.

MARCIE  
Please. You don't have--

BUCK  
No, I don't, although I freely  
admit, I am going to enjoy it.

The BLAST of a gun. Buck stands there. Stunned, then glances down at his shirt. There's a widening circle of blood spreading across his chest.

He falls forward. His corpse hits the ground face first. There's a bullet wound in the center of his back.

Theo's sitting up in the van. Chad Michael's smoking pistol clutched in his trembling, weak hands.

Pam rushes over to his side.

PAM  
Are you--

Theo pulls her close and kisses her on the lips.

THEO  
I am now.

Marcie watches them with a smile. A gun FIRES.

SCOTT (O.S.)  
No!

Knowing something's terribly wrong, Marcie turns to look back at the house.

MARCIE  
Joel!

Pam watches as Marcie sprints toward the side of the house.

She looks back at Theo, who hands her Chad Michael's gun.

THEO  
I love you.

Pam takes the gun, kisses Theo, then races after Marcie.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE, BACK YARD - AFTERNOON

Marcie races around the side of the house, then, a scream trapped in her throat, stops in her tracks, and, trying to process what she's seeing, gapes ahead.

Both Joel and Scott lie on the ground, about several yards apart. Logan's walking toward Scott, who lies face down. Austin's on the back porch holding a rifle.

Before Marcie has time to scream, Austin aims his gun at her and FIRES.

The bullet sails past her head and HITS the house right behind her.

Marcie races back around the side of the house, and presses against it as Austin FIRES again.

Logan walks over to Scott, and nudges his side with his rifle. Scott doesn't move, so he pokes him, hard. Nothing.

Logan laughs then turns to Austin.

LOGAN  
Think you done killed the little--

Scott lunges up and drives his knife deep into Logan's thigh.

Logan screams and drops his rifle. Scott hits him with a right hook that sends Logan stumbling.

A rifle FIRES. The bullet zips past Scott, just missing him.

Austin stands on the back porch, his rifle trained on Scott.

AUSTIN  
I always did know there was  
something off about you.

He looks through his scope, aiming for Scott's head.

Pam steps up behind him, and presses Chad Michael's pistol to the back of his head.

PAM  
Drop it.

Austin drops his rifle, then spins around, grabs Pam's hand, and raises it, and the gun, so it's pointing up. The gun FIRES, but the bullet shoots up in the air.

With his free hand, Austin grabs Pam's throat. Wrapping his fingers around it and squeezing hard, strangling her.

Unable to breath, Pam releases the gun, and desperately claws at Austin's fingers, which just squeeze harder.

Austin has both hands wrapped around Pam's neck, squeezing as hard as he can.

Her face turning red, Pam frantically beats and scratches at Austin's hands, but it's no use. She's getting weak.

Scott sees Austin strangling Pam, and races to help.

Logan comes up behind Scott, and wraps an arm around his throat, trying to get Scott in chokehold.

Scott drives both of elbows back as hard as he can, ramming them into Logan's stomach with enough force to knock the wind out of him.

As Logan doubles over, Scott slams head backward into Logan's face so hard he shatters his already broken nose.

Logan screams, his hands go to his bleeding nose, and he staggers away.

LOGAN  
My fucking nose!

Scott still has the knife in his hand, he lunges at Logan, who dodges out of the way, then hits Scott with a powerful left jab to the face followed by a right hook.

Dazed, Scott stumbles backward. He raises his hands to defend himself, but Logan's punches are fast and hard.

Scott takes a swing at Logan, who hits Scott several times in the face, before delivering an upper cut to Scott's stomach.

The wind knocked out of him, Scott doubles over, and Logan hits him with an upper cut to the jaw.

Scott falls to the ground, and starts to get up, but Logan kicks him in the chest, knocking him to the ground.

Logan grins down at Scott, then notices Scott's knife in the grass, several feet away.

Scott looks over and sees Joel, just a few yards away.

Joel's on his back, his shirt drenched in his own blood, injured, weak, but alive. He looks over at Scott.

JOEL  
If this is our first date, it fucking sucks.

Scott chuckles, then looks up.

A grinning Logan stares down at him. He holds up the knife.

LOGAN  
Chad Michael's knife?

SCOTT  
Was. He gave it to me.

LOGAN  
Then it's fitting I use it to gut you with.

Scott grins.

LOGAN (CONT'D)  
What's so funny?

Scott leaps up, hits Logan in the midsection, and knocks him to the ground.

As Scott tackles him, Logan stabs the knife deep into Scott's back. Driving it in all the way in to the hilt, but Scott's undeterred.

He slams Logan to the ground, squats on his chest to pin him down, then hits his face. Again and again. Right. Left. Right. Left. Beating him bloody until Logan's unconscious.

Pam claws and pounds at Austin's hands, but it's no use. His grip's too strong. She's starting to lose her strength. Her fighting gets weaker. She's close to passing out.

Austin gives her a gloating smirk which reinvigorates her.

AUSTIN  
Weak little bitch can't even put up  
a decent--

With all her strength, Pam reaches up and drives her manicured thumb into Austin's eye, piercing the pupil. Pushing it in as deep as she can.

Blood running from his puncture eye, Austin screams in pain and shoves Pam as hard as he can. She stumbles backwards, pulling her thumb out of his eye socket.

AUSTIN (CONT'D)  
You fucking cunt!

His hand covering his bleeding eye, Austin stumbles around.

MARCIE (O.S.)  
Hey, asshole.

Austin spins around.

Marcie's right behind him.

Before Austin can react, Marcie swings the brick in her hand as hard as she can.

The brick smashes into the side of Austin's head, cracking his skull and killing him.

His body falls at Marcie's feet.

MARCIE (CONT'D)  
I hate that word.  
(to Pam)  
You OK, kid?

Pam, rubbing her bruised throat, nods.

Marcie remembers.

MARCIE (CONT'D)  
Joel!

She and Pam race toward Joel.

Scott's kneeling beside him. Pam stands back as Marcie kneels on the other side of Joel, who's on his back, weakly holding Scott's hand.

MARCIE (CONT'D)  
Joel, sweetie, are you alright?

Joel looks up, it takes him a moment to focus on her.

JOEL  
Aunt Marcie?

Marcie grabs Joel's other hand.

MARCIE  
I'm here, sweetie.

He stares at her a moment.

JOEL  
God, your hair looks hideous.

Marcie, Pam, and Scott laugh.

MARCIE  
He's going to be OK.

Police SIRENS in the distance, racing toward them.

PAM  
(hoarse)  
I think we all are.

LOGAN (O.S.)  
Not fucking likely, bitch.

They look over to see Logan standing a few yards away, aiming his rifle at them.

He aims at Scott's head.

LOGAN (CONT'D)  
I am so going to enjoy--

The Sheriff's cruiser, having sped around the house, SLAMS into Logan so hard the impact throws him several feet.

Logan crashes to the ground. Bloody, gripping his rifle with his unbroken arm, he struggles into a sitting position, then, with a grin revealing several broken teeth, he aims his rifle at Scott.

LOGAN (CONT'D)  
I'm going to take you to Hell with--

The cruiser HITS him again, then rolls over him. The tire crushing his skull before it stops.

Theo, weak from blood loss, opens the driver's door.

THEO  
Bubba left the keys in it.

Everyone sighs in relief. Pam leaps up, races over to Theo, and hugs him.

PAM  
I want to get married. Today.

THEO  
Pam,--

PAM  
I almost lost you, I can't risk--

THEO  
It's not that I don't want to--

Marcie stands.

MARCIE  
Um, I'm actually an ordained minister. I did it online, I've married a few friends.

SCOTT  
You all can get a marriage license down at the courthouse.

Theo grins at Pam.

THEO  
I guess we're getting married, if I don't die from blood loss.

SIRENS blare as police cruisers and ambulances pull up to the front of the house. Relieved, Pam smiles.

PAM

Looks like you're stuck, mister,  
because the Calvary's arrived.

Car doors OPEN then SLAM shut. VOICES. Someone SHOOTS orders. Marcie gives Scott a nervous look.

MARCIE

Are we sure they're here to help us  
and not--  
(nods at the dead bodies)  
Reinforcements for them?

Scott, unsure, shrugs, then nervously stares at the corner of the house, waiting.

FOOTSTEPS racing towards them. Scott looks down at Joel as he squeezes his hand.

SCOTT

No matter what happens, I'm glad I  
met you.

Joel, in pain, gives him a teasing grin.

JOEL

You really suck at this whole  
reassuring thing.

Scott grins.

MARCIE (O.S.)

Scott!

Scott looks over to see Deputy Wheeler and several other officers, their weapons drawn and ready, approaching.

Scott sighs in relief.

SCOTT

It's alright.

Marcie gives him a questioning look.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

He's my ex's brother. I trust him  
with my life.

MARCIE

Yeah, but you're trusting him with  
ours too.

She nervously watches as Deputy Wheeler, his gun held ready, approaches.

Sensing there's no danger, Deputy Wheeler holsters his revolver, and hurries over to Scott.

DEPUTY WHEELER  
Want to tell me what happened here?

SCOTT  
It's a long story.

Deputy Wheeler notices Joel on the ground, then looks around at the other officers.

One officer is checking Theo's wound, while the others are walking around the yard, checking the other bodies.

The other officers give a thumbs up.

Deputy Wheeler shouts into his radio.

DEPUTY WHEELER  
The scene's secure. We need medics back here, now!

INT. HOSPITAL, JOEL'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Joel, hooked up to IVs and monitors, lies in bed. Scott, wearing a hospital gown, sits beside him, holding his hand. Every so often they smile at the other.

At the foot of the bed, Pam, holding a bouquet of flowers, and Theo, wearing a hospital gown and sitting in a wheelchair, face Marcie, who's wearing a purple minister's shawl as she performs their marriage ceremony.

MARCIE  
And do you Theo promise to love Pam completely, to console and comfort her, to laugh and grieve with her, to be truthful and honest with her, to forsake all others, and to cherish her, for as long as you both shall live?

Theo grins up at Pam.

THEO  
I do.

MARCIE

By the authority vested in me, I now pronounce you partners for life. You may seal your union with a kiss.

Theo and Pam grin at each other a moment, then she leans down and they kiss.

Scott and Joel watch, then they turn to each other. Grinning they stare a moment, then Scott leans over, and kisses Joel.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Roberta, dressed in black, her eyes red from crying, stands in front of Chad Michael's open grave.

She absently nods and shakes the hands of the few mourners who've lined up to pay their respects.

INT. SCOTT'S PICKUP - DAY

Parked in the cemetery parking lot, Scott and Joel watch as the mourners head to their cars, leaving Roberta alone at the grave of her son.

They sit there, waiting until the last car pulls out of the parking lot and drives away.

SCOTT

Be right back.

He opens the driver's door.

JOEL

Scott.

Scott looks back.

Joel wants to say something encouraging, but isn't sure what.

SCOTT

Are you sure you're Ok with this? I mean, she did--

JOEL

Beat the shit out of me and threaten to burn me with an iron.

Scott looks hurt, nervous, and very uncomfortable.

SCOTT  
Yeah, that.

Joel gives him a teasing grin.

JOEL  
That's nothing. Ask Aunt Marcie  
what Uncle Dave's mom was like.  
Want to talk about psycho.

Scott grins.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Roberta stands in front of Chad Michael's open grave,  
solemnly staring in.

She HEARS someone approaching. Without looking up, she knows  
who it is.

ROBERTA  
(staring into grave)  
Was wondering if you'd show.

SCOTT (O.S.)  
Wasn't sure I'd be welcome.

A stoic Roberta looks at Scott, who stands a few feet away.  
Tears in his eyes.

ROBERTA  
No matter what, he was your  
brother. He loved you. Only wanted  
what was best for you.

SCOTT  
Mama, I, well,--

ROBERTA  
Don't.

She looks cold. Hard.

SCOTT  
I just--

ROBERTA  
Want to explain? I don't think I  
care to hear it. Feels like I've  
lost everything. My husband, my  
boys, my house. Friends won't speak  
to me. I--

SCOTT  
I'm not lost, Mama.

ROBERTA  
I don't know what you are, what  
you've become. Your father and I  
raised you to be a good Christian.  
To live right, follow the bible. If  
your father knew--

SCOTT  
He did, Mama.

ROBERTA  
That's a lie. He would've--

SCOTT  
What? Disowned me? Thrown me out?

ROBERTA  
He would've told me. I don't  
believe you.

SCOTT  
Couple weeks before he died, he  
walked in on me and Kyle Wheeler  
kissing in the barn.

ROBERTA  
No, if he'd seen--

SCOTT  
He did.

ROBERTA  
And he didn't say nothing?

SCOTT  
Actually, he did. When Kyle left,  
he said, you're my son. He never  
said anything else about it. Didn't  
treat me different either.

ROBERTA  
He would've told me.

SCOTT  
I guess he figured a gay son was  
better than no son.

He stares at Roberta, waiting for her to say something, but  
she can't.

She stands there, struggling to process this.

Scott stares at her, tears fill his eyes. He gives up, and walks away.

Roberta watches Scott walk across the cemetery, towards the parking lot, where his pickup is parked.

Tears in her eyes, she looks back at Chad Michael's open grave. Lost in memories.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, DINING ROOM - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Roberta, Scott, Chad Michael, and Wyatt sit at the table having dinner.

WYATT

(to Scott)

I don't know. What's brown and sticky?

Scott gives him a teasing smirk.

SCOTT

A stick.

Wyatt laughs. Chad Michael groans. Roberta grins as she watches Wyatt and Scott, who seem to share a bond.

CHAD MICHAEL

(to Scott)

Your jokes are as bad as Dad's.

Wyatt gives him a stern look.

WYATT

Hey!

(a teasing grin)

Nobody's jokes are as bad as your old man's.

(to Scott)

Why do chicken coops have two doors?

Scott grins, holds up his hand as if smoking a cigar, and mimics Groucho Marx.

SCOTT

With four, it'd be a chicken sedan.

He and Wyatt laugh. Chad Michael groans, then laughs in spite of himself. Roberta watches them with a smile.

INT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A weary Roberta, tears in her eyes and struggling not to cry, sits at the table, a mass of bills: all have "FINAL NOTICE" stamped in red; spread out on the table before her.

Condolence cards have been arranged on the buffet, standing so she can see the pictures of pretty flowers and inspirational messages.

Scott comes out of the kitchen, walks over, and sets a mug on the table in front of Roberta.

SCOTT

Made you some hot chocolate. I know  
you haven't been sleeping, so a  
little Baily's might have found  
it's way in there.

Roberta gives him an appreciative smile and picks up the mug.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

I love you, Mama.

He kisses the top of her head, then walks off. Heading towards his bedroom.

Roberta smiles, blows on her mug, then takes a sip.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY (PRESENT)

Roberta's staring into Chad Michael's grave.

She turns and watches Scott, who's almost to the gate.

EXT. HEWITT RESIDENCE, FRONT PORCH - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Roberta, dressed in black, sits on the porch swing, staring off. Tears in her eyes.

Scott, 6 or 7, also dressed for a funeral, comes running, clutching a handful of freshly picked daises.

He rushes onto the porch.

YOUNG SCOTT  
Mama, look, daises.

He hands Roberta the flowers.

YOUNG SCOTT (CONT'D)  
 Grandma said daises bring  
 happiness. It's her way of telling  
 us that she's still here, watching  
 over us.

Crying, Roberta hugs Scott.

YOUNG SCOTT (CONT'D)  
 I didn't mean to make you cry.

Roberta kisses his cheek.

ROBERTA  
 You didn't, baby. You made me feel  
 better. You always do, my special  
 little boy.

Scott hugs Roberta tight.

YOUNG SCOTT  
 I love you, Mama.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY (PRESENT)

Roberta watches Scott walk out of the gate.

ROBERTA  
 (under her breath)  
 I love you too, baby.

She sees Joel sitting in the passenger seat. He looks  
 heartbroken as he watches a dejected Scott walk back towards  
 the pickup

Torn, Roberta turns back to Chad Michael's open grave then  
 back at Scott. She struggles to think of something to say.  
 Finally, she shouts;

ROBERTA (CONT'D)  
 Scott!

He stops and turns back, but Roberta doesn't know what to  
 say. She thinks for a moment.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)  
 You, ah, with that boy now?

Scott stoically stares back a moment, then nods yes.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)  
 You all spending the night?

Scott nods.

SCOTT  
Got us a room down at the motor  
lodge.

They stare a moment. Roberta struggling to come to terms.

Scott waits, but Roberta doesn't say anything. She wants to  
but can't.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Guess we should be going.

He turns to walk away.

ROBERTA  
I've got a pot roast in the Crock  
pot. Got enough casseroles to feed  
an army. If you boys haven't eaten.

Scott, tears in his eyes, smiles.

SCOTT  
I'd like that.

Roberta smiles.

ROBERTA  
I think I might too.

Scott walks over, takes her hand, and escorts Roberta to the  
parking lot.

FADE OUT.

THE END