

THROWAWAYS

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Draft
VERSION 2

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INT. HOUSE - MORNING

Ciudad Juarez, Mexico

In a dark room a hand shakes a young boy awake. JUAN RIVERA, nine-years old, pushes a blanket off, and painstakingly extricates himself from a mattress with several other sleeping children.

He enters a small makeshift kitchen with a dirt floor. His mother, IRIS RIVERA, early 30's, wears a work uniform.

Iris hovers over a small propane gas-light warming tortillas over the bare flame.

Iris kisses on the forehead as she hands him two tortillas with a smear of beans.

Juan hands one back, Iris refuses.

Juan inhales the tortillas.

When Juan finished, Iris extinguishes the propane flame. The room goes dark.

The sound of quiet shuffling and inaudible whispers.

A door opens to the outside, Juan and Iris appear at the doorway. The sun has not yet risen.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING.

Juan and Iris exit their home, a tiny ramshackle hut. Both wear thin sweatshirts against the cold.

They walk in silence together, hand in hand.

Bicyclists and cars roll by them.

They arrive at a warehouse and knock on a door.

It opens, revealing a brightly lit interior.

IRIS
(in Spanish)
I love you Juan.

JUAN
(in Spanish)
I love you Mama.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They enter. The tat-tat-tat sound of industrial molds opening and closing, loud hissing sounds. We are in a manufacturing facility.

A man addresses Iris, we cannot hear them. She exits the building, leaving Juan standing alone.

MAN

You work the presses today. Do you know how?

JUAN

Yes sir.

MAN

Don't burn your fucking fingers off.

The man hands Juan a candy bar wrapped in foil.

MAN (cont'd)

Eat it before you sit down.

Juan nods, tears into the candy bar, devours it.

The man leads Juan through a dark maze of machines and electric cables and stacks of pristine cardboard boxes.

They arrive at a chair, the man directs Juan to sit.

The man goes through the procedure one time.

Juan watches and nods.

The man leaves him.

Juan produces toy after toy after identical toy.

Steam surrounds him and he sweats profusely.

The man brings him another candy bar and a bottled water.

Juan produces toy after toy after identical toy.

When each toy is done he tosses it into a freshly shaped cardboard box.

The man returns, puts his hand on Juan's shoulder.

Juan stands and glances at the boxes filled with toys he manufactured.

The man nods his approval.

Juan stands and follows the man back through the maze to the door.

The man hands Juan a thin packet of paper money.

JUAN
Thank you sir.

MAN
Come back tomorrow.

Juan nods.

The man opens the door, it is night now.

Juan steps outside and looks around, possibly for his mother.

MAN (cont'd)
She won't be here. I was given word
she was injured at work. Hurry home.

Juan starts to rush away.

MAN (cont'd)
Don't let anyone rob you!

Juan nods and runs home in the dark.

He arrives at the door, opens it to find his mother preparing tortillas over the flame, one hand wrapped in thick white gauze.

Juan hugs her, and cries and hands her the packet of money.

She wipes away his tear and hands him a tortilla with a sliver of chili.

He pushes it back and she eats it.

They brush their teeth.

Iris watches Juan crawl into bed with his siblings, all already asleep. She draws a curtain across the doorway.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

A cargo truck pulls up to the warehouse.

OLIVER VASQUEZ, Mexican, middle-aged, pushing a heart attack exits the cab, pulls the door of the hauler open.

He smokes a cigarette as the truck is loaded.

Workers open the warehouse cargo bay door and carry out stacks of boxes, all with the same logo as the boxes Juan filled.

The boxes are wheeled to the cargo hauler, and loaded.

Oliver waits until the truck is filled and then pulls away.

Oliver arrives at the Port of Entry into the United States at the border of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico and El Paso, Texas.

Oliver waits in line, listening to Mexican music and smoking cigarettes.

The truck is granted access into America.

EXT. AMERICAN HIGHWAY - MONTAGE

Oliver drives all day and night in a blaze of rotating sun and dark.

INT. TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

Missouri, United States.

He stops at a truck stop and eats fried food at a booth, talking softly into a headset in Spanish.

He returns to his truck.

A white woman, maybe 30 but looks like the inside of a smoker's lung turned inside out and shoved into a too-tight Glamour Girls Doll outfit, approaches from behind.

WOMAN

Hey hon.

Oliver turns, he isn't surprised, but he also isn't buying.

Oliver directs her away.

OLIVER

SSSST.

Like a lioness knowing it's not worth the effort to run down a gazelle with a head start, she leaves him.

Oliver drives away.

Oliver pulls into a warehouse, and the cargo is unloaded onto a cargo pad.

Oliver drives away.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

BOSTON, Massachusetts

A light turns on showing a very nicely furnished young boy's bedroom.

NATHANIEL JONES, ten years old, sleeps in a bed, covered in a blanket.

A man sits on the bed.

FATHER

Nathan, time to wake up bud.

Nathaniel stirs, eyes still closed.

NATHANIEL

Five more minutes please Dad?

FATHER

It's up to you. Do you want Mom to make waffles or do you want to stop on the way to school and pick something up?

NATHANIEL

Pick something up.

FATHER

That'll work. Be downstairs in fifteen minutes.

Nathaniel's father stands to leave.

FATHER (cont'd)

Wear a coat, it's cold this morning okay.

NATHANIEL

Okay.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Nathan appears in the kitchen wearing an expensive ski jacket.

His mother peels a waffle out of the waffle maker and plates it and holds it out for Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL

Dad said-

His father rushes in, kisses his wife.

FATHER

Dad said he'd stop and pick something up on the way.

The wife is clearly frustrated, and sets the plate down.

WIFE

Who's going to eat this?

The father points to an overweight dog.

Nathaniel laughs. The wife does not.

Nathaniel's mom kissed him on the forehead.

WIFE (cont'd)

Love you. Have a good day at school.

Nathaniel and his dad exit the kitchen through a door leading to the garage.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Nathaniel sits in the backseat, still too young to sit up front.

His father drives and talks over blue-tooth and simultaneously writes a text message.

NATHANIEL

Dad. Dad.

His father pulls into a chain drive-thru, still yammering on his call.

FATHER

Places order.

Father pulls forward.

INT. DRIVE-THRU JOINT/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

A middle aged woman stuffs food into a paper bag.

Almost as an afterthought she reaches into a cardboard box and pulls out one of the toys we recognize and tosses it into the bag.

She hands it out the window to the father.

He hands it back to Nathaniel.

Without thanking the woman he drives off.

FATHER
Don't wipe your hands on the seat
okay.

Nathaniel rummages through the bag and starts eating a breakfast sandwich.

His father pulls into a gas station.

INT./EXT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

His father gets out and pumps gas.

Nathaniel rolls down the window, and hands his father the bag with the trash.

The father tosses the open bag into the trash.

They drive away.

Sitting on top of the breakfast sandwich wrapper is the unopened toy Juan made.

INT. GAS STATION- CONTINUOUS

SHELLY MARSTON, 22 years old, is trying to drag out the last hour of the overnight shift. She's pretty in a rough kind of way, could have been something, might still make it air about her, slips on a sweatshirt.

SHELLY
(to her manager
working at register)
I'm taking five.

MANAGER
Take five, and the trash.

Shelly rolls her eyes, flips her manager off.

She pulls on a pair of latex gloves, and a plastic bag from and pushes the back door to the drive-thru joint open. She pulls a pack of cigarettes from her sweatshirt, lights one and closes her eyes.

A car honks at her to move. Startled she jolts awake.

She pulls out the stuffed bag of trash, not noticing the toy, or anything else other than the weighty kick of nicotine.

She replaces the bag.

Shelly notices the little toy. She glances around, then removes it from the bin, wipes it off on her jeans and prepares to put it in her pocket.

A car horn startles her, she drops the toy back into the bin, embarrassed.

She places a new trash bag into the bin.

Shelly sleepwalks to a large dumpster behind the gas station and tosses the bag in.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

A garbage truck pulls in to the gas station and empties the large trash bin.

The garbage truck drives to a trash staging area and the trash is smashed into pallets and loaded onto a flatbed.

The flat bed is driven to a port.

EXT. PORT - DAY

The driver of the cargo hauler arrives at a port and pulls his truck into a line of other trucks.

He nods off as he waits.

A customs official waves him through a gate and the driver signs a document on a clipboard and then pulls to a loading dock.

The cargo container is lifted off the cargo hauler and hangs midair.

INT. CRANE OPERATOR CAB - CONTINUOUS

ARUTH MIEMBE, a Senegalese man, operates the controls of the crane.

The now bare cargo hauler disappears below.

Aruth pilots the cargo container down into a sea of other cargo containers.

INT. CARGO SHIP - DAY

Aruth is about to lie down in a hammock in a room full of hammocks and bunk beds.

An unopened letter in his hands, addressed in beautiful penmanship. This is a letter Aruth seeks comfort in, a letter from home.

FOREMAN
(off screen in
English)
Aruth, they need you back in the
cargo bay.

Aruth shakes his head, and looks at the man who yelled. You can sense that Aruth wants to tell this man to fuck off, but that would be a mistake.

Aruth nods and then wearily stands.

He folds the letter and tucks it into his overalls.

He takes a hit of methamphetamine leaves his hammock and the promise of sleep.

INT. CARGO SHIP - DAY

Aruth wedges crowbars between cargo containers to budge them. He sweats heavily but his breath is visible in the cold ocean air.

Aruth stops to take a breath, and seems to realize he had forgotten the letter.

He removes the envelop, the once beautiful handwriting has bled into a blue-black smear of ruined ink.

Aruth puts his head in his hands.

INT. CRANE OPERATOR CAB - DAY

Port Klang, Malaysia

Aruth guides the cargo containers off the ship setting them down on the concrete below.

He looks out across the water, somewhere far-away, home.

EXT. PORT KLANG- CONTINUOUS

RAYYAN MEGAT, about twenty, smooths his hair back, sits in the driver's seat of a small flatbed, plays a handheld video game.

His is but one in a long line of flatbeds parked in a long line of flatbeds.

Bins of plastic and trash, unloaded from Aruth's freighter, are loaded by forklift onto the flatbeds and driven away.

Several horns blare.

RAYYAN

(In Malay)

Come on, I only have one life left.

(yells out the window)

Assholes.

Rayyan slams the handheld player down, and pulls up to the loading zone.

A load is transferred to his flatbed. The toy is visible in the mass of garbage.

Rayyan looks out the window, reaches out his window and gives a thumbs-up to Aruth above in the crane.

Aruth returns the gesture.

Rayyan drives away.

Rayyan pulls into a vast landfill.

Children run beside his truck whacking it with sticks, trying to dislodge bits and pieces of potential value.

EXT. LANDFILL - DAY

Rayyan delivers his payload, and drives away.

RAYYAN
Fucking poor bastards.

Rayyan tosses a handful of coins from a bin on his dashboard, out the window.

The children clamor and scratch and claw for it.

EXT. LANDFILL - CONTINUOUS

TINO, about ten years old, doesn't have a last name. As slight as a stray kitten, Tino is a stray himself. Filthy, with dull eyes, and mismatched flipflops.

He combs through the mountain of trash.

A rat squeaks and hisses at him before it disappears into a dark crevice.

Tino finds a nearly empty plastic soda bottle, he unscrews it, drinks the contents then tosses the bottle back into the heap.

Other children scurry across the landfill like ants, picking through the trash.

Tino spots something of interest, reaches for it.

He pulls out the small toy, still wrapped in plastic.

He grins, and tucks it into a small zippered pouch that hangs from his neck.

INT/EXT. CARDBOARD AND TARP DWELLING - NIGHT

Tino pulls back a corner of a dingy tarp.

A small boy, no more than half Tino's age, sits on his haunches.

The younger child smiles at Tino.

Tino hugs him and then opens the pouch, retrieves the toy.

The child squeals with delight at the new, unopened toy, and rips it open.

Nearly starving to death, but grateful for this act of attention from his older brother that will sustain them both a while longer.