

Arcadia Disinherited

by

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OVER BLACK we hear the sound a few Humvee engines humming along. Some gravel kicks up, but other than that, the engine sounds so smooth it purrs. Moments pass before...

A BLOOD CURDLING EXPLOSION of an IED ripping through metal and glass.

It's all melee and heavy breathing, panicked and indiscernible screams, both in Arabic and English.

Automatic guns begin FIRING, concrete and bricks CRACK under heavy shelling.

SSGT. BEEK (V.O.)
There's a girl over there!

MAJOR VANN (V.O.)
Where's your squad, Sergeant?

SSGT. BEEK (V.O.)
There's a girl. She's stuck over there!

CAPTAIN BOWMAN (V.O.)
So what?!

SUPERIMPOSE: Iraq, August, 2005

SUPER: Salah ad Din Province

Fade up:

EXT. TIKRIT ROADWAY - DAY

A thousand newspaper pages dance in the air amidst enemy fire, two obliterated Humvees, and a sea of debris scattered all around.

Across the road an IRAQI GIRL, no older than 15, has taken refuge in front of a concrete doorway.

Walls have collapsed all around her and a Humvee FIRE rages dangerously close by. Frozen. She looks absolutely terrified.

SSGT. BEEK
She's gonna get killed!

SERGEANT BEEK, mildly overweight, crew cut, and military mustache is bogged down in a narrow city street.

Alongside Beek, crouching between a FLAMING HUMVEE and the concrete wall of a blown-out newspaper factory is SHERIFF/MAJOR VANN, 45, a powerful presence who seems like he was born in military uniform. On Beek's left side is the rugged and all-American looking CAPTAIN KENNETH BOWMAN, 30.

VANN

Where's your fucking squad,
Sergeant?!

SSGT. BEEK

We just got ambushed. I don't know
where the fuck anybody is!

Sergeant Beek is fixated on the young girl.

SSGT. BEEK (CONT'D)

I can't just...

Beek suddenly breaks out into the line of fire now towards the distressed teen. Bowman tries to grab him, but misses.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

Idiot. Beek!

Captain Bowman and Major Vann fire aimlessly into the street and helplessly watch Beek run for about twenty yards before...

He trips over THE BOOT of a fallen comrade who's body is half buried under a pile of rubble.

Beek's POV: Footballs of fire fly towards him, all miraculously missing him.

SSGT. BEEK

SHIT.

INT. / EXT. TIKRIT ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Across the road, in the shelter of a second storey window, SPECIAL FORCES/SERGEANT ZAYAS, a square jawed rock of soldier, late twenties, methodically sets up his sniper rifle and takes aim.

THROUGH HIS SCOPE: He has the drop on all six of the Iraqi opposition shooters-- hiding behind a pair of white panel vans about a hundred feet down the street.

Sfc. Zayas aims ever so carefully.

CLICK. BOOM.

One drops.

CLICK. BOOM.

And another.

EXT. TIKRIT ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Beek can only watch as a million bullets whiz inches past his face, he covers his head and fires wildly into the smoke, praying to God a shell doesn't find him-- A hand reaches out and yanks him by the ankle, behind a pile of rubble and out of harms way.

Beek looks up: The hand belongs to one pissed off Captain Bowman.

Beek is gasping, breathing so hard that he can't spit the words out, but his eyes scream 'thank you.'

INT. / EXT. TIKRIT ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sfc. Zayas continues his spectacular sniper assault on the opposition, systematically eliminating every one of them.

CLICK. BOOM.

CLICK. BOOM.

CLICK. BOOM.

He's on a roll.

And then, just like that... there's no one left.

The atmosphere RINGS in aftershock. No one moves a muscle.

Zayas raises his rifle... Looks like he's got 'em licked.

SGT. ZAYAS

Told you fuckers... Lord's on my side.

Everybody stays down.

EXT. ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Beek shuffles to his feet, his nerves shot, his face bloodied.

He steps forward, looking for the young girl in the smoke--
She's vanished.

He heads towards the ROW OF DOORS along a STOREFRONT of a
bombed out building.

MAJOR BOWMAN
Watch yourself Beek!

Vann casually gets up and saunters across the bombed out
roadway.

MAJOR VANN (O.S.)
WHO'S DOWN? WHO'S HURT?

Beek climbs through the rubble by the storefront. He walks
alongside the row of doors-- One suddenly swings open to
reveal--

The Iraqi girl cradling an AK-47 like a baby--

By the time Beek sees her she's already FIRING erratically.

Beek dances a dance of fear, trying to dodge the bullets--
one smashes into his chest armor, knocking him into a spin,
but he somehow manages to stay on his feet... She stops.

INT. / EXT. TIKRIT ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Zayas spots the girl, aims his rifle and PULLS THE TRIGGER.

CLICK. A jam.

EXT. TIKRIT ROADWAY - CONTINUOUS

Shivering with fear, the girl steps out from the rubble cave.
The gun's as big as she is.

Beek keeps his gun down.

She screams at him in Arabic to stay away, petrified of him.

SSGT. BEEK
(gesturing frantically for
her to drop the gun)
NO! NO! I am not going to hurt you!
Hold on! Wait!

But she won't wait. She continues towards Beek. She points
the gun at him, her finger on the trigger. She aims.

Beek doesn't blink-- Frozen. The girl closes her eyes tightly, and squeezes the trigger.

A SHOT rips through her heart...

Before anybody can react Vann routinely walks up to within a few feet of the girl, aims his 9mm, and fires twice more.

She drops RIGHT IN FRONT OF Beek's eyes.

MAJOR VANN
(like nothing happened)
Who's down? Who's hurt?

CAPTAIN BOWMAN
(approaching Beek)
Move, Sergeant...

Beek doesn't move.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN (CONT'D)
Beek! Let's go!

But Beek cannot turn away. Vann looks back. The girl's face is pristine, her body fragile but strong... In this moment she very much resembles the Virgin Mary cradling a weapon. As he looks down at her we FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: 3 days later

OVER BLACK the sound of lockers opening and slamming closed. A TV blares INTENSE ABC NEWS HOUR MUSIC before:

TV NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
Worst fears realized. Tonight--
entire towns have been wiped out
near Gulfport Mississippi. A local
mayor says: "This is our Tsunami."
(flashy sound effect leads
into)

Underwater: Here in New Orleans
tonight-- After the giant storm
came the rising waters. Over 80
percent of the city-

SSGT. BEEK (V.O.)
What happened?

VANN (V.O.)
The levees broke.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN (V.O.)
(in disbelief)
No, they didn't...

VANN (V.O.)
They're sending us home...

SSGT. ZAYAS (V.O.)
All of us?

VANN (V.O.)
The entire 519th battalion.

SSGT. ZAYAS (V.O.)
Holy shit.

SSGT. BEEK (V.O.)
When do we leave?

VANN (V.O.)
Right now.

The sound of gear and boots shuffling around.

SSGT. ZAYAS (V.O.)
Home sweet, home.

SUPER: Louisiana: September, 2005

FADE UP TO:

EXT. SOUTH LOUISIANA - HURRICANE EVACUEE TRAILER PARK - DUSK

Rows upon rows and miles upon miles of identical white trailers stretch into the dusty sun drenched horizon. Out of the cracked dirt roadways sprout weeds and blue grass beside tire tracks and sporadic puddles of black mud-- Occasionally a car passes through.

A labyrinth of a townscape, flat and never ending. Around every corner is the same, all of it pale and tin.

Only a random few trailers have power. Huddles of jaded locals comfort themselves around open camp fires. Exhausted faces and empty smiles glow in the shadows.

EXT. HURRICANE EVACUEE TRAILER PARK - WRESTLING RING - DUSK

Far and deep into this make-shift dodge, nestled into one of its very few clearings, stands a crudely erected octagon-shaped wrestling ring.

The ring is surrounded by a small but capacity crowd of a hundred-or-so cheering onlookers.

Inside the ring are two acrobatic silhouettes tangled in a cat like flurry of fury. This is backyard wrestling at its finest.

Seated on the hood of a baby blue Chevette parked just beyond the edge of the crowd is the mildly gruff but handsome STONE, 17, hiding himself in a slouch and lazing beside his pretty gal pal, CHRISTIE, 15. They are still amidst the chaos.

STONE

Can you tell me what's wrong please?

Stone's wiry little brother MATTY, 16, is one of the wrestlers, much smaller than his opponent in physique, but very apparently more dominant in skill, as he twists and turns the MASKED MAN'S arm behind his back into an upside down V.

CHRISTIE

I don't think I want to see you anymore.

STONE

Why?

Christie massages the sunflower tattoo on her left shoulder.

CHRISTIE

Because....

STONE

Because? What am I supposed to do with because?

CHRISTIE

I dunno... Move on, or something.

The monstrous masked man takes one deep breath before he back swings with both of his arms, hurtling Matty from his body and bulldozes him into the canvas.

Completely paralyzed beneath the fat man's weight, Matty is pinned. The referee counts.

REFEREE

1-2-3!!!

And it's over.

INT. PAUL'S CHEVETTE - EVENING

Stone is buried in the back seat amidst a flood of baby toys.

On the other side, Matty is seated behind PAUL, 20, the oldest and merriest of the three brothers-- A pair of crutches hang out of the passenger window.

MATTY

Bull-shit match... How am I
supposed to see the guy without any
fucking lights on?

LESLIE, 20, Paul's girlfriend and mother of his baby daughter, is behind the wheel-- Accentuated by a punk rock red pixie cut, Leslie's big brown eyes meet Stone's gaze in the rearview mirror.

LESLIE

How ya doing back there, Stone?

STONE

OK...

MATTY

(to Stone)

Dude, did she actually say the
words, "I'm fucking another guy?"

STONE

No... but she is. I know it.

MATTY

Man, oh, man... We are gonna kill
the guy.

Matty pulls his LARGE HUNTING KNIFE from his pocket and flips it open.

STONE

Can you not be a weirdo, Matty?
God. Put that away. You're such a
fucking weirdo.

Matty smiles and puts the knife back into his right pants pocket. Paul looks back at Matty.

PAUL

Got enough leg room back there,
buddy?

MATTY

What? Yeah, I got enough room.

Paul launches his seat as far back as it can go. He stretches out his broken and cast-bound right leg.

MATTY

(struggling for leg room)

Ow! Fuck you, Paul.

LESLIE

Has Christie been acting weird at all lately, Stone? A girl's behavior can help reveal a lot about what she's thinking.

STONE

She's just been sick some times. She just found out that she's anemic or something. I don't know.

LESLIE

Oh really? My sister was anemic.

MATTY

My ex-girlfriend was anemic. She was a vegetarian too.

(a beat)

Is Christie a vegetarian? 'Cause if she is, I'll bet you that's her problem. Vegetarians are usually crazy.

STONE

Ironically enough Christie is a vegetarian now, but-

LESLIE

You can't generalize like that. I'm a vegetarian, and I'm not crazy. What do ya think of that?

MATTY

I think it's just a matter of time before you're crazy too, Leslie.

The boys crack up.

LESLIE

Oh, whatever! Don't you laugh Paul!

Leslie punches Paul playfully but harshly in the shoulder.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

(to Paul)

Don't you laugh! I'll break your
other leg in front of your little
brothers!

PAUL

See Stone? She's already crazy!

EXT. ORANGE DRAGON ARCADE - DUSK

Paul, Leslie, Stone and Matty pull into an arcade/bar on the right lit up with a couple of neon signs. The structure is a massive barn... with an attitude. Neon signs flash ORANGE DRAGON -- GAMES -- BEER

A small rectangle of land is used as a parking lot with lots of pickup trucks and beaters.

INT. CHEVETTE - DUSK

The car eases into a parking spot. The orangy incandescence of a neon sign fills the car.

PAUL

Well... We're here now.

STONE

(as he climbs out of the
car)

Jesus. Looks crowded.

PAUL

Mm-hm. No more generators.

LESLIE

They got electricity here?

INT. 129TH PARISH JAIL - DUSK

Deputy Beek holds up a smoke-blackened glass CRYSTAL METH PIPE in front the bars of a holding cell.

DEPUTY BEEK

You get this at church?

Inside the cell is Beek's wife, LISA, 25, dressed in sweats, sitting on the edge of a metal slab/holding cell bed-- She looks about ten years older than she should.

The sight of the pipe is too much for her to bare.

LISA
I'm sorry.

DEPUTY BEEK
What were you thinking?

LISA
(through heavy tears)
I... just... baby... Don't...
Leave...

She is crying so hard we can barely make out her words through her sobs.

DEPUTY BEEK
I can't understand you, hon. You
have to calm down for me.

LISA
Don't leave me... Don't leave me...

Lisa's gaunt and pale face has weathered under drug addiction. Beek reaches a few fingers from his right hand through the bars and holds onto her hand.

DEPUTY BEEK
You are never going to be alone
again. OK? I'm home, babe.

Sheriff Vann hurries in.

VANN
(re: keys)
Found 'em. Of course nothing's
where I left it...

He opens the holding cell.

DEPUTY BEEK
Thank-you, Sheriff...

Lisa bolts into Beek's arms and won't let go.

INT. VANN'S HUMVEE - DUSK

Vann drives the beat up old Humvee through the trailer city.
Deputy Beek sits tensely in the passenger seat.

VANN
She's going to be OK.

Deputy Beek doesn't answer.

VANN

Cal.

(waits until Beek looks at him)

She's going to be OK.

DEPUTY BEEK

I spend a year in Iraq and come home to twenty thousand refugees in my Parish, and my wife in a holding cell... How does this happen? She never did anything wrong in her life.

VANN

Well then she was about due.

(Beek half grins)

It's over now. There's counselling on the base... You should take the night off. Go be with her.

DEPUTY BEEK

No... I can't.

Vann notices how run down and pale the Deputy appears-- The back of his left wrist is covered in BLADE BURN MARKS.

VANN

You sleeping any better?

DEPUTY BEEK

Worse.

Vann's cell phone rings. He answers.

VANN

(into phone)

Vann here... Hi honey. Nah, I won't be home 'til pretty late. I'm at the station... I know, but our Parish has twenty thousand unexpected guests... OK, I will... Bye. I love-

Vann looks at his cell, trying to figure out if the phone just died, or if he was hung up on.

DEPUTY BEEK

The wife?

VANN

Yeah.

DEPUTY BEEK

How's she doing?

VANN

Great... Thanks. Thank you for asking.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD hundreds of evacuees are visible lining up for food under a shoddy tent.

A gang of young teens cockily stride by, darting mean spirited eyes towards the two officers. Beek's fingers anxiously CLENCH THE DOOR until the teens pass.

INT. THE ORANGE DRAGON - NIGHT

Sweat glistens on the young patrons of the crowded arcade. The atmosphere is drenched in a tungsten glow. The nicotine stained walls are lined with a garden variety of occupied video games.

At the back of the arcade, Paul and Stone play pool. Paul sinks two high balls in a single shot. Matty and Leslie lean against a nearby bar table and observe.

A WAITRESS comes over and clears some empty beer bottles from around the boys.

WAITRESS

Y'all wanna drink?

PAUL

Um, four Buds.

MATTY

Can we get four tequila shots?

LESLIE

And a lemon and the salt, please?

WAITRESS

IDs?

Everyone pulls out their IDs. The waitress smirks and hands them back.

As she leaves:

PAUL

Why don't you get a better fake ID?

STONE

What's wrong with this one?

PAUL

You're not a Mexican.

MATTY

Hey! Anyone wanna smoke a bowl?

Paul and Stone barely shake their heads, and proceed to play pool.

LESLIE

(waves Matty away)

Go ahead, Matty.

EXT. THE ORANGE DRAGON - REAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Matty keeps the exit door propped open with his left foot, as he lights the tightly packed hash pipe with a PLAYBOY BUNNY BUTANE LIGHTER.

As Matty inhales his first long haul from the pipe, he turns and spots a national guard military jeep.

Matty hacks in surprise and juggles the pipe, nearly dropping it in a panic.

MATTY

(discreet)

Shit!

He quickly snuffs out the pipe on his pant leg, and stuffs it into his shirt pocket.

Matty backs into the exit door, but pauses when he notices how foggy the jeep's windows are. He squints for a moment.

Inside the vehicle is a National Guardsman feverishly making out with a very young girl, an ARMY INSIGNIA on his shoulder. Matty, amused, moves in for a closer look.

The bodies of the officer and the girl SLAM up against the driver's seat window, wiping some steam from the glass.

Matty spots a tattoo on the back of the young girl's shoulder:

INSERT OF TATTOO: A small sun flower containing the initials
C. G.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Oh, my, sweet Jesus.

INT. THE ORANGE DRAGON - NIGHT

Matty walks swiftly towards Stone at the pool table with purpose, as if he is the head of a task force with a briefing for the president.

MATTY

Stone... I found Christie.

INT. THE ORANGE DRAGON - NIGHT

Across the bar a group of young girls laugh, oblivious as Stone furiously tries to storm out of the arcade and is restrained by his brothers in the B.G. by the pool tables. Stone finally slumps against the wall, devastated.

INT. THE ORANGE DRAGON - SAME SCENE

Leslie rubs Stone's back compassionately.

STONE

OK. This situation is officially disgusting now.

MATTY

She's outside right now. Let's go get the Nazi.

STONE

It has to be Captain Bowman. I know it's him.

MATTY

Who the fuck's Captain Bowman?

STONE

She...

(barely spits it out.)

Christie Baby-sits for him.

LESLIE

Yeee-uck! She's sleeping with a guy she baby-sits for? Yeee-uck!

STONE

I should have figured it out. She came back from baby-sitting drunk three times this month.

Matty puts his arm around Stone.

MATTY

He's outside right now! Let's go get the piglet.

PAUL

He's a Guardsmen not a cop.

LESLIE

Tell Christie's dad about it.

STONE

No.

LESLIE

Your uncle was in the guard. Tell him.

STONE

No. I'm- I'm just leaving.

MATTY

To do what? Sulk?

STONE

Yes.

LESLIE

No, you're staying.
(hugs Stone's neck)
Paul, baby, tell him he's staying.

PAUL

Don't let her control you, man.
Stay for one more game of pool,
Stone, OK? We'll figure this out.

A line of fashion conscious city girls file past brushing up against the pool tables. Stone takes a drink, nods and begins to rack up the next pool game.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I'll even give you the good pool cue this time.

STONE

....mean the one that's not broken?

INT. THE ORANGE DRAGON - NIGHT

JAYDA SILVER, 17, sits on a stool next to the wall with her small entourage of urbanites who stand-out like beautiful novas in this rural-clad arcade.

Directly across the room Stone stands motionless, staring at a seemingly impossible shot. The eight ball lies directly between the cue ball, and the only other ball on the table, the seven.

Jayda hops from the stool and grabs a FIST FULL of bills from her homemade purse. She selects a dollar bill and shoves the rest of the money into the back pocket of her tight corduroys.

Jayda saunters past the three brothers. Paul's eyes follow her instead of Stone's pending shot.

Leslie smacks Paul on the arm.

LESLIE

Looking at something, Paul?!

PAUL

(making intense eye
contact)

Only your pretty eyes, sugar pants.

Stone hits the balls into all the wrong directions. The eight ball sewers.

Jayda walks to the jukebox in the back, inserts the dollar bill, selects a song, punches the buttons, a needle lands on a record, and the great blue surf tune *I Get Around* by The Beach Boys comes blaring through the arcade.

Jayda starts doing a slow seductive fandango around the arcade. Her back to the pool tables. She's really getting into it. Fearless--

She downs a couple of waiting whiskey shots at the bar, and glimpses over at the table where the three brothers are playing pool. She smiles with sly amusement as--

Stone stares down at the pool table, lost in his head somewhere.

MATTY

(about Jayda)

Jesus Christ.

LESLIE

Tongue away, Matty.

Jayda's pals have joined her, as well as one or two cowboy patrons of the arcade who dance with the city gals, trying to flirt. To look at Jayda move, you can see that any man would be doing the exact same thing.

Stone stares down at the pool table and nods his head slightly to the jukebox.

STONE

(singing quietly)

From town to town. Get around
'round 'round.

For a brief second Stone lets his heart go with the music. He bobs his head, almost in a dance. And then....

Jayda grabs a hold of Stone's arm as naturally as a Great White Shark grabs a seal from the crest of a wave and tugs him close to her.

Stone is completely caught off guard. He awkwardly stands in front of Jayda as she moves rhythmically and flawlessly. He tries to copy what she's doing.

Jayda laughs at him and pulls him close. Her forehead is touching his. She puts her hands around Stone's waist, and sways his hips with hers. She spins herself under Stone's arm.

JAYDA

Relaaaxxx. Get around-round-round,
why don't you?

STONE

Sorry. I, uh... Sorry.

They shuffle and circle. Jayda leads Stone to dip her. She is laughing wildly. Stone is dumbfounded.

In the blink of an eye Jayda stops and pulls Stone to an emptier spot by the fire exit. She raises her voice over the blaring music.

JAYDA

Where you from?

STONE

Now, or before?

JAYDA

I know where you are now. Where are you from originally?

STONE

New Orleans... You?

JAYDA

Same.

A beat.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

You like to dance or what, Albert?

STONE

Albert?

JAYDA

You look like an Albert.

STONE

Really? I don't look like an Albert do I?... Am I fat?

JAYDA

You're not fat Albert, you're my Albert, but no one else can call you that but me... You want to know why?

STONE

Um, yeah.

JAYDA

Because this makes the relationship between you and me different from any other relationship that you ever had with any other person. To me you're Albert, but to everyone else you're someone different.

STONE

Sounds good... Um... Betty?

Jayda grins.

JAYDA

Cute. My name's Jayda. It's a pleasure to meet you.

Jayda extends her hand for a hand shake.

STONE
Jayda? That's a very cool name.
Jayda.

JAYDA
Thank ya!

Stone shakes her hand.

STONE
My real name is-

JAYDA
Albert! Your real name is Albert!
Do we have to go through this
again?

STONE
No.

They laugh.

JAYDA
Thanks for being my dance partner.
You were swell!
(adjusts her top)
I've gotta go to the ladies room
now, though. So, bye-bye!

Stone grabs her hand swiftly, almost desperately.

STONE
Well. You know-

JAYDA
Yeeeeesss?

STONE
Wait. I mean-

JAYDA
What's your phone number?

STONE
Exactly.

Jayda smiles.

JAYDA
No, I mean what's your phone number
silly?

STONE

Oh! Sorry. 513-9597.

JAYDA

K! I'll call you.

(a beat)

If you're lucky!

STONE

Oh, uh. OK. Shouldn't you write it down or-

JAYDA

513-9597.

STONE

Wow...OK.

JAYDA

I never forget phone numbers!
Remember that about me.

STONE

That's really, uh. But... like-

JAYDA

(singing)

Ohhh, the ladies room is callin'!
The ladies room is callin'! While
terrorist bombs are fallin', the
ladies room is calling! Yeahhh!

Stone now has full-fledged case of the stupids. He's speechless.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

Just made that up right now.

(a beat)

Do I scare you?

Stone doesn't answer. Jayda grabs Stone by the face and gives him a big kiss on the cheek and whispers in his ear.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

You should never be afraid of
anything. Such a waste of fucking
time.

(a beat)

It was so good to meet you...

Jayda winks and dances off the floor.

JAYDA (CONT'D)
ALBERT! ALBERT! WHOOH!

EXT. THE ORANGE DRAGON - LATER

The Orange Dragon sign casts a heavy glow on the dirt roadway and the line of people filing outside the two giant wooden front doors. The crowd is rowdy, loud, and grows steadily. Stone Matty Leslie and Paul lean against the arcade wall.

STONE
OK. OK. Why did that chick talk to me?

PAUL
She was probably high on E or something.

Leslie claps her hand over Paul's mouth.

LESLIE
Shush! She was probably high on Stone's good looks. Don't be an asshole. What was her name Stone?

STONE
Jayda. Isn't that a cool name? Jayda.

Paul spots Captain Bowman across the street.

PAUL
Hey. Lookie. Lookie. Is that our Rambo and his underage girlfriend?

Captain Bowman is chatting casually with Christie, Deputy Beek, and CORPORAL Thomas, 22, a bespectacled and skinny soldier.

MATTY
I'm gonna deal with this.

STONE
Don't bother Matty. It's-

Matty abruptly starts walking towards the men. The others watch agog as Matty taps Captain Bowman on the shoulder.

MATTY
Captain Bowman, you old son of a gun! I haven't seen you in forever.

The entire circle of officers suddenly go silent.

Paul attempts to follow on his crutches, but Leslie clutches his arm with all her might and gestures towards his cast.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

Do I know you?

MATTY

Oh, don't be coy with me. Isn't that just like ol' Captain Bowman to be coy.

(winks at the other officers)

Heyyy, last I heard you were fucking a fifteen year old girl, Captain Bowman? How's that going?

Christie looks at Matty taken aback.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

Now you're making false accusations against an officer. Real smooth.

(to Christie)

Don't worry Chris.

MATTY

(impersonating Bowman)

Yeah. Yeah. Don't worry "Chris."-

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

What's your problem fuck nut?

CHRISTIE

He's a loser! That's his fucking problem!

MATTY

You're my problem you fascist, in more senses of the word than just one! People saw you fucking her in the back parking lot, like an idiot for everyone to see-

DEPUTY BEEK

Hey. Hey. Watch yourself buddy. You better watch yourself. I just heard you call him a fascist. Not smart.

MATTY

(to Beek)

Hey. Easy there. I ain't got no problem with you other fascists.

STONE
Will you shut up, Matty.

Bowman grabs Matty by the shoulder.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN
We are here to keep the peace and
we do have the authority to
restrain and/or detain anyone who
might be trying to break that peace-

MATTY
Buh-buh-buh, blah, blah, blah from
the wannabe marine.

Stone tries to pull Matty away.

Bowman pulls pepper spray from his belt and BLASTS Stone and
Matty for a few seconds, both of whom instantly collapse to
the ground in vocal agony.

All three of the guardsmen pounce on the brothers and
restrain them face down in the mud.

MATTY (CONT'D)
WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU
PIGS? WHAT DID I EVEN DO?

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP TO:

EXT. TRAILER PARK - MORNING

Heat waves begin to rise as the sun peeks over the vast plane
of mobiles. An alligator splashes into the nearby swamp-- A
freight train approaches on the horizon.

EXT. BOWMAN FARM - MORNING

A vast Louisiana farm. An open field. Captain Bowman loads
his M16 alongside Deputy Beek.

DEPUTY BEEK
You believe I actually miss the
desert. These refugees are doing a
stupendous job of pissing me off. I
come home-- They got my wife hooked
on drugs. And you hear what that
little shit was sayin' last night?

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

What do you expect? New Orleans
coddles criminals. They got boys in
blue with criminal records. Guys
who haven't even graduated high
school...

A small paper target with the shape of a human being's upper
body is stapled to some tree stumps a hundred feet across the
field.

DEPUTY BEEK

(swigging a can of
Budweiser)

Yeah, but it ain't no different for
the military, Ken. We got moral
pardon's letting dumb ass criminals
in too...

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

That's different.

The duo crouch down to their right knees, and aim at the
targets.

DEPUTY BEEK

How's that any different?

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

Volunteers are always better than a
draft. I want a soldier who wants
to be watching my back watching my
back. You know?

DEPUTY BEEK

Yeah...

THUNDEROUS AUTOMATIC ROUNDS escape Bowman's M16.

Beek's gun JAMS before it even gets a shot off.

Bowman's target shreds and splinters. Beek cringes as if the
bullets might bounce right back at them.

DEPUTY BEEK

(covering head)

Shit! Shit!

Bowman stops. Beek raises his head.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

What?

DEPUTY BEEK
(checking gun)
Oh....Fucking thing jammed again.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN
(giving Beek a look)
Oh.

Bowman goes back to shooting. Again, Beek cringes with every shot.

INT. SUN TIMES OFFICE - DAY

Stone beat up, rubbing his eyes, hungover, gives his editor, and uncle JIM, 52, the article he has written for his school co-op. Jim is a white bearded former marine who's clearly used to holding reign over whoever is in his presence.

Jim skims over the article and hands it back to Stone.

JIM
Rewrite it. Once again, journalism
is not self indulgence. It's the
Who? What? When? Where? And Why?
Not the *Me, me, me, me, and I!*

STONE
Right-o.

JIM
You should write a feel good story.

STONE
I write the St. Mary's school news,
Uncle Jim.

JIM
I know.

STONE
Well... St. Mary's High School has
been underwater for three weeks.

JIM
The glass is always half empty with
you, isn't it?

STONE
(nodding "yes")
Especially when the glass is under
ten feet of water.

JIM

Tell me where you are right now?

STONE

Um... A trailer park?

JIM

Bingo. Write about our trailer park.

STONE

(laughing)

What about? The three trailers that actually have electricity, the trailers that nobody's allowed to live in, or how 'bout an inspiring little piece about the heroes that finally cleaned up the raw sewage? Oh, wait, that was the parents of the kids who got typhoid.

JIM

Very funny... Here's one: The army just presented the Hammond Sheriff with an award recognizing him as a "Patriotic employer."

STONE

What is a "Patriotic Employer?"

JIM

It's an employer who supports the armed forces and/or employs the armed forces.

STONE

Isn't the Sheriff running the Hammond National Guard?

JIM

He's a Major in the 239th Military Company, 519th Battalion right up there out of Fort Polk!

STONE

So, he just got an award for supporting himself?

JIM

Don't be such a smart ass all the time.

Stone awkwardly tries to leave the office.

JIM (CONT'D)

You know I've never had a problem
with a school news co-op student
before you? Never.

STONE

I know, Uncle Jim, I know. It's
very terrible.

INT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES - DAY

Matty stocks aisle six full of ketchup. His name tag reads:
HAPPY MATTY!

Paul and Stone stand in the aisle.

MATTY

I still feel that pepper spray-

STONE

It never goes away-

MATTY

I know. I've felt it all day. You
can't rub your eyes because it
makes it worse, and when you don't
rub your eyes, all you can think
about is how much you want to rub
your fucking eyes.

STONE

I can say without a shadow of a
doubt that pepper spray is the
worst pain. The absolute worst pain
on this planet.

PAUL

Unless you've been bear sprayed.
You know, pepper spray for bears?
Have you ever been bear sprayed?

STONE

No, I haven't been bear sprayed?
Who the hell's been bear sprayed?
Have you been bear sprayed?

PAUL

Yes once. By an angry shop teacher.

STONE

You did not get bear sprayed by an angry shop teacher Paul. Why are you making this up?

PAUL

I did too. Grade ten. Mr. Macgillicuddy.

STONE

Mr. Macgillicuddy did not bear spray you!

(to Matty)

You should have left it alone last night.

MATTY

Well someone had to do something. I can't believe you're letting this guy get away with banging your girlfriend-

STONE

I don't want to talk about this again.

(to Paul)

What are we doing here again?

PAUL

Getting um, some eggs, and a cheese, and...

STONE

Didn't you write it down?

PAUL

No.

STONE

Leslie's gonna be mad as a...

(a beat)

Mad as something.

PAUL

She's always mad, though.

INT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES: AISLE 6 - MOMENTS LATER

Matty works alone stocking the ketchup section. He glimpses over at a man who is checking the prices of mustard.

It's none other than Captain Bowman in plain clothes.

MATTY
(whispers to himself)
Aw, no way!

Matty hastily leaves the aisle without being noticed by the Captain.

INT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES: VEGETABLE SECTION - DAY

Paul sorts through the tomatoes.

PAUL
How do you tell what a good tomato is? I know whatever I pick for Leslie it's going to be the wrong tomato.

STONE
I don't know, just make sure they're not soft or green or anything.

PAUL
Ah.

INT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES: AISLE 6 - DAY

Bowman retrieves a jar of mustard. Suddenly FEEDBACK from the intercom, then:

MATTY (V.O.)
(over intercom)
Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, I hope you're enjoying your shopping experience today at Happy Tom's Groceries. If I could, I'd like to draw your attention to aisle 6, where we have Captain Kenneth Bowman of the Louisiana National Guard, an Iraqi war hero, and one of our trailer town's finest peace keepers.
(a couple of people applaud)
Captain Bowman is also one of our town's very own pedophiles! This polyester molester has recently been indulging in sex with his adolescent baby-sitter! Let's give him a hand ladies and gentlemen!

Bowman drops his groceries in a rage and goes running to the front of the store.

INT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES - DAY

The Captain arrives at the front of the store just as Matty emerges from using the intercom in the office. Matty is laughing hysterically.

Happy Tom's employees and managers are urgently walking towards Matty, some with their arms outstretched as if to ask what's going on.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

Better run.

Bowman bolts towards him. Matty scampers towards a nearby fire exit and slips outside. Bowman is seconds behind him.

Stone pushes his way through curious onlookers just in time to see the exit door closing.

EXT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES - CONTINUOUS

The Captain grabs Matty and immediately punches him harshly across the teeth knocking the smile off his face. Matty's knees buckle and he collapses to the ground beside a garbage bin.

Cars whipping by on the busy street beside the grocery store. A few cars slow down, but nobody stops.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN

You asked for it.

Bowman picks Matty up and slams him against the brick wall of the grocery store.

Stone emerges from around the exit and Bowman immediately swings at Stone. Stone blocks it, but falls to the ground with his forearms up over his face.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN (CONT'D)

BACK THE FUCK OFF.

He points scoldingly at Stone.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN (CONT'D)

First of all you little shits! I'm
30. I'm not an old man!

(MORE)

CAPTAIN BOWMAN (CONT'D)
And second, I'm a goddamn Captain
in the Louisiana Army National
Guard. You will respect that, and
you will stay the fuck out of my
business. She's my baby-sitter,
nothing more-

MATTY
WE SAW YOU MAKING OUT WITH HER, YOU
PEDOPHILE.

Bowman kicks Matty in the ribs.

CAPTAIN BOWMAN
(as he's kicking)
Don't. You. Ever. Call. Me. A.
PEDOPHILE.

Stone jumps to his feet and runs at the Captain. Bowman
easily picks him up and slams him to the ground, onto his
spine, knocking the wind out of him.

Paul emerges from the door to see Bowman kicking Stone
several times in the kidneys.

Paul takes his crutch and swings towards Bowman, at first
just barely catching him in the knee.

PAUL
Why don't you try to pick on me?

Bowman turns to attack Paul but Stone grabs and clings to the
officer's right arm, and doesn't let go.

Paul swings the crutch again at the Captain and this time
makes full contact across the side of Bowman's face. He is
stunned for a second and backs away from the brothers.

PAUL (CONT'D)
PICK ON ME FUCKER.

Matty gets up from the ground, reaching for something in his
pocket.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I'LL KICK YOUR ASS WITH A FUCKIN'
BROKEN LEG. LET'S GO!

The Captain and Paul circle one another. Bowman has fists up,
smirks and kicks Paul with full force on his broken leg,
cracking the cast. Paul howls in pain and falls against the
garbage bin.

Bowman suddenly drops his fists as he looks past Paul towards Matty who brandishes his large hunting knife, his arms spread in a threatening pose.

MATTY
(to Bowman)
Better run.

Bowman turns and darts towards the front of the grocery store with Matty in pursuit.

Stone, winded, lags behind them turns back to the injured Paul. He tries to help Paul get up.

STONE
C'mon man. You alright? Let's go!
Let's go!

PAUL
My leg's broken. He broke my
fucking leg again.

MATTY (O.S.)
STONE. I GOT HIM.

Stone turns and freezes in shock. Matty's shirt is splashed with scarlet, and he hoists his BLOOD STAINED KNIFE.

MATTY (CONT'D)
Look! Blood!

Happy Tom's employees gasp, and a female employee, EILEEN, 18, runs inside.

Stone grabs Matty by the arm.

STONE
Run. We gotta run.

INT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES - DAY

An oblivious female CASHIER scans various FOOD ITEMS. A PHONE sits next to her register.

A frantic Eileen comes running up to her.

EILEEN
Call 911!

The cashier holds up a finger signalling her to wait a second.

EILEEN

Matty stabbed a guy. Call 911.

EXT. CHURCH ALLEYWAY - DAY

A few hundred feet from Happy Tom's Groceries, Matty stumbles into a church trailer's alleyway. Seconds behind, is the injured Paul who uses Stone as a crutch. They all collapse into the alleyway breathlessly.

A church choir's southern hymns escape from an open stained glass window.

STONE

(in pain)

You stabbed him?!

MATTY

I guess.

STONE (CONT'D)

Well, is he fucking dead?

MATTY

He looked pretty dead man.

PAUL

What the fuck were you thinking?

Matty's proud posture turns to a bag of sand.

MATTY

(holding back tears)

It was self defence...

Creeping SIRENS bounce off the trailers around them as Paul rips the shattered cast from his leg in a frenzy.

PAUL

If we run, we'll look guilty.

STONE

If we run we are guilty. It's accessory to murder.

PAUL

(shaking his head)

I'm not waiting for the National Guard to find us. They'll kill us.

STONE

No they won't. We'll call Uncle Jim.

MATTY

Everything's nuts right now. The guard'll probably hang us from trees to make an example-

PAUL

Shut the fuck up Matty.
(to Stone)
The dumb little shit's right.

EXT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES - DAY

Some MEDICS run up to the strewn out body of Captain Bowman in the parking lot. They check his vitals. Nothing.

EXT. TRAILER PARK RAVINE - DAY

Malicious vegetation strangles away the trees and the sunlight is broken into a million tiny shafts as Stone, Paul and Matty inch down the ravine with their backs to the hill and their hands on the ground.

Mud churns beneath their feet creating tiny mud slides that roll off the cliffs below to the bottom of the chasm.

Paul is forced into a balancing act, the pain from his leg is affecting his every move. He never lets his leg touch the ground as they inch downwards ever so slowly.

EXT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES - DAY

Deputy Beek is on the scene in full National Guard attire, is scribbling notes on his note pad, standing beside Eileen,

DEPUTY BEEK

Thanks for your help, Eileen.

Two Humvees overflowing with National Guardsmen pull into the store lot.

EILEEN

You don't need anything else?

Beek's phone rings.

DEPUTY BEEK
(shaking his head)
You can leave.

Beek answers.

DEPUTY BEEK
(concerned)
Hey sweetie... I know, Lisa, and
I'm sorry, but it's crazy tonight.
They barely have anybody working
here. Everybody's still stuck in
New Orleans.

INTERCUT WITH:

Lisa is curled up on her couch watching American Idol.

LISA
I can't sleep if you're not home.

DEPUTY BEEK
You're doing so well. I know you
can do this. I'll be home in a few
hours. You can call me any time.
OK?

LISA
(hesitant)
OK.

DEPUTY BEEK
I'm proud of you.

As Beek hangs up, Sergeant Zayas and Corporal Thomas step out
of their Humvee. They salute as they approach.

SSGT. ZAYAS
Beek. Good to see you again man!

A handshake hug.

SSGT. ZAYAS
What's up?

Beek is looking particularly sullen and agitated.

DEPUTY BEEK
(upset)
Ken Bowman's dead.

SSGT. ZAYAS
How the hell did that happen?

DEPUTY BEEK

Some piece of shit stabbed him...

Vann, already on the scene, approaches. Some E4 soldiers join the crowd. Everybody salutes the Sheriff/Major.

VANN

(addressing squad)

OK. We're gonna have to conduct a search as one group. And for the record, gentlemen, while I am Sheriff in this Parish, I am addressed as Sheriff, even though I am, in addition, your acting Major. Understood? Sheriff and Parish. It rhymes. Is that clear?

Everybody nods.

VANN

We have three Deputy's already searching.

SSGT. ZAYAS

Anyone else from the brigade gonna show?

DEPUTY BEEK

Earliest we can get anyone out here is tomorrow morning. We only have your squad for the night.

SSGT. ZAYAS

That's not enough.

VANN

It's gonna have to be.

SSGT. ZAYAS

How many vehicles we got?

VANN

Four Humvees and five squad cars.

SSGT. ZAYAS

That's it? No trucks?

VANN

That's it. Everything else is in New Orleans or the desert...

SSGT. ZAYAS

How many suspects we looking at?

DEPUTY BEEK

Witness saw three guys. Teens.
Apparently brothers.

VANN

(gesturing out over the
ravine)

Last seen headed towards the west
trailers over there.

CORPORAL THOMAS

How many were there?

DEPUTY BEEK

I just said there was three.

CORPORAL THOMAS

You said at least three, but does
that mean there's a possibility
there was more than three.

SSGT. ZAYAS

Jesus, Thomas, are we actually
having this conversation? He said
we're looking for three guys.

VANN

OK, let's shut the fuck up, and
find these fucks. We'll make up for
manpower with some speed. Let's go!

SAME SCENE - SECONDS LATER

A half-dozen guardsmen, pull thirty calibre machine guns from
the back of the Humvee.

Led by their Staff Sergeant Zayas, and framed by the ravine
forest's brooding branches, the soldiers march off towards
the west group of trailers.

Deputy Beek and a PRIVATE with a German Shepard follow
behind.

EXT. RAVINE - DAY

At the bottom of the gorge, Paul hops off a river bank into
some tall glades plunging knee-deep into the murky black
swamp.

PAUL
(to Matty)
Get in, psychopath. Water throws
off police dogs.

MATTY
No it doesn't.

PAUL
It sure as fuck does.

STONE
How the fuck would you know?

PAUL
Discovery channel... Just get in
the fucking water.

Stone follows clumsily into the water. Matty's eyes are
locked on the muddy water, his mind is locked in deep
thought.

PAUL
Matty. Wake the fuck up and hurry
the fuck up, please.

MATTY
I did this for Stone and you are
treating me like I was the one who
fucked his girlfriend-

PAUL
The only reason you did anything is
because of you, Matty. You didn't
do it for Stone. You didn't do it
for me. You stabbed the guy for
you. You've always had so much to
fucking prove, and now we're all
screwed because of it.

Matty melts into a sulk and climbs away from the water.

PAUL
And right on cue: Matty tries to
make us feel sorry for him.

STONE
You always pull this shit, Matt.
C'mon.

Matty stops. He contemplates his words carefully and then:

MATTY

Do you know what the meaning of life is?

PAUL

Oh, God...

STONE

Don't even do this.

MATTY

I'm serious. Take a guess. Give me your theory on the meaning of life.

STONE

No.

PAUL

To go forth and reproduce!

STONE

You're being a real fucking flake, Matty.

MATTY

The meaning of life is to give something back to other people's lives...

The two older brothers would probably laugh out loud if they weren't so pissed off.

PAUL

Profound thought is not your friend, Matty.

Matty stares up, and glances back and forth between both sides of the ravine. The ground at the top is covered in white mobiles as far as anyone can see.

MATTY

Listen to me. My point is they're gonna be looking for three guys-

STONE

Get in the water.

MATTY

So we should split up...

STONE

We're not splitting up. Get in the water.

MATTY

Until I confess to what I did,
they're going to think we all did
it.

STONE

We don't need to split up for you
to confess.

Matty looks at his brothers and takes a deep breath. He
begins back up the bank and into the bush.

STONE

Don't be fucking stupid. We don't
have time... Matty!

PAUL

(Matty distances himself)
We're not gonna chase after you
dude!

MATTY

Don't then.

And Matty fades into the densest Louisiana brush you've ever
seen.

STONE

Matty... Ya little freak.
(starts after Matty)
MATTY! GET BACK HERE!

He stops. Looks back, and keeps on going. Stone looks at
Paul. He has no choice but to stay.

EXT. RAVINE - MOMENTS LATER

As Matty scales back up the ravine he fails to notice hints
of military green uniforms becoming visible through the trees
in the distance.

INT. CHRISTIE'S HOUSE: KITCHEN - DUSK

Christie, in her pajamas, eats a bowl of Lucky Charms cereal
and paces impatiently around her massive family kitchen.

INSERT OF DECORATION SIGN OVER SINK: God blesses this
kitchen, but he doesn't clean it!

CHRISTIE

I think we're leaving the cake in too long.

Christie's mom, FAYE, forties, an earnest housewife, picks up invisible specks of dust off the kitchen floor and wipes down the counter to make way for a chocolate CAKE rising in the oven.

FAYE

You sound like your Aunt Sue. Cake made from scratch takes a little bit longer. We used to just argue to death about this.

CHRISTIE

People don't argue about this kind of stuff, mom.

FAYE

They do too! I once knew two sisters who stopped speaking because they cooked chicken casseroles differently.

CHRISTIE

(laughing)

OK, correction: Sane people don't argue about this kind of stuff, mom.

Faye wanders out of the kitchen.

Christie turns her attention to a local NEWSCAST playing on a small TV in the B.G.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

...murder took place behind Happy Tom's Groceries this afternoon. No names have officially been released by officials, but sources tell us that the victim's name was a Captain Kenneth Bowman of 519th Battalion in Fort Polk. Again, we want to stress that this is not official, but...

Christie drops her bowl of cereal. Yellow stars, green clovers, and purple horseshoes swim at her feet.

Faye comes back in with a dustpan.

FAYE
What's wrong with you?

Christie has turned white.

FAYE (CONT'D)
What?

EXT. RAVINE - DUSK

Sergeant Zayas and Deputy Beek approach the top of a hill above the water.

Zayas breaks over the brow of the hill only to find...

Matty climbing towards them. He freezes in his tracks.

All the soldiers turn and aim their guns at Matty.

SSGT. ZAYAS
(amused)
Well, ho-lee shit!

DEPUTY BEEK
Hands! Hands! Hands!

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - DUSK

Just away from the ravine, surrounding the bottom of a rustic water tower, is an abandoned football field, and a cluster of a few thousand empty FEMA trailers.

GUTTERS

Stone and Paul hurry between the no man's land of gutters, thin muddy drain-ways that hide behind the back ends of every trailer and stretch for miles on end.

EXT. RAVINE - DUSK

The squad's guns are up, sights locked on Matty, who is frozen in his tracks in the midst of frantic negotiation.

DEPUTY BEEK
Where your brothers at? They here?

MATTY
No! Why?! They didn't do shit! I did it! I did it!

SSGT. ZAYAS

What you got in that back pocket?

Matty has his right hand clasped to something in his back pocket. He lets go.

MATTY

Just listen! Just listen!

The Private and his barking German Sheppard edge towards Matty.

MATTY

What's up with that dog? Keep that dog away!

SSGT. ZAYAS

We're going to let the dog go!

MATTY

Let that dog go then and see what happens!

PRIVATE

I plan on it! I plan on it!

DEPUTY BEEK

Hands up! And the dog won't go near you!

MATTY

Alright, but y'all need to just listen to me!

The Sergeant clutches his gun tight, aiming carefully. Matty and Beek's lock eyes. The Shepard is getting pissed, barking louder.

CORPORAL THOMAS

You can end this peacefully! You can end this peacefully!

MATTY

(slowly raising hands)

You can end this peacefully too!

And suddenly the Sheppard is loose and charging at Matty.

Matty pulls his knife, but it's too late.

Beek FIRES, and all within five seconds COUNTLESS THUNDEROUS AUTOMATIC ROUNDS are fired at Matty.

SSGT. ZAYAS

HOLD! HOLD!

Matty and the dog drop like trees. The shooting stops.

SSGT. ZAYAS

What the fuck?!

PRIVATE

YOU HIT THE DOG!

SSGT. ZAYAS

Godamn it!

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER

What sounds like the CRACKLE OF DISTANT FIREWORKS echoes a couple of miles off. The brothers barely notice as they hurry to the nearest trailer. Stone runs up the trailer steps and shoulders into the door, once. Twice. Nothing.

PAUL

(unimpressed)

What are you doing?

STONE

What?

PAUL

You know they only have three different sets of keys for the whole fucking trailer park.

STONE

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah! That's right.

Stone tries his key on the trailer. Doesn't work. He moves on to the next trailer. Like a charm.

EXT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES - DUSK

There's a small commotion amongst the police. Vann's noting blood spatter at the crime scene. His walkie crackles:

WALKIE (O.S.)

(talking fast)

... suspect down. He had a gun--
Need a paramedic...

VANN

(into walkie)

10-4. What's your twenty?

EXT. RAVINE - DUSK

A few feet into the ravine, caught on a fallen tree, and hanging upside down with his shirt up over his face, is the barely distinguishable body of Matty-- A forensics photographer taking photos.

A bullet has ripped half his name tag away, all that remains of the tag is the blood spattered word, 'Happy.'

Beek, slouching under the weight of remorse, is in animated conversation with Sheriff Vann.

DEPUTY BEEK

He said he had a gun, and we fired
when he went for it...

VANN

And how the fuck did you manage to
shoot the dog?

The Private picks up the body of his dog, shot to death, and carries him up out of the ravine.

Beek breathes deeply, trying to hide what appears to be a small panic attack.

DEPUTY BEEK

The dog broke loose and bolted for
the suspect simultaneously with the
suspect pulling, what we thought
was a gun.

VANN

And when did you realize his gun
was a six inch hunting knife?

DEPUTY BEEK

(a little ashamed)

After the suspect was deceased.

Corporal Thomas is sitting on a tree stump, staring wide eyed out into space.

CORPORAL THOMAS

We were just doing our job...

VANN (CONT'D)

And, of course, I can't send any of you fucks home to properly investigate 'cause then we'll have no boots in the fucking Parish tonight? Right?

DEPUTY BEEK

That's not my call, sir.

VANN

Christ!

SSGT. ZAYAS

(to Vann)

Not everybody fired, sir.

DEPUTY BEEK

(very offended)

We had no choice but to do what we did, Sergeant.

SSGT. ZAYAS

No offence meant, Cal. It just feels ugly.

DEPUTY BEEK

I know it does-

VANN

(ending conversation)

OK.

Without missing a beat, Vann turns to the congregation of law enforcement and Guard.

VANN

Alright, listen the fuck up! Our suspects have been on the run for sixty minutes. One suspect is deceased, and it appears we have two more on the run. One is believed to be injured, so it's a safe bet they have not left this trailer park. I want a section by section search of every trailer in this park if need be and I want check-points up at every half mile, where possible!

(to Beek)

I got control here, Cal. Take control everywhere else.

(MORE)

VANN (cont'd)
Get to the families, hangouts,
girlfriends. Anywhere these boys
might be!

Everybody springs into action. Police and guard disperse from the scene like waves of an explosion.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DUSK

The otherwise empty mobile is adorned with only a small plastic platinum crucifix. Paul is on his cell phone.

PAUL
(to Stone)
Ouch! That is not how you do a
fucking splint man!

Stone throws his hands up, abandoning Paul's boorish leg splint made from sticks and shoe laces.

PAUL
(into phone)
No, Leslie, don't call 911...
You're breaking up. I can barely
hear you.. Leave Gracie with your
mom, and get down here before the
fucking army's on your front
lawn... I know you don't have a
front lawn. It's called a figure of
speech.

EXT. LESLIE'S MOM'S TRAILER - EVENING

The baby blue Chevette screeches up the front of a trailer and comes to a sudden halt. Leslie leaps out of her Chevette and runs into her mom's trailer with the crying baby GRACIE, still strapped into the baby seat.

A second later she runs out of the trailer, leaps back in the car, and tears away, leaving everything in a CLOUD OF DUST.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - EVENING

Stone has his mouth wide open beneath the kitchen faucet, unsuccessfully attempting to shake just one single drop of water onto his tongue.

Paul disassembles the CRUCIFIX. He takes the wooden cross, and lays the Christ down on a nearby windowsill.

PAUL
Sorry Jesus...

STONE
(giving up on faucet)
We gotta call Uncle Jim?

PAUL
He's probably happy this happened
to us.

STONE
Don't joke about this.

PAUL
Who's joking?

STONE
What do you think's gonna happen to
Matty?
(before Paul can answer)
Fuck. We shouldn't have let him go.

PAUL
Either you chased after Matty, or
you stuck with me. It was Matty's
choice to fucking take off.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - TRAILER - EVENING

Stone is on his feet-- Paul ties the last knot of his
professional looking leg splint, made from a crucifix, held
together by some shredded curtains.

STONE
I gotta go.

PAUL
Where?!

STONE
I gotta go see Jayda.

Paul looks at Stone like he's from another planet.

PAUL
Let me get this straight: You want
to go on a date right now?

STONE
I'll wait 'til Leslie gets here and
then I'll go. Two hours. That's it.

PAUL
We're on the run.

STONE
And I might not ever get another chance to date a chick again. It's become more than a very real possibility that after today I'll end up dating a fucking drag queen in the penitentiary.

PAUL
Ohhh, dating the drag queen?!

STONE
Shut up, man.

PAUL
Some optimistic thinking there.
Wow.

STONE
Fuck off.

Paul and Stone hold eye contact. Paul smiles. He gets it.

PAUL
Go on your little date then, fuck head... Leslie'll be here any second. You got two hours.

STONE
I'm not leaving before Leslie shows-

PAUL
I would leave before Leslie gets here, dude. No way she's gonna let you go on a date.

STONE
(trying to brush off mud)
Should I call Uncle Jim or should you?

PAUL
Um. You. Definitely you. He trusts you...
(re: cell phone)
Reception sucks out here anyway.

Stone takes a deep breath, gives Paul a handshake/hug, but still hesitates.

STONE

Nah... I can't go.

PAUL

(strongly)

Go. Go for your two hours.

(Stone still waits)

Before I punch you.

INT. KING'S HOTEL: JIM'S ROOM - EVENING

Jim is in shock, seated at the hotel desk in mid conversation with Deputy Beek who stands in front of him.

JIM

I just need a straight answer here.

Do you have a witness that saw

Matty stab the guy, or what?

DEPUTY BEEK

(hesitant)

No one solid, sir. This is why we need you to help us help Stone and Paul.

JIM

Help 'em? I'm gonna kill 'em.

DEPUTY BEEK

Any idea where they would be?

JIM

Nah. Why should they tell me anything? I'm just their bank machine.

The Deputy picks up a stack of photos of the boys, at least ten years out of date from a nearby table.

DEPUTY BEEK

Is this all the photos you got?

JIM

Yeah... Everything was gone after Katrina.

The Deputy stops on one photo in particular.

INSERT OF PHOTO: A pic of all three brothers, grade school age, with their mother at a picnic table.

DEPUTY BEEK

Their parents both dead, sir?

JIM

Father's a dead beat. Long gone...
Katie... Their mother was driving
home after a shift at the hospital
where she worked the night the
levees broke... They found her
car.. Never found her...

And then it really hits him.

JIM (CONT'D)

And now Matty... Shit... How could
they be so stupid?

EXT. HAPPY TOM'S GROCERIES - EVENING

Beek walks with Vann and Sergeant Zayas through the chaos of
the crime scene parking lot. Guardsmen jump into a couple of
jeeps behind them.

SSGT. ZAYAS

(frustrated for him)

What about their parents?

DEPUTY BEEK

Father walked out on 'em ten years
ago... Mother died in Katrina.

VANN

Christ... What's the press doing
for us?

DEPUTY BEEK

KRCQ and crime stoppers are issuing
a reward for witnesses or
information leading to the arrest
of the suspects.

VANN

Good.

They slip past THREE FORENSICS WORKERS combing the scene with
an ALS LIGHT.

SSGT. ZAYAS

So, I was thinking.

VANN
(kidding around)
Uh-oh.

SSGT. ZAYAS
I don't know if the squad should be
on duty after a shooting.

Vann opens the driver's seat door and steps one foot into his
Humvee.

DEPUTY BEEK
Three weeks ago every one of us was
in Tikrit. Not one of us would have
been pulled after a shooting.

SSGT. ZAYAS
This is America.

VANN
It's America minus man power... Our
Parish is under siege by twenty
thousand refugees, Sergeant, and we
have a grand total of twenty-three
bodies helping us tonight. Eight of
them are in your squad. We can't
afford to lose a single man, never
mind a whole squad.

Zayas nods in surrender. Beek salutes as Vann shuts the
Humvee door.

SSGT. ZAYAS
(saluting)
Happy birthday, sir... by the way.

VANN
Thank you, Sergeant.

The Humvee pulls away.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - CEDARWOOD LANE- EVENING

Stone sneaks and peeks through the park and hides himself
from the glare of passing cars behind some dying cedars
around the streets.

He looks at the address he has scribbled on the corner of a
beat up, and somewhat inaccurate, map of the trailer city.

INSERT OF MAP: Jayda-- 199 28th Section, West.

INSERT OF NUMBER ON TRAILER: 199

EXT. TRAILER 199 - MOMENTS LATER

Stone climbs the steps of TRAILER 199. He knocks and jumps as he catches a glimpse of his reflection in the door window.

He swipes some caked blood from his forehead and cheek.

The door swings open to make way for Jayda, smiling wide.

JAYDA

Heyyyy, how the...

(her smile melts away)

Oh my God! You're bleeding!

She looks him up and down.

JAYDA

What in the name of everything...

STONE

A bit of a mishap... on the way over.

JAYDA

(not buying it)

Uh-huh.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: TRAILER - EVENING

Paul finishes up his splint modification and hears the sudden and fast approaching sound of several ARMED BODIES coming right up behind him.

He pulls out the trailer steps, squeezes his body underneath, and pulls the steps back up against the trailer wall.

INT. CHEVETTE: EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - EVENING

Leslie has stopped at the edge of the empty FEMA trailer section. She looks around, clueless about where to go. She hurriedly dials her cell.

INSERT OF CELL: NO SERVICE AVAILABLE

Frustrated, she dials again-- Nothing.

She SCROLLS through her cell menu to SEND TEXT MESSAGE-- and CLICKS ON IT.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: UNDER TRAILER STEPS - SECONDS LATER

Under the steps, Paul resembles a broken legged contortionist, comically uncomfortable. The sound of boots on mud tread implacably all around him.

In the trailer above is the BANGING of the military tearing the place apart looking for him. It soon ends.

The footsteps become distant. Paul relaxes, and then KA-BANG.

SSGT. ZAYAS (O.S.)
Check under the steps!

The steps he is under move a couple of inches out from the trailer wall. A flashlight's beam swoops around Paul. Whoever has the flashlight is sloppy. Miraculously, they miss him.

CORPORAL THOMAS (O.S.)
Looks clear here! Fuck it...

And again, the footsteps become distant.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: TRAILER STEPS - SAME SCENE

Everything is very still a few beats before:

The trailer steps begin to play THE GHOSTBUSTERS THEME SONG.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: UNDER TRAILER STEPS - SAME SCENE

The theme song is revealed as Paul's cell phone text message alert. Paul ties himself in a knot, scrambling to retrieve the cell phone. He shuts off the music.

INSERT OF TEXT MESSAGE: Where the fuck are you jerk??? >:(

Paul begins to TYPE OUT A REPLY: B-careful... I M near RAVINE...

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER

Paul worms out from beneath the steps.

Leslie's Chevette breaks through the tree line. Paul limps out into the grassy road and flags her down as she fishtails towards him and screeches to a halt beside him, muck and pebbles flying.

INT. CHEVETTE - EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - EVENING

Paul gets in. Leslie is fuming, arms crossed-- about to blow.

PAUL
(lightning fast)
Sorry! Sorry! Sorry! Sorry! Sorry!

LESLIE
Shut up.

Paul goes for a hug and is promptly body checked to the other side of the car.

PAUL
(slamming into window)
OW! Jesus, Leslie!

LESLIE
Just don't fucking fuck with me
right now, mother fucker!

Paul rubs his shoulder, but his feelings are what's hurt.

LESLIE
Where's your two idiot brothers?!

PAUL
Matty went to confess to murder.
Stone went on a date.

LESLIE
What?!

EXT. JAYDA'S TRAILER - EVENING

Jayda comes out onto the steps and shuts the door behind her. She LOCKS it, and checks her canvas purse making sure she has everything.

JAYDA
OK, let's go.

STONE
Where are we going?

JAYDA
I stole a new trailer last week and
moved in. Let's go.

STONE

What do you mean, you stole a new trailer?

Jayda is already down the steps and walking up the street.

JAYDA

FEMA fucks gave us one without power, so I stole one... You coming or staying?

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - EVENING

Jayda leads Stone into a group of unused trailers and stops in front of an optimistic looking mobile decorated with blue Christmas lights and a semi-psychedelic paint job.

STONE

Subtle.

They begin up the tiny lane way past a group of garden gnomes painted to look like a rock band.

JAYDA

You ever been to this section before?

STONE

(looks up at water tower)

Once.

JAYDA

No one's even checked on it yet. You believe it?

STONE

I very much do believe it, actually.

Stone's eyes meet one gnome that looks exactly like Jerry Garcia with wings, perched on a cloud, singing his heart out from heaven.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: TRAILER - EVENING

Leslie is backing up and pulling forward trying to squeeze into a tiny gap between a parking barrier and some trailers.

LESLIE (O.S.)

So, I've been trying to watch the news but my sister wouldn't let me 'cause she was watching The Wheel of Fortune. She watches The Wheel of Fortune voluntarily. Daily. Why? Why in God's name would anyone do such a thing?.. And why are we parking?

PAUL (O.S.)

I told you, we have to wait for Stone.

LESLIE (O.S.)

We shouldn't be waiting around. You should be calling your uncle.

INT. CHEVETTE - EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - EVENING

As she struggles to park, Paul snaps on the radio.

PAUL

(surfing through channels)
Should be listening to the radio...
Figure out what the fuck's going on.

LESLIE

Be pretty funny if we found out they weren't even looking for you guys.

PAUL

Yeah. Hilarious.

Paul stops at the first channel that gets reception.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

(on the radio)
...Newt Gingrich addressed CPAC today...

Leslie finally parks safely between two mobiles.

NEWT GINGRICH (O.S.)

(on the radio)

How can you have the mess you have in New Orleans, and not have had deep investigations of the federal government, the state government, the city government, and the failure of citizenship in the Ninth Ward, where 22,000 people were so uneducated and so unprepared, they literally couldn't get out of the way of a hurricane.

LESLIE

(stunned)

He did not just blame us.

NEWT GINGRICH (O.S.)

(on the radio)

And yet there's no sense of, we should be changing these things. Not just accepting them, and not just complaining about them.

Radio applause. Paul is absolutely speechless.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - EVENING

Jayda digs around in her freezer and flops a bag of frozen peas down on the table with a thud. She pulls out a chair.

JAYDA

Sit.

CUT TO:

Stone holds the frozen peas firmly on his head and guzzles down a 2 litre bottle of water.

JAYDA

(going to fridge)

Wanna beer, Stone?

STONE

Thanks... You gonna call me Stone or Albert? What's the verdict on that?

JAYDA

(laughing)

"Drunk Jayda" likes to give people nick names. "Sober Jayda" will call you by your real name, Stone.

STONE

So, who are tonight?

JAYDA

"Sober Jayda."

(leaning into fridge for beer)

Soon to be drunk again.

Stone tries not to stare at her perfect ass, back, and every single curve of her, all the way down to her slender legs to her sandaled feet-- Time for some awkward chit chat.

STONE

I can't believe you stole this.

(looking up)

This thing even has sunroofs!

Nobody noticed you here? Seriously?

Jayda returns with a beer for Stone and another for herself.

JAYDA

Told ya, nobody checks. Nobody cares... All the good trailers are tied up in the contract dispute thingy... But I'm happy. No neighbors for five miles.

Stone is completely enamored by this girl.

EXT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Vann's Humvee eases into the rear parking lot alongside a couple of squad cars all in a row. The trailer park city glows from a few miles away.

INT. POLICE STATION: AUTOPSY LAB - NIGHT

Vann and a skinny bald FORENSICS WORKER, fifties, walk past a series of cold concrete rooms as they snake through various fluorescent kindled hallways.

FORENSICS

Heard you've had a tough night.

VANN

You kidding? Been an easy night.
They'll be wheeling in our first
suspect any second now.

They chuckle at their black humor and carry on through the
web of passageways.

Finally, they stop at the sudden sight of the Captain
Bowman's body strewn out on a steel examining table.

VANN (CONT'D)

Alright then. Enlighten me.

FORENSICS

(gesturing towards body)

So far? I can see it was a single
stab wound in the front chest. Hit
him directly in the heart. An
eighth of an inch either way, he'd
have survived.

(illustrating sideways
stabbing motion)

The shape of the victim's wound
insinuates that the suspect was
stabbing from the side, but the
fact that the victim's also got
blade contusions all across the
backs of his arms are, to me, very
clear signs that--

VANN

The Captain had his attacker in a
reverse choke hold.

FORENSICS

(nodding "yes")

That's right.

VANN

Unarmed combat 101...

(re: stab wound)

So was this the result of self
defence?

FORENSICS

I don't know which came first, the
choke hold or the knife, but I do
know that the suspect was more than
likely being choked to death when
he stabbed Captain Bowman.

VANN
OK, is there any physical evidence
from the suspects?

FORENSICS
I haven't found anything yet. No
blood. No nothing.

A BEEPER cuts in. Vann checks his beeper. Not his.

VANN
That yours?

FORENSICS
No. Not mine.
(points at the body)
It's his.

Vann looks at the Forensics guy like he's kidding, and then
dashes to the beeper sitting on a nearby cart containing all
of Bowman's belongings.

THE BEEPER READS: CALL ME! 911- IT'S CHRISTIE! 545-5659

VANN
(shocked)
Christie?

FORENSICS
What's wrong?

VANN
You sure this isn't somebody else's
beeper?

FORENSICS
Absolutely positive. Why?

Vann's eyes leave don't leave the beeper-- his face is tense.

VANN
This page is coming from my
daughter...

INT. CHEVETTE - EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - EVENING

Leslie watches Paul devour a can of Zoodles. The radio plays
overzealous synthesizer music before the news.

RADIO NEWSCASTER (O.S.)
(on radio)
This is the news on KRCQ...
(MORE)

RADIO NEWSCASTER (O.S.) (cont'd)
 A brazen attack on a Captain in the
 National Guard today...
 (Paul puts the can down.)
 One suspect is dead and police are
 searching for at least 2 more...

LESLIE
 Did he just say one suspect's dead?

PAUL
 Shhh!

RADIO NEWSCASTER (O.S.)
 16-year-old New Orleans native,
 Matthew Green was shot and killed
 by police after a standoff...

LESLIE
 (frantic)
 Omigod! Omigod!

For a tense moment nobody moves. Then Paul launches a mean
 right hook into the radio, killing it. The Zoodles can
 wobbles to the floor.

LESLIE
Paul!

He hits it again. And again. And again, until the entire car
 is shaking violently under the weight of a barrage of punches
 and elbows, all smashing into the radio and dashboard in a
 tantrum of hurt.

LESLIE
 (as he's hitting)
 Paul! Baby! Paul, STOP! STOP!

INT. EILEEN'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Eileen is putting up PARTY PHOTOS on an internet chat room.
 KRCQ radio plays in the b.g.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)
 (on radio)
 ...A one thousand dollar reward is
 being offered for any information
 about the murder of Captain Kenneth
 Bowman. Police have no witnesses...

Eileen jumps right out of her seat and stares at the radio.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)
(on radio)
Witnesses are asked to call this
number. 985-323...

Eileen grabs a pen and marks down the number on a Seventeen magazine.

INT. DEPUTY BEEK'S HUMVEE - NIGHT

Driving in his Humvee, cell phone pressed to his left ear, Beek is in delicate conversation.

DEPUTY BEEK
(into phone)
Sweetie. We gotta be prepared!

INT. DEPUTY BEEK'S AND LISA'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lisa, on a portable phone with Beek, timidly stares down at FIVE BIG BLUE BINS OF RICE in her closet in a daze.

LISA
(confused)
Baby, why do you have five bins of
rice in our closet?

DEPUTY BEEK (V.O.)
I have two bins of flour too.

LISA
Where?

DEPUTY BEEK (V.O.)
Under the trap door I installed in
the kitchen floor.

Lisa walks into the kitchen, crouches down, and discovers a secret trap door built into the floor tile. She opens finds the latch, opens the door, and sees two bins of flour under the house.

LISA
Baby, you're freaking me out a
little bit.

DEPUTY BEEK (V.O.)
I'm just making sure we're
prepared!

LISA
What are we preparing for?!

DEPUTY BEEK (O.S.)
(shaking his head)
Heaven forbid we'll ever need that
stuff, but who knows what might
happen... Let's just talk about
this tomorrow. Go to bed.

LISA
I told you, I can't sleep!

Deputy Beek's phone BEEPS.

DEPUTY BEEK (V.O.)
Lisa. I'm gonna have to call you
back. I'm sorry. I gotta take this.

He clicks over.

INT. DEPUTY BEEK'S HUMVEE - NIGHT

DEPUTY BEEK
(into phone)
Deputy Beek speaking.

EILEEN (V.O.)
Hi. Um. You the fella offering the
reward? I was a witness at Happy
Tom's today. I saw everything!

DEPUTY BEEK
Where you at?

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS: JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - EVENING

Jayda grabs a pile of records, and flops herself into a
yellow bean bag chair beside a vintage record player.

STONE
You got running water... Power!

JAYDA
And I even gotta phone line.

STONE
No. Now you've gone too far. I
don't believe you.

JAYDA

All trues. No lies.

STONE

So, do your mom and dad know about this place?

JAYDA

Yeah. They're hilarious about it. They love that I stole a FEMA trailer, but they refuse to step foot in it.

Putting on an Ani Difranco record, Jayda kicks her feet back and her sandals fly off into the middle of the floor.

STONE

I am mesmerized by your madness.

JAYDA

I put a spell on you? I tend to do that.

STONE

(laughing)

I think you did...

Jayda is back at Stone's side in time to take hold of the icy bag.

JAYDA

So you gonna tell me what happened to you today?

STONE

Honestly, it's no big deal. Just... It's nothing.

She brushes some dried mud off his shoulder. The needle hits the record as:

JAYDA (CONT'D)

You're not going out with me when you're this filthy, Sugar.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER: BATHROOM - LATER

Stone showers in the tiny bathroom. A foggy shower curtain is all that separates him from Jayda, who is just barely visible through the seventies style floral print, as she tries on various outfits in front of the bathroom mirror.

JAYDA

So where are we going tonight?
Anywhere special?

STONE

Um, solid question... I'll get back
to you.

Through the curtain, Stone watches the vague silhouette of Jayda. Her back to the shower, she drops her Jean shorts to her ankles, rips off her white tank top, and slips into a quaint little sundress. He smiles.

STONE (CONT'D)

(joking)

You know I usually don't shower
until after I sleep with a girl,
Jayda...

She glimpses devilishly towards the curtain.

JAYDA

Oh, reallllly?

STONE

Yup. Yup, I--

Jayda tears open the shower curtain. Stone attempts to cover himself as he sees Jayda standing there in the summer dress that compliments her every curve.

STONE (CONT'D)

Whoa! Jesus!

JAYDA

Can I ask you something?

STONE

Um... OK?

JAYDA

Wouldn't it be fun to do an entire
date backwards? I mean, it starts
with a shower, instead of ending
with one. And then you get to score
with me without the petty games
designed for people with no self
esteem. And then maybe we play the
petty games, just to say we did.

(MORE)

JAYDA (cont'd)

And, then, if I'm lucky, you tell me your last name, and what you're doing with your life, and what your astrological sign is, and I'll act like I give a fuck. And all the boring bull shit will come last. All the fireworks will come first. The way I think it should be. All backwards. Wouldn't that be cool, Stone?

A beat.

STONE

(blown away)

Yes, it most certainly would.

Jayda climbs into the shower, still dressed in her summer dress, and hits Stone with a hot blooded kiss as she pulls the curtain half closed behind her. Stone pulls her dress up over her head.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER: BATHROOM - EVENING

Stone showers in the tiny bathroom. The previous sequence is revealed as a fantasy.

Indeed, a foggy shower curtain is all that separates him from Jayda, who is just barely visible through the seventies style floral print, as she tries on various outfits in front of the bathroom mirror, but Stone's wit is a little less piercing than his fantasy.

STONE (CONT'D)

(mumbling)

You know I usually don't shower until after... Um...

JAYDA

What's that?

STONE

Nothing.

EXT. CHEVETTE - EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - NIGHT

The radio and plastic vents are in several pieces scattered around the Chevette. It looks like a bomb's hit the dashboard.

Paul, in tears, sits in a heap on the dusty old parking barrier in front of the car. Leslie rubs his back and rests her head on his big shoulder.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Stone's clothes tumble around and around in the dryer across the room. Stone lounges beneath a navy blanket covered in stars and moons. Jayda climbs in beside him.

They're looking through some photographs of India, half-watching The Wizard of Oz on a tiny TV in the b.g.

JAYDA

The best people I met there were the monkeys...

STONE

Aren't monkeys like pests in India?

JAYDA

Oh, on the contrary! You know that when the sun rises in a city there, the streets are filled with monkeys? Monkeys everywhere. And you know what they're doing?

STONE

Um- Being pests?

JAYDA

(playfully whacks him)

No. They're cuddling. They cuddle with each other just for the sake of each other. No other reason. There's no selfishness involved. It's really amazing.

STONE

That is kinda amazing, I guess. Did you take any pictures?

JAYDA

No... Some things aren't meant to be photographed, ya know?

Stone and Jayda make long eye contact...

STONE

Why are you single, Jayda?

JAYDA

After Katrina... I... I don't
know...

And Stone finally gets his kiss.

EXT. VANN FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT

Vann drags himself up the steps of his beautiful three story house. White picket fence. Large and well kept lawn. Beautiful gardens. Perfect.

INT. VANN FAMILY HOUSE: KITCHEN - NIGHT

Vann sits down across from his daughter Christie, still in her PJs who hides behind her knees up at her chest, her arms wrapped around her legs.

CHRISTIE

I refuse to talk to you about
anything in front of mom. I'm
pretty sure she has no soul.

Faye obsessively wraps up the undecorated birthday cake sitting on the counter.

FAYE

He finally comes home to see his family when his daughter's part of a murder investigation... Nice to see ya, John!

VANN

(to Faye)

Can I talk to Christie a moment?

FAYE

No you can't. It's my house and you can talk to her in front of me!

CHRISTIE

Mom, just go!

FAYE

You don't tell me when to leave and when to stay. I tell you.

Christie SLAMS down her mug.

CHRISTIE

OK, mom. You wanna know what happened?! I fucked the army guy that got murdered today-

VANN

Christie.

CHRISTIE

And he probably got murdered because I fucked him!

Faye is speechless. She storms out of the kitchen. A DOOR SLAMS O.S.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

INSERT OF TV: Dorothy, The Tin Man, The Cowardly Lion, and The Scarecrow skip merrily down the yellow brick road singing about going home.

STONE

Do you wanna come to a backyard wrestling match with me next... uh...

Reality hits Stone.

JAYDA

What? Why'd you stop speaking?

STONE

Never mind. You wouldn't wanna go.

JAYDA

What the fuck are you talking about? I'd love to go to a wrestling match... When?

STONE

Um. Next Friday.

JAYDA

(nodding "yes")

I'll be there... So you'd better be there, bubs...

A beat.

STONE

Can I use your phone?

JAYDA
(nodding)
G'head... It's in the bedroom.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

In his boxers, Stone sits on the bed next to the night stand and picks up the phone.

INSERT OF PHONE: An animated Homer Simpson, passed out on a couch. Homer wakes up when the receiver is lifted.

Stone dials.

STONE
Uncle Jim?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. UNCLE JIM'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Jim sits cross legged in a large computer chair, adjusts his knee socks, and does not break from a game of online poker.

JIM
Stone? What in the name of-- Your
life is pretty much over!

STONE
Don't get all angry!

JIM
How many lives have to end before
you decide enough is enough?

STONE
You sound like such a reporter
right now.

JIM
I am a reporter.

STONE
Well then you should wanna hear
both sides.

JIM
Where are you?

STONE

In the abandoned section by the
water tower. We need a-

JIM

Hold on. Hold on a moment.

He covers the mouthpiece and watches his COMPUTER SCREEN. The
poker dealer reveals his opponent's cards.

COMPUTER VOICE

Flush-- beats your-- pair of Kings.
You lose!

JIM

Shit, shit! Damn it all.

This only adds to his wrath. He puts the phone back to his
ear in time to hear Stone say:

STONE

...We need a lawyer.

And Jim's up and pacing like a lion in a cage,

JIM

Oh no! I'm not helping you with
this one. The cash flow ends when
you start committing crimes, bud.

STONE

What?! You can't even accept the
remotest possibility that all this
may not be our fault, can you?

JIM

Even after what happened to Matty
you're still the most stubborn son
of a-

STONE

What does that mean? What happened
to Matty?

JIM

(hesitant)

Shit... You don't know.

STONE

What?!

JIM

Well, Matty got himself shot. He's
dead... I'm sorry.

And everything is different.

STONE

Who shot him?

JIM

The National Guard.

Stone is trying to keep his cool. Neither one of them says
anything for a moment.

JIM (CONT'D)

Stone??

STONE

(beat)

Jim.

JIM (V.O.)

What?

STONE

Go fuck yourself.

He hangs up.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Stone sits on the edge of the bed beside the phone and just
stares at the wall.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

On the couch, Jayda, in a tiny white shirt and cut-off Jean
shorts, stands on her knees and folds some clothes.

Stone emerges from the bedroom.

STONE

Something happened. I gotta go.

JAYDA

Are you OK? What happened?

STONE

It's easier if I tell you
everything later.

Jayda hands him his clean shirt and pants.

JAYDA
(kidding around)
Just using me for my washing
machine?

EXT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Stone steps outside of Jayda's trailer entrance. The door shuts. He stares at the door. He just can't leave. He raises his hand to knock, but stops himself.

The door flies open to reveal a very amused Jayda.

JAYDA
Stalking me?

STONE
I have no idea what I'm doing...

Jayda grabs Stone, gives him a long kiss, then pushes him away. She smiles and winks as she shuts the trailer door in his face.

Stone allows himself a slight smiles as he walks away from the trailer, a different man than the one who walked in.

INT. VANN FAMILY'S HOUSE: KITCHEN - NIGHT

Fay can be heard O.S. BANGING around upstairs. Vann slides his plate of cake across the table to Christie. She slides it back.

On the stove, the kettle SLOWLY BOILS to a SCREAM.

VANN
(retrieves kettle)
I remember you were the neatest
kid. You used to run around the
house in a Supergirl costume. You
remember that? You weren't into
Barbies, or tea sets. You wanted to
save the world... I remember one
time I made the unforgivable
mistake of addressing 'Supergirl'
as 'Christie.' You flew right into
the kitchen and let me have it.
'Christie's not here right now,
daddy!

(MORE)

VANN (cont'd)
I'll go see if I can find her!' And
you flew away... You never did find
her.

Vann smiles and pours an instant coffee. Christie rolls her
eyes, annoyed by the story.

CHRISTIE
You can't let anybody hurt Stone,
dad. I'll kill myself... This is my
fault.

VANN
It's not your fault.

CHRISTIE
(very upset)
Yes, it is.

VANN
How did you end up dating a refugee
kid?

CHRISTIE
Believe it or not, they are human
dad. They are dateable... And the
politically correct term is
evacuees. You should probably know
that.

Vann sits down beside her and looks her in the eye.

VANN
Listen to me. I'm going to ask you
again, do you have any idea where
he might be? You have to tell me.

Christie shakes her head "no" as Faye CLUNKS into the kitchen
with two packed suitcases.

FAYE
C'mon Christie! Let's go!

CHRISTIE
I'm not going anywhere with you!

Faye yanks Christie by the arm from the table.

VANN
(stepping in)
Hon, what are you-

FAYE

Get away from us!

(outraged)

You haven't even been here for a year and now you want to act like some heroic father-

VANN

Faye-

FAYE

Even when you're home, you're never here.

VANN

Faye, I have been in a war fighting for our country.

FAYE

Spare me! Spare me the "I have been fighting for our country" crap!

Vann stops. This is an impossible fight, and he knows it. He looks at Christie.

VANN

Go with your mother tonight.

CHRISTIE

No!

VANN

Yes, and we'll talk about this in the morning, OK? We all just need to cool off tonight.

Christie stares Vann dead in the eye, defeated.

CHRISTIE

You don't even care...

Before Vann can even respond Christie is gone.

Vann just stares at his wife who is looking at him like this is all to be expected and all his fault.

VANN

Where can I call you?

FAYE

You can't... I'll call you.

And she is out the front door.

INT. EILEEN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Beek sits across from Eileen, seated at kitchen stool. He gives her a blank look.

DEPUTY BEEK
(pulling out note pad)
So what happened? Exactly?

EILEEN
It's just like I told you before.
(acting it out)
There was a big huge scrap between
the three brothers and Captain
Bowman...

FLASHBACK HAPPY TOM'S IN SLOW MOTION - DAY

Matty chases Bowman. He stops and heads back. Bowman swings around and sneaks up behind Matty, and begins to give Matty a few vicious punches to the head.

EILEEN (V.O.)
(simultaneous with action)
...And then Matty pulls a knife and
chases the Captain. Matty stops.
Then the Captain turns around and
gets him in this choke hold... and
Matty's panicking 'cause he can't
breathe. His face is going purple
and he's swinging all over the
place, and then he just stabs him.

He grabs Matty and puts him in a reverse choke hold, slowly crushing his wind pipe. Suffocating, Matty swings wild, sideways, slicing into the backs of Bowman's arms before his six inch hunting knife lands right in Bowman's heart.

Bowman falls to the ground, dead instantly.

BACK TO THE SCENE

EILEEN
His brothers weren't even near him
when it happened.

DEPUTY BEEK
(making notes)
So, why are you only coming forward
when there's a reward being
offered?

EILEEN

(very strongly)

What are you talking about? I told you all this before at Happy Tom's yesterday! Remember?!

DEPUTY BEEK

(mystified)

No... I'm sorry. Remind me.

EILEEN

You didn't listen. You just wanted to know what the boys looked like and which way they went and what kinda shirt they was wearin', and-

DEPUTY BEEK

Where are you from Eileen?

EILEEN

New Orleans.

DEPUTY BEEK

(dismissive)

That's what I thought... Would you have any reason to lie for these boys?

EILEEN

What?! No! What kind of a thing is that to say?

Deputy Beek just looks at her with skeptical disdain. His cell phone rings. He answers.

DEPUTY BEEK

Hello...

(getting up)

What? Where did they say they were?

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Jayda lays on her back and listens to music on her retro head phones.

INSERT OF TV: A FEMA spokesman shows a reporter around a trailer.

FEMA SPOKESMAN

(on TV)

(MORE)

FEMA SPOKESMAN (cont'd)
We've enacted a plan that will put
every hurricane victim without a
home inside one of these trailers.
They're state of the art...
(with a chuckle)
...I would be surprised if they
ever wanna leave.

Every State Line by Ani Difranto drowns out the sound of the
television set in front of her.

ANI DIFRANTO (V.O.)
(singing)
...he said, baby do you like to
fool around? / baby, do you like to
be touched? / I said, maybe some
other time / fuck you very much...

The song plays over the following scenes:

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Stone wanders-- The trailer park is a labyrinth. Every which-way leads to another which-way that may or may not lead to a dead end clogged with trash and a few shady customers.

A hand scrawled sign hangs from a nearby mobile that reads simply:

OUR FATE IS YOUR FATE

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Deputy Beek and a few other Humvees drive as a group through the narrow gravel roads, barely wide enough to fit a large vehicle. The roads are haphazard, and zigzag throughout the park before breaking into wide open planes, seemingly with no rhyme, reason, or any sort of respect for the laws of engineering.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - NIGHT

At the forty-five yard line of the abandoned football field, the shadows of the trees dance in the September breeze and crash with Stone's silhouette in the night light.

ANI DIFRANCO (V.O.)

(singing)

...there's a thousand shades of
white / and a thousand shades of
black / but the same rule always
applies / smile pretty and watch
your back...

Stone crosses the field towards the Chevette in the distance.

The music ends. Stone gets into the car.

INT. CHEVETTE - EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - MOMENTS LATER

Leslie, in the driver's seat, waits beside Paul in the
passenger. Stone is sunken into the back.

STONE

I just don't want to talk about it,
Leslie.

Leslie is trying to achieve a Dr. Phil breakthrough.

LESLIE

You know, you both did the same
thing when your mother died. You
never talk about anything. Paul
smashes things, and cracks jokes
forever, and Stone turns into a
mute. It's not healthy.

PAUL

We can't have a grief counselling
session right now, OK? The bottom
line is that we're going to kill
the guy who killed Matty.

LESLIE

No you're not.

STONE

No we're not, Paul.

IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR: A pair of headlights climbs over the
cusp of the hill.

LESLIE

How was the date?

STONE

Went from the best to the worst
night of my life... She's fucking
amazing.

LESLIE

(re: headlights in mirror)
Are those cars coming here?

Another pair of headlights comes in from another direction,
but these headlights conspicuously vanish.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Did you see that?

STONE

Yeah.

And another pair of lights from another direction appears,
and again, vanishes.

STONE

(looking back)
They're trying to sneak up on us.

LESLIE

No... No, no, they're not.

STONE

(embarrassed)
I told Uncle Jim where we were...
Shit! I can't believe he did this.

PAUL

I can't believe you fucking told
him where we were!

STONE

It was before he said he wouldn't
help us. Shit.

The cars are edging closer and closer.

LESLIE

What should we do?

PAUL

Go.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Jayda cleans up around the trailer in a dance, grinning from ear to ear.

She throws some dresses on the couch and ties back her thin dreadlocks as the TV blares in the b.g.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

...A massive manhunt is under way
for at least two more suspects...

She glances at the TV, and the smile is wiped from her face by the sudden imposition of a poor quality photo of Stone, accompanied by his name and a "wanted" graphic flashing ominously beneath.

INT. CHEVETTE - EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - NIGHT

The four mystery vehicles wind towards them. The ignition key is TWISTED. The engine ROARS to life.

Leslie hesitates.

LESLIE

Where are we going?

PAUL

Anywhere.

LESLIE

Well, you have to tell me where?

PAUL

Anywhere Leslie!

Leslie THROWS the car into drive, and STOMPS on the gas pedal.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Wait!

The car TUMBLES in one large THUMP over top of a cement parking barrier in front of them. Everything jerks to a halt.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. CHEVETTE - EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - SECONDS LATER

The tiny Chevette balances on the parking barrier like a teeter-totter, muffler dangling to the ground.

Paul, uses a large walking stick as leverage to inspect the damage beneath the car.

PAUL

Yup. We're fucked.

A SHADOWY VEHICLE surreptitiously moves through the trailers towards them, very close.

Leslie clasps her elbows around her ears in panic. Stone ponders hard and then--

STONE

I know where we can go.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - REAR GUTTERS- MOMENTS LATER

Stone, Paul, and Leslie squeeze and splash down the middle of a mucky and very narrow gutter between the back ends of two long rows of trailers-- A no man's land. Paul relies on a tree branch walking stick, and drags his leg behind him.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - MOMENTS LATER

A whirlwind of Humvees simultaneously pull onto the scene.

Deputy Beek leaps from his vehicle in a frenzy, shines his flashlight on every trailer within eye shot, but it's a hall of mirrors. His suspects are long gone.

They search everywhere. Every trailer is checked.

A couple of squad cars join the crowd. One car parks and another secures the grounds with a spotlight search.

DEPUTY BEEK

Check out back!

TWO UNIFORMS take off running out back. They try to squeeze into the gutters, but barely fit and abandon the idea.

INT. HOLIDAY INN: FAYE AND CHRISTIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Through the windows a Jade-green hotel sign buzzes into the night.

We HEAR a key in the lock-- DOOR opens.

It is Faye with a brown paper bag filled with wine and snacks. She sees her daughter is asleep in the bed across the room.

INT. SHOWER - FAYE

Faye is under the water for a few moments before she half opens her eyes... A weird intuition.

She jumps out of the shower, throws on a robe and is out of the bathroom.

INT. HOLIDAY INN: FAYE AND CHRISTIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Faye hurries to Christie's bedside.

FAYE
(urgently)
Christie... Christie? Sweetie?

Christie does not respond.

Faye rips the blankets off of Christie's bed to reveal...

BLOOD EVERYWHERE. Christie has cut her wrists.

FAYE
(trying to stop the
bleeding with a sheet)
OH NO! CHRISTIE?!

She grabs the phone, shaking, and dials 911.

FAYE
Yes. My daughter's tried to kill
herself...

CUT TO:

EXT. VANN'S FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

Vann hurries out to his Humvee in the driveway.

VANN

How did you know they were there?
Why am I finding out about this
now?...

(call waiting beeps)

Hold on... Hold on a second, Cal.

(clicks to the other line)

Yeah...

(very concerned)

What hospital?

EXT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Vann's Humvee pulls up simultaneously with an ambulance. Vann runs out and sees:

CHRISTIE ON A STRETCHER

Oxygen and life support on her calm face.

Attendants rush at him and one or two try to hold him back. Vann knocks them down like bowling pins and races into the hospital.

CUT TO:

INT. EMERGENCY CORRIDOR - SAME SCENE

Faye catches up to Vann who is right beside his daughter as she's whisked down the hall.

VANN

(to Christie)

Christie. I'm with you, baby... I
love you. I love you.

They make eye contact. Christie relaxes for second and is out cold again. The paramedics start to pump her chest.

ORDERLY

You have to wait in the waiting
room.

VANN

It's my daughter.

DOCTOR

Sheriff, you know you can't-

VANN

Doc. Let me be with my daughter.

DOCTOR

You gotta give us room, Sheriff.

Christie's face is pristine, her body fragile but strong...
In this moment she very much resembles the Virgin Mary.

Helpless, Vann just stands in the middle of the hallway and watches his daughter's stretcher disappear down the long white corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - LATER

A DOCTOR approaches Vann and Faye who are seated in the back of the crowded waiting room.

DOCTOR

Mr. and Mrs. Vann?

VANN

Yes.

DOCTOR

You're daughter's going to be OK.

(Vann and Faye gasp in relief)

You are extremely lucky for two reasons: 1: That you found Christie in when you did, and 2: That she appears to have been extremely healthy before this. She will require a blood transfusion because her blood loss caused some hypovolemia, which can lead to what's called retro-stress-relaxation, and that is severe, but we were lucky enough to bring her back from that. We need to keep her for observation, of course, but I will let you know the second you can see her... OK?

VANN

(nodding)

Thank you, Doctor.

The doctor nods assuredly and heads back into emergency.

Vann has his arm around Faye.

She leans back against him.

VANN

You OK?

She shrugs. Then she moves closer to him, pulls herself into his shoulder... and she cries her heart out...

EXT. - JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Stone knocks lightly at Jayda's door. The blue lights' glow kindles the three tired faces.

PAUL

This is three hundred yards from where we just were.

STONE

So?

PAUL

So we should have gone to my place.

LESLIE

Our place.

PAUL

Our place. That's what I meant.

STONE

Your place might be a bit of an obvious secret hide out, don't you think?

The trailer lights slowly turn on one by one.

A few seconds pass before Jayda appears at the door, unlocks it, and opens it. She does not look impressed.

JAYDA

We having a party?

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER

Jayda emerges from a linen closet, and hands Stone a couple of pillows, some bread, chips, and meat slices.

JAYDA

(tired and annoyed)

Give these to Paul and Leslie too.

STONE

I'll explain everything.

JAYDA

Yeah, OK. I need a drink. Do you need a drink?

STONE

Sure. Yeah.

INT. JAYDA' STOLEN TRAILER: BEDROOM - NIGHT

Stone tosses some pillows to Leslie who has the bed already perfectly made.

Paul pours some Tylenols down his throat as Stone hands him the food and ice wrapped in elastic tied plastic bags.

LESLIE

Does this poor girl have any idea what the hell is going on?

STONE

I'm going to tell her.

Paul removes the elastics and wears four of them like rings-- He puts an ice pack on his leg.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Jayda has a bottle of vodka out on the counter and rolls a joint beside a FANCY RED TIN of marijuana decorated with mock golden arches, with the word marijuana written across, and the slogan 'Over 1 billion stoned' underlining the logo.

Stone spots a variety of children's records on the counter beside the tin. He picks one up.

STONE

(re: records)

Some classics.

INSERT of vinyl: Three little Pigs, Little Red Riding Hood, etc.

JAYDA

Remnants of a pop culture junkie.

He puts on a record. The needle lands, *The Three Little Pigs* begins to play quietly.

JAYDA

So, um, why does your brother have a splint made from a crucifix on his leg?

STONE (CONT'D)

That's a fair question. It is. He broke his leg in a backyard wrestling match and the splint... It's... I have something that I have to tell you.

JAYDA

And I'll bet it's damn good, considering you and your entire family showed up at 4 AM in need of a place to stay, for no discernible reason.

STONE

Yeah. It's... It's... It's...

Jayda lights her joint and exhales a deep blue cloud into the cramped surroundings.

JAYDA

Breathe, Stone.

Jayda pours Vodka shots into a pair of glasses. She bumps Stone as she sits down as close to him as possible and offers Stone a toke before she butts it out.

STONE

I don't smoke. Thanks.

JAYDA

You going to tell me this century, what seems to be the trouble, bubbles?

Jayda downs her shot.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

You don't have to tell me.

STONE

I'm going to tell you.

Jayda walks over to the bottle of Vodka and brings the entire bottle back to her seat.

JAYDA

OK. Can I ask you one thing, though?

STONE

Of course. What?

JAYDA

You have a wife, or kids, or something? Cancer? You a hit man?

STONE

None of the above.

JAYDA

You a registered sex offender, or something really weird like that?

STONE

(disgusted)

Fuck no. Why would you ask me something like that?

JAYDA

It was a joke.

Stone shoots back his shot and coughs as part of it goes down the wrong way.

JAYDA

Well this sounds pretty huge, so I'll let you get comfortable.

Stone takes a breath as if he is about to speak, but stops short.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

Can I just ask you one other little thing, Stone?

STONE

Yeah.

Jayda gets up and walks across the room, distancing herself.

JAYDA

Does this have anything to do with that army guy you killed today?

Stone is dumbfounded.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

Cat got your tongue?

STONE
How long have you known?

JAYDA
What difference does it make?

STONE
Jayda, I was there, but I didn't do it.

JAYDA
Just quit lying to me.

STONE
I'm not lying to you.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER: BEDROOM - NIGHT

Paul's eyes are locked on a SUPER NINTENDO sitting by a TV at the foot of the bed. Leslie is almost asleep when--

PAUL
Fuck this. I can't sleep.

He gets out of bed and turns on the TV and Nintendo.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Stone pours himself yet another shot. Jayda smiles, keeping her cool.

JAYDA
You're all over the news.

STONE
Why didn't you say anything when we got here?

JAYDA
Why didn't you say anything when you got here?

STONE
I was scared to I guess.

Jayda nods as if to say that is her answer too.

STONE
I thought you weren't afraid of anything.

JAYDA

You didn't think, if you thought that... Jesus, if you're innocent, just say you're innocent. Why did you even show up for our stupid little date in the first place?

STONE

Because I didn't do anything. I was there, yes, and I am going to turn myself in, yes, but I made the decision that I had to see you.

JAYDA

Why?

STONE

In case I never got another chance.

Jayda doesn't answer right away. She's digesting this.

STONE

Jayda, I-

Jayda covers Stone's mouth.

JAYDA

I'm sorry about your brother. I really am... but I don't feel the same way about you. And I think you should leave.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

A weathered old American flag hangs from an empty trailer and flutters in the wind as--

Three Humvee and two police cruisers roll out of the edge of the park. The leading Humvee stops. Sits-- And U-turns back into the park. The line of vehicles follow.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER: BEDROOM - NIGHT

ON THE TV: Paul is the character Ryu, battling it out with Colonel Guile.

He clicks away on the controller-- old game maneuvers are instinct to him.

PAUL

So some dude called you today,
after he heard on the news that I
was a wanted man?

LESLIE

(sitting up in the bed)
He just wants to help. He's a
really really nice guy.

PAUL

Leslie, there is no such thing as a
'really really nice guy.' He's just
really really nicely trying to get
in your pants.

Paul wins the first round of Streetfighter with a sharp upper
cut.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Vann and Faye sit. The Sheriff's CELL PHONE RINGS.

VANN

(into phone)
Yeah... Nobody move until I'm
there...

He hangs up. Faye looks at him.

FAYE

(understanding)
Go.

VANN

(rubs her shoulder)
One of these boys knew Christie.

FAYE

I know.

VANN

I'm so sorry for everything.

FAYE

So am I...

A hug and kiss good-bye.

As he's rising--

FAYE

Be careful... We'll be here when
you're done...

Vann nods "OK." It's extremely hard for him to leave. He
turns and hurries out of the hospital.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Stone is sitting on the kitchen counter and Jayda is
standing, not fucking around.

JAYDA

Leave.

STONE

No. I want to be around someone I
care about right now.

JAYDA

You don't even know me.

STONE

You wanna know how I know it's real
with you?

JAYDA

No I don't, to be honest.

STONE

Yes, you do.

JAYDA

No, I don't.

Jayda's body language screams "fuck off."

STONE

Every time I see you smile it
instantly makes me happy, and I
instantly want to protect you--

JAYDA

How fucking original!

Uneasy, the rest of her answer is lyrics from the song *Modern
Romance* by the Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

JAYDA

(singing)

Don't you know / It never lasts /
This is no / There is no modern
romance...

STONE

Just listen to me! Ever since I
came to this park, I have been
caught in this angry feeling... I
can barely function. I can barely
eat. I can barely sleep. Every
single thing I've ever cared about
is gone, but when I was with you
tonight you made me feel like
everybody else.

JAYDA

Stop.

STONE

You make me feel normal again.
Despite losing every single thing
I've ever had, I feel just like
everybody else when I'm with you...

The last words appear to hit Jayda like a freight train.

JAYDA

(almost whispering)

Stop it...

STONE (CONT'D)

What?

JAYDA

Save this stuff for somebody else.

STONE

I don't feel it for somebody else.

Jayda stares into Stone's eyes for a few seconds. Her eyes
begin to fill with tears.

JAYDA

Stone...

STONE

Yeah.

A beat.

JAYDA

Run.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER: BEDROOM - NIGHT

The Street Fighter match rages on. As round 2 begins--

LESLIE

(tying ice bag closed)

I really miss Gracie.

PAUL

It's only been five hours...

LESLIE

(grabbing the bag of ice)

I know... But, you know she never stops crying when you're gone?

Paul continues playing... Leslie come to the foot of the bed and places a bag of ice on his leg.

LESLIE

Keep this on your leg.

INT. HUMVEE - EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - NIGHT

Beek is in the passenger seat looking annoyed.

DEPUTY BEEK

We're nowhere even close.

SSGT. ZAYAS

We've gotta be close.

(spotting it)

Hold up! I see it.

They spot Jayda's brightly lit trailer on an adjoining road--

The line of vehicles turn towards it.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Jayda walks to the other side of the trailer. She is keeping as much space between her and Stone as possible.

STONE

(laughing)

What do you mean, run?

JAYDA

I mean you have to run. I called the police. I called them when you got here.

STONE

I don't believe you. They would have been here by now.

JAYDA

They just have to find the place.

STONE

No. I don't believe you.

JAYDA

You can't risk not believing me!

STONE

(starting to give credence)

You're lying, right?

Stone slides down the counter to the floor. A couple of vinyl records catch his shirt and fall with him.

STONE (CONT'D)

This is a really cruel joke. I mean-

JAYDA

It's not a joke.

Stone has an awkward smile of disbelief on his face.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

I don't even like you that much, so-

STONE

Why are you saying all this?

JAYDA

Because it's true!

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - NIGHT

Tearing around the empty trailer lot, Vann's Humvee BEELINES into the park towards water tower.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER: BEDROOM - NIGHT

Paul is lying on the bed, looking up at the sky through the sunroof-- He braids together three elastics into a SMALL RING, doing his best to hide it from Leslie, who is readjusting his splint and tying on the ice pack on with a pillow case.

PAUL

I really love you, ya know?

LESLIE

You'd better.

PAUL

How 'bout we go to Vegas and make this thing official?

LESLIE

(not even looking)

Somebody popped way too many codeine pills today.

PAUL

Is that a "yes?"

She stops and looks at him.

LESLIE

No, it's not a "yes." It's an acknowledgment of what is quite possibly the shittiest proposal in modern history... Where's my ring? Do I even get a ring?

PAUL

Maybe you do, maybe you-

A Humvee door slams O.S.

PAUL

You hear that?

Leslie gets up and pulls open the curtains a little-- then RIPS THEM CLOSED so fast they nearly come off the window.

LESLIE

The fucking army's out front!

Paul falls out of bed, gets to his feet-- and begins to pull a three drawer dresser under the skylight.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Jayda tries to pull him up off of the floor from beside the cupboards. He's dead weight.

Stone picks up a Three Little Pigs record cover from the floor and stares at it.

STONE

I can't run anymore.

JAYDA

Why?!

STONE

I don't care if they come. I-

Jayda tries to pull Stone to his feet with all her might. He's dead weight.

JAYDA

Go! This is stupid. They might kill you!

STONE

You care. You wouldn't want me to run if you didn't.

JAYDA

I'm not worth this!

STONE

You are.

JAYDA

We haven't got some magical fucking connection. OK? OK?!

Shuffling can be heard outside. Jayda smacks Stone's face extremely hard.

JAYDA

Wake up!

EXT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Zayas, two specialists, and four privates follow behind Thomas. They line up behind as Thomas mounts the first of the trailer's front porch.

About eight DEPUTIES spread out in front, unable to access the sides of the mobiles because the buildings are too close together.

EXT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT.

Beek and Vann have slipped out of the their cars, and wait behind them, watching keenly as--

Thomas pulls the MP-4 Assault Rifle to his right side, reaches out and knocks loudly with his left hand...

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Paul, balancing on one foot, tries with all his might to get the sunroof open but he doesn't have the leverage. It's sealed shut.

Leslie screams out to Stone:

LESLIE
Stone! WE GOTTA GO.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

The DOOR RATTLES under a heavy knock. Jayda again, tries to pull him up off the floor. Stone won't move a muscle.

LESLIE (O.S.)
C'MON GUYS.

JAYDA
Your brother's in there! Go! Go!

Stone shakes his head "no."

EXT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

A Private yanks a 12 lb. sledgehammer from the Humvee and hurries towards the trailer...

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

Jayda hits Stone with a flurry of punches and smacks across his head and shoulders and accidentally knocks the volume of the stereo WAY UP.

Stone manages to block a couple, but the hits that do land don't budge him an inch.

JAYDA

Run! Run! Run, will you, ya idiot?!

Jayda is nearly in tears.

The trailer DOOR RATTLES a second time with knocking.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

RUNNNNNN-

THE DOOR CRASHING IN cuts through Jayda's scream.

EXT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

The door, half off its hinges, gives in to the second swing of the sledgehammer and DROPS TO THE FLOOR.

Vann and Deputy Beek race towards the trailer, guns up...

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - NIGHT

The squad is inside. Everybody aims their guns.

The trailer appears empty.

Who's Afraid of The Big Bad Wolf plays loudly:

THREE LITTLE PIGS SONG (V.O.)

I built my house of stone / I built
my house of bricks / I'll be safe,
and you'll be sorry, when the wolf
comes through your door!

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - BEDROOM - NIGHT

As quick as the Flash, Jayda grabs a BROKEN OFF SUNROOF LEVER from a DRAWER, hops up on the TABLE, and CRANKS the sunroof WIDE OPEN, all within seconds.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. / EXT. JAYDA'S TRAILER - BEDROOM - SECONDS LATER

Jayda and Leslie, on the roof, tug Paul up through the sunroof. Stone boosts him up from underneath.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Zayas, M16 out front of him, shuffles heel to toe down the hall towards the CLOSED DOOR. Thomas is right behind.

Zayas boots down the door.

INT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - BEDROOM - SAME SCENE

It's empty.... Just an unmade bed.

SSGT. ZAYAS
Magic mother fuckers.

The stereo blares:

THREE LITTLE PIGS SONG (V.O.)
Who's afraid of the big bad wolf /
big bad wolf, big bad wolf? / Who's
afraid of the big bad wolf?

Everyone aims there guns, rabidly searching.

Vann and Beek arrive inside.

Vann looks up at the ceiling. The sunroof is wide open-- He looks down-- A three drawer dresser directly beneath.

VANN
Since when do these things have
sunroofs?

As the Deputy searches all around--

DEPUTY BEEK
This is a family unit. It's not
even legal to live in this thing.

VANN
(dumbfounded)
Does that mean that nobody covered
the roof?

Silence.

VANN (CONT'D)
(harsher)
Sergeant Zayas, does that mean that
nobody covered the fucking roof?

A bunch of embarrassed heads hang.

VANN (CONT'D)

Well, get the fuck up on the roof
then!

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - ROOFTOPS - SECONDS LATER

Stone, Jayda, and Leslie's silhouettes scurry across the rooftops towards the vast scarlet sky.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - GUTTERS - CONTINUOUS

The four of them slide off a roof into a rear gutter-- Paul slips in the mud behind them. Leslie desperately tries to yank Paul to his feet by his left arm.

PAUL

I'll catch up. I'm hurt-

LESLIE

If you think I'm leaving here
without you, you're fucking crazy!

Jayda scrambles to help. They get Paul up.

Footsteps and shouts of their pursuers rain down from the rooftops and alleyways in the distance.

STONE (CONT'D)

We gotta get inside one of these trailers.

(his fingers count)

Ready? One. Two. Three...

They DART around the corner onto the roadway into the waiting arms of...

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - NIGHT

Two more MILITARY VEHICLES tearing into the park.

In a split second Stone swings to the right, uses his key. The key WORKS. A miracle.

He ROCKETS through the door of the trailer-- Jayda follows and helps Leslie pull Paul in as--

One MILITARY DRIVER looks over, just missing them.

INT. / EXT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - ROOF - NIGHT

A SOLDIER hoists himself up through the skylight onto the rooftop, gun aimed in front.

DEPUTY BEEK
(getting off phone)
Second squad's here. Third's on its
way.

EXT. JAYDA'S STOLEN TRAILER - ROOF - NIGHT

A ladder SMACKS the side of the trailer and three more SOLDIERS climb up from the outside of the trailer.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - NIGHT

Everyone is dispersed around the trailer, looking out windows and drawing blinds.

Paul collapses onto the couch, clutching his leg.

LESLIE
Why are we running? This is stupid!

STONE
(frustrated)
Do you even remember what happened
to Matty a few hours ago, Leslie?
I'm not going near those guys.

LESLIE
So you're just going to run for the
rest of your life?!

STONE
I don't know... I haven't thought
that far ahead.

PAUL
(choking down a fistful of
Tylenols)
How did the police know where we
were?

STONE
Who the fuck knows?

A beat.

JAYDA

I do.

PAUL

What do you mean, you know?

Silence.

LESLIE

(to Jayda)

Did you call?

STONE

No, she didn't fucking call.

JAYDA

Yes, I did... I called.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - NIGHT

Draped over the hood of a Humvee, Sheriff Vann is looking at a TRAILER PARK MAP with Sergeant Zayas and his squad. Deputy Beek approaches.

VANN

(to Zayas)

Take your squad and search every trailer in this section. If and when you find them, do not fire. Set up a perimeter and wait for me. I do not want another dead body, Sergeant. Understand?

SSGT. ZAYAS

Yes-

VANN

I need you to make sure all the squads that just arrived understand that. I want these guys brought in alive, or it's your badges, or your military careers, or whatever else you motherfuckers have to spare.

SSGT. ZAYAS

Yessir.

Zayas salutes before him and his squad move.

VANN

Deputy, anything else?

DEPUTY BEEK

No, sir.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - NIGHT

Jayda stares out the window across the room and addresses the first hints of a rising sun as if they were her only friend.

STONE

You don't owe us this-

JAYDA

Yes, I do.

PAUL

Yes, she does.

LESLIE

She could have left us, Paul- but she's the one who got the sunroof open.

JAYDA

When I called I was just doing what I thought was right.

PAUL

Well, why isn't it "right" anymore?!

JAYDA

Because of what Stone said to me... I just believe him. It's hard to explain, but-

PAUL

But you didn't believe him two hours ago?

JAYDA

No.

Paul scoffs.

STONE

Jayda. Leave.

JAYDA

No.

STONE

I'm not saying this to-

LESLIE

So what if she was scared? I woulda
been freaked out too!

STONE

I'm not saying this to punish
her... You shouldn't be with us
either, Leslie.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

The veins of the trailer city are congesting with waves of
EMERGENCY VEHICLES, SOLDIERS and JEEPS.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - NIGHT

Leslie is giving Stone a look like she is trying to make him
spontaneously combust with her mind.

LESLIE

(seeing red)

And just who the fuck do you think
you are now?!

Sounds of soldiers and Deputies TEARING APART THE PARK O.S.

STONE

(trying to get Paul on
board)

They're going to kick down every
door in this trailer park... They
only want you and me, bro.

A beat.

PAUL

Let me talk to my girlfriend.

BATHROOM

Stone enters the bathroom. He tries to shut the door, but
Jayda stops him, and follows him in.

JAYDA

How is it that you and me spend so
much time in the can together?

Stone won't even humor Jayda with eye contact. A few shafts
of morning light creep in through the bathroom blinds.

JAYDA (CONT'D)

What would you have done a day ago, if a bunch of suspected murderers showed up at your house in the middle of the night? You would have freaked the fuck out, is what you would have done because that's what any normal person would do.

Stone thinks. She's right. He finally looks at her and nods as she breaks down.

JAYDA

(overcome with emotion)

I just want to go home...

STONE

We will.

Stone hugs her...

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DAWN

Leslie sits on the couch beside Paul, whose injuries have rendered him a little inarticulate.

LESLIE

You can't just go making my decisions for me.

PAUL

We have a baby now... That's what makes the decisions, I think...

LESLIE

I can't just leave you now.

Leslie is getting very upset. She knows he's right. Paul sifts through his pockets for something.

PAUL

Hold out your hand... Other hand.

In his hand, Paul is holding a RAINBOW COLORED ENGAGEMENT RING that he has meticulously braided out of three elastics: One red. One blue. And one green.

He puts it on her ring finger.

LESLIE

(very happy)

Ohhh... You're such a nerd.

Leslie can't wipe the smile off her tear stained face.

LESLIE
How long did it take you to make
this?

PAUL
Like a long time... Three minutes.

LESLIE
(satisfied)
My engagement ring.

PAUL
'Til we get to Vegas.

Leslie grabs him and pulls him close, kissing him so
passionately that Paul nearly falls right off the couch.

LESLIE
You're gonna call me when you turn
yourself in?

Paul nods "yes."

LESLIE
Promise?

PAUL
I promise.

They both look over at the CLOSED BATHROOM DOOR.

LESLIE
I should wait for Jayda.

A BANGING can be heard off in the distance O.S.

PAUL
You just need to go.

EXT. TRAILER - DAWN

Right outside the door, A PRIVATE waits a couple of beats
before he BOOTS DOWN THE DOOR with one kick.

Like clockwork six squad members rush inside, guns up, lights
flash all around the interior.

CORPORAL THOMAS (O.S.)
HANDS UP! HANDS UP!

Zayas remains on the exterior covering the front door waiting for their squad.

Zayas's M16 locked... Petrified voices O.S.

CORPORAL THOMAS (O.S.)
Just some fuckin' squatters. Ain't them.

Two beaten up looking HOMELESS MEN, mid sixties, and one WOMAN, fifties, hurry out of the trailer.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - DAWN

A DEPUTY, early twenties, approaches the Sheriff and hands him a cell phone.

UNIFORM
(re: cell phone)
You better take this...

The Sheriff nods, takes the cell and heads for his vehicle.

VANN
(into phone)
This is Sheriff Vann

As Beek watches Vann head towards his Humvee he looks off into the distance and just happens to briefly spot Leslie walking through some trailers. He looks around for somebody-- Everybody is gone-- He is standing by himself.

M16 up, he hurries towards where he spotted Leslie.

INT. EILEEN'S HOUSE - DAWN

The TV NEWS is on in the b.g. Eileen, waiting on the phone, is buttoning up her Happy Tom's uniform getting ready for work.

Her name tag reads: HAPPY EILEEN

EILEEN (V.O.)
Hi Sheriff! This is Eileen Bartlett!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. VANN'S HUMVEE - DAWN

Vann climbs into the front seat of his Humvee to escape the clatter.

VANN

How can I help you this mornin',
Eileen?

EILEEN (V.O.)

Yes, well, I got up for the early
shift this morning and the news is
still saying that Stone and Paul
Green killed this National
Guardsmen, um, Kenneth Bowman, or
whatever, at the grocery store
yesterday...

VANN

Uh-huh.

EILEEN (V.O.)

And, anyway I was there and they
didn't kill nobody.

And suddenly Vann has the look of a man who just lost his
life savings at a roulette table.

VANN

Eileen, why on earth didn't you
tell anybody yesterday?!

EILEEN (V.O.)

I did, Sheriff! Twice! I told
Deputy Beek. Like a bird's Beek.
Such a weird name... He must have
forgot to tell you, or something,
or the news is just reporting it
wrong... or he didn't believe me.

VANN

That piece of shit.

INT. EILEEN'S HOUSE - DAWN

Eileen frowns.

VANN (V.O.)

I need you to take the day off and
go to the police station.

EILEEN

Oh cool! Well, I won't argue with a day off, Sheriff! Should I dress good?

VANN (V.O.)

Just wear whatever is on your back and get down there.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - MOMENTS LATER

Leslie wanders a few seconds from the trailer when her glance meets Deputy Beek's BOOTS and ASSAULT RIFLE stepping into her path.

She smiles shyly up at him.

DEPUTY BEEK

(looking her up and down)

Can I ask you what you're doing out here?

Leslie slowly walks backwards as she speaks.

LESLIE

I'm just going for a walk.

DEPUTY BEEK

Got any ID?

She stops.

LESLIE

Course.

Leslie hands Beek her FAKE ID. He looks it over. We can hear the COMMOTION OF ZAYAS'S squad searching a trailer nearby.

He hands her ID back.

DEPUTY BEEK

First off, Juanita, this is an off limits site.

LESLIE

Really? Sorry.

DEPUTY BEEK

We're looking for some dangerous people and I wouldn't want to see you get hurt. OK?

LESLIE

OK. Sorry... I'm leaving.

Leslie nods graciously, turns, and disappears into the direction from whence she came.

Beek heads back to the squad... He stops. It hits him.

He turns and jogs back after Leslie.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - GUTTERS - CONTINUOUS

He hits a pair of forking paths between the trailers. Leslie could have gone left or right.

He thinks... and then goes right.

INT. / EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Stone and Jayda emerge from the bathroom. Stone takes Jayda's hand and leads her past Paul. She stops at the door.

STONE

It's impossible to know what to say.

JAYDA

(very upset)

And that is the perfect thing to say: "It's impossible to know what to say," is probably the most perfect thing anybody's ever said to me...

She looks at him for one last moment, takes a deep breath and opens the door to reveal--

Deputy Beek-- startled by the door, swings his M16 up at Stone and PULL THE TRIGGER...

CLICK. But the damn thing is jammed.

Beek cannot believe he just pulled the trigger. Neither can anybody else.

Beek shakes the JAMMED BULLET LOOSE.

Jayda lunges at Beek like a woman possessed.

They begin to wrestle for the gun. Jayda is surprisingly feisty.

He uses the rifle to toss her back into the trailer, she goes flying, but she does not let go of the gun.

Stone throws all of himself into the scrap and grabs a piece of the gun's barrel in an attempt to pull the weapon away.

But Beek is still winning this tug of war.

Paul flops off the couch onto his stomach and DRAGS HIMSELF up the side of the couch to his feet.

CUT TO:

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - DAWN

SQUAD CARS and MILITARY VEHICLES continue to flood into the park from all directions like angry waters breaking over a dam.

BACK TO:

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DAWN

The muzzle dances back and forth, taking aim from the walls to the ceiling. The duo is having a tough time.

As fast as he can, Paul pulls himself up the side of an armchair and hops up onto his left foot.

The pile of people that is Jayda, Stone and Beek comes tornadoing towards the middle of the trailer.

The second Paul is close enough to leap into the fight he dives in. He gives Deputy Beek FOUR really solid uppercuts to the chin... He's hurt.

Now Paul manages to get a really good grip on the gun's handle and they all heave at the rifle with everything they have.

Beek is losing his weapon, his finger on the trigger. Slipping away. Slipping away... Slipping... Until...

Paul's CHEST SUDDENLY EXPLODES behind the sudden thunder of a GUN SHOT.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAWN

The intense blood red Louisiana sun breaks over the horizon and floods the trailer park.

From high above it all looks like a pulsing maze, personnel everywhere..

SERGEANT ZAYAS'S SQUAD hears the shot and all hurry back towards the scene.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DAWN

Paul, bleeding badly but still breathing, is down on the floor.

Stone and Jayda continue to desperately wrestle with Beek until the gun breaks free. Beek crashes into the door. Stone flies backwards onto the couch, and Jayda has come up the gun in her hands.

Nervous and shaking terribly from what must be pure adrenaline she points the gun at Beek's surprised face.

Jayda FIRES... And doesn't come within three feet of him.

Deputy Beek goes running right out the front door.

INT. / EXT. VANN'S HUMVEE - DAWN

Vann looks around at all the soldiers frantically yelling to each other.

SSGT. ZAYAS (V.O.)
(police radio)
Suspect down inside, uh, building
185 27th Section, West! Three more-

As he's getting out of his Humvee--

VANN
(into walkie)
Set up a perimeter. Do not fire.
Repeat. Do not fire.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DAWN

The COMMOTION OF VEHICLES AND VOICES OUTSIDE is growing.

Paul is strewn out in front of the couch. His chest moves up and down. He's still alive. His eyes just stare.

JAYDA
(hysterical)
Shit!

STONE

You OK?

Jayda is about to lose her mind-- Stone is calm. Too calm.

STONE

(to Jayda)

Stay on the floor.

On his knees, Stone drags Paul away from the window towards the back of the trailer.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DAWN

A line of shielded soldiers and a loudspeaker are setting up outside the front of the mobile. Vann arrives on scene.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DAWN

Stone kneels PICKS UP THE M16.

NATIONAL GUARD (O.S.)

(over loudspeaker)

We want you to be OK, so come on
out-- If you don't come out, we
will come in and it will get a lot
more intense...

Jayda watches Stone cock the M16. He knows his way around a gun.

JAYDA

(in tears)

Stone... Don't... Don't...

In this moment we see that Stone is a completely different person. A fire in his eyes and a calm in his voice that is signature of anyone with nothing left to lose.

STONE

No matter what: Stay with him.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DAWN

On the horizon, a freight train winds towards them. Vann comes up to the front line.

VANN

EVERYONE STAND DOWN.

The squads lower their weapons. The FREIGHT TRAIN draws close.

VANN
(to Beek)
Who shot him?

DEPUTY BEEK
I think that I had to shoot, sir...
They got my gun from me and-

VANN
You "think" that you had to shoot,
Deputy?

DEPUTY BEEK
(in a daze)
I don't know...

VANN
I want you off my scene.

DEPUTY BEEK
Why? For what?

VANN
I just talked to a girl named
Eileen, who was working at Happy
Tom's yesterday when Kenneth Bowman
was killed. Ring any bells? Those
boys were innocent, and you knew
it! Goddamn you!

DEPUTY BEEK
And you just believed her?! She's
from New Orleans, John. Every
person from that shit hole is a
fucking liar! Our fucking friend is
dead!

Vann stares hard into Beek's empty eyes.

VANN
You're all gone, Cal.
(to Corporal Thomas)
Corporal Thomas, escort the Deputy
to the Sheriff's Department.

Corporal Thomas steers the stunned Deputy Beek out of the crowd as--

SSGT. ZAYAS

The squad'll go in whenever you're ready, sir.

VANN

(to man on loudspeaker)

Inform the suspects that I am coming in and that I am unarmed.

SSGT. ZAYAS

(shocked)

You kidding, sir?

VANN

No, I'm not.

The Sheriff takes off his gun and hands it to Zayas. He looks over at the GUARDSMEN manning the loudspeaker.

Everyone with a gun is a little confused as they hide behind vehicles and riot shields. Zayas bites his tongue.

NATIONAL GUARD

(over loudspeaker)

A man-- the Sheriff is coming in to talk. He is not armed. Repeat. He is not armed.

Hands in the air, Vann starts cautiously towards the trailer.

He is almost at the door. The train RIPS PAST as--

Stone BURSTS OUT of the front door of the trailer, gun pointed squarely at the Sheriff who is only a few feet away.

Every man with a gun SWINGS THEIR M16s UP.

VANN

HOLD YOUR FIRE. DO NOT FIRE.

From 15 feet, Stone see down the barrels of M16s aimed squarely at him. He keeps his sights on the Sheriff. Stone boldly moves closer.

STONE

My brother needs help. Send in a medic.

VANN

You need to put down your gun.

STONE

Send a fucking medic into the trailer!

VANN

Stone. I need you to listen to me-

STONE

And I need you to send in a medic before I blow your fucking head off! NOW!

Guns CLICK behind Vann.

VANN

(to the Guard)

Everybody stand down.

They hesitate, leering at the Sheriff like he's really lost it. He looks back at them.

VANN (CONT'D)

Now.

Everybody obliges. Zayas holds out, before finally lowering his gun... Stone puts takes one step towards the huge wall of manpower.

VANN (CONT'D)

You have to listen-

STONE

(finger grazing trigger)

NO. YOU HAVE TO SHUT THE FUCK UP...
Now, my brother didn't do anything!
I will be forced to fire this gun
if you don't send a medic in right
now...

VANN

(very fast)

I know Matty did what he did in
self defence. I know you didn't do
it. I know Paul didn't do it. We
have a witness who will testify-

STONE

Bull shit!

VANN

I don't know what happened today,
but-

STONE

The mother fucker tried to shoot me
and then shot my brother in the
chest is what happened today.

VANN

He's been taken off duty.

STONE

Send a medic in.

INT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILER - DAY

Paul lies on the ground suffocating. Jayda holds her hand over his wound. His lungs wheezing, his breathing faster and more labored by the second.

EXT. EMPTY FEMA TRAILERS - DAY

All of the men's eyes are frantically shifting back and forth between Stone and Vann.

STONE

(stepping forward
threateningly)

HURRY THE FUCK UP!

VANN

No medic will risk their life and go into that trailer until you lower that gun.

STONE

Just send the medic in! He's dying
man!

VANN

Put the gun down and let me help your brother, Stone. If you don't put the gun down, chances are Paul will die waiting for medical attention, and by the looks of how things are going right now, you and me will die here too... Is it worth this?

Stone feels the first hint of sense returning.

VANN

I know you've been nothing but
fucked over by everything and
everyone you have ever trusted... I
know everyone let you down... I
know that.

STONE

(emotional)

Don't fuck with me...

VANN

My word, Stone. He will be OK the
second you lower that gun. I give
you my word, a soldier's honor...
means more than anything else I can
give you.

Stone still doesn't move a muscle.

VANN (CONT'D)

Look at me.

(he's losing Stone again)

Look at me... I mean what I'm
saying to you.

Their eyes lock... A long tense moment and then...

Stone lowers his gun...

A huge sigh of relief escapes Vann and everybody else.

VANN

GET THE MEDICS! MEDICS.

NATIONAL GUARD

(over loudspeaker)

Medics. Medics! Medics!

MEDICS run onto the scene and into the trailer. Everybody
lowers their weapons. A cloud of dust blows THROUGH THE
FRAME. No one can believe what has just happened.

EXT. TRAILER PARK / INT. HUMVEE - DAY

Stone, in handcuffs, is escorted by Vann and the younger
Deputy out of the park into the waiting chaos.

Paul, breathing steadily, on a stretcher, is loaded into an
ambulance by paramedics.

Jayda is led out by the younger deputy. Her and Stone barely catch a glimpse of each other as they disappear into the crowd...

A pair of television camera lights blanket the scene as Stone and Vann move into the crowd of spectators on the periphery. Stone lowers his head. A couple of local reporters move towards them.

REPORTER

Stone, are you innocent?!

Vann wants them out of the way.

VANN

(to police)

Get everybody back.

The guardsmen and cops hold back the reporters and spectators allowing Vann to get into a waiting Humvee away from the crowd. The young Deputy opens the back door and helps Stone inside.

The Deputy climbs in behind the wheel. Vann in the back next to Stone.

VANN

(to Stone)

Let me see your hands.

Stone hesitates, then holds up his wrists and Vann unlocks Stone's handcuffs.

VANN

You all right?

Stone nods "yes."

STONE

How's Christie doing?

Vann looks at Stone, a little surprised by the question.

VANN

She'll be a lot better when she knows you're OK.

Stone nods to Vann-- Respect. He turns and watches the barren townscape pass by out the window.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - SAME SCENE

The Humvee carrying Stone pulls onto highway heading into Hammond - at first alone on the dusty highway - then gradually joined by other cars until finally becoming one with the traffic, and the movement of the town.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - DUSK

The elastic strewn wedding ring on her finger, Leslie HOLDS PAUL'S HAND. They're napping on a hospital bed, their six-month-old daughter sleeps soundly on a pillow between them.

A NURSE comes in and tidies up some pop cans.

The news drones on a HOSPITAL ROOM TV:

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

(on TV)

...limited help being offered to behavior related to PTSD. Loss of appetite, irritability, sleep deprivation, hypervigilance, memory loss are just some of the symptoms... The former Army Captain, Kenneth Bowman...

(his army portrait on TV)

...had served two tours in Iraq. He leaves behind a wife, and three children... His funeral is next Tuesday...

(shifts through her papers and turns on the smile)

Time to move onto some lighter news, with some early Christmas gift tips from our very own Christmas expert, Patty Sosnowski! Hi Patty!

The nurse picks up the remote and shuts the TV off.

Paul's eyes blink open. He sees his FRESH LEG CAST, an assortment of bandages, oxygen, and a heart monitor BEEPING steadily.

PAUL'S POV Baby Gracie's bright eyes looking right at him. She smiles. He smiles back.

THROUGH HOSPITAL WINDOW: A crudely erected octagon-shaped wrestling ring stands off in the distance.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - WRESTLING RING - CONTINUOUS

The ring is surrounded by a small but capacity crowd of a hundred-or-so cheering onlookers. The trailer park stretches out forever behind them-- construction on the horizon.

At the back of the crowd, is our baby blue Chevette, its muffler bound on by a coat hanger.

Sitting on the car's hood is Stone. He just watches. He barely notices as somebody sits down beside him.

After a moment he looks over. It's Jayda.

Inside the ring are two acrobatic silhouettes tangled in a cat like flurry of fury. This is backyard wrestling at its finest.

THE END