

HORSEHEAD GIRLS

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - DAWN

In the weak, gray light, muffled footsteps shuffle along an empty, narrow blacktop road cut through thick, dark green woods.

KEYA (30's), a Native American woman, walks slowly along the overgrown shoulder. Her down-turned face is partially hidden by a hoodie with a casino logo. Her thick, black straight hair covers the rest.

She brings a lit cigarette to her mouth and sucks until the ash grows and the ember dies. Her blood-speckled hands tremor. Her dirty nails are short, chewed and unpainted. No rings.

The spent butt bounces once in front of her. She flattens it with a sensible black work shoe. Red and blue lights in the distance catch her eye and stop her.

Keya steps into the woods near a battered road-side casino sign and squats behind a tree, disappearing from sight.

A police cruiser flies toward the direction she came, its siren muffled like the rest of the sounds. She reaches into her blood-spattered purse and pulls out another cigarette. She digs a lighter from her pocket. The flame reveals a black eye and a swollen, split lip. She smokes in silence, taking her time.

The sun finally emerges. Keya starts digging a hole with her hands in the soft dirt. The morning birdcalls sound far away.

EXT. KEYA'S HOUSE - MORNING

A small, run-down single-story clapboard square house rests alone in an unkempt lot surrounded by forest.

Keya stands in an empty blue plastic kiddie pool in the front yard. She kicks off her shoes and socks then pulls off her black pants and hoodie. The white button up shirt underneath is blood-stained, dirty and missing buttons. Her name tag is still affixed to the front. A black bow tie hangs from the collar by one clip.

She tosses the name tag to her purse then removes the shirt, leaving her shivering in her bra and underwear. Fresh purple bruises run along her arms and legs.

She notices a spot of blood on her bra and licks a finger, rubbing it until it's a pink smear.

KEYA

Fuck.

A KNOCK on a window over her shoulder. Keya can't hear it. Her son, AIDEN (6) waves to her and knocks harder. He yells from the other side of the dirty glass.

AIDEN

Why are you swimming?

His voice is barely a whisper. He leaves the window and moment later emerges from the door. He wears pajamas and sleepy hair.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

Mom? Mom?

He walks around to face her, her head still down. He reaches a small hand toward her arm.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

MOM!

She startles and yelps, recoiling.

KEYA

Shit! Aiden you scared me.

She quickly pulls him to her in a tight squeeze and holds him.

AIDEN

Didn't you hear me?

His voice is distant, muted. He breaks free from the embrace, fidgety and cold.

She shakes her head, and covers her ears. When she talks it's too loud.

KEYA

Give me a minute. Put a waffle in the toaster and get ready for school.

He likes this game and yells back enthusiastically.

AIDEN

Why are you in the pool?

KEYA

Aiden, go!

AIDEN

How many can I have?

KEYA

I don't care.

He stops and notices.

AIDEN

Hey, where's our car?

She doesn't respond. He leaves on his waffle quest.

INT. KEYA'S CAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Keya sits in an older model, four door sedan held together with rust and prayer in a desolate parking lot outside a neon-lit casino. A sign in front of her space reads: *employee parking*.

She wears her uniform; white shirt, bow tie, name tag. Everything in place. Her hoodie in the seat next to her.

The key in the ignition dangles pink dice. She turns it, the car doesn't respond.

KEYA

C'mon, cocksucker.

She picks up her cell phone, battery low. She dials SHELLY and lights a cigarette. After four rings, a female voicemail.

SHELLY

(through phone)

Hey bitches! I'll pay you next week! Don't leave a message, I don't care --

Keya clicks off then re-dials RANDY and waits. The phone picks up on the second ring.

RANDY

(through phone)

What?

KEYA

I need a jump.

RANDY
(through phone)
Where?

KEYA
Work. My phone's almost dead.

RANDY
(through phone)
Goddammit, Keya I'm busy.

KEYA
Doing what?

RANDY
(through phone)
I have people over. Can't you ask
some random old white dude? Maybe
you could blow him for a start.

KEYA
Fuck you, Randy.

RANDY
(through phone)
Fuck you too, Keya.

KEYA
I'll remember this next time your
sorry broke ass tries to bum a ride
from me.

A long silence.

RANDY
(through phone)
Hey, you got any pills?

She clicks off. Keya plays with her name tag and smokes,
watching bus loads of old white men load into the casino.

She sings the childhood song to herself.

KEYA
One little, two little three little
white dudes.

It makes her smiles.

She pulls the key out and gets out of the car.

EXT. CASINO PARKING LOT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Keya goes around to the trunk and opens it, pulling random junk aside - clothes, empty cans, broken toys. A doll shoe tumbles onto the pavement.

A new black pickup truck pulls up alongside and idles. A window slides down, releasing a puff of smoke and country music. The STRANGER (30's) behind the cigarette wears a cowboy hat, pulled low.

STRANGER
Your pony break a leg?

Keya looks over at him, his face hidden. She approaches the truck.

KEYA
You got jumpers?

STRANGER
I'm sure I can help a pretty lady out.

She smiles shyly.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. KEYA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Keya steps out of the pool, then flips it over, covering the clothes and shoes. She picks up her purse and limps inside.

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE (BATHROOM) - DAY

Keya stands in front of the mirror staring at her abused body in the light. A dried line of blood runs from a small hole in her arm.

She plugs her phone in on the sink. It starts up after a dead battery shut down. The screen is cracked. Missed messages and calls pop up in a series of buzzes.

Keya turns to the shower and starts the water. A POUND on the door. It's the first clear sound she's heard. An annoyed teenage girl is on the other side.

BRYLEE (O.S.)
I need to get ready! Where you been? I called --

Keya quickly turns the lock on the knob.

KEYA

I picked up a late shift.

BRYLEE (O.S.)

Well hurry up. Aiden ate four waffles. There's none left.

KEYA

Eat a pop tart.

BRYLEE (O.S.)

Gross.

KEYA

Make eggs.

BRYLEE (O.S.)

All the dishes are dirty.

KEYA

Wash a damn dish!

BRYLEE

We're out of soap.

KEYA

Brylee just - just give me a couple minutes, okay?

Her voice strains. There's a long pause.

BRYLEE (O.S.)

Can I get my curling iron?

Keya spots it, unplugs it and quickly opens the door, shoving the curling iron through the small opening into her daughters face then shutting it.

BRYLEE (CONT'D)

Hey! Just cause you're crabby don't mean you gotta be a total --

KEYA

--Bry, not now!

BRYLEE (O.S.)

Where's the car at?

Keya ignores her and climbs into the shower, whimpering as the hot water hits her skin.

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE (SHOWER) - DAY

Dirt and blood mix in the water around her feet. She scrubs the dried line from her arm to her wrist inspecting the hole. There are bite marks on her breasts.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A flashlight beam is blinding. A large pale hand holds Keya's arm steady. Along the length of his arm is a tattoo of a gushing oil tower shaped like a phallus.

Her shirt sleeve is rolled up. A needle plunges into her vein.

Keya yells out in pain and tries to sit up. She struggles, breaking the needle tip. The hole bleeds down her arm. The TATTOOED MAN (30's) growls at her.

He holds up the broken syringe in the light, half of the liquid remains.

TATTOOED MAN

You wasted half of it, bitch! This is good shit, too. Nods you right the fuck out. It's called 'compliant' - you know that word, bitch? You should get that dictionary app, learn new words. I don't think stupid bitch is in there ... Maybe imbecile. You're definitely an imbecile.

Keya sits up, dizzy and confused.

KEYA

What the hell did you put --

A fist comes back, popping her in the eye. Keya flies flat back on a dirty bare mattress, her bloody arm dangles over the edge. The contents of her purse are strewn around her.

Keya turns her head to focus. A young naked Native FEMALE FIGURE (15) is curled up and rocking in the corner. She's lit only by a full moon through a broken window.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Who ... She... Hey!

Her voice slurs, heavily drugged.

Flashlight beams move around, his voice floats above her as the drug takes effect.

TATTOOED MAN (O.S.)
Manageable, submissive,
accommodating, obliging...

She reaches out, grasping at shadows. Keya's eyes close on the girl in the corner who turns and stares at her.

END FLASHBACK

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE (BATHROOM) - DAY

Keya's face is inches from the mirror as she applies a thick coat of off-white concealer to her swollen black eye and steps back to look at herself in a fresh bra and panties.

She dumps three pills into her palm, sucking water from the faucet to swallow then turns to see the damage to the rest of her body.

A new pain makes her pull her panties aside to reveal a bright red shape on her butt. She can't quite see it in full at this angle.

POUNDING at the door.

KEYA
Almost done, cripes!

Keya unplugs her cell phone and takes a photo of her butt.

She wraps a towel around her midsection and opens the door. Mother and daughter stare at each other.

BRYLEE (17) A beautiful Native teenager, stands with her arms crossed, not happy. Her black hair is hastily curled.

BRYLEE (O.S.)
Where's the fucking car?

KEYA
You're so pretty when you talk like that. It's at the casino.

BRYLEE
Were you drunk?

KEYA
No.

Brylee glances down at the phone in her mother's hand. The distorted image still on the screen.

BRYLEE
Gross, are you taking naked
selfies?

Keya hides her phone.

KEYA
Is Aiden ready?

BRYLEE
How are we getting to the bus?

KEYA
I'll call Shelly.

BRYLEE
Are you wearing my makeup?

KEYA
Why are you attitude grilling me?

BRYLEE
Because you never wear makeup and
it's obvious you have no idea what
you're doing. I hate when you work
late, I have a life you know. I'm
not just a live-in babysitter. He
doesn't even listen to me. You get
a new boyfriend or you still seeing
that stupid Ran --

Brylee turns her mother's face toward the light and gasps.
Her swollen features cannot be hidden with makeup. Brylee's
face goes from mad to concerned.

BRYLEE (CONT'D)
Mommy ... What happened?

Keya puts her head down. Brylee softens. She pushes her
mother back into the bathroom onto the toilet lid. She pulls
several bottle of makeup from a drawer.

BRYLEE (CONT'D)
Let me fix it.

It's a tender moment as Brylee gently pulls Keya's wet hair
back then fixes her makeup, wiping off some and adding
elsewhere. Her tone turns to anger.

BRYLEE (CONT'D)
Don't talk to that asshole no more.
Does he have our car?

KEYA

It wouldn't start. I left it.

BRYLEE

Why didn't you call me?

KEYA

What would you do?

BRYLEE

Johnny has a car.

KEYA

It was late. Besides, my phone died. I tried Jenny. I called Randy --

BRYLEE

Randy only cares about alcohol, drugs and hurting you. Why do you even talk to him?

KEYA

--I'm done with him, okay Brylee?

Brylee backs up, tears in her eyes. She looks at her mother. Keya stands up and hugs her tightly.

KEYA (CONT'D)

It's okay, baby girl. Shhh, I'm okay.

Brylee wipes the tears quickly.

BRYLEE

Don't stand for that no more. Like, fight back. You deserve better. You're a strong lady. That's what you tell me all the time. I'm never gonna let a man do that to me.

KEYA

Promise?

BRYLEE

I promise.

KEYA

I believe you. It'll never happen again - to either of us.

BRYLEE

Does it hurt?

KEYA

Not no more. Get Aiden ready, we're gonna be late.

Keya leaves.

Brylee notices several drops of blood on the floor. She pushes a towel with her foot over the drops and leaves it there as she steps in front of the mirror.

She looks at herself for a long time. When the tears come she pushes them away quickly.

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE (BEDROOM) - DAY

Keya sits on the edge of a messy bed with her cell phone, looking at the photo she just took. Edges of a symbol are burned into her skin - distorted by the cracked screen.

She switches to dial mode and brings up "Shelly" in her contacts.

EXT. KEYA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Keya and her kids stand on the side of the road in front of their house. Keya has changed purses.

Keya and Brylee eat pink frosted Pop Tarts. Aiden runs circles around them.

BRYLEE

You shouldn't give him so many waffles.

Aiden runs over to the turned over kiddie pool. He kicks it a couple times then starts lifting the edge barely revealing her pile of clothing.

KEYA

Aiden, don't touch that! Get back over here, she's coming.

Aiden drops it. The bass music can be heard approaching.

A beater car pulls up, driven by a large Native woman, SHELLY (40's). Her music is loud rap.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - MORNING

Keya sits in the front, the kids in the back. Shelly wears a fresh white shirt, black pants and bow tie like Keya. She loves makeup. Lots of makeup.

They drive through the reservation.

SHELLY

So you just left it there?

KEYA

I called you.

SHELLY

You shoulda gone back inside and pulled a drunk-ass off a stool to help you. How did you get home?

KEYA

Walked.

Shelly turns down the radio.

SHELLY

You walked eight miles in the dark?

AIDEN

She went swimming too.

He says it while looking out the window. Nobody pays attention to him.

KEYA

I needed the exercise.

Shelly laughs.

SHELLY

Bitch, you don't even like to shuffle them cards too fast in case you break a sweat. I call bullshit.

BRYLEE

Me too.

AIDEN

Bullshit!

BRYLEE

You can't say that.

AIDEN

You said it.

BRYLEE
I'm almost eighteen.

AIDEN
Bullshit!

KEYA
Aiden stop it! Where did you go
after work?

SHELLY
Hot date at the laundromat. I don't
know why there's no cell service in
there like some black hole. Hey
Bry, you still seeing that Long
Grass kid? What's his name...
Johnny? He's cute. Good kisser?

AIDEN
Gross.

KEYA
Yeah, gross.

BRYLEE
Can we not?

AIDEN
Bullshit!

Brylee punches him lightly in the arm. He howls
melodramatically and punches her back.

Shelly looks in her rearview mirror. A red flashing light
behind her catches her eye and she slows the car. A police
cruiser passes them at high speed. The kids sit up to watch
it pass.

BRYLEE
He's comin' to get you for punching
me. Are you sorry?

He thinks on this for a moment then smiles at her.

AIDEN
You think he's chasing a crack
head?

BRYLEE
Police don't chase crackheads,
Aiden.

AIDEN
How do they catch them then?

SHELLY
They don't.

BRYLEE
Nobody cares about them on the rez.

SHELLY
Them cops been out all morning.
Something's going down. Someone at
the casino will know.

A handful of KIDS stand on a corner. Aiden and Brylee get out
and stand at Keya's window as she rolls it down.

KEYA
No more swearing or punching or ...
kissing I'll send them cops after
your ass. Have a good day.

AIDEN
Can you go to jail for kissing?

KEYA
Gimme some sugar and let's see.

BRYLEE
Don't be so stupid.

Aiden tentatively kisses her then takes off. Brylee lingers
on her mother before joining the group.

KEYA
Behave.

BRYLEE
I ain't the one taking bathroom
selfies.

KEYA
Love you guys.

BRYLEE
Love you.

The car pulls away.

SHELLY
I take bathroom selfies too. You
gotta get the light just right and
arch your back all to hell. Were
you with Randy last night? He do
that?

Keya's hand goes to her eye. She turns toward the window as Shelly lights a cigarette.

KEYA

Can I get one too? I fell walking last night.

SHELLY

Into a bear?

KEYA

It was dark.

SHELLY

-- No. Just stop. You didn't fall or run into a tree or a doorknob, either. Girl, you're moving like an elder on an ice rink. I ain't stupid. Don't feed me crap, Keya. You got your ass beat good.

Keya lowers the sun visor and stares at herself in the mirror. A tear zips down her face, she wipes it quickly. Shelly hands her a cigarette.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Fuck, I'm sorry. Are you okay?

KEYA

Do you have better makeup?

SHELLY

In my purse. I got that shit that covers tattoos.

KEYA

What tattoos?

SHELLY

Exactly.

Keya touches a *dreamcatcher* dangling from the rearview mirror.

KEYA

These ever work for you?

SHELLY

I'm afraid to not have one. Catch the bad dreams, let the good ones through. Mostly I think it's superstition ... But you never know what crazy shit's been caught in there.

KEYA
I need a bad memory catcher.

SHELLY
What happened, Keya?

KEYA
It's over, I'm okay.

Keya watches the dreamcatcher swing.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Keya lays on the mattress, unconscious. Only moonlight illuminates her. Her body jerks as hands undress her, pulling down her black pants and pushing up her white shirt, popping several buttons that roll onto the floor.

KEYA
No. No. Please, no!

The air on her bare skin rouses her as she focuses in on the fat, white man with tattoos at the foot of the bed. It's the man who drugged her earlier.

She bolts up and fights like a cornered cat, screaming. He's amused as she bats him away.

TATTOOED MAN
She's awake!

The Stranger in the cowboy hat appears with a flashlight to help the Tattooed Man wrestle her back down. He pulls a .38 revolver from his waistband, thumbs back the hammer and presses it to her skull. He whispers calmly to her.

STRANGER
Settle the fuck down.

Keya does, keeping her eyes on the weapon. Her breathing comes fast as she nods submission.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Why did you get in my truck?

Keya whimpers at the memory but stays silent. He smacks her - hard. Her lip bleeds.

TATTOOED MAN
Where'd you get this one? She's antiquated.

STRANGER

What?

TATTOOED MAN

She's old, man.

STRANGER

Just say old. The bitch is old.

KEYA

Fuck you!

STRANGER

Why the fuck did you get into my truck - Keya?

He pulls on her name tag.

KEYA

You were nice.

She says it with no emotion. Both men chuckle.

STRANGER

Am I nice now?

She shakes her head.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Are you sorry?

KEYA

Yes.

STRANGER

Very fucking sorry.

KEYA

Yes.

STRANGER

Yes, you are.

TATTOOED MAN (O.S.)

Compunctious.

STRANGER

Shut up with that shit, asshole.
You want me to tell you what
asshole means? It means you sound
like a pretentious prick. Do your
job and just shut the fuck up.

The Stranger gets up from the bed and picks up items from her scattered purse. He picks up the pink dice keychain along with a bottle of prescription pills.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Let's make it quick, I want to get out of here before morning.

KEYA

Where?

He ignores her and opens the bottle, dumping several into his palm. He shines a light on the label of painkillers.

STRANGER

I don't suppose you have a prescription for these, Miss... Phillip Deadcrow?

TATTOOED MAN

You a fucking junkie or you just hustle them? Maybe a little of both?

STRANGER

You know this shit will ruin your life? Goddamn American epidemic.

KEYA

Where are you taking me?

He throws the opened bottle at her, scattering the rest over her body, the bed and floor.

STRANGER

You might need a couple after we're done.

KEYA

I wanna go home.

The stranger hands over the .38 To the Tattooed Man.

STRANGER

Keep her subdued. Can you handle that?

TATTOOED MAN

That's a good word. Subdued.

STRANGER

It'll take both of us to hold her down. The fire's hot, I'll be right back.

The Stranger goes outside.

Keya looks over at the young girl in the corner, glassy-eyed.

TATTOOED MAN
You know her name?

Keya studies her for a moment. The girl is lost, thankfully somewhere else. Keya shakes her head.

TATTOOED MAN (CONT'D)
That's good. Don't ask her, you understand? No names. She probably don't know it no more either. Bitch is aloof as fuck.

He bends over the mattress and starts picking up the pills and pocketing them.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Keya reaches over to Shelly's purse and pulls out makeup.

SHELLY
Was he on pills too?

Keya is confused for a moment.

KEYA
Who?

SHELLY
Randy.

KEYA
It was nothing, Shell okay? I had a couple beers after work and ran my mouth.

SHELLY
Do you want me to have Junior go over and talk to him?

KEYA
No - please just don't. How's this?

Keya turns to face Shelly. The makeup over her eye evens her complexion, hiding the bruise.

SHELLY
You still look like shit but it's
better. So where's your car?

KEYA
Employee lot.

EXT. CASINO PARKING LOT - DAY

They pull into the lot, it's half full. Keya scans the cars
through the windshield.

KEYA
FUCK!

SHELLY
I don't see it.

KEYA
Let me out.

Keya has the door open before Shelly can stop. She stumbles
out into the parking lot and runs toward a row of cars,
frantic. She stands in an empty spot.

Shelly pulls up alongside her, rolling down her window.

KEYA (CONT'D)
It was right here.

SHELLY
Maybe Pete had it towed. Be just
like that fat dickhole to do that.

Keya bends down and picks up the flattened doll shoe she
dropped from the trunk.

INT. CASINO - DAY

Shelly deals blackjack to a half dozen grey-haired zombies.
She glances at Keya talking to PETE (50's) a heavyset Native
man with a braid down his back. He shakes his head. Keya nods
and walks toward Shelly's table passing it, shaking her own
head.

She goes to a table next to Shelly's and starts organizing
her chips and cards.

INT. CASINO - DAY

The daily dark, depressing grind of an Indian casino.

MONTAGE

A) A thick cloud of cigarette smoke circles over the windowless carpeted game floor as the sound of hundreds of seductive slot machines continue relentlessly.

B) A line forms around a buffet serving every kind of deep fried food, limp vegetable medley and three kinds of whip-topped dessert.

C) The clang of coins hitting metal trays is punctuated by a muffled voice on a loud speaker announcing that the progressive jackpot is still up for grabs.

D) Bored security guards in ill-fitting uniforms flirt with flat-assed cocktail waitresses serving watered-down drinks.

Keya deals to a group of middle-aged women having a ladies weekend. They gather their winnings and waddle away. Keya puts down a "Five Minute break" sign packs up her cards and chips and carries them to the security window.

INT. CASINO (BATHROOM) - DAY

A toilet flushes and a large WOMAN (50's) comes out holding an orange-capped syringe. She disposes it in a plastic container labeled "INSULIN SHARPS" and washes her hands.

She leaves passing the only other occupied stall. Under the stall door, Keya's work shoes are stained in the harsh fluorescent lights.

The sound of spitting followed by a hand with balled up toilet paper tries to wipe them clean. The toilet paper turns pink. A moment later a flush.

INT. CASINO (BATHROOM STALL) - DAY

Keya sits on the edge of the toilet, fully clothed. She stares at her cracked phone screen.

CLOSE ON SCREEN:

It's the photo of her ass, branded with a bright pink shiny burn. Her fingers try to enlarge it but the cracks won't allow. Her hands shake.

TATTOOED MAN (V.O.)
Hold still, bitch!

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The .38 Is aimed at the back of Keya's head by the Tattooed Man. Keya is bent over the side of the mattress, her knees on the floor and her pants pulled down exposing her bare ass. A flashlight beam illuminates one cheek.

TATTOOED MAN

If you move, it's going to be worse.

Keya looks over. The girl watches with glazed eyes.

The Stranger walks in carrying a rod of steel, bright red at one end. A shape is bent out of the metal. It's a homemade cattle brand. He walks quickly to Keya and unceremoniously presses the hot end into her buttock.

She screams as it hisses.

STRANGER

Hold her still!

The tattooed man jumps on top of her, holding her down while she thrashes.

TATTOOED MAN

Fuck, that stinks.

STRANGER

Like bacon a little, right?

TATTOOED MAN

I love bacon.

The stranger pulls the brand away. Her skin smokes in the dim light. Keya tries to focus on the contents of her purse scattered around her. Her eyes land on a pen from the casino.

STRANGER

I'll be back in an hour. Put some ointment shit on that so it doesn't get fucked up, there's some on the table over there. Wake her up soon and be ready to go.

The stranger walks toward the door.

TATTOOED MAN

Hey, she's not like the rest of them - why her?

STRANGER

I don't ask. You shouldn't either.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO BATHROOM STALL SCENE

Keya stands and lowers her pants, pulling her panties aside and feels for the injury. She grits her teeth in pain.

The bathroom door opens.

SHELLY (O.S.)
Keya? You in here?

Keya quickly pulls her pants back up. Shelly's feet approach her stall. A KNOCK.

SHELLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Cops out there looking for you.

KEYA
What do they want?

SHELLY (O.S.)
It's jut Lonnie. Maybe they found your car?

KEYA
I didn't have a chance to call it in yet.

SHELLY (O.S.)
Well my mom always said 'If they came to find you then it can't be good news.'

INT. CASINO (BATHROOM) - CONTINUOUS

Shelly stands at the mirror fixing her makeup. Keya emerges from the stall, straightening her clothing.

KEYA
How does my eye look?

SHELLY
You think they'll ask?

Keya shakes her head.

KEYA

They probably seen it a million times. Won't even notice.

SHELLY

I swear if I see him --

KEYA

Shelly, please. No more trouble.

SHELLY

I think trouble's looking for you. You'd better get out there and see if some kid hot wired your car and ran it into a tree or something. Maybe he hit a deer and you got guts in your grill.

KEYA

Shit. I'm not even insured.

SHELLY

Insurance is for the rich and unlucky.

KEYA

You got insurance?

SHELLY

Well I'm not rich.

They walk out of the bathroom together.

INT. CASINO (BREAK ROOM) - DAY

Keya sits at a table across from LONNIE (20s), a fresh-faced Native deputy tribal cop in uniform. He takes notes.

LONNIE

So you left it here?

Keya nods.

KEYA

Walked home.

LONNIE

Anyone see you?

His pen runs out. Keya watches him shake it then pick up a casino pen left on the table.

KEYA

I don't know, it was dark. Couple cars passed me maybe. I was wearing a hoodie.

LONNIE

Did you leave keys in it?

KEYA

Well it was dead. I mean somebody woulda had to jump it first to drive it. I figured it got towed. I haven't had time to report --

LONNIE

-- I understand, but do you have the keys?

She slows down, thinking.

KEYA

Yeah sure, in my purse.

LONNIE

Can you get them?

Lonnie watches her carefully. Keya walks to a set of lockers, turns a combination and retrieves her purse. She digs around for a moment. She turns the purse upside down on the table. Loose change, makeup, cigarettes, lighter, coupons, candy, etc. No keys.

KEYA

Fuck. They're not here. I changed purses this morning, maybe... I can't remember... So where is it then, Lonnie?

INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Keya rides shotgun as they pull out of the casino parking lot. She chews a nail.

KEYA

Can I smoke in here?

LONNIE

You got an extra one?

She lights two cigarettes and gives him one.

KEYA

Can you just tell me? Did someone wreck it? I'm gonna be pissed aren't I? It's all paid off. It'll take me months to save up -- fuck!

LONNIE

It's not wrecked.

Cars ahead of them pull over as they pass.

KEYA

You got the lights on?

He shrugs.

LONNIE

I don't get to use them much.

She looks nervous.

KEYA

I meant to catch up on insurance next week. Did someone get hurt, Lon?

LONNIE

We'll get it sorted, Keya. How's your family?

KEYA

They're doing good. Brylee has a boyfriend now - that girl is boy crazy. Aiden reads everything he can get his hands on.

LONNIE

Getting old, them kids.

KEYA

They're my life.

The cruiser turns down a dirt road - one of dozens that snake through the reservation.

Three more lit-up cop cars are parked at a dead end. Police tape surrounds a marked-off area with her car in the middle.

The relaxed mood in the car changes to uncomfortable silence. Lonnie parks and comes around to open the door for Keya. She hesitates and lets him help her out.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Lonnie?

LONNIE
It's okay.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

He leads her toward the back of her vehicle where the Chief of Police, BEN MANKILLER (50's) waits for her. Other officers stand around watching, all eyes on her. She crosses her arms defensively.

KEYA
Hey, Ben.

BEN
Keya.

KEYA
I didn't know we even had this many
cops.

Ben lifts the hood of the trunk with latex-gloved hands. Keya gasps and stumbles backward.

CLOSE ON TRUNK

The naked, battered and bloody body of the girl from the night before lays curled among Keya's things.

She also has a bright red brand on her ass. In the light of day and on someone else it's glaringly clear.

CLOSE ON BRAND

A crude triangle shape of an oil field tower with a pump across the apex.

BEN
Do you know her?

Keya breaks free several feet, falls into the weeds on her hands and knees and vomits pink frosted Pop Tarts.

The officers exchange glances.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

She sits at a desk in a small, outdated police station wiping black fingerprint ink from the tips of her fingers with an alcohol swab. Ben sits across from her tapping on a dated computer. Lonnie leans up against a wall nearby.

BEN

And you left it in the parking lot?

She nods.

KEYA

I told Lonnie. It wouldn't start.
No jumpers neither.

LONNIE

It started right up when we tried.

BEN

Do you usually leave your keys
inside?

KEYA

I didn't think I did.

BEN

So that's a no?

KEYA

No.

Ben nods to Lonnie who produces a plastic evidence bag and hands it to Keya. Inside is her pink dice keychain.

BEN

That them?

She nods.

BEN (CONT'D)

Did you know the employee parking
lot can't be seen by surveillance
cameras?

KEYA

They don't care about our shit.
That's why they stick us in the
back.

BEN

Which means we can't see who took
your car... or verify that it
wasn't you.

KEYA

Who is she? The girl. She Indian?

BEN

Not one of ours. Maybe Fox River or up at Deep Water, we're asking around for missing or runaway juveniles. It's a long list. Shit, she could be from down south or Canada for all we know.

KEYA

She's so young.

LONNIE

Probably a prostitute.

Keya shoots him a glare.

BEN

A lot of these rez girls choose to -
-

KEYA

--Doesn't look like it was her choice to get into my trunk.

BEN

I was gonna say choose to leave home. Go into the cities to find jobs.

KEYA

She looks like Brylee don't she? I bet she has a family, maybe sisters.

Keya looks down, shameful.

BEN

Who were you with last night?

KEYA

Nobody. I got off work, had a couple beers, couldn't start my car, called a few people before my phone died then just decided to walk home.

BEN

Someone beat on you. Your eye is fresh, so is your lip.

She touches her lip and looks at Lonnie.

KEYA

I'm not filing a report.

LONNIE
My brother?

KEYA
I'm fine.

LONNIE
I'll talk to him.

KEYA
Please ... He won't remember doing
it. It has nothing to do with
whatever happened with that girl.

BEN
Keya, I don't want you wrapped up
in bad shit. And this is real bad
shit. I think someone spotted your
car abandoned, saw the keys in it
and an opportunity to dump a mess
on a stranger.

KEYA
Are you keeping it?

BEN
We'll need to process it first but
you'll get it back. Might take a
couple days.

LONNIE
Are you gonna tell her about the
other one?

Ben shoots Lonnie an annoyed look.

KEYA
Other what?

LONNIE
She's probably the last one to
know, the way shit spreads around
here.

KEYA
Other what?

BEN
We think the young lady could be
connected to another homicide we
caught earlier this morning.

Keya's face registers panic.

KEYA

There's two of them?

BEN

We haven't had a murder up here since eighty-three. Drugs, vandalism, drunk driving but nothing like this.

KEYA

Another girl?

BEN

No.

KEYA

A tribal member?

LONNIE

A white guy.

BEN

We just called in the feds. Murders go up the ladder. We'll work with them - or try at least. They think we're in the dark ages.

LONNIE

They'll find the connection if there is one.

BEN

Or just brush it under the rug and leave us looking like assholes.

KEYA

Are they gonna talk to me too? I mean, I told you guys everything. You said it yourself, some jerk just used my car for a ride. I got nothing to do with this. And this other guy, where was he at?

BEN

We really can't talk about --

LONNIE

--Up at the old Buffalo house. Kids hang out there sometimes. Bloody as hell. Wasn't kids.

BEN

Thanks, Lonnie.

Lonnie shrugs.

LONNIE
Maybe she has information?

Ben turns to Keya.

BEN
Do you?

She shakes her head.

KEYA
I saw the cop cars this morning
when Shelly drove me in.

LONNIE
Anonymous call, someone heard
gunshots during fishing season.
Benefits of living in a small town,
everyone wants to be involved in
everyones business until they
don't.

Keya chews a nail.

BEN
So I might as well ask you now.
Officially on the record. Where
were you around four-thirty am?

KEYA
In my bed.

BEN
Right where you should be.

Ben shakes a cigarette out for her, takes one himself.

KEYA
And you think the same person
killed them both?

BEN
All we can think at this point is
that it's not you. Fair enough?

He smiles warmly at her. She nods back.

LONNIE
Unless you're secretly some cold-
blooded, undercover, Indian-
assassin blackjack dealer.

They laugh. She laughs along nervously.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Keya stands over the bare mattress, half-clothed. Her lip and eye are swollen. She holds the .38 in front of her, aimed steadily downward. Her face is emotionless and cold.

TATTOOED MAN (O.C.)

No don't--

She squeezes the trigger. A spray of blood covers her with the first bullet. She empties the weapon, less blood sprays back with each round until it CLICKS empty.

END FLASHBACK

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Keya takes a long drag from her cigarette then dumps it into a coffee cup. She looks up at both men.

KEYA

Who's driving me back to work?

INT. CASINO - DAY

Keya scurries past the machines toward Shelly's table. She grabs her "on a break" sign and slams it down.

KEYA

Smoke.

SHELLY

Did they find your car?

Keya looks around.

KEYA

Outside.

SHELLY

Pete's gonna be --

KEYA

-- Fuck Pete.

Keya grabs her hand and pulls her through the casino. They attempt to pass Pete. He steps in front of them.

PETE

Now what? I'm not paying you to not deal blackjack. Keya, that little field trip is coming out of your paycheck.

SHELLY

Her car was stolen, Pete. She didn't have a choice. She's traumatized for fuck's sake.

KEYA

We'll be back in five, I'll pick up a weekend shift.

He checks his watch then leans in, lowered voice.

PETE

So was it your car?

KEYA

What did you hear?

PETE

My cousin said they found a big black motherfucker in the driver's seat dressed like a chick, like a legit tranny. He - She - flipped it like ten times into a ditch probably putting on lipstick in the mirror, right?

SHELLY

Damn, Keya! For real?

Keya takes Shelly's hand again and drags her away. Pete yells after her.

KEYA

Don't spread rumors, Pete.

PETE

So is it true?

EXT. CASINO - DAY

On the back side of the casino near the dumpsters, overlooking a field then a highway, is where the workers gather to smoke and gossip. Shelly and Keya listen to various version of who or what was found in her car. The reservation grapevine runs wild.

MONTAGE

A) A COOK in a dirty white apron and hat takes a drag on a joint.

COOK
Someone hit a bigfoot with it,
totalled your fucking car.

B) A WAITRESS clearly drinking on the job.

WAITRESS
I heard the whole thing was messed
up with bullet holes--

C) A SECURITY GUARD paces nervously.

SECURITY GUARD
--And every seat covered in blood.
How you gonna get that out, Keya? I
gotta guy --

D) A CASHIER in work uniform.

CASHIER
It had to be a Mexican gang come
up. I heard they get initiated when
they kill Indians. This whole damn
place is gonna be overrun by Indian-
killing Mexicans, wall or no wall.
You wait, you see.

END MONTAGE

BACK TO SCENE

Shelly and Keya stare out onto the empty highway in the distance.

SHELLY
So... What the fuck?

KEYA
There was a dead girl in the trunk.

SHELLY
Holy shit.

KEYA
It was bad. She was beat up.

SHELLY
Who is she?

KEYA
They don't know.

SHELLY
Who did it?

KEYA
Shelly, I don't know!

SHELLY
Should you be telling me this?

KEYA
Why, did you do it?

SHELLY
That's a stupid question.

KEYA
Can I borrow your car tonight? I
promised Doe I'd go see her.

SHELLY
Not if you're gonna put fucking
bodies in the trunk.

KEYA
Very funny. I don't know when I'm
getting mine back.

SHELLY
Why the hell do you want it back?

KEYA
I need a car, Shelly.

SHELLY
What if it's haunted?

KEYA
As long as it gets my ass to work
and back, I don't care. The cops
will clean it out ... Right?

SHELLY
I think there's like companies that
do that. Not on the rez though.
That's fucked up.

KEYA
I guess.

SHELLY
Was there blood? Like on her body?

KEYA

I didn't look that long. They just wanted to know if I knew her, probably see how I'd react.

SHELLY

Pop Tarts come back up?

KEYA

All of them. Also, there's another one. A white dude at the old Buffalo house.

SHELLY

Shit! I knew there was shit going down! Are they connected?

KEYA

How the hell should I know? I just wanted to get out of there.

Shelly takes Keya's hand and stares at her black stained fingertips.

SHELLY

Are you a damn suspect?

KEYA

They needed to be able to tell mine from whoever else was in the car.

SHELLY

Shit, now you have a file? Keya, this isn't good. Do you need a lawyer? I dated this guy once who has a brother --

Shelly paces, panicking.

KEYA

I gave my statement. It's cool. Ben knows I didn't do it. So, can I borrow it?

SHELLY

I'll get a ride home. Just don't hit no tranny Mexican bigfoots.

They sucks cigarettes instead of laughing.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

And Keya promise me one thing? Stay away from Randy.

(MORE)

SHELLY (CONT'D)

I don't need your fucking body in the trunk of nobody's car. Maybe he had something to do with this, did you think about that? He's bad news.

KEYA

Randy's a pussy and a loser, I don't think he's a murderer.

SHELLY

Just be safe, girl. You don't really know anybody, do you?

Shelly hugs her friend.

EXT. ELDER CENTER (ESTABLISHING) - DAY

A culture that cares for its elderly community members. The new building has murals on the walls, carefully landscaped and cared-for outdoor spaces and a staff that gives a shit.

INT. ELDER CENTER - DAY

Keya sits in a rocking chair in a small private room. It's cozy and decorated with traditional Native art, paintings and photos of Keya and her kids. She chews on a huge piece of frybread.

DOE (80s) sits up in bed crocheting slowly with crooked hands.

KEYA

It's good, who made it?

DOE

That girl with the braces on her teeth makes frybread every Wednesday in the kitchen. She brings in honey too ... Fresh.

KEYA

She has bees?

DOE

Her arms always getting stung, she don't complain though. Worth it ... Long as she don't bring bees in.

KEYA

Are you eating?

DOE
I do on Wednesdays.

KEYA
Your hair's growing back.

Doe stops to fuss with her short gray hair.

DOE
I wish they'd let me dye it. I look
so damn old.

KEYA
You look good. Young... Like
seventy.

DOE
I'd look sexy sixty-nine with my
dark hair.

Doe winks. They laugh together.

DOE (CONT'D)
So what's the business with your
car?

KEYA
Dammit - how?

DOE
Honey, the grapevine has deep roots
here. We're old and wise for a
reason. You okay?

KEYA
I'm fine.

DOE
No trouble?

KEYA
No trouble.

Doe stares at her for a long moment to read Keya's face for
little white lies.

DOE
I'm proud of you, Keya. I know it's
been hard with your past and
without your mother and I worry
about that. It keeps me up. You see
this wrinkle here - that's all you.

Keya gets up from the chair and sits on the edge of Doe's bed. She plays with several granny squares in a pile.

KEYA

Brylee's getting good grades,
Aiden's playing basketball. The
casino is steady. I'll be alright.
I ain't taking blame for any of
them wrinkles.

DOE

Where does she belong, the girl
they found?

KEYA

I don't know.

DOE

She's our sister, Keya. Somebody's
daughter. I'll pray for her.

KEYA

I will too.

DOE

I wish someone could have saved
her.

KEYA

Me too.

Grandma Doe reaches a shaking finger to trace the bruise
under Keya's eye.

DOE

Maybe somebody tried.

KEYA

Maybe.

DOE

Don't ever go backwards, Keya.
Promise me.

Keya lays down at the foot of Doe's bed and pulls the squares
around her one by one. Doe runs her fingers through Keya's
hair.

KEYA

I promise.

DOE

I'm glad you're okay. You want more
bread?

KEYA

Yeah. Honey too. No bees.

INT. ELDER CENTER (HALLWAY) - DAY

Keya walks down the empty hallway. A silver tray on wheels is parked outside an open door. A light above the door flashes red. Several nurses appear from all directions rushing past her into the room.

Keya stops, unable to look away. An OLD MAN convulses on the bed, his mouth and eyes both gaping and lifeless. He grasps the air, connecting with a NURSE trying to hold him down. They speak quietly to him in his native language, calming him.

Keya looks at the name card by the door: *Phillip Deadcrow*. She looks at the tray filled with medication bottles. She picks up a bottle, turns it in her hands then puts it back.

She moves down the hall, the soothing sound of the nurse speaking another language follows her.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - DAY

A hand wearing latex gloves holds an empty pill bottle with the same name **Phillip Deadcrow**.

The hand belongs to FBI AGENT MARLOW (50's) A barrel-chested black man in a suit. He hands the bottle to his partner, AGENT FARRIS, a slight plain woman in her thirties.

AGENT MARLOW

Check who this belongs to and why
its here.

AGENT FARRIS

Deadcrow, Phillip.

She bags it.

They both stand at the foot of the mattress and turn toward the large shirtless body of the Tattooed Man sprawled out and surrounded by pills, needles, chapstick, loose change.

His chest is covered in holes like a bull's-eye. One shot to the head for good measure. The casino pen protrudes from one bloody eye socket.

Ben and Lonnie walk in on the end of the conversation.

BEN
Deadcrow's an elder up at the
center.

Marlow looks over at the two rez cops then back at Farris.

AGENT MARLOW
Find out why the elder center
doesn't secure their controlled
medication and who has access.

Lonnie and Ben exchange glances.

Agent Marlow peels off a glove and extends a hand.

AGENT MARLOW (CONT'D)
I'm Agent Marlow, this is Agent
Farris. We're assigned to your two
homicides called in this morning. I
understand you've done some
preliminary work with the girl?

BEN
This is Deputy Bresette I'm the
chief of police, Ben Mankiller.

Agent Marlow raises an eyebrow at his name. Ben hands Agent
Marlow his phone.

BEN (CONT'D)
These are photos of the first
scene. The girl is on her way to
the county morgue about an hour out
of town. The vehicle she was found
in is in our back lot at the
station waiting to be processed.
We're holding for the medical
examiner to come back for this one
here. He's a big boy, needs a big
car and a couple hands for
transport.

Agent Marlow swipes through the photos.

CLOSE ON PHOTOS:

- A) Keya's car from several angles.
- B) Girl in trunk, also several angles.
- C) closeup of her face.
- D) closeup of the brand on her ass.

BEN (CONT'D)

This house has been empty for a while now. Kids run up here for parties or sex. Sometimes drugs. Mostly sex. We run 'em off when we catch them. We had a girl give birth here last Spring.

Agent Farris looks horrified as she looks down at the dirty mattress.

AGEN FARRIS

Charming.

LONNIE

Not much else for them to do around here.

AGENT MARLOW

Do we have the murder weapon for this one?

BEN

Not yet. I'm assuming the pen from up at the casino was not the final blow.

LONNIE

Thirty eight special.

BEN

We think they're connected but we'd like your opinion and forensics. You bring a team?

AGENT FARRIS

Was she shot as well?

BEN

Not that we could see. We're waiting on cause of death.

Agent Marlow enlarges the photo of the girl, focusing in on the brand.

AGENT MARLOW

They were taking her to South Dakota.

LONNIE

They?

AGENT MARLOW

Well either she shot this gentleman then killed herself up and locked herself in the trunk of a stolen car or He killed her came back here and riddled himself with bullets.

LONNIE

Good point.

AGENT FARRIS

Someone else did either one - or both.

AGENT MARLOW

Or maybe we're looking for more than one person.

BEN

Or maybe they're not connected at all.

The agents don't respond.

LONNIE

It's a clusterfuck alright. Why South Dakota?

AGENT MARLOW

The brand on her buttock here --

BEN

Where have I seen that before?

AGENT MARLOW

They used to tattoo them until the ones that escaped started getting them removed.

AGENT FARRIS

Now they brand them ... And don't let them escape.

LONNIE

Like cattle?

AGENT FARRIS

Horsehead girls.

LONNIE

What is it? A gang?

AGENT MARLOW
Are you familiar with the Dakota
drilling towns out there?

BEN
Sure. They call them the new Wild
West. Bad place to be.

LONNIE
Especially if you're an Indian.

AGENT FARRIS
Especially if you're a woman. It's
one of the largest human sex
trafficking and prostitution rings
in the country. Girls from around
the world have been found there.
Kidnapped, beaten, forced to take
drugs until they do it voluntarily
then raped on a daily basis until
they runaway or get killed.

LONNIE
Nobody looks for them? What did you
call them? Horse something --

She takes the phone from Agent Marlow and zooms in on the
brand.

AGENT FARRIS
See, it's an oil well with a horse
head pump.

LONNIE
...Horsehead girls.

The room is silent.

AGENT MARLOW
She might have escaped and they
were taking her back.

LONNIE
Why don't you just go out there and
bust it up? Throw them fuckers,
pardon my language, in jail?

AGENT MARLOW

Sure, first I get a warrant to search the private property owned by the drilling companies run by rich, old men with connections you wouldn't believe, then when they've been properly warned by the law in their pocket I start searching hundred of acres of land with no address, no roads and no help. Google doesn't exactly have them pinpointed on their maps. They move the girls like nomads. Pack 'em into camper trucks and wait us out. We don't have the resources.

LONNIE

Jesus. What about just going in with guns drawn and getting them girls without a warrant - saving them? Fucking up their shit? Pardon me again.

AGENT FARRIS

Because nobody cares.

AGENT MARLOW

They usually end up back there anyways.

LONNIE

I bet their moms care.

AGENT FARRIS

I bet they do too.

BEN

So what happened here, Agent Marlow?

AGENT MARLOW

Someone fucked up.

Agent Farris spots something on the floor across the room. She goes to it, bends down and holds up a single white button.

AGENT FARRIS

Someone fought back.

She tries not to smile.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The fresh blood on Keya's shoes shine in the moonlight as she takes two steps back from the mattress, kicking one of her white buttons.

She lowers the gun. There's a harsh bright ringing in her ears. Her voice is calm and steady. The Tattoo'd Man's body lays lifeless in front of her.

He has a pen sticking out of one eye.

KEYA

Deceased. Lifeless. Expired.
Cadaverous. Inanimate. Departed.
You're dead you narcoleptic,
inattentive, careless, preoccupied,
oblivious motherfucker. Look it up.

Keya goes to her purse, shoves the gun inside then picks up her hoodie from the floor.

She goes to the girl whimpering in the corner, her hands cover her ears. Keya reaches out. The girl recoils.

KEYA (CONT'D)

It's okay. It's okay. We have to go
before the other one gets back,
hurry.

Keya gently takes her hand. She looks around the dark room.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Where are your clothes?

The girl continues to whimper, resisting any movement. Keya quickly scans the corners of the dark room.

KEYA (CONT'D)

We don't have time. Let's get the
fuck out of here. I just fucking
murdered that guy. I killed him,
okay? We have to leave. Can you
talk? Are you hurt?

Keya lifts the girl's arm, it's covered in bruised track marks. She gets in her face and lightly slaps it. No response.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Fuck, you're high.

Keya lifts her bobbing head, brushes the hair out of her face and looks into her vacant eyes.

KEYA (CONT'D)
What's your name, honey?

Keya puts one arm around the girls body and pulls her to her feet. It's awkward weight and Keya half drags, half carries her toward the door.

KEYA (CONT'D)
I need you to walk. We might even
have to run, do you understand? My
name is Keya. What's yours?

The girl's head bobs up and for a moment she focuses in on Keya. Her eyes fill with tears and she shakes her head.

KEYA (CONT'D)
What?

SARAH
I can't. He told me never to say
it.

The girl's lips move but Keya can't hear her due to the gunshots in her ears.

KEYA
It's okay, you're safe. I'm taking
you home. Tell me your name?

The girl speaks, barely a whisper.

SARAH
I'm Sarah. Don't leave me, Keya.

Keya watches her mouth move in slow motion. A tear runs down the girl's face and she throws her thin bare arms around Keya's neck. Her lips say the word over and over, Keya watches them move.

KEYA
Sarah?

Sarah nods her head.

The silence is cut by an approaching motor racing in the darkness. A pair of headlights zoom across the wall and park illuminating both of them. They stop breathing.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Keya pulls up behind a school bus pulled over, stop arm out and lights blinking. Kids pile out onto the side of the road. Aiden jumps from the bus and runs toward Shelly's car, waving at his mother. The rest of the children disperse.

Keya watches as the bus folds the stop arm, turns off the blinkers and pulls out into traffic.

Aiden jumps into the front seat.

AIDEN

Cool, do we own Shelly's car now?

KEYA

Where's Brylee?

AIDEN

I don't know.

KEYA

She wasn't on the bus?

AIDEN

I didn't see her.

Keya pulls out her phone and dials, waiting through the rings.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

Oh wait, she's getting a ride home with her boyfriend.

KEYA

With Johnny? Are you sure?

AIDEN

Yeah, I think so.

KEYA

No, Aiden look at me. Did she tell you that?

AIDEN

Yeah it was gross. She was kissing on him.

KEYA

And what did she say?

AIDEN

'I'm getting a ride, tell mom.'

KEYA
Dammit, she needs to ask me first.
I told that girl --

AIDEN
Teenagers suck.

Keya messes his hair and smiles.

KEYA
You have no idea, kiddo. Can you
stay six forever?

AIDEN
No.

Through the phone Brylee's voicemail message then a beep.
Keya holds up a finger to shush Aiden.

KEYA
(into phone)
Brylee you know you're supposed to
let me know if you're not taking
the bus. Call me back as soon as
you get this. I'm not happy with
you.

Aiden yells at the top of his lungs.

AIDEN
Penis!

Keya hangs up.

KEYA
You're coming to the laundromat
with me.

AIDEN
I have to?

KEYA
You have to.

Keya pulls away from the curb. Aiden turns the fan off and
on, the radio dial, the door lock.

KEYA (CONT'D)
Aiden stop messing around.

He opens the glove box and takes out the car manual and
random papers.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Aiden --

AIDEN

What's this?

Keya looks over to see he has a mace can pointed at his face.

KEYA

Aiden stop!

She slams the brakes and screams loud enough to jerk his reflexes. He drops the can to the floor then bursts into tears.

Keya pulls over.

KEYA (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing? I told you to stop messing around. You almost maced your goddamn face!

He sobs, trying to talk.

AIDEN

I didn't know! What's - a - maced?
Would I get killed?

Keya unbuckles them both and pulls him into her lap.

KEYA

Shhhh, it's okay, baby. It's okay.
I didn't mean to scare you. I didn't know that was in there. It's to hurt bad people. It makes them stop and run away... Okay?

AIDEN

Like monster spray?

KEYA

Yes. Just like monster spray.

AIDEN

Okay. Sorry.

She kisses him on his head then plops him back into his seat and buckles him up. She picks up the can of mace and puts it back in the glove box.

KEYA

I'll get our car back in a couple days. Don't touch anything from now on. Promise?

AIDEN

Promise.

He nods his head and wipes his snotty face on his sleeve.

INT. RIVER ROCK LAUNDROMAT - DAY

The small, outdated laundromat is empty. Keya stands in front of an open washer door. Aiden presses his face on the vending machine in the back. Eighties music plays from speakers in the ceiling.

She pulls dirty clothes from a laundry bag and piles them inside. The last items are her hoodie, black pants and blood-stained white shirt. She quickly throws them in the back.

AIDEN

Can I get candy?

KEYA

No.

AIDEN

Gum?

KEYA

That's still candy.

AIDEN

No it's not, I don't even swallow it.

KEYA

Yes you do.

AIDEN

Please?

He joins her at the machine. She closes the washer door then grabs her purse and digs in the bottom, coming up with a handful of change. She counts out a four quarters and hands it to him.

KEYA

Get a granola bar.

She continues to search her purse, moving stuff aside.

AIDEN

Yuck, I'd rather eat poop.

KEYA

Did you take my wallet?

AIDEN

No.

Keya digs more frantically, taking out items. Aiden runs back to the candy machine to carefully consider his decision.

KEYA

Shit.

Keya takes several dollars to a detergent vending machine.

She plugs the quarters and pushes a combination of buttons waiting for her detergent. She turns to smile at Aiden deep in his own choices.

KEYA (CONT'D)

So do they have poop in there?

As she turns back, Keya barely has time to react to a reflection of someone behind her. A hand wraps around her mouth. She tries to scream.

A man's voice spits in her ear.

RANDY (O.S.)

I know what you fucking did.

Her eyes grow big.

RANDY (30's) spins her around and slams her back into the vending machine, cracking the glass and shaking loose boxes of detergent.

He's a tall, muscular Native man with a buzzcut, pocked skin and a very short temper. He sports a black eye that matches Keya's.

Keya turns her head toward where Aiden was, he's gone. Her eyes dart to the corners of the laundromat but Randy is close to her face, her view blocked.

RANDY (CONT'D)

You told people I beat your ass
last night and you know I didn't
touch you, but I'm gonna do it now.

Keya bites his hand. He yowls and moves it.

KEYA

Randy stop! Randy let me explain,
please! You're drunk, you should go
home. Aiden! Aiden where --

RANDY

--I got jumped and I didn't do
shit. Why the fuck are you telling
lies?

He slaps her across the face.

KEYA

I'm sorry, I didn't want you to get
in trouble. I couldn't --

He slaps her again.

RANDY

--Whatever you got you fucking
deserved and I'm gonna finish the
job. Teach you to not to lie to
your friends... my goddamn family.

He pulls back a fist. She ducks out and he smashes clumsily
through the glass, cutting his hand.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Keya races toward the door. She stops and looks around
corners.

KEYA

Aiden!

Randy catches her and throws her to the ground. Keya kicks,
connecting but doing little damage.

RANDY

Let him watch. Maybe he'll learn
how to be in control of a woman who
lies. Don't you teach him about
lying bitches? He's gonna grow up
to be a pussy.

She pulls a wire cart with wheels down on top of him and
claws along the linoleum floor, yelling.

KEYA

No!

He grabs a foot and pulls her back. He flips her over and
straddles her, pinning her down.

RANDY

You're gonna need all them pills
you fucking junkie because I'm
gonna break you.

He pulls back his bloody, scratched fist when the can of mace appears in front of him and a yellow spray shoots into his eyes. Randy SCREAMS, throwing himself back onto the floor.

Keya gets up and turns around to see Aiden holding the can, crying. Keya goes to him and scoops him up, coughing at the gas in the air.

KEYA

Aiden, baby. Baby it's okay. You did good, honey. You saved Mama.

AIDEN

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I touched it again. I'm sorry. He was hurting you.

He drops the can. It rolls under a machine.

Randy crawls blindly to a set of dryers to stand up, screaming and swearing at the pain in his tearing, red, swollen eyes.

Keya frantically grabs her purse and rushes for the door.

RANDY

Get back here, bitch! Keya, I'm gonna fucking kill you!

Keya is almost out the door. She stops, looks back and sets Aiden down. She's pissed.

KEYA

Go get in the car, honey.

Aiden tugs on her hand.

AIDEN

Let's go.

KEYA

Get in the car, now!

Aiden lets go and runs for the car. Keya walks back toward Randy, still blindly feeling his way around the laundromat. He swings in the air, punching madly.

She walks up to him and kicks him in the balls, dropping him to the floor like a bullet to the spine. He cries and vomits on the floor.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Don't ever touch me again, Randy
you understand?

(MORE)

KEYA (CONT'D)
I'm not afraid of you or anyone
anymore. I've had enough.

She steps over him toward the candy vending machine and pushes a couple buttons.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Aiden chews a huge wad of gum while unwrapping a third piece. Keya smiles at him.

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE (BRYLEE'S BEDROOM) - DAY

Brylee's room is her sanctuary. High school memorabilia, photo collages, bottles of hair and beauty product and clothes everywhere ... Except the bed.

Brylee and JOHNNY (18) lay on her bed making out. He's a handsome, shy young man with an athletic scholarship in his back pocket.

He sits up, reaches over to a bottle of Jack Daniels on the side table and takes a swig. He offers it to Brylee who follows suit and giggles when some spills.

Johnny turns up the music and peels off his shirt. Brylee does the same.

EXT. KEYA'S HOUSE - DAY

A familiar black pickup truck pulls up next to Johnny's car. The engine is cut, the door opens and cowboy boots get out.

The tall Native Stranger in the cowboy hat knocks on the front door and waits. He knocks again, harder.

A moment later Brylee opens the door, disheveled, annoyed and a little drunk. The Stranger reaches into his pocket and produces Keya's wallet along with a huge shit-eating grin.

STRANGER
Sorry to bother you, Darlin'. Is
your mama home? I believe this
belongs here.

Brylee recognizes it, smiles and reaches for it.

BRYLEE
Yeah, that's hers. She ain't home
yet. Where'd you find it?

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Ben does paperwork at his desk. Randy stumbles in, his eyes still puffy and red. He rubs them with his fists and sits down in a plastic chair in the lobby.

Ben looks over at him, annoyed with whatever drama he's bringing this time.

BEN

Lon, your brother's here!

Lonnie comes out from the bathroom. Ben points towards Randy.

LONNIE

Shit, Randy what the hell happened?

RANDY

The bitch bear sprayed me ... Well the kid did. Right in my fucking eyes.

Ben stands, amused. Lonnie sits in a chair next to Randy.

LONNIE

Who?

RANDY

I want to press charges. Right now! Right fucking now, let's type it up!

Randy stands then Lonnie stands, hands reflexively go to his weapon.

LONNIE

Calm down!

RANDY

You gonna shoot me? I was goddamn assaulted!

BEN

Who assaulted you, Randy?

RANDY

Aiden did.

The officers look at each other.

BEN

Keya's kid?

LONNIE

He's six.

BEN

Why would he randomly hit ya in the face with pepper spray?

Randy looks down, thinking on the story. He rubs his eyes some more and shrugs.

RANDY

She was telling people I beat on her last night. Got my ass kicked by Junior and them.

LONNIE

So you decided to confront her?

BEN

And that little boy protected his mama by sprayin' you? Is that what happened?

RANDY

I didn't fucking hit her. I mean last night anyways. She got that black eye all on her own.

BEN

Did she tell you what happened?

RANDY

All I know is her car broke down, she called for a jump. I - I was busy, I couldn't come get her. Next thing I know Junior's shaking my ass out of bed, drags me to the front yard and whoops me.

LONNIE

But you didn't see Keya last night?

Randy shakes his head.

RANDY

Get me a bucket, I'm gonna be sick.

Lonnie brings a garbage can to Randy. He pukes into it.

BEN

You can't press charges against a kid. Go home, Randy and remember this next time you go looking for trouble.

RANDY
She kicked me in the balls.

Lonnie looks down at Randy's bloody, scratched hand.

LONNIE
And your hand?

Randy looks down at it.

RANDY
I guess the vending machine at the
laundromat might need maintenance.

BEN
Sounds like someone might be able
to file a report but it ain't you,
Randy. Get out and stop wasting our
time. We have murders to deal with.

Randy stands up and turns to leave.

RANDY
You don't know Keya. She's tougher
than she looks.

BEN
Then I suggest you stop fucking
with her.

A phone rings. Ben picks it up, the ordeal with Randy quickly forgotten.

BEN (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Chief Mankiller. Yeah, Agent Marlow
whatcha got?

Lonnie hovers nearby, anxious for news. Ben covers the mouthpiece.

BEN (CONT'D)
Go take him home then check out the
laundromat. Faye's gonna be up in
arms when she hears about her
machines.

Lonnie and Randy leave.

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - DAY

Agents Marlow and Farris wear scrubs in the sterile small
pale green room. The girl's body is on a metal table.

Her hands are bagged. Agent Marlow is on his phone at her feet, examining them.

Agent Farris circles the body, taking photos.

AGENT MARLOW
(into phone)
I had her prints sent to our
database but I'm emailing them to
you too for your files.

He bends down and examines the soles of her feet. They're dirty. Pine needles are stuck between her toes.

AGENT MARLOW (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Any reason she would be walking
around in a pine forest barefoot?

Agent Farris tugs on his sleeve for attention.

AGENT FARRIS
The woman with the car --

AGENT MARLOW
Oh, yeah. We're coming back to get
a look at the vehicle. We'd like to
interview the owner too if you can
track her down.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Chief Mankiller sits down.

BEN
(into phone)
Keya? We interviewed her this
morning. Lonnie and me, we don't
think she has anything to do with
this. She had car trouble, that's
all. Wrong place, wrong time deal.
I'm writing up the report right
now. She ain't had a good day,
Agent Marlow. What about the other
one, the big one with tattoos?

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE - DAY

Agent Marlow steps over the a hulking figure still under a sheet. A thin file folder rests on top.

He picks it up then pulls back the sheet to reveal the dead man riddled with bullets. There's a gaping meat hole in his eye where the pen was. His fingers have black ink on them.

He opens up the file and reads.

AGENT MARLOW

(into phone)

His name is Winston Frey. Basically just a mule. Been out of prison for a year after a ten year stay for the usual bad shit. Originally from Texas but no current address aside from this table. I'm sending his info to you as well. We'll see you shortly.

He clicks off then turns to Farris.

AGENT MARLOW (CONT'D)

What do you think?

She sighs heavily.

AGENT FARRIS

Maybe this one got a little rough with this one, accidentally killed her then whoever he answers to killed him. He was angry.

AGENT MARLOW

Why dump her body and leave his behind?

She shrugs.

AGENT FARRIS

Two hundred extra pounds?

AGENT MARLOW

Why drag a stranger into this?

AGENT FARRIS

Pretty risky to take a random car from a well-lit casino parking lot. There's usually cameras and security and people around the clock.

AGENT MARLOW

Pretty lucky, I'd say. You think the killer left the reservation?

AGENT FARRIS
Why would he stay?

AGENT MARLOW
Because someone lost a product.
He's empty-handed.

He nods toward the girl.

She goes to the girl and touches her head tenderly with a latex glove. She bends down and whispers in her ear.

STRANGER (V.O.)
What's your name, sweetheart?

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE - DAY

Brylee takes her mother's wallet and giggles. Her shirt buttons are crooked.

BRYLEE
Brylee.

STRANGER
That's right. Your mom talked all about you. She's like a leprechaun. Her table was a pot of gold. Made me a semi-rich man last night. She didn't tell me how pretty you were though.

Brylee blushes and plays with her hair. He smiles warmly.

BRYLEE
I'll let her know you found this.
She's probably been freaking out all day.

She stands on her toes and looks over his shoulder.

BRYLEE (CONT'D)
Is that your truck?

STRANGER
She's pretty, huh?

BRYLEE
It's cool.

STRANGER
Is that your car?

BRYLEE

Oh, no. I don't have my license yet. I mean I've driven before, I can do it, it's not that hard. I just haven't taken the test and all that.

STRANGER

I bet you could drive my truck. You'd look real good up there behind the wheel.

BRYLEE

What happened to your face?

Brylee notices a large scratch across the stranger's cheek.

STRANGER

Hey listen, could I bother you to --

Johnny appears behind Brylee, even more buzzed than before.

JOHNNY

Babe, I thought you'd be right back. (beat) Who the fuck are you?

The Stranger's eyes darken at this new addition.

STRANGER

Would this lucky young man be your boyfriend?

BRYLEE

Yeah, this is Johnny. That's his car. Don't be a dick, Johnny.

STRANGER

Well, Johnny's going to be a problem.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Keya and Aiden drive with the music on. She passes the same casino sign from earlier in the morning.

A long line of tall pine trees as far as the eye can see line the road.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Keya takes Sarah's hand and pulls her toward the back door. They bump into counters in the darkness. The truck door slams then Footsteps approach.

Keya turns the knob. It's locked.

KEYA

Fuck!

She backs up and kicks it once, twice.

She pulls Sarah through the house, down a hallway into a bedroom.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Furniture is piled everywhere, a burned mattress covers the only window. A large graffiti mural on one wall has an intricate dreamcatcher with horrible creatures caught in its "web." Sarah stares at it, mesmerized.

The front door SLAMS followed by footsteps then silence.

STRANGER (O.S.)

Motherfuck! Goddamn bitch!

KEYA

(whispering)

We gotta get out of here. Help me!

Keya goes to the mattress and tries to slide it. She can't budge it and instead tips it forward, making a large BAM!

The window is wide open.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Hurry, get out. Get out, get out!

Keya grabs Sarah and pushes her through the window. Footsteps rush down the hallway. A flashlight beam approaches. Sarah lands outside. Keya throws one leg out the window, the beam of light catches her.

STRANGER

You fucked up, girl.

He runs for her and grabs her by her hair before she can escape. He drops the flashlight and tries to pull her back into the window. They struggle, she fights for her life.

Keya punches and slaps at his face. She jabs him in the eye, he instinctively lets go and yowls. She falls to the ground.

He throws half his body out the window after her, grabbing in the dark.

She scrambles to her feet, takes Sarah and runs into the darkness. The Stranger pulls himself back into the bedroom and runs for the back door.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Keya and Sarah run toward the forest surrounding the abandoned house. It's dark but moonlit. The forest is mostly pine with little place to hide between trees.

Sarah is barefoot, Keya is not.

KEYA

Follow me, I know where we are.

The back door slams open off its hinges as the flashlight beam swings side to side.

STRANGER

You must think you're pretty badass right now, bitch. A goddamn murderer. That's prison time, Keya! I bet your ears are ringing like shit. I counted his body, you're out of bullets.

He takes a step out into the back lot along the edge of the forest listening for a sound.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

You can't save her. She doesn't belong to you - fuck, you don't even belong to you. You know that though, don't you, Keya? You knew it was only a matter of time. You can't hide from your past, from who you are and who she is. I hope she didn't tell you her name, it's against the rules you know. She will be punished for that.

A snap of a twig in the darkness. He walks slowly toward the line of the forest. Sarah whimpers.

END FLASHBACK

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Ben's email notification pops up with the title Fingerprint Match Case #020372. Ben clicks on the email.

CLOSE ON SCREEN

A photo of a young pregnant Native girl. She looks scared, disheveled, vacant. She holds up a sign with a date fifteen years earlier and a name: KEYA PATHWALKER.

Another photo, a close-up of a tattoo. It's a "Horsehead Girl" symbol.

His phone rings.

INT. RIVER ROCK LAUNDROMAT - DAY

Lonnie stands by the washing machine Keya used. He holds the blood-stained shirt in one hand. His cell phone raised to his ear.

LONNIE

You might wanna come down to the
River Rock ... And bring the yellow
tape.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Aiden and Keya sing a pop song at the top of their lungs. Keya turns down her road. A figure far ahead runs toward her car. Aiden sits up, trying to focus.

AIDEN

Hey, that's Johnny.

KEYA

What? Where?

Aiden points out the front window toward the figure.

AIDEN

Running at us, up there.

KEYA

Where's Brylee?

She steps on the gas to catch up to Johnny. As he gets closer he's shirtless, bleeding and cradling a severely broken arm. Keya pulls over.

KEYA (CONT'D)
Aiden stay put!

AIDEN
But --

KEYA
Do it!

She jumps out and runs toward Johnny.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Before she can get to him he's talking fast between sobs of pain and terror.

KEYA
Johnny, what happened? Where's
Keya?

She reaches for his dangling arm, he screams.

JOHNNY
I tried to stop him. He took her.
He took Brylee.

KEYA
Who?

JOHNNY
He broke my fucking arm, he knocked
her out and put her in the truck.
Took my phone, my keys... My
goddamn shoes! Took her and left.

She takes his face in her hands and makes him focus on her.

KEYA
Johnny, calm down. Breath, just
calm down. I need to know who took
Brylee.

JOHNNY
Big dude in a cowboy hat and a
black truck. I'm sorry, I tried to
stop him. I tried to protect her.
I'm so sorry.

He turns into the child he is and weeps on Keya's shoulder.

KEYA

It's okay, lets get back into my car. I'm calling the cops, let's go.

She gently leads him back to Shelly's car.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Aiden get in the back.

Aiden climbs over the seats into the back while Keya helps Johnny sit in the passenger seat.

AIDEN

Where's sister?

JOHNNY

I'm sorry --

KEYA

You need to go to the hospital.

Aiden screams, scared and sobbing.

AIDEN

Where's my bullshit sister dammit!

KEYA

Aiden, please!

She picks up her phone and dials.

KEYA (CONT'D)

(into phone)

I need to report a kidnapping. This is an emergency. (beat) It's Keya -- what? Why?

She puts the car in drive and turns it around while holding.

KEYA (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Ben? Brylee's gone! Someone beat up Johnny and took her -- What do you mean where am I? Someone needs to find my daughter! I don't have time file a fucking report. Why do I have to come in? But I answered your questions already... FBI?

She's nervous. Both boys watch her, scared. She speaks calmly.

KEYA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I can't do that right now.

She hangs up the phone and presses the gas.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Ben yells into the phone.

BEN
(into phone)
Keya! Keya! I can help you! Shit.

He hangs up and re-dials, no answer.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Her phone rings, she declines it.

KEYA
Aiden are you buckled in?

Aiden buckles in.

AIDEN
Where are we going?

KEYA
I'm taking Johnny to the hospital
and you're hanging out with Shelly
until I get back.

AIDEN
From where?

JOHNNY
Do you know where he took her?

KEYA
A place I promised myself I'd never
go back.

Keya hands Johnny the phone.

KEYA (CONT'D)
Call your ma, tell her to meet you
at the emergency clinic.

He starts dialing.

JOHHNY
What do I say about what happened?

KEYA
Have you been drinking?

He nods.

KEYA (CONT'D)
Tell her the truth.

He dials the phone, still crying.

JOHHNY
(into phone)
Mom?

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Keya pulls away from the curb. Johnny walks inside.

INT. RIVER ROCK LAUNDROMAT - DAY

Ben pulls the bloody clothing from the washing machine and shoves it into a brown paper bag. He walks toward the door, the mace can poking out from under a machine grabs his attention. He bends, picks it up.

EXT. RIVER ROCK LAUNDROMAT - DAY

Two cop cars are parked in the lot. Lonnie waits by his trunk. Ben hands him the bag.

BEN
Get rid of it.

Lonnie looks at him then nods. He puts the bag in the trunk. They both get into their own cars and leave.

EXT. SHELLY'S HOUSE - DAY

Shelly stands outside her house with Aiden. Keya hugs Shelly.

SHELLY
Can't you tell me where you're
going? What if something happens to
you?

KEYA

He's using her as bait ... Or maybe
he was using me, I don't know.

SHELLY

Who?

KEYA

Keep Aiden safe. I'll be back.

SHELLY

What if someone comes looking for
you?

KEYA

Do you know where I'm going?

SHELLY

No.

KEYA

Good.

She picks up Aiden and squeezes him tightly. He cries.

KEYA (CONT'D)

I love you, honey. I'm gonna go get
your sister, okay? I won't let
anyone hurt us.

He nods into her shoulder. She puts him down and gets into
Shelly's car and drives away.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Shelly's car is pulled over by the casino sign.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Keya digs up the hole behind the tree where she hid earlier
in the morning. She pulls out the .38 And brushes the dirt
off. The sun starts to set. It's been a long day.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - NIGHT

Keya pulls out of a parking lot and sets a box of .38 Ammo on
the seat next to her along with a receipt.

Through the windshield are signs for South Dakota a couple
hundred miles away.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Lonnie stands at the bedside of Johnny. Johnny has a cast on one arm and stitches on his chin and generally beat up and scared. JOHNNY'S MOTHER is nearby and pissed.

LONNIE

Do you remember what plates were on the truck?

JOHNNY

No.

LONNIE

Did he have an accent?

JOHNNY

Like from another country?

LONNIE

Or just like Minnesota or down south? Anything weird at all?

JOHNNY

I mean, cowboy boots are weird. He talked normal though, but like he was a cocky, mean fucker. And like he knew Brylee's mom from somewhere, talked like he met her before.

Johnny's mom gets in Lonnie's face.

JOHNNY'S MOTHER

What if that maniac comes back and finishes the job? He could have killed my son.

JOHNNY

I'm fine, Ma. He has Bry. We gotta find her.

She rolls her eyes.

JOHNNY'S MOTHER

Poor girl got herself messed up in something. That mom though -- I never liked the mom.

Lonnie tries to get the conversation back on track.

JOHNNY'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Did you say he knew Keya?

JOHNNY

I heard him talking with Bry at first when he came. He was saying he was at the casino, like at her table. But I don't know why he wanted to take Brylee. I love her.

Johnny rubs his eyes to prevent himself from crying. His mother crosses her arms, fusses with him and walks toward the door.

JOHNNY'S MOTHER

I need to get a candy bar. You want anything, honey?

He shakes his head. She leaves. Johnny sits up.

JOHNNY

He fucked her up real good, Lonnie. I don't know what he's going to do with her, kill her? Rape? Fuck, I'm scared. I tried to stop him. He's big like bigger than Chief Mankiller and he's an Indian too, short hair. Keya said she was gonna find him... I just hope you find her first. Why aren't you out there looking?

LONNIE

Where should I look?

Johnny flops back on his pillow and covers his face with his arm.

JOHNNY

I don't know. If Keya knew where to go then you gotta find her.

Lonnie stands.

LONNIE

I wanna see you on the basketball court in the spring.

He walks out into the hallway and dials his phone.

EXT. KEYA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A reservation cop car is parked outside her dark house. Ben gets out of the car and with a flashlight walks around the house, aiming his light into a window.

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The flashlight beam sweeps over the living room revealing broken pictures, overturned furniture and blood stains.

EXT. KEYA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ben puts his hand to his holster and moves to the front door. He knocks several times.

BEN
Police!

He pounds again then tries the door. It's unlocked, he opens the door a couple inches and listens. Silence.

BEN (CONT'D)
Police! Is anyone hurt?

He unholsters his weapon and continues inside with his flashlight.

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

On the floor in front of him is Keya's wallet. He steps over it and continues through the destroyed house.

BEN
Keya? Brylee? Aiden? It's Ben ...
Is anyone here??

He moves down the dark hallway, opening doors to rooms. The end of the hallway is Brylee's room.

INT. KEYA'S HOUSE (BRYLEE'S BEDROOM) - NIGHT

The bottle of whiskey is spilled on the side table. A blood stain covers her pillow.

BEN
Jesus.

Her cellphone is on the floor. He picks it up. It needs a code to unlock it but the screen is a photo of her and Johnny.

His cell phone rings, startling and confusing him. He finds it in his pocket, a call from Officer Bresette.

BEN (CONT'D)
(into phone)
What's he saying?

He picks up photos of the family while listening to Lonnie on the other end.

BEN (CONT'D)
Hey, can you ask him one last thing
before you leave? Did Brylee ever
talk about her dad?

INT. STRANGER'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Brylee is buckled into the passenger side, unconscious and leaned up against the window. Country music plays on the radio.

She starts to come around, first sitting up then looking around. She's severely beaten. Her sleeve is rolled up and her arm is bruised from an injection.

BRYLEE
Where the fuck --

Pain then panic registers on her face.

BRYLEE (CONT'D)
Where are you taking me?

She tries looking out the window into the darkness.

BRYLEE (CONT'D)
Stop the car. Stop it or I'm
jumping out!

He chuckles and glances at the speedometer.

STRANGER
At eighty you'll be spread out
about five hundred feet along the
highway.

She lunges for the wheel, he's quick to pop her in the face. She recoils in pain.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Don't be stupid.

Brylee looks down at her arm.

BRYLEE

What did you do to me? Who are you?
Are you going to kill me?

He smiles, it's more chilling than charming this time.

STRANGER

Nope, that's not my job.

BRYLEE

Where's Johnny? What did you do to
my boyfriend?

STRANGER

Gonna be a while before he's
throwing balls straight again. I
gotta give it to the kid though, he
fought damn hard for you. He must
love you. You must fuck him good.
You look like you fuck good. It'll
be a while before he forgets about
you... finds himself a new
girlfriend, someone prettier maybe.
A white girl? She might fuck better
even.

Brylee wipes a tear away.

BRYLEE

Shuttup. I want to go home.

STRANGER

You'll get over that.

BRYLEE

I want to see my mom.

STRANGER

Now that I might be able to help
you with. I suspect she's not far
behind us. That mom of yours is a
hellcat.

Brylee stares at him for a moment.

BRYLEE

It was you. You beat her up last
night, didn't you?

He tips his hat, reaches into his pocket and puts a chew in
his lip.

STRANGER

It's not like I enjoy going around
beating on women. I have sisters, a
mom... I don't feel good inside
when it comes to it.

BRYLEE

Bullshit.

STRANGER

We all gotta do what we gotta do,
don't we?

BRYLEE

She got away.

STRANGER

She got away.

BRYLEE

And she's gonna come find me.

STRANGER

That's what I'm counting on,
darlin'

BRYLEE

You know what? She's gonna be
pissed. Not just like normal mad, I
mean like she's really gonna be
pissed. I'm glad I'm not you.

His smile falters a little.

INT. ELDER CENTER - NIGHT

Ben and Lonnie sit at the bedside of Doe. She's in her
pajamas. They're extremely respectful of the old woman and
speak gently.

BEN

So anything you can tell us that
might let us know where Keya went.

Doe sits up and takes her time. Lonnie and Ben look at each
other and lean forward.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A YOUNG KEYA (14) sits at the end of a bed on a floral
comforter watching cartoons on a cheap television.

She chews her nails. She wears shorts and a T-shirt, little makeup. A typical teenage girl in every way.

DOE (V.O.)

Keya's Mama died when she was ten. She never knew her dad. Wasn't worth knowing anyhow. She was what we called a 'free spirit' kind of child. Stubborn, taking risks, I'm sure you know the type. She was resourceful. Keya would find a way - she always found a way. As a teenager she would runaway a lot for various reasons. Sometimes she would find good people she could trust, but not often. Mostly bad ones. She did find alcohol though and she trusted that. Trusted it when it introduced her to drugs. Trusted those too.

The motel door opens and two MEN walk inside. One is an older WHITE man (50's), nervous in a business suit. The second one is younger with a limp, ALEX (30's). He walks to Young Keya and throws her a tiny baggie with a white rock.

Keya sits up, smiles and takes the baggie and shoves it in a back pocket. She leads the older white man to the bed and sits him down. He gives her a wad of cash, she turns and gives it to the younger man.

Alex takes the money then takes Young Keya's chin and raises it for a tender kiss. He then walks out the door, leaving Young Keya alone with the older man.

DOE (V.O.)

I don't know where she met Alex, all I know is that he filled a hole in her life that nobody else could. He gave her drugs, money, food, new clothes and what I supposed she thought was love. A man's love, a parent's love, a friend. She didn't go back home for a long time after she met Alex.

Young Keya bends over the older man and unzips his pants. He grabs at her chest, pulling her shirt aside. He's rough and abusive. He yanks down her shorts revealing a bright, fresh horsehead tattoo on one side of her butt.

She picks up the remote and turns the volume up on the TV then turns her head and watches the cartoons while the man kisses her neck.

EXT. CLINIC PARKING LOT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Keya sits in the passenger seat with a fresh black eye. Alex sits in the driver's seat. People outside the clinic protest with anti-abortion signs.

Alex counts out three hundred dollar bills and hands them to her. He's not happy about it. Young Keya looks terrified. He pushes her out of the car. She walks slowly toward the door and the protestors screaming at her.

Another GIRL from the back seat opens the door and takes the now vacant front seat Keya was sitting in. She waves to Keya.

DOE (V.O.)

I don't think she really knew about the other girls. There were dozens like her, replaceable he told her. She thought she was the only one; special. She learned pretty soon that special don't mean shit.

Young Keya closes her eyes and walks through the crowd. Women and Men get in her face and yell at her, push her and stand in her way.

A NURSE/DOE (50's) rushes outside and takes Young Keya under and arm and walks her quickly into the doors.

INT. CLINIC - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Keya opens her eyes, still being embraced by the nurse. She buries her face in her arms and holds onto her.

INT. DOE'S CAR - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Keya, still holding her three hundred dollars, lays down in the back seat of a car watching the sky through the window.

Doe drives out of the parking lot and past Alex's car, still waiting for Young Keya.

DOE (V.O.)

I brought her back here, to her home. I was all she had. When Brylee was born we were a family. She still had a lot to learn, she was young herself. She got pregnant again, had Aiden but always we were a family. She had someone to love and protect from that day on.

(MORE)

DOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
She made a new life. She's not a
good judge of people sometimes, but
she is a good mother and I'll tell
you what, if she thinks someone is
going to hurt her baby, she will
kill them.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Young Keya sits in a bed holding a wrapped newborn. Doe sits
in a chair next to her crocheting a pink blanket.

END FLASHBACK

INT. ELDER CENTER - NIGHT

Ben and Lonnie are somber. Lonnie gets up and looks at a
photo on the wall of Doe, Young Keya and a baby. Ben takes
Doe's hand.

BEN
Where did she go?

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Ben and Lonnie are parked along the side of an empty road at
the edge of the reservation line.

Agents Marlow and Farris are in another, unmarked car parked
facing the opposite way. Both windows are rolled down. Ben
and Marlow in the driver's seats.

AGENT MARLOW
Do you think she has weapons?

BEN
I hope so. She knows what she's
going into and what she's up
against and she's gonna do what she
has to do to get Brylee back.

Agent Farris leans over.

AGENT FARRIS
It's about fucking time someone
did.

AGENT MARLOW
We'll get them both back.

BEN
Bring them all back ... no more
horsehead girls.

The cars move off in opposite directions.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - NIGHT

Keya crosses the border of South Dakota. She pulls the car over and pulls the weapon from her purse. She loads the gun then puts it back on the seat next to her.

A moment later a car pulls up behind her and parks, then flashes red and blue lights.

KEYA
Fuck!

Her car is illuminated with a spotlight. She sees an officer get out of the driver's side. Without looking down she quickly swipes the gun off the seat. It THUDS on the floor in the darkness. She puts both hands on her steering wheel and doesn't move a muscle.

A flashlight hits her face from the side. She rolls down the window. A MALE OFFICER (60s) stares at her for a moment.

KEYA (CONT'D)
I just pulled over to make a call --

MALE OFFICER
Out of state plates with expired
tabs and three unpaid moving
violations.

KEYA
Shit, Shelly.

MALE OFFICER
Can I see a driver's license and
registration?

KEYA
It's not my car. She's insured
though.

MALE OFFICER
I'm delighted.

KEYA

I - My wallet was stolen last night.

MALE OFFICER

Have you reported it to your local authorities?

KEYA

Not yet. I haven't had time to --

His flashlight stops on a single bullet on the passenger car seat. Keya looks over at it then back at the officer.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Is that bad?

MALE OFFICER

Ma'am do you have any weapons in the car?

His flashlight sweeps the back seat.

KEYA

No.

MALE OFFICER

Have you been drinking this evening?

KEYA

No.

He puts the light back on her face.

MALE OFFICER

What's your name?

She stares at him, unable to speak.

MALE OFFICER (CONT'D)

Ma'am?

KEYA

My daughter, Brylee. I have to find her.

MALE OFFICER

What happened to your daughter?

His face remains unemotional.

KEYA

He took her.

MALE OFFICER

Who?

He notices the dreamcatcher dangling from Shelly's rearview mirror then looks back at Keya.

MALE OFFICER (CONT'D)

Why don't you go home now?

KEYA

What?

MALE OFFICER

I think you should turn around,
Keya.

Hey eye twitches at her name.

KEYA

How much does that fucker pay you?
You help them, you hide them.
You're part of this sickness.
Where's Brylee? Where's my goddamn -
-

The officer steps back from her car door and moves a hand to his holster.

MALE OFFICER

Get out of the car.

A semi truck speeds by HONKING, barely missing him. He doesn't flinch.

Keya slowly opens the door and gets out, her hands held up. She slams the door. They stare at each other.

KEYA

Now what?

He gestures toward his vehicle.

MALE OFFICER

We're gonna take a ride.

KEYA

No we're not.

He smiles, amused.

MALE OFFICER

I'm holding a weapon aimed at your
head.

KEYA

Did he tell you to shoot me? I'm pretty sure he wants me alive.

MALE OFFICER

I'm pretty sure you won't find your daughter dead.

A speeding, swerving car without headlights comes down the highway. Keya turns, takes a foot and kicks the officer into the path of the car. It slams into him, tossing his body into the air, the gun goes off before flying into the darkness. Keya gasps.

The car then careens out of control, flipping and landing upside down in a ditch.

A beer can falls from the sky landing with a crunch, spraying beer in the middle of the empty road.

KEYA

Oh shit. Oh fuck. Oh my god.

She jumps into her car, it in drive and guns it around the wreckage down the highway.

The sun starts rising.

EXT. MOTEL (ESTABLISHING) - DAWN

A tiny strip of a seedy motel in the middle of nowhere. The stranger's truck is parked in the lot along with two other cars. The sun rises on the flat Dakota horizon.

Bobbing oil pumps dot the surround landscape.

INT. MOTEL ROOM A - DAWN

A FAT DUDE (40's) in boxer shorts stands on the other side of a closed bathroom door. He pounds on it with a fist.

FAT DUDE

Get out here now, bitch!

A girl sobs on the other side of the door.

FAT DUDE (CONT'D)

I didn't pay for a whining Pocahontas whore.

He pounds again, the sobbing continues.

INT. MOTEL ROOM B - SAME

In the room next door, the pounding and yelling on the other side of the wall grows louder and more violent.

The Stranger sits on the edge of the bed smoking and listens carefully to the argument.

The Stranger whispers under his breath.

STRANGER

Goddammit, girl don't make me come
in there.

He gets up and pounds on the shared wall.

He turns around to look at Brylee, curled up on a pillow sleeping.

INT. MOTEL ROOM A - DAY

The pounding on the wall then the bathroom door opens. A young NATIVE GIRL (14) peeks out. Her face is puffy and red from crying. She steps out, her chest hitching from crying.

NATIVE GIRL

I want to go home.

FAT DUDE

That's better. Now get over here.

She walks slowly to the bed.

INT. FBI CAR - DAY

Marlow drives while Farris sleeps against the window. The sun is up but still low in the sky.

They cross the South Dakota line and see flashing lights ahead.

AGENT MARLOW

Shine time.

Agent Farris rouses and sits up, squinting at the light.

AGENT FARRIS

What's up?

AGENT MARLOW

Looks like an accident.

AGENT FARRIS

Is it her?

AGENT MARLOW

Can't tell yet. Lots of vehicles on the scene.

The car slows behind a line being patrolled through the scene. Two ambulances are parked along with state trooper cars. Law enforcement everywhere.

They pass the empty cop car that pulled over Keya, light still on. They pass the wreckage of the car flipped over. A body on the road ahead is covered and being moved.

As Marlow approaches the OFFICER in the street directing traffic he rolls down the window.

AGENT MARLOW (CONT'D)

What happened?

OFFICER

Move along, please.

Marlow flashes his FBI badge. Farris passes over a photo of Keya. The Officer takes it and looks at it.

AGENT MARLOW

Have you seen her?

The Officer shakes his head.

OFFICER

We have a DUI accident, three dead on the scene, two thrown from the car and one of our state guys they hit, no witnesses. Fucking drunks. It appears he pulled someone over and was struck by the vehicle on its top over there.

AGENT MARLOW

Who was pulled over?

OFFICER

That's the funny part. He didn't call in a stop or key in the license plates. But there's no other reason for him to be in the road and we have tire tracks. Someone got out of here fast. Why you looking for her?

He hands the photo back. Agent Marlow looks at the scene carefully before answering.

AGENT MARLOW
Drug investigation crossing state
lines.

He nods and signals them to move forward.

OFFICER
Good luck.

AGENT MARLOW
You too.

Agent Marlow moves through the scene watching faces watch him. Once they clear, Farris talks.

AGENT FARRIS
You think she was pulled over?

AGENT MARLOW
Right over the state line, like he
was waiting for her.

AGENT FARRIS
Who knew she was coming here
besides us and the rez guys?

AGENT FARRIS (CONT'D)
Whoever took her daughter knew she
was coming.

AGENT MARLOW
Maybe that was the plan.

AGENT FARRIS
Lucky break having a car full of
drunk assholes save you.

AGENT MARLOW
She's gonna need a lot more luck
before the day is done.

AGENT FARRIS
Where do we start?

She opens a large spiral bound map of South Dakota.

AGENT MARLOW
Local motels then head into the
fields and hope we run into some
luck of our own.

AGENT FARRIS

Before we do this, who's side are we on? We don't even know her story. What happened two nights ago?

AGENT MARLOW

She murdered a man?

AGENT FARRIS

In self defense.

AGENT MARLOW

We don't know. Maybe she killed the girl too.

AGENT FARRIS

You don't believe that.

AGENT MARLOW

People surprise me every day.

AGENT FARRIS

Her daughter was just kidnapped. She's in survival mode. She's a mama bear.

AGENT MARLOW

She's dangerous.

AGENT FARRIS

Good.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Keya checks her rearview mirror. She's alone on the road, the flat landscape is desert-like in all directions.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Keya and Sarah hide behind a tree as the Stranger gets closer.

KEYA

I'm not going to let him take you back.

Sarah nods, shaking.

The Stranger stands along the row of trees, yelling into the darkness.

STRANGER

I'm a reasonable man. I'm going to give you exactly ten seconds to think about this for a moment then make a decision. You get out from whatever bush or rock or tree you're hiding from and I'm gonna show some mercy. You come with me and we'll head back home tonight. You don't have any money, no food, no clothes ... Shit, I bet you don't even have shoes on right now. You're gonna get sick pretty soon too. Withdrawal is a bitch, you throw up, you hurt all over, you'll want to die. I'll take care of you.

Keya turns to Sarah, she's listening intently.

KEYA

(whispering)

Don't listen to him. Sarah, look at me.

Sarah turns her head slowly, tears run down her face. She's not well.

STRANGER

Come on out and don't make me come looking for you. Cause if you do, there's gonna be trouble. I might have to go back and find your little sister. How old is she, twelve? I bet she wouldn't last long out there in the fields with big dirty men laying on her. I really won't have a choice. What if your mama lost both her baby girls?

Sarah starts shaking her head violently. Keya holds onto her arm.

KEYA

(whispering)

He's not gonna do that. He won't, he's trying to scare you.

STRANGER

You wanna save your little sister, don't you? You can do that right now. Come on out and she'll be safe. I promise.

Sarah stands up and before Keya can grab her she runs out into the clearing.

SARAH
Don't fucking touch her!

Sarah stops several feet from the Stranger. He smiles.

KEYA
Sarah, no!

The Stranger's face drops.

STRANGER
You told her your name?

SARAH
I didn't -

STRANGER
She knows your fucking name?

Sarah shakes her head and turns to run. He lunges for her. She goes down with a thud on her face. He jumps on her and flips her over onto her back and sits on her chest and wraps his hands around her neck.

Keya runs out from the trees.

KEYA
Leave her alone! Get off of her!

Keya jumps on his back, trying to get him off of her.

STRANGER
I'll kill you both.

Sarah struggles under both their weight, thrashing and gasping.

KEYA
She can't breath. You're crushing her.

He reaches over his shoulder and pulls Keya off of him, she rolls to the ground then stands up to jump back on.

Keya takes several steps toward them.

KEYA (CONT'D)
Please! Get off her.

STRANGER
Off of who?

Sarah looks over at Keya, fear and panic in her eyes as the breath is pressed out of her lungs.

The Stranger screams at Keya.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Off of who?

Keya wipes the tears streaming down her face. When she speaks it's barely a whisper.

KEYA
Sarah.

With that, the girl takes her last gasp of air.

KEYA (CONT'D)
No!

Keya turns and runs into the darkness.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Keya shakes off the memory. She passes a motel and notices a black truck in the parking lot. Keya cranks the wheel and pulls over to make a U-turn.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Keya parks in the middle of the lot and rushes toward the door in front of the black truck.

She turns the knob and pushes, the door opens but then stopped by a chain. She slams the door with her hand, screaming.

KEYA
Brylee! Brylee! Open the fucking door! Brylee are you okay?

She backs up and kicks at it.

KEYA (CONT'D)
Open the door or I'm shooting!

A moment later the door slams shut, the chain is removed and the door opens. An ELDERLY man and his ELDERLY WIFE stand in the threshold, hands up, scared out of their minds.

ELDERLY WIFE
Don't shoot! Don't shoot us!

Keya stands back, letting the adrenaline leave her body.

KEYA
Oh god, I'm so sorry!

ELDERLY MAN
Take what you want, take it and
leave.

KEYA
No, no, no - I made a mistake. Is
this your truck?

They both nod.

ELDERLY MAN
Our son bought it for us last year.

ELDERLY WIFE
It's more than we really need.

ELDERLY MAN
You want the truck?

KEYA
No. Please, forgive me. I thought
you were someone else.

The elderly man starts closing the door as Keya turns away.

ELDERLY WOMAN
Crazy bitch.

Keya gets in her car and pulls out of the parking lot. The man in the boxer shorts open his motel door and watches her leave.

INT. STRANGER'S TRUCK - DAY

Brylee and the young Native Girl sit in the truck as it travels down the highway. Brylee cradles the younger girl in her arms.

BRYLEE
What's your name?

STRANGER
No names.

BRYLEE
It's okay, shhhh, it's okay.

She looks out the window, the horse heads bob in the distance. The truck turns down a dirt road toward them.

BRYLEE (CONT'D)
I don't feel good.

STRANGER
Withdrawal.

BRYLEE
I'm gonna be sick.

The stranger looks over at her, Brylee is waxy and pale. He stops the truck.

STRANGER
Hurry up.

Brylee opens the door, she takes the girl's hand and pulls her. The Stranger holds onto the girl.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Just you. If you take off she can
watch me run you down.

Brylee nods.

EXT. STRANGER'S TRUCK - DAY

She climbs down from the cab and turns in all directions. Nothing but pumping oil drills on flat lands then mountains further out. Between them several dots of metal reflect the sunlight, too far to make out.

Brylee takes a couple steps then is overcome with nausea. She leans over and vomits into the prairie grass.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - DAY

Agent Farris slides the photo of Keya to the CLERK behind the desk. She stares at it through thick glasses then shakes her head.

She walks out and gets into the FBI car parked in the lot.

INT. FBI CAR - DAY

Agent Marlow sits behind the wheel with the map in his lap.
Agent Farris gets in.

AGENT FARRIS

Nothing.

AGENT MARLOW

How many more we gonna check?

AGENT FARRIS

Depends on where we're going. Where
is their base? Where are they
keeping the girls.

AGENT MARLOW

There's three main fields within
five hundred miles from us and
hundreds of miles between them
where they could hide ... All
private land and all butting up
against this national park, so no
roads in from this way.

Agent Marlow points to a large green square on the map.

AGENT FARRIS

So we have one shot before they
know we're there and kick us off.

AGENT MARLOW

Unless we have a warrant. And you
know shit gets ugly when federal
agents go rogue.

AGENT FARRIS

Can we get one for all three?

AGENT MARLOW

In the next hour?

She looks out the window and contemplates.

AGENT FARRIS

Can we go a little rogue?

AGENT MARLOW

I hate that look on your face.

AGENT FARRIS

Let's head for the eye of the
hurricane.

AGENT MARLOW
Middle of all three?

She shrugs.

AGENT FARRIS
Seems like a solid business plan.
You have a better idea?

He puts the car in drive.

AGENT MARLOW
I'll let you know.

They pull out of the motel lot.

INT. SHELLY'S CAR - DAY

Keya turns down the same dirt road. In the distance the metal objects get closer. She smiles and pushes the gas. The car jerks several times.

She looks down at the temperature gauge. The red needle flies to overheat. A moment later the hood of the car steams.

KEYA
No! No no no no, fuck!

The car stops. Keya gets out.

EXT. SOUTH DAKOTA PLAINS - DAY

Keya walks around the disabled car, kicking it in frustration.

She looks off into the distance. She opens the car door, pulls the gun off the floor and starts walking.

INT. STRANGER'S TRUCK - DAY

Brylee watches through the windshield as a shallow valley is revealed and in the center is a modern day wagon circle, but instead of wagons, it's Winnebagos and RVs.

A dozen luxury campers on wheels in a horseshoe configuration surround an encampment of cars, three wheelers, fire pits and tents. A man on top of an RV serves as LOOKOUT with binoculars, although he's currently napping on a lounge chair under an umbrella.

The entire operation can be shut down and dispersed within ten minutes.

BRYLEE

Holy shit.

The Stranger parks the truck.

STRANGER

Let's go.

He gets out and lets out a shrill whistle between his teeth, rousing the sleeping lookout, who jumps to attention and brings his binoculars to his face.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

We're gonna have company soon. Let me know when she comes.

LOOKOUT

Two legs or four thousand?

STRANGER

What?

LOOKOUT

The buffalo's are roaming.

The Stranger and Brylee turn to look along the horizon. A cloud of brown fur, horns and dust is moving fast across the plane, cutting off access to the road.

The Stranger chuckles to himself. He raises two fingers as "horns" on his head, hunches over and mocks a certain movie.

STRANGER

Tatanka, bitch!

Brylee stares in horror.

EXT. SOUTH DAKOTA PLAINS - DAY

Keya hears them before she sees them. Loud thundering hoofs running on hard dirt punctuated by snorts and grunts. The mile-wide dark cloud precedes them, there's nowhere to run.

Keya is stuck in the middle of an oncoming stampede of hundreds of thousands of pounds of bison running right at her.

She turns toward them, raises her gun and shoots into the air. The stampede flows around her like an invisible shield. She stands her ground and watches in awe.

INT. FBI CAR - DAY

The car is stopped next to Shelly's car. The doors are opened. The herd crosses a quarter mile in front of them, blocking their path.

Agent Marlow and Farris are helpless and can only wait it out. She holds one of Keya's bullets in her hand.

AGENT FARRIS

I'm glad I'm not out there.

AGENT MARLOW

You think she's on the other side?

AGENT FARRIS

I don't know which is worse.

AGENT MARLOW

At least we're on the right path.

AGENT FARRIS

Lucky us.

The herd seems endless. Agent Marlow lays on the horn in frustration. The sound is lost in the hoof thunder.

EXT. RV CARAVAN - DAY

The Stranger stands in the center next to a fire holding the end of the brand. He pulls the red end out and heads toward one of the RVs.

INT. RV - DAY

The Stranger steps inside. Three girls hold down another girl on her stomach. A blanket covers her head and body, muffling her screams. Her panties are pulled aside.

The Stranger walks over to the girl and presses the hot brand into her skin. It sizzles and smokes. The girl under the blanket SCREAMS. The other girls struggle to keep her down, conflicted and scared.

Two gunshots outside and through a window the Lookout tumbles to the ground. A moment later the door busts open. Keya stands in the small space, dust covered, sweaty and pissed. The gun in her hand still smokes.

KEYA

Brylee!

She scans the faces of the girls, none of them are Brylee.

The Stranger turns around, still wielding the red brand. He stands between Keya and the girl under the blanket. He smiles at her.

STRANGER

Did you miss me?

Keya aims her gun, the girls scream and pile into a corner covering their heads. He grabs one and puts her between Keya and himself as a shield.

She lowers the gun. She spots the brown legs from under the blanket, a bright red burned brand on the girl's buttock peeks out from underneath.

KEYA

Where's my daughter? Brylee! Is she under there, oh my god, Brylee! You fucking asshole, what did you do to her!?

The girl under the covers sits up revealing her face. It's not Brylee. Keya lets out a sigh of relief that turns to anger.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Where is she?

STRANGER

I'd like my gun back, please.

The girls watch intensely. The Stranger holds the girl in one hand, the brand in the other, the hot end close to her face.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Now!

Keya hands over the gun.

KEYA

Where's Brylee?

STRANGER

She's having a family reunion, or maybe just a first meet. Ladies, let's get miss Keya here out of the way.

The half-dozen girls move toward her. Keya steps back.

KEYA

Wait! You don't have to do what he says. You don't have to be here, none of you. You own your bodies, nobody else does no matter what he says or does to you. I have the mark too, I'm one of you - or I was. But I have a home now and a family and a job, I have a life and no man tells me what to do or who to fuck. Nobody controls you.

The Stranger laughs.

STRANGER

They know the truth.

KEYA

He killed Sarah.

The girls falter and look from Keya to the Stranger for confirmation.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Her name was Sarah and she was trying to go home and he murdered her.

She points to an older female.

KEYA (CONT'D)

What's your name?

STRANGER

No names!

KEYA

I'm Keya and my daughter is Brylee and she's here somewhere and I'm going to take her home. I want to take you all home, back to your families. Your moms and grandmothers and sisters, we love you and want you back home where you belong.

Some of the younger girls begin to sob. A LITTLE ONE steps out from behind an older one.

LITTLE ONE

I'm Jasmine. Like the princess.

STRANGER

Shut up!

Keya smiles at her. One by one the girls state their names.

GIRL ONE

Melissa.

GIRL TWO

Stephanie.

GIRL THREE

Abbey.

GIRL FOUR

Vanessa.

And the last one is the one being held by the Stranger.

GIRL FIVE

Lyla.

Keya smiles and makes a slight nod. The OLDEST ONE looks over at the Stranger.

OLDEST ONE

You killed Sarah?

She lunges for him and immediately the other girls follow. He is disarmed and releases the girl. The brand drops to the floor. He gets off a shot before his arm is held down. A girl yelps but the wound is superficial.

The girls pound, slap, and kick him to the ground. Keya picks up the brand.

He struggles as he's pinned.

STRANGER

No, please!

Keya lays the end of the brand into his cheek, sinking it as it burns and sizzles. He screams and passes out.

OLDEST ONE

Brylee's with him, in the first one.

KEYA

I need you girls to leave. Get out of here, go hide somewhere safe until I come back.

OLDEST ONE

What are you gonna do?

She looks down at the passed out Stranger.

KEYA

Go.

The girls shuffle out, some looking back. The brand starts smoking on the rug.

Keya picks up the gun, stands over the Stranger as he comes to. She leans down.

KEYA (CONT'D)

For Sarah.

She pulls the trigger.

EXT. RV CARAVAN - DAY

Keya runs from the RV to the first one, it's the biggest, most expensive one in the lot.

KEYA

Brylee! Brylee!

She opens the door and goes inside.

INT. BIG RV - DAY

It's dark, all the windows are covered. There's cartoons playing in the back bedroom. The door is closed.

KEYA

Brylee?

BRYLEE (O.S.)

Mommy!

Keya races for the closed door. She throws it open.

INT. BIG RV (BEDROOM) - DAY

Brylee sits on the bed cross-legged and stiff, her eyes are puffy and glazed over. Upon seeing her mother a new set of tears erupts. Brylee tries to push them away. She is terrified to move.

BRYLEE

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

Next to her is Alex, older now but unmistakable, casually eating from a bag of chips and laughing at the television.

Keya stops in her tracks, gun held up.

KEYA

What the fuck is going on? Brylee
are you okay?

She nods, her eyes locked on Keya's.

Alex stands. Brylee tries to stand, he pushes her back down
then throws the chips at her.

ALEX

Finally my little family is
complete.

KEYA

What?

BRYLEE

He says he's my dad.

KEYA

He's not your fucking father.

ALEX

Whoa, whoa now hellcat. Brylee and
I have been having a little talk.
Haven't we, pumpkin? We did the
math and I mean, look at her. We're
practically twins. I'm pretty
pissed about the whole abortion
thing.

He turns back to Brylee. She looks from him back to Keya.

ALEX

What? Didn't your mom tell you, she
wanted to flush you down the
toilet. Get rid of you. Wipe you
from existence? I mean, it's a
woman's body, right? What could I
say?

BRYLEE

Is that true?

KEYA

Brylee get off the bed.

BRYLEE

Did you try to abort me?

ALEX

I begged her not to. I wanted to
keep you.

Brylee sobs.

KEYA

Get off the fucking bed and come here now! Don't listen to him.

Her gun never wavers. Brylee gets up, now scared.

ALEX

What are you going to do? Have your daughter watch her mother shoot her father? Nice parenting, Keya.

KEYA

You're not her goddamn father, shut up! You're a monster!

Keya can't stop the tears now streaming down her face.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Brylee go outside.

BRYLEE

I don't think I can -

Brylee sways on her feet, her knees buckle.

KEYA

Did you drug her?

Alex laughs.

ALEX

Nothing she hasn't seen before I'm sure living with you, Keya. You were quite the dragon chaser as I recall. Look at her. Look at our beautiful little girl ... All grown up!

BRYLEE

I want to go home.

KEYA

We're gonna go home, baby. I'm going to take you.

ALEX

No you're not. You're a scared little girl like you always were. You don't have the goddamn guts.

BRYLEE

Mom, he has a gun.

KEYA

He always does, baby.

Keya's gaze is steady. She never takes her eyes from Alex, the hatred builds.

KEYA (CONT'D)

Brylee leave.

BRYLEE

What are you going to do?

KEYA

Get out of here.

Brylee pulls on Keya's arm.

BRYLEE

No, I'm not leaving you! Let's go home, I want to go.

KEYA

Tell her. You're not going to let her go, are you? Or the rest of them, you're going to pimp them out and have them sold and drugged daily. She doesn't understand the evil motherfucker you really are and why I had to get away. She wasn't there when you beat me, broke my bones, busted my teeth. When you raped me and forced me to the clinic. When other men paid you to rape me. She wasn't there. But like you said, she's all grown up now, safe with me. So maybe she is big enough to see this. What I should have done seventeen years ago. You will never hurt another child ever again. No more fucking horsehead girls.

Alex moves swiftly to his back waistband as Brylee covers her head. Keya doesn't miss a beat and squeezes the trigger before he can fully extend his weapon.

She shoots him in the head. He drops the gun and falls back on the bed, dead. Brylee gasps and buries her face in Keya's shoulder. They cry together.

EXT. RV CARAVAN - DAY

Keya and Brylee step out of the Big RV, the air around the caravan fills with black smoke. Most of the other campers are on fire. Girls gather in the middle, some crying, some cheering some just dazed.

INT. FBI CAR - DAY

As the agents approach the encampment, black smoke rises into the sky. Agent Marlow steps on the brakes. In the distance Keya walks toward them leading the girls away from the smoldering caravan.

Agent Farris smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Keya pulls up in her own car outside a small yellow house on a city block. She gets out and walks up to the front door and knocks.

The door opens. A Native MIDDLE AGED WOMAN stands at the threshold.

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN
Yes? Can I help you?

KEYA
My name is Keya. Are you Sarah's
mom?

FADE OUT.

American Indian women suffer sexual violence and human trafficking at the highest rate, per capita, in the country. It's time to fight back.