

UNTITLED MARC CHERRY

"Pilot"

Written by

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## UNTITLED MARC CHERRY

### TEASER

#### EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

We OPEN in SLO-MO on a HAND WAVING.

REVEAL a BEAUTY QUEEN seated in the back of a convertible. She smiles to display a mouth filled with braces.

ANGLE on SWEATY TEENS blowing into brass instruments as they attempt, but don't succeed, to march in time.

ANGLE on MIDDLE-AGED VETS atop a float. Dressed in military uniforms that are much too tight, the VETS salute OLD GLORY which hangs from a pole beside them.

THIS IS A **4TH OF JULY PARADE** IN SMALL TOWN AMERICA. IT'S FAMILIAR, HILARIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL ALL AT THE SAME TIME.

The CROWD watches from the sidewalk - RETIREES in lawn chairs. MEN drinking beer. HOUSEWIVES eating cotton candy.

ANGLE on the back of a WOMAN moving through the crowd. She wears a LAW ENFORCEMENT UNIFORM. She stops and turns.

REVEAL RUBY ADAIR, 55. TOUGH and SEXY, she's the SHERIFF of this town. She nods to passersby who greet her warmly.

Ruby sees a COWBOY, 35, smoking a cigarette while holding a BABY. She taps him on the shoulder. She gives him a pointed look. Chastened, he puts the cigarette out. Ruby walks away.

Over Ruby's shoulder we SEE a BATON TWIRLER, 17, dancing in the parade. The girl tosses her baton high in the air.

We FOLLOW the baton upwards. As it FALLS out of frame, we RACK FOCUS to REVEAL a hill in the distance.

We PUSH IN to SEE a BLUE CHEVY racing down the hill.

END SLO-MO

#### EXT/INT. DIRT ROAD/CAR - DAY

We're in REAL TIME as we CUT to the CHEVY. It squeals around a turn and knocks over a sign.

REVEAL the sign as the CHEVY drives over it. It reads, 'WELCOME TO OXBLOOD. BEST SMALL TOWN IN KENTUCKY.'

EXT. MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

We're BACK to SLO-MO. A DEPUTY, 25, stands in front of traffic cones at the entrance to MAIN STREET. He calmly directs traffic away from the parade route.

As he looks back proudly at the parade, we RACK FOCUS past him to SEE the CHEVY getting closer.

END SLO-MO

EXT/INT. DIRT ROAD/BLUE CHEVY - DAY

In REAL TIME the CHEVY veers back and forth and it speeds down the hill.

INSIDE the car we SEE a BOOT jamming down the accelerator. The speedometer reads '80 mph'.

EXT. MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

In SLO-MO the DEPUTY looks up to see the CHEVY coming towards him. He gestures for the CHEVY to turn. The CHEVY keeps speeding towards him. The DEPUTY reacts, confused.

INT. BLUE CHEVY - CONTINUOUS

In REAL TIME we see DROPS of BLOOD drip onto the dirty white T-SHIRT the UNSEEN DRIVER is wearing.

EXT. MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

We STAY in REAL TIME as the DEPUTY realizes the CHEVY isn't slowing down. He waves for the car to stop. It doesn't. He jumps out of the way as the car drives onto MAIN STREET.

The CHEVY sideswipes the convertible carrying the beauty queen. The convertible jerks to the side, causing the beauty queen to tumble onto the ground.

PEOPLE in the crowd begin to scream and point. RUBY pushes her way through the CROWD to see what's happening.

TEENS in the MARCHING BAND turn to see the CHEVY approaching. They drop their instruments and SCATTER as it bears down on them. Some TEENS are hit and go flying.

CLOSE on the BATON TWIRLER who's frozen in terror. Ruby runs onto the street and knocks the girl out of the way of the oncoming CHEVY.

CLOSE on the BATON as it falls to the ground. The tires of the CHEVY run over it.

The CHEVY continues its path of destruction. MEN hop on the hood trying to stop it. We SEE them fall away.

The CHEVY finally crashes into the BACK of the VETS military float, knocking all the VETS down. The pole holding the AMERICAN FLAG starts to TEETER.

ANGLE on Ruby as she runs toward the CHEVY. CLOSE ON her hand as she removes the gun from her holster.

Ruby rushes up to the car with her gun drawn and points her gun at the driver's side window.

RUBY

Get out of there! Now! With your hands up!

ANGLE on the car door. It slowly opens. People start to slowly encircle the car, anxious to see who's inside.

CLOSE on a boot hitting the pavement. A YOUNG WOMAN, 20, of SEEMINGLY MIDDLE-EASTERN ANCESTRY emerges from the car.

As the YOUNG WOMAN slowly raises her hands, we REVEAL one of her hands has been CHOPPED OFF.

Ruby and the crowd react in horror. No one moves. The YOUNG WOMAN looks at Ruby. She tries to speak. But she makes no sound. Ruby's expression turns to confusion.

Then the YOUNG WOMAN falls to the ground. Dead.

ANGLE on the float. The pole holding the AMERICAN FLAG cracks. The FLAG begins to dip towards the ground.

One of the OLD VETERANS sees this. He rushes out of frame.

ANGLE on the FLAG falling. It's about to hit the ground when the VETERAN dives into frame and catches it.

VETERAN

Boy, that was a close one.

We TILT UP to REVEAL Main Street in the b.g. It's littered with BODIES, SOBBING SURVIVORS, DESTRUCTION and CARNAGE.

BEGIN OPENING  
CREDITS

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. MAIN STREET - THE NEXT MORNING

TWO WOMEN sweep up broken glass and debris on the pavement.

THREE CHILDREN stand at a makeshift shrine, made up of flowers, candles and teddy bears.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A CAMERAMAN films a REPORTER, 35, on the lawn of the church. As he reports, townspeople walk to the entrance in the b.g.

We PULL BACK to REVEAL a POLICE CAR parking in the f.g.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ruby, in the driver's seat, turns off the engine. She sits, motionless. Beside her is TJ, a sweet-natured child of 7.

TJ

Grandma? Aren't we going in?

Stirred from her reverie, Ruby turns to TJ.

RUBY

There's gonna be a lot of folks in there. All of 'em angry. They'll want to know how I let it happen. Truth is I don't have an answer for 'em. So I'm just figuring out how to get through this.

TJ thinks for a beat, then:

TJ

Rev. Sykes says in times of trouble, we all need to pray.

Ruby smiles and nods. TJ exits the car. Ruby pulls a FLASK from her pocket. She shuts her eyes and takes a swig. Beat.

RUBY

Amen.

Ruby puts the flask back in her pocket and exits the car.

INT. CHURCH - MINUTES LATER

A crowd of ANGRY TOWNSPEOPLE are seated in the pews. There is much shouting, conversation and confusion.

REVEAL Ruby at the pulpit. Behind her stands MAYOR FRENCH, and various councilmen. Ruby tries to calm the unruly crowd.

RUBY

... Okay! Okay! I know you're all upset, but we're not ready to say this was terrorism.

An IRATE HOUSEWIFE stands up in the front pew.

IRATE HOUSEWIFE

It was a Fourth of July parade!  
That's a symbol of America!

Murmurs of approval from the crowd. Ruby reacts, carefully.

RUBY

I know, Lu. You still gotta give me and my team time to investigate.

A REDNECK FARMER, 40ISH, stands in the second pew.

REDNECK FARMER

Three people are dead. Dozens in the hospital. And that girl who drove the car had mighty dark skin.

RUBY

But she died, Carl. We don't know her name, let alone what she was thinking.

HOLLIS POLLIT, 30, SWEET, ODD, raises his hand. Seated beside him is ALBERTA POLLIT, 80. She's in a wheelchair and wears a DISAGREEABLE expression.

HOLLIS

Sheriff Ruby? My grandma wants to say something.

RUBY

What's on your mind, Alberta?

Hollis uses SIGN LANGUAGE to relay Ruby's question. As she signs her response, SUBTITLES tell us what Alberta is saying.

ALBERTA

(in sign language)

That dead bitch was probably part of a terrorist cell. You need to find her towel-head friends, and then kill 'em.

Everyone looks expectantly at Hollis for the translation. Hollis pauses for a beat, then politely translates:

HOLLIS

The girl might have had accomplices. You should talk to them.

RUBY

We're looking into that. Called a friend of mine, Earl K. Hobs. He's with the FBI terrorism taskforce...

RUBY'S POV - DEKE and RANDA enter. Deke, 55, is ATTRACTIVE, in a WEATHERED SORT of WAY. He walks with a LIMP. Randa, 42, is SEXY and CHEAP. They cross to a pew and sit.

RUBY (CONT'D)

... and he's gonna come down here and help us find out what happened.  
(then)  
Any more questions?...

As people continue to talk, Ruby glances at Deke and Randa.

ANGLE on TJ. He turns around in his pew to see what his grandmother keeps staring at.

TJ'S POV - Deke and Randa sit in a back pew. Deke smiles at the young boy. TJ grins excitedly.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

AERIAL SHOT of a BLACK SPORTS CAR driving along a country road through rolling hills and lush green farmland.

CLOSE on the CAR as it pulls up to a STOP SIGN. REVEAL the driver, an ATTRACTIVE MAN, 27, of **MIDDLE-EASTERN DESCENT**. He wears sunglasses and an Italian suit. He takes a drag off a cigarette, then looks O.S.

REVEAL a COW grazing next to the road. The cow looks at the ATTRACTIVE MAN.

The ATTRACTIVE MAN disdainfully blows his cigarette smoke at the cow, then drives away.

INT. CHURCH - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Ruby says goodbye to a few townspeople. She looks over to see Deke and Randa making their way down the aisle.

DEKE

Hey, Ruby.

RUBY

Deke.

DEKE

We drove up from Mobile last night. My Aunt Patsy was one of the folks who got hurt yesterday.

RUBY

I know. I'm so sorry.

RANDA

Hey, Ruby. Ain't you gonna say 'hi' to me?

Ruby looks at Randa for the first time.

RUBY

No.

Randa reacts. Ruby turns to TJ who lingers six feet away.

RUBY (CONT'D)

TJ? You remember your Grandpa, don't you?

DEKE

That can't be Timothy James. He's not that tall.

TJ

I am now.

DEKE

Then you better get over here.

TJ runs to Deke and hugs him. Deke looks at Ruby.

DEKE (CONT'D)

While we're here, I'd love to spend time with him. If it's okay.

RUBY

Of course.

TJ beams and hugs his grandfather. Ruby checks her watch.



RUBY (CONT'D)

Look, I got a lot of work to do...

DEKE

Sure. If you need to reach me,  
we're staying with Randa's mama.

As Ruby and TJ walk up the aisle, Randa waves at the boy.

RANDA

Looking good, TJ!

TJ turns to Ruby as they cross up the aisle.

TJ

Do I know her?

RUBY

That's Randa. She's the one who  
stole your Grandpa from me.

TJ twists to look back at the woman.

TJ

That's the whore?!

RUBY

Wait til we're out of church, honey.

As Ruby pulls him out of the church, we...

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The black sports car speeds along. It approaches a bridge.

INT. SPORTS CAR - CONTINUOUS

The ATTRACTIVE MAN stubs his cigarette out in the ashtray.  
He then OPENS the glove compartment and takes out the PACK of  
CIGARETTES and a lighter.

As the ATTRACTIVE MAN steers with one hand, he tries to  
REMOVE a single CIGARETTE. A gust of wind suddenly sweeps in  
through the OPEN WINDOW and blows the PACK out the window.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

The BLACK SPORTS CAR screeches to a halt on the bridge. The  
ATTRACTIVE MAN emerges from his car. He begins to wander  
around the bridge looking for his cigarettes.

In the b.g. we SEE a SEDAN driving onto the bridge. As it passes by the ATTRACTIVE MAN, the sedan slows.

INT. SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

An ELDERLY DRIVER peers at the ATTRACTIVE MAN (**OF MIDDLE-EASTERN DESCENT**) as the MAN looks over the bridge railing.

The ELDERLY DRIVER turns to the ELDERLY WOMAN beside him.

ELDERLY DRIVER  
Give me your phone.

EXT. BRIDGE - MINUTES LATER

As the ATTRACTIVE MAN continues to look for his cigarettes, a POLICE CRUISER drives up and parks a few feet away.

DEPUTY JOE PAUL, 42, emerges from the police cruiser. He is MACHO and ARROGANT. He approaches the ATTRACTIVE MAN.

JOE PAUL  
Hey. You. What're you doing?

ATTRACTIVE MAN  
(not looking up)  
Clearly, I'm looking for something.

JOE PAUL  
I'll bet. Show me some I.D.

The ATTRACTIVE MAN stops and looks disdainfully at Joe Paul.

ATTRACTIVE MAN  
You really should say 'please' when dealing with the public.

The ATTRACTIVE MAN continues searching for his cigarettes. Joe Paul reacts, insulted and incensed.

JOE PAUL  
Hey! I.D.! Now!

The ATTRACTIVE MAN is about to say something when he spots his pack of cigarettes being blown by the wind towards the feet of the deputy.

The ATTRACTIVE MAN steps forward to grab his cigarettes. Joe Paul, seeing his approach, reacts nervously.

JOE PAUL (CONT'D)  
Whoa! Whoa!

ATTRACTIVE MAN  
(looking up)  
No, I'm just trying to...

Joe Paul whips out his taser and stuns the ATTRACTIVE MAN who falls to the ground. CLOSE on the cigarettes as the wind blows them away.

EXT/INT. RURAL HOUSE/POLICE CAR - DAY

TJ stands beside a maternal-looking WOMAN, 35, on the porch of a modest home. He is waving. REVEAL Ruby beside her police car, waving back. Ruby gets into her car.

Her radio crackles. She answers it.

RUBY  
(into car radio)  
Hey Joe Paul. What's up?

JOE PAUL (O.C.)  
(over speaker)  
I'm at Cutter's Bridge! Get over here. I just bagged me a terrorist!

Ruby reacts, stunned.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Ruby's police car pulls up to find the bridge abuzz with activity. Three other police cars block off the entrance. A few deputies inspect the BLACK SPORTS CAR. Curious TOWNSPEOPLE stand off to the side.

ANGLE on the ATTRACTIVE MAN. He stands in handcuffs, leaning against the railing.

His POV - Ruby emerges from her car and crosses to Joe Paul. He begins to gesticulate wildly as he tells her his story.

CLOSE on the ATTRACTIVE MAN as his eyes narrow. He is clearly plotting on how to handle this fiasco.

Ruby and Joe Paul cross over to the ATTRACTIVE MAN.

RUBY  
I'm Sheriff Ruby Adair. What's your name, darlin'?

The ATTRACTIVE MAN regards her for a beat. Then:

ATTRACTIVE MAN

That's not the question you should be asking.

RUBY

And what should I be asking?

ATTRACTIVE MAN

How many state and federal laws did Deputy Short Bus break when he tased me without cause?

JOE PAUL

Screw you.

RUBY

Hey.

(to ATTRACTIVE MAN)

What were you doing out here?

ATTRACTIVE MAN

What do you people think I was doing?

JOE PAUL

It looked like you were trying to find a place to put some explosives.

ATTRACTIVE MAN

(bitterly amused)

You think I'm a terrorist?

JOE PAUL

I see what I see.

ATTRACTIVE MAN

Yes, I am a Muslim. In an Armani suit. With a Prada belt. And a Ferragamo tie.

JOE PAUL

So what?

ATTRACTIVE MAN

Islamic Fundamentalism is an Ideological movement that seeks to destroy every vestige of Western Culture. That means, by definition, a terrorist bent on Jihad, would never have this much sense of style!

The ATTRACTIVE MAN and Joe Paul are nose to nose. Ruby tries to calm the tense situation.

RUBY

Yes, you look very nice. But I'm still gonna need your name.

ATTRACTIVE MAN

I have a wallet in my jacket.

Ruby looks at Joe Paul.

RUBY

You didn't pat him down?

Joe Paul's face turns red. Ruby glares at him, then reaches in the ATTRACTIVE MAN'S jacket. She pulls out a wallet and opens it. CLOSE on the wallet. An FBI BADGE is displayed.

RUBY (CONT'D)

You're with the FBI?

TAG

Special Agent Tag Fayad. I'd say it's lovely to meet you, but...  
(indicating handcuffs)  
... you know.

A furious Ruby turns to Joe Paul.

RUBY

Get the cuffs off. Now.

A flustered Joe Paul searches for the keys. He finds them and starts to unlock the cuffs. Ruby turns to Tag.

RUBY (CONT'D)

You know, I was expecting Earl K.

TAG

He felt you required someone with special expertise. So I flew in from New York.

JOE PAUL

Look, buddy. I'm sorry. It just didn't occur to me they'd send an A-rab to investigate terrorism.

TAG

I'm Persian. Not Arab. You should learn the difference so the other racists don't make fun of you.

Joe Paul removes the cuffs. Tag walks briskly towards his car. Ruby follows.

RUBY  
Where are you going?

TAG  
To the airport.

RUBY  
Look, I know your feelings got hurt,  
but we got bigger fish to fry.

TAG  
The Bureau has other agents who can  
help you. I'll see what they have  
in the way of pale Lutherans.

Tag arrives at his sports car.

RUBY  
Now hold on...

TAG  
Goodbye, Sheriff.

Tag gets in the car and drives away. Ruby's expression turns from concern to determination. She pulls out her phone.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MINUTES LATER

The black sports car speeds down the highway.

INT. SPORTS CAR - CONTINUOUS

Tag is driving. His phone rings. He answers it.

TAG  
Hello?

We HEAR a VOICE on the other end of the phone talking.

TAG (CONT'D)  
Oh. It's you, sir. I take it  
Sheriff Adair called -- No, I  
wasn't actually injured, but I  
felt, under the circumstances...

We HEAR the VOICE yell. Tag's jaw clenches.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The black sports car does a dangerously quick U-turn and heads back into town.

EXT. BRIDGE - MINUTES LATER

Ruby leans against her police car, waiting. The SPORTS CAR pulls up. An angry Tag jumps out.

TAG  
Seriously? You called my boss?

RUBY  
You lied to me. You're not here just 'cause you got special expertise. They wanted you out of New York. As punishment.

TAG  
Earl K. has a big mouth.

RUBY  
Boy, you must have done something real stupid.

TAG  
Whatever it was, it's none of your business.

He stares at Ruby, defiantly. Beat.

RUBY  
Okay. Well, don't just stand there growing tits. We got work to do.

Ruby gets in her car and drives off. A disgusted Tag gets into his car and follows her.

EXT. STREET/BRIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

In a WIDE we SEE Ruby and Tag drive their cars away. They PASS a RED PICK-UP TRUCK going in the opposite direction.

We FOLLOW the TRUCK as it pulls onto the bridge and parks.

INSIDE the truck we SEE a MAN'S HAND reach into a BEER COOLER on the seat next to him. He takes out a plastic bag.

CLOSE on the bag -- We SEE a YOUNG WOMAN'S HAND inside.

The MAN (only seen from the chest down) takes the hand out of the bag. In a WIDE we see the hand tossed from the truck into the water. As the RED PICKUP TRUCK drives away, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOEXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

In a WIDE SHOT we SEE the street is abuzz with activity. People are replacing windows, sweeping up debris. A camera crew is interviewing townspeople citizens in the b.g.

We FIND Ruby and Tag walking down the street. GO CLOSE on the pair to see they're walking silently. Ruby glances at Tag, who is clearly still in a bad mood.

RUBY

Do you ever smile?

TAG

I'm still furious with you.

(then)

Also, I haven't eaten today.

RUBY

How about this? After we see the coroner, I'll buy you lunch.

TAG

Fine. But I'm a Vegan. I don't eat meat, dairy or anything fried.

Ruby shoots Tag a look.

RUBY

No wonder you don't smile.

They walk into a building marked 'County Coroner'.

INT. MORGUE OUTER OFFICE - DAY

A cheery office. Photos hang on the wall in colorful frames. There is a desk adorned with cute knickknacks.

Behind the desk sits VONDA JEAN, 38. She is BEAUTIFUL, PERKY and PURPOSEFULLY CHARMING. She wears a string of pearls and her hair is in an updo. She rises when Ruby and Tag enter.

RUBY

Hey, Vonda Jean. I want you to meet Special Agent Tag Fayad. Tag, this is Vonda Jean French.

TAG

Lovely to meet you.



VONDA JEAN

Mmmm. Well, aren't you exotic?

She flirtatiously rubs Tag's arm. He raises an eyebrow.

TAG

Perhaps you should let the coroner know we're here.

Ruby and Vonda Jean exchange an amused look.

RUBY

Vonda Jean is the coroner.

TAG

Oh.

VONDA JEAN

Didn't think I'd be so pretty, did ya? In '99 I was first runner-up at the Miss Kentucky pageant. Why didn't you tell him, Ruby?

RUBY

'Cause I knew you'd bring it up.

VONDA JEAN

I used my scholarship money to get a degree in forensic medicine. Now I'm the coroner for the whole county. And that gal who won the pageant? She just got fat.

Vonda Jean sweeps into the next room. Ruby and Tag follow.

INT. MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

The trio enters. Three BODIES, covered with sheets, lay on gurneys off to the side. The body of the YOUNG WOMAN (who drove the car) lies naked on a coroner's table in the center.

Vonda Jean grabs a plastic smock and puts it on. (There is something bizarre about the combo of smock, updo and pearls.)

VONDA JEAN

As you can see, it's standing room only in here. So I haven't had much time with little Miss Jihad.

RUBY

What can you tell us?

VONDA JEAN

Cause of death was blood loss. The hand was severed with some sort of dull blade. And the angle of the cut suggests she did it herself.

During this speech, Tag circles the body. He examines the torso and the arm. CLOSE on his eyes as he concentrates.

RUBY

Lord. Why would she do that?

VONDA JEAN

Passports only require a right thumb print. Makes it hard to ID a terrorist here on a tourist visa.

Tag looks up from the body.

TAG

She wasn't a terrorist.

Ruby and Vonda Jean exchange a surprised look. Tag points to the DEAD GIRL'S hip. CLOSE on a TATTOO of a FOREIGN SYMBOL.

TAG (CONT'D)

Her tattoo. It's a Hindu symbol. Her facial structure and skin tone indicate South Asian ancestry. India, I should think.

VONDA JEAN

What does that prove?

TAG

Hindu Indian females don't fit any terrorist profile I'm aware of.

VONDA JEAN

Maybe not. But she did drive a car down Main Street into a parade.

Tag thinks for a beat, then:

TAG

Sheriff, if you were dying of blood loss, where would you go?

RUBY

Oxblood Clinic. Over on...  
(realizing)  
... Main Street.

TAG

Maybe she was going to the clinic and passed out. Lost control of the car.

RUBY

But why would she cut off her own hand and then go for help?

VONDA JEAN

Know what bothers me? She couldn't have gotten far bleeding like that.

TAG

So it happened not too far away.  
(starting to smile)  
But if she lived around here, why don't people know her? And if she was just passing through, where's her wallet? Or some kind of ID?

RUBY

Why are you smiling?

TAG

Contradictory facts. A perpetrator who may be a victim. Solving this case is going to be a lot of fun.

Ruby takes in Tag's enthusiasm for a beat. Then:

RUBY

Agent Fayad, come here for a sec.

Tag follows Ruby as she crosses to one of the bodies nearby and lifts up the sheet. Underneath is an ELDERLY WOMAN.

RUBY (CONT'D)

This is Sue Ford. She taught every kid in Oxblood how to play piano.

Tag reacts, confused. Ruby crosses to another body. Pulls back sheet to REVEAL a HANDSOME MAN in his 40's.

RUBY (CONT'D)

This man's name is Mason Miller. He was a champion barrel racer.

Ruby lifts up sheet covering last body. It's a TEENAGE BOY.

RUBY (CONT'D)

And here's Petey Bell. I went to school with his mama.

Tag begins to react, uncomfortably.

RUBY (CONT'D)

These were my people. It's our job to figure out why they died. If you can have a good time while doing that, fine.

(pointedly)

But keep it to yourself.

Ruby exits. Tag looks at Vonda Jean, who smirks. He exits.

EXT. MAIN STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Tag and Ruby walk in silence. In the b.g. people are still repairing the damage from the parade.

TAG

Okay. I feel bad about what happened in there. Sometimes I don't express myself correctly.

RUBY

Is that what got you in trouble at the FBI? That mouth of yours?

Tag looks at Ruby for a beat. He decides to shock her.

TAG

No. Different part of my anatomy.

RUBY

What does that means?

TAG

(proudly)

I slept with the wife of my bureau chief.

RUBY

(appalled)

Now why would you do that?

TAG

I like sex.

RUBY

Everybody does. That's no excuse.

TAG

No. I like sex a lot.

Tag smiles pointedly. As an uncomfortable Ruby reacts, we...

INT. DINER - DAY

We're ON Hollis as he carries a tray of food. He walks past Ruby and Tag, seated at a booth, eating lunch. Joe Paul sits with them, displaying contents of a file folder.

JOE PAUL

I ran the VIN number. Dead girl's car was registered to Shep Worth.

RUBY

Shep? He died three years ago.

JOE PAUL

And there's no record of that Chevy ever being sold.

TAG

Start calling insurance companies. If the Chevy was involved in any accident in the last decade, they can tell you who filed a claim.

JOE PAUL

That's your big FBI tip? Hell, I knew that. I bet you didn't learn nothing at Quantico they didn't teach me at the police academy.

TAG

I learned how to snap a man's neck like a twig. Ask me to show you.  
(hopefully)  
Please.

An angry Joe Paul looks to Ruby, who is busy eating.

RUBY

Yes, he's rude. Just go.

Joe Paul storms out. As Ruby finishes her meal, Tag looks around the diner. He notices Alberta, seated a few feet away, glaring at him. Tag turns back to Ruby.

TAG

People are staring at me.

RUBY

You are wearing last year's Armani.

TAG

I know these looks. Every Muslim's gotten them. 'Screw-you-and-the-camel-you-rode-in-on'.

RUBY

It's a small town. Everybody knows everybody else. Only reason folks are staring at you is 'cause you're a stranger.

TAG

Still... I'd get a warmer welcome if everyone knew the dead girl wasn't a terrorist.

RUBY

We'll get the word out. But stop thinking we're all a bunch of redneck racists. I know these folks. They're salt of the earth.

TAG

Even her?

He points to Alberta, who is still glaring at him.

RUBY

(looking back)

Oh, no. That's Alberta. She's absolutely racist.

TAG

Ah. Ever thought of telling her that's not cool?

RUBY

At her age? Easier to just let her die.

Tag looks back at Alberta, who continues to glare at him. Tag throws her a kiss. Off her horrified reaction, we...

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

MAYOR FRENCH, 39, HANDSOME and SLICK, looks into a mirror and combs his hair on the steps of City Hall. A camera crew sets up in the b.g. Ruby and Tag cross into frame.

RUBY

Mayor French? This is Agent Fayad of the FBI. We need to talk to you.

MAYOR FRENCH

Now? I'm about to be on TV.  
(re: face, proudly)  
See? I'm wearing makeup.

TAG

Yes, well, we thought you should know we're reevaluating our theory as to what happened at the parade.

Mayor French reacts, confused. A WOMAN crosses into frame.

WOMAN #1

They're ready for you.

MAYOR FRENCH

Be right there.

(to Ruby)

What's he going on about?

RUBY

Agent Fayad thinks, and I agree, what happened yesterday was probably not terrorism.

MAYOR FRENCH

Well, that's... too bad.

TAG

I beg your pardon?

MAYOR FRENCH

It's just everybody feels so sorry for us. We got media coming in from all over the country. The motel's bursting at the seams. Hollis says business at the diner's never been so good. I hate to lose all that for a 'probably'.

TAG

At this point, you should be worried about stoking racial resentment. Perhaps refrain from doing press until our investigation is complete.

MAYOR FRENCH

I know how this sounds, but... I already told my folks I'm gonna be on T.V.

An angry Tag stares at the Mayor, coldly.

TAG

Clearly, you don't know how that sounds.

The mayor reacts, insulted. Ruby, trying to diffuse the situation, puts a soothing hand on Tag's arm.

RUBY

Tell you what, Mayor. We'll circle back round once we got proof. Okay?

MAYOR FRENCH

Thank you.  
(posing)  
Now how do I look?

RUBY

Like a politician.

MAYOR FRENCH

(touched)  
Aw.

Mayor French exits towards the cameras. Tag and Ruby being walking away.

TAG

Why didn't you tell him to shove it?

RUBY

That little pissant runs this town. I want that dead girl's name before I go to the mat with him.

Ruby's phone buzzes. She looks at the screen. Her expression changes. Ruby stops walking.

TAG

What's up? Did Joe Paul's academy training finally pay off?

RUBY

(reading text)  
No. This is... personal.  
(changing subject)  
Hey, since the motel's booked, we need to find you a place to stay.

TAG

Sure. Any suggestions?

RUBY

The Winemillers own a Bed and Breakfast. I'll call 'em and see if they've got a room for you.

TAG

Great. Who are the Winemillers?



INT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

ANGLE on the WINEMILLER SISTERS. AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHURCH LADIES. They sit together, in floral prints, fanning themselves. They look with keen interest at...

... an uneasy Tag. He sits awkwardly holding a cup of tea.

VELMA

An FBI agent from New York City. In our home. This is so exciting.

INEZ

And we're relieved you're looking into that parade business.

VELMA

Making any progress? You know who's responsible?

INEZ

She means was it Muslims?

The women look at Tag expectantly. Beat.

TAG

Well...

VELMA

Look at that! He paused.

INEZ

He did. He did.

VELMA

We knew it wasn't Jihad.

INEZ

Why would terrorists come to this one-horse town?

VELMA

From the start I said, 'This feels like homegrown mischief to me'.

INEZ

That's what she said.

VELMA

We got all sorts of bad folks in this town.

INEZ

Like our postman, Mr. Reeves? He beats his wife.

VELMA

Tammy Corn next door? She's sleeping with her stepson.

INEZ

You want to know who's evil in Oxblood, you come talk to us.

VELMA

And remember, folks here don't like strangers. So be careful.

INEZ

Yeah, this ain't New York. You're in America now.

The two women fan themselves. As a stunned Tag reacts, we...

INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

**CLOSE on a text that reads 'I'M STILL ALIVE. GO TO HELL'.**

REVEAL a drunken Ruby seated at the table, staring forlornly at her phone. A bottle of whiskey sits beside her. Photos of her investigation are spread out on the table.

TJ enters, dressed in pajamas. He sees his grandmother.

TJ

What's wrong?

RUBY

Nothing. I just got a text from your mama, that's all.

TJ

What did she say?

RUBY

She said she loves you. And she's coming back real soon.

TJ smiles brightly. As Ruby tries to hold it together, we...

INT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - TAG'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tag lays shirtless in bed reading through a file marked 'Coroner's Report'. He massages his own chest as he reads.

Finally, he throws the file down. He is bored. An idea occurs to him. He bounds off the bed.

CLOSE on the closet. The door swings open and Tag's hand reaches in and grabs a BLACK LEATHER JACKET.

INT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The WINEMILLER SISTERS, dressed in bathrobes, sit knitting by the fire. Tag enters, dressed in sexy nightclub attire.

INEZ

Hey, Tag! What can we do for you?

TAG

You ladies said you know everyone who's evil in Oxblood?

VELMA

Sure.

TAG

Where do those people go for a good time?

EXT. PUNK'S ROADHOUSE - NIGHT

A NEON SIGN reading, 'PUNK'S ROADHOUSE' blinks slowly. It shines a light on a parking lot filled with various trucks and old jalopies. Tag's BLACK SPORTS CAR pulls in and stops.

INT. PUNK'S ROADHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

A smoke-filled dive. Rough-looking men sit at tables with cheap-looking women. Honky-tonk music plays.

Tag enters. As he crosses to the bar, customers notice the DARK-SKINNED FOREIGNER. Tag registers their disapproval. He doesn't care. He looks around, but sees nothing above a 7. He's unhappy. Finally, someone O.S. catches his eye.

Tag's POV - A BEAUTIFUL GIRL, 21, sits in the corner talking to a group of MEN charitably described as 'meh'. Clearly charming, she laughs and flirts with her admirers. They hang on her every word. She is Scarlett at the barbecue. Tag watches her. He is intrigued.

CLOSE on the GIRL. She notices Tag. Standing in the perfect light, he looks like a movie star. The girl is taken aback. Tag realizes she's aware of his presence.

He nods to her and indicates she should come to him. This strikes the girl as brazen. And sexy as hell.

The girl makes some excuse to her friends, then crosses over to Tag. He waits for her as if they had an appointment.

TAG

You are beautiful, but your fan club is hideous. Why hang out with them?

BEAUTIFUL GIRL

Maybe I'm just waiting for something better to come along.

TAG

Well... I'm here.

BEAUTIFUL GIRL

You're not as good-looking as you think you are.

TAG

No one's as good-looking as I think I am.

The girl laughs. She is amused by Tag.

BEAUTIFUL GIRL

I'm Jennifer. Wanna buy me a drink?

TAG

No. I want you sober.

JENNIFER

Why?

TAG

Because I'm going to kiss you, and I want you to remember it for the rest of your life.

JENNIFER

I don't care how sexy you are. I'm not going home with you.

TAG

I wasn't going to ask you to.

JENNIFER

Then where did you plan on kissing me?

As Tag grins impishly, we...

EXT. PUNK'S ROADHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE on Tag and Jennifer as they go at it, slamming against the wall of the roadhouse, feet away from the dumpster.

Someone's POV - Tag and Jennifer are illuminated by occasional flashes from the neon sign atop the roadhouse.

We REVEAL the RED PICK-UP TRUCK.

As the UNSEEN MAN inside the truck watches them, we...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. WINEMILLER'S HOUSE - DAY

Tag emerges and crosses to Ruby's police car, parked in front. Once he gets in, the car pulls away.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ruby's in the driver's seat. Tag on the passenger side.

RUBY

Joe Paul had some luck with the insurance company. A claim was filed on the Chevy two years ago by, of all people, Whitey Dubois.

TAG

You know this person?

RUBY

Everybody in town knows Whitey...

Ruby's voice trails off as she spots something troubling O.S. Tag notices the change in her expression.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT LAWN - MOMENTS LATER

The police car swerves over to the curb and parks.

REVEAL TWO TEENAGERS, 19, are shooting paintballs at a cat in a tree. Both of the boys are TALL, MEAN, and UNAPPEALING. Ruby gets out of her car and approaches them.

RUBY

Curtis! Claude!

The teenagers look at Ruby.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Leave that cat alone.

CLAUDE

He's stuck up there. We're just helping to get him down.

RUBY

You don't torment animals. Not in my town. Now go inside.

Neither of the boys move. Ruby's eyes narrow.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
I told you to do something.

CURTIS  
I know my rights. You can't tell us  
what to do on my property.

Curtis looks at Ruby defiantly. ANGLE on Tag who emerges from his car, curious as to the situation.

RUBY  
Here's what I know, Curtis. Your  
daddy has a drinking problem and  
when he gets drunk, he gets violent.

CLOSE on Curtis. The smug expression drains from his face.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
If you don't do what I say, I'll  
come back here tonight with a bottle  
of cheap whiskey. I'll visit with  
your daddy til he finishes every  
last drop. Then I'll tell him how  
you disrespected me.  
(pointedly)  
What do you think will happen next?

A chastened Curtis looks at Claude. They drop the paint ball guns, then exit into the house. Ruby walks back to Tag. She sees his astounded face.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
Sometimes you just gotta let 'em  
know whose dick is bigger.

Ruby grins. As they get into the car, we...

EXT. ANTEBELLUM MANSION - VERANDA - DAY

We PAN ACROSS lush grounds and LAND on the veranda of an old antebellum mansion. Ruby and Tag are there, talking to WHITEY DUBOIS, 49. He's a GOOD OLE BOY with a patch over one eye.

WHITEY  
Ruby Adair. How long has it been?

RUBY  
Too long, Whitey. Much too long.

Whitey notices Tag staring at his eye patch.

WHITEY

Well, it's good to see you. And to meet your friend from the FBI.

(to Tag)

Who keeps staring at my patch.

TAG

(caught)

Sorry. I was just...

WHITEY

Wondering how I lost my eye? Well, I'll tell you. Sad story. I was a victim of domestic abuse.

TAG

Really?

WHITEY

Oh, yes. One night I was hitting my wife and she decided to fight back.

Tag reacts, horrified. Whitey begins to laugh uproariously.

RUBY

That's a joke. He had cancer.

WHITEY

But that's not as funny.

TAG

Sir, we're here on official business. Do you know this girl?

Tag shows Whitey a photo on his phone.

WHITEY

Can't say that I do.

TAG

She was driving your Chevy yesterday when she crashed into the parade.

WHITEY

That was Shep Worth's car. He was keeping it in my garage. Then he died.

TAG

What happened to it then?

WHITEY

Well, I traded it. In exchange for... services rendered.



TAG

Who did you trade it to?

Whitey nervously turns away. Tag becomes irritated.

TAG (CONT'D)

Sir, I asked you a question.

Seeing Whitey's discomfort, Ruby indicates for Tag to back off. Tag reacts, insulted. Ruby leans into Whitey.

RUBY

Darlin', we wouldn't ask if we didn't need to know.

WHITEY

Oh, Ruby. I gave it to Miss Bo.

Ruby shakes her head. Tag mouths the words, 'Who?'

RUBY

She runs the local whorehouse.

WHITEY

See, my wife's got osteoporosis. If I so much as touch the woman, she breaks a hip. So I started going to Miss Bo's and ran up quite a tab.

RUBY

We'll need to confirm this.

WHITEY

Do it quietly. If Helen finds out I've been seeing whores... I can kiss this other eye goodbye.

As Ruby and Tag react, we...

EXT. LAKE - DAY

In a WIDE SHOT we see two figures on a boat in the middle of a lake. We GO CLOSE to REVEAL Deke and TJ fishing.

DEKE

You having fun?

TJ

Yes, sir.

DEKE

Me, too. Sorry I haven't seen you in a while.

TJ  
That's okay.

DEKE  
When I left your Grandma it got ugly. We needed a break. But just 'cause I haven't seen you in while doesn't mean I don't love you.

TJ thinks about this for a beat. Then:

TJ  
You think Mama still loves me?

This hits Deke hard. He tries to cover his emotions.

DEKE  
'Course, she does.

TJ  
She hasn't come to see me in two Christmases.

Deke looks at TJ for a long beat. He makes a decision.

DEKE  
Would you like to hear a secret?

TJ nods enthusiastically.

DEKE (CONT'D)  
I'm gonna be seeing you a lot from now on. And we'll do anything you want. Fish, hunt, throw a ball around. That sound good?

TJ beams. Deke tousles his hair. Suddenly, TJ gets a tug on his fishing pole.

TJ  
Grandpa, I got something!

DEKE  
(helping TJ)  
Okay. Reel it in, but take it slow.

An excited TJ reels in his catch. Deke smiles with anticipation. Suddenly, their expressions turn from excitement to horror as they react to something O.S.

REVEAL a YOUNG WOMAN'S HAND dangling from the fishing wire.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Ruby and Tag trudge up a gentle slope. They begin to pass small, dingy trailers lined up on either side.

TAG

It's funny. A Christian town like Oxblood having it's own brothel.

RUBY

We sin the same way y'all do in New York. We just got the decency to be ashamed the next morning.

Tag's POV - FAT and HOMELY WOMEN start appearing in the doors of the trailers. They watch calmly as Tag and Ruby pass. Some give Tag seductive looks. He reacts, nervously.

They approach a ramshackle shack in the middle of the clearing. MISS BO, a VIBRANT COUNTRIFIED WOMAN, emerges. She smiles broadly when she spots Ruby.

MISS BO

Ruby Adair! What're you doing out here? Coming to arrest me?

RUBY

(grinning)

One of these days, Miss Bo. One of these days.

Ruby and Tag walk up the steps of the porch. Miss Bo and Ruby hug. Ruby then gestures to Tag.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Special Agent Tag Fayad. This is Miss Bougainvillea Jones.

MISS BO

Nice to meet you, Agent Fayad. What do you think of my girls?

TAG

(awkwardly)

Well... they're lovely.

MISS BO

Please. I got the ugliest whores in Kentucky. But what they lack in looks, they make up for in creativity.

She waves Ruby and Tag into her shack. As they exit, we...

INT. SHACK - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby, Tag and Miss Bo are seated. Miss Bo sips coffee.

MISS BO  
Yeah. Whitey gave me his car.

TAG  
What happened to it?

MISS BO  
One of my girls stole it. Said she was gonna visit her family. Never came back. I would've reported it but the car was a piece of junk.

Tag shows Miss Bo a picture of the DEAD GIRL on his phone.

MISS BO (CONT'D)  
(re: photo)  
That's her. That's Topaz.

TAG  
Topaz?

MISS BO  
Some of my girls don't use their real names. For obvious reasons.

RUBY  
When did you last see her?

MISS BO  
About a year ago.

Ruby and Tag exchange a look. Ruby's phone rings.

RUBY  
Excuse me.

Ruby exits the shack. Miss Bo sips her coffee. Beat.

MISS BO  
I'm glad Ruby's got someone new to work with. She's been out of sorts ever since that 'to do' with Ellie.

TAG  
Ellie?

MISS BO  
Her daughter. The junkie?

TAG

Oh. I had no idea.

MISS BO

I'm not telling tales out of school. Everybody knows about Ellie. She showed up here once, wanting to work for me. Needed money for smack. I called Ruby to come get her. We've been thick as thieves ever since.

Moved, Tag looks out the window. He sees Ruby on the phone.

TAG

Is Ellie okay now?

MISS BO

Not sure. Ellie refused to go to rehab. Ruby and her had an awful fight. Ellie ran out and never came back. That was two years ago.

As Tag takes this in, Ruby appears at the doorway.

RUBY

They found the hand. We gotta go.

Tag and Miss Bo get up from their chairs.

MISS BO

Nice to meet you, Agent Fayad. Come back anytime and spend some money.

TAG

Thanks, but I don't need to pay for it.

MISS BO

That's what all men say. Then they turn middle-aged.

Miss Bo and Ruby grin. As Tag and Ruby exit, we...

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

CLOSE on the DEAD GIRL'S HAND on a tray. Reveal Vonda Jean, dressed in her smock, studying it. She is on the phone.

VONDA JEAN

(into phone)

... Baby, I know we had plans, but I'm gonna be working real late.

(MORE)

VONDA JEAN (CONT'D)  
The Sheriff needs my report as soon  
as possible.

There is a knock at the door. Vonda Jean turns to see Hollis  
poke his head in. He carries a sack.

HOLLIS  
Hey, Vonda Jean.

Vonda Jean motions him in. Hollis enters. He sees the DEAD  
GIRL'S BODY. As Vonda talks, he stares intently at the body.

VONDA JEAN  
(into phone)  
Baby, dinner's here. I gotta go.

Vonda Jean hangs up the phone and turns to Hollis.

VONDA JEAN (CONT'D)  
This is so sweet of you, Hollis.  
Doing a special delivery.

Hollis looks at the body again. Vonda Jean sees this.

VONDA JEAN (CONT'D)  
You seen a dead body before?

Hollis shakes his head 'no'.

VONDA JEAN (CONT'D)  
No reason to be scared. She's just  
like us. A little colder.  
(checking her pocket)  
Left my wallet in back. Hold on.

Vonda Jean exits. Hollis stands for a beat, staring at the  
body. After a beat, he approaches the table. He looks down  
at the body, with a tender expression.

Hollis' POV - The dead girl lays there, cold and still. But  
in a way, beautiful in repose.

Hollis checks to make sure Vonda Jean is not coming back.  
Satisfied, he leans over the dead girl's face.

HOLLIS  
I miss you.

As Hollis slowly kisses the dead girl, we...

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. BEAUTY PARLOR - DAY

Ruby and Tag exit the police car and head toward the beauty parlor. In the f.g. a news crew interviews more people.

INT. BEAUTY PARLOR - DAY

Mayor French sits in the styling chair. CORA, a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN, applies dye to his hair. Ruby and Tag enter.

CORA

Ruby, what're you doing here?

RUBY

Came to see the Mayor, Cora.

They cross to the Mayor. He motions for them to lean in.

MAYOR FRENCH

If you tell anyone I dye my roots,  
I'm cutting your budget.

RUBY

That'd be the pot calling the  
kettle gray.

Ruby hands the mayor a file. He reads its' contents.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Got a hit on the fingerprints. The  
gal in the car was a hooker named  
Kareena Chopra. She dropped out of  
school in Ohio two years ago. Her  
family hasn't heard from her since.

TAG

And I've called the Bureau. She  
had no known ties to terrorism.

MAYOR FRENCH

So what was she doing in that car?

RUBY

We're not sure. We think something  
bad may have happened to her.

Just then, RANDA emerges from the back room, wearing a smock.

RANDA

Cora, I found those blade clippers  
behind the... oh.

Randa stops dead when she sees Ruby. Ruby turns to Cora.

RUBY

What is she doing here?

CORA

Randa asked for her old job back.  
(nervously, to Randa)  
You didn't tell her?

Randa is silent. Ruby, trying to remain calm, crosses over.

RUBY

Why would you need a job here?  
After Deke's aunt gets better  
you're going back to Mobile.

RANDA

(uncomfortably)  
There's been a change in plans.

RUBY

Why?

RANDA

You should talk to Deke.

Randa looks at Ruby, defiantly. Everyone looks at Ruby to see what she'll do. Ruby turns and exits. Tag follows her.

INT. POLICE CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby is starting the car. Tag races over and jumps inside.

TAG

Who was that woman?

RUBY

Randa Post. The woman who stole my  
my husband.

TAG

Was she your hairdresser?

RUBY

No. She was my best friend.

Tag reacts. The car pulls away.



EXT. RANDA'S HOUSE - DAY

The police car speeds down the street and into the driveway of RANDA'S HOUSE. Ruby parks the car haphazardly and jumps out. As she runs in the house, Tag gets out and watches her go.

INT. RANDA'S HOUSE - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby bursts through the front door. She calls up the stairs.

RUBY  
(angrily)  
Deke! I want to talk to you!  
Do you hear me?

ANGLE on Deke emerging from an upstairs bedroom. He wears overalls covered with paint. He carries a paint brush.

DEKE  
What are you doing here? Why  
didn't you call first?

Ruby runs up the stairs towards him.

RUBY  
Are you moving back to Oxblood?

Deke, caught, looks down. Finally:

DEKE  
I was going to talk to you about  
that...

RUBY  
"We're not going to keep humiliating  
you!" That's what you said. "Me  
and Randa will move far away."

DEKE  
Well, things have changed.

RUBY  
How? How have things changed?

As Deke steps forward, Ruby sees the bedroom behind him.

Ruby's POV - A newly painted room with a crib in the center.

A look of horror and realization washes over Ruby's face.

DEKE  
(softly)  
I really wish you'd called.

RUBY

Randa's having a baby?

DEKE

And she wanted to be closer to her family, so...

Ruby, overcome with emotion, rushes down the stairs.

DEKE (CONT'D)

Come on. Don't be this way!

As Ruby storms out of the house, we...

INT. POLICE CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Ruby drives the car in silence. Tag, understanding she's upset about something, looks at her compassionately.

TAG

You want to talk about it?

Ruby shakes her head 'no'. Tag nods sympathetically. They ride in silence for a beat.

CLOSE on Ruby. She sees something O.S.

Ruby's POV - Curtis (from Act 3) is shooting paint balls at a dog tied to fence while Claude records it on his phone.

EXT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE on the police car driving up on the curb. Ruby jumps out. Inside the car, Tag struggles to unbuckle his seat belt.

The teens turn to see Ruby approaching him.

CURTIS

Hey. We're not hurting him...

Ruby takes out her baton and jams it into Curtis' chest. He falls to the ground.

ANGLE on Tag getting out of the car. He reacts, horrified.

ANGLE on Ruby as she goes after Claude. He tries to run away, but slips and falls. As he gets up, Ruby swings her baton and hits him in the legs. He falls back down.

CLOSE on Ruby. Her face is filled with fury and tears as she strikes both of the teens again.

RUBY

What'd I say? Huh? WHAT DID I SAY?

Tag runs over and grabs Ruby. He pulls her from the boys.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Get off of me!

Ruby struggles. Tag whips her around and shakes her.

TAG

Do not make me arrest you!

CLOSE on Ruby's face. She suddenly realizes what's she's done. Her body goes limp. Her baton falls from her hand.

Tag turns to the two boys, moaning on the lawn.

TAG (CONT'D)

You two. Get out of here. Now.

Curtis and Claude nod. They pick themselves up and take off, hobbled. Tag picks up Ruby's baton.

TAG (CONT'D)

Come on, Ruby.

As Tag walks Ruby back to the police car, we...

EXT. HOLLIS'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

A creepy old house nestled in the hills, surrounded by trees.

INT. HOLLIS'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

REVEAL Alberta in her wheelchair, watching CLOSE-CAPTIONED TV. Hollis enters, wearing a nice shirt and a tie. Alberta stares at him, suspiciously. (Alberta's dialogue is done with subtitles. Hollis speaks as he signs.)

ALBERTA

(signing)

Where are you going?

HOLLIS

(signing)

A friend.

ALBERTA

(signing)

You don't have any friends.

HOLLIS  
(signing)  
Shows how much you know.

Hollis grabs his car keys off the coffee table, then exits. A distrustful Alberta watches him go, then resumes watching TV.

INT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - TAG'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tag sits in a chair. He wears a thoughtful, sad expression. After a beat, he reaches over and grabs his phone off the table. He types a few words.

INT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer sits at a table, surrounded by family and friends. She gets a text. She pulls out her phone and looks at it.

**PHONE SCREEN - 'DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE TONIGHT. COME OVER'.**

Jennifer smiles, then types in a few words.

INT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - TAG'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tag's phone buzzes. He looks at his phone.

**PHONE SCREEN - 'I'M AT A FAMILY GET-TOGETHER.'**

Tag reads this. He thinks for a moment, then gets up and starts taking off his clothes.

INT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jennifer gets another text. She looks at the phone.

**PHONE SCREEN - 'HERE'S A REMINDER OF WHAT'S WAITING FOR YOU.'**

Jennifer raises a confused eyebrow. Over her shoulder, we see a NAKED SELFIE of Tag. (Her shoulder blocks the most provocative part of the shot.)

ANGLE on Jennifer as her eyes light up at the completed image. She rises out of her seat.

JENNIFER  
Daddy, I gotta go.

REVEAL **Joe Paul in his deputy uniform**, cutting a birthday cake. Decorations behind him read, 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY'.

JOE PAUL

But we ain't done cutting the cake.

Jennifer walks over and kisses Joe Paul on his forehead.

JENNIFER

Save me a piece. I'll be home late.

Jennifer exits frame. As her perplexed father reacts, we...

EXT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE - FRONT WALKWAY - NIGHT

Jennifer emerges from the house and hurries down the walkway. She gets into her car, parked in front of the house. The car starts and she pulls away.

Moments after she pulls away, we REVEAL the RED PICKUP TRUCK parked twenty feet away. It's lights go on.

CLOSE on Hollis sitting inside the truck. He starts the car.

As the RED PICKUP TRUCK follows Jennifer, we...

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVEEXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

In a WIDE we SEE townsfolk gathered for a candlelight vigil. Men play guitars as a SINGER sings 'I JUST REALLY MISS YOU'.

Ruby stands apart from the crowd. Her expression is sad and teary as she listens to the song. She looks at her phone to see an old picture of herself holding a baby, ELLIE.

Her phone rings. She walks away from the crowd to answer it.

RUBY  
(into phone)  
Hello?

MISS BO (O.S.)  
Hey, Ruby. It's me.

INT. SHACK - NIGHT

Miss Bo is there, on the phone. One of her prostitutes stands in the b.g. She wears a worried expression.

MISS BO  
(into phone)  
Been talking to my one of my girls  
and I found out something you need  
to know.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER

We're ON TJ as he speaks to four boys.

TJ  
... I thought it was a fish. But  
when I pulled it out it was a hand.  
It was all slimy and disgusting.

BOY #1  
That is so cool.

TJ  
I know.

TJ smiles proudly. His friends react in amazement. Ruby walks into frame and puts her arm around TJ's shoulder.

RUBY

Say goodbye to your friends, honey.  
We gotta go. Now.

TJ reacts, surprised. As Ruby exits frame, we...

INT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - TAG'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tag and Jennifer are naked in bed, having sex. They are oblivious to a BUZZING sound. TILT DOWN to REVEAL Tag's phone laying on top of a pile of clothes.

CLOSE on Tag's phone screen. A message from Ruby reads -  
'GET DRESSED. WE GOT WORK TO DO.'

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Ruby hangs up her phone. She thinks for a moment, then grabs TJ by the hand and exits frame.

INT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - TAG'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Jennifer and Tag lay on the bed, draped in sheets. He smokes a cigarette. She rubs his chest. He regards her for a beat.

JENNIFER

You got a girlfriend back home?

TAG

No.

JENNIFER

Why not?

TAG

Don't want one.

JENNIFER

How come?

TAG

I don't believe in monogamy. Or marriage. Or cuddling. Lots of reasons.

JENNIFER

What if you fell head-over-heels, crazy punch drunk in love?

TAG

That will never happen.

JENNIFER

Why not?

TAG

I'm not just wired that way. To really love another human being.

Jennifer sits up in bed and looks intently at Tag.

JENNIFER

I've known lots of guys who say stuff like that. But they're really just afraid no one could really fall in love with them.

She stares at him knowingly. There is a knock at the door.

TAG

Thank God.

Tag wraps the sheet around him as he gets up from the bed. He goes to the door and opens it to REVEAL Ruby.

RUBY

Did you get my message?

Tag looks down at the sheet he's wearing, than back at Ruby.

TAG

What do you think?

RUBY

Get dressed. I just spoke to Miss Bo.

TAG

What's going on?

RUBY

Kareena called one of her girls the day she went missing. Her car had broken down and she needed someone to come get her. But then Kareena said, 'Oh, someone just pulled up. I think he can help me.' That is the last anyone heard from her.

TAG

You think this man took her?

RUBY

We've been asking ourselves why would she cut off her own hand? If she was kidnapped and restrained...



TAG  
(realizing)  
... she would have cut off her hand  
to get away.

RUBY  
That was a year ago. Her family's  
been wondering where she was this  
whole time. They thought she  
didn't love 'em anymore, but the  
truth was...

Ruby's eyes well up with emotion. Tag realizes she not just  
talking about Kareena. Beat. Ruby shakes off her emotions.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
... anyway, I gotta find out who  
took her.

TAG  
Don't worry. We will.

Ruby and Tag share a moment of solidarity. Just then, the  
door opens a touch wider.

RUBY'S POV - A naked woman's legs stretched out on the bed.

Ruby looks disapprovingly at Tag.

TAG (CONT'D)  
The room doesn't come with cable.

RUBY  
Meet me at the police station.

Ruby crosses away. Tag shuts the door.

EXT/INT. WINEMILLER'S HOUSE/POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Ruby gets into her police car. The car pulls out and goes  
about thirty feet when Ruby looks to her side. She sees  
RANDA'S HOUSE, coming up on her left. Ruby thinks for a  
beat, then pulls over to the side and parks. She looks in  
the back seat at TJ, curled up asleep.

RUBY  
(to TJ)  
Honey, I'm going in to talk to your  
grandpa. You just keep on  
sleeping. Okay?

TJ gives her a 'thumbs up' sign. Ruby exits the car.

EXT. RANDA'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Ruby walks up to the front door and knocks. A moment passes and then the door opens to REVEAL Deke in a bathrobe.

RUBY  
(gently)  
Can we talk for a sec?

DEKE  
Sure.

Deke indicates for Ruby to enter.

INT. RANDA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ruby and Deke walk in.

RUBY  
Where's Randa?

DEKE  
She's sleeping. What's up?

RUBY  
I got a text from Ellie.

DEKE  
(happily)  
Let me see.

Ruby shows him her phone. Deke's smile fades.

DEKE (CONT'D)  
Same as the other ones.

RUBY  
But it means she's still out there.  
I just want you to remember that.

DEKE  
(suspiciously)  
Meaning what?

RUBY  
Well, now that you got a new baby  
on the way... I don't want you to  
forget about your first one.

Deke reacts, trying to remain calm.

DEKE

Got a lot of nerve, throwing Ellie in my face. Remember, of the two of us, I'm the one who never hit her.

RUBY

You weren't there that night. You didn't hear how she spoke to me.

DEKE

She needed understanding.

RUBY

She needed to get the needle out of her arm. And grow up.

DEKE

Maybe she did. But we can't be sure 'cause now we don't know where she is. And that's on you.

Ruby paces for a bit. Then:

RUBY

Sure. It's my fault. And I understand why you blame me. But to walk out over that, after thirty years of marriage...

DEKE

It wasn't just Ellie. For years I put up with your job and your drinking and your temper. Let's face it, darlin'. You were never an easy woman to love.

This hits Ruby. Hard. After a beat, she smiles lovingly.

RUBY

I think it's a good thing that Randa's pregnant.

DEKE

Why?

RUBY

(sincerely)  
'Cause now I know. You're never coming back.

Ruby's eyes fill with emotion. Deke slowly walks over and takes her in his arms. They stand silently in this embrace.

REVEAL Randa standing at the top of the stairs. She has heard all of this.

EXT. WINEMILLER HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

In a WIDE we SEE Jennifer, now dressed, emerge from the house. She crosses down the walkway to her car.

REVEAL the RED PICKUP TRUCK. Inside, we SEE Hollis watching Jennifer from a hundred feet away.

Jennifer arrives at her car and tries to unlock it. There is something wrong. She peers at the keyhole. There is GUM WADDED UP in it. She reacts, confused.

The RED PICK UP turns on it's lights and drives forward. The truck pulls beside Jennifer and her car. She looks over.

JENNIFER

Hollis. What're you doing around here?

HOLLIS

Nothing much. Something wrong?

JENNIFER

Somebody put gum in my keyhole.

HOLLIS

(sweetly)

I can help you with that.

Hollis gets out of his car.

INT. POLICE CAR - BACKSEAT - CONTINUOUS

We're ON TJ, asleep. We HEAR the sound of voices talking. TJ opens his eyes. He looks out the back window.

TJ's POV - Jennifer and Hollis are talking a few yards away. Suddenly, Hollis grabs Jennifer. She struggles.

CLOSE on Hollis' hand as he takes a RAG from his pocket and covers Jennifer's nose and mouth.

ANGLE on TJ. He reacts, confused.

Jennifer struggles for a beat, then goes limp. Hollis drags her to his truck. He lifts her body and places her in his flatbed. He then gets back into his truck.

ANGLE on TJ. He watches as the RED PICKUP TRUCK starts and drives down the street towards him.

We're ON Hollis. He is calm and concentrated as he drives. He casually looks to his side.

His POV - TJ is looking right at him through the window of the police car.

CLOSE on the wheels of the RED PICKUP TRUCK. They stop.

TJ's POV - Hollis stares at TJ through the window of the RED PICKUP TRUCK.

TJ begins to tremble.

CLOSE on Hollis' hand as he pulls a knife from the glove compartment. He opens the truck door, about to step out.

ANGLE on Deke's front door. Ruby and Deke emerge, chatting.

Hollis throws the knife down, shuts his door and puts his car into drive.

ANGLE on a confused TJ. He watches as the RED PICKUP TRUCK gently pulls away.

Ruby says goodbye to Deke, then crosses down to her police car. It's clear she has not noticed the truck.

Ruby gets into the police car and sees the TJ is wide awake.

RUBY

What are you doing up?

TJ

(confused)

I think I had a bad dream.

As Ruby starts the car, we...

EXT. HOLLIS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The red pickup truck pulls up and stops. Hollis gets out and crosses to the back of the truck to look at the unconscious Jennifer. He then pulls out his phone.

HOLLIS

(into phone)

Hey. It's me. Wanted you to know... I got a present for you.

INT. HOLLIS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We're ON the TV set. IMAGES of a CLOSE-CAPTIONED SITCOM fill the screen. We HEAR the sound of CANNED LAUGHTER.

REVEAL Alberta watching her show, with a smile on her face.

ANGLE on the front door. Hollis pokes his head in. He checks to see Alberta is still engrossed in her show. Satisfied, he crosses to the stairs with Jennifer's body slung over his shoulder. He climbs to the second floor.

ANGLE on Jennifer as she begins to waken. She moans as she looks around, trying to figure out where she is and what's happening to her.

Hollis gets to the door at the top of the stairs. He opens it and takes Jennifer inside. The door swings shut.

ANGLE on Alberta watching her CLOSE-CAPTIONED TV. Hollis appears moments later and sits beside her. He reaches out and takes her hand.

**Suddenly we hear Jennifer screaming from upstairs.**

Hollis merely smiles at his grandmother who smiles back at him. As Alberta turns back to her sitcom, we see she's totally unaware of what's going on in her home.

END OF SHOW