

SNOW BLIND

Written

by

Vaun Wilmott

Based on the BOOM! Studios graphic novel by Ollie Masters

20th Century Fox TV

TEASER

FADE IN:

We hear PANTING. A man's labored breathing.

EXT. NORTHERN ALASKA - DAY

OPEN ON WHITE. Nothing but white. A powerful WIND HOWLS, a blizzard so heavy it's hard to see. Over the wind, we hear more PANTING and see a long trail of BLOOD, bright red against the fresh snow. A MAN runs from us wearing a Sheriff's uniform. He slips, falls and looks back. This is **BILLY BOWDEN, 40**. He has the face of a man you can count on, with intelligent, seasoned eyes. And right now, he's looking for a way out of the storm because he's badly wounded.

Billy's on a small main street with snow laden trees, single story mom and pop shops, old cracked telephone poles, a few parked cars... when the RAPID FIRE blast of a high caliber automatic takes out the windows of a CAR next to him.

He ducks, keeps trudging through deep snow as two silhouettes appear in the storm behind him, faces hidden. Both heavily armed. Billy reaches a door in the back of a brick building, unlocks it and goes inside.

INT. POLICE STATION - SAME

Billy has entered his own office. It's quiet, no one at work today, with a few desks, a small town jail in the corner and a rack of shotguns along one wall. A BODY is tied up on the ground wearing a hood, so we can't tell if it's man or woman. Billy ignores the body as he moves to get a weapon, but as he turns, he hears a CLICK and finds a GUN pointed at his face.

On the other end of that barrel, stands a tortured **YOUNG MAN (15)**, who has fear, loathing but most of all anger on his face. Billy stares down the barrel and realizes the kid means to kill him as we slam to BLACK.

CHYRON: ONE MONTH EARLIER

EXT./INT. POLICE SUV - KAROKE, ALASKA - NIGHT

A sheriff's SUV drives by a road sign: KAROKE, ALASKA (pop. 1458). Karoke is quaint, all American, surrounded by dense forest and flat plains of barren hard dirt, partially covered with fallen snow. Colossal mountains rise up in the distance, an epic landscape. It's bitterly cold.

Billy drives a brand new SUV, as his deputy **JAMES DEGAN, 38**, American Indian, with a dry sense of humor, derides life's inequities.

JAMES

I'm telling you Sheriff. It isn't fair. Real leather and one better, cowhide. Not that plastic, makes you think it might be leather kind of leather in my old heap. Blue tooth, panoramic sunroof and four-wheel on the fly. And my God...

(realizing)

Ass heaters!

Billy grins.

BILLY

What are you gonna do with a panoramic sunroof up here anyway? Tell you what, when you're sheriff, you get the new car.

A loud "Pfft!" comes from the back seat. They're not alone. Behind the steel mesh, a head pops up. **SCARLET BOWDEN, 17**, is drunk, way too brilliant for her own good, with edge for days. She scoffs at James.

SCARLET

Don't hold your breath James. Daddy loves bossing people around way too much.

(puts her feet up)

He isn't giving up the big man title.

Billy shoots her a look in the rearview.

BILLY

Know when to stop digging Scarlet.

SCARLET

Why? I was just hanging with friends...

BILLY

And Tom Sutton. I've told you to stay away from him.

The CRACKLE of a radio call and we hear a voice.

DISPATCH

Sheriff... Mrs. Hoden, out on Ridge Road, just called.

(MORE)

DISPATCH (CONT'D)
 She's hearing those spooky noises
 again. Wants you to swing by.

Billy talks into the mic.

BILLY
 Will do... now go home Wendy. It's
 way past closing up time.

WENDY
 Hallelujah.

And Billy turns the SUV around.

EXT./INT. HODEN HOUSE - NIGHT

Billy and James pull up to a snow covered ranch house, tall
 pines loom heavy over the house. The men get out of the SUV.

BILLY
 (to Scarlet)
 Stay in the car. We'll be back.

Scarlet rolls her eyes, happy to play on her phone. Both men
 wear heavy down jackets, the cold's biting, as they crunch
 across the snowy lawn their breath trailing behind them.
 They knock on Mrs. Hoden's door. A beat.

MRS. HODEN
 Whatya want?!

BILLY
 Abigail. It's Billy. The Sheriff.
 And Deputy Degan.

We hear her mumbling, irritated, her night interrupted. Then
 the SOUNDS of multiple locks unbolted, slid, chains dangled.

Slowly, a GIANT SHOTGUN BARREL slips through the crack in the
 door, followed by the steely, sinewy, ninety pound, silver
 haired lady holding it, **MRS. ABIGAIL HODEN**. She wears a
 heavy long jacket, even indoors. Billy gently pushes the
 barrel to aim out into the woods, away from them.

BILLY
 You called us.

Abigail steps into the light, takes a hard look at the two.

ABIGAIL
 Yes. Yes I did. They're back.

JAMES
 Who?

ABIGAIL

The thieves. The ones stole my antique china dolls. And my remote control! I heard em, on the side of the house, scratching around like rats, trying to get in again. If Arnold was here, they wouldn't be back, I'll tell you that much.

(she hoists the shotgun
bigger than her)

But I'm ready for 'em.

BILLY

Arnold was a good man.

(glances out into night)

How about this? Put down the shotgun, and let us check it out. I don't think it's anything but the wind.

ABIGAIL

You're a good boy Sheriff. I'll save some tea for you. Maybe a Kit Kat too.

(grins with a few missing
teeth)

If you're lucky.

BILLY

Get back inside. Go on. It's blowing tonight.

James winks at Billy. The two men pull their flashlights and walk around to the side of the house.

JAMES

If there's only one Kit Kat, it's mine.

(off Billy's look)

You got the new truck.

Billy smiles. On the side of the house they find a garbage can, knocked over. Billy squats down, smells something, odd... it's not the garbage.

BILLY

You smell that? Pungent. Racoons?

JAMES

I can't smell anything.

As we cut to...

INT. POLICE VEHICLE - SAME

...Scarlet, bored, tired of messing with her iphone. She gets out and follows the SOUND and FLASHLIGHTS of her father to the side of the house...

EXT. HODEN HOUSE - NIGHT

... and as Billy tries to remember that smell, a BEAR CUB wanders into the BEAM of their flashlights. It sees the two men, wide eyed and screeches LOUDLY in fear. Billy stands up quickly, peering out into the darkness.

He knows what's coming and yells at James...

BILLY

RUN!!

...just as the giant MOMMA BEAR comes plowing out of the night, SWATTING Billy hard against the house, cutting into his chest with her claws.

There's no time to pull a gun and both men take off in a sprint... James first, Billy right behind him as they come tearing around the corner and they spot Scarlet walking towards them. Ah shit!

Scarlet sees them and the bear but reacts in the opposite way you'd expect, because even as Billy screams...

BILLY

Get back to the car!!

...the bear coming up fast, Scarlet pulls out her cell phone, to capture an epic moment, totally unafraid; almost detached. The FLASH/LIGHT goes on, as her camera begins to VIDEO which causes the bear to charge Scarlet instead.

There's no time, the bear will be on her in an instant and there's no way to take a shot without possibly hitting her. But Billy sees a RAKE, and without hesitating he picks it up, snaps it over his leg, turning it into a sharp point.

He runs at the back of the bear as it is about to lunge on Scarlet and JAMS the SPEAR point into the base of the bear's skull, a perfect hit. The bear groans and goes down, Billy falling on top of it in a heap. James stares in disbelief at Scarlet, the bear, and then Billy. Under his breath...

JAMES

Damn.

Billy climbs up off the bear and runs over to Scarlet.

BILLY

Scarlet... You okay baby?

He looks her over like an army medic checking for wounds. Scarlet's panting, the adrenaline hitting her now and looks close to tears but then laughs, exhilarated.

SCARLET

Whooo!! What a rush!

Billy hugs her to him...

EXT. HODEN HOUSE - NIGHT

An hour later, the house is surrounded by EMERGENCY VEHICLES. A JEEP speeds in, parks. A beautiful woman gets out followed by a young MAN. The woman is **JEN BOWDEN, 38**, intense, with the strength and rugged good looks of the frontier.

But right now she's scared as she rushes into the action to find, Billy, getting his chest bandaged by a PARAMEDIC and her daughter Scarlett sitting on the hood of a fire truck, watching the video on her cell phone. Scarlet sees her.

SCARLET

Mom... you gotta see this video!

Jen grabs both Billy and Scarlet in a hug. She looks them both over, brushes hair away from Scarlet's face.

JEN

Thank god you're both okay...

(then)

Are you crazy!! What in heaven's name were you thinking...

Scarlet goes to talk, but Jen holds up her hand, don't!

JEN

I heard on the way over. You stood your ground to a charging bear?

Billy goes to say something, stops with one look from Jen.

JEN

And you, when did you start taking her on calls?

Both Billy and Scarlet look down, chastised, knowing that Jen isn't comfortable with the more "reckless" members of her family... and have heard this before. But they both know her worry is getting the better of her.

BILLY

It wasn't really a call and besides
it wasn't as bad...

And right as Billy says this, JAMES voice rises up as he RE-ENACTS the killing blow with the rake for a rapt FIREMAN.

JAMES

...snaps it over his leg like a
savage and then just ran at the
thing...

James stops, realizes the Bowden clan is staring at him, listening. Caught, Billy rolls his eyes, as the young man from the car walks up.

This is **TEDDY BOWDEN, 15**, uncomfortable in his skin, young for his age, earnest and inquisitive. Teddy slaps Scarlet on the knee, the brotherly language of "glad you're okay."

TEDDY

Mom's right. You're both crazy.
(grins)
But I'm glad you're okay...

He hugs his dad and that's when we realize, Teddy's the young man about to kill his father in the opening.

ACT ONE

EXT. BOWDEN HOUSE - NIGHT

Establishing a two story wood panel with surrounding porches on three acres. The nearest neighbor is blocked by trees.

INT. BOWDEN HOUSE - SCARLET'S ROOM - LATER

The walls of Scarlet's room are covered in photography, her own and others. Her desk overloaded with camera gear. She's getting ready for bed when Billy comes in and sits down.

BILLY

You scared me tonight. The risk
you took staring that bear down...
what were you thinking?

Scarlet thinks on it, shrugs.

SCARLET

I wasn't. It happened so fast all
I could see was the moment. I had
to get it...

And that, of course, is what scares Billy about her. He really looks at her a beat, thinking...

BILLY

You may find this hard to believe, but when I was your age, I was just like you. I had a fire in my belly... had to get it, had to get there, do something, everything. And that made me reckless. There was a man I knew, his name was Antonio and he had a 69' Cadillac. Dark turquoise, with long white side accents. He treated that car better than his mother and it was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. I wanted to drive that car. Badly. So one night, I stole it. Took it out and spun it into a tree. Totaled it. Antonio found me and beat me within an inch of my life. And he did this...

He holds up his left hand, one finger a quarter as long as it should be, a digit missing. Scarlet's shocked.

SCARLET

That's how you lost your finger?

Billy nods.

BILLY

...but it didn't change me. I didn't learn. I kept on being reckless... until I met your mother. She taught me balance, to think before I acted. She saved me, made me a better man. I want you to have that balance Scar. Don't just act. Think. You could have easily died tonight... and for what, a video?

Scarlet's taken by her father's story, not used to hearing him open up. After listening, she's more sober and shaken from the close call and lets her tough exterior down.

SCARLET

Thanks for saving me Dad. Really.

She places her forehead against his... something she hasn't done since she was little. It's a nice moment, Billy's touched. He stands to leave.

BILLY

I was serious about Tom. It's a small town, people talk and from what I hear there's nothing good to talk about. He's a roughneck, they come to work and when they're not working, they're trouble.

Scarlet nods okay and as her dad leaves she checks the Instagram on her phone.

SCARLET

10000 likes? In an hour!

BILLY

What?

SCARLET

I posted the video on Instagram. It's blowing up.

She proudly shows him her phone. Scarlet's video of Billy killing the bear to save her has over 10000 likes. Billy's shocked, but more... a little scared.

BILLY

Take it down.

SCARLET

Why?

BILLY

Just take it down... Now. Don't argue!

SCARLET

Okay, okay... all right.
(does it)
There... happy?

BILLY

(relieved)
Yes. Thank you. Night.

Scarlet looks after him a beat, surprised by his reaction, but then watches the video again amazed by what she captured.

INT. BILLY/JEN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Billy walks in, Jen sitting on their bed, ledger's spread out, glasses low on her nose...

JEN

Did you talk to her?

BILLY

I did. I think she understands how stupid that was...

(still worried)

But this didn't start tonight. She's drinking more. Getting in trouble. It started with him.

JEN

Tom qualifies as part of her bad boy phase. It's a right of passage for every girl.

(not worried)

But that girl's changing faster than the weather, she'll outgrow him in the next couple weeks.

Billy isn't so sure.

BILLY

Tom has a hold on her. He's older. More worldly. It's like one predator sniffing out another. I know how men think.

JEN

Oh... how do they think?

Billy reluctantly smiles.

BILLY

You don't want to know.

And then he notes all the ledgers laid out as he painfully takes off his shirt, bandages on his chest underneath.

BILLY

(re: ledgers)

What's up?

JEN

My mother. She's trying to creep back into Bucks. Says I'm losing money. After Dad left me the restaurant, she can't stand that part of her kingdom is being run by someone else, even me.

BILLY

Want me to bring her in? Rough her up a little?

JEN
Can you? Wait. A. Second...

Jen scoots over to him, checks his bandages.

JEN
I just remembered I'm in the presence of a real life hero. And a hero deserves a reward from his lady.

Billy grins, likes where this is going as they start to kiss.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Jen makes coffee as Teddy sits drawing a COCKATIEL in his journal, munching cereal. Jen ruffles his hair, kisses him.

JEN
Walter?

TEDDY
Yeah...

JEN
I know you still miss him.

TEDDY
He's coming back. Cockatiel's have been known to fly back to their perch...

Jen smiles and nods, of course, a knowing lie parent's sometimes tell. That bird is long gone. Billy comes in, kisses them both and sees the drawing.

BILLY
Nice. Walter. He'll be back...
(Jen gives him a look)
Scarlet already gone?

JEN
Yeah, left early. I have to go too. Pick up supplies at Costco.

Jen exits as Billy pours coffee and watches Teddy draw. Teddy can feel his father watching him and without glancing up...

TEDDY
What's up for today? A take down of Godzilla?

BILLY

Nothing that exciting.

(smiles, sits down)

I bumped into your Principle at the feed store. He said the Winter Solstice Ball's coming up. Who you planning to take?

TEDDY

They're lining up for me Dad. Hard to choose.

BILLY

What about Julie Wimcomb?

TEDDY

She moved away in first grade.

BILLY

Okay, how about Sally...?

TEDDY

Ballard. She's taking her girlfriend.

BILLY

Oh... There's gotta be someone you've had an eye on?

Teddy looks up from his cereal, gives his Dad a look...

BILLY

I see I've wandered into the "don't butt-in zone." We still on for the arcade this weekend?

TEDDY

It's more like a gaming convention. It hasn't been called an "arcade" since the 80's. You really want to do it?

BILLY

You went fishing with me, so... dark rooms, flashing lights, stale air and BO... I can't wait.

They both grin, knowing full well how different they are. Teddy stands, grabs his backpack and binoculars.

TEDDY

Awesome! Gotta get up in the perch.

Teddy exits leaving Billy to finish his coffee. Billy looks at his watch and then glances through the kitchen window at a small shed/office out back.

EXT. WEST HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Not a very large school, built in the 60's. Bundled kids pull up in trucks or are dropped off. The school has a cross section of Alaskan teen: flannel, denim, military boots, and heavy down. Native Americans and whites. A few African Americans. But everyone is a little rougher around the edges, teen boys sporting heavy beards (when possible), some girls with dated hairstyles that are now back in style.

INT. WEST HIGH SCHOOL - DETENTION - MORNING

Scarlet's sitting in morning detention with her best friend, **REB, 17**, pretty and mouthy. A few other kids are in detention with them, bored, keeping to themselves.

Scarlet has her CANON camera perched on the desk, discreetly snapping pictures of the open mouthed TEACHER playing mobile games, ignoring them. She whispers to Reb

SCARLET

I'll call it "a man in repose."

Reb snickers.

REB

Your photography's so good Scar...
you're gonna be famous with that
bear video.

Scarlet shakes her head. Nah.

REB

What happened with Kagan's Nat Geo
contest you entered?

SCARLET

Got the envelope yesterday.

REB

So...

SCARLET

Didn't open it. Rejection three
years in a row. I don't need four.
Kagan has it in for me, doesn't get
what I do.

REB

(whisper shouts)

Kagan's a tight ass from Los Angeles, thinks coming to Alaska makes her rustic or somethin'. It's National Geographic! Open the damn letter!

Scarlet looks at her, decides Reb's right. How does she know what it'll say? She takes it out of her backpack and opens. It's a rejection... UGH. Hands it to Reb. It hurts a lot more than Scarlet lets on.

SCARLET

Not going to be famous. See...

Reb quickly scans the rejection letter, undeterred. She crumples it, disgusted and pulls out her iphone. Looks for something and then Ah ha! Reb proudly holds up her phone with the bear video on Instagram.

REB

Maybe. BeigeCardigan, WorldStar, FuckJerry... all picked up your video! You're over a 150K likes. 100 times the number of folks living in this drop of water. You are gonna be famous!

Scarlet's stunned, holy crap! Then the PA system squawks, a student's voice in a droll monotone details an upcoming school event, but ends with a huge shout out to "our very own bad ass, Scarlet Bowden!" Reb gives her a vindicated look, Scarlet can't believe it and grins as we cut to:

EXT./INT. BACK SHED/OFFICE - MORNING

Billy's man-cave. A number is punched into a door lock, and Billy enters. Inside, a HOYT BOW is propped in the corner, a rack of fishing poles, a desk, and a trunk. Billy opens a drawer. Inside are half a dozen older flip cell phones. He takes one out and dials a number from memory. It doesn't work inside the shed, no signal, so he walks outside.

EXT./INT. FIRE TOWER - MORNING

A fire tower on the edge of the Bowden property. The "perch." Inside, Teddy scans for Walter using his binoculars, but no sightings of his beloved bird. He marks another day on a calendar and we see it's been almost a month. Heartbreaking.

Then he hears the door SHUT on his father's shed below, turns his binoculars to look down. He zooms in and sees BILLY coming out, locking the door behind him and making a call... with a FLIP PHONE? BILLY makes the call, listens...

BILLY

Some things happened. It's probably nothing... but we should meet. Let me know when.

Back to Teddy. We can tell by his expression he notes the phone Billy's using, it's not his Dad's. His father finishes, and does something even more odd... he breaks the phone in half and tosses it in the garbage.

Off Teddy, then... ah shit! He looks at the time, he's late, grabs his bag and climbs down the ladder... as we cut to...

EXT. TWO STORY BUILDING - TIJUANA MEXICO - EARLY MORNING

A MAN carrying a bag of food, climbs up a rusted fire escape entering through a window into a second floor apartment...

INT. SECOND STORY APARTMENT - TIJUANA - EARLY MORNING

...where three FEDERAL AGENTS sit. A DEA jacket thrown over a chair. They wear headsets, the CONVERSATION they're listening to in Spanish. Some kind of surveillance.

Behind the AGENTS, a MAN and a WOMAN huddle over a map, weapons at their hips, also cops but not wearing the DEA jackets. They are wearing headsets, listening to the surveillance but arguing about something back and forth on a PAD of paper.

RALLY WHITE, 48, the kind of guy who hates details, POINTS at a location on a MAP. **ANN POLLARD, 35**, African American, top of every class she's ever been in. And details are the only thing she likes.

She shakes her head, and WRITES IN SHARPIE: *Didn't want the south.* Rally points to another location, Detroit. Ann WRITES: *She said nothing cold. Detroit is COLD.*

RALLY

(whispers)

Grand Rapids it is. We're not travel agents.

And then something in the steady stream of SPANISH conversation in their ears catches Rally's attention, a NAME. He nods to one of the DEA agents, who pulls off his headset.

RALLY
 (quietly)
 What was that name? Just now.

DEA AGENT
 Guille Ortiz...

RALLY
 And the context?

DEA AGENT
 Said they saw him...

Rally takes it in, thinking. The AGENT gives him an address.

DEA AGENT
 She'll meet you at this address.
 It's an old cantina, in the La
 Presa district. Three PM. Sharp.

Rally stands and nods to Ann.

RALLY
 Let's go.

ANN
 What's with the name?

RALLY
 Guille's Spanish for William...

Which seems to mean something to both of them.

EXT./INT. JEN'S TRUCK - MORNING

Jen pulls up to BUCKS, loaded with supplies from Costco.

BUCKS is her diner: large plate glass windows, booths, neon sign, serves beer and wine at night. It's like a time capsule from another era and right now, two LARGE EIGHTEEN WHEELERS are parked out front completely blocking the diner from street view, casting it in shade.

Jen gets out holding paper towels under an arm. WTF? **JOSE, 30**, Jen's Puerto Rican cook waits for her out front.

JEN
 What's going on?

JOSE
 These trucks. They've been here
 all morning...
 (MORE)

JOSE (CONT'D)
 (rolls his eyes)
 Momma strikes again!

Jen notes there's no waitress inside.

JEN
 And where's Josey?

JOSE
 Never showed.

Fuck. Jen glares at the trucks, her back way up. Then she looks across the street to a WAREHOUSE/BUILDING. BUCK'S TRUCKING is plastered across the front of it.

INT. WAREHOUSE - BUCK'S TRUCKING - MORNING

Jen storms in, forgetting she still carries the paper towels. She passes workers, trucks, equipment and stacked boxes ready to load. She's on a mission to the back of the warehouse and an office. Her mother's.

INT. WINONA'S OFFICE - MORNING

Standing behind a desk is a dark-haired woman. The lady is formidable, born and raised in the wilds of Alaska and speaks with purpose. She's going through invoices. This is **WINONA BUCK, 60**, Jen's mother and the matriarch of Karoke.

JEN
 Nice move.

WINONA
 Pardon me?

JEN
 Parking your trucks out front of the diner. You say I'm losing money so why not speed it up by making sure new customers passing through can't find the place.

WINONA
 You're losing the regulars sweetie... not enough newcomers to make up for that. But there's no conspiracy here. We had a couple extra loads up from Juneau and nowhere to park the trucks. We'll get 'em moved soon.

JEN

Good. And where's Josey? I spoke to her this morning. She was on her way in.

WINONA

Oh, well, I sent her home.

JEN

What? You can't do that!

WINONA

She was happy to get the day off. And frankly, not a moment too soon. She looked like she was rode hard and put away wet.

JEN

Mom!

WINONA

She did! Don't know why you hired her. That girl's two sandwiches shy of a picnic.

JEN

You can't just send my workers home. It's my restaurant now... you have the trucking company.

Winona puts down the clip board.

WINONA

I hate trucking. Crates, schedules and dust. Somethin's picked up from point A and delivered to point B. Too impersonal.

JEN

Well that's how Pop wanted it.

WINONA

Pop didn't know what he wanted without asking me... and frankly what kind of world do we live in that a man gets to carve up a family's life work like it was his right alone.

(beat)

I built "your restaurant" before there ever was a trucking company. Or a twinkle in your father's eye.

Beat. Jen's not going to dance.

JEN

If the trucks aren't gone in twenty minutes, I'll have them towed.

Jen turns to leave... Winona changes tack.

WINONA

Okay... you're right. I'm sorry. You're short staffed because of me. Let me help out Jen. Just for today.

Jen thinks for a beat, she is short now and relents a millimeter, but knows her mother... Off her look.

WINONA

And I'll move the trucks right now.

JEN

Just for today?

Winona nods, pleased. Jen realizes she's still holding the paper towels, hands them to Winona. They exit together...

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - MORNING

It's the police office we saw in the beginning, but this time it has people. Actually, just two. James is at his desk on the phone and **WENDY, 35**, is at her "dispatch center" better known as a single radio and computer.

Billy enters, hangs his jacket and gets some coffee as he glances over at Wendy.

BILLY

Morning... anything happening?

WENDY

(reading from her list)
Well, the Jerome brothers are fighting over their fence line again. Mrs. Chucker wants you to attend her daughter's wedding. And the ladies Rotary Club is complaining that old Winston Spool is nude sun-bathing again across the street from where they lunch.

BILLY

Tell the Jerome's that if I have to come out again, I choose the fence line, and they're not going to like it. And didn't I attend Chucker's wedding last year?

WENDY

That you did. Already divorced and onto husband number two.

BILLY

And if Spool can spend any time outside in this weather naked... more power to him.

WENDY

Thought you'd say that. You may need to run by and tell the ladies yourself.

James hangs up the phone.

JAMES

Gunn retail got hit last night. Another robbery.

BILLY

That's four in a month and half.

JAMES

This one was different... Reggie Gunn said he got beaten up pretty bad. He was talking gibberish like he had a concussion, but refused to go to the hospital. I said we'd head right over.

As they talk, a news VAN pulls up out front, a journalist and cameraman get out. Billy turns to Wendy, non-plussed.

WENDY

Oh, they're from Nome. Called this morning wanting to interview you about the bear attack. I said sure, come on down!

Billy's immediately concerned.

BILLY

How'd they hear about it?

WENDY

Ed the paramedic has a big mouth.
You tell him somethin' at
breakfast, you gotta expect a few
hundred people are gonna know it by
lunch. Besides, I think his cousin
is the weather girl over there.

Billy's short with her.

BILLY

Stall... And tell them no
interviews!
(he nods to James)
Let's go.

Billy and James bolt down a hall just missing the pretty
journalist and exiting through a side door as we cut to...

EXT. CANTINA - LA PRESA - TIJUANA - DAY

Ann sits in her car with Rally. It's a run down part of
Tijuana, old town, mostly empty with no cars traveling these
alley-like streets. Rally scans the front of a corner
CANTINA, white stucco, smudged and dirty. He's alert. Ann's
relaxed, looking at her phone.

ANN

God, that food smells delicious.
I'm hungry.

RALLY

I want to throw up...
(off her look)
Always feel that way before a job.

ANN

You're acting like it's your first
time down here... how long have you
been doing this anyway?

RALLY

Long enough to know every time is
the first time.

Ann shrugs, flips through pictures on her phone. And then
clicks on a video as shock and realization creeps over her
face from something she sees.

RALLY

What?

She stops the video on an image and hands the phone to Rally.

ANN

Isn't that who I think it is?

Rally stares at the phone, shocked. We see it's Scarlet's video of BILLY and the BEAR.

ANN

It's on my sister's Facebook.

Rally shakes his head.

RALLY

Fucking Billy Bowden. Now it makes sense. We're going to need to deal with him...

Then he looks at his watch. Three PM. It's go time and he gets out of the car.

ACT TWO

EXT./INT. GUNN RETAIL - DAY

Billy and James walk up to GUNN RETAIL. Over the door it reads, "Have Gunn, will travel." The front window shattered.

The gun store is owned by one **REGGIE GUNN, 60**, a tall, stoic American Indian, who speaks slowly, with a deeply lined faced and one white eye from cataracts. Reggie has a bandage on the right side of his face.

BILLY

How you doing Reggie?

REGGIE

Been better days...

As Billy speaks, James pokes around.

BILLY

You up for talking about it?

REGGIE

Yeah... I was coming back from Red Water, just like I do every Tuesday. Had a good night, heavy with winnings. Well, I came in, locked the door... when three guys busted through the glass.

(points at bandage)

Did this. Took my money and my safe, which had everything. Every dime I ever made in it.

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)
(off Billy's look)
Don't trust banks.

JAMES
Your camera's up last night?

Reggie nods to a black and white monitor on the counter.
James takes a look at the footage.

BILLY
How much you win at Red Water?

REGGIE
Oh, don't know... maybe... a
thousand.

BILLY
And in the safe?

REGGIE
Thirty grand and change.

Billy looks at the weapons in cases, on walls, untouched.

BILLY
Did you get a look at 'em?

REGGIE
There were three. Wearing gloves,
masks. Each mask was different.
Old white movie stars. Clark Gable
beat the shit out of me. But it
mighta been Gary Cooper. They all
look the same to me.

James finishes with the camera footage.

JAMES
Not much here, they avoided the
cameras for the most part. Clark
Gable did Reggie.
(he notices something)
But one of the genius' left a foot
print.

Billy and James take a look... it's mud mixed with something
BLACK. Billy touches it, it's sticky and dense.

BILLY
Tar?

James takes a sample, Billy stands, looks around.

BILLY

Odd they didn't touch the guns.
Reggie has an AR 15 over there
which can be modified to full auto
and sold on the black market. It's
the drug dealer's weapon of choice.
Worth taking in my mind.

JAMES

Doubles the time served... burglary
is one thing. Trafficking guns?
Harsher sentence.

James notices something mixed in the broken glass. He picks
it up. It's an ID of one SAM WOHLD.

JAMES

Seems Sam was here.

REGGIE

That kid? Rotten to the core...

JAMES

I went to high school with him...
he was nothing but bad news. And he
always hated the "Injuns."

Billy takes it in... refers to Reggie's face.

BILLY

Get that looked at Reg. We'll be
back to you.

EXT. GUNN RETAIL - DAY

Billy and James walk to the car. Billy stops, looks back.

JAMES

What's on your mind?

BILLY

Never met a gambler that didn't
know exactly how much he won on any
given night.

JAMES

He's old and took a hit to the
head. Besides, how do you know
that? You don't gamble.

BILLY

(winks)
I know people.

They climb into the SUV.

INT. CANTINA - LA PRESA - TIJUANA - DAY

Rally enters the cantina, glances around. The place is empty except for a woman, **CICI HERNANDEZ, 36**, quietly sitting with her son, **CARLOS, 6**. Cici is a beautiful woman, put together, has money. Mother and son only have water on the table. Rally slides into the booth across from them.

CICI
Mr. White?

RALLY
Yes. Do you have the hard drive?

Cici nods, clearly uncomfortable and slides a package over to Rally. Rally checks it, good.

CICI
Has everything been arranged for me
and my son?

RALLY
Yes.

Cici is frightened, a feeling of great danger hangs over the scene, but the one Rally focuses on is Carlos. He notes the little boy is scared too, his hands shaking, has his TOY STORY backpack on, his most cherished possessions with him.

Rally puts out his hand, the boy tentatively shakes.

RALLY
I'm a Woody fan myself but you seem
like a Buzz Lightyear kind of guy.

CARLOS
(shakes his head)
No. Woody's my favorite.

Carlos unwinds a tiny bit, liking this man.

CARLOS
Are you arresting my Momma?

Rally gives him a reassuring smile.

RALLY
It's complicated. But I know one
thing, you're going to be okay. I
promise. You're safe with me.

Rally takes a look around the restaurant to see if anyone is paying attention to them as we cut outside to Ann...

EXT. CANTINA - LA PRESA - ALLEY - DAY

Ann sits in her car keeping an eye out... when she hears the SOUND of a MOTORCYCLE turning the corner behind her in a hurry. It ROARS by her car, two MEN on the bike wearing black helmets, the passenger holding a MACHINE GUN. Ann reacts immediately, speaks into her radio.

ANN

We have company... move!

She slams the CAR in reverse and pulls away from the CANTINA down the alley.

INT. PIZZARIA - DAY

...Rally gets the message in his ear mic. Rally stands suddenly and barks at Cici.

RALLY

We need to go. Now!

CICI

What?! Oh my God! No, no...

Carlos is alarmed but Rally picks up the child and moves Cici towards the back, by the kitchen. But it's too late, the men have entered, still wearing the helmets and see them. They open FIRE, spraying bullets into the swinging kitchen doors just as Rally hustles mother and son through...

EXT. BACK ALLEY OF CANTINA - SAME

Rally, Carlos and Cici explode out the back as Ann pulls the car up. Rally grabs a 2 x 4 from the garbage and blocks the ramshackle door as Carlos and Cici pile into the car. SLAM! The men hit the door, it nearly gives.

Then BLAM, HOLES are blown through the door, throwing Rally to the side. Rally jumps into the car just as the two men run out, but Ann's vehicle is already out of sight around the corner...

INT. BUCKS - DAY

The diner is busy. A combination of locals, all wearing flannel, caps and boots. Also, it's a heavy trucker's hang out as they head north, a place for good food and coffee.

The walls have black and white photos of the town's history and the people who've lived here. In addition, a number of travel posters to exotic locales that don't fit the decor: Paris, Bali. Jen and Winona are behind the counter.

We can see Winona's in her element, knows EVERYONE, their history, who they are. She missed this.

WINONA

Why'd you move everything around?
The condiments? I can't find
anything...

JEN

They took up too much counter
space.
(points where they are)
Wasn't efficient.

WINONA

And the menu? Reads foreign to me
now. Tortilla de Patatas... what
the heck is that?

JEN

It's a Spanish potato omelet Mom.
Jose added a few items.

Winona casts a suspicious glance over her shoulder at Jose in the kitchen. He returns the stare, two ally cats who don't like each other.

WINONA

I'm sure he took a few away as
well...
(beat)
No wonder people aren't coming in.
Everything's changed. And I don't
know why you let Ray go.

JEN

I found him lying in the freezer in
his own vomit. He's a drunk.

WINONA

Everyone deserves a second chance.

HANK
More coffee!

An onery TRUCKER, HANK, 38, rude, thinks he owns the place, holds up his empty cup. Jen fills it up.

JEN
Easy there Hank...

Then, someone Winona's known her whole life, **JUDGE FREDERICK BOONER, 65**, enters. He's a bow tie wearing, maximum sentencing kind of judge, but today he's decked out in cold weather fishing gear.

BOONER
I'll be damned, Winona... you're back?

WINONA
Just for the day Booner. Fishing?

BOONER
The ice has finally thickened up.

WINONA
(winks)
I'll get your usual.

Winona, cocky, happy to get his order, when Jen pulls her aside.

JEN
He gets the Hawaiian ham and cheese now.

WINONA
Hawaiian what? Not the roast beef? The man has ordered that every week for twenty years?

JEN
He changed his mind.

As simple a thing as that is, Winona's embarrassed as she watches Jen put his new order together. Oh... Winona doesn't like that one bit.

INT. WEST HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Teddy's walking to class, keeping to himself when he sees the TORVALD brothers, 15, nerd elites and the only members of the chess club. Yes, it's a small chess club in Karoke. He makes an about face, hoping they didn't see him, but...

TORVALD 1
Bbbbbbbowwwddddeeeen....

TORVALD 2
Where you going? Hold up.

TEDDY
Can you guys j...jjjjjj...usttt...
sssttttoooo...

And we realize Teddy has a stutter when he's nervous. He flees into the bathroom to escape but they follow... as...

Scarlet walks with Reb to class, getting a ton of new looks: kids high-five her, a group of pretty girls smile, tell her the video was way too cool, amazing. She's not used to the attention, but Reb loves it.

REB
Yeah, she's my best friend. Since we were two.

And then Scarlett sees Teddy disappearing into the boy's bathroom followed by the Torvalds.

SCARLET
(to Reb)
I'll catch you later.

INT. WEST HIGH - BATHROOM - DAY

The brothers stand outside a stall, Teddy inside, as they harass him through the door and over the wall.

TORVALD 1
Cooooommmmm outttt....
Teddddyyyy..

One throws a toilet roll at Teddy's head just as Scarlet walks in.

SCARLET
You have five seconds to get out of here before I maim you nerds for life.

Five, four... and they're gone. She gently raps on Teddy's bathroom stall.

SCARLET
It's all clear.

The door creeps open, Teddy excruciatingly embarrassed that his sister had to protect him. Again.

TEDDY

You're in the boy's bathroom.

SCARLET

That's the thanks I get?

She hands him his backpack.

SCARLET

My God T, how far down the food chain are you to be harassed by the co-chairs of the chess club.

TEDDY

Rock bottom. Thanks for reminding me.

Scarlet immediately regrets saying that as she sees it hurts him. She loves her brother fiercely and so she pivots, puts an arm around him.

SCARLET

But none of this will matter when they're cleaning toilets at your start up.

He relishes the thought, grins.

TEDDY

True.

SCARLET

Come on.

INT. WEST HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - SAME

As they walk.

TEDDY

Have you ever seen Dad with a flip phone?

SCARLET

Maybe in the olden days... I think he has a Samsung now.

TEDDY

That's what I thought.

SCARLET

Why?

TEDDY

No reason. See ya...

As he walks off, it's clear, Scarlet worries about him.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Billy sits in his office working on his computer. We see what he's looking at: Scarlet's bear video. It's been picked up by other sites. One has 1.1 million views. Another 657k views.

He clicks on the VIDEO and we watch a few moments of the dynamic, incredible footage. And we can see Billy clearly, hear his voice and it's evident that so can anyone else watching it. There's no way not to recognize him...

Billy's deeply concerned as James walks.

JAMES

Everything okay?

BILLY

Yeah. Fine. What do you have?

JAMES

I sent the sample to the lab, but Hank's bunions are flaring up again. It could take awhile. But I did get Sam Would's new address.

BILLY

Good. Let's go pay him a visit.

Billy stands just as Wendy rushes in.

WENDY

Jen just called. There's some kinda emergency at Bucks. She didn't give me any details but you gotta get over there!

Shit. Billy and James rush out...

EXT. BUCKS - NIGHT

Billy and James pull up in the SUV. It's dark, no one in the restaurant. What the hell?! Billy jumps out, runs inside...

INT. BUCKS - NIGHT

SURPRISE!! It's a birthday party for Billy. And they totally got him. There's balloons, cake, food and drink.

Teddy, Jen, Winona and Scarlet are all there, grinning at their gotcha! James laughs, he was in on it...

JAMES

Man, the look on your face!

Billy's embarrassed, but happy. He kisses Jen, hugs her.

BILLY

Nice one.

JEN

Happy Birthday baby.

Scarlet and Teddy give him a hug.

TEDDY

Did we really get you?

BILLY

Dead to rights.

And he sees Winona.

BILLY

Hello Winona. Back at work today?

We can tell he treats his mother in law like a rattler that might strike at any moment.

WINONA

Happy Birthday Billy.

SMASH CUT TO: Billy blowing out candles to cheers. He grins, genuinely happy.

BILLY

It's nice to be thirty again...

They laugh and we hear.

SCARLET

Oh my God!

The room glances up at a TV where CNN is playing on mute and they see Scarlet's video playing of her dad and the bear, the reporter talking. Scarlet scrambles and turns up the volume.

REPORTER

...it was an incredibly heroic moment, where a father, the Sheriff of a small Alaskan town, saved his daughter from being killed by a bear with nothing but a garden rake. Katey Williams has more from our Nome affiliate...

Billy's face is plastered across the world. The room cheers, all except for Billy. He stares at the video playing on CNN and looks like he's seen a ghost. Winona catches his outsized reaction and so does Teddy. And off that SCREEN in BUCKS we cut to another screen. In another country...

INT. MANSION - MEXICO - NIGHT

... where a MAN sits alone in an opulent living room, having a brandy. He's flipping channels, stops on CNN and drops the glass he's holding. It shatters on the floor as he stares in disbelief. He dials his cell phone.

MAN

Turn on CNN. The dead have risen.

The man is **MIGUEL ORTIZ, 42**, Hispanic, with sad eyes and a kind, charismatic face. He's as shocked as Billy is scared.

ACT THREE

EXT. TRAILER PARK - OUTSKIRTS OF KAROKE - MORNING

Billy and James pull into a trailer park. It's poor, satellite dishes on top of rusted out trailers, power lines run through cracks in windows connecting to the poles above.

They stop at one particularly run down trailer, get out. As Billy and James approach, they see a MAN climbing out a back window and give chase.

Weaving in and out, cutting between trailers, Billy finally tackles the man. Meet SAM WOULD, 37. Drug addled and thin, tatted up. Billy pushes him back against a trailer.

SAM

Okay... what'd the hell I do?

BILLY

You coulda asked that at the door.

James holds up SAM'S ID.

JAMES

You left this at Gunns after
beating the shit out of Reggie and
ripping him off.

SAM

What? No, no, no... No way.
That's not me. Well, it is me, but
I didn't do it. I swear.

JAMES

There were two others with you...
who are they?

SAM

I'm telling you, it wasn't me!
Look, I don't know how that ID got
there... must of been stolen.
(agitated)
And besides, that creepy old
Indian's had it out for me for
years. You should know that.

BILLY

Why?

SAM

I did some work for him... painted
his shop. But he's a cheap
motherfucker, super tight and never
paid me, said my work was shit.
Which it wasn't. So... I put out
the windshield on his truck. And I
did my time for it too. It was ten
years ago but he never forgets...
every time I see him he gives me
that white stink eye.

He's all out of steam, scared and clearly telling the truth.

SAM

And I may be dumb, but not dumb
enough to rip off a guy owns a gun
shop.

BILLY

Get out of here.

Sam scurries back to his trailer as James turns to Billy.

JAMES

The guy's guilty as hell.

BILLY
Something doesn't sit right.

JAMES
You don't know him like I do. He's a racist just like his red-neck father before him. It's in his blood. Probably hated the fact Reggie has money.

BILLY
Seems convenient that a guy who hates Indians rips off a gun store owned by an Indian and leaves his ID.

(starts walking to car)
But he said one thing that stood out... Reggie's tight. Which gives me an idea.

James isn't so sure... but follows...

EXT. RED WATER CASINO - TLINGIT INDIAN RESERVATION - DAY

In the middle of a frozen wasteland, RED WATER CASINO, flashes neon and gold. It's a modern structure, with a huge parking lot. The Sheriff SUV pulls into a space.

INT. RED WATER CASINO - DAY

Billy and James cross the main floor, the casino crowded with blackjack tables, roulette and a whole lot of slots. A mix of people, drinking, smoking, all look up at the Sheriff as he passes.

Billy's uncomfortable with the attention, wondering if it's because of the video. Then Billy spots who he came to see... NATE NEDORA, 30, American Indian, handsome, polished, wearing a bolo neck tie. He's the General Manager.

NATE
Billy... What can I do for you?

BILLY
We need information on Reggie Gunn.

NATE
What kind?

BILLY

He said he was here the other night. Tuesday. Says he comes every week, same night.

NATE

Yeah, he's a club member. Gold star regular. Loves the tables.

BILLY

How'd he do?

NATE

You know I can't share that information.

BILLY

Can't or won't?

NATE

Does it matter? Corporate policy.

Billy stops, glances around. He stands next to a SLOT MACHINE, GOGOGO blinking on the screen. As Nate and James watch, he walks over and gives it a shove, then another, lifting it just an inch or so off the ground each time. One last time, he stops, comes back to Nate.

BILLY

You've got your slots weighted in the back left corner. Maybe a pound or so. Just enough to throw off the wheel... gives the house a what, extra 30% chance of winning?

Nate's smile is frozen, not giving anything away.

NATE

That would be illegal.

BILLY

I can have the state inspectors here in about three hours. Just say the word.

NATE

Hold on.

Nate walks over to a table, talks to a FEMALE pit boss. She looks something up on a laptop. Nate walks back.

NATE

Tuesday night, he lost. Five hundred and sixty seven dollars.

Billy and James look at one another. Reggie lied. Nate walks away, not too happy...

JAMES

You know the craziest shit Billy...
weighted slot machines, black
market guns. You sure you were
never a big city cop?

BILLY

I'm sure.

JAMES

But you think Reggie had a part in
getting beaten up and ripped of?

BILLY

Not yet. But why lie about his
winnings?

(beat)

Reggie's got more story to tell.
And who are the guys in the masks?

INT. WEST HIGH - DAY

Scarlet's at football practice, her camera set up on a tripod, taking pictures of players, just at the moment of impact, the pain of getting hit on the athlete's faces. It's her odd sensibility of capturing uncomfortable moments.

Scarlet hears someone come up and turns to find JESSICA KAGAN, 35, pretty and hip, the photography teacher, as well as head of the statewide Nat Geo art and photo contest she's been entering the last three years. She motions towards Scarlet's camera.

JESSICA

Can I?

Jessica sees what she's photographing.

JESSICA

You have an eye Scarlet...but
mostly for the strange and
disquieting.

SCARLET

I know. It's why I never make the
contest.

JESSICA

Last year you submitted a photo of
a cadaver.

SCARLET

I photograph the things people don't want to see. It's the point of my art.

JESSICA

But it was one of your classmate's family members.

Scarlet doesn't have an answer to that one...

JESSICA

But I did see your bear video. Which seems to perfectly encapsulate what we are trying to achieve this year with Nat Geo... being a witness to nature vis a vis modern man.

(smiles)

A screen grab at sixteen seconds would be perfect. Will you enter that in the contest?

Scarlet glances around, not sure she's talking to her, can't believe it, then realizes it's just the two of them.

SCARLET

Of course! Thank you!

She holds in a scream until Jessica walks away. Pumped up from all that is happening for her from that one video, Scarlet quickly collects her things.

She's on her way home across the football field when she sees TOM SUTTON (we won't know this is Tom yet, just think a really handsome guy is with her friend) talking to Reb, clearly waiting for her. For a moment, Scarlet grins, excited to share her news and walks toward them... then stops, her Dad's words ringing in her ears. She makes a choice, walking the other way, dodging Tom and Reb.

INT. BOWDEN HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Teddy warms up a burrito and as he waits, impatient, he glances outside at the garbage and gets an idea... And we CUT TO Teddy digging through the garbage, finding the broken flip phone. He grabs both halves and we cut to:

INT. TEDDY'S ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Teddy's lair is packed to the gills, filled with comic books, junk, toys.

And it's a tech haven with two computers he built. A soldering iron, sophisticated legos, telescope, a PS4. And sadly an empty bird cage, Walter's former home.

He looks at the input for the phone, finds an appropriate cord and plugs one end into the phone the other into his computer. CODE comes up. He types, and gets an ERROR message. Tries again, and reboots the phone, scrolling through. It's completely blank, except for one number. Must be the one his father called. He grabs his home phone and dials it. It rings and rings and finally a woman answers.

WOMAN

Revel Cleaners. Can I help you?

TEDDY

Where are you located?

WOMAN

Kansas.

Teddy hangs up. Off his confused look we cut to:

INT. BUCKS - EARLY EVENING

Scarlet sitting at the counter, chowing as she tells her mother the news. The place is quiet at the moment, just Mom, daughter and a couple truckers.

SCARLET

I couldn't believe it... she came to tell me herself! To enter a still from my bear video. It's gotta mean I have a shot at winning!

JEN

That's so great Scarlet! Really...

But we sense the slightest holding back, the slightest unhappiness in Jen. Scarlet misses it.

SCARLET

Maybe, I don't know, it could turn into a career or something. Can you imagine, me, a photographer for a travel magazine, or, even, National Geographic!

JEN

I can imagine it...

SCARLET

The guy who won last year got a full scholarship to an art academy in Milan!

JEN

Good for you baby. Amazing.

Suddenly, we hear a woman's RAISED voice. A man yelling back in SPANISH.

SCARLET

Is that grandma? What's she doing here?

JEN

Josey called in sick. Again.

Jen goes in back to find Winona squared off against Jose.

JOSE

Crazy momma is saying I steal!

WINONA

He is. He orders two of everything and takes one home with him. Now we know one of the reasons you're losing money...

JOSE

Not true! I use everything!

Jen looks at Jose, then at her mom.

JEN

Go home Mom. You're done.

Winona's shocked, incredulous and embarrassed, but leaves with her head held high without saying a word.

JEN

I'm sorry Jose...

Jen follows Winona out and watches her exit, everyone in the place watching.

SCARLET

Did you just fire grandma?

JEN

Not a moment too soon...

INT. BILLY/JEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Billy sits up in bed, jolted awake by a dream. He gets up and walks to the window. He parts the drapes and looks out front, sees a NEWS VAN parked down the street. A new one. Clearly, another town has sent journalists, not just Juneau and Nome... the story seems to be growing even more.

JEN

What are you doing?

BILLY

Another news van just drove by...
They're not leaving.

JEN

Because you won't talk to them. Do
a couple interviews and it'll pass.
Now come to bed.

Off Billy's worried face, he gets back into bed.

EXT./INT. BOWDEN HOUSE - MORNING

Scarlet and Teddy are already off to school. And Jen throws her stuff together to get to work, when she sees a car pulling up. **WADE BENSON, 50**, gets out. African American, professorial, with a tweed jacket and dark rimmed glasses. He walks up, knocks. Jen's rushing out and answers the door.

WADE

Hello. Mrs. Bowden?

JEN

Yes.

WADE

I'm Wade Benson. And I'm with Time
magazine.

Wade is charming, intelligent. They shake hands and he gives her his TIME Magazine card.

WADE

Sorry to drop in on you like this,
but I'm doing a story on American
Heroes and I'd love to include your
husband.

JEN

Time magazine. Wow.

WADE

Small town America is where heroes
are born...

(MORE)

WADE (CONT'D)

and a true life story of a Sheriff saving his daughter with his bare hands during a bear attack deserves recognition. I had to come meet the man myself...

Jen grins, excited...

JEN

Please come in. I was rushing out but I think we have some coffee made up.

WADE

That would be nice. Thank you. And it would be wonderful if I could sit down with you both...

But as Jen turns she finds Billy watching them from the stairs. He's still, overheard their conversation. Billy quickly moves past Wade...

WADE

Mr. Bowden? I'm Wade...

BILLY

Sorry. Not interested.

...on his way to the car, leaving Jen and Wade staring after him, Jen surprised by his abruptness.

JEN

I'm so sorry Mr. Benson... he isn't usually like that.

WADE

Please. Call me Wade.

JEN

Wade. Let me work on him. He's a very private man.

WADE

Of course. I understand. You have my card, reach out to me whenever.

He begins to exit and stops.

WADE

By the way... there's an exciting story here that could warrant a cover.

Jen even more impressed as she closes the door...

INT. HALLWAY - LOS ANGELES - MORNING

...and another door opens. Rally, Cici and Carlos race into the hallway followed by Ann. They look as if they slept in their clothes, driving all night, but move quickly.

Rally knocks on a door at the end of the hallway and the door opens to reveal **TWO MEN**, FEDERAL OFFICERS. They stand aside for Cici...

CICI

Thank you Mr. White.

Rally nods to her, but before Carlos follows, Rally drops down next to him, gives him a big man shake, and tells him in his best Tom Hank's impression as Woody...

RALLY

"You're my favorite Deputy Carlos."

(beat)

You're going to be okay...

Carlos grins, nods, grateful and follows Cici inside the room... As Rally looks after him, something about the boy hitting him in the heart and he absentmindedly says to himself, "there's a snake in my boot." Rally turns to Ann.

RALLY

You okay?

He finds his partner cold, detached and she is, standing back, looking relaxed after nearly getting shot. The woman has guts, he'll give her that. She nods, fine.

ANN

Buzz was my favorite.

RALLY

Figures.

Rally takes out his phone for the first time since we met him and he has a message. He plays it and we hear Billy's VOICE, the message he left earlier...

BILLY OC

Somethings happened. It's probably nothing... but we should meet. Let me know when.

Rally looks at Ann.

RALLY

Speak of the devil.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - MORNING

Billy arrives in a bad mood. James gets off the phone.

JAMES

Hank finally got around to analyzing the footprint. And he was kinda irritated we wasted his time.

BILLY

Why?

JAMES

The sample's just your run of the mill mud, silt and tar. He said if we wanna go sleuthing for it, might as well check out the whole state and every river bed in it.

"Every river bed..." Billy thinks. That single detail gives him an idea.

BILLY

Let's go.

EXT./INT. FORDHAM RIVER - DAY

Billy and James drive along a scenic river and as they come around a bend, they pull up to TWO HOUSEBOATS, linked together on Fordham river. They are run down, beaten up frat houses, a couple trucks parked out front.

JAMES

You think the roughnecks are involved with Reggie on this? Seems like two things that don't mix... Ever. Why would they?

BILLY

It's always worth asking.

A few men, ranging from 18-22, watch from porches as the SUV parks. These are tough young men, hardened, dangerous but also handsome, sexy. They work the oil derricks 6 months a year, one of the toughest jobs in the world.

It feels a lot like approaching a pack of hungry wolves as Billy and James walk over. Cold, suspicious stares. Billy looks at the ground, and he sees dark tar intermixed with mud. The same they saw in the footprint at the gun shop.

BILLY

How you doing today?

No answer.

BILLY

Don't suppose anyone'd here would
like to tell me where they were
three nights ago. Tuesday.

One HUGE roughneck, MALEK, 20, walks over holding an axe from
cutting wood, threateningly.

MALEK

We were here. Having a fiesta.

Two more roughnecks follow him, trying to intimidate.

MALEK

But Sheriff, you oughta know
that... your daughter was here with
her sweet little ass.

A long beat, James shuffles, uh oh, as Billy stares at the
men. Then...

BILLY

Now... you had to bring up my
daughter.

And before they know what hit them, Billy slams Malek into a
parked truck, breaking his nose, another taken down with a
bent arm, while the last takes an elbow to the head.
Something professional, incredibly violent about the way
Billy handles them. The other roughnecks back off.

JAMES

(deadpan)
You done Sheriff?

Billy nods, looks at the rest of the men.

BILLY

Where's Tom Sutton?

TOM OC

Here...

The good looking man we saw with REB steps out from the
house. **TOM SUTTON, 19**, has a fierce intelligence in his eyes
and total confidence. He's cocky.

BILLY

(to James)
Wait here.

And he walks past TOM, doesn't ask, just goes inside. Tom follows.

INT. HOUSE BOAT - SAME

Inside, Billy sees a 9MM on the table.

BILLY

You have a license for that?

TOM

Yeah...

Billy picks it up, checks the slide, removes the clip, all handled like a pro, his movements trained. He loads the clip and sits down across from Tom.

As he speaks the gun rests in his lap, ominously.

Billy's eyes track the room, sucking in information, but he ignores why they're there and instead...

BILLY

In parts of Mexico, actually all over South America, there are families where a man's name is everything. It means status, wealth, safety. And a man's daughter is the key to his name, a signal of his virtue, the purity of his family. When a daughter is corrupted by a man who isn't good enough, beneath her, that man is killed in more horrible ways than I care to think about... dragged behind a car, vanished in the night, lit on fire inside a stack of old tires in the center of town.

TOM

Glad I don't live in backasswards Mexico. Sounds medieval.

BILLY

Seems like it's from another century, but it's not.

Billy stands, walks over to the tv, looks at the DVD's there.

BILLY

I don't want you to see Scarlet again. Ever. Do you understand?

Tom isn't scared of a cop, threats or no, but he nods.

TOM

Yes.

Billy places the gun on the table. As he exits...

BILLY

Where were you on Tuesday night?

TOM

Here... watching movies.

BILLY

Alone?

TOM

No.

BILLY

What movie did you watch?

TOM

Citizen Kane.

EXT./INT. POLICE SUV - SAME

Billy and James walk back to the truck.

BILLY

Write this down.

James pulls out his pad.

BILLY

7GW39373648AO.

(beat)

It's the serial to Sutton's gun.
Run it through the database. See
where he bought it.

They climb into the SUV and drive away.

BILLY

And come back here later. Keep an
eye on them, see who comes and
goes.

JAMES

Will do.

BILLY
 Tomorrow we'll have Reggie come in
 to talk some more.

James nods as Billy drops James off at his car down the road.

JAMES
 Did Sutton say anything of
 interest?

BILLY
 He likes classic movies...

INT. POLICE SUV - DAY

Billy drives back into town, deep in thought. On the radio, we hear talk of a historic winter on its way. And then something grabs his attention.

He pulls off the road and parks, gets out. He walks up to a fence, and sees a YELLOW RIBBON tied to a post. Billy glances around to see if he's being watched, and pulls the yellow ribbon down. He puts it in his pocket, gets back in his car and drives away.

INT. ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH - DAY

Billy walks into the church and crosses himself like a true Catholic. He then goes into confessional. A moment later a **PRIEST, 30**, climbs into the confessional next to him.

BILLY
 Bless me Father, for I have sinned.
 It's been...

He pauses.

BILLY
 I can't remember my last
 confession.

PRIEST
 Too long Billy. Too long. Go on...

BILLY
 I accuse myself of the following
 sins...

A long beat, this is coming from a deep, deep place. It's hard to say... then...

BILLY
I lied to my wife, I lied to my
daughter, I lied to my son...

PRIEST
What kind of lies?

BILLY
(beat)
The kind that leave a mark.

Billy goes silent.

BILLY
That's all I can say.

PRIEST
That's all?

BILLY
Yes.

PRIEST
I absolve you of your sins. Say
the prayer of contrition ten times
a day for the next week. May God
bless you and keep you.
(beat)
And come back to see me more Billy.

Billy sits a moment, taking in the silence, listening to the
Father's footsteps move away and then he takes out a knife.
Pop. Pries up a floor board at his feet, shines his small
flashlight into the opening. We see BUNDLED MONEY, a lot of
money, dust and cobwebs. It's been there a long time. He
takes the money and exits.

ACT FOUR

INT. DINER - NOME - MORNING

Teddy and Billy walk in, sit down. Billy takes off his
jacket. Teddy's in a good mood, happy that his Dad is doing
this with him and talks excitedly...

TEDDY
So one of my favorite games right
now is Outback Hunter. Great
graphics, first person shooter...
but I like the older games too.
Defender rocks. It's a Williams
game made in the eighties that
grossed over a billion dollars...

He notes his Dad's distracted, distant...

 TEDDY
Dad, wake up!

 BILLY
Sorry, was just out of it for a
minute... so tell me about Avenger.

 TEDDY
Defender.

 BILLY
 (teasing Teddy)
Right. Contender.

They have a nice moment, laugh at Billy's lack of knowledge.

 BILLY
Gotta use the restroom. If the
waitress comes by, order me some
eggs.

On his way back to the bathroom, Billy passes a stack of local PAPERS and the headline reads SHERIFF BOWDEN SAVES DAUGHTER, with a screen grab of an epic moment in the video, Billy's face clearly depicted.

Billy goes into the bathroom, locks the door. He splashes his face with water and stares at himself in the mirror.

 BILLY
 (quietly)
Stupid.

He looks stressed, worried and we get the sense the walls are closing in on him, but we're not sure why.

BACK AT THE TABLE

Teddy's playing with straws and hears a RINGING. He wonders where it's coming from, realizing it's his Dad's jacket. He looks to see if his Dad's coming back.

He's not, so Teddy jumps to the other side of the booth, reaches into the pocket, pulling out yet ANOTHER FLIP PHONE. It's ringing, what's he going to do? He looks over his shoulder, and answers.

 TEDDY
Hello?

Silence, but it's clear someone is on the line.

TEDDY

Hello?

More silence. His Dad's coming back. Shit! He hangs up, puts the phone in the pocket but doesn't have time to get back to his side of the table. Billy notes the change in seating with a look.

TEDDY

Better view... of the parking lot.

Billy's not quite buying the move, but smiles, sits down.

BILLY

Let's eat so we can get to the arcade.

TEDDY

It's not called an arcade anymore Dad.

And off Teddy's face we cut to:

INT. BUCKS - MORNING

At BUCKS, Jen's working, short handed. Josey didn't come in again. Jen's rushing frantically from customer to customer and sees HANK, the trucker that gave her trouble a couple days earlier, being rough with his GIRLFRIEND, 20's, grabbing her wrist. Hard. And the woman has a black eye.

Hank, irritable as usual, raises his cup...

HANK

Jen! Come on, move it! More coffee!

Jen stops, the entire restaurant heard what Hank said... She stares at Hank, icy, and slowly walks over to him.

JEN

Listen Hank, I want your woman abusing, skinny white ass out of my shop. Now. Your girl can stay.

Hank sneers and stands. He's a big dude.

HANK

But your hubby's not here to back you up.

WINONA OC

I am.

Winona's standing behind the counter. She takes out a baseball bat from under the counter and hands it to Jen. Jen nods a thanks, takes it and mom and daughter have a moment. Faced with the two tough ladies, Hank caves and like all bully's leaves, the girlfriend trailing behind him.

From the back of the diner we hear CLAPPING. The TIME magazine journalist, Wade, saw the whole thing.

WADE

Maybe I should have interviewed you
and your Mom instead.

Jen turns to Winona, a thankful look.

WINONA

People don't want to hear about an
old hunk of petrified wood like
me...

(to Jen)

...but I can help you out today.
Truce?

JEN

Thanks Mom. Appreciate it.

Winona happily goes to work.

WADE

Listen Jen, I'm sorry for pissing
Billy off.

JEN

Not at all. He's not big on
sharing. Never has been. So
journalists are kind of his least
favorite people.

Wade glances at the black and white pictures on the wall of the town's history and people. And the travel posters.

WADE

So your family built this place?

JEN

This place and most of Karoke.
Forty years ago the town was a
dirty grease spot in the snow. A
gas depot, nothing more.

WADE

(re: Eiffel tower poster)
And who has the predilection for
all things French?

JEN
 Guilty as charged. The food, the language, the romance. I always wanted to travel there... but never had the chance.

WADE
 Why?

JEN
 You know...
 (he doesn't)
 You get busy, with family, kids...
 (he still doesn't)
 I don't know to be honest, I guess I could have. But Billy loves it here. Never wanted to leave.

WADE
 And what about Billy... his early life. Did he grow up in Karoke?

And something about that last question stops Jen, abruptly. She stares a moment, not sure about answering, and then sees a customer with a raised hand.

JEN
 (re: patron)
 Sorry... duty calls.

WADE
 Go do your work. I'll be staying in town for a few more days doing background. We can talk later. Thanks for the chat.

And he exits. Jen watches him through the window, her look inscrutable.

EXT. WEST HIGH - LATE AFTERNOON

Scarlet's taking off after school and sees Reb at the lockers, she grins and approaches her.

SCARLET
 Reb... you're not going to believe what happened yesterday!

REB
 Really! What?

And out steps Tom Sutton from around the corner. Scarlet's surprised. He smiles.

TOM
 Hey stranger. We're going out...
 you want to come?

REB
 Yeah, come on Scar. Come out with
 us! And tell me what happened...

And off Scarlet's uncertainty, we cut to:

INT. BOWDEN HOUSE - NIGHT

Billy and Teddy walk in, both happy.

BILLY
 Well, I think I've taken enough
 abuse for one day. Are my thumbs
 supposed to be numb?

TEDDY
 If you played hard...

BILLY
 Mission accomplished. Night buddy.

TEDDY
 Night.

As Billy walks up the stairs, Teddy goes into the kitchen but instead of getting something to eat, he waits by the back door. He listens for the shower to go on upstairs and then goes out back to the office/shed.

INT. BUCKS - NIGHT

The place has emptied, it's just Jen and Winona cleaning up. Jen stops, stares at her mom for a beat, thinking, then...

JEN
 Scarlet came in today with big
 news. Her video got accepted to
 the statewide contest and if she
 wins, it could lead to something
 amazing for her.

WINONA
 Good girl. That's great.

JEN
 (Jen looks gut punched)
 And truth is, when she told me, I
 was so jealous I wanted to scream.

WINONA
 (surprised)
 Really? Why?

JEN
 She found her passion, her thing,
 and she's doing something about it.
 I never had anything I believed in
 or loved so much that I had to do
 it. I stayed in Karoke and let
 myself shrink down smaller than I
 was ever meant to be...

(beat)
 And it hit me today, I think it's
 why Dad left me the diner. He knew
 I needed it. Beyond something to
 help my family financially, but
 more importantly to help me.

(heartfelt)
 I love you Mom but this is my
 business now. My thing.
 And I need to do it alone.

Winona thinks on this for a beat... Nods.

WINONA
 Baby, even as a child, you
 underestimated yourself. You were
 always so self critical. But we're
 more alike than you think. This is
 something I would have said...

(beat)
 But I never wanted to leave Karoke,
 be or do anything else. This town,
 this diner is what I wanted and I
 built it. I'm not going to let
 your father give that away. I'm
 sorry.

Winona reaches in her purse and pulls out some paperwork
 handing it to Jen. Jen reads, then looks up at her mother.

JEN
 You're contesting the will?

WINONA
 Your father wasn't in his right
 mind at the end of his life.

And Winona walks out, leaving Jen in shock.

INT. /EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Wade's inside a liquor store, getting cigarettes. He grabs some beef jerky as his phone rings and he takes the call and walks outside.

WADE

Hello? Yeah. It's a unique place.
A lot of color. No. I haven't had
any time with the Sheriff yet...

He hangs up and walks to his car. As he does, he sees a TRUCK drive by with Tom Sutton and a few of the roughnecks in the back, Scarlet and Reb with them. Wade looks after them, but it isn't clear if he recognizes Scarlet as the sheriff's daughter or not.

EXT. BOWDEN HOUSE - SHED/OFFICE - NIGHT

Teddy has broken into the back office through the window. He rifles through the desk, finds more cell phones. Odd. Teddy keeps looking and finds a trunk.

Inside, their childhood art and polaroids of the family. His dad always loved polaroids. Then at the bottom of the trunk, a JOURNAL. More polaroid's, but these are of his father as a young man.

He stops on a page. It's of a man standing with Billy (22) and we recognize him from earlier in the episode. He saw Billy on CNN. It's Miguel Ortiz. Off Teddy's intrigued face, he takes the journal, cleans up and exits...

INT. BOWDEN HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

The next morning, Billy's up, uniform on, moving silently around the room not wanting to wake Jen. He slips out.

EXT. FOREST GLADE - MORNING

Billy drives out into the wilds of Karoke, down a snow covered road that pulls into an area of trees that breaks into a clearing... and as Billy's SUV pulls into the glade, we see RALLY and ANN standing by their car. Waiting.

Billy parks, gets out, walks up to them.

BILLY

Rally.

RALLY

Billy.

(gestures to Ann)

This is Ann Pollard. My new partner. Ann this is Billy Bowden... formerly Billy "Guille" Ortiz of the Ortiz cartel.

(looks at Billy)

My very first Witsec case. What is it now Billy... 19 years?

Off Billy's face... The Sheriff's in Witness Protection.

ACT FIVE

EXT. FOREST GLADE - MORNING

Back to the Glade.

BILLY

Have you seen the video on CNN?

RALLY

Yeah, us and a hundred million other people.

BILLY

Heard any chatter?

RALLY

It's not good. We flagged your name during surveillance in Tijuana. The Ortiz also could've gotten wind of you. I think it's just a matter of time Billy.

BILLY

I thought they collapsed and were absorbed by the other cartels. How active are they?

ANN

Very. Miguel Ortiz took it over, laid low for a few years, but lately they've been ramping up again, taking control of the southwest meth trade. They're stronger than ever.

Billy thinks a beat... this is excruciating...

BILLY

You need to pull me and my family out now. Move us to another location. Give us new identities.

ANN

Okay. But if we do, we take just you, not your family.

Billy's stunned.

BILLY

What? How can you do that? My family's innocent. They had nothing to do with any of this... they'll be targeted.

RALLY

Easy. It's the deal the government made. I'm sorry, mostly for Teddy and Scarlet, but it's all we can do...

Billy becomes cold, deadly and we see a tiny glimpse of the man he was.

BILLY

You son of bitch.

RALLY

This is on you Billy. You did this, had a family, started living like you didn't have a past.

(beat)

And I must have been out of my mind to let you take the Sheriff job when the town offered.

Billy's gut punched, his world suddenly turned upside down, the one protection he thought he had for his family is gone. It gets heated.

BILLY

I gave up everything, my life, my name, turned states evidence. I gave you Jose Ortiz and a dozen Lugartenientes.

RALLY

Rats don't get to make demands.

BILLY

This rat saved your life.

There's history there, Ann clocks this last statement, looks at Rally, but Rally moves on...

RALLY

I'm sorry.

Billy studies them both, quickly realizing they're not bluffing, not looking for anything else. They're not going to budge, so he makes a hard decision...

BILLY

I'm staying.

RALLY

If there's any trouble Billy-- we hear anything about you, about this town--it's over. We're pulling you if you want it or not.

But Billy ignores him, already walking back to his SUV.

RALLY

And we'll be staying in town.

Billy climbs in his car and drives away...

INT. BOWDEN HOUSE - MORNING

Jen wakes to find Billy already gone. She gets up, looks in on Teddy. He's dead asleep. She turns on the light.

JEN

Time to get up baby.

She then moves on to Scarlet's room and finds her bed empty.

INT. POLICE SUV - MORNING

Billy's driving, shaken to his core, knowing he now has to protect his family and keep his secret no matter what. He's on his own.

Then his cell rings. It's Jen and she's worried.
INTERCUTTING:

JEN

Scarlet's bed's empty. She's not in the house. I called Reb's parents but they didn't answer.

Because of what he just learned, this news alarms Billy more than it normally would, but he hides it well.

BILLY
She probably just fell asleep there
last night. I'll drive over.

JEN
Okay. Call me back.

Billy turns around but on his way he gets a RADIO call from Wendy.

WENDY
Billy...

BILLY
(picks up mic)
Yeah.

WENDY
They found a body out on Old
Tenant.

EXT. OLD TENANT ROAD - MORNING

Billy and James pull up at the same time. There's a TRUCK parked down the road a ways, and an eighteen wheeler sitting in the middle of the road. A TRUCKER stands next to it, waiting for them, having a smoke. As they walk over...

JAMES
(to Billy)
I ran the serial on the 9mm.

Billy's not really listening.

JAMES
Guess where Tom bought it?
Reggie's store.

Billy doesn't respond, too focused on what could be coming as they walk up to the BODY. The Trucker approaches.

TRUCKER
I was driving by and saw it...
shit. So young.

The body's in a ditch on the shoulder of the road, signs of a struggle, a fight. Billy leans down to get a look at the face, partially buried in snow. It's TOM SUTTON.

JAMES
Holy shit.

A GASH on the back of Tom's head, a bloody wrench nearby.

Then a GLINT of something in the snow... Billy walks over and what he sees makes him want to throw up. It's Scarlet's GOLD IPHONE... The screen cracked.

He quickly looks up and realizes that's Tom's truck 20 yards away, passenger door partially open. He gives James a nod and they pull their weapons and approach, yanking the door open to find a GIRL'S body inside the cab. Billy rushes forward and rolls her over to find REB, Scarlet's friend, alive. Billy shakes her awake.

BILLY

Reb! Where's Scarlet?!

Reb's out of it, like she's drugged.

REB

I... I don't know.

END PILOT