

"DARK WINDS"

"Pilot Episode"

"The Spirit of Monster Slayer & Born For Water"

Written by

Graham Roland

Based on the novels of Tony Hillerman

FINAL: 2D

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'Whenever these masks were worn, those who wore them prayed for good things and necessary things. They prayed for rain and for abundant crops. But, on the eastern mountain, the people learned terrible secrets, too. For witches also possess masks like these.'

- Diné Bahane

(from The Navajo Creation Story)

"When all of our stories have been written down... the world will end."

- Navajo saying

* NOTE TO READER: DIALOGUE IN ITALICS IS IN SUBTITLED *DINÉ*

OVER BLACK:

A MAP of NAVAJO NATION. Then, the following text:

"In 1970, Navajo Nation covers 27,000 square miles in parts of Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico, and is policed by fewer than 100 Navajo Officers."

"Approximately, 1 officer for every 300 square miles."

FADE IN:

EXT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A sheet of LIGHTNING peels the desert sky silhouetting a small roadside motel. Above it, a neon sign blinks on and off -- *"Black Rock Motel"*.

Monument Valley, Part of Navajo Reservation

1970

A Rambler station wagon pulls off the highway, into the motel parking lot and stops in front of the lit lobby. The driver's door opens and a young WOMAN gets out, holding an oversized Letterman jacket (the 'Hawks') over her head as she runs through the rain toward --

INT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

The BELL above the door clangs and the young woman enters, shaking the rain from her big jacket. In the light, she's NAVAJO, can't be more than 18 or 19, long, black hair. Her smile comes easy, and luminous. We like her instantly.

ANNA

Some storm, huh?

The WHITE MANAGER, 50, white, Protestant, looks up from a book about rocks. He's not friendly.

WHITE MANAGER

Help you?

ANNA

I'd like a room, please.

She lays three wrinkled bills on the counter, and smiles, bats her eyelashes. She's quite beautiful.

WHITE MANAGER
(points to a sign)
Day rate's five bucks.

ANNA
Do you rent by the hour?

WHITE MANAGER
Day rate is five bucks.

He goes back to his book about rocks.

ANNA
You can hold onto this. It's worth
a lot more than five dollars.

Anna slips a beautiful silver and turquoise BRACELET off her wrist and lays it next to the three dollar bills.

WHITE MANAGER
I ain't runnin' a brothel, ya know.

Anna swallows the 'fuck you' that's on the tip of her tongue as the White Manager moves to a peg board of ROOM KEYS.

ANNA
Do you have a room with a door that
faces east?

INT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Anna steps in, carrying a faded green suitcase in her hand. She runs her free hand along the wall looking for -- *t-clik* -- a dim bulb gives off just enough light to push the darkness to the edges of the room.

ANNA
(in Diné)
Come in, grandma.

Anna coaxes an OLD NAVAJO WOMAN, hunched beneath a shawl, into the room. She wears DARK SUNGLASSES and wields a wood cane. The old woman's given name is MARGARET CIGARET, but in these parts, she's known by another name, 'Listening Woman.'

Anna arranges her grandmother on the bed and places a handmade quilt across her legs.

INT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

ON the room's TV: an episode of MANNIX starring Mike Connors.

Margaret Cigaret lies on top of the bedspread with her head tuned toward the TV -- still wearing her SUNGLASSES. Next to her, Anna paints her fingernails, looking bored.

A KNOCK. Anna gets up and shuts off the tv and goes to the door, slides off the chain-lock and opens it, REVEALING --

HOSTEEN TSO, Navajo, 50s, a spare frame swallowed up by an old Army field jacket, rain dripping off the brim of his hat. We can't see much of his face yet.

HOSTEEN TSO

(he coughs)

Yá'át'ééh. Are you the one I spoke
to on the telephone?

ANNA

I'm Anna. Come in.

Tso enters and removes his hat. The man's cheeks are sallow and sunken; his skin and eyes are yellow from jaundice. Basically, he looks terrible. He COUGHS into a bandana -- there's BLOOD in it.

HOSTEEN TSO

Hosteen Tso.

Tso pulls out his billfold and hands over \$5.

ANNA

The room was five. Plus gas. We
came all the way from Ship Rock.

Tso gives her all the money he has: \$3. Anna pockets it and walks to the bed and whispers something in Margaret Cigaret's ear while Tso lingers by the window, peaking through the blinds, as if he's looking for someone out there in the rain.

MARGARET CIGARET

(in Diné)

*Come into the light, where I can
see you.*

Tso shuffles across the dingy carpet, and leans forward, allowing Margaret's hands to run across his sagging, jaundiced cheeks.

MARGARET CIGARET (CONT'D)

How long have you been poorly?

Margaret leans forward and takes off her sunglasses... her eyes are milky white from cataracts. She's blind.

HOSTEEN TSO

*It started about a week ago, with a
pain in my back.*

He touches his lower back with his hand.

ANNA

His kidneys, grandmother.

HOSTEEN TSO

*Then came the fever, blood in my
kerchief when I cough... some in my
stool, too. Can't keep food down.*

MARGARET CIGARET

Have you been to a Crystal Gazer?

HOSTEEN TSO

No.

MARGARET CIGARET

What about a Hand Trembler?

HOSTEEN TSO

No.

(a beat)

*I've been dreaming of my son. He
died last winter.*

MARGARET CIGARET

How did he go?

HOSTEEN TSO

Horse threw him, broke his neck.

MARGARET CIGARET

*Have you seen any witches in your
dreams?*

HOSTEEN TSO

No.

MARGARET CIGARET

*What about wolves? Any Navajo
wolves?*

HOSTEEN TSO

*No, but now that you mention it,
somethin's been killing my sheep.*

ANNA

In the dream?

HOSTEEN TSO

No. That part's real. They didn't look like wolves got at 'em, though. Other than being dead, they looked okay.

(switches back to *Diné*)

And I've been hearin' things in the wind. It sounds like... laughing.

MARGARET CIGARET

The Hard Flint Boys like to play tricks with the wind.

(then)

Is there anything else?

HOSTEEN TSO

I stepped on a frog. I killed him.

ANNA

Did you bring a token?

Tso reaches into his pocket and produces a bone-handled POCKET KNIFE.

HOSTEEN TSO

It belonged to my son.

Anna takes the knife and lays a 3' x 3' square of white cloth on the floor at Tso's feet and places the knife on top.

HOSTEEN TSO (CONT'D)

Is she gonna give me some herbs or medicine?

Margaret Cigaret answers for her granddaughter, in English:

MARGARET CIGARET

You are the medicine.

INT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Anna opens the faded green SUITCASE and removes POUCHES of different colored sand, quartz crystals, and mixing bowls. She brings over a leather pouch of yellow pollen, and sits on the floor, next to her grandmother. Tso sits across from them, shivering from his fever.

Margaret Cigaret takes a pinch of the YELLOW POLLEN and drops it on the tip of her tongue... she takes another pinch and drops it on the top of her head...

MARGARET CIGARET

(in Diné)

We are the universe... We are the earth...

Anna takes the pouch from her grandmother and repeats the ritual.

ANNA

We are the universe... We are the earth...

Then, it's Tso's turn.

HOSTEEN TSO

We are the universe... we are the earth...

MARGARET CIGARET

I ask the being from the south, the one that wears the turquoise armor, protect me.

While Margaret Cigaret leads Tso in the protection ceremony, Anna uses her fingers to smudge yellow pollen on the room's south-facing wall.

MARGARET CIGARET (CONT'D)

I ask the being to the west, who wears the yellow armor of the abalone shell, protect me...

Anna smudges yellow pollen on the room's west-facing wall.

MARGARET CIGARET (CONT'D)

I ask the one in the north, who wears the armor of the black flint, protect me...

As Tso repeats the words --

CUT TO:

INT. LEAPHORN'S '65 SUBURBAN (MOVING) - NIGHT

JOE LEAPHORN, 45, Navajo, leans over the steering wheel, straining his eyes to see past his windshield wipers. He has a short, salt & pepper hair, and a dark brown jacket over a dark brown shirt and a bolo tie with a silver buckle. Leaphorn's resting face is a scowl that would make Charles Bronson look down at his fucking shoes. Picture a Navajo Clint Eastwood. The strong, silent-type.

The only sound in the car besides the squeak of the windshield wipers is the car's AM radio, a NEWS BROADCAST:

MALE DISC JOCKEY (OVER RADIO)

"... Federal and State authorities still have no leads in their search for two unidentified suspects who used a stolen helicopter to commit two daring bank robberies in southern Utah last month--"

Leaphorn changes the station.

RAYMOND BEGAY (O.S.)

Hey. I was listening to that.

In the passenger seat, RAYMOND BEGAY, 22, Navajo, small and fidgety, with a baby face framed by long black hair.

LEAPHORN

Don't make me put you in back, Raymond.

Leaphorn stops the dial on Elvis Presley's *Memories*. Begay stares out his window. The lack of conversation is driving him crazy.

RAYMOND BEGAY

Elvis is part Indian. Bet you didn't know that. His people come from Mississippi. That was Cherokee country, or was, 'fore the *Biliga'ana* marched 'em all up to Oklahoma. He's Indian, all right. His cheekbones, that's how you can tell.

Leaphorn considers the possibility: *The King, an Indian?* His reverie is broken by a SQUELCH OF STATIC, then a MALE VOICE:

DISPATCH (V.O.)

One-Eleven-Adam, Kayenta Dispatch, over.

Leaphorn reaches for the CB RADIO on his dash and keys it.

LEAPHORN

This is One-Eleven-Adam, go 'head.

DISPATCH (V.O.)

Lieutenant, they need you over at the Black Rock Motel.

RAYMOND BEGAY
Monument Valley?! In this shit--?!

Leaphorn silences Begay with a look that could make a train take a dirt road.

LEAPHORN
(into radio)
Kayenta -- What's it about?

DISPATCH (V.O.)
Homicide. Over.

Murder's not unheard of on the Rez, but it's not common, either.

LEAPHORN
I'm on my way.

EXT. HIGH WAY - CONTINUOUS

The SUBURBAN does a U-turn, and a bar of sirens come to life, flashing red and blue.

EXT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A group of LOOKY-LOOS (mostly white tourist-types, here to see where John Wayne made his most famous westerns) huddle under the overhang to escape the rain. No one can go back to sleep after what they've seen. HEADLIGHTS rake the front of the motel. Everyone LOOKS UP as --

Leaphorn's SUBURBAN pulls into the parking lot.

INT. LEAPHORN'S SUBURBAN - PARKED - NIGHT

Leaphorn reaches into the backseat for a POLAROID CAMERA.

RAYMOND BEGAY
You're just gonna leave me in here
with some crazy goddamn killer
runnin' loose and no way to defend
myself?

Begay raises his right arm and we see that his wrist is cuffed to the door handle. *He's Leaphorn's prisoner.*

LEAPHORN
Lock the doors, Raymond.

Leaphorn grabs a pair of latex gloves from a box on the dash, gets out, and slams the door.

Begay leans over and locks it, just in case.

EXT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Leaphorn dons his black Stetson as he runs across the parking lot in the rain. The White Manager leaves the shelter of the overhang and meets him half way.

LEAPHORN

You the one that called it in?

WHITE MANAGER

We found her wandering the parking lot.

ANGLE ON

Through the window, IN THE LOBBY, Margaret Cigaret sits in a chair with a towel draped around her shoulders. Her milky eyes stare straight ahead, at nothing. Catatonic.

WHITE MANAGER (CONT'D)

She must've been in the room when it happened. She won't talk, though. Not a word.

LEAPHORN

She saw it?

WHITE MANAGER

Not exactly. She's blind. Near as we can tell, anyway.

His eyes flick to the HIGHWAY.

WHITE MANAGER (CONT'D)

Is uh anyone else comin', like back-up or...?

LEAPHORN

(Nope.)

Nearest available unit's in Kayenta.

(nods toward the motel)

Show me.

WHITE MANAGER

No way.

The White Manager tosses a room key at Leaphorn.

WHITE MANAGER (CONT'D)

I ain't going back in there.

INT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - THE ROOM - NIGHT

Leaphorn runs his hand along the door jam. No sign of forced entry.

Leaphorn's POV

Moody light from the toppled desk lamp -- furniture in disarray -- contents of Anna's green suitcase scattered everywhere -- Blood-splatter on the carpet, the wall --

A pair of skinny legs poke out from behind the bed, the soles of the person's white socks are soaked through with blood.

Leaphorn moves around the foot of the bed, and sees...

Hosteen Tso. His throat has been CUT so deep that the white of his vertebrae shows through the viscera.

Next to the body, on the floor, a square of cardboard containing a nearly finished Navajo sand painting -- 'The Rainbow Man' -- now flecked with the dead man's blood.

Leaphorn's eyes land ON -- the BATHROOM DOOR. Half-open. Dark inside.

INT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Leaphorn's hand finds the light switch and flicks it on. He sees a clawfoot bathtub, and, through the half-open plastic curtain, a WOMAN. She's slumped over, her long black hair hangs down over her face, concealing it.

Leaphorn leans down and gently parts the girl's long hair so he can see her face -- it's ANNA. Her eyes are half open, unblinking. She's dead.

Leaphorn drops his head.

LEAPHORN

Goddamn it.

He knows this girl. She has no visible wounds. No blood anywhere. Leaphorn gently presses two fingers to the side of her neck just to be sure. Then, his eyes catch on something in Anna's hair.

A HAWK'S FEATHER behind the dead girl's ear. He gently removes it and turns the FEATHER over in the light.

Was this part of the ceremony they were doing? Or was it left by the killers? Leaphorn looks back at the dead girl in the tub.

CLOSE: Anna's face, eyes half-open. She looks peaceful. Angelic, even in death.

CUT TO:

TITLE SEQUENCE:

D A R K W I N D S

FADE UP:

EXT. MONUMENT VALLEY - DAWN

Fingers of early morning SUNLIGHT reach across the valley, creating the kind of vista that makes you believe in God.

EXT. PAINTED DESERT (AZ) - TWO LANE HIGHWAY

A black '67 Chevelle winds its way up the pass.

PRELAP: "White Room" by CREAM --

INT. CHEE'S CHEVELLE (MOVING) - DAY

JIM CHEE, 27, half-Navajo, half-white, with the high cheekbones, black hair and dark eyes of his mother, and his father's fairer skin and narrow nose. The blend makes him quite handsome. He's wearing a suit and his best tie, which happens to be his only tie. As he drives, he hits the steering wheel in time to Ginger Baker's DRUM BEAT when --

SKRRRRRIIKT! The Chevelle's tape deck begins to "eat" the Sabbath eight-track -- Chee ejects the TAPE and gets a fistful of TANGLED RIBBON along with it. Because of the distraction, he doesn't see --

A COYOTE standing in the middle of the road --

-- The coyote HITS the Chevelle's fender with a sickening thud, pitching over the hood and cracking the windshield --

The Chevelle skids off the highway and comes to a violent stop in the ditch. Chee WHIPLASHES forward and hits his forehead on the steering wheel --

EXT. PAINTED DESERT (AZ) - TWO LANE HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Chee gets out, rubbing a bump on his forehead where a small cut has opened above his left eye. He wipes the blood away, inspecting the damage.

In addition to his cracked windshield where the coyote hit, his front TIRE is punctured. Chee sighs. Fuck.

EXT. DITCH OFF THE HIGHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The COYOTE lies at the bottom of the ditch, motionless except for the shallow rise and fall of its broken ribs as it labors to breath. Its eyes track Chee's approach from the road.

Chee gently touches the coyote's coat, and feels its warm blood on his hands. He considers what to do about the dying animal. He's a hundred miles from a hospital, much less a veterinarian. He can leave the animal to die here under the merciless Arizona sun. Or he can put it out of its misery.

CHEVELLE'S TRUNK - A MOMENT LATER

Chee pops the trunk and reaches past the spare tire and a duffel stuffed with clothes and retrieves an old CIGAR BOX.

POV

Inside, a .22 PISTOL and six loose BULLETS rattle around the bottom of the box. Next to the pistol, a leather pouch, the kind you'd keep tobacco in. Chee considers the gun for a beat, then chooses the LEATHER POUCH.

IN THE DITCH --

CHEE kneels over the dying coyote and reaches into the leather pouch for a handful of YELLOW CORN POLLEN. He holds the Coyote's muzzle closed with one hand, and places the handful of corn pollen over the Coyote's nose, forcing the animal to breathe it in. The coyote begins to struggle, but Chee holds his hand in place: an act of mercy.

CHEE
(in Diné)
Go in beauty. Go in beauty.

CHEVELLE'S TRUNK - MOMENTS LATER

Chee stows the leather pouch of corn pollen in the cigar box and grabs a wool blanket and closes the trunk.

THE DITCH - A MOMENT LATER

Chee walks back down into the ditch carrying the blanket to wrap the carcass in until he can find a shovel and a place to bury it, but when he gets to the spot where he left it, the animal is GONE. All that remains is a patch of matted buffalo grass, streaked with blood.

Chee looks up and down the highway, and scans the open desert, but the coyote is nowhere to be seen. *Is it possible he didn't kill it, after all?* He thinks about this, a little spooked by it. Then, he turns and walks back up to the highway, carrying his empty blanket.

INT. ATTCITY HOGAN - DAY (MORNING)

A coal oil lamp is lit, illuminating ALMA ATTCITY, late 30s, Navajo. She's small in stature, but carries herself with quiet strength, the matriarch of her household. She shakes out the match and carries the lamp across the dark dwelling.

There is a door that faces east, but no windows. A stovepipe rises up from a cast iron stove and through a hole in the mud the roof. Several colorful handmade rugs cover the dirt floor. Despite the cramped quarters, there is a warmth and charm about the space. A family lives here.

Alma passes two twin NAVAJO BOYS, 12, curled up beneath a blanket, sleeping soundly. She pulls the hearth door open with a coat hanger and adds more wood to the smoldering fire.

A FIGURE stirs in the shadows -- Alma's husband, GUY ATTCITY, 40, Navajo, a skinny man with a kind face. Guy sits up, and rubs sleep from his eyes. As soon as he's awake, his eyes flick to --

An empty MATTRESS, its blankets undisturbed. Its usual occupant did not sleep here last night.

ALMA

(in Diné)

*They probably didn't want to drive
in the rain.*

Guy grins. After 20 years of marriage, his wife knows everything he's thinking. He throws the blankets off, stretching as he makes his way over to Alma.

CLOSE: a keloid SCAR runs up his right thigh, from knee cap to pelvis. There is a story behind that SCAR, but for another time.

GUY

*Good morning, my wife who grows
more beautiful every day.*

Alma hands him an empty bowl made of white shell.

ALMA

We need eggs.

EXT NAVAJO "VILLAGE" - ATTCITY PROPERTY - MORNING - LATER

The ground is damp from last night's rain. Guy exits their *hogan*, barefoot, faded jeans and a light shirt. He walks with a noticeable LIMP (the same leg that bears that scar).

WIDEN to REVEAL: a warren of HOGANS (six in total). Hogans are octagonal or hexagonal dwellings made of logs stacked on top of each other and packed with mud and grass for insulation. They may look crude, but they've protected the Navajo for hundreds of years, through frigid winters and blistering summers. Save a few hints of the 20th Century (a gas generator, a pickup), this settlement could have existed a 100 years ago.

Guy tosses a handful of seed at some chickens in a mesh coop. While they chase the seed he gathers eggs from the nests.

GUY

Yá'át'ééh!

Guy waves to two NAVAJO TEENAGERS loading a band saw into the back of a dusty pickup. Everyone in this little desert hamlet is related to one another by blood or marriage.

Guy's POV

On the horizon, a white Suburban drives up the dirt road.

Alma and the twin boys appear in the hogan's doorway, drawn out by the sound of the approaching vehicle. Visitors are rare in these parts. Ones in automobiles even more so.

ALMA

(in Diné)

What does he want?

INT. LEAPHORN'S SUBURBAN - PARKED - SIMULTANEOUS

Leaphorn kills the engine. In the passenger seat, Raymond Begay, still cuffed to the door handle, wakes up from a restless sleep and looks around, confused.

RAYMOND BEGAY

What the hell are we doing here?

Leaphorn grabs his Stetson and gets out, and opens the Suburban's rear door, REVEALING -- MARGARET CIGARET, in the backseat, staring straight ahead, still in shock. Leaphorn leans in to help the old woman out of the vehicle.

RAYMOND BEGAY (CONT'D)

You ever plan on takin' me to jail?!

Leaphorn slams the rear door, leaving Raymond alone again.

RAYMOND BEGAY (CONT'D)

Asshole.

EXT. NAVAJO VILLAGE - CONTINUOUS

Leaphorn gently shepherds Margaret Attcity by the arm.

CROWD/VARIOUS NAVAJOS

(in Diné; to each other)

Here comes Marshall Dillon/ White Justice has arrived/ He must be running out of young Navajos to arrest.

Guy approaches, LIMPING on his bad leg, Alma not far behind.

GUY

You got some nerve showing up here.

Alma takes Margaret Cigaret's arm, and pulls her away from Leaphorn, as if he were contagious with small pox.

ALMA

Shimá? What are you doing with him?

(beat)

Shimá?

The old woman doesn't answer. Alma looks at Leaphorn:

ALMA (CONT'D)

What's wrong with her?

LEAPHORN

She's in shock--

GUY

--Where's Anna--?

LEAPHORN

Maybe we ought to talk inside.

GUY ATTCITY

Did you arrest her? For what? She ain't done nothing.

Leaphorn meets Guy's angry eyes. There is a deep and painful history between the two men, but Leaphorn isn't here for a fight. Even if Guy looks like he wants one.

LEAPHORN

Anna was killed last night, at the Black Rock motel. I'm sorry.

Guy buckles. Several RELATIVES rush to hold him up.

Alma stands there, frozen. "Anna"? "Killed"? It can't be.

One of the older relatives translates Leaphorn's words into Diné, sending gasps of shock and grief through the crowd.

Guy breaks free and charges Leaphorn. He doesn't get far on his bad leg and FALLS FORWARD into the mud. He scrambles to his feet, but his relatives grab him again, holding him back.

GUY

Where were you?! Where were you?!

TRAITOR!

*(fights to get at
Leaphorn)*

Let go of me! Damn you!

After a moment, Guy stops struggling and begins to sob.

GUY (CONT'D)

Annaaa?!

His kin walk him to his hogan, consoling him.

ALMA

... How?

Leaphorn turns back to Alma, staring up at him. In all the commotion, he forgot she was there. TEARS shimmer behind the strong woman's dark eyes. But she won't let them fall.

LEAPHORN

We're sending her body to Flagstaff for autopsy, but it looks like a homicide. I'm afraid that's all I can say right now.

Alma absorbs this blow like the other, with stoic dignity.

ALMA

Did you find the one that did it?

LEAPHORN

Not yet. Murder's a federal crime. By law, the tribal police are required to turn over all evidence to the F.B.I.

ALMA ATTCITY

The FBI don't give a damn about a dead Indian girl, you, of all people, should know that.

LEAPHORN

I'm awful sorry, Alma--

Alma SPITS in Leaphorn's face. It's sudden, shocking.

ALMA ATTCITY

Are you happy now? I said, are you happy?!

(Leaphorn says nothing,
just stands there)

Now, both our daughters are dead.

Alma takes her mother's arm and they walk back to the hogan.

Leaphorn wipes her spit away with his sleeve and watches Alma and Margaret disappear inside the hogan. The door shuts. A few seconds later, Alma begins to SCREAM from inside -- the primal, sorrowful wail of a mother who has lost her child.

The sound follows Leaphorn all the way to his Suburban.

INT. INDIAN HEALTH CLINIC - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

A STETHOSCOPE slides over the curve of a very pregnant belly.

WIDEN: SALLY GROWING THUNDER, a young NAVAJO WOMAN, 17, in her third trimester, lies on an exam table while a WHITE DOCTOR, 26, traces the business end of his stethoscope across her belly, listening for a heartbeat. The disc stops along the curve of her stomach.

WHITE DOCTOR

Ah, here we go.

Sally's mother, ADA GROWING THUNDER, late 30s, solemn-faced, watches from the corner of the room as the doctor listens through his instrument. Finally, he plucks the stethoscope from his ears.

WHITE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Sometimes late in the pregnancy, as the fetus grows, it doesn't have as much room to move around. That's most likely why you haven't felt anything in a while. Nothing to be alarmed about. Everything sounds normal.

The white doctor looks at EMMA LEAPHORN, 44, a Navajo midwife, with kind eyes and a good beside manner. Emma translates:

EMMA

(in Diné)

Your baby is healthy, younger sister. You've nothing to worry about.

Sally can breathe again. She even manages a shy smile.

SALLY GROWING THUNDER

Can I...?

Sally points to the STETHOSCOPE. The white doctor places it in Sally's ears and holds the silver disc against her stomach. Sally hears her baby's heartbeat for the first time and giggles.

In the corner, Ada clears her throat.

ADA GROWING THUNDER

You got what you wanted. It's time to go now.

Sally's smile fades and she removes the stethoscope from her ears and hands it back to the white doctor.

SALLY GROWING THUNDER

(broken English)

Thank you.

WHITE DOCTOR

I wish you'd come to see me sooner. There's not much we can do about this one. You're too far along. But given your age and uh situation, one baby's going to be hard enough to take care of.

The White Doctor reaches into a nearby drawer for a BROCHURE.

ON the front, beneath a drawing of a smiling Navajo woman, the words: "*Tubal ligation: Everything you need to know.*"

WHITE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

It's a procedure that the government offers, free of charge.

EMMA LEAPHORN

(in Diné)

After you deliver, he wants to give you an operation so you can't get pregnant again.

Sally looks at Ada, horrified. *Who would do such a thing?*

WHITE DOCTOR

There's no reason to be scared. It's relatively painless. You can go home the same day.

EMMA LEAPHORN

He wants me to tell you that it won't hurt, but it will, and there is no way to reverse it. If you have your baby here, he'll do the operation while you're under anesthesia, and say you consented.

ADA GROWING THUNDER

Tell this 'Boy' that if the white man is so worried about more Navajo mouths to feed he should give us jobs instead of cutting up our women and killing our babies.

Emma turns back to the White Doctor and SMILES --

EMMA LEAPHORN

They'll think about it.

Emma takes Sally's arm to help her off the exam table --

Emma's POV

Fresh BRUISES on the young woman's wrist and forearm. Sally pulls her sleeve down to cover the bruises.

EXT. INDIAN HEALTH CLINIC - MOMENTS LATER

Ada tosses the brochure the doctor gave her into the trash can as she and Sally exit the clinic. Emma Leaphorn catches up with them.

EMMA LEAPHORN

(in Diné)

Sisters, wait. I've delivered over a hundred babies, and I've never lost one. I'd be happy to deliver yours at your home, in the traditional way.

ADA GROWING THUNDER

My daughter and I appreciate your honesty, sister. But we don't need anything from you--

EMMA

If money is a problem--

ADA GROWING THUNDER

(curt)

--Her grandmother will deliver the child.

Ada pulls Sally by the hand, toward a new model black CHEVY step-side PICKUP TRUCK parked in the dirt lot.

Emma's POV

Through the pickup's rear window, she can see a MAN sitting on the driver's side, smoking. His thick frame takes up half of the front seat, his head almost touches the top of the cab. The "Big Man" makes no move to get out of the truck and open the passenger door for the pregnant girl. The two women are barely inside the cab when he starts the engine and throws the truck in reverse --

As the Chevy drives away, young Sally Growing Thunder turns and looks at Emma through the pickup's back window. Something about the look that passes between them sends a chill up Emma's spine. Sally looks frightened, like a young woman in trouble. Emma watches the truck drive off, troubled.

EXT. KAYENTA POLICE SUB STATION - DAY

The sun-bleached brick building juts out of the red desert like a broken tooth protruding from angry gums. Leaphorn's Suburban is parked next to a white Chevy Caprice with a row of sirens on top and a tribal police insignia on the door.

INT. KAYENTA POLICE SUB STATION - PRISONER HOLDING AREA - DAY

Leaphorn shaves with a straight razor in the same sink the prisoners use. The holding cells are empty save for one, where Raymond Begay does stretches in his cell. He groans:

RAYMOND BEGAY

You know, I got scoliosis, I'm not s'posed to be in the sitting position for more than an hour.

LEAPHORN

You're breakin' my heart, Raymond.

RAYMOND BEGAY

What'd you do to that dead girl's daddy anyway?

LEAPHORN

Folks tend to have a strong reaction to being told their child is dead.

Leaphorn splashes water on his face and reaches for a towel draped over the iron bars.

RAYMOND BEGAY

That ain't what I meant; his blood was up before you said a word, soon as he saw you as a matter a' fact. He called you a "traitor". What'd you do? Arrest him?

LEAPHORN

I shot him.

Raymond looks at Leaphorn through the bars. *Is he serious?*

Behind them, the door opens and Navajo Police SGT. BERNADETTE MANUELITO, 30, pokes her head in. Bernadette is barely over 5' but carries herself like she's 7' tall.

BERNADETTE

You got a visitor, Lieutenant.

LEAPHORN

Who?

BERNADETTE

Jim Chee. He says you're expectin' him.

Leaphorn's brow knits. He has no memory of this.

LEAPHORN

I'll be right out.

Bernadette shuts the door.

RAYMOND BEGAY

Why'd you shoot him, that girl's
daddy?

LEAPHORN

He was asking too many questions.

INT. KAYENTA POLICE SUB STATION - LEAPHORN'S DESK - DAY

Chee sits in a chair opposite Leaphorn's desk, waiting with a file in his lap, sweating through his suit jacket. The cut over his eye has scabbed over, but his collar and lapel are spotted with dried blood.

Chee's POV

On the desk, next to the photo of Leaphorn's parents, a stack of Polaroid PICTURES of the Black Rock crime scene.

Chee steals a glance over his shoulder at Bernadette, banging away on the substation's only typewriter.

In the corner, sitting in front of C.B. RADIO, beneath a handmade sign, "DISPATCH", CORPORAL GEORGE BLUEHOUSE, 26, reads a paperback of *The Hobbit*, paying Chee no mind.

Chee leans over for a better look at the Polaroids... the PHOTO at the top of the stack shows a frail Navajo Man (Hosteen Tso), lying on a blood-soaked carpet, throat slit.

Next to the Polaroids -- the HAWK'S FEATHER Leaphorn found behind Anna's ear, sheathed in a plastic evidence bag. Chee picks up the FEATHER, looking at it closely when --

Behind Chee, the whine of rusty hinges, Leaphorn emerges from the holding area. Chee drops the feather like it was on fire, and stands to greet his new boss --

CHEE

Lieutenant Leaphorn, sorry, I'm
late. Jim Chee.

Chee thrusts out his hand. Leaphorn lets it hang there.

LEAPHORN

Who the hell are you?

CHEE

I'm Jim Chee.

LEAPHORN

Okay? What do you want, Jim Chee?

CHEE

Didn't they call you? Somebody
from Window Rock was supposed to
call you.

Chee hands the file he brought with him to Leaphorn.

CHEE (CONT'D)

I'm your new Deputy.

LEAPHORN

(to Bernadette)

Did you know about this?

Bernadette shakes her head no.

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

What happened to your face?

CHEE

I hit a coyote on the drive in.

LEAPHORN

Looks like he hit you.

CHEE

Car went off the road. I banged my
head on the uh steering wheel--

BLUEHOUSE

-- What direction was it facin'?

Chee turns to officer Bluehouse at the dispatch desk --

BLUEHOUSE (CONT'D)

The Coyote, was it facin' north?
'Cause a coyote facin' north is bad
luck.

Leaphorn has Chee's personnel file open, looking at his
orders to report to Kayenta, "effective immediately."

LEAPHORN

How long have you been with the
N.T.P.?

CHEE

Two months. I was working for
Captain Largo as his adjutant.

LEAPHORN

Adjutant?

CHEE

I was doing administrative stuff,
typing up reports, things of that
nature.

LEAPHORN

--I know what an adjutant does.
Just never knew Cap'n Largo to have
one.

Chee picks up the Hawk's FEATHER off Leaphorn's desk,
changing the subject --

CHEE

Is this from the Black Rock
Homicide?
(off Leaphorn's look)
It's written on the side of your
box.

Chee points to a box on a nearby chair with the words: "BLACK
ROCK HOMICIDE" written on the side.

CHEE (CONT'D)

Hawk's feathers are used to send a
message. Could be a threat? Like
saying, 'this isn't over.'

LEAPHORN

Listen...?

CHEE

Chee.

LEAPHORN

You picked a helluva mornin' to
show up, Chee. I have to be
somewhere, but Sergeant Manuelito's
my number two. She'll square you
away. You and me'll talk later.

CHEE

Looking forward to it, sir.

Leaphorn takes the hawk's feather from Chee and drops it in
the box.

LEAPHORN

How's that incident report comin'?

Bernadette pulls the typed report from the Selectric and
hands it to Leaphorn along with his handwritten notes.

BERNADETTE
Where you going?

LEAPHORN
Morgue!

He grabs his Stetson off a peg on the wall and exits.

BERNADETTE
(turns to Chee, sighs)
C'mon, let's you get you fixed up.

INT. KAYENTA POLICE SUB STATION - ARMORY - DAY

Bernadette unlocks a GUN CABINET that serves as the substation's armory. She turns to Chee, standing behind her.

BERNADETTE (O.S.)
(in Diné)
What's your clan?

It's been a long time since Chee has conversed in his native tongue and he knows this isn't just small talk. It's a test.

CHEE
(in flawless Diné)
*My mother's people come from the
'One Who Walks Around You' Clan, my
father was from the 'Potato' Clan.*

BERNADETTE
An Irishman?

Bernadette hands him a .38 Revolver, and a box of bullets.

CHEE
Hollow points?

BERNADETTE
Welcome to Kayenta.

She shuts the cabinet and locks it.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
You watch *Star Trek*?

CHEE
Of course. I've seen every episode.

BERNADETTE
Lieutenant's Cap'n Kirk. I'm Spock.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
Bluehouse is Scotty.

BLUEHOUSE
(his best 'Scotty')
'I can't change the laws of physics, Cap'n! I'm just a dispatcher!'

BERNADETTE
Officer Manygoats is off today, but he's Uhura. And you? You're fuckin' Sulu. Sulu takes out the trash, Sulu cleans the shitter, and Sulu mops three times a week. Sulu's also last in-line for over-time.

She points to a bare desk.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
That's you. Your first shift's tomorrow. 8 am. You can shadow me for a couple of days before you go out on your own.

CHEE
Sounds good.

Bernadette points at the chevrons on her sleeve.

CHEE (CONT'D)
... Sounds good, Sergeant.

BERNADETTE
Where are you staying?

CHEE
Figured I'd find a motel until I could arrange something permanent.

BERNADETTE
Wait here.

Chee watches as Bernadette crosses the station and grabs a scratchy, gray wool blanket from a beat-up footlocker and tosses it at him.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)
You can sleep in the holding area, if you don't mind Raymond's snoring.

CHEE

Raymond...?

BERNADETTE

Two-bit rez thief. You'll be seein' a lot of him. Hardly a full moon passes we don't pick him up for something. His momma usually lets him sweat it out for a couple of days before she bonds him out.

(a beat)

How'd you like workin' for Cap'n Largo?

CHEE

We got along all right.

BERNADETTE

Really? He was my training officer, and a know-it-all prick, even before he made Captain.

CHEE

I guess he softened with age.

Bernadette looks Chee up and down, studying him. Nothing about this guy fits. Not his suit. Not his Biliga'ana haircut. The way he talks. It bothers her. He bothers her.

BERNADETTE

8am tomorrow.

Bernadette walks back to her desk.

BLUEHOUSE

I'd take my chances at a motel, if I was you.

(leans over, whispers)

This place is haunted.

Chee looks at Bluehouse to see if he's having fun at the new guy's expense, but Bluehouse looks deadly serious.

INT. SHORT MOUNTAIN TRADING POST - DAY

CLOSE: Bourbon is poured into a glass, stopping precisely at the bottom of the Coca-Cola label.

TILT UP TO -- JOHN MCGINNIS, a hard 50, Irish-immigrant and snake oil salesman whose litany of failed 'Get Rich Quick' scams have landed him in the Arizona desert, operating the largest trading post on the Navajo Reservation.

WHITOVER

I thought this was a dry rez?

Across the counter, SPECIAL AGENT GEORGE WHITOVER, 45, gray suit, gray crew cut, frozen in the 1950s.

MCGINNIS

Dry for Navajos, not for this Irishman.

McGinnis takes a gulp, and exhales contentedly.

MCGINNIS (CONT'D)

Doctor in Gallup told me I had to quit with this stuff, said it was affecting my eardrums. I told him, 'Doc, I like what I'm drinking better than what I'm hearing.'

McGinnis's laugh turns into a fit of coughing.

WHITOVER

These any good?

Whitover holds up a pack of *Smoke Signal* cigarettes. McGinnis shrugs, the most enthusiasm he can muster.

SPECIAL AGENT PHIL SPRINGER, 29, wanders over. Springer's a cornfed Midwesterner raised on Jesus and Nebraska football. He drops an *Apollo* candy bar on the counter.

SPRINGER

I'll pay you back.

While McGinnis makes change, Springer looks around the shop, and sees the typical tourist fare like Navajo blankets and jewelry, there are arrowheads and pouches of corn pollen, sage bundles, various herbs.

SPRINGER (CONT'D)

Who buys this shit anyway?

MCGINNIS

Tourists, mostly. Assholes looking for something to show off when they get back to Kansas or Missouri. People like you.

SPRINGER

I'm from Nebraska.

MCGINNIS

What's the difference?

Springer picks up a BEAR's CLAW hanging from a leather strap.

SPRINGER
What's this for?

MCGINNIS
Protection.

SPRINGER
From what?

McGinnis leans across the counter like a magician about to reveal a particularly spooky trick.

MCGINNIS
From the 'dark energies'. Evil
beings, shape shifters, skin
walkers 'n such.

SPRINGER
Sounds like a crock a' shit to me.

WHITOVER
Not to a Navajo, it ain't.

They all look up as Leaphorn enters the trading post.

WHITOVER (CONT'D)
You're late.

LEAPHORN
Good to see you too, High Pockets.

A dig at the way Whitover wears his pants: high up on his waist.

WHITOVER
What'd I say 'bout callin' me that?

They don't shake hands. Whitover nods to Springer --

WHITOVER (CONT'D)
My new partner.

SPRINGER
(he loves saying this)
Special Agent Springer.

The younger agent does not offer his hand to Leaphorn. Which is fine by Leaphorn.

MCGINNIS

Leaphorn, I need my damned freezer.
Three customers I've turned away
already.

WHITOVER

Can we get this over with? I don't
wanna spend my whole fucking day
here.

INT. MCGINNIS'S TRADING POST - COLD STORAGE - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON: Hosteen Tso's pale face; blue-ish lips pulled back
over his teeth, eyes open, his expression frozen in terror.
CHAKA -- a FLASH strobes the upper half of his body which is
covered with a piece of tarpaulin up to his neck wound--

SPRINGER

Why'd you put the bodies in the
freezer, anyway?

WIDEN: Special Agent Springer stands over the corpse, taking
photos of with a Leica camera. Leaphorn stands nearby,
surrounded by frozen slabs of meat hanging from hooks.

LEAPHORN

The cold preserves evidence.

Springer shivers, pokes Tso's corpse with his finger.

SPRINGER

Coroner's gonna have to thaw these
bad boys out before he can do an
autopsy.

Whitover sits on two milk crates stacked on top of one
another, looking at the Polaroids Leaphorn took of the crime
scene. He holds up one for Leaphorn to see --

POV

MARKS of dried BLOOD going up the wall and onto the ceiling --

WHITOVER

Them look like tracks to you?

LEAPHORN

On the ceiling?

WHITOVER

What do you make if it, Sherlock?

LEAPHORN

Deliberate. Somebody messin' with us.

Whitover tosses the Polaroids on a butcher's block and joins them over Tso's corpse.

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

His name's Hosteen Tso. Address on his B.I.A. card's listed as Chinle. Born: 11/11/1918.

SPRINGER

Same day as the Armistice.

WHITOVER

(blows hot breath into his hands)

Let's have a look at the other.

Leaphorn moves to Anna and Leaphorn draws the sheet back. Save for her pale skin and blue lips, she could be asleep.

WHITOVER (CONT'D)

What's the cause of death?

LEAPHORN

I was hoping ya'll could tell me. She don't have a mark on her. Not so much as a bruise, or a broken fingernail.

SPRINGER

O.D.?

LEAPHORN

I considered it. Can't find no needle marks, though. You can do a tox screening when you get her back to Flagstaff.

Whitover pulls the sheet down, exposing the dead girl's breasts. Hard to tell if he's examining the body for evidence or enjoying the view.

WHITOVER

Chinle to Monument Valley's a long way to drive for a fuck.

LEAPHORN

She wasn't a whore.

Leaphorn pulls the tarp back up over Anna's breast, restoring her dignity.

WHITOVER

What in the hell were they doin' in a motel together, then? Havin' a sewin' circle?

LEAPHORN

He was there for a sing.

WHITOVER

A what now?

LEAPHORN

A blessing. A Navajo healing ceremony. The male victim appears to have been in poor health. Looks like he was there to get a healing. Her grandmother performed the ceremony. The girl was just there to help her.

Whitover and Springer trade amused looks.

SPRINGER

So where's Granny?

LEAPHORN

Her name's Margaret Cigaret, and she's alive. They left her unharmed. Probably 'cause she can't i.d. 'em. She's blind.

WHITOVER

Well did she hear anything?

LEAPHORN

I don't know. She wouldn't talk. She was in shock.

WHITOVER

A blind, mute witness. That ought to look great in my report.

LEAPHORN

I wrote down directions in my notes. You should go question her again. Maybe she recognized a voice? Heard a name?

Whitover blows warm breath into his hands, over it.

WHITOVER

Get these bodies loaded up. I wanna be back 'fore dark.

Springer snaps his notebook closed and looks up at Leaphorn.

SPRINGER

Gimme a hand with the litters?

Leaphorn lingers over Anna's corpse, looking down at her face, knowing, in all likelihood, there will be no justice for the murdered girl.

EXT. MCGINNIS' TRADING POST - DAY

BACK OF '59 Cadillac -- the model they used for ambulances in the 1960s. Leaphorn helps Springer push Anna's litter into the back. Tso's corpse is already inside. Springer hops out the back, and shuts the rear doors.

LEAPHORN

There's a box in my trunk.
(tosses his keys at
Springer)
Go fetch.

Leaphorn walks the 'Black Rock' case file over to Whitover, who is smoking a cigarette in the shade of the wood awning.

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

You'll get back to me on the cause
of death for the Attcity girl,
right?

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

Look, this deal at the motel might
not be over.

WHITOVER

How do ya figure?

LEAPHORN

I found a hawk's feather in the
dead girl's hair. Among our Diné, a
hawk's feather carries a message.
Could be a threat. Like sayin',
more's comin'. That kinda deal.

WHITOVER

You know this girl or somethin'?
Why you got such a burr in your
saddle 'bout her?

LEAPHORN

Two people were murdered. Isn't
that reason enough?

Whitover studies Leaphorn, not convinced that's all there is to it, but he doesn't care enough to press the issue. He flicks ash from his lapel, changes the subject:

WHITOVER

You hear about them two bank robberies up in Utah? The ones they used the helicopter for?

LEAPHORN

I thought we were talking about a double homicide.

WHITOVER

We're talkin' about both. One hand washes the other, Kemosabe.

Leaphorn parts with a weary sigh. He's dealt with enough white law men to know that everything in their world is transactional.

LEAPHORN

I read about it in the paper.

WHITOVER

That helicopter they hijacked was last seen headed south into Navajo country. Matter 'a fact, five eyewitnesses stated they lost sight of it behind the mesa east of Mexican Hat. It looked to be descending, they said. Rapidly.

LEAPHORN

If there's somethin' you want to say, I wish you'd say it.

WHITOVER

I think I just did.

LEAPHORN

If I knew anythin' more, I'd have reported it.

WHITOVER

Would you? Part of me thinks you'd just as soon not have a hundred white G-men turnin' rocks over on Indian land?

LEAPHORN

My ancestors had a saying for white folks stealin' money from white banks.

Leaphorn SPEAKS in Diné (NO subtitles).

WHITOVER

What's it mean?

LEAPHORN

'White People Problems'.

WHITOVER

Who said they was white?

LEAPHORN

Tell you what, High Pockets, I'll pretend them bank robbers was Navajo, if you pretend those two victims at the Black Rock was white. Let's see which one of us does our job quicker.

Leaphorn walks to his Suburban. Whitover flicks his cigarette butt in the parking lot.

EXT. LESTER'S AUTO REPAIR - DAY

CLOSE: a handmade sign: *"Let an Injun Fix your Engine!"*

TILT DOWN -- LESTER YAZZIE, 30s, in a dirty pair of coveralls, stands in front of the open garage talking with Chee. In the b/g, Chee's Chevelle is raised on a scissor jack while a Navajo MECHANIC puts on a new tire.

LESTER YAZZIE

Sure you don't want me to swap out them others? Rear treads look a little bald.

CHEE

No thanks.

Chee tears a check from his checkbook and hands it to Lester.

LESTER YAZZIE

(sees the name at the top)

Hey. You wouldn't be the Jimmy Chee who played basketball for Tuba City High?

(off Chee's nod)

I'll be damned. I didn't recognize you. You cut your hair off. You got a scholarship, right? Stanford?

CHEE

Berkeley.

LESTER YAZZIE

You make us proud. We need Diné like you to show these young folks 'round here that a Navajo can make something of himself.

CHEE

Thanks for the tire.

Chee holds out his hand for his keys.

LESTER YAZZIE

'Preciate your business. Remember, why pay more when you can pay Les!

EXT. KAYENTA - DUSK

Drive around with the RESERVATION with CHEE. See the REZ through his eyes. He's home. Let's show all sides of life here. The poverty. The beauty. The tragedy. He passes a gaggle of TOURISTS taking PHOTOS with a "real life NAVAJO" -- signs like "MEET AN AUTHENTIC MEDICINE MAN - \$2" "THIS WAY FOR DINOSAUR TRACKS" "REAL NAVAJO SWEAT LODGE 1/2 MILE"

EXT. DIRT ROAD IN THE HIGH DESERT - NIGHT

Chee drives to the end of a dirt road overtaken by buffalo grass and pine saplings, and parks in front of an abandoned hogan with a collapsed roof.

Chee gets out, but leaves the head lamps on. He kneels and scoops up a handful of earth and rubs it in his hands, he sniffs it, then lets it fall between his fingers.

A HOLE has been punched into the mud wall of the hogan. It's too neat and circular to have happened by accident. This, like most things in Navajo culture, has meaning. Chee gets it, even if we do not. He moves around the front of the hogan and sees the wood door, canted inward, hanging on by a single rusty hinge. Chee wipes away a layer of dust, revealing...

Chee's POV

One word carved into the wood grain -- "WITCH".

Chee stares at the word. It haunts him. After a moment, he turns to go.

He's almost to the Chevelle when he sees -- a pair of yellow EYES in the tree line, catching the light from the car's headlamps. The eyes belong to a COYOTE, sitting on its haunches, staring at Chee. It's eerie. *Could this be the same coyote he hit on the road? It sure as hell looks that way (sans the blood). But it can't be. Can it?*

The coyote's eyes track Chee back to his Chevelle, and watch as he drives off --

EXT. N.T.P. HEADQUARTERS, WINDOW ROCK - NIGHT

A two story brick building that served as a U.S. Army Post after the Civil War. Now, two flags fly above it: the American flag, and the flag of the Navajo Nation.

PRELAP: a RINGING PHONE --

INT. WINDOW ROCK PRECINCT - DISPATCH DESK - NIGHT

Officer PHIL SHERMAN, 30, Navajo, answers the phone. He has one leg propped up on a chair, sporting a plaster cast from his foot to his mid-thigh.

OFFICER SHERMAN

(into phone)

Window Rock Dispatch -- Officer Sherman speaking. How may I direct your call?

INT. KAYENTA POLICE PRECINCT - BERNADETTE'S DESK - INTERCUT

Bernadette sits, phone to her ear, and Chee's personnel file open on the desk in front of her.

BERNADETTE

Phillmer, it's Sergeant Manuelito over at Kayenta. Is Cap'n Largo on today?

*

OFFICER SHERMAN

He went home for the evenin'. Something I can help you with, Bernie?

BERNADETTE

I'm calling about an officer you all sent: Jim Chee. I'm tryin to get a little more information on him.

OFFICER SHERMAN

We didn't send ya'll anybody.
What'd you say his name was?

BERNADETTE

Chee. Jim Chee. Half white.
Kinda uppity, walks around like his
shit don't stink.

OFFICER SHERMAN

We had a couple of rookies come
through here last month. Nobody by
that name, though. You sure he
came from us?

Bernadette considers this, and is troubled by it.

BERNADETTE

Maybe I made a mistake. Thanks,
Phil.

Bernadette hangs up the phone. Questions swirl in her head.

EXT. LEAPHORN'S FARMHOUSE - DUSK

A modest, well-kept farmhouse on a beautiful patch of God's earth. There's a stable with four riding horses, a sheep paddock with a dozen head of sheep. Leaphorn has done well for himself, which hasn't made him popular in the impoverished community he polices.

Our eyes are drawn to a SAILBOAT dry docked in front of the house. It looks odd; out of place in the desert.

Angle ON: painted on the stern, the boat's name: "CAROLINE".

EXT. LEAPHORN'S FARMHOUSE - FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Leaphorn sits in his rocking chair on the porch, reading a day old copy of the *Salt Lake Tribune*. ON FRONT PAGE: "**FAMILY FEARS WORST FOR MISSING PILOT.**" Beneath the headline, a photo of smiling WHITE MAN in a flight suit. The name "Chip" is stenciled above his left breast pocket.

The SCREEN DOOR OPENS and his wife Emma Leaphorn, steps out and sees a RATTLE SNAKE coiled up behind one of the potted plants at the edge of the porch.

EMMA LEAPHORN

I wish you'd chase that damn thing
off.

LEAPHORN

Who? Lefty? He ain't botherin'
nobody. He keeps the kangaroo rats
away.

She takes her customary post in a rocking chair next to his.

EMMA LEAPHORN

(re the paper)
Anything interesting?

Leaphorn folds his paper and produces his tobacco pouch and
rolling papers and begins to roll a cigarette.

LEAPHORN

Three week old bank robbery and a
missing white helicopter pilot's
still front page news. Not a
single word about two Indians
murdered at the Black Rock last
night.

EMMA LEAPHORN

You're surprised?
(beat)
I heard one of the victims was Anna
Attcity. Shame.

Leaphorn lights his cigarette and passes it to Emma. She
takes a puff.

EMMA

Did you see her daddy?

LEAPHORN

I had to do the notification,
didn't I.

EMMA LEAPHORN

You coulda sent Bernadette.

LEAPHORN

Didn't feel right to put it off on
somebody else.

EMMA LEAPHORN

So what are you going to do?

LEAPHORN

Murder's a federal crime. Nothing I can do, even if I wanted to, you know that.

EMMA LEAPHORN

Then what's the point in getting all worked up over it?

LEAPHORN

(worked up)

Who's worked up?

(a beat)

Homicide's bad enough, but, of all the girls in the Four Corners, why'd it have to be her?

Emma knows he's not looking for an answer. Even if he was, there's none she can give that would satisfy him.

EMMA LEAPHORN

Well, I got somethin' you can do.

Emma pulls a slip of paper from her pocket and hands it to him. Leaphorn looks at it: a license plate number.

LEAPHORN

What's this?

EMMA LEAPHORN

It's a license plate.

LEAPHORN

I can see that. Whose it belong to?

EMMA LEAPHORN

Dick Cavett, how should I know? That's what I want you to find out, dummy. It's a black Chevy pickup. Looked new.

LEAPHORN

Anythin' I should know about?

EMMA LEAPHORN

Young pregnant gal came into the clinic today. I just want to make sure she's not in any trouble, is all. Just a feeling I got.

LEAPHORN

Why's it whenever you get a
"feelin'", it always ends up bein'
more work for me?

(a beat)

I'm sorry hon. I'm in a helluva
mood tonight.

Leaphorn reaches over and puts his hand on Emma's.

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

I love you.

EMMA LEAPHORN

I know it.

They sit and rock in silence.

INT. KAYENTA POLICE SUB STATION - PRISON CELL - DAY

CLOSE: Chee's EYES snap OPEN. He blinks and sits up -- He is sleeping in one of the jail cells. He hears Begay snoring lightly in the next cell over and swings his legs off his cot, trying to shake off a bad dream. After a moment, he rises and reaches for a uniform shirt hanging from the open cell door. He stares at patch on the shoulder -- NAVAJO TRIBAL POLICE. Heavy thoughts swirl behind his dark eyes. He's conflicted. *About what? We do not know.*

INT. CHEVY CAPRICE - MOVING - DAY

Chee drives. Bernadette rides shotgun.

BERNADETTE

... Carry a gallon of water in your
vehicle at all times... a spare
flashlight... you'll need a good
knife, too.

She reaches down and lifts her pant leg exposing a KNIFE in a leather scabbard around her calf.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

You smoke?

CHEE

No.

BERNADETTE

Buy a carton anyway. Folks 'round here will tell you more for a pack of cigarettes than they will in an interrogation room.

(points)

Turn here.

Chee turns the Caprice onto a dirt frontage road.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

You're not going to find many streets out here and forget about addresses. If something goes wrong on a call, distances and landmarks will be the difference between back-up finding you, or not finding you.

(beat)

Your file said you graduated college.

CHEE

Berkeley. In Calif--

BERNADETTE

-- I know where it's at. I'd bet we're the only substation in the whole damn N.T.P. with two college graduates.

Chee turns and looks at her: *Who's the other?*

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Lieutenant graduated Arizona State.

CHEE

Really?

BERNADETTE

Master's degree in anthropology. You know, most Diné would saw off a leg to go to college, and get off the reservation. You two strange birds gotta be the only ones crazy enough to come back to be tribal police for \$250 a month.

CHEE

They gave me a bonus. Being a college graduate, and all.

The attempt at a joke falls flat. Chee can feel Bernadette looking at him.

He points to a faded black and white PHOTO -- a NAVAJO MAN with short hair, wearing a TRIBAL POLICE UNIFORM -- taped to the dash.

CHEE (CONT'D)

Is that your father?

BERNADETTE

My uncle. He raised me and my brothers after our mom passed.

CHEE

How'd she die, if you don't mind my asking?

BERNADETTE

Givin' birth to my little brother.

CHEE

What about your dad?

BERNADETTE

The bottom of a bottle, mostly.
Died when I was sixteen.

A beat.

CHEE

It's weird, your folks being gone.
It's like, you didn't come from anyone. You're just... here.

Bernadette turns to Chee, realizes they share something: they're both orphans.

BERNADETTE

Makes a person feel "unclaimed."

A MOMENT between them. Bernadette breaks it --

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

I called Window Rock. Asked a friend of mine about you. He said they didn't have any officers named Chee come through there.

She lets that hang there, studying Chee for a reaction. He doesn't give her one.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Ain't but fifteen or twenty officers comin' and goin' in the whole building.

(MORE)

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

And, no offense, not many of 'em
half-breeds. You'd be pretty hard
to miss.

CHEE

You saw my transfer order. Call
Captain Largo.

BERNADETTE

I plan to.

On the car's dash, the short-wave RADIO squawks:

BLUEHOUSE (V.O.)

One-Adam-Baker, this is Kayenta
dispatch, come in, over.

Bernadette picks up the handset.

BERNADETTE

Go 'head, Kayenta.

INT. KAYENTA POLICE SUB STATION - INTERCUT

Bluehouse sits at the dispatch with the license plate number
Emma gave Leaphorn the previous night in front of him.

BLUEHOUSE

(into radio)

Lieutenant had me run down the
registration on a plate for a
welfare check. He's indisposed at
the moment, wanted to know if you
could check it out.

BERNADETTE

(into radio)

Who's it for?

BLUEHOUSE

Sally Growing Thunder. She's eight
months pregnant. Possible domestic
abuse situation.

BERNADETTE

(into radio)

Give me a location. We'll take
care of it.

EXT. ATTCITY FAMILY SETTLEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Leaphorn's Suburban stops in front of the warren of hogans we saw him visit the previous day. He gets out and sees Guy and Alma's TWIN BOYS playing baseball with an old broom handle and rocks, arguing with each other in Diné about balls and strikes.

LEAPHORN

(in Diné)

*Yá'át'ééh, little cousins. I'm
looking for your father.*

The twins point to a solitary figure sitting under a pinon tree atop a nubby hill overtaken by wild grass.

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

*Did anyone from the FBI come 'round
yesterday or today?*

They shake their heads in unison. Nope.

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

Ahéhee'.

EXT. TOP OF THE HILL - MOMENTS LATER

Leaphorn crests the hill to find GUY ATTCITY, shirtless, his back to Leaphorn, beneath the pinon tree. He stares out over the valley, at what? Only he knows.

LEAPHORN

Yá'át'ééh.

Guy Attcity doesn't respond or even turn around. Instead, he raises his arm, revealing -- a big HUNTING KNIFE in his hand. He grabs one of his long braids with his free hand and saws it off. When he's finished, he does the same with the other. He tosses them in the dirt. The two braids of black hair lie there, like dead snakes.

Leaphorn just stares at Guy. A father driven mad by the loss of a child. We get the sense that Leaphorn knows from experience what Guy is going through. He leaves the man be, and turns and walks back down the hill.

EXT. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL - MOMENTS LATER

Leaphorn sees Alma walking from an underground well with two swollen buffalo skins of water slung over her shoulders.

LEAPHORN
 (tips his hat)
Yá'át'ééh, sister.

ALMA
Yá'át'ééh.

Alma has smudges of BLACK ASH on her forehead and hands.

LEAPHORN
Here, let me help you.

He takes the two buffalo skins from her.

ALMA
*Ahéhee'. About the other day, I
 should not have--*

LEAPHORN
 --You have nothing to apologize
 for.
 (nods at the hilltop)
 Is he going to be all right?

ALMA
 I'm not sure. But right now I have
 a daughter to bury and two boys and
 a mother to look after.

LEAPHORN
 I'd like to see her, if I could.

Alma reaches in her apron for a MEDICINE POUCH.

ALMA
 I'd put this on first: ash. For
 protection.

LEAPHORN
 I'll take my chances.

INT. MARGARET CIGARET'S HOGAN - MOMENTS LATER

Leaphorn follows Alma through a wool blanket hung over the doorway.

Leaphorn's POV

Margaret Cigaret, the one they call 'Listening Woman', lies on a straw mattress, buried under multiple quilts, what we can see of her night gown is soaked through with fever sweat.

At the head the mattress, a NAVAJO MEDICINE MAN, 50s, rubs Margaret Cigaret's chest with herbs and chants in soft, melodic Diné.

Alma takes one of the buffalo skins from Leaphorn and pours water into a metal pail and dips a wash cloth in it and begins dabbing the skin on her mother's forehead.

LEAPHORN

What's wrong with her?

ALMA

She has the ghost sickness. It started the night you brought her home.

Alma lets water from the rag dribble past her mother's cracked lips and into her mouth.

LEAPHORN

Have you thought about takin' her to Tuba City to see a doctor?

ALMA

A doctor can't do anything for her.

Leaphorn doesn't argue. It wouldn't do any good. Their way is the old way.

ALMA (CONT'D)

(to the Medicine Man)

Great Uncle, let us talk alone.

The Old Medicine Man gets to his feet and shuffles out.

LEAPHORN

Has she spoke at all about that night?

ALMA

Nothing yet. But you're welcome to try.

Leaphorn kneels beside Margaret Cigaret's straw bed, and speaks to her in *Diné*.

LEAPHORN

Grandmother, it's Joe Leaphorn. I'm here to find the one killed who your granddaughter.

Margaret Cigaret's eyes are closed while she labors to breathe.

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

*Did you hear something that night?
A voice? A name?*

Again, nothing.

LEAPHORN (CONT'D)

(to Alma)

Was Anna seeing anyone? Is there anybody you know of that could've done this?

ALMA ATTCITY

She was seein' this Red House boy. Joseph. He's a few years older. But I think they'd only been out a couple of times. Nothing serious.

Leaphorn considers this for a beat.

LEAPHORN

Do you know if your mother had a hawk's feather in her medicine bundle?

ALMA

If she did, I don't know where she'd have gotten it. No one in these parts can do the sing that calls the hawks from the sky.

Leaphorn looks back at Margaret Cigaret breathing raggedly on her straw mattress.

LEAPHORN

I'll be by in a day or two to check on her. Hopefully, she'll be better by then.

ALMA

She's not going to get better.

LEAPHORN

I s'pose I'll come by anyway.

Leaphorn turns for the door.

ALMA

I thought you said only the white federals could find the ones that killed Anna?

LEAPHORN
(in Diné)
*Take care of yourself, sister.
Walk in beauty.*

Leaphorn puts his Stetson back on and tips its brim. He pushes the wool blanket aside and exits the hogan --

EXT. MARGARET CIGARET'S HOGAN - CONTINUOUS

... Leaphorn walks past the old Medicine Man sitting on a log stump smoking a wood pipe.

OLD MEDICINE MAN
*He's killing her. Taking his time,
too.*

LEAPHORN
Who?

OLD MEDICINE MAN
That damn witch.

The old Medicine Man turns his pipe over and taps the bowl -- a ball of smoldering ash falls to the ground and he walks back inside.

EXT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - DAY

The small roadside motel where our story began sits in the valley's red basin surrounded by 1.8 billion year old mesas and rock monoliths. In the daylight, it's a stunning vista of natural beauty incomparable to any place on earth.

Leaphorn's dusty white Suburban pulls into the empty parking lot of the Black Rock motel.

INT. BLACK ROCK MOTEL - FRONT OFFICE - DAY

A small fan blows hot air around the office. The white Manager, whom we met at the beginning of the pilot, sits behind his desk holding a magnifying glass over a piece of quartz, polishing it with a rag.

Leaphorn enters, triggering the bell above the door.

LEAPHORN
Afternoon.

WHITE MANAGER
Officer.

LEAPHORN

How's business?

WHITE MANAGER

I'm polishing rocks. How do you think? That damn mess the other night scared off all my paying customers.

(then)

Somethin' I can do for you?

LEAPHORN

Has the F.B.I. come to see you?

WHITE MANAGER

Only law I seen around here is you.

(after a beat)

I did have one fella come by this morning. Big son of a bitch. Indian. He had a what'd ya call it...?

He touches his top lip.

WHITE MANAGER (CONT'D)

... A hairlip. Didn't get a name, though.

LEAPHORN

What did he want?

WHITE MANAGER

To get in that room, the room.

LEAPHORN

For what?

WHITE MANAGER

Have a look around, I guess. I thought it was a touch morbid but--

LEAPHORN

You let him?

WHITE MANAGER

Hell yes. He gave me this.

The Manager opens his till and reaches under the cash tray and produces a crisp new \$100.

WHITE MANAGER (CONT'D)

The cost of replacing the carpet and paint alone is gonna run me fifty bucks.

Leaphorn holds the \$100 bill up to the light.

WHITE MANAGER (CONT'D)

It's real.

LEAPHORN

Other than the hairlip, anything else you remember about this Indian fella?

WHITE MANAGER

He drove a brand new Chevy pickup, a black one.

Off Leaphorn, remembering the license plate number Emma gave him -- it belonged to a "black Chevy pickup". Oh shit...

EXT. DILAPIDATED FARMHOUSE - DAY

A BLACK CHEVY PICKUP TRUCK is parked in front of a run-down farmhouse. Next to the pickup, Chee and Bernadette's white Caprice is parked. Through the lowered window we can hear Leaphorn's VOICE coming through the SHORTWAVE:

LEAPHORN (V.O.)

Sergeant Manuelito, come in, over?
(no one is in the car to
answer the radio call)
Manuelito? Are you there--?

ANGLE ON

Bernadette and Chee stand on the farmhouse's porch, out of ear shot of the radio in their cruiser. Bernadette knocks on the door while Chee looks around at the surrounding desert. No one else around for miles. They're alone out here.

BERNADETTE

Yá'át'ééh!

No answer. Bernadette tries to look through the window but its shrouded by a dark heavy quilt.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Have a look around back.

Chee heads down the steps and around the side of the house.

Bernadette knocks again.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Tribal Police?! Is anyone here?!

Bernadette's just about to give up when -- the door is pulled open, startling Bernadette (and us) -- Ada Growing Thunder steps out onto the porch, wearing all black. Her eyes are very black, abnormally so. She squints, like she hasn't seen sun in a while.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Yá'át'ééh, sister.

ADA GROWING THUNDER

(in Diné, curt)

What do you want?

BERNADETTE

I'm Officer Manuelito with the Tribal Police.

Bernadette nods to the black Silverado parked out front.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Is that your pickup?

Sally Growing Thunder appears over her mother's shoulder, one hand on her pregnant belly.

SALLY GROWING THUNDER

What's going on, shima?

ADA GROWING THUNDER

Go back inside. This has nothing do with you--

BERNADETTE

Are you Sally? Sally Growing Thunder?

Sally looks at her mother to answer.

ADA GROWING THUNDER

She's my daughter. What's this about--?

BERNADETTE

Is it just the two of you living here?

ADA GROWING THUNDER

And my mother. She's sleeping. Her health isn't good.

BERNADETTE

(to Sally)

Will you come talk with me over here, younger sister?

ADA GROWING THUNDER

What do you want with her--? She hasn't done anything--

BERNADETTE

--Sister. I need to speak with your daughter. Alone.

Ada nods. Sally follows Bernadette down the porch steps, out of earshot of Ada, who lingers in the doorway, watching them.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Don't worry, you're not in any trouble. Whose pickup is that?

SALLY GROWING THUNDER

My mom's boyfriend.

BERNADETTE

What's his name?

SALLY GROWING THUNDER

John. John Tull.

BERNADETTE

Where's John now?

SALLY GROWING THUNDER

At work. He's a hand for some white chicken farmer. I don't know which. I've never been there.

BERNADETTE

Younger sister, are you okay here?

Sally's eyes reflexively shift to Ada in the doorway.

BERNADETTE (CONT'D)

Don't look at her. Look at me, are safe here?

A beat.

SALLY GROWING THUNDER

I'm fine, older sister.

EXT. DILAPIDATED - DAY (SIMULTANEOUSLY)

Chee is poking around the property behind the farmhouse. There are a half-dozen broken down automobiles, most of them junkers, used for parts. Like the front of the farmhouse, the back windows are all covered by thick dark blankets.

Chee's POV

A hillock of red earth baked hard by the desert sun. There is an opening in the side of it, covered by a sheepskin. It's a Navajo sweat lodge.

Chee approaches and pulls back the sheepskin -- a cold hearth filled with volcanic rocks and a couple of woven blankets for sitting. Nothing more.

Chee looks around. At the very edge of the property, abutting a barbed wire fence, there is a small BARN. As Chee moves to investigate --

DROP BACK INTO SOMEONE'S POV FROM INSIDE THE BARN:

SOMEONE (unseen) watches Chee approach through a gap between the wood slats.

EXT. BACK ON THE FRONT PORCH WITH BERNADETTE - INTERCUT

Bernadette walks Sally back up the porch steps to where Ada is waiting in the open doorway. Then, from inside the house, a loud shrieking NOISE. Sounds more animal than human.

BERNADETTE

What was that?

ADA GROWING THUNDER

(to Sally)

Go check on your grandmother.

BERNADETTE

You said she was asleep.

Ada smiles, but not with those black eyes of her's.

ADA GROWING THUNDER

I guess she woke up.

Bernadette's POV:

Over Ada's shoulder, Bernadette can see inside the house and just barely make out several ANIMAL SKINS, wolf, goat, coyote, nailed to the wall. In the kitchen, a shelf full of mason jars filled with ANIMAL PARTS floating in some kind of viscous liquid. Objects used in Witchcraft.

ADA GROWING THUNDER (CONT'D)

Would you like to come in?

Bernadette's gaze snaps back to Ada, standing on the other side of the threshold, smiling.

Shadows cover half of her face. Then, something happens, Ada's face -- everything above that fake smile of hers -- BLURS. Just for a second, all of her features become misshapen, indistinguishable.

Bernadette blinks. Did she just see that? Was it the shadows? Her eyes playing tricks on her? She can feel the little hairs on the back of her neck and arms stand on end. Navajos call it the 'Seventh Sense' -- something UNNATURAL is present inside this house. DARK ENERGY.

BERNADETTE

You have a nice day.

Bernadette steps back keeping her eyes on Ada until she's at the porch steps. She turns and goes.

ADA GROWING THUNDER

(she begins to laugh)

Go in beauty, sister!

EXT. DILAPIDATED FARMHOUSE - BACK OF PROPERTY - INTERCUT

Chee is five feet away from the barn door. He reaches up to push it open when --

BERNADETTE (O.S.)

CHEE!

Chee stops and turns around and sees Bernadette standing at the back of the farmhouse, calling to him.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

REVEAL: the blue steel BARREL of a SHOTGUN trained on the closed barn door... in the hands of a BIG INDIAN MAN (HOPI, if you're wondering), 35, with long black hair, and an upper lip marred by a CLEFT PALLET. His name is JOHN TULL, though we won't know that yet. Tull stands barefoot & shirtless, holding the double-barrel shotgun at eye level, waiting to ambush Chee if he opens the barn door.

BERNADETTE (O.S.)

Let's go!

Tull's POV (through the wood slats):

Chee looks back at the closed barn door...

BERNADETTE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

NOW!

Chee does as he's told, and walks away.

STAY WITH Tull as he lowers the shotgun and leans forward to peek through the wood slats, watching Chee go.

CLOSE ON: Tull's eyes -- blank. Empty. He would have shot Chee with both barrels and not thought twice about it.

INT. CAPRICE - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

Bernadette drives. Chee rides shotgun. No one says anything until they come to the edge of the Growing Thunder property. Bernadette pulls the car over and cuts the engine. She leans over, opens the glove box, and retrieves a small sheep skin POUCH from a group of five and exits the cruiser.

CHEE

What are you doing?

EXT. OPEN DESERT - DAY

Bernadette moves to the front of the car and stands, looking out over the red basin at storm clouds gathering on the other side of Blanca Peak. She dips her fingers into the second pouch and when she pulls them out the tips are black. She rubs them beneath her eyes, leaving a marks of ASH. She takes a little more and sprinkles it in a circle around her feet.

Behind her, Chee gets out of the car and stands in the open passenger side door, watching Bernadette utter a quiet prayer in Diné. When she's finished --

BERNADETTE

Get a medicine bundle. Put corn pollen, ash, sage, and yucca in it. Carry it with you on patrol.

CHEE

Did something happen back there?

Chee casts his gaze off in the distance to the Growing Thunder's FARMHOUSE on the horizon, alone against the darkening sky.

Chee's POV

BIRDS (DOZENS of them) circle above the farmhouse and land on the ROOF.

BERNADETTE

The male rain is on the other side
of the mountain. We better go.
It'll be here soon.

Bernadette gets back in the cruiser. After a moment, Chee follows.

A clap of THUNDER rolls across the valley as they drive away.

INT. LEAPHORN'S FARMHOUSE - CAROLINE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A girl's bedroom. There is a layer of dust over everything. No one's been in here for a long time. A *Beatles* poster on the wall. A modest collection of records. The bed is still made. A bunch of STUFFED ANIMALS on it.

Leaphorn moves to a small, pink vanity with a cluster of PHOTOGRAPHS taped along the edges of the mirror (typical pre-teen girl stuff -- photos of friends; school pictures; etc). His hand is drawn to a POLAROID that hangs askew amongst the others.

Leaphorn's POV

Two NAVAJO GIRLS, both 14, caught in that awkward limbo between being a child and a teenager. Their thin brown arms are draped around one another. They're smiling for the camera. We recognize one of the girls instantly -- a younger ANNA ATTCITY. The other girl, the one whose room we're in, we can assume is Leaphorn's DAUGHTER, her smiling face, like her bedroom, frozen in adolescence.

Leaphorn stares at the PHOTOGRAPH. He turns it over and we see handwriting in flowery letters -- "*Caroline & Anna. July '65. Best friends forever.*"

Leaphorn RUBS his thumb across the handwriting -- *her handwriting.*

Leaphorn realizes that he is CRYING, and wipes his face with his kerchief. He puts the Polaroid back on the mirror, and leaves, turning off the light and shutting the door behind him.

CLOSE ON: the Polaroid, bathed in soft moonlight from the window, two happy girls, in happier times. Both of them now gone from this world forever.

EXT. OUTDOOR RODEO ARENA - BLEACHERS - NIGHT

The kleig lights give just enough light to see the cowboys in rancher shirts and ten gallon hats ride bare back on horses and rope calves. It's like any rodeo you've ever seen, but with one difference: ALL THE COWBOYS ARE NAVAJO. So is everyone in the stands. Even the rodeo clowns are Navajo.

Chee walks up the packed bleachers carrying two paper plates of fry bread and honey, bought from the concession stand.

Chee sits at the top of bleachers, next to a WHITE MAN with a crewcut holding a pair of binoculars up. He lowers them, revealing -- Whitover?!!! The Federal Agent has traded his gray suit for jeans and shirt sleeves.

WHITOVER

(makes a point of checking
his watch)

What is it with you Navajos and
bein' late?

CHEE

There's no Navajo word for time.
Here, I got you one.

Chee holds out a plate. Whitover regards it suspiciously.

CHEE (CONT'D)

It's fry bread. Dip it in the
honey. It's good.

Whitover takes a bite and chews. He nods. Not bad.

CHEE (CONT'D)

See? Reverse cultural assimilation
at work.

WHITOVER

Watch this kid.

Whitover raises his binoculars.

In the arena, a YOUNG NAVAJO MAN rides bareback atop a big, nasty bronc.

CHEE

What the hell am I doing here?

WHITOVER

What's a matter? Homecomin' off to
a bumpy start?

Whitover laughs at his own joke. Chee is not in a joking mood.

WHITOVER (CONT'D)

I'm assumin' you heard about those two bank robberies in southern Utah?

CHEE

The ones who stole the helicopter? Just what was in the news, why?

WHITOVER

Here's somethin' that wasn't in the news: they found a Mongoloid hair in the vault of the Kanab Savings & Loan. Mongoloid means hair like you peoples'.

CHEE

I know what it means. You think the bank robbers are Navajo?

WHITOVER

Ninety thousand people livin' on a parcel of land bigger than a quarter of the states in our fine Union leaves a lot of desert to hide in.

Whitover tears off another piece of fry bread, chews.

WHITOVER (CONT'D)

'Sides, if they were anywhere else, I'd have found 'em by now.

CHEE

So send in a search party, do fly overs. What do you want me to do about it?

WHITOVER

Navajo land is the Tribe's jurisdiction. But, if the FBI had a tangible lead like a location, they could go to the Tribe and negotiate a joint task force, but short that, the Tribe and your new boss, cantankerous prick that he is, don't want a buncha federal agents stompin' all over their jurisdiction.

(re Chee)

Ergo, I had to get creative.

Whitover wipes his hands on his pant legs and reaches in his back pocket and produces a folded map and hands it to Chee.

Chee opens it and sees a large area near Mexican Hat outlined in RED. He looks up at Whitover -

CHEE

You can't be serious?

WHITOVER

I'd get a horse, I was you. Some of them slot canyons look pretty narrow.

(looks Chee in the eye for this part:)

And you report directly to me. And only to me. Understood?

CHEE

That cover story of yours, about me being at Window Rock? The sergeant at Kayenta is already poking holes in it.

WHITOVER

I'll take care of it. Oh, and don't forget which tribe you belong to. Special Agent Chee.

Chee gets up and walks back down the bleachers and doesn't look back.

EXT. OUTDOOR RODEO ARENA - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Chee returns to his Chevelle and finds... a HAWK'S FEATHER pinned beneath one of the windshield wipers. He looks around the parking lot, but he doesn't see anyone.

CAMERA RISES above Chee... above the parking lot... the arena... the town... the desert... higher and higher until there's nothing but blackness on the horizon.

Cream's "White Room" plays us out.

BLACK.

"End Of Pilot"