

EXT. BAJA, BEACH - DAY - SIX MONTHS AGO

"Welcome To The Boomtown" by David & David plays over black & white, Eighty's MTV style video of a dark haired, HISPANIC GIRL, 18, in a bikini on a beach, full of life. Maybe a home-movie. She smiles, natural mischief in her eyes, dances away, the camera follows. She's not used to attention but she's striking. Ava Gardener, Brigitte Bardot, Cindy Crawford. She runs into surf, splashing water. The camera focuses on sand, the outline of a heart being washed away:

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. BORDER CROSSING - DAY - 1985

A 1970 Chevy Malibu, gold and primer, mufflers rumbling, speeds to a border crossing, slows late, tires squeak. It's engine idles high as it pulls into the third lane of a four lane, out of the way, U.S./Mexico border crossing. "Welcome To The Boomtown" by David & David's on the stereo. The far right lane's where Border Patrol strips your car if they think you're smuggling. A white kid, madras, button down, "Risky Business" look, Ray Bans drives the Chevy. BORDER PATROL AGENT leans in the window.

BORDER AGENT
Citizenship?

KID
United States.

The Kid hands him his CA license, the Agent holds it.

BORDER AGENT
Purpose of your trip to Mexico?

A SECOND AGENT walks by, looks at the Kid then the back seat.

KID
(TOO FAST) Just being a tourist,
picking up blankets, souvenirs.
(BEAT) I've got family visiting,
thought I'd get souvenirs, ya know?

Get souvenirs for out of town family that's visiting?

BORDER AGENT
Uh huh. Visiting from where?

KID
Who?

BORDER AGENT
(POINTED) Your family?

The Kid's distracted by the 2nd Agent circling the car. Why's a beat up Chevy got brand new tires? He kicks 'em.

KID
Michigan. They're not visiting. I'm sending stuff to Michigan. Okay?

BORDER AGENT
Anything to declare?

KID
Souvenirs and blankets, in back there. Can I have my ID?

The 2nd Agent, in front of the car, motions to the first.

BORDER AGENT
He gonna pop your hood.

KID
What? Mind If I ask why?

BORDER AGENT
(FUCK YOU) Nope.

Under the hood's a big block 454, dirty but still new. 2nd Agent makes eye contact then speaks into his radio.

KID
So? We good or-

BORDER AGENT
Nice engine. Buy that in Mexico?

KID
No! Came out of my Uncle's truck. He wrecked it then gave it to me.

BORDER AGENT
So VIN numbers won't match?

KID
VIN? Uh, guess not.

Agent takes off his hat, wipes his head with a hankie. Cars fly into Mexico and crawl into the States, the disparity obvious. AC's on full blast, kid sweats anyway.

BORDER AGENT
Nothing to declare? C'mon. Young guy like you? No Tequila, Kahlua?

KID
No, way. Under twenty one.

The Kid revs the engine. It's a tell, he's antsy. There's the lane he's in and the open lane where they tear your car apart then nothing but highway. He could outrun a Bronco.

BORDER AGENT
(BEAT) Pull your car into the inspection lane.

KID
Shit. Really, man?

When the second Agent puts the hood down the Kid sees a Border Patrol Bronco now blocking his lane. He looks to the search lane and a Bronco pulls in there too.

BORDER AGENT
Hey! Andale, andale!

Resigned, the Kid pulls the Chevy over.

EXT. VICTORY MOTORS - DAY

Victory Motors, a car dealership situated just North of the U.S./Mexico border with 12 other dealers on the Boulevard. JOHN CRANE, General Manager of Victory, fifties, bald, bad toupee and GENE WESTER, (BIG G) late 70's, hard, oily, a killer. Victory's owner as well as the Wester family patriarch. They stand at the corner the blacktop. John chews a cigarette. Big G, stares off, steely eyed. He spends his days dwelling on his mistakes. He has cancer, he's dying.

JOHN
How are you, sir?

BIG G
Old, tired, full of shit. Wasting my time wishing money could solve your problems. You?

EXT. VICTORY MOTORS PAD - CONTINUOUS

On the Victory patio/pad high end cars sit outside the showroom. Three young men talk, two in suits. MARC CARLIN, earnest, amoral, adrift, 20, a transplant from Pennsylvania to So Cal. BILLY CHOW, African American, local, fast, a truth teller, funny and unafraid. The third is RAFAEL "RAFFI" OROSCO, 20, also very smart, good looking, an illegal recently arrived from Baja. Raffi wears a Victory service department shirt.

All three work here, Marc & Billy in Sales, Raffi in Service. They pick a high end Chevy conversion van. Alpine stereo, captain's chairs, velour interior, loaded. This is Marc & Billy's morning ritual when someone has cocaine.

MARC
Gentleman, shall we parley?

BILLY
Yes! Let's do it, pickle.

Billy, Raffi and Marc look around then pile into the Chevy.

INT. CONVERSION VAN - CONTINUOUS

They lock doors, pull the drapes. Billy shakes Raffi's hand.

BILLY
S'up. Billy Chow.

RAFFI
I'm Raffi Orosco.

MARC
Sorry, Billy, Raffi. Raffi's cool.

Marc pulls a paper bindle from his pocket and unfolds it, laying blow out on the smooth tabletop of the van.

BILLY
Been working here long, Raffi?

RAFFI
Two months. Washing cars out back.

BILLY
That's rough. And are you now or have you ever been a member of the DEA or any other police or federal narcotic organization, son?

RAFFI
Federal? No.

MARC
Billy, he's cool.

BILLY
His word's good enough for me!

Billy chops the coke with a credit card and spreads out lines as Raffi rolls a five into a straw. He passes it to Billy.

RAFFI
After you.

BILLY
Oh no, you're the guest.

Raffi does a line then Billy. Marc turns on the Alpine.
Morris Day & The Time, "Jungle Love" plays on the radio.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Yesss! The Time. No robot shit.

RAFFI
Girllies dig the robot shit.

BILLY
No more girllies, bro. Mar-ried.

Billy holds up a diamond wedding ring on his left hand.

MARC
Me and Raffi still playing.
Clubbing, looking, hunting.

BILLY
Thought you were shackled up. (TO
RAFFI) Living with a big girl.

Billy laughs like Morris Day.

MARC
Come on, man. Charlene's nice.

BILLY
"Nice, good personality, sweet".
All just another word for-

MARC
Shut it.(BEAT) She's my room mate
now anyway, so-

BILLY
Yeah. Room mate ya fuckin'

RAFFI
Nothing wrong with a big girl. Or
fuckin' your "room mate."

MARC
Normally true. (BEAT) Unless that
room mate gets pregnant.

BILLY
(BEAT) What?

They stop. Marc buries his head in his hands. FLASHBACK TO:

INT. CHARLENE & MARC'S APARTMENT - EARLIER THAT MORNING

Charlene, 21, pretty blond girl with some baby fat, hands Marc a cup of coffee and joins him at the kitchen table in their cheap East San Diego Apartment. She eats cereal, he smokes. Marc's in his suit, Char's in a T-shirt and panties.

MARC
(BEAT) One time. In three months-

CHAR
Keep saying it won't change it.

MARC
You were on the pill-

CHAR
I'm on the pill, I didn't forget!
Shit happen. I'm pregnant!

MARC
Okay! (THEN) And you know for sure-

CHAR
Yes. You fucking jerk!

MARC
I'm trying to figure things out.

CHAR
Like what? We're not together, we made a mistake. You don't want to be with me. I'm going to take care of it.

MARC
Char, I'll take care of it with you-

CHAR
(SARCASTIC) Thanks.

Marc watches Charlene eat, she feels him judging her, gets up, throws the cereal bowl in the sink. He takes a sip of coffee, stubs the butt and gets up to leave.

MARC
I'm gonna be late-

CHAR
Bye.

Marc exits as she slams the bedroom door.

INT. CONVERSION VAN - CONTINUOUS

Billy & Raffi take in Marc's story.

BILLY

Oh, shit. (BEAT) Maybe she ain't fat. (LAUGHS)

RAFFI

Maybe not for long.

BILLY

Don't wait on that shit. Get it done before she starts thinking.

MARC

Thinking what!?

BILLY

Thinking bout making you a daddy.

RAFFI

Geez. That's too bad, bro.

MARC

It'll work out. I got a Doctor's appointment.

RAFFI

Billy, you from Pennsylvania too?

BILLY

No. He's Pennsylvania, I'm local. Mountain View, gang banging, rough stuff. Cops don't kill ya, the homies will. What's an under privileged, young black man to do!?

*

RAFFI

Sell cars!

BILLY

Bingo. Dropped my homies, made myself disappear. Didn't say goodbye, came down here, put on a tie, make 50 K a year. Easy peasy.

*

RAFFI

Fifty!? Man, you guys gotta teach me how to sell cars.

MARC

You speak Spanish and English.
You'd make a ton.

BILLY

How'd you wind up here, Raffi?

RAFFI

I got some people here. I crossed over, like everybody. Just need an ID. Or a nice gringo to marry.

BILLY

ID's easy. I can swing you a license. Nobody gives a shit here.

MARC

What was it like? Crossing over?

FLASHBACK: Raffi's trip through Mexico to the States is shown in flashback as he recounts it to Billy and Marc.

RAFFI (V.O.)

Scary. Desert's freezing at night, weird sounds, wild animals, always looking out for Federales, La Migra, other Mexicans who'll take your roll. They know you're traveling with all your cash. They'll kill you. Coyotes make cash bringing illegals over but mostly they take your roll then you never see 'em again. They split if there's trouble so I went alone. I ran, I got myself ready, got in shape. Better odds alone. You sleep at night wake up somewhere new everyday. I wake up one day, I'm walking across a huge green lawn. It was beautiful, the sun's coming up, like a dream. I realized I'm on a golf course. I'm in California.

INT. CONVERSION VAN - CONTINUOUS

The guys as before, Marc smokes a cigarette.

RAFFI

I'd finally made it. I didn't realize the exact moment I'd crossed that invisible line but I knew I was here.

MARC
That's awesome.

BILLY
Where you go from there?

RAFFI
Traveled at night, took buses and alleys to my Uncle Jesse's house. You know Jesse? He works out back. He's my Mom's brother. I showed up at his door, he was so happy. (PROUD) I already sent money home.

MARC
Got to help your family. Anyone else coming here?

RAFFI
Someday. I hope.

BILLY
Hey, you got a sister? Don't introduce her to fuck monster here.

MARC
Wow. Really?

Raffi bristles. Too soon for the joke but that's Billy.

BILLY
Oh, sorry, man. (BEAT) So what, you got, like a "Scarface" thing going on? Amor de Hermana?

MARC
William? Manners?

RAFFI
Nah, it's cool.

BILLY
See? It's cool. We fuck with each other. We talk shit, it's how we all do it. You wanta sell cars? Gotta talk shit. And you gotta take it.

MARC
That's true.

RAFFI

Really? That's good. Cause I was just wondering if I could fuck your sister.

BILLY

Hey! That's way outta line, man.

MARC

Okay, amigos. This coke ain't gonna snort itself.

There's a knock at the van's door. They freeze then Marc gathers the coke into the paper with a credit card.

BILLY

(WHISPER) Let's all be cool.

MARC

(LOUD) Just a minute!

They try to look innocent as Marc opens the door. It's JACKIE WESTER, 30, gorgeous, the owner's daughter. Twice married she still calls herself "Wester". Hot, blond Bettie Page.

MARC (CONT'D)

Oh, hey, Ms. Wester.

JACKIE

(KNOWING) What are you up to in here?

BILLY

Who, us? Ya know. Bumping wieners.

MARC

(COUGHS) Nothing. Sorry, have you met Raffi yet? Raffi, Ms. Wester.

Raffi is smitten. He shakes her hand as she stifles a laugh.

JACKIE

Hi, Raffi.

RAFFI

Hey, hi. How are you?

BILLY

Yo. (SOTTO) Let go of her hand, bro

MARC

Billy & I have taken it upon ourselves to show Raffi the incredible features of this amazing van. He wants to sell cars.

JACKIE

Yeah? We can always use Spanish speaking salesman. And you obviously speak English.

RAFFI

I worked at resorts. Had to speak English. For guests.

JACKIE

Nice. Marc, can I talk to you a second?

The guys share a look.

MARC

Of course.

EXT. U.S./MEXICO BORDERLANDS - DAY

ARTURO CHAVEZ, 30's, drives his Border Patrol Bronco through no man's land, East of the Pacific, between Mexico and the States. Arturo covers where most migrants cross now that "Operation Gatekeeper" has pushed them inland from Tijuana. Miles and miles of desert, one Agent. "I Was Country Before Country Was Cool" by Barbara Mandrell plays on the radio. Something in the distance catches Arturo's eye, a bright color out of place in the monochromatic desert. Pink? Maybe a balloon or trash? He stops the Ford, checks his odometer.

ARTURO

(INTO RADIO) Dispatch, I'm at mile twenty six point four, I see something, I'm exiting my vehicle.

DISPATCH (RADIO V.O.)

Roger, thirteen.

Arturo exits his Bronco and walks to the bright object off the fire road, 25/30 yards away from a drop off into a dried out river bed unseen from the road. The pink object's a backpack. Up close he sees it's attached to a female. Her body lays curled up into a fetal position. Arturo checks, she's dead. He speaks into his portable radio.

ARTURO

Dispatch, I've got a body. Female.
I need an EMS wagon at mile marker
twenty six point four of the fire
road.

DISPATCH (RADIO V.O.)

It's in route. Will she need
assistance?

ARTURO

No.

Arturo looks through the back pack. It has a garish picture of the band Menudo on it. With his pen he lifts the long black hair off the girl's face. She's Hispanic, beautiful (she's the girl from the video on the beach) and she's died within the last ten, twelve hours. The backpack's got toothpaste, hair brush, clothes. He unzips a pocket and finds Polaroids. They show family, this girl, beach pics. Did she crawl here or is this a dump job? She has a family that loves her somewhere. But no ID. No ID? Arturo keeps the pictures. Arturo looks for any sign, the name for the story the environment will tell if you know what to look for. The girl walked then crawled to here. He sees faded knee print, foot prints, broken branches/brush she disturbed when she made her way here and laid down. Rocks pushed away to lay down comfortably. Arturo looks off into the distance.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

You wouldn't have been alone.

INT. BORDER CROSSING DETENTION OFFICES - LATER - DAY

The Kid from the Chevy waits in a Border Patrol detention trailer. The Agent enters with a bag. The kids smoking.

BORDER AGENT

You okay? Need anything?

KID

No. What's taking so long?

BORDER AGENT

We found something. You want to
tell me anything?

KID

What's to tell?

BORDER AGENT

We found something.

KID
It's not mine. Whatever you found.

BORDER AGENT
Wrong answer. I want to help you
here, kid.

KID
What are you talking about?

The Border Agent pulls out a big bag of weed. Too big.

KID (CONT'D)
Pot? But isn't that, like a ticket?

BORDER AGENT
Not anymore. Just Say No? Nothing?
Not ringing a bell?

KID
No. Oh yeah, isn't that what that
skinny, big head lady says?

BORDER AGENT
Close enough. Oh! You also had a 38
under your seat. Yeah. A loaded 38.

KID
What? That's not mine. Neither's
the car. Check the registration.

BORDER AGENT
No shit? Must be your lucky day. I
might buy that car when we auction
it off. Cause it's ours now, dooper.

The Agent twirls the 38 revolver like Johnny Ringo in
Tombstone. The Kid stubs the butt, lays his head on the desk.

INT. VICTORY MOTORS - SALESMAN OFFICE - LATER

Marc sits in the customer's seat, Jackie sits where the
salesman normally does. The salesman have four offices that
face the showroom. It's where they sweat customers till they
make a deal. Jackie takes her time, writing nothings on one
of the salesman's four square pad where deals are written up.
Marc goes to turn on the light, she stops him.

JACKIE
Don't.

Jackie turns on a clock radio sitting on the desk. Dan
Hartman sings "I Can Dream About You".

She leans her chair in, motions for Marc to do the same. Jackie knows she can't be seen from the outside if the light's off. She also knows the office is bugged.

MARC

Uh, If this is about-

JACKIE

You guys doing blow? No. I was thinking you and I? We should probably get a drink. Sometime.

MARC

(BEAT) I'm sorry. What?

JACKIE

You do drink, right?

MARC

Yes. I do. (BEAT) Hell, Ms. Wester, I'd drink poison with you.

JACKIE

I prefer Vodka. And call me Jackie. (BEAT) Stay in here for a minute? After I leave.

MARC

Okay. Jackie.

JACKIE

And have a good day.

Jackie exits to the showroom. Marc watches her ass.

MARC

Oh my God. Oh my God!

Billy sees Jackie exit while Marc's still inside the office, not fired but probably in more trouble than he even knows.

EXT. U.S./MEXICO BORDERLANDS - DAY - LATER

An ambulance is parked on the fire road. Two PARAMEDICS are there. A man attends to the dead girl and JULIE MORROW, 28, a new hire to the Emergency Medical Services, EMS. Julie walks up behind Arturo as he's tracking the girl's sign. He makes his way slowly to the edge of the drop off, towards the dried out riverbed. That's when Arturo sees where the girl came from. The big picture. There's bodies down below, bodies that couldn't be seen from the fire road at the bottom of the river bed. She wasn't traveling alone. They're everywhere, spreading out from a burned out camp fire.

ARTURO

Oh my God.

Julie catches up, stands next to Arturo, stunned. Bodies fan out from the now dead fire. Sixteen, including the girl.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. VICTORY MOTORS SHOWROOM - DAY (DAY 1)

John chews a cigarette, making his Pop-eye face. Customers are out on the lot with salesmen. Marc Carlin, his prodigy stands with him. The "Smooth Wave" station plays Kenny G.

JOHN

Our biggest problem? Who we have to sell to. The mutts who pays the bills for us to stay open. Squids, illegals, Flips, BK's and all the rest. Cheap grinders who shave your dick down like an accountant's pencil. But mixed in with 'em? Home-runs. The perfect combo of mutt with money meets car back of book.

MARC

Yeah. The home run.

JOHN

The Home run. Don't let mutts wear you out before "the one" walks in.

MARC

Or you'll miss the full pop.

JOHN

Keep your head right. That's how you got this streak. These guys piss and moan, you're the new guy and you're knocking their dick stiff up in the owner's office.

MARC

Thanks, John. I love it.

JOHN

What's not to love? Rack 'em up, ring the bell. See all the commission slips in your box?

MARC

Like manna from heaven.

JOHN
Keep it up.

John slaps him on the back.

MARC
Thanks, John.

JOHN
Eagles and bunnies. Who ya wanna
be? (BEAT) Got anything working?

MARC
Waiting for F&I on a Volvo I sold.

JOHN
Uh huh. Take care of your problem
yet?

MARC
No, but I got an appointment.

JOHN
Don't fuck up. A kid's for life, ya
know? Too young for that shit.

MARC
I'm on it. Seriously.

JOHN
Roll the fucker, get another one.

EXT. U.S./MEXICO BORDERLANDS - DAY - LATER

Arturo and Julie walk among the bodies. A news crew's there
The bodies have only spent a short time out in the
environment. Red, plastic beer cups lie around the campfire,
some upright, blue drink left inside some.

JULIE
I haven't seen many dead people.

ARTURO
Easy to die out here. Are you new?

JULIE
Kind of. Transfer. I'm Julie.

ARTURO
Hi. I'm Arturo.

JULIE
So, where were they all headed?

ARTURO
America! Of course.

JULIE
No, I know, I mean this location seems out of the way. Yet close to the fire road so-

ARTURO
Everywhere can be out of the way when you're illegal. They probably had a bad "tour guide." Coyote's tired of dragging ass, they become a liability for him this close to the States. If they get caught? They get sent back but he goes to jail. He had his money, he probably left them.

JULIE
But why wouldn't they try to make it on their own?

ARTURO
Some did. There were more than just these ones here. Maybe twice as many. You can read the signs. See? (INDICATES FOOTPRINTS) But these are all older or younger or women. No young men. The ones who could leave, left. For whatever reason these ones stayed.

JULIE
I don't understand this

ARTURO
I guess they stayed till it was too late. Being out in the desert can kill you. The environment- (TRAILS OFF)

Julie finds a plastic water bottle half full of blue liquid.

JULIE
This doesn't seem right.

ARTURO
Yeah. Nobody dying of thirst should have water left.

Arturo takes the bottle and smells it.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
It smells like juice. You should
save it.

Julie puts a cover on it and drops it in her bag.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Somebody knows what happened here.
Nobody's going to care.

EXT. VICTORY MOTORS - WASH AREA - LATER

Marc & Raffi smoke a joint behind car wash row. The yellow Volvo sits gleaming in a stall. Lola Beltran sings "El Rey" loudly from a mechanic's radio somewhere.

RAFFI
Nice car.

MARC
Turbo with a stick. I drove it for
awhile.

RAFFI
What's that like, driving these
cool cars?

MARC
Great. I love it.

RAFFI
I think I'd love it too. Driving
cool cars, making good money.

MARC
I can teach you, Raffi. You'd blow
these guys away. You can learn it,
easy. I was like you when I
started.

INT. VICTORY MOTORS - DAY (FLASHBACK - 4 MONTHS AGO)

Billy Chow's introducing Marc to John in the showroom of Victory. John is talking to a car wholesaler, TOMMY CRUTCHFIELD, better known as CRUTCH, fifties, an intimidating man, always in big Hawaiian shirts, smoking a cigar, walks with a cane. They eye Marc who's wearing work boots, dirty jeans, a leather jacket and has long hair.

CRUTCH
Geez, Billy. Where do you find
these guys? I'll see you, John.

John waves Crutch off then turns back to size up Marc.

MARC

Hi, Mister Crane. I'm-

JOHN

You gotta be shitting me, right?
Allen Funt gonna come walking out?

BILLY

No, no, no. John, did I ever waste
your time before?

JOHN

Seriously? I seem to recall one guy-

BILLY

That one's not my bad. Dude blew
his own head off. He was moving the
metal before that.

JOHN

Uh huh. (TO MARC) So? What's your
story, bud?

MARC

I'm doing construction right now,
Mr. Crane. But I'd love a shot at
this. I've never sold cars but my
dad had a dealership-

JOHN

So maybe it's in your blood?

BILLY

Yes. It's in his blood, John.

John looks at him for a long beat. He's all instinct.

JOHN

Okay, fuck it. Cut the hair, buy a
suit, no boots, shoes. Expensive
ones. People look at your shoes.

MARC

(TENTATIVE) Sure, great.

JOHN

Broke, right?

John takes out a huge roll of bills. ALL salesman have a wad
in 1985. Cash is power, it feels good.

JOHN (CONT'D)
That your piece of shit truck?

MARC
Some might say it's a classic.

JOHN
Maybe it is in your blood. But some might say that's a 2RMF-er. A double rat mother fucker. You gotta drive in style. Fill out your paperwork, pick a car. Billy'll get ya keys. But anyone can sell your demo out from under you anytime.

John counts out a grand in hundreds, gives it to Marc.

MARC
Wow. Thanks, Mister Crane.

JOHN
You're holding my money so call me John. And fuck "thanks", just sell baby.

EXT. VICTORY MOTORS - WASH AREA - DAY

Marc and Raffi in the wash area finishing off the joint.

MARC
That was four months ago.

RAFFI
Already got a Rolex.

MARC
It's cake. You just gotta like people and listen to what they want. Be happy.

RAFFI
I like people. I like their stories. But where I'm from only Narcos roll like you guys.

MARC
Yeah, about that. Never had any interest in the coke biz?

RAFFI
Kind of. I saw it, I knew how it was. But the risk? Lotta risk. Lotta bodies.

(MORE)

RAFFI (CONT'D)

But my family's tight. They'd never let me do it. Too many uncles, brothers and cousins watching over me.

MARC

That's one product that sells itself. In the States anyway.

RAFFI

Hard to find a connection. And strangers will just rip you off. Plus you step on the wrong toes. (GESTURES A CUT THROAT) You gotta find a supplier, someone you trust. Plus cash to start it up. It's hard and dangerous.

MARC

Yeah but if it was easy everybody would be doing it. And yet everyone has it!? So a bunch of people must be doing it!

RAFFI

Huge money. I'd love that kind of money.

MARC

What would you do with it?

RAFFI

Me? Get a big house with a big ass pool, have my family move in with me. Live the life. Like Scarface. "The World Is Yours", ya know? Porsches, cash, power. And the ladies. What about you?

MARC

If I had crazy money? (BEAT) I'd get my Dad his dealership back. He lost it. Or his partners fucked him out of it. (BEAT) That changed him.

RAFFI

Sucks. But we gotta make the dream come true, man! This is America.

MARC

Hell, it's California. Anything's possible in California, Raffi.

EXT. U.S./MEXICO BORDERLANDS - NIGHT

Arturo walks the riverbed, Julie's next to him, sweaty, her forehead, clothes dirty. The place is lit up with spotlights. Border Patrol, Sheriffs and Paramedics walk around, packing people up and bagging them.

ARTURO

How long have you been a paramedic?

JULIE

I've been in the field- three months? But I've never seen anything like this.

ARTURO

I've seen it. I transferred here from Juarez. Are you from here?

JULIE

Yeah. Ocean Beach. My mom and dad are hippies. Still. First thing they asked was what kind of drugs I had in my ambo.

ARTURO

My parents and grandparents are first and second generation Americans. My family lived North of the Juarez border when it was set down so, whoop de do, we became "Americans" after that.

JULIE

That's lucky. Is your wife-

Arturo holds up his wedding ring.

ARTURO

Oh, yeah, she's from Juarez too.

JULIE

You guys have kids?

ARTURO

(BEAT) We did.

JULIE

Oh. I'm sorry, Arturo.

A pissed BP Agent, late fifties, KIP DRUMMOND, walks up.

DRUMMOND

Great, Arturo. Couldn't just call this in to the Mexicans, could ya?

ARTURO

It's on our side of the border, Drummond.

DRUMMOND

So what? How you even know? Ya get out your map? They're all Mex. This don't have shit to do with us.

ARTURO

What's the matter, Drummond? You worried about the paperwork cause you can't spell?

JULIE

Okay. I'm, I better get back to it.

Julie leaves. Kip Drummond's old time racist Border Patrol, Arturo's the future. The Border Patrol wants to replace all the Drummonds. HARRY KARLSON, tough, ex-Marine and a San Diego County Sheriff joins Arturo. They're friends.

HARRY

(OFF JULIE) Who's that? Nice ass.
(THEN) Kip, Art.

ARTURO

Harry. Julie, she's new.

HARRY

You find all this, Art?

DRUMMOND

Yeah. And he plans on opening a fucking funeral parlor for broke ass Mexican's.

ARTURO

What the fuck you even know? Maybe they're American.

DRUMMOND

Bullshit, look at 'em, they're Mex. And none of our business.

HARRY

I don't know how we all could have missed this.

DRUMMOND

What's that supposed to mean,
Harry?

ARTURO

You were on duty last night. Did
you drive the fire road?

DRUMMOND

Fuck you! Did you see 'em from the
fire road?

HARRY

I said we "all" missed it, Kip.

ARTURO

Highway's west of here. If they're
dying, why don't they just walk the
fire road?

DRUMMOND

I don't know. Maybe cause they're
stupid? Or Mexican.

HARRY

Give it a fucking rest, Kip. We're
just talking, all right?

DRUMMOND

Bullshit. I don't like what either
of you saying. Eh, fuck you guys.

Drummond walks off, disgusted. Both men shake their heads.

ARTURO

Fuck him. Two more years to twenty,
he's gone. (BEAT) So? What's up
with you? How's Mandy?

HARRY

She's great. Pain in the ass. She
just got her driver's license,
thinks she's gonna drive my car.

ARTURO

You going to the auction?

HARRY

Yeah. Lotta cars this time. Lot of
muscle. There's even a Ferrari.

ARTURO

I saw that. You gonna get Mandy a
Ferrari?

HARRY

Shit. She already gets too much attention. (BEAT) God, Art. Some of these look like kids.

ARTURO

The first one I found, the girl over there, she looked like (TRAILS OFF) She looked like a teenager. (BEAT) I put her in the Ambo.

HARRY

Why?

ARTURO

Why not? She was on our side. You heard Drummond. They're gonna dump 'em in a pit. I didn't want her thrown away.

HARRY

Okay.

ARTURO

I just, I'd like her family to know what happened. If she has one.

CHIEF DANIEL MORTON, 40's, a bureaucrat but a decent man, in charge of the San Ysidro Border Patrol station, joins the two men. The Chief's been given the task of transitioning his Border Patrol into a new age. No shakedowns, no rapes or good ol' boy "accidents" (murders or beatings) in holding cells. Agent Drummond and his partner RICK OLSON walk up with Chief Morton. Drummond and Olson are both past their prime and corrupt.

DRUMMOND

Hey, good news, Art.

OLSON

Yeah. These ones ain't ours. Say bye to your dead friends, amigo.

CHIEF MORTON

What'd I just tell you guys? Go help bag 'em and load 'em up.

OLSON

What are EMS here for if-

Chief looks at them. The two Agents walk off, muttering.

OLSON (CONT'D)

(SOTTO) This is fucked.

DRUMMOND
(SOTTO) Shut up!

Arturo spits after them as they go.

ARTURO
Useless. Why you put up with that
bullshit!? They're done. Guilty
cause you're promoted over 'em?

CHIEF MORTON
Hey, competency's not for everyone,
Art. It's your Union that keeps me-

The Chief looks at Harry. Harry takes the hint and exits.

HARRY
See you at the auction, Art.

CHIEF MORTON
(THEN) Relax. They won't last much
longer.

ARTURO
I guarantee that asshole slept in
his Bronco all night. Or worse-

CHIEF MORTON
Which ever side they're on it
doesn't matter, they're Mexican.
You know that. And that's where
they have to go. None of 'em has ID-

ARTURO
And that doesn't seem strange?
Sixteen bodies, no ID?

CHIEF MORTON
The trafficker took their ID's.
Easier to keep them in a group.

ARTURO
How did he talk all these people
out of their ID?

CHIEF MORTON
He collected 'em before or, ya
know, after. He wouldn't want us or
the Mexican police figuring out
where they're from. He didn't count
on you coming by.

ARTURO

So he just left them? (THEN) If one of 'em was your daughter-

CHIEF MORTON

I know, Art. But we're not cops. We don't do- There's protocol-

ARTURO

Yeah, same as Juarez. But not 16 people. Not without a truck breaking down or an accident. He left them to die.

CHIEF MORTON

Even if? We have tenuous relations with Mexico-

ARTURO

We have no relations. Sheriffs and SDPD don't either. We need someone in Mexico willing to help.

CHIEF MORTON

Everything is drugs now, Art.

ARTURO

So we ignore murders?

CHIEF MORTON

Just say no. Mexico won't even return stolen cars.

ARTURO

Neither do we.

CHIEF MORTON

Exactly. So how you gonna find someone to work with? Leave it. It's easy to get dead down there.

INT. VICTORY MOTORS GM OFFICE, EAGLE'S NEST - NIGHT

John Crane and DAVID CORTEZ, Used Car Manager at Victory, sit at their desks, across from each other. On their glass wall is "The Board". The Board's where the salesman's tallies for the month is kept, "A" team and "B" team. The "A Team" is John's, the "B Team" is Dave's and they side bet against each other and it causes a cut throat competitiveness. ROY WESTER, 30's, paunchy, mustache, receding comb-over, is in the office with John and Dave. Roy's Jackie's older brother. Roy knows zero about the car biz except which car he wants to drive.

ROY
What's working on that 911 Turbo?

JOHN
Nothing I know of.

DAVE
Yeah, nothing.

ROY
That's a pussy magnet. (LAUGHS)
Who's winning this month?

JOHN
I'm still betting on Marc Carlin.
Fourth month in a row.

DAVE
He's a car down from Clint Rushing
with forty minutes to go. Dream on.

JOHN
We'll see.

Marc Carlin is John's top dog on A Team, CLINT RUSHING is Dave's on the B Team. Clint's winning a tight race. He paces in the showroom, watch's the board. Clint's in his 30's, a big man. Doughy, unhappily married, four kids. He uses his weight to push people around but he's all bluster. A bad habit if you come up against someone who's for real.

ROY
Clint? The, that fat one? Huh.

Roy loiters. Clint flashes a fake smiles, waves confidently at Roy from the Showroom. Roy looks at him, ignores him.

ROY (CONT'D)
That guy's creepy. Guess the dopes
don't see it.

John smiles and looks at Dave who scowls.

DAVE
Moves a lot of cars.

ROY
(BEAT) No accounting for taste.
(ASIDE) You seen Jackie?

JOHN
No. Any plans tonight, Roy?

*

Roy doesn't answer. Raised rich he has no social skills or courtesy. He's sorta waiting to see who wins but couldn't really give a shit. He wears a "Member's Only" jacket. He goes to the box where all the lot's car keys hang, takes the 911's. Guilty, he looks around, doesn't say goodbye, exits.

DAVE
Piece of shit.

JOHN
Horse's ass. His sister's got bigger balls.

Marc enters to read the Board.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Hasn't changed since last time you looked at it fifteen minutes ago.

MARC
Billy's got a customer of mine in the booth. I T-Oed him.

DAVE
Cover him! You should be working a deal. You wanta lose by one car?

JOHN
Even worse, tie ain't a win, tiger.

Over the PA: "Marc Carlin to F & I, please?" Dave, Marc and John look surprised. Marc claps.

MARC
Oh yeah! That's probably the deal Billy had working.

DAVE
No. Didn't come through here. And half any deal you get is Billy's.

JOHN
Unless it's a be-back.

DAVE
What be-back?

JOHN
It could be a be-back, Dave. Quit busting his balls.

MARC
A car and a half if Billy's deal comes through. Shit yeah!

Marc exits the office, Clint heckles him with some bullshit (Unwind) as he crosses to F & I.

INT. VICTORY MOTORS FINANCE & INSURANCE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Marc enters to find an old man he's never seen before. GISELLE PERON, 50's, Argentinian woman, heavy accent, (married to the Belgian Nazi who heads Victory's Service Department) Giselle's the piranha in charge of Victory's finance & insurance. She finishes up with Mulray's paperwork.

GISELLE

Marc, Mr. Mulray's truck is in the service drive. Put his window sticker in for him, please. Thank you, Mr. Mulray.

Marc takes the Registration sticker (the Reg) from Giselle and has Mr. Mulray follow him down the hall, out to Service.

EXT. SERVICE DRIVE - CONTINUOUS

"Synchronicity 2" by The Police plays through PA speakers as Marc puts the car's reg on the passenger side windshield. He opens the door for Mulray and shakes his hand as he gets in.

MARC

Thank's Mr. Mulray.(SOTTO) Hey, uh, have we met before?

MULRAY

Don't think so. Thanks.

Mulray pulls out of the Service drive. Marc's dumbfounded, he never forgets a deal. Then he sees Jackie Wester standing in the shadows of the service aisle. She leans her leg against the wall, smoking a cigarette. She's attractive. Good God, she's the Devil's Candy. She stubs out her cigarette.

JACKIE

Hiya, sport. So, congrats. I guess you won the month.

MARC

Yeah. Did you throw me that deal?

JACKIE

Yes. You're welcome.

She heads into the shadows. Marc catches up but she grabs him first and kisses him hard on the mouth. She's the Alpha.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Had to get that outta the way, huh?

MARC
Yeah. Uh, so about that drink-

JACKIE
Maybe some other time. (THEN) But
right now we could just, uh-

She takes his hand, leads him to a service stall. Dim green light shines off a work bench. She lays down on a Jaguar's hood, puts her heels in the bumper. Marc hesitates but fuck the Jag. She pulls him to her, pulls him into her. She crosses her legs behind him. They're making love like they'd never done it before.

MARC
(WHISPER) Don't care if you're bad
news, don't care if you hurt me,
don't care if-

*
*
*

JACKIE
Shut up.

She's an addiction and Marc's intoxicated. Her smell, her hair, her skin, all of her and he doesn't care. Doesn't even care if she gets him killed. This is the most beautiful woman he's ever met, he's ever seen. He only cares about her. About Jackie.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. SD COUNTY AUTOPSY ROOM - LATER

Arturo, Harry and Julie enter the autopsy room of the morgue. "Dreadlock Holiday", 10CC on the radio. GLORIA PETT, 50, County Coroner is going through her report. The dead girl's on a metal table. She's still beautiful.

HARRY
Gloria, Julie Morrow. Julie, Gloria
Pett, queen of the dead.

GLORIA
(SARCASTIC) Thanks, Harry. (THEN)
Latino female, Five foot, three,
one hundred seven pounds. From
Mexico, I'd guess from her dental
work. Mid-late teens. (BEAT) There
was some overkill with this girl.

ARTURO
Overkill?

GLORIA
Dehydration but no hypovolemic shock. A broken hyoid bone, tracheal compression under her scarf.

ARTURO
The desert and elements didn't kill her. She was murdered.

GLORIA
Ruptured capillaries. Possibly raped. Contusions, skin under her fingernails.

ARTURO
(STARING) You put up a fight.

JULIE
And the juice in the bottle?

GLORIA
Smells a lot like Ethylene glycol.

HARRY
They drank anti-freeze?

INT. RADIO'S 48 - LATER

Julie, Arturo and Harry are having a drink. Radio's 48. Small town. Julie smokes and wobbles a bit, tired and slightly lit.

JULIE
What. The. Fuck.

ARTURO
Yeah. They were all killed.

JULIE
Someone kills sixteen people. In America. And we send 'em to Mexico?

HARRY
Uh, oh. She's an idealist, Art.

ARTURO
Sorry, Julie. That's how it works.

JULIE
Well, what now?

HARRY

I say we form a posse! (THEN) Why
you want the girl's fingerprints?

*
*

ARTURO

See if she has a record. If so, I
will find out who she is. Let her
family know. Just- so they know.

HARRY

And your "Chain Of Command"

ARTURO

Chain of command? Can't go up a
chain if links are missing. No one
cares, we just snag dope now, the
rest's off limits.

HARRY

Yeah. Morton gonna be pissed.

ARTURO

Morton told us put 'em on a truck,
give 'em back to Mexico. He said
"get back the body bags."

*
*

HARRY

Gotta say, I'm a little concerned.

ARTURO

Okay. Can I count on you?

*

HARRY

Ab-so-fucking-lutely.

JULIE

I'm in. If you need me to be.

ARTURO

Thanks.

HARRY

If you're really gonna get into
this thing? Seriously might want to
join the Sheriff's Reserve.

ARTURO

Again with the Sheriff's Reserve?

HARRY

You want to investigate murders?
Get a badge that lets you do it.
Border Patrol's only about drugs.

JULIE

I, uh. I'm gonna go throw up now.

Julie exits to a bathroom.

HARRY

Okay, she's fucking delightful.

ARTURO

And you're married.

HARRY

Yeah. So are you.

INT. VICTORY MOTORS GM OFFICE - NIGHT

Marc's won the month. John's stifles a laugh, Dave's not impressed, Clint knows it. He had the lead the entire month only to see it slip away in the last half hour of the last night of the last day of the month. It's a bad beat. *

CLINT

One car. Had it all month. Where that fucking deal come from? I didn't see him come in.

DAVE

Yeah. Just lucky, I guess.

JOHN

Or he fought till the very end?

DAVE

(BEAT) I'd actually like to know what that deal is too.

JOHN

What the deal is? On the board, okay. He won. Tomorrow's a new day, don't be a pussy.

CLINT

(FAKE LAUGH) Oh no, John. I'm great. I still sold a ton. "The King" is happy for the kid. *

JOHN

Really?

DAVE

Shit (SOTTO) The King.

Marc enters the office, disheveled, grinning, sex high. *

MARC
Hey! This a bad time?

JOHN
No! Not at all, champ!

DAVE
Where the fuck you been?

MARC
Working. Ya know. Closing deals!

He's giddy. John counts out three grand cash for Marc. *

JOHN
Hell yeah. You're a rock star. Keep
it up, eagle. You earned it.

CLINT
Yeah. Nice job.

Clint keeps up the good sport act but it sickens Dave. Losing
should infuriate you. But John's happy.

MARC
Thought you had it sewn up, Clint.

CLINT
Me too. (ASIDE) Even told the wife.
But stay on top six months in a row-

DAVE
Aw, quit living in the fucking
past. Win "one" in a row, King.

CLINT
Oh, come on Dave! *

DAVE
We use to measure shit in Viet Nam,
like "one inch" alive? Another
inch, dead. Your fat ass woulda got
greased day one. *

Marc and Clint take this as their cue to exit. Wall plaques
and pictures show John was in Korea, Dave was in Viet Nam.

DAVE (CONT'D)
(BEAT) You throw him that deal?

JOHN
What if I did? I'm the GM here, I
do what I want.
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)
I can go in the showroom and
literally take a shit on a car.

DAVE
(BEAT) Might hurt it's resale.

JOHN
Ya know Dave, some people when
they're offered a bet say "no".

DAVE
There was a lot of money-

JOHN
I didn't throw him the deal! You
fucking degenerate gambler.

DAVE
(BEAT) Okay. I'm sorry.

JOHN
Great. So can we forget this? Or do
you want to suck my dick?

DAVE
Yeah. I've been meaning to try some
new stuff your Mom taught me. You
know how she cups my balls and-

JOHN
Okay. (THEN) Fuck you.

DAVE
Fuck you.

INT. VICTORY MOTORS - WESTER SUITE

Inside the office above John and Dave's is Big G's office, on
the top of the dealership. Remington bronzes and other
American bullshit. Jackie sits in a leather chair, smoking,
drinking vodka. Big G comes in and sits down next to his
daughter. He's not unlike Noah Cross from Chinatown.

BIG G
What are you up to, darling?
Besides no good.

JACKIE
Why?

BIG G
Just curious. Where's Roy?

JACKIE
Am I my brother's keeper?

BIG G
No, I just thought you seem to know everything around here.

JACKIE
He took the new 911 out. To look for prostitutes or wreck it and get another DUI.

BIG G
Always on his ass while I hope, wait for him to show me something.

JACKIE
Hasn't he showed you enough? I've seen plenty.

BIG G
(BEAT) Well, he'll never be you.

JACKIE
Right. "The Chosen One". (BEAT) So how come you're are leaving him my dealership in your will?

Big G's thrown. How could she know this?

BIG G
You read my will?

JACKIE
Did I stutter? So it is true.

BIG G
Jackie, I was, how do-(THEN) You're married now, Drake has money.

JACKIE
His money, not mine. Pre-nup?

BIG G
Honestly darling, I thought about it, about you. You have shares, how could Roy survive me gone?

JACKIE
What about all your Darwinian philosophy? I earned it. You just can't stand a woman getting what's yours. Even your own daughter.

*
*

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BIG G
Jackie, you're taken care of.

JACKIE
I don't live dependant. On anyone. *

BIG G
There's no shame, most women-

JACKIE
Aren't most women "whores or doormats"? I know this place. I've worked here since I was sixteen while genius flunked out. *

BIG G
I just thought an education would help. (SOTTO) Good money after bad. *

JACKIE
The best part? He'll just piss away all you built. Fast. It'll all fall down. But I won't be here. *

BIG G
Jackie. You're incredibly valuable to me and I know Roy won't-

JACKIE
Blah, blah, blah. Change your will. And I'll know if you don't.

BIG G
Jackie, don't be- *

JACKIE
Like you? If you really are worried about Roy? Worry about me. *

Jackie gets up, she's heard enough. *

BIG G
Try not to kill any more salesman, dear? *

JACKIE
That wasn't me. That was Darwin. *

She leaves the old man alone with his troubles.

INT. FREE CLINIC - MORNING

Marc and Char wait in a shabby Free Clinic, pamphlets about STD's and AIDS. The other patients are rough around the edges. They look uncomfortable, a match once, but not now.

CHAR

I'm scared.

MARC

I'm not. It's fine. (BEAT) I mean you'll be okay, okay?

CHAR

No. I said I'm scared, alright?

MARC

Fine! Do you want to leave?

CHAR

(TOO LOUDLY) No! Can't I just tell you I'm scared without you denying it or trying to fix-

MARC

Keep it down!? What do you want from me? We've been over it-

Char starts to cry, Marc hands her a handkerchief.

MARC (CONT'D)

I gotta, I need a bathroom.

INT. FREE CLINIC BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marc enters the small bathroom, toilet, chipped sink, graffiti covered mirror, locks the door, he's sweating, no window. He pours out coke on the toilet top. He rolls a bill, a loud knock at the door scares him.

MARC

I'm in here! (SOTTO) Fuckin' idiot.

He kneels on the dirty floor, snorts two lines. He wipes his face, fixes his tie in the mirror, looks at himself, ashamed.

INT. FREE CLINIC

Marc comes out, a BIG MAN goes by, Char's chair is empty.

MARC

(WHISPER) Aww, fucking great!

He goes to the NURSE in the small sliding window.

MARC (CONT'D)
So, did the blond girl-

NURSE
She's in back with the Doctor.

MARC
(BRIGHTLY) Oh! (BEAT) Should I-

NURSE
Have a seat.

Marc fidgets. The clock goes from 2:06 to 2:56. Char comes out, pale and sweaty. She sways, Marc holds her arm. She has papers, two pill bottles.

MARC
Hey. They give you anything good?

CHAR
Can you take me home?

MARC
Okay. (BEAT) Are you hungry or-

CHAR
(OVERWROUGHT) Take me fucking home.

INT. VICTORY MOTORS, CONVERSION VAN - LATER

Raffi and Billy are doing blow in the Conversion Van. There's a knock. Billy looks out a window, opens the door for Marc.

BILLY
Hey. What's the deal, pickle?

MARC
Nothing. Did the thing. With Char?

BILLY
Right. Had to get that shit worked out, bud. So? She alright?

MARC
Who knows. Shit's changed. I changed.

RAFFI
That's women. Leaving cause you changed or leaving cause you never change. Or asking you to leave.

BILLY
That shit's true.

RAFFI
How come all the salesmen are here?

MARC
Saturday. Anyone can take an Up if there's overflow or too many Ups.

RAFFI
What's an "Up"?

BILLY
Every customer that walks on the lot is an "Up". We go in order taking ups. You can't cherry pick or burn through 'em looking for a good one. Gotta wait your turn.

MARC
People get in fights. It's your money and anyone can be a home run. *

BILLY
That's the spirit, Chief

MARC
And you never let anyone walk after talking to just one salesman. You gotta "T-O" them. "Turn Over". Every customer's got to talk to two salesman before you walk 'em. And fill out a customer card. Your "Be-back" file. A personal log of Ups. Be-backs are people who say "I'll be back". You get major shit from a Manager if you don't do it. *

BILLY
But only if they catch you.

They hear a key in the lock, straighten up, act casual. Door opens, it's Clint and a customer, grinning like a prick.

BILLY (CONT'D)
...So Raffi, would your family enjoy this magnificent van? *

RAFFI
Uh, yeah. (TO CLINT) Fuck yeah, brah. *

MARC

Then let's write this bitch up! Oh.
Hey Cliff!

CLINT

It's Clint.

MARC

Right. My bad.

Marc, Raffi and Billy get out and leave. Clint starts his spiel then sees a dot of white powder on the Formica table.

INT. VICTORY MOTORS SHOWROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marc, Raffi and Billy enter the showroom. The TV shows footage of the bodies Arturo found. Sound's down but Raffi watches as Marc and Billy go into a salesman's office. *

INT. VICTORY MOTORS - SALESMAN OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Billy sits behind the desk, Marc's on the customer side.

MARC

Think Clint's gonna blow us in?

BILLY

He don't see shit. Gotta talk to you, man. *

MARC

Okay. Why so serious, bud? *

BILLY

Why ya talking to Jackie Wester?

MARC

Jackie Wester? When?

BILLY

Really, man?

MARC

What? She said "good job"-

BILLY

That'd be a first. And you hadn't won top salesman yet. Not when I saw you talking to her.

MARC

You watching me? I've been doing good. That's probably why-

BILLY

You gonna lie to your partner?

MARC

Billy, what's this about?

BILLY

I'm your friend, maybe your best friend. And she's hot as fuck.

MARC

Not hearing a problem yet-

BILLY

Hot. And married. And wicked smart. You heard about Paul-

*

MARC

The guy who shot himself in the bathroom? Uh, yeah. We know.

*

BILLY

Know why he killed himself?

MARC

Nobody knows. He's a nut-job, he wasn't selling, he's depressed-

BILLY

Not even close. Paul was the best, man. Before you showed he was my partner. I T-Oed all my Ups to Paul and vice versa.

MARC

So you tell me what happened?

*

BILLY

Jackie Wester happened.

MARC

How? How's she responsible?

*

BILLY

He never told me, I never asked. But Paul got mixed up with her, his sales took a shit, he was all in his head. Left his wife, got juiced every night.

*

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

He took himself out before they
fired him and after Jackie dropped
him. The next day she's walking
around like, like it's Tuesday.
Nothing. She makes water ice.

*
*
*

MARC

(BEAT) No. You blow your head off
it's on you. She's out of my leag-

BILLY

No. She like's what she likes. She
can have what she wants. But when
she's done? You'll never see it
coming.

*
*

MARC

Billy, I appreciate it but you know
she's married and-

*

BILLY

Okay. So you gonna lie, follow your
dumb ol' dick to whatever fucked up
place it takes you?

*
*
*

MARC

Yes. Absolutely. That's not a lie.

*

BILLY

Fuck it. As your mentor, I want to
be able to say I warned you. And I
also want you to know, no matter
what happens? I have your back.

*

MARC

Okay. Consider me warned. And you
know I'll always have yours.

*
*

BILLY

I do know that, bro.

*

They shake on it.

*

INT. RADIO'S 48 CLUB - NIGHT

Salesmen hang at Radio's 48 Club getting cheap drinks and
watching bad strippers. "Day After Day" by The Pretenders is
on the jukebox. It's a joint in a strip mall. Fights are
common, the guys are sorta drunk. Crutch, the car wholesaler,
hangs out with Marc, Billy, Clint, Dave, Raffi and CHUCK
GREEN, a laconic, bean-pole, gas-bag from Green Bay who's on
the B Team with Clint. Crutch holds court, always with cigar.

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CRUTCH

...That's why you go after somebody with at least a 38. Aim mid-high.

CHUCK

I've read Mafia hit men favor the twenty two, shoot their victims behind the ear. Twice. The twenty two slug rattles inside the skull where your larger caliber will exit the brain, doing less damage.

*

CRUTCH

Is that so, Professor?

MARC

Like drinking with Cliff Clavin.

*

BILLY

I like a shotgun. Can't trace it.

DAVE

Tell 'em bout getting shot five times, Crutch.

*

CRUTCH

Six. A revolver. He emptied it.

MARC

What the fuck?

CRUTCH

I used to put money on the street -

BILLY

Used to?

CRUTCH

"Used to", wise ass. Mike Hicks, a loser, stupid bets, in love with point spreads, zero common sense. A degenerate, my favorite. He's good for awhile, pays on time, no problems. Then he goes ice cold. His balance starts going just one way, down. Pretty soon he's into me for mid five figures. Then he stops making his vig. Finally says "fuck you" to me when I turn down a bet. Fuck you, to me, in public. Which really rocked my sensitive, emotional state. Then? It turns out that last bet woulda won! Woulda got him back to zero.

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(MORE)

CRUTCH (CONT'D)

Now he's pissed, red hot. So I'm in a bar, back to the door like Wild Bill. Hicks comes in, bang! bang! bang! I hear it, I turn around, bang, bang, bang. Three more in the front. With a twenty two? Now I'm mad. So I kill him.

*
*
*
*
*
*

MARC

(BEAT) How'd ya kill him?

CRUTCH

With kindness.

Everyone laughs.

CRUTCH (CONT'D)

I just beat him up. He died. Which was my bad cause it cost me fifty six grand.

*

CHUCK

What was that experience like?
Getting shot six times?

*

CRUTCH

Fun at first, Chuck. What the fuck ya think it was like? It burned. They took out four slug but two more still in there somewhere. I didn't think he'd even hit me, ya know? Then I'm like some cartoon, blood coming out of six holes. Drove myself to the hospital. Fucked up my leather seats. Self defense, open and shut but those holes bled for months.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

BILLY

Nice bedtime story. I'm out.

*

Billy downs his drink, hugs Marc, exits.

MARC

Crutch, you going to the Border auction at the Air Base?

CRUTCH

Fuck yeah. I never miss 'em. I'm gonna school Raffi, see if he can work for me. They got a Ferrari. What dumb fuck crosses with drugs in a Ferrari!? Unless they planted.

*

CLINT
(OFF MARC) This one here can't be
beat. He can't. (MEAN) Fucker.

*

CRUTCH
Uh, oh. Who ya calling fucker? As I
recall, ya ain't much of a fighter.

*

CLINT
It's a compliment! Today? Everyone
blanks, he rolls two. Two!

CRUTCH
Place is feelin' played out. Like
you.

*

*

MARC
So? TJ?

*

ALL
(SCREAM) Fawk yeah! Tijuana!!

EXT. RADIO'S 48 CLUB - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS
Crutch, Clint, Chuck, Marc and Dave come outside. Raffi's on
the pay phone speaking Spanish to someone.

MARC
Yo Raffi! Want to go to TJ?

Raffi waves them off.

RAFFI
No thanks. I just escaped that
place. Don't get killed by
Federales. (INTO PHONE/IN SPANISH)
When exactly they expected here?
(BEAT) Okay. (BEAT) No reason.
Cool. (BEAT) I'll call you next
week, bro. Tell 'em I love 'em.

*

*

*

*

Raffi hangs up the pay phone, leans his head on it, scared.

*

EXT. MEXICAN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Crutch drives his white Lincoln Town car as it barrels down a
road in Mexico. Dave in front, Clint, Chuck and Marc in back.
Chuck got hump. No street lights. Crutch uses back roads on
the Indian Reservation, avoiding the Border. A joints goes
around, Clint and Chuck pass, old school drunks.

*

*

*

*

CRUTCH
Drop a joint in here? I whup ass.

*

"Burning Down The House", Talking Heads on the radio.

CRUTCH (CONT'D)

So Clint, how long you gonna let
the kid kick your ass?

DAVE

Fuckin' forever.

CLINT

A car! Get off my dick.

CRUTCH

Rather get beat by ten. Shameful
shit. *

DAVE

(BEAT) I know a whorehouse. *

CLINT

Yes, I love whores! They're honest
and they don't make you take out
the trash. *

Marc picks up a double barrel sawed off with a pistol grip. *

MARC

What's this, Crutch?

CRUTCH

A shotgun, genius. Aim it down. Or
up but not at me! *

CLINT

Give it to me, you're high.

MARC

And you're drunk as piss. Fuck no. *

CLINT

Yeah but weed makes you retarded. *

CHUCK

Maybe you should fight for it? *

CRUTCH

Put it down, don't fuck with it!

They drive in silence. No one likes Crutch mad.

DAVE

(MUTTER) Beat by a kid. Fuckin
newbie. *

CLINT
It's not gonna happen again.

*

MARC
Really? Put some money on that?

*

CLINT
Oh no. Beating you's reward enough.
Everyone starts to makes chicken sounds, pussy, no balls.

MARC
Five bills says I win.

DAVE
Five!? Shit! Why not a dollar?

CLINT
Please. (SCOFFS) Five hundred?

*

MARC
Okay, "King" (BEAT) Five grand?

*

CLINT
I don't want to take that much off
you, kid.

Shit, that's a lot of money. Cat-calls start again.

*

CRUTCH
Bullshit. You're scared ya- oh
fuck!

*

Crutch yanks the wheel, the Lincoln swerves as the bumper
clips what looked like a dog in the headlights, crossing the
road. The car goes left, right, does a 360, things float in
the air then it comes to a stop in a whirl of dust and
gravel. Everyone's dizzy, confused. They pile out of the car.

*

*

*

CRUTCH (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch!

The dog's a coyote. It's alive, it's hip protruding. It pulls
itself from the headlights leaving a trail of blood. Crutch
walks over, the coyote bares it's teeth, defiant always.
Crutch takes out a revolver, puts two in it's head.

*

*

CRUTCH (CONT'D)
I fucking hate Mexico.

CLINT
Whoa! That was a trip!

Everyone laughs, jokes at their near death experience.

CRUTCH

So, King? Think we forgot about the
kid's bet? Or you gonna be chicken
shit forever?

*
*

INT. ARTURO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Arturo and his wife CLAUDIA, pretty, 42, Hispanic, sit at the
kitchen table, drinking coffee. Claudia looks tired. Arturo's
in his BP shirt, neck loosened.

*
*

ARTURO

I saw Harry today.

CLAUDIA

Yeah? How's Harry?

ARTURO

The same. You know Harry.

CLAUDIA

Yeah. (THEN) I'm beat. I'll see you
upstairs.

ARTURO

Okay.

There's a space between them. As Claudia exits the kitchen,
there's a picture of a young Hispanic girl on the wall, a
girl not that different from the one Arturo found today.
Claudia kisses her fingers and touches the picture as she
passes, her ritual. The girl is Arturo & Claudia's daughter.
She's gone now, murdered in Juarez and she's the elephant in
their living room. Arturo takes out the folder from the
coroners. He goes through the pictures. In one the girl's
sitting next to a young man, kissing his cheek as he smiles.
The smiling young man is Raffi Orosco.

*
*
*
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*

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. WHORE HOUSE, TIJUANA - NIGHT

Outside the Whore House in Tijuana. Red lights in the
windows. Mariachi music drifts out with voices, English,
Spanish, a party. Crutch's white Lincoln's parked there. Two
men hang out front. Glass breaks, a woman screams then
someone fires a gun. The men rush inside.

*
*

EXT. ANGEL YBARRA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Another house in Mexico, in the country, a rancho, walled off, wood gates. Young men hang around the courtyard. Someone's tied to a chair, bloody, head resting on his chest.

*
*

INT. ANGEL YBARRA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Miami Vice, 80's inspired, spare. ANGEL YBARRA and his partner MANNY "LOCO" RAMIREZ are watching MTV with their crew. Angel and Loco are coke dealers. They ship product into the U.S. through a porous 1,954 miles of California/Mexico border. Angel's doing lines of coke. Loco doesn't do blow. He's rock solid, the pragmatic one. Calling Manny "Loco" was a joke that stuck. He's anything but. Angel's reactionary, passionate, angry and blow doesn't make him more reasonable. He does blow all night, downers to sleep. (The following is in Spanish)

*
*
*
*
*

ANGEL

I'm not okay just letting go of ten kilos of our cocaine.

*

LOCO

I'm not either. Bad to have it out there, auctioned off by fucking gringos. But it's inside the gas tank and it'll stay there, Angel.

*
*
*

ANGEL

Maybe, Loco. But that Chevy's got strings. And strings gotta go somewhere. Like right back here.

*
*

LOCO

Angel, that's every car we send. Every one. It's why we put walls up between couriers and us. Who could put it together without a witness?

*

ANGEL

Someone. Someone smart. Someone who's looking.

*

LOCO

Oh, like the Border Patrol?

*

Everyone laughs, including Angel at this thought.

ANGEL

Two thousand miles plus the ocean? They don't find shit. But DEA?

*

LOCO

We're under their radar. We're not cartel. But if we do this-

ANGEL

We do this. DEA don't know we're not cartel. They could follow the string. I want that Chevy. I want those kilos. I want that car. So I can sleep at night.

*
*
*

LOCO

That's not why you can't sleep. You'd risk everything to get a car back?

*

ANGEL

No! Not everything. (BEAT) Just a couple these assholes.

Angel waves his hand over his men. Everyone laughs.

LOCO

You trust these assholes to get it?

ANGEL

(ANGRY) I fucking want it, Loco!

*

LOCO

(BEAT) I'll go get it.

ANGEL

No, Loco. Not you-

LOCO

Yes, me. I got a California Driver's license. Gotta show a license. I pay cash. I'll get your fucking ten kilos-

*
*

ANGEL

Our fucking ten kilos, Loco. I love you, man.

*

LOCO

Good. Now I know somebody gonna come see me in prison.

Through a window into the courtyard the Kid from the Border crossing's in the chair, bloodied but alive.

*
*

EXT. TIJUANA STREET - LATER - MORNING

*

The Lincoln's parked sideways, the salesman eat off a taco

cart. "Mexican Radio" by Wall Of Voodoo plays from inside the car. Some are bloody, still drunk. Cars pass by, everyone looks at the gringos. Clint's got a bloody cut above his eye, purple bruises, a fat lip and a bag of ice on his balls. They've been in a fight. The repercussions will reverberate. Crutch throws half a burrito in the street, the vendor gives him stink eye. Crutch notices, smashes his tequila bottle too. Scared, the man looks away from the ugly American.

CRUTCH

Let's get the fuck outta here.

INT. CHARLENE & MARC'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Char, on the couch, watches MTV, looks sick. Marc never came home, never called, now he comes in, looking bad, dirty suit, greasy hair. He shuts the door.

CHAR

Thanks, Marc.

MARC

Hey, Char-

CHAR

All night, I'm sick, had no idea
where you were, had a horrible-

*
*

MARC

(LIES) Okay, I did try to-

*

CHAR

I've never felt worse, feel worse!

*

MARC

I'd won top salesman so-

*

CHAR

Who cares. I needed you here. Not
because we're a couple, I'm past
it, but I thought we were at least
still friends. You're not even that
anymore.

*
*

MARC

Aw, I was gone for a night, do you
want to know what- fuck it.

CHAR

I know what you're doing. You talk
and talk but what you do? That's
who you are.

MARC

Yeah, you too, baby. You ever even think to just ask me what I wanted when it came to the baby that-

*

CHAR

Stop! It's fine. I'll tell everyone I dumped you, okay? You went out of your way to wreck it so I'd be the one to end it. You just can't stand anyone thinking you're the bad guy.

*

*

*

*

MARC

(THEN) Char, you're so wrong. We're over cause you never knew me. The truth? I love being the bad guy. I'm just new at it.

EXT. GSA CAR AUCTION/SHUTTERED AF BASE - MORNING

"Two Tribes", Frankie Goes To Hollywood plays on a radio. Dealers, Agents, Lawmen and civilians check out the vehicles at the defunct Landing Field. The Chevy's in the auction, in the middle of all the other cars. It's number 416 is on it's windshield. Raffi sits inside a car, one lane over, one car down when Loco and Cesar, Angel's Nephew, finally spot it. They don't see Raffi. (In Spanish)

*

*

*

LOCO

This one. Check the numbers.

Agents walk by, Cops and Sheriffs everywhere. Cesar looks at his paper then the VIN # of the Chevy. They match.

*

CESAR

Yes, 416! Fucker got ten kilos of coke in it's gas tank and nobody-

*

Raffi eases his seat back and out of sight.

LOCO

Shut the fuck up.

Loco looks around. Cesar pops the hood, sees the 454.

CESAR

A 454! Who gets it once we buy it?

*

LOCO

Junk yard. Crusher. Angel wants it to disappear. Thinks it's bad luck.

CESAR

Bad luck my ass. It's a beautiful speed demon with ten kilos of-

Lightening quick, Loco grabs Cesar by the neck and squeezes.

LOCO

I crush your windpipe you say one more word.

Cesar holds onto Loco's arm and shakes his head "okay" till he's let go and doubles over in a choking fit. Raffi smiles like a prick as Loco and Cesar walk off.

INT. GSA CAR AUCTION TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Crutch and his assistant CELIA JAY, (CJ) 18, hot, trashy punk girl sit in the government double wide looking at the auction catalogue. It's got the car's stock numbers and a short description, coupe/sedan, cylinders, auto/stick, running/not. Five hundred plus vehicles, forfeit, impound or ex-govt. Crutch checks his watch as Raffi joins them. *

CRUTCH

Why you fucking off on my time?

RAFFI

Sorry, Crutch. So many sweet cars! *

CRUTCH

I don't buy "sweet cars", I buy cars, I resell cars. They're just dollar signs. *

RAFFI

Uh, Crutch, if I want to buy a car-

CRUTCH

Which one?

RAFFI

Uh, Not sure but, like a muscle car-

CRUTCH

Muscle!? No, bad. Get a Honda, save you gas money, man.

RAFFI

Yeah, Honda's are cool.(BEAT) But if there was a muscle car-

CRUTCH

We'll see.

RAFFI

Yes! So if there is one you'd front me? Cause I'll pay you back-

*

CRUTCH

Oh, I already know you'll pay me back, junior. Goes without sayin'

RAFFI

Great! So how much would-

CRUTCH

Depends on the car. Let's say 1,500. But I only pay back of wholesale book. Not a dime more.

*

RAFFI

Thanks Crutch.(BEAT) What if it was an awesome sleeper that-

CRUTCH

Back of book. Fuck.

*

CJ

Crutch never pays over low book.

RAFFI

Oh. Okay. (THEN) But if-

CRUTCH

Back. Book. Shut up.

*

EXT. GSA CAR AUCTION - CONTINUOUS

The Malibu, Arturo & Harry take their turn checking it out, hood up, doors open.

*

*

HARRY

What do you think?

ARTURO

Maybe six. A grand.

HARRY

She's a monster. Interior's clean, new tires, 454, unreal. Somebody loved it. (THEN) I'm getting it.

ARTURO

Buy a sixteen year old a hot-rod?

HARRY

It's not for Mandy, It's for me.

ARTURO
Course it is.

HARRY
I'll give Mandy my dad's car. He's too old to drive anyway. (THEN) Nice car, low miles. Station wagon.

ARTURO
(BEAT) I got Claudia pregnant in her father's station wagon.

HARRY
(BEAT) Maybe a Subaru Brat.

INT. GSA CAR AUCTION TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Arturo and Harry pass Loco and Cesar on the way in. Both men stare at Loco, a clear understanding they're enemies. Cesar and Loco stand in the back by an exit. They don't feel right in America, in a place filled with the law. (Loco & Cesar In Spanish.) *

LOCO
(OFFHAND) Cops.

CESAR
(TOO LOUD) Where!?

LOCO
Everywhere. Shut up, never mind.

AUCTIONEER (O.S.)
Sold! Five hundred and six dollars to bidder One eighteen. *

LOCO
Four hundred cars to go. *

CESAR
Fahhkh. This boring as shit. I thought we'd come and just buy it. *

LOCO
Get it straight. Your mom being Angel's sister, don't cut nothing with me. You ain't earned it. Trip me up, I drop you in a hole. Tell your mama I said so. Now chill. *

Cesar takes a seat. A booth (like a bank teller) and table are set up at the front next to the auctioneer. Catalogues, bid cards, pencils sit on the table.

The cashier takes checks and mostly cash from buyers. Every bidder has an assigned number. Raffi, Crutch and CJ sit near the front. Harry & Art walk by.

HARRY

Hey Crutch!

CRUTCH

Hey, Harry. Anybody here you wanta shoot?

They shake hands, these two go back a ways.

HARRY

No. Everybody here. You buying or stealing?

CRUTCH

Little bit of both. Don't shoot anybody near me, okay.

HARRY

Not gonna make any promises.

As they walk by Arturo, wearing a BP hat, looks at Raffi. He thinks he knows him but can't remember where in this context.

RAFFI

That dude staring at me was La Migra.

CJ

Yeah. He looked like he wanted to haul you in or bang you. You're so pretty, Raffi.

CRUTCH

Half the people here are illegal. The other half are cops. Off duty. He's cool. You're with me.

*

RAFFI

Really? Nice. This is amazing.

CJ

First auction?

*

RAFFI

Yeah. So what do we think?

CRUTCH

We? We think a whole lotta money's gonna get spent here today.

Raffi sees wads, bills, cash. Locked up in a cheap old booth.

RAFFI

All that money in a chintzy wooden booth with one old lady and a cop.

CRUTCH

No. These crackers love the Wild West. I know most of 'em. But you alright, Raffi. Don't you know? You in "Upper Mexico" now.

Two/Three Split Screens: Harry, Loco, Raffi. All three men here for that one car. Room full of smoke, sweat, desperation like gambling. Auctions are an addiction, illogical needs. Two determined buyers can drive a price up to Stupid Town. But for Raffi, Crutch drops him out at 1,200, higher than he should've gone. Harry and Loco keep raising each other on their car. Finally there's just the two of them left. The car's gone way over at 1,600. *

HARRY

Fuck this. Art, you got your BP hat on. Go intimidate that fucker. He's probably illegal. *

Art walks towards Loco, eye fuck each other. Cesar's jumpy. *

CESAR

Loco! They're coming over here!

LOCO

So? We got a right to be here. Angel wants it, we're getting it.

AUCTIONEER

1650? Do I hear 1650? 1650?

Harry whistles, Loco looks. Harry's bid is his middle finger extended towards Loco. Arturo's creeping closer.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

1650! Now do I hear 17? 1700?

Auctioneer to Loco, who goes to raise a hand, Cesar grabs it. *

CESAR

Loco! (BEAT) I'm holding.

LOCO

(SOTTO) Mother fucker.

Loco puts his hand down and salutes Harry. He's out. You win.

AUCTIONEER

Sold! For 1650 dollars to Sheriff
Harry Karlson. (TO LOCO) Ya owned
it for a minute, Senor.

Loco smiles with dead eyes, walk up to the table by the
cashier. Cesar gets coffee.

CESAR

I'm sorry, Loco. (SOTTO) Please
don't kill me.

*
*

Raffi leaves Crutch, goes to Loco, pretends to get coffee.

*

RAFFI

(INGRATIATING) Man, I wanted that
car too. Fucking gringo, ay?

Loco looks at Raffi like something stuck to his boot.

RAFFI (CONT'D)

Well, okay. Good luck.

Raffi's at the pay window, an old woman does inventory.

RAFFI (CONT'D)

Hi, (SMILES) I lost my number and I
can't remember it but there's a car
I really want to bid on.

The old woman smiles, pushes the bidder's book to him.

RAFFI (CONT'D)

Aw, you're sweet! Thank you.

Raffi locates Harry's name and address, copies it down.

RAFFI (CONT'D)

All set! Thank you, Miss!

The old woman pulls the ledger back. Loco pushes Cesar.

LOCO

Get up there. Lady's cool. She let
that bendajo look at the book.

CESAR

So?

LOCO

So get the bidder's address!?

CESAR
Why don't you do it?

LOCO
Old ladies don't like me. I scare
them. *

CESAR
(SOTTO) You fucking scare everyone. *

Harry walks up to the window, ID out and claps Cesar and Loco
on their backs. They jump, Loco whirls on him.

HARRY
Whoa. Jumpy, Cabron? Hi, I'm Harry
Karlson, I want to pay for my car. *

Loco and Cesar walk off.

HARRY (CONT'D)
(ASIDE) Sore fucking loser. It's
number 416, 1970 Chevy Malibu. *

Arturo watches Raffi as he goes over and sits with Crutch.

ARTURO
Harry, who's that guy you said hi
to earlier? Big man. *

HARRY
Crutch? Wholesaler. And a crook.
Tommy Crutchfield. One bust away
from going up but everybody been
saying that for years. He's got a
used car lot on the Boulevard. Why?

ARTURO
That Mexican kid he's with? I know
him. He looks familiar. *

HARRY
Really? They don't all look alike
to you?

ARTURO
Fuck you. *

INT. CONVERSION VAN - MORNING

"I Don't Wanna", The Call, plays on the radio. Billy, Marc
and Raffi are having their powdered breakfast of yayo. *

RAFFI

Remember how we were talked about
"the dream", you know, the
score?(BEAT) Our big dream!?

BILLY

No.

MARC

Yes. What about it?

BILLY

Yeah, bro. You got a score?

RAFFI

I think I do. Anyone ever steal a
car before?

Raffi raises his hand then Marc and Billy do too.

*

MARC.

Well all right, man.

THE END

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