

COYOTE

A new play by

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CHARACTERS

VINCE - An Old Man, Caucasian

LUKE - A Young Man, Caucasian

ANNA - A Young Woman, Latin

JAEGER (V.O.) - A Middle Aged Man, Caucasian

Various radio voices.

SETTING

A truck on the border between the United States and Mexico.

NOTES

/ indicates overlapping speech.

-- indicates an interruption

ABOUT THE SCRIPT

A first iteration of COYOTE appeared in 2008 and was awarded the National Student Playscript Competition Award (UK).

This new script (2018) retains the characters and setting but is otherwise re-imagined.

Have you seen that vigilante man?
I been hearin' his name all over the land.

- Woody Guthrie, Vigilante Man

All politics is local.

- Tip O'Neill

I will build a great wall -- and nobody builds walls better than me,
believe me -- and I'll build them very inexpensively. I will build a
great, great wall on our southern border, and I will make Mexico pay
for that wall. Mark my words.

- Donald J. Trump, 45th President of the United States of America

I: RAGNARÖK

Dusk. June, 2015. Arizona, on the border between Mexico and the United States of America. VINCE and LUKE sit in VINCE's truck. A coyote yips and howls.

LUKE

That a coyote?

VINCE

Ain't no show dog.

VINCE reveals a flask and drinks.

LUKE

We gonna patrol or something?

VINCE

We're gonna sit a bit. Git to know each other.

Silence.

LUKE

Know any songs?

VINCE

Nothin' fancy.

LUKE

Try me.

VINCE

(singing)

Oh give me a home where the buffalo roam...

LUKE

(singing)

Where the deer and the antelope play...

VINCE

Where seldom is heard a discouraging word...

LUKE

And the skies are not cloudy all day.

VINCE & LUKE

Home, home on the range,
 Where the deer and the antelope play,
 Where seldom is heard a discouraging word, And
 the skies are not cloudy all day.

VINCE

The Red man was pressed from this part of the west,
 He's likely no more to return,
 To the banks of the Red River where seldom if ever
 Their flickering campfires burn.

LUKE

You make that up?

VINCE

What'dya think?

LUKE

Never heard that verse...

VINCE

Yeah the PC police chucked that one.

The yip of a coyote.

LUKE

Maybe the radio?

VINCE

You get bored easy?

LUKE

I like music.

VINCE turns on the radio.

EXTREME TALK RADIO HOST

The New World Order globalists are going to lose it
 over this... whether or not he wins the nomination,
 it's heroic. That's what it is! He-ro-ic. This man is
 already famous, wealthy/

VINCE turns the radio dial to crackle, hiss - late-night AM nothing.

LUKE

That's kind of cool. He could really shake things up.

VINCE

Bloodsuckers. All of em.

LUKE

Yeah but somebody's finally running on immigration--

VINCE

This is America. Ain't no heroes left. We can't even fix a goddamned pothole.

LUKE

It's the principle. We need to draw a line in the sand.

VINCE

Build a wall to the moon, they'll come by sea. Think about this: what keeps them out keeps us in.

LUKE

That doesn't make sense.

VINCE

Ain't about sense! It's about the soul of our nation. You cannot rely on a worldly government in a spiritual war. You need men of spirit. Patriots. Ya with me?

LUKE

Yeah.

LUKE scans the airwaves. VINCE drinks.

RADIO PREACHER

(through static)

... is by Jesus' name that we are... Now I want you to pick up your phone and make one call... reach out to the Lord and... dial--

LUKE turns the station.

BBC WORLD SERVICE

This is the BBC World Service. The news from the US is the surprise announcement of the candidacy of/

VINCE

Turn off that British state propaganda dogshit 'fore I puke!

LUKE changes the station. A Mexican norteño plays: Los Alegres de Terán Carga Blanca (White Cargo).

LOS ALEGRES DE TERAN (V.O.)

Cruzaron el rio bravo ya casi al amanecer,
Con bastante carga blanca que tenían que vender/

VINCE

(changing the station)

Screw that spic shit.

NPR (V.O.)

-- if you pledge an annual donation of any level now we'll receive this lovely, real cloth reusable tote bag perfect for your next grocery run--

VINCE turns off the radio.

VINCE

Damn libtards. Don't take an actual side, just hem and haw and nothing changes and the world goes to hell - them's the worst. Them's the real traitors, the ones who don't stand for nothin'. Least with the cartels we know what they're after: power. People in this country don't stand for nothin' anymore. Only care about themselves and their homo quinoa salads. There's no loyalty. It's all greed and ignorance and the world just goes to hell/

LUKE

It's gonna get better, people are/

VINCE

Them's the worst: the ones who don't take a side. A man takes a position and stands for something meaningful.

LUKE

I hear ya.

VINCE

I'd like to round up every limpdick fudgepackin' wishy-washy centrist liberal progressive college-boy traitor shitstain and tie them to the back of my truck, drag them to the Rio Grande. Dump em in and make them swim across, see how much they like how things get done in May-hee-co.

LUKE

I'm with you.

VINCE

Love it or leave it.

LUKE

Love it or leave it.

VINCE

This country's gone to hell in a tote bag! Since Ronny. Now that was a president.

LUKE

"Trust but verify."

VINCE

Hell yeah "trust but verify." There's a man who stood for something.

LUKE

People are waking up.

VINCE

Yeah? To what?

LUKE

The globalist plan to eliminate our sovereignty through the pernicious influence of Cultural Marxism by way of the universities, mainstream media, ChiCom, Islamism and sleeper agents within the deep state.

VINCE

That's good. You should git yerself one of those
online radio shows... one of them pod thingies.

LUKE

A podcast?

VINCE

I'll be your first guest.

LUKE

I would rather suck a thousand dicks all in a row
than start a podcast.

VINCE

Yeesh you got a dirty mind.

VINCE hands the flask to LUKE, who shrugs no. VINCE takes a pull.

VINCE (CONT'D)

You believe in Jesus?

LUKE

What?

VINCE

Do you believe Jesus is your savior and the savior of
this shithole world?

LUKE

Yeah?

VINCE

You believe He has a plan for the US of A?

LUKE

We're a shining city upon a hill. Come on, let's get
out so you can show me the ropes.

VINCE

This is the ropes. You believe you been saved?

LUKE

Don't have to believe. I know.

VINCE

Oh you “know.” So do the beaners flooding over the border every night. ‘Cept they’re Catholics. So they’re lost in the wilderness. They don’t love Murca like we do. Too accustomed to kneeling. They learn to kneel when they’re just kids, and from there it’s all subju-fucking-gation. All that homage to a little man in a big hat who lives in Italy. The original globalists!

LUKE

You’re preaching to the choir--

VINCE

(drinking between rants)

Why do they need those big churches? All that architecture? Here’s some architecture. This desert is a church. This sky. The rocks. The coyotes are the choir. The hood is the altar. I don’t need a kidfucker in a smock to talk to God for me while I get all prostrate with a buncha old ladies and Mexicans. A man stands, with his back straight, shoulders facing adversity. Facing God too. I got a straight shot from my heart to Mother Nature. God and me go one to one. Man to man.

LUKE

Mano e mano.

VINCE

Talk English.

LUKE

I don’t need a lecture on masculinity.

VINCE

You got yourself a wife?

LUKE

No.

VINCE

Girlfriend?

LUKE

No.

VINCE

You do need a lecture! What's the problem? Yer' good lookin'.

LUKE

I like being alone. What's your excuse?

VINCE

You're not one'a those?

LUKE

One'a what?

VINCE

I'm an racist homophobic peckerwood, but I'm open-minded. It's all right if you, you know. "Experiment" with dick.

LUKE

I like pussy.

VINCE

And here I'd pegged you as a dog fella. And you said you'd suck a thousand dicks, so...

LUKE

I'm trying to meet you at your level.

VINCE

My level?

LUKE

It's a colorful colloquialism.

VINCE

I said talk English.

LUKE

I enjoy female human vagina. Happy?

VINCE

Delighted.

LUKE

If I was the grandson of one of your buddies, would you bust my balls like this?

VINCE

Don't matter cuz you ain't. What are you, anyway?

LUKE

Wha'dya mean?

VINCE

Your people.

LUKE

German Irish. American.

VINCE

Where your folks?

LUKE

Kaput. Now can we get out of the damn truck? I'm tired of sitting.

VINCE

You're purty young to be an orphan.

LUKE

I'm not an orphan.

VINCE

That's lit'rally what you are tho. I guess I am too but mine went from gettin' old like God intended. But you're young. What'n the hell happened?

LUKE

You really wanna know?

VINCE

I asked.

LUKE

Dad OD'd. Opioid. In the eighties. Something called "propoxyphene." They took it off the market in 2010. 2005 in the UK. Turns out it's not especially effective at killing pain, and if you take even a bit too much, or mix it with booze, it can kill ya. Killed thousands of people. Collateral damage in the great American war on pain.

VINCE

Like that fentanyl shit they got now. People playing with fire.

LUKE

Yeah like sixty thousand Americans a year now from this opioid shit. Dead. And not just trailer trash. Famous people. Actors. Artists. It's bad news...

VINCE

It's a plague. Made in China. You know that? We got us a reverse Opium War going on. Chinese make it, send it to Mexico, and they bring it up here. You can get thousands and thousands of doses over in a backpack. No joke. Border patrol can't keep it out, no way.

LUKE

Yeah it's messed up. I wouldn't touch heroin...

VINCE

Well no shit. What about your ma?

LUKE

Just collapsed a couple years ago. Her heart. This white trash American life. What about you? What are you?

VINCE

(rolling up a sleeve to reveal a tattoo)

Read that.

LUKE

"Feeleez fee-or-vee?"

VINCE

“It sates itself on the life-blood
of fated men,
paints red the powers' homes
with crimson gore.
Black become the sun's beams
in the summers that follow,
weathers all treacherous.
Do you still seek to know? And what?”

LUKE

That's a non-sequiter.

VINCE

Ain't no non nothing. That's Ragnarök. The
Twilight of the Gods. The end of the world. That's
what I stand for. That's who I am.

LUKE

You're the end of the world?

VINCE

I'm the last line of defense against the hordes. Now
who're you?

LUKE

And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in
thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the
bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy
merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy
sorceries were all nations deceived.

VINCE

What's that?

LUKE

Revelation?

VINCE

I'm more of an Old Testament guy.

LUKE

Right.

VINCE

Those old stories shake your bones. Got a way of comin' round when you don't expect. And they're as true as anything scientists get up to. Truer. Stories got a deep truth. I got this pagan poetry tattooed but I'm a Christian. I guess I'm a walking contradiction.

LUKE

What kind of Christian doesn't know Revelations?

VINCE

The usual kind who don't know the Bible word for word. Candles and bridegrooms. What's that supposed to mean?

LUKE

It's prophecy. Means the light of love one day will wink out of the world, and the merchants will rule with their sorceries, deceiving all the nations.

VINCE

Huh.

LUKE

It's a cool tattoo.

VINCE

Hell yeah it's "cool." That's heritage on my arm. Listen, you're a smart young buck. Don't use a phrase like "white trash" about yer folks. Better yet, don't use it at all.

LUKE

Why not?

VINCE

Cuz white pride, motherfucker. When's the last time you said "white pride"?

LUKE

Dunno.

VINCE

Never?

LUKE

Never had a reason.

VINCE

Go ahead.

LUKE

White pride.

VINCE

White pride white power.

LUKE

White pride white power.

VINCE

You a parrot?

LUKE

Is this a good use of our time? I came out here to help y'all guard the/

VINCE

You ain't trash. Yer' brainwashed by the PC police. You know why Free Speech is the First Amendment? Cuz without it'ya lose the others. Have a drink. Yer' a little lost orphan but your folks are looking down from them stars up there and I'm sure they're prouda you taking up the cause down here. Cheers.

LUKE takes a drink.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Got another question for ya. You think I'm a racist?

LUKE

Yes?

VINCE

Yes! Everybody is! Most people are just liars to boot. It's a world of go-along-to-get-along sheep. Baaaaaa. Baaaaaaa. Baaaaaaa.

LUKE returns the flask to VINCE.

VINCE (CONT'D)

(drinking)

Used to be guys like us were the floor. The ceiling. The stars in the sky. Men wore hats and women... A white lady would never get her nose pierced.

LUKE

You have a tattoo/

VINCE

Now it's all parrots and sheep and show dogs. Baaaaaaaaaaaa. Baaaaaaaaaaaa.

A coyote yips and howls. Dusk has to night. The many stars shine.

LUKE

And coyotes. Wait, are we just waiting for it to get dark?

VINCE

Now yer' using those pretty young eyes of yours. I got another question for you. It's real serious.

LUKE

Shoot.

VINCE

You a parrot, a sheep or a show dog?

LUKE

What?

VINCE

Think about it.

VINCE drinks.

LUKE
I don't like the options.

VINCE
Them's what you get.

LUKE
Then I'm nothing. Nada.

VINCE drinks.

LUKE (CONT'D)
It's dark. What do we do now?

VINCE
We watch the border for Jesus.

LUKE
(revealing a smartphone)
Can I listen to music on my phone, or/

VINCE
Ho-lee shit, is that thing on?!

LUKE
Yeah, but I'm not getting a signal/

VINCE
Give it. Give it!

LUKE
It doesn't... Hey. Hey, Vince! Dude, c'mon.

VINCE
(exits the truck and gestures as if to
throw the phone)
Bring a government tracking device out here. Gonna
chuck this thing to the snakes/

LUKE
I don't have insurance! Stop! Please!

VINCE heaves the phone.

LUKE (CONT'D)

You dirty old cocksucker.

VINCE

What'd you call me, you queer-ass punk?

LUKE

Nothing. Sorry. Damn.

LUKE searches for the phone. The CB radio in the truck crackles to life.

JAEGER (V.O.)

This is Jaeger. Come in, Ragnar.

VINCE

Why'd you bring it?!

LUKE

It's just a phone!

VINCE

It's an illuminati tracking device! Apple?

LUKE

Yes?

VINCE

Like the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. You ever think of that?!

LUKE

I had not.

VINCE

Lord a'mighty, they're listening right now!

The coyote howls.

LUKE

To what?! The coyotes? You bleating like a sheep?

VINCE

Maybe! Islamists have infiltrated the Deep State. CIA. NSA. I heard something on the radio about that.

LUKE

Yeah but the Jews control the media, right?

VINCE

Common knowledge.

LUKE

So those should offset. Help me find my phone!

VINCE

That ain't how it works. They're prolly listening to us right now. You never know. They got special beams and radar, technology twenty, thirty years ahead of anything we know about.

LUKE

(on his hands and knees after the phone)

I'm sure the secret imams at the three letter agencies and the Elders of Zion at Facebook would do anything to listen to us sing Home on the Range off key. Where'd you throw it? Hey?

VINCE chuckles, then laughs. HE claps his knee, laughing.

LUKE (CONT'D)

What?

VINCE

You're gullible.

LUKE

I ain't gullible.

VINCE

(revealing the phone)

Y'ain't not gullible neither.

LUKE

You like those triple negatives.

VINCE

Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name.

LUKE

Come on. Give it. That has all my contacts. I don't use the cloud.

VINCE

What cloud? Not a cloud in the sky...

LUKE

Don't matter. Give it back. Please?

VINCE

You don't think they monitor phone signals down here?

LUKE

If what we're doing is legal, what does it matter?

VINCE

Ain't about legal. Sheeeee-it you are a show dog. A little poodle. Or a chihuahua.

LUKE

I'm not a chihuahua.

VINCE

A sheep then. Baaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa--

LUKE

Give it. Come on.

VINCE

Sure, I'll give it. First you gotta howl like a coyote.

LUKE

Doesn't this noise kind of defeat the purpose of our vigil?

VINCE

This ain't a vigil. It's a watch.

LUKE

Those are synonyms. The same.

VINCE

A vigil's for the dead. We're hunting the living.

LUKE

Hunting's the wrong word.

VINCE

No it ain't. We're out here hunting the living. Cuz' the dead don't come here for handouts. The dead don't vote.

LUKE

So what's the point if the live ones can hear us for miles?

VINCE

Howl loud enough, maybe the dead'll hear you too. Spooky.

LUKE

Come on. We got a job to do.

VINCE

Maybe tonight ain't about hunting beaners. Maybe tonight is about your synonymous ass.

LUKE

What's my ass synonymous with?

VINCE

Grass if you ain't careful.

JAEGER (V.O)

(over the CB)

You drunk again, y'old Nazi?

LUKE

You gonna get that?

VINCE

That prick can wait. Go ahead. Howl. Make it real so the wetbacks won't know the difference.

LUKE haltingly howls.

VINCE (CONT'D)

That ain't a howl. Go on, college boy.

Luke howls.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Not bad for a show dog.

VINCE tosses the phone at LUKE.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Take out the battery.

LUKE

You can't take out the battery on these new ones.

VINCE

Course you can't! That'd be too easy. Gonna have to put it in the back.

LUKE

It's off.

VINCE

Don't matter. The spooks in Langley can hear.

LUKE

You're paranoid.

VINCE

You use a lot of ten dollar words for a wannabe vigilante.

LUKE

Not my fault you never went to college.

VINCE

How'd you know that?

LUKE

Lucky guess.

VINCE

I'm starting to think you think this is a chickenshit outfit.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Ragnar, this is Jaeger. Come in. Over.

VINCE reaches into the cab of the truck and uses the CB microphone.

VINCE

Jaeger, is this a chickenshit outfit?

JAEGER (V.O.)

You drunk?

VINCE

Not enough fr'this bullshit.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Have the kid drive if you're too drunk.

VINCE

I don't trust him.

JAEGER (V.O.)

He causing a problem?

VINCE

Is this a chickenshit outfit?

JAEGER (V.O.)

It is not.

VINCE

How many free-range beaners we help detain?

JAEGER (V.O.)

Lost count.

VINCE

(looking at LUKE)

How many of them "coyote" human trafficker
shitbags we turnt back?

JAEGER (V.O.)

Four or five.

VINCE drinks.

VINCE

How about that whoppin' cartel deal we busted up?

JAEGER (V.O.)

Made the news.

LUKE

Vince, I get it, you're hot shit/

VINCE

National news! One of their jefes went to the prison on the back of our reconnaissance. That there is some real cowboy shit. Yeeeeee haw.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Yee haw.

VINCE

We are patriots having a real impact on a real border. We're out here saving lives and enforcing national sovereignty. How many of these poor idjits die trying to cross?

JAEGER (V.O.)

About four hundred a year. That we know of. You can't count bodies you don't find.

VINCE

How about the rapes?

JAEGER (V.O.)

It's a bad situation.

LUKE

I got the message/

VINCE

We find em dehydrated, messed up. Some'v'em are being trafficked for God knows what. Sex stuff. Snuff films. You don't fuggin know with these animals. They send em out to LA or New York. Babylon. We're Christians. We give em water.

(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

And we turn their tired asses over so they go back around to the shitholes they come from. Used to be Mexicans, coming for work. By the millions. Now it's Guatemalans, Hondurans, God knows what else. Let 'em sort it out. This is America. It's still a country of laws, ain't it, Jaeger?

JAEGER (V.O.)

Yes, sir. Great speech, thanks for checking in. Hey, put the kid on. Over.

VINCE hands LUKE the CB. LUKE leans into the truck. VINCE steps aside.

LUKE

Uhh, hello? Over?

JAEGER (V.O.)

He been drinking?

LUKE

Yes?

JAEGER (V.O.)

Do me a favor and keep an eye on that. Don't want him getting another dooey.

LUKE

Roger.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Put'm back on. Over.

LUKE

He wants to talk to you again.

THEY swap.

VINCE

I don't trust him. Something ain't right about him.

LUKE

I can hear you, man. I'm right here.

JAEGER (V.O.)

What is it?

VINCE

He brought his phone out here.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Rookie mistake. Anything else?

VINCE

He's too somethin'. Young.

JAEGER (V.O.)

We need some youthful energy out here. You girls play nice. Try to cool it with the hooch, Ragnar.

VINCE

Suck my massive donkey dick. Over and out.

VINCE tosses the CB into the truck.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Busybody. Now we're gonna put your tracking device in the back with the gear. And if you ever come back out again, leave it.

LUKE

I'm here for the long haul.

VINCE

That ain't your call.

LUKE

I did the paperwork.

VINCE

Anybody can do paperwork. Question is, can you handle your shit? This ain't a Sunday drive through the country.

LUKE

I get it. You gotta like, haze me--

VINCE?

Haze? This isn't some faggy frat. Nobody wants to see your dingalingdong.

LUKE

I got it.

VINCE

Gimme the tracking device.

(taking it)

I figured it was common sense to leave this. But you... what do they they call you kids? Your generation?

LUKE

Millennials?

VINCE

You milleni-holes wouldn't know your assholes from your elbows without some high-tech GPS to help ya.

LUKE

Says the boomer.

VINCE

Damned right says the boomer. Boom.

VINCE deposits the phone into a case in the back of the truck, and swings round an AR-15. HE straps it to his chest.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Rooks get goggles.

HE hands LUKE a pair of night goggles.

LUKE

We just gonna stand here?

VINCE

You ask a lotta questions.

LUKE

I just want to help.

VINCE

Shut your milleni-hole for ten seconds.

VINCE drinks.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Yer' getting on my nerves. Take a walk.

LUKE

I didn't say anything!

VINCE

Check the perimeter.

LUKE

What perimeter?! It's a desert.

VINCE

Blouse your boots. You don't want a critter to crawl up your leg and bite off your pecker. What? Jesus wandered the desert for forty days. You can handle forty minutes.

LUKE

Alone? Without a weapon?

VINCE

I got a knife. Here.

VINCE hands LUKE a rather large knife HE has strapped to his leg.

LUKE

What good is that against bullets?

VINCE

Bullets? This ain't a movie.

LUKE

You said you helped bust a cartel chief.

VINCE

Yeah sure. Earlier this year. We spotted what you'd call a "major transaction" and called it in. I ain't suicidal. I mean no more than the next guy. We all got a death wish. Psychology 101. Don't need college to know about that. School of life.

LUKE

So what am I looking for?

VINCE

You'll know it when you see it. This desert is a teacher. She'll show you who you really are, spend enough time with her.

LUKE

You ever been shot at?

VINCE

Not out here.

LUKE

Killed anybody?

VINCE

Too many damn questions.

LUKE

Did you?

VINCE

Not out here.

LUKE

Nam? Vietnam? Vince? Is that what you mean/

VINCE

Done a little shooting out here though. We caught a coyote. Mean little goofy looking bastard. Moving a buncha Guatemalans across near here actually. A baker's dozen let's say. They wouldn't listen... Not even to Spanglish. So we fired warning shots. Half froze, half runt. You gotta let'm know who's boss.

LUKE blouses his pants.

LUKE

Keep the knife.

VINCE

You got this picture in your head of what a drug smuggler looks like. A bad hombre in a truck of his own. Ain't like that.

(MORE)

VINCE (CONT'D)

You know how much one smart drug mule can get over? That fentanyl shit that's killing all them famous junkies? A lot. And I've seen every trick in the book. Vests. Plastic buckets. Condoms up their cabooses. These days they ain't even armed, a lotta them.

LUKE

Okay, so what am I looking for?

VINCE

Go out a couple hunnert yards and walk a circle, and if you see anything... anything on two legs, anything on wheels... come right back. I'll turn on the blinkers when it's time to git movin', and we'll head to the next checkpoint. What?

LUKE

I don't know.

VINCE

Don't be a female human vagina. Git. Go on. Go see what the desert's got for ya.

LUKE wears the night goggles and stalks into the brush.

VINCE (CONT'D)

(singing)

Home, home on the range
Where the deer and the antelope play
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,

And the skies are not cloudy all day.

As LUKE moves, the truck recedes, and stars overtake the desert. HE scans the horizon. HE reveals a small device - some kind of GPS? A figure appears behind him: ANNA, with a high-end digital camera and lens strapped to her neck. SHE photographs him.

ANNA

Hola, gringo.

LUKE

Christ, you scared me.

ANNA

You have the tracker right there.

LUKE

I'm on edge. Tonight's been crazy. This old guy,
he's a trip.

ANNA

Cállate. Don't move. Perfect.

LUKE

Stay back. I'm freaking out. He could see.

SHE photographs him.

ANNA

We're out of his line of site.

LUKE

How do you know?

ANNA

That's my job. Yo soy un aspiring photojournalist.
Yo soy sneaky. Here. You look like a soldier. Me
gusta.

LUKE

Where'd you leave the bike?

ANNA

Off the frontage road.

LUKE

This is a terrible idea. The worst idea of all the ideas
ever.

ANNA

Shush. You're going to want these photos for our
bestselling book.

LUKE

There won't be any book if he sees us.

ANNA
He take your phone?

LUKE
Soon as I pulled it out.

ANNA
Yes! I told you!

LUKE
Quiet. Goddamn.

ANNA
It's a good trick. Now he thinks you're stupid.

LUKE
Or a spy.

ANNA
A spy wouldn't show off his smartphone, coño.

LUKE
A dumbass journalist might.

ANNA
He just thinks you're in over your head.

LUKE
Because I am!

ANNA
That works for us.

LUKE
I'm gonna piss myself.

ANNA
Where's your gun?

LUKE
Next time I get one. If they invite me back.

ANNA
If? No no no. I don't like ifs.

LUKE

Tonight's a test. I'm supposed to be more of a badass.

ANNA

Give me a badass look.

LUKE

This?

ANNA

(photographing)

No no no. Think badass thoughts. Like, oooo. Fuck this guy's mother. Puta madre. Or... aaaaaa you looked at my sexy chica, bastardo... That's better. Nice.

(taking pictures, looking at her camera)

I got it. When your famous you'll be glad I took these photos. See?

LUKE

(looking)

You don't know what this is like/

ANNA

Come here.

THEY embrace.

ANNA (CONT'D)

You're brave to do this. Big brave gringo.

LUKE

You're brave too. Did you get any of the truck?

ANNA

I tried...

LUKE

(looking)

These won't work.

ANNA

I'll have to get closer.

LUKE

No way in hell. Not tonight.

ANNA

You're shaking.

SHE holds his hands.

LUKE

This guy's nuts. I don't know what's bullshit and what's real.

ANNA

Don't let him get to you.

LUKE

He's an old, racist drunk with a AR-15.

ANNA

Racist?

LUKE

A real life white supremacist. He's got a tattoo, some Nordic poem about the end of the world. And he goes on these rants. It's like extreme right wing talk radio come to life, with no filter.

ANNA

I told you there's a story down here.

LUKE

Maybe it's an article and not a book?

ANNA

Cállate la boca article. This is a book. A bestseller. A TV series. Netflix and chill, baby. We're gonna be famous. Visualize it. Heroic gonzo journalist and his Latina photographer companion infiltrate a White Supremacist border militia.

LUKE

I don't care about famous. I need to get paid. I'm going broke. Living in a fleabag motel.

ANNA

We have to try.

LUKE

I've got student loans. My credit cards are maxed. It's a huge financial risk even if I get a decent advance on a book. And that's just finances. This guy's unhinged.

ANNA

One night isn't enough. Here.

SHE passes him a tote bag.

LUKE

What's this?

ANNA

A charming tote bag?

LUKE

Better hold onto it. It's a whole thing.

HE takes a wad of cash from the bag and stuffs it into his vest.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Gracias, chica.

ANNA

Look at me. In the eye. Now don't panic.

LUKE

I could not be more panicked.

ANNA

That's the last of the money.

LUKE

Okay I am even more panicked.

ANNA

My father cut me off. He wants me to come home to Mexico City, but we have to do this. We have to commit.

LUKE

No. Tonight. This is it. And I write an article and pitch it to the bigger magazines and we work our way down and leverage that to/

ANNA

No, we can't give up on this. Not now. You're already in.

LUKE

Without more cash we're done.

ANNA

There's always cash. We just need to get creative. How drunk is he?

LUKE

I could end up driving.

ANNA

I want to try something.

SHE reveals a small package.

ANNA (CONT'D)

See if you can get this back to your motel.

LUKE

What is it?

ANNA

A test.

LUKE

Hell no. I'm already taking the "hang with the raving drunk, gun-toting white supremacist" exam tonight.

ANNA

A test from them. A test from me. That's poetic.

LUKE

That's not poetic. That's madness.

ANNA

Just get it back to the motel. Easy.

The coyote yips and howls.

LUKE

This leads to money how?

ANNA

Do you love me? You said you did.

LUKE

Yes.

ANNA

And do you trust me?

LUKE

Yes.

ANNA

It's a game. He messes with you. So we mess with him.

LUKE

That has an appeal.

ANNA

It's a trick. Like Coyote. My grandma told me stories, you know? She was mixed. Native. In the stories Coyote is a sneaky trickster who steals fire from the gods.

LUKE

Anyone ever get dragged to death behind a truck and executed by a white supremacist in one of those stories?

ANNA

No, but listen. I believe in signs. And maybe the coyotes howling tonight means you're supposed to trick this old bastard.

LUKE

You're loco.

ANNA

Brave and loco. Both of us. Partners.

LUKE

Give me a kiss.

After a quick peck, SHE pushes him away.

ANNA

Nada mas. Not now.

LUKE

It's not drugs, is it?

ANNA

No. I swear. Do you love me?

LUKE

Te amos. I really do. I know it's crazy, but. You're special/

ANNA

Buzz off, coño. I'll text you. Be tricky like Coyote.

LUKE conceals the package on his person.

LUKE

When this is over, we'll rent a place. Cancun.

ANNA

Cancun? No. Ibiza.

LUKE

Whatever you want.

ANNA

Como un jefe. Big man. Hasta. Go.

LUKE turns and vanishes. ANNA lights a cigarette and smokes as the light around her dissolves and the truck reappears. VINCE stands at the hood. HE too smokes.

VINCE ashes his cigarette in the dirt, goes to the back of the truck and returns to the hood, revealing a laptop and LUKE's smartphone. He is shockingly adept with the laptop.

He connects the laptop to the smartphone with a USB cable, taps at the laptop, confirms his connection to the phone and sharply closes the laptop. HE returns the devices to the back of the truck. Through this HE sings.

VINCE

(a Woody Guthrie tune sung without irony)

Have you seen that vigilante man?
 Have you seen that vigilante man?
 Have you seen that vigilante man?
 I been hearin' his name all over the land.

Well, what is a vigilante man?
 Tell me, what is a vigilante man?
 Has he got a gun and a club in his hand?
 Is that is a vigilante man?

Rainy night down in the engine house,
 Sleepin' just as still as a mouse,
 Man come along an' he chased us out in the rain.
 Was that a vigilante man?

Stormy days we passed the time away,
 Sleepin' in some good warm place.
 Man come along an' we give him a little race.
 Was that a vigilante man?

HE turns on the emergency lights in the truck and returns to his position at the hood. As VINCE sings, we also see LUKE as HE discovers something in the desert.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Preacher Casey was just a workin' man,
 And he said, "Unite all you working men."
 Killed him in the river some strange man.
 Was that a vigilante man?

LUKE kneels and retrieves whatever it is HE has found. HE secures it in his jacket.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Oh, why does a vigilante man,
Why does a vigilante man
Carry that sawed-off shot-gun in his hand?
Would he shoot his brother and sister down?

LUKE moves through the desert, toward VINCE, carrying this new bundle. LUKE appears to VINCE.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Ain't you cold? Gets cold out here at night.

LUKE drops the night vision goggles.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Hey watch the equipment. What?

LUKE

I got out a couple hundred yards. By that rocky
mass. Stood watch a minute. Went right... I guess
south... another fifty or so... found something.

VINCE

Well show it.

LUKE does. VINCE squints.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Left my readers at home.

LUKE

Look closer.

VINCE

That could be anything. Coyote bones.

LUKE

Look.

VINCE

Can't see too well in the dark here.

LUKE

You stand watch with a semi-automatic weapon and
you can't see?

VINCE

I'm farsighted. Anything I shoot ain't gonna get close enough for it to matter.

LUKE

Use the goggles.

LUKE sets down the bones. VINCE picks up the night goggles but doesn't put them on.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Give me the knife.

VINCE

The odds of you finding a human body the first time you come out here. Purty slim. Might be an antelope calf...

LUKE

The knife.

VINCE

You shoulda let it be.

LUKE

Knife.

VINCE hands LUKE the knife. LUKE kneels and cuts something from the pile of bones. HE holds it up: a child's rosary.

VINCE

Told you they's Catholics. Welp. We gotta take it in.

LUKE

How'd this happen? Can you tell?

VINCE

How should I know? What?

LUKE

It's a shock...

VINCE

Then you ain't been paying attention. Don't get all weepy. This one might'a got lucky.

LUKE

Lucky?!

VINCE

There's things worse than death.

LUKE

Like what?

VINCE

Use your imagination. We got a war zone in our backyard, case you ain't noticed.

LUKE

Maybe she's one of those Guatemalans? The ones you/

VINCE

I don't shoot kids.

LUKE

Sure but with your eyes? It could happen, right?

VINCE

First questions. Now accusations. You sound like a lawyer--

LUKE

No, I'm just trying/

VINCE

Shut your carpetbagging mouth/

LUKE

I didn't mean it that way/

VINCE

If I was yer' pa, I'd smack some sense into you.

LUKE

Yeah, well I hit back.

VINCE

Tough guy. Big swinging dick. Put it in back.

LUKE places the bones into the back of the truck. VINCE sits in the driver's seat and turns on the engine. LUKE gets into the passenger side and considers the rosary.

LUKE
You cool to drive?

VINCE
Cool? Yes. I am cool.

VINCE picks up the CB radio receiver.

VINCE (CONT'D)
Jaeger. Ragnar. Copy.

JAEGER (V.O.)
Copy.

VINCE
Kid found a a buncha bones. Went and moved them.

JAEGER (V.O.)
Why'd he do that?

LUKE
Seemed like the right thing to do.

JAEGER (V.O.)
Next time don't touch anything.

VINCE
Gotta take it in.

JAEGER (V.O.)
Hot damn. Must mean something, him finding that his first night.

VINCE
Don't mean dick 'cept he's got young eyes and no sense. We gotta cut his Yankee ass loose.

JAEGER (V.O.)
Nah it's good work. Hey, kid. You hearing me?

LUKE

Yeah?

JAEGER (V.O.)

We're out here helping. Despite what the libtard coastal elite media says. You did a good thing. Just don't touch it next time. We need a young pair of eyes like yours out here. Don't let that old pole smokin' homo bust your agates.

VINCE

Yeah yeah yeah. Homover and out.

JAEGER

Over and--

VINCE turns off the CB.

LUKE

Sounds like I'm comin' back.

VINCE

He don't run the show.

LUKE

And you do?

VINCE

My truck. My equipment. I decide who rides along for the ride.

LUKE

Yessir.

VINCE

If you come back, you're gonna need a handle. I'm Ragnar. He's Jaeger. You ain't dick.

LUKE

Let me think about it.

VINCE

It ain't like that. It's something you earn.

LUKE
So give me a handle.

VINCE
It don't work that way.

LUKE
Make an exception.

VINCE
Fine. Yer' Nada.

LUKE
Nada?

VINCE
Suits ya. Put on your seatbelt, Nada.

LUKE puts on his seatbelt. VINCE turns on the truck's lights.

LUKE
I don't like that...

VINCE
Don't get your hopes up about comin' back out here,
Nada. I'm on the fence about you.

LUKE
Why?

VINCE
Cuz' you ask too many goddamned questions.

End of Act

II: THE MULE

In a fleabag motel room, LUKE takes off his boots and unblouses his pants. His phone buzzes. At the truck, VINCE appears in the glow of his laptop, a cigarette at his lips.

[Text messages] appear.

LA REINA ANNA

[You at the motel?]

LUKE

[Yeah.]

LA REINA ANNA

[I've been texting.]

LUKE

[I've been busy. We found something.]

LA REINA ANNA

[Call me.]

LUKE tosses the phone aside. HE pounds a beer.

LA REINA ANNA (CONT'D)

[Hola? Gringo?]

LUKE pulls forth the mysterious package from his gear and considers it. His phone rings. [LA REINA ANNA] is calling.

VINCE stubs his cigarette and connects headphones to the laptop. HE listens to ANNA and LUKE's call through LUKE's hacked phone.

ANNA

(appearing)

What did you find?

LUKE

Bones. Human.

ANNA

Jesus, what?

LUKE

After we spoke. In the desert. There was a rosary.
Pink.

ANNA

What did you do?

LUKE

I took it back to the truck. Turned it over.

ANNA

You did the right thing. That's somebody's girl.

LUKE

The dude on the radio thought I did a good job spotting it. The old man doesn't like me. Calls me Nada.

ANNA

What about the package?

LUKE

I have it. We shouldn't be talking on the phone like this.

ANNA

This app is encrypted. You know that.

LUKE

I don't know anymore...

As THEY speak, ANNA taps at her phone, sending a text - to whom it is unclear.

ANNA

You're getting paranoid.

LUKE

What happened last night is a story. It's a longform article at least.

ANNA

If anybody will believe you.

LUKE

It happened.

ANNA

"My night with the racist minuteman, and oh hey I found a child's bones" isn't enough.

LUKE

We can't force this. This guy's volatile.

ANNA

We can't stop now.

LUKE

Without money it's over. I have to buy gear. Pay for this shitty motel. At some point I'll need my own truck if I'm going to hang with these guys. Like Hunter Thompson and his motorcycle. And even then... You know how "Hells Angels" ended? They kicked the shit out of him.

ANNA

So learn from his mistakes.

LUKE

I am out of funds.

ANNA

God provides.

LUKE

God doesn't pay student loans. Or credit cards. Or motel bills. I'm gonna have to declare bankruptcy/

ANNA

That's American God. American God is a dull, stingy bastard. Mexican God provides. Mexican God loves a party. You just have to trust me.

LUKE

Reagan said "trust but verify."

ANNA

Cabron Reagan! That old bastard really got to you!

LUKE

He helped win the Cold War--

ANNA

Take the package to the door.

LUKE

What?

ANNA

Go to the door.

LUKE

Why?

Knock knock.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Somebody's there.

ANNA

That's our publisher.

LUKE

What's in this packet? Tell me.

ANNA

A book proposal.

Knock knock. LUKE goes into a dresser and reveals a pistol.

LUKE

If you made me into a drug mule, we have a problem.

ANNA

It's not drugs.

LUKE

I'm not going to prison over this shit. I'll kill myself first, I swear to God. I have a limit. We're reaching it.

ANNA

We don't know our limit til we hit the edge. And that's what a border is. The edge. It's a test. And it'll teach you who you really are if you let it.

LUKE

I have principles.

ANNA

Cállate principles. Put those away and play your part.
We need a budget. This is an easy way. Nobody gets
hurt. Not really. You're lucky I'm so resourceful/

Knock knock knock.

LUKE

I'm supposed to pretend that's a rep from a
publishing house at the door of my motel?

ANNA

It's a trade. We have a book proposal. They have an
advance. Simple. Luke? Mi amor? Trust me.

LUKE goes to the door with the package and the pistol. VINCE continues to listen. LUKE
returns with a duffel bag.

LUKE

Who was that?

ANNA

Our publisher.

VINCE reveals his smartphone.

LUKE

Dressed like a maid. Sure. And what's in this bag?

ANNA

Our advance.

LUKE

You keep saying "our." It's my book.

ANNA

With my pictures. The pictures sell it.

LUKE

Pictures ain't shit without words.

ANNA

You say "ain't" now?

LUKE

I'm playing the part.

ANNA

Oh that's some method acting shit. We gotta get you back out there.

LUKE

The old cocksucker doesn't trust me...

ANNA

So make him.

VINCE dials LUKE.

LUKE

He's calling.

ANNA

Speak of the devil. See? Signs all around. You just have to look.

LUKE

It's a coincidence.

ANNA

Call me right back.

LUKE takes the call from Vince.

LUKE

Vince, hey.

VINCE

Nada. How you holding up?

LUKE

Fine.

VINCE

That's good. Listen, you wanna go out again?

LUKE

Yeah, of course. When?

VINCE

Tomorrow night.

LUKE

I'm in.

VINCE

White pride.

LUKE

White pride white power.

VINCE

Have a good night, Nada.

VINCE hangs up.

LUKE

Don't call me... that.

LUKE reconnects with ANNA. VINCE returns to listening in on their call.

LUKE (CONT'D)

I'm back.

ANNA

What'd he want?

LUKE

He says I'm in. Tomorrow.

ANNA

I told you. Put your faith in Mexican God. Mexican God is a bad bitch.

LUKE

(at the duffel)

A representative of a publisher dressed as a maid gave me a bag of cash in exchange for I don't even know what? Come on.

ANNA

Coño, I'm from El Distrito Federal. I know all the publishers.

LUKE

What did we just do?

ANNA

We made a transaction. A paquete for un poco cash.

LUKE dumps the cash onto the bed.

LUKE

There must be thirty grand in here...

ANNA

An advance. They're excited for your story. There's something else in the bag too...

LUKE

(with a small vial)

What's this?

ANNA

A gift. For the puta racist. If we need it.

VINCE lights a cigarette, listening.

LUKE

(holding the vial in one hand, his
pistol in the other)

What is it?

ANNA

Did you drive back?

LUKE

He did.

ANNA

So next time if you need to, put that in his drink at the end of the night, one drop. He'll knock out. And we can get all the pictures we need. Of the truck, the weapons, everything. And you'll drive back, they'll see him passed out and you'll become the reliable new guy with the good eyes.

VINCE spits.

LUKE

This is over the top. I can get my own pictures.

ANNA

Not like I can. And the pictures sell the story.

LUKE

It's a big risk to take for some pictures--

ANNA

Okay so for your safety too. If things start to get crazy, slip him that and he'll pass out. You can drive back and be the responsible one and everyone wins and we go to Ibiza on that thirty grand.

LUKE

He'll know I slipped him something.

ANNA

It's a backup plan then. If things get too crazy, if he starts to threaten you or you freak out, use it. I'll be nearby with my phone.

LUKE

Who the hell are you?

ANNA

I'm your partner. And I'm helping you get the story.

LUKE

This isn't how you get a story.

ANNA

Says who?

LUKE

Schools!

ANNA

Oh the American schools that put you a hundred grand in debt, cabron!? You bitch and moan all the time!

LUKE

Because things are royally messed up and there aren't any good jobs unless you know somebody and/

ANNA

So maybe your American schools pimped you out, huh? You ever thought about that? Maybe you're America's ho and it's time to be a man and do make your own moves for once, to stand up for yourself, or are you too much of a puta bitch you want you corrupt government's cock up your asshole for the rest of your life?

LUKE

I want to get the story. I don't want to be the story.

ANNA

Too late, papi chulo. You white boys, you think the world's gonna hand everything to you on a plate. The world don't care. America don't give a shit, not even about your white ass. American God just wants our money. They to got us through those puta schools, the professors and the administrators and the government cashing in on those goddamned loans and nobody's to blame but here we are, generation fucked. Same as it ever was. We got played.

LUKE

We're done. This is over.

ANNA

Our publisher won't like that.

LUKE

What's that mean?

ANNA

We are partners here. Luke. Mi amor. You're the writer. Read between the lines.

LUKE

Come to the motel.

ANNA

No. We need to be careful.

LUKE

I'll leave.

ANNA

And go where?

LUKE

North. Away from this shitshow.

ANNA

Our publisher will be so disappointed. And angry. It's a very vindictive publishing house we're dealing with here.

LUKE

I'm not muling drugs.

ANNA

Who said anything about drugs?

LUKE

Why are you doing this?

ANNA

Somebody needs to tell this story. And you look the part. You're a little bit country. You can speak to these racist pieces of merde. If we have to get a little dirty to get the cash to do it, then we get a little dirty. It's a dirty story. People die down here every day. And none of the "good people" care, not really. And your racist buddy is part of the problem/

LUKE

Listen these guys mean well. They're not all just evil brownshirts/

ANNA

Coño, don't be naive. This is a war zone and these crackers aren't the Red Cross. They're down here playing war because of wounded pride. They know brown folks are taking the country back one inch at a time and they can't do anything about it.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

Their time is up. This desert has its own ways. Its own gods. And these guys think they can turn back a tide of blood.

LUKE

It's more complicated than that/

ANNA

You're on land the imperialists stole from my people through murder and oppression and racism and the puta banks and coño War on Drugs. Trust but verify? Ronald Reagan? That b-movie actor? I spit on Ronald Reagan. I fuck his mother in all her saggy pink fucking holes and spit in her eyes fuck that puta bitch.

LUKE

Okay, relax.

ANNA

Fuck that ho Nancy too. And fuck that cunt Thatcher. And Meryl Streep for taking that puta role.

LUKE

Are you done?

ANNA

Si.

LUKE

Look. I need to know I can call this off at any point or I'm done. I'll take this cash and leave.

ANNA

That would be so bad for you.

LUKE

Is that a threat?

ANNA

No.

LUKE

This ain't a hill I'm gonna die on.

ANNA

Save the "ain't" bullshit for the desert. This is the story of the millenium. Mass migration, south to north. Changing demographics. White anxiety. You tell this the right way, it'll be explosive.

LUKE

Fact is, people don't actually care. They just pay lip service and spill ink when it serves them. But thousands of people have died and worse crossing this border since the turn of the millennium alone. But hey Americans elected a black man president, so we can't be that bad, right?

ANNA

People are blind.

LUKE

Worse. They see. They just do not care.

ANNA

So make them.

LUKE

I don't know. We need like... a safe word.

ANNA

Me lleva la chingada "safe word."

LUKE

It'll make me feel better. Seriously.

ANNA

Okay, so what?

LUKE

"Ragnarök."

ANNA

Ragna what?

LUKE

The end of the world. Nordic.

ANNA

Okay. So if you say “Ragnarök” what then?

LUKE

Then it’s over. I give him the dose, he wakes up the next day with a wicked hangover, and we head north.

ANNA

If that happens, I’ll get pictures. Fuck him.

LUKE

Sure. Fine. Fuck that white trash piece of shit. He deserves to be publicly humiliated. He’s a joke.

VINCE sneers.

LUKE (CONT’D)

No more muling. After tonight. Promise? I don’t want to get deeper than this. Anna?

ANNA

Si. Te amos. Luke?

LUKE

Te amos.

THEY hang up. LUKE sits and checks his pistol. VINCE closes the laptop on the hood of his truck. ANNA and LUKE fade away.

VINCE goes to the rear of his truck and reveals a second AR-15.

VINCE

And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

VINCE releases a clip and replaces it with another. HE drinks.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Our nada who art in nada. Nada be thy name.

His phone rings. HE answers.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Who's this? It's darnt late.

Yeah yeah... We got quite the operation going on down here... kind of a twisted little tango.

Yeah. What? I figgered. What do the kids say? Game. Game knows game that's right.

Yeah. No, I ain't goddamnt crazy. I'm jerking the little bastard's chain some sure. It's what you do when you suspect somebody's you know, not on the level... yeah you get it.

Go ahead. I'm listening.

END OF ACT

III: DE NADA

The truck in the desert, the following night.

VINCE

You leave your phone?

LUKE

I'm not stupid.

VINCE

I should search you. See if you have a pistol or something. A tracking device.

LUKE

Go ahead. I'll get on all fours and you can do a cavity search. Kinky.

VINCE

Mmmhmm. You're gonna love it. I'm real thorough.

LUKE

Faggot.

VINCE

Punk.

VINCE drinks.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Hey, Nada. You ever get that ED?

LUKE

ED?

VINCE

Erectile dysfunction. You ever get that? Cuz I got these pills.

LUKE

Oh yeah? You got a hot date later?

VINCE pops some pills.

VINCE

Maybe.

LUKE

Ain't we out here all night?

VINCE

I'm yerkin' your chain. These are pills for pep. I'm gonna stay wide awake all night. Gonna be sharp. I got some coke too. Kablam.

VINCE does a key bump.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Bump? No?

VINCE does a second key bump.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Keeps you alert. Pow. Here, have some--

LUKE

I took a siesta.

VINCE

You took a nap.

LUKE

Where'd you score the coke?

VINCE

There you go again with the questions.

LUKE

I'm not gonna spell out the irony for you.

VINCE

What irony?

LUKE

Where your coke money goes. That leads to gang violence, which leads to refugees and on and on.

VINCE
Who says I paid for this?

LUKE
Touche'.

VINCE
Too-fuckin'-che'. C'mon. Let's move.

THEY exit the truck.

LUKE
Quiet. Different from last night. What is it?

VINCE
Coyotes. Ain't none.

LUKE
Any notion why?

VINCE
Nope. One night they howl like nuts. The next ther'
quiet. No rhyme or reason to it, Nada.

VINCE reveals an AR-15.

LUKE
Stop calling me that.

VINCE
Earn a better one. You got one'n the chamber?

LUKE
(checking)
Yessir.

VINCE straps on his own AR-15.

JAEGER (V.O.)
Ragnar, this is Jaeger, come in.

VINCE
(with the CB)
This is Ragnar. I got Nada here with me.

JAEGER (V.O.)

You're off route.

VINCE

I'm tryin' somethin' different. Thought I told you.

JAEGER (V.O.)

No, you did not.

VINCE

We'll git to the next checkpoint after this.

JAEGER (V.O.)

We keep a route for a reason.

VINCE

Had a hunch. Ragnar out.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Well yer' pretty far south. Keep a look out for any--

VINCE

(tossing the radio mic)

Yeah yeah yeah.

LUKE

Where are we?

VINCE

Closer to the Rio.

VINCE drinks.

LUKE

You gonna take it easy tonight?

VINCE

You want some?

LUKE

No.

VINCE

You look like you need one. C'mon? Here you go.
What? Too good for my liquor?

LUKE

I want to stay sharp.

VINCE

I ain't gonna roofy you. That ain't my style. I'll take
you to dinner first.

LUKE

Fine...
(drinking, wincing at the booze)
Whoo doggy.

VINCE

That is real life bathtub gin. Have another. Savor the
aroma.

LUKE does. HE winces and coughs. VINCE takes and pockets the flask.

VINCE (CONT'D)

You git a girlfriend yet?

LUKE

Did I acquire a girlfriend since we were out here last
night? No.

VINCE

So step it up, faggot. Play the field.

LUKE

What about you? You gettin any high grade
poonanny?

VINCE

Me? My wife's still dead, if that's what ya mean.
Rest her soul. Few years back. Same deal as your
poor ma. A heart thing.

A moment.

LUKE

Sorry. I didn't know.

VINCE

Didn't have no kids neither. End of the line, me.
This shit out here's all I got.

A coyote howls.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Aha we woke the neighbors. Hang on now... I got a
new toy today...

VINCE goes to the back of the truck and reveals a handheld video camera.

VINCE (CONT'D)

It's got a night mode. Made in China.

LUKE

You're making a video?

VINCE

Recruitment purposes.

LUKE

I didn't consent.

VINCE

Consent? Am I lifting up your skirt? Am I finger-
bangin' you under the bleachers at homecoming?
Are you going to start a hashtag to tattle on me?

LUKE

I didn't sign a release or anything.

VINCE

Release? We don't need some kike lawyer to bill us
for some boilerplate release so I can make a home
movie to show the boys. Come on, Nada. You're a
meanass peckerwood, right? Go ahead. Say it.

LUKE

I'm a meanass peckerwood.

VINCE

Try it again. Mean it.

LUKE

I'm a meanass peckerwood.

VINCE

Heck yeah you are. I'm filming. And... So, Nada.
You love busting beaner ass down here?

LUKE

Sure.

VINCE

You found a body last night, didn't ya? Your first
time out in the desert. Yee haw.

LUKE

Yeah. Yee haw.

VINCE

What was that like?

LUKE

Intense. Umm. We're out here to help. I wish I could
have helped her, but. It's not our fault they're
crossing over where it ain't safe. We got laws fer' a
reason. I feel bad for the kids. It ain't their choice.

VINCE

(directing)

Goddamn. That's good. More'a that.

LUKE

Why are you doing this?

VINCE

Recruitment. You like busting cartel ass, Nada?

LUKE

I haven't done any of that yet.

VINCE

No no no. Cut cut cut. You gotta say, "Hell yeah,
Ragnar. I love busting cartel ass." Sell the sizzle, not
the steak.

LUKE

I'm not comfortable with this.

VINCE

This ain't about you. You better figger that out fast.

LUKE

Is that a threat?

VINCE

A man ain't what he say. A man is what he does. If you learn nothin' else out here, learn that.

LUKE

Spare me the downhome cliches.

VINCE

You got a loaded firearm there. I got a loaded firearm here. You think I'm gonna threaten you?

LUKE

Yer' coked up. Yer' drinking.

VINCE

I did a couple key bumps. I haven't lost my marbles. I just wanna make a video for private recruitment. Don't need no Mexican standoff with my ride-along.

LUKE

What if the video gets into the wrong hands?

VINCE

You think I'm gonna put this online?

LUKE

No...

VINCE

So look in the camera and tell them why you're here. Stop being Nada and be something real. One, two, three: action...

LUKE

I'm an American. All my life, that hasn't meant much to me, but the way things have been going in this country, I gotta stand up and be counted. And I'm new, I just started, but I'm gonna tell you guys something: I love being out here. I love representing myself and my nation. Don't care if anyone ever notices. Don't care if the media gets it. Don't care if we're considered white trash, hicks or whatever the elites think about us. They don't know the first thing about what life is like out here. And that's fine. They got their life and I got mine. And I'm finally proud of something. I'm doing something that matters. Before this, I was like everyone else: adrift, no purpose, swamped by this... this dying culture.

VINCE gives him a thumbs up.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Here I have community, and acceptance, and I don't have to censor myself when I know what's true and right and good.

VINCE

What'd you say last night? A line in the sand.

LUKE

We're out here for a reason. We have to draw a line in the goddamned sand.

VINCE

Okay. This is great. Say "Hell yeah, I love kickin'..."

LUKE

Hell yeah, I love kicking cartel ass. Whenever we see anything like that, we call it right in. Trucks. Small planes. One mule crossing alone. We don't care. We catch a mule, catch a coyote, we call in the authorities. That's called justice.

VINCE

Talk about the jefe we busted.

LUKE

I wasn't here.

VINCE

Don't matter. Talk about the group. And... action...

LUKE

Our group even helped send a jefe, a big cartel chief, to prison. Made the national news. We ain't scared. And if they want to come at us, we're ready. Locked and loaded. We are American citizens and we ain't scared.

VINCE

That's golden. You're a good actor. You should be on Broadway.

The coyote howls.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Oh shit. There he is. Get your rifle. Point it. There.

LUKE

Nah, I'm done..

VINCE

We need the money shot. Here. Yeah, like that. Now look out there, through the scope. You see the coyote?

LUKE

Yeah.

VINCE

So shoot it.

LUKE

It ain't done anythin' to us, man.

VINCE

Come on, Nada--

LUKE

Stop calling me that!

The coyote howls, a new note, plaintive.

VINCE
(filming)
Shoot the fucker.

LUKE squeezes the trigger. Bam. Silence.

VINCE (CONT'D)
You get it?

LUKE
Maybe, yeah. It's dark. Can't tell.

VINCE
Hell. You ain't Nada. Yer' Coyote. That's your handle. Coyote. You like that?

LUKE
Better than Nada.

VINCE
Git out there. Make sure it's dead.

LUKE
You want me to make a perimeter too?

VINCE
Now you're catchin' on.

LUKE
You happy with your home video?

VINCE
Yeah.

LUKE
Fantastic.

VINCE
If it ain't dead, cut its throat. Don't want to do too much shooting out here. Clear?

VINCE hands LUKE the knife.

LUKE

Right.

VINCE

Same deal. Circle round. Come back when I flash the lights.

LUKE

Yessir.

This night, LUKE's boots are already bloused. HE exits with his finger on his rigged AR-15. VINCE stands watch. Drinks.

VINCE

Kid's dumber'n a Democrat.

HE spits. HE lights a cigarette. HE smokes and considers the heavens.

VINCE (CONT'D)

When I sitting heard the astronomer where he
lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,

ANNA appears behind the truck, unseen by VINCE. SHE places a device on one of the rear tires.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

ANNA stands in the bed of the truck. SHE claps.

ANNA

(clapping)

Bravo.

VINCE

(pointing his rifle)

Goddamn. You got a death wish?

ANNA

You look at the stars and recite poetry? Cabron what a life.

VINCE

(relaxing)

Don't sneak up on old men with loaded rifles...

ANNA

You're cute. If you were twenty years younger, my God. I'd really make you see stars. Bet you can't get it up any more, can you?

VINCE

Why don't you bend your little peach over and find out? We can have a quickie in the back right now. I got a blanket and everything/

ANNA

Oh I think you'd prefer one of my brothers, maricón. I don't judge. Who's poem was that? Don't tell me you wrote it.

VINCE

Whitman.

ANNA

Ha. You are an old queer. Maricón. Whitman.

VINCE

Don't care Whitman sucked balls. He's American. A poem's a poem.

ANNA

A poem's a poem. Very wise.

VINCE

Don't patronize me, little girl.

ANNA

I'm not. You got that white boy spinning round!

VINCE

You and me both.

ANNA

Two to tango, yes?

VINCE

This a ménage à trois here.

ANNA

That in your Tinder profile?

VINCE

I got video of him shooting. Like you asked.

ANNA

Let me see.

VINCE

Stay round there. He's got shit for brains, he might come back any second.

ANNA

Oh no. He's a puppy. I have him trained. He's meeting me out there again. He'll wait.

VINCE

If he comes back, it's your ass.

ANNA

Show me where he talks about the jefe.

VINCE shows ANNA the video footage.

LUKE (V.O.)

Our group even helped send a jefe, a big cartel chief, to prison. Made the national news. We ain't scared. And if they want to come at us, we're ready. Locked and loaded. We are American citizens and we ain't scared.

ANNA

I like that. You should go to Hollywood.

VINCE

Yeah yeah. I'd fit right in. Listen, I been thinking'about this/

ANNA

Don't think. Give me the camera.

VINCE

Says who?

ANNA

The God of Mexico.

A moment.

ANNA (CONT'D)

She's an angry god, cabron. And she doesn't ask twice. She asks once, then she takes.

VINCE

You got a smoke?

ANNA

Ask again. Politely.

VINCE

Got a smoke? Por favor?

SHE hands him one. HE lights his. SHE lights hers.

VINCE (CONT'D)

I don't like to go back on a promise.

ANNA

It's bad, si.

VINCE

That dumbass kid is in over his head.

ANNA

What kid? There's no kid.

VINCE

He's out there right now.

ANNA

He's already dead.

VINCE

I'm not just gonna hand him over.

ANNA

Shh. Listen. Really. You hear that?

VINCE

There's nothing.

ANNA

Nada. Si. What do you think that means?

VINCE

Means you're bluffing. This is a con. You, the kid.
The whole rodeo.

ANNA

No con. You might die any second. Bam.

VINCE

You got some bad hombre sharpshooters out there?

ANNA

I come correct or not at all.

VINCE

Where's the stuff then?

ANNA

Stashed.

SHE reveals a slip of paper.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Not far. Coordinates right here. Easy to follow.

VINCE

And you want this camera?

ANNA

Si.

VINCE

To show to your jefes.

ANNA

Cabron, jefes? I don't have jefes. I'm a freelancer.

VINCE

Look I ain't gonna let no cartel take the kid. I was boozing last night when ya called. And pissed off cuz he's trying to fuck me. I cooled off. Thought about it. Ain't worth it.

ANNA

Coño, you are summoning demons.

VINCE

I am a demon. I'm the pale face of Valhalla.

ANNA

There's all kinds of demons. Look. See. Devils dancing around the truck, getting closer.

VINCE

My eyes ain't what they used to be. I got good aim tho. And I'm lookin' at you.

ANNA

Let me explain. These flames, all around, these dancing devils. They're coming for you. And these are Mexican demons. Not soft, privileged American devils. We got some real old school Mexican hellfire all around us. They got fangs, claws, red and burning ready to come down on your tired ass.

VINCE

Do not threaten a man ain't got shit to lose.

ANNA

But your family tho.

VINCE

I got no family.

ANNA

Your sister's daughter just had a baby, what two months ago, in Nevada. Si?

VINCE

We're done. Unless you want to drop those panties and take some high quality white dick? I'll toss some prime genetic material your way. But ya gotta ask nice/

ANNA

You men can't help yourselves. Just gotta get that release. And those babies they just pop out of nowhere! Pop! Pop! Pop! And they're so fragile. Everyone has family. Nobody's entirely alone.

VINCE

You think they invite me round for Thanksgiving? You think I give two shits?

ANNA

Si. I do.

VINCE

So what?

ANNA

I got two coordinates on this slip of paper. Maybe I'll forget one of them if I give it to you. Henderson, Nevada. Outside Vegas. A forgettable place.

VINCE

If you had a posse out here, this'd be over. I'd be dead, and you'd have the kid and that's that.

ANNA

But we want to work with you. I told you last night on the phone.

VINCE

And if I change my mind?

ANNA slips the paper into her jacket.

ANNA

You don't have a choice.

VINCE

You're the kinda woman gets by on her looks.
Here's a newsflash for ya. They won't last. You're
just another deceitful fuckin' cooze and I see right
into your black little soul--

ANNA

Ha ha. This is where Spanish is better. "Fucking
cooze." Pinche culero cabron/

VINCE

Suck my elephantine dick you dumb spic bitch/

ANNA

Gringo puto hijo de la chingada/

VINCE

I'd assfuck your spic mother if she wasn't
such a wrinkled wetback beaner pendejo
bitch.

ANNA

Anda a chingar a tu madre gringo I spit on
your fucking flag you maricón
motherfucker.

VINCE

I know your father's tied up with some dirt. Was
kidnapped years ago. Big ransom. Ugly business.
Am I wrong? I'm not.

ANNA

How you know that?

VINCE

You think you're the only one knows how to get
into a phone and snoop around? Trace numbers?
Make calls to friends in high places?

ANNA

Oh I like you. You're fun.

VINCE

And I think maybe something like that happened
again. And you're trying to make a move to show
you can play big league ball. This is your ransom.
Right? This move? Setting up this channel?

ANNA

You and me, partners. Twenty eighty.

VINCE

Twenty eighty ain't partners.

ANNA

I'm holding the cards.

VINCE

I can still walk.

ANNA

We can make so much money. When's the last time they checked your truck after one of these trips?

VINCE

Never. Course not. We know all the law enforcement guys. They're on our side. Even now, with that fuckin' Kenyan in office.

ANNA

(revealing the paper)

See. I got a package out there. Coordinates on this paper. Fentanyl. Let's say a million dollars worth, depending on the connect on the other side and where the market's at. We can do this on the reg. You get a new truck. Real equipment. You can play cowboy til the end of time, and ride away rich as a sultan in a year.

VINCE

And after a year, you just let me go?

ANNA

Sure. We find somebody else.

VINCE

Ain't worth it. Not for my damnt soul.

ANNA

And your niece's soul?

VINCE

You ain't even armed.

ANNA

I don't need to be. That's my superpower.

VINCE

Yer' crazy or stupid or both.

ANNA

You ever had any money? Real money?

VINCE

I got what I earned.

ANNA

Idiota, you don't earn money. You take money.

VINCE

Maybe I skimmed a little from the top down here.
Plenty of options.

ANNA

Aha see you know the secret. Money's the blood of
the gods. Sometimes you gotta trick them out of it.
Gods are very stingy.

VINCE

There's only one God. And I ain't gonna offend him
by offerin' up some poor kid as a hellfire sacrifice to
whatever demons yer' dancin' with.

ANNA

Why do you care about this kid so much? He's
down here stealing stories. Yours and mine both.
Picking at bones. Lying to himself. Lying to you. He
isn't even a real journalist. A student, just graduated.

VINCE

He's confused.

ANNA

Give me the camera. Pard'ner.

VINCE

You can have the camera. But I ain't giving you the
kid.

ANNA

The camera for your family and a piece of tonight's move. Let's start there.

THEY exchange the camera for the piece of paper.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Oh I've forgotten about what's her name, your what was it? Your cousin?

VINCE

Get outta here. I can move the shit into town later. Never want to see your spic ass again after tonight.

ANNA

You making it look like you're coked up? Like I told you?

VINCE

Yeah. Don't know what the point'a that is.

ANNA

So he thinks you're extra loco. Keeps him off guard. Listen. He's gonna try and put something in your flask. Just let him think he dosed you. Drink it and knock out--

VINCE

I made your fuckin' video. I'm taking that shit over later. Like we agreed.

ANNA

There's something else.

VINCE

Course there is.

ANNA

You know what this is about. What I'm after. What we have to do. Think about it. I'll wait. Such a pretty night. So many stars...

A moment.

VINCE

That bust. We made the news. The jefe. And that's why you got me to get him say it. On video. I'm right, aren't I?

ANNA

Si, and the way this works in my country--

VINCE

I don't give one shit about your country/

ANNA

Vendetta. One for one. And you owe them a route, which you fucked up for them. Costs a lot of people a lot of face. And money. Hey, it's just business.

VINCE

We had nothing to do with what happened to that guy in prison. That's another cartel--

ANNA

That wasn't just some "guy" you got locked up. Cabron, you're almost as naive as the kid.

VINCE

I won't be part of this.

ANNA

You already are.

VINCE

Why don't I just shoot you?

ANNA

Cállate, you're too smart to be this stupid. Unless you want to die?

VINCE

Test me. Find out.

ANNA

We have to deliver a route and something else. To the God of Mexico. Un poco video.

VINCE

Say it plain.

ANNA

A home movie. Call it a commission. You do the kid. Execution style. Tonight. And I film it. Unless you want the kid to shoot you? I could get him to do it. I got that snappin' pussy, he'll do whatever I say. But here's the deal: he wouldn't be much use to me after that... I mean the sex isn't that good. I can do better.

VINCE

You're evil. You know that?

VINCE points his AR-15 at ANNA. ANNA puts her hand into her coat as if to draw.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Why ain't they shooting? Huh?

ANNA

I didn't give the signal.

VINCE

You suck and fuck some naive college boy, get him to fall in love with you, and throw him to the wolves?

ANNA

I'm just a player. Hate the game.

VINCE

So I kill the kid on video and you got me by the balls forever? Turn me into your drug mule til it don't suit you no more. I calling this right?

ANNA

Don't make promises drunk you can't keep sober. You should have gone to bed last night. Late phone calls. They lead to no good. You or him. Tonight.

VINCE

I done a lot of things I ain't proud of. But I'll be good goddamned if I'm gonna/

ANNA

Put the gun down/

VINCE

/ be a part of some goddamned scheme to kill some dumb kid and move that poison over this border to kill decent Americans. You made a big mistake thinking I'm gonna be used that way...

ANNA

Put it down.

VINCE relaxes the gun and bam. The rear truck tire explodes from the device ANNA planted. But VINCE does not know this. Could be a warning shot. HE takes cover by the far side of the truck.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Claro? Hey?

VINCE

Yeah.

ANNA

I'm going to meet him now. When he comes back, he'll want your flask. Let him think he's dosed you. I'll set him up. And you knock him down. In the truck. Get him by the throat and don't let him go.

VINCE

Why so complicated?

ANNA

We're making a movie, cabron. We need setup. Can't just show you blowing his brains out.

VINCE

And what's the story back home? When the kid don't come back?

ANNA

He went into the desert and poof. Suicide case. Times like these. People got a death wish.

SHE stands on the opposite side of the truck from VINCE's position and checks her tracker.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Change the tire. Then signal him.

ANNA backs away. VINCE leans against the back of the truck and lights a cigarette. HE smokes, shaking. HE stands, moves around the truck and reveals a jack. HE hoists the truck to replace the tire with a spare. HE squints, considering the damage.

LUKE appears elsewhere with earbuds on. HE stands with his tracker. Stars fall. LUKE removes his earbuds, places them away and considers the sky.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Mi amor.

LUKE

Chica, buenos noches.

ANNA

See the falling stars?

LUKE

It's meteors.

ANNA

Sorry I'm late. This is farther south than last night.

LUKE

Yeah he left the usual route. He did some coke. Had me shoot at a coyote. He doesn't trust me. I can tell.

ANNA

This is what it's like to go undercover.

LUKE

He made a video.

ANNA

A video? Had me say a buncha shit. This is too damned. much. I'm calling it. Ragna--

ANNA (CONT'D)

Shhh, don't.

LUKE

Ragnar--

SHE kisses him to shut him up.

LUKE (CONT'D)

At this point I just want to drive north and not stop
til we see a moose.

ANNA

Okay. Fine. Let's get the pictures we need. You and
the truck. Use the stuff on him, and we're done. Put
in a dozen drops. He'll knock right out. We can take
the cash in the room. Go to Ibiza. You can write an
article.

LUKE

Te amos.

ANNA

Yeah yeah. Big man.

The truck's emergency lights blink.

LUKE

I'll flash the lights when he's knocked out.

ANNA

Make sure the rifles are in back? Just in case?

LUKE

Claro.

LUKE turns round, and the truck appears with its tire restored, the blasted tire gone, lights
blinking. VINCE stands at the hood.

VINCE

It sates itself on the life-blood
of fated men,
paints red the powers' homes
with crimson gore.
Black become the sun's beams
in the summers that follow,
weathers all treacherous.
Do you still seek to know?

LUKE

And what?

VINCE

Well hey, Coyote. How'd it go?

LUKE

Uneventful.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Ragnar, this is Jaeger. Copy.

VINCE

Mom's calling.

VINCE goes to the radio.

VINCE (CONT'D)

What you want?

JAEGER (V.O.)

How's he doing tonight?

VINCE

Better'n last time. Less questions.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Solid. Hit me when you're en route. Over.

VINCE

Over and out.

LUKE

You see them fallin' stars?

VINCE

Yup.

LUKE

Signs n' wonders.

VINCE

You see anythin' out there?

LUKE

Nope. Nothin'.

VINCE

Good. I gotta take a piss.

LUKE

Gimme that hooch.

VINCE hands his flask to LUKE, who holds it. LUKE takes a sip and holds it. VINCE exits. LUKE copiously doses the flask. Stars fall. VINCE returns.

VINCE

This is surely God's work we're doing out here. We have a holy duty to protect the Constitution of this great nation. Many are called, few follow through.

LUKE

Cheers.

LUKE hands VINCE the flask. VINCE caps and pockets it. VINCE unstraps his AR-15.

VINCE

Git my smokes. Glove compartment.

LUKE does. VINCE moves round the other side of the vehicle and empties the flask into the thirsty desert. HE kicks his boots a bit by the tire and returns to his place.

LUKE

These'll kill ya.

VINCE

I have measured out my life with Marlboro Reds.

LUKE

You quoting Eliot now?

VINCE

You want one?

LUKE

Nah.

VINCE lights a smoke and hands out the flask to LUKE.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Nah, one of us needs to stay sober.

VINCE

Buzzkill.

VINCE hits the flask. HE smokes. A coyote howls.

VINCE (CONT'D)

You find that coyote?

LUKE

No trace.

VINCE

Huh.

LUKE

Do I dare
disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will
reverse.

VINCE

What's that?

LUKE

For I have known them all already, known them all:
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons--

VINCE

No with Marb Reds. I take my coffee black--

LUKE

I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a farther room.

VINCE

I'm tired, damn. I'm gonna have a quick/

LUKE

So how should I presume?

VINCE

A quick nap. Over here.

LUKE

All right.

VINCE

Listen, Coyote. You're the good Coyote. But those other coyotes. The people who smuggle people, they're savages. Animals... Home home on the range. The red man pressed. From this part of this west. MS-13, shit we gotta stand tall them gangs they'll cut our balls off. We gotta... drive them back south... and they are us too and we are them, ain't we? Ain't that somethin'? The hell we raise on Earth?

VINCE drops his rifle outside the truck, opens the passenger's door and stumbles in. HE sits in the passenger's seat and appears to pass out. LUKE takes a moment. HE goes to VINCE and waves a hand in front of his face. Nada.

HE takes the dropped AR-15, goes to the bed of the truck, places the weapons down, stands and flashes the lights of the truck.

LUKE

And I have known the eyes already, known them
all—
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?

And how should I presume?

ANNA

(with her camera)

Ay gringo. What a party. Stand still. There. Smile.

LUKE

Hurry up.

ANNA

Stand here now.

SHE photographs.

COYOTE

Kevin Kautzman

LUKE

This is fucked.

ANNA

These'll sell it. We'll be famous. Rich. Respected.

LUKE

Be quiet.

ANNA

Get in the truck.

LUKE

What? No.

ANNA

That's the shot we need. You and him in the truck. You awake, eyes wide open. The sleepy old man passing the torch to the new guard. Come on. He's done for ten hours at least. It's that date rape shit. We could sell him for parts.

LUKE cagily enters the driver's side and sits in the cab. VINCE glances at him as he moves, unseen by LUKE.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna take video.

LUKE

What? No. Get stills.

ANNA

We can use this. Go on. Get closer. I need you both in the shot. Closer.

LUKE

(leaning toward VINCE)

Hurry up...

VINCE snaps to and clutches LUKE in a choke hold, a heretofore hidden pistol to his neck. ANNA circles round back.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Vince, dude.

VINCE

Out of my truck!

LUKE

I can explain.

VINCE

Git out of my fucking truck!

VINCE maneuvers LUKE to the front of the truck and holds him there.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Where's the spic cooze?

LUKE

I don't know what you're talking about.

VINCE

Shut it. You got hoodwinked by one of them sicaria
Flaca bitches.

LUKE

Flaca?

VINCE

That's what they call em, flacas--

LUKE

You're out of your mind/

ANNA stands in the bed of the truck with one of the AR-15s at her hip and the video camera she received from VINCE her other. VINCE turns his pistol on her, keeping LUKE in a chokehold. ANNA aims at VINCE.

VINCE

See, Nada. Open your pretty eyes and see.

LUKE

Vince, stop, I can explain.

ANNA

Don't point that gun at me, cabron!

VINCE

“Flacas” just means “Skinnies.” They use their looks to bamboozle idjits like you. Never met one til’ now, but we got us a slick operator here.

ANNA

He’s lying, Mi Amor. A puta liar.

VINCE

Why’s she filming, huh?

LUKE

We’re trying to get a story--

VINCE

Ain’t nothing to tell here. This story old as time. It’s tired. I’m tired. On your knees, faggot.

VINCE releases and viciously kicks LUKE to his knees.

LUKE

Ow, shit. Ow. Goddamn/

VINCE

Well damn. I saw this comin’. We got us one of them Mexican stand-offs.

ANNA

You’re an old fool. I laid this for you on a plate.

VINCE

Where’s your posse? Why ain’t I dead already?

ANNA

Oh you are.

VINCE

One of them ARs ain’t loaded. You got a fifty fifty shot at best right now.

ANNA

Lies.

VINCE

You know she wants me to kill you, Nada? On camera? That's why she's filming.

ANNA

No, Luke. It's for the jefe, they need to see blood. But it's a trick. A trick on him. We just need to kill him and get it on camera/

LUKE

What the actual fuck is this, Anna?!

VINCE

Yes. What the actual fuck is this, Anna? That ain't even your real name, is it? Altagracia. The Grace of the Virgin Mary/

ANNA

Luke! I have a sister, okay? They have her, and this is the only way. Trust me. Please. You're my papi--

LUKE

You used me.

VINCE

This is why you trust then verify, dumbass.

ANNA

Only to help my family. I'll explain when this/

VINCE

We got a problem here, Nada. You're the only one ain't in front of a gun...

LUKE

I just want to go home.

VINCE

Look at that. He pissed himself. That supposed to be your man? You ain't her man, Nada. You ain't shit.

ANNA

Luke, look at me.

VINCE

She used her little brown poontang to lure you in and I'm supposed to be your executioner to satisfy some old school vendetta--

ANNA

He's a lying old bastard with a gun to his head/

VINCE

Where'd you meet her? On campus?

LUKE

Yeah.

VINCE

You ever see her take a class? Huh? You sit next to her in Geometry?

ANNA

Don't listen to him!

LUKE

Anna, put the gun down he's not fucking around--

VINCE

This bitch wants me to do you for a snuff video and use me to run drugs over the border. You hear me, Nada? I got it all on tape--

LUKE

Anna what the fuck!?

ANNA

What we have is real, Luke. Please. He can't shoot us both. We've got the upper hand. You just have to decide.

VINCE

Shut up!

ANNA

Pinche culero cabron/

VINCE

Guess what, chica?

ANNA

Gringo puto hijo de la chingada/

VINCE

Like I told ya: one of them ARs ain't loaded.

ANNA

This one is.

VINCE

Lemme finish. One of those ARs ain't loaded. The other's got blanks in it. Don't it, kid? You shot that coyote, didn't ya?

LUKE

Yeah.

VINCE

Find a body? Any blood out there?

LUKE

Anna, put the rifle down.

ANNA pulls the trigger. Bam. Bam. Blanks.

VINCE

Pay attention, Nada. Now we're gonna find out who you've been "dating."

ANNA

(tossing the gun, she holds the video camera, filming)

Put a motherfucker. Shoot me. Go ahead. Won't change anything. You're old and tired. We're young, and we are here too and we never sleep. Our eyes are open and we're looking through you. We're in the dust, in the air, all around you. We're not afraid. We live forever. We are the sand and the stars and we got stories you'll never know. We're gods. You're animals, crawling around in the dirt while we take the world back from your honky asses one child at a time--

VINCE fires. BAM. An actual bullet. Everything changes. The following is stylized, theatrical, a storytelling moment.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Coyote came across a human village. There was this wailing cry. The women were moaning for their dead children and the dead elders that winter took. This moaning really got to Coyote. It raised the hair on his neck. One of the men in the village said:

VINCE

“How warm the sun is now. If we only had a small piece of the sun during the winter.”

ANNA

Coyote knew there was a mountain where three Fire-beings lived. These beings guarded the fire out of fear man would take it and become strong like them. Coyote didn't like selfishness, so he decided to help man out. Coyote went to the mountain and watched the Fire-beings guard the fire. When Coyote got close the Fire-beings became alarmed. They had huge, flaming teeth and claws and eyes like great black coals.

LUKE

“Who's that?” one hissed.

VINCE

“A thief, a thief!” said another one.

ANNA

The third saw Coyote, but since Coyote had gone up on all fours the Fire-being thought Coyote was just another Coyote, not El Coyote. “It's nothing,” the third one said.

So the Fire-beings relaxed at their fire, and Coyote hung around and watched them. Coyote saw the Fire-beings watched the fire all day but for one part, which was in the early morning when the winds blew. The one on guard would enter the hut and tell the next one to wake up and guard the fire.

But the next one would always take a long time to get to the fire.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

Coyote knew this would be his chance to steal the fire. Coyote went down the mountain and told his animal friends about the hairless men and the selfish Fire-beings and how he wanted to help the man, and they agreed to help. So Coyote went back up the mountain, waited to morning, and snatched a bit of the fire. The Firebeings ran after him screaming. As fast as Coyote would go, they were always on his heels.

LUKE

One of the Fire-beings reached out and touched the tip of Coyote's tail, which turned white, and Coyote's tail-tips are still white. Coyote shouted and threw the fire.

This is where Coyote's friends helped.

VINCE

Squirrel caught the fire, put it on her back, and fled through the trees. The fire burned her back so her tail curled up.

ANNA

The Fire-beings chased Squirrel, who threw the fire to Chipmunk. Chipmunk stood very still, thinking the Fire-beings might pass her by, but one Fire-being saw her and clawed her, tearing down her back and leaving three stripes.

LUKE

Chipmunk threw the fire to Frog, and the Fire-beings chased poor Frog. One of the Fire-beings grabbed Frog's tail, but Frog took a huge leap and freed himself, and so frogs have no tails.

ANNA

The Fire-beings chased Frog again, but he threw the fire to Wood, and Wood swallowed it, and however much the Fire-beings pled and promised gifts and sang and shouted at Wood Wood would not give up the fire.

LUKE

But Coyote knew how to get fire out of Wood. He went to the village and showed the people. He rubbed two sticks together very quickly until a spark was set, and Wood gave up the fire.

ANNA

And since that day man has been warm and safe against the cold of winter.

The world of the desert and the truck returns, and the stars are gone but for three, an uncanny constellation.

ANNA lies beside the truck, bleeding.

LUKE kneels in his own urine. VINCE takes ANNA's bag and pulls out the video camera.

VINCE

Hey. Nada. Nada. Stand up.

LUKE

I pissed myself.

VINCE places the video camera on the hood, still recording.

VINCE

Smile for the camera.

LUKE

Vince, I'm sorry/

VINCE

That thing's on, case you want to try anything funny. Evidence. Never know when you might need it.

LUKE

I'm so damned sorry I got you caught up in this.

VINCE

You're lucky to be alive.

LUKE

She's... this is a mistake. She wouldn't...

VINCE

She asked me to kill ya'. And record it. I got her saying it.

HE reveals a recording device.

LUKE

Fuck. Fuck me.

VINCE

Never know when somebody's listening. Deep state. Yer' local redneck vigilante.

LUKE

She wouldn't do that. To me. We're in love.

VINCE

You want to hear it?

LUKE

No... fuck... I... I believe you. Fuck! This is so fucking fucked!

VINCE

How long you know her?

LUKE

Just this year, start of the semester. But it isn't like that/

VINCE

Yer' young. You got played.

LUKE

Is she dead?

VINCE

(crouching beside ANNA)

She's got a pulse. She's a tough little piece of ass. Cute too. Can't blame ya' really. You gotta think with your head tho. The one on your shoulders.

LUKE

She needs a doctor...

VINCE

You check her background?

LUKE

No.

VINCE

You supposed to be a journalist?

LUKE

I'm not in the habit of doing background checks on the women I date.

VINCE

Yeah yeah. And she had a big plan, right? Come down here and what? What's the big idea?

LUKE

Get a story.

VINCE

For what? Money?

LUKE

I guess... Yeah, I wanted to get a book deal. Like a gonzo thing. Embed with... with a militia group. I'm deadass broke. My folks didn't leave me shit and I just... the breaks weren't coming.

VINCE

Well you sure got yer' story. Dipshit. This is why you gotta stick to your own kind. You can't trust nobody these days. Keep it simple. Family. Kin. Country. Strange pussy's at the bottom of that list, all the way down there with tote bags and podcasts. Word of advice: just pay for strange pussy, Nada. Don't bring it back home with ya.

LUKE

I need a cigarette. I'm shaking fuck.

VINCE

You tried n' drug me.

LUKE

I'm sorry.

VINCE

I saved your ass. You're lucky I'm such a stand up guy. I got some loyalty to my fellow white man. Another guy'd kick your ass right now. And you deserve it, and worse.

LUKE

Yeah. Vince, man, I made a mistake.

VINCE

You made a series of mistakes combined into what I like to call a monumental fuck up.

LUKE

I know. Fuck. I'm so sorry/

VINCE

Don't go and shit yourself too.

VINCE taps out a Marlboro Red. HE leans against the truck and looks at the three-starred sky.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Ain't many stars left, huh?

LUKE

(looking)

It's just clouds.

VINCE

No. There ain't any clouds. Stars just gone. Strange. Hey. Look at the sky. Now look at me. Now look down at that earth. See how the desert soaks up yer piss? Like this ain't even happened. Like you weren't even here.

LUKE

I fucked up/

VINCE

Goddamn, you're one of the stupidest sumbitchin' milleniholes I ever met. You're one big Nada.

LUKE

My name's Coyote.

VINCE

Nah you're Nada. Our Nada who art in Nada, Nada be thy name.

LUKE

Can I get a cigarette?

VINCE

You and the questions. I'm tryin' to think. We got a half cadaver here and she might have actual backup out there tho I highly doubt it at this point. Just another lost soul trying to pull a fast one. Maybe she's got a sister been kidnapped. Maybe she's just trying to leverage your dumb ass for a position with a cartel. In the end, it's about money. Money she's gonna make slinging junk to Americans caught up in this "opioid crisis." Traitors. Foreigners. Pharma companies. The Chinese. The cartels. But we ain't stupid. We are wakin' up. You hear me, you spic whore? You lost. This is America. We got rules.

VINCE spits on ANNA.

LUKE

I can make this right. You have to let me figure something out/

VINCE

Stop blubbering. You haven't left me a lotta options here. You're prob'ly goin' to prison. Or worse. We gotta figure out how to explain this shit to the authorities. This ain't the wild west anymore much as we like to pretend--

LUKE

(singing)

Oh give me a home where the buffalo roam, and the
deer and the antelope play.

VINCE

Shut up, ya fuckin' Yankee--

LUKE

Where seldom is heard a discouraging word.

VINCE

Would ya shut your trap! I ain't askin' again!

VINCE turns to face LUKE, who stands.

VINCE (CONT'D)

There you go. Least you're off your knees.

LUKE raises his pistol to VINCE.

LUKE

(spoken)

And the skies are not cloudy all day.

VINCE

Oh that's real nice. Y'know I can see you real clear
now. Real clear. Go ahead. Do it. Be a man. Faggot.
Pussy. Yankee. Piece of shit carpetbagging college
boy. I knew you was good for nothin. Worse.
You're one of them nobodies, only in it for yourself.
Go ahead. Big swingin' dick. Send me to Valhalla,
you stand-for-nothin' misceginating traitorous bast--

LUKE

Ragnarök.

LUKE shoots VINCE. A star falls, so two remain. And the skies are not cloudy.

ANNA gasps and crawls through the dirt. SHE rolls over, bleeding.

LUKE sets his pistol atop the truck's hood. HE finds VINCE's pistol on VINCE's corpse.

ANNA kicks herself toward the truck, blood trailing. LUKE stands over her with
VINCE's pistol.

ANNA
Mi amor... Luke... please...

LUKE kneels.

LUKE
What?

ANNA
Is he dead?

LUKE
Yeah.

ANNA
Where's the camera?

LUKE
On the hood.

ANNA
Is is on? The light?

LUKE
Yeah? So?

ANNA
So it's recording. We can use that... Listen I couldn't
tell you before... but my sister is still... In Juarez,
they have her.

LUKE
Who has her?

ANNA
I need a doctor. I'm gonna die here/

LUKE
A doctor here, or in Mexico?

ANNA
My family will pay. Dios mio I can't move. I don't
feel anything. My legs. Is it bad? Luke?

LUKE
Pretty bad.

ANNA

Is he dead?

LUKE

Si.

ANNA

That's what they need to see. A militiaman shoots another militiaman on camera. For the jefe who died in prison... a video...

LUKE

A video like the one he had me make earlier?

ANNA

Si. One of you kills the other. That's all they need to see/--

LUKE

You set this up. With him. When? When did you talk to him?

ANNA

Last night. It's not what it looks like. I had to/

LUKE

That's why he made that video.

ANNA

That's all I need. And a move. But we can be partners. You and me. Real partners. It's out there right now.

LUKE

How much?

ANNA

A million dollars almost.

LUKE

What is it?

ANNA

Fentanyl. We can do a million a month, easy, you and me... shit I'm gonna die, aren't I? Luke. Please, take me to a doctor. Call one. Something, please/

LUKE

No...

ANNA

My phone, use it, here, please/

LUKE

Where's the stash?

ANNA

Close. It's on a slip of paper. He has it. He was going to... Ahh please. I'm gonna die if we don't... Luke.

LUKE

You set me up.

ANNA

I have a connect. We can move that product and disappear. You and me, Ibiza.

LUKE

I'm not a drug mule.

LUKE stands over her.

ANNA

Te amos, please/

LUKE

You don't have a sister.

ANNA

Please please/

LUKE

You were going to have him kill me. Record it. And blackmail him to mule for you. He'd be valuable. A real insider/

ANNA

No no no/

LUKE

And I'm a nobody. No use to you after tonight.

ANNA

There is a million dollars worth of primo shit out there in the desert, in a couple bags, and we can move it together and it's just a start if you want, or we can never do it again... Please, Luke, te amos it's true please te amos please...

LUKE holds forth the pistol.

ANNA (CONT'D)

No, Luke, mi amor. I need a doctor, please... No... no no no... Don't do this. Why'd you shoot him if this? If you don't trust me?

LUKE

Y'all didn't leave me a choice. You're one and the same, you and him. Two faces of the same problem... And I'm just another mark. You even lied about your name.

ANNA

It's Altagracia. Altagracia. That's true/

LUKE

I told you this ain't a hill I'm gonna die on. I'm not going to jail for this. For you. For anyone. Go ahead and say a prayer. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

ANNA

No please. Mi amor? Te amos. Te amos. Luke--

LUKE

Trust but verify.

A moment.

ANNA

Put a. Put a cocksucker. Yeah you are a mark.

LUKE

This ain't on me. This ain't my fault.

ANNA

Yeah nothin's your fault cuz you ain't nothing. You gringos are all the same and that's why you're gonna lose. My people were here before and we'll be here after. You're dying out. Here. Europe. You have the money but we have the blood. Everybody feels it. You got no will to live anymore. No will to make big strong families. You're a lie. You believe in nothing. And one at a time you're fading away. And we will wait.

LUKE

Close your eyes and say a prayer or something. I'm sorry. You didn't leave me a choice/

ANNA

A tired old racist white cocksucker like him dies every minute and ten of us come along to replace him. We don't need money cuz we got long memories, and we're real patient cuz' we're real as fuck and y'all are pale-ass, fake soulless excuses for people. Y'all are vampires, zombies, parasites/

LUKE

Close your fucking eyes!

ANNA

Oh no. I like looking at you. Know what I see? Nothing. A ghost. Just another dead gringo.

LUKE

Not dead yet.

ANNA

Give me my phone, run into that desert and put a bullet in your head. Do yourself a favor. What my people will do to you, whoa boy. They love to toy with a white boy. They're gonna skin you alive.

LUKE

Not if I disappear. Take that package. Sell it up north. Vanish. I got no family. Been using a fake ID down here. Like you said. I'm a ghost. Close your eyes. Come on.

ANNA

You're fucking dead.

LUKE

Fuck it. Fuck this. You did this to yourself.

LUKE looks to the sky.

ANNA

Anda a chingar a tu madre gringo look at me you piece of--

Two shots to the chest with VINCE's pistol. Bam. A star winks out. Bam. The stars are gone.

LUKE returns to VINCE's corpse, searches it for the coordinates paper and finds it. HE takes his own pistol from the hood, wipes it for prints and places it in ANNA's corpse's hand. HE does the same with VINCE's pistol, returning it to VINCE's hand. An apparent murder suicide.

HE takes ANNA's phone and the video camera from the hood, turning it off. HE goes to the driver's side of the truck. HE looks at the slip of paper with the coordinates. The CB radio crackles to life.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Ragnar, this is Jaeger. Come in. Over.

I been thinking about the kid. What handle did you give him? Here it is. Nada. Been thinking about Nada. We need fresh blood. You gotta trust people. And yeah verify, but you gotta trust first. Because people are okay if you give em a chance.

Everything's so messed up these days. You don't know which way's up and who's on what side or what even matters anymore. It's an upside down time.

(MORE)

JAEGER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I gotta tell ya pretty optimistic about this next Presidential election. Been listening to the news. It's a good story anyway. We need somebody to upset the order of things. We need somebody who represents real Americans. Don't get me wrong. I ain't got my hopes too high. None of them politicians really cares about nothin' but money. Not like we care. We're actually making a difference. Standing for what's right, putting our asses on the line every week cuz' it's the right thing to do.

We're patriots, even if the libtard media won't ever give us the credit. Buncha bigshots in New York and LA and London act like they know what's happenin' down here. Think they know score. Where were they ten, fifteen years ago when we figgered the scope of the problem down here? Somewhere else, coverin' Iraq or Afghanistan or somethin'. And where'll they be ten years from now? Who knows? Chicago's a war zone too. Maybe they'll start carin' about Chicago next. Start a hashtag. Wear a ribbon. Thoughts and prayers. Useless. This country's a mess. The whole world. Europe ain't even Europe anymore. They're gonna replace us, all these immigrants. Millions of 'em, south to north. The scramblin' hordes. That's been the plan all along. No place for good, white Christian families in their New World Order. And the elites in their gated communities lecture us about what's right. Fuck that. The writing's on the wall. Ragner? You there? Over.

Whatever happens, we'll still be here when all those "good liberals" lose interest too. You know what? I think they secretly admire us. Guys like you and me. And when we're done, the next generation will step up. Young men like Nada. The future of the white race.

We gotta groom the next generation of American heroes. Can't leave things to the government, whatever the politicians say when they're trying to get elected. Ain't no wall gonna put a stop this shit.

(MORE)

JAEGER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Ain't nothin' gonna put a stop to this, not til
Kingdom Come and Earth as it is in Heaven. Man is
a fallen creature. A beast. We just have to do our best
and trust the Lord's gonna light the way.

I'm the one making speeches now. Gotta admit I've
had a couple stiff ones myself tonight. That bathtub
hooch holy Moses. Over.

Ragnar, come back. Kinda startin' to worry about
you. Vince, ol' buddy, come back or I'm gonna have
to send somebody out there to git your drunk ass.
Over.

As JAEGER speaks, LUKE walks backwards into the desert. HE methodically wipes his
tracks with his jacket, one step at a time, and vanishes into the desert.

JAEGER (V.O.)

Nada, if you're there come back. We do these check
ins for a reason, guys. Not trying to break your balls.
Over.

A coyote howls.

END OF PLAY