

Red Queen

by  
Mike Doyle

FADE IN

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK (MOVING) - DAY

Three Mexican men, 30s-40s, sit in the bed of the truck, their backs to the back window. Desert all around. They're all looking at the same thing.

A GIRL, 8, kneels near the back of the bed. The gate is down. She has ribbons in her curly hair, a new dress. Her mouth is duct taped shut. Her hands are tied behind her back.

A rope is coiled up in front of her, leading back behind her. She is unafraid.

The Mexican in the middle scoots forward a bit. He lifts his leg, shod with a cowboy boot.

The girl watches as the Mexican man places his foot on her chest. The man pushes, the girl tumbles out of the truck.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A pickup truck drives along a desert road, dragging a small body behind it.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A girl being dragged, face down, the road zooming past, a trail of blood.

FADE TO:

A BRIGHT WHITE. CLOUDS. ETHEREAL. SOFT LIGHT IN THE MIDDLE. MOVING FORWARD.

DOCTOR (O.S.)

Almost there. I can see the head.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A MOTHER, 30s, in the throes of labor. DOCTOR, 40s, down at the business end of things. A NURSE, 30s, and a HUSBAND, 30s, lend help and comfort.

DOCTOR

The head is out. One more should do it.

The Mother pushes with all she's got.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Husband sleeps in a chair by the bed. The Mother beams down at a swaddled baby in her arms. The Nurse enters to check on things.

NURSE  
He's beautiful.

MOTHER  
Thank you.

NURSE  
Your first?

MOTHER  
Yes.

NURSE  
What did you name him?

MOTHER  
Gabriel.

NURSE  
Oh. Like the angel.

MOTHER  
Yes.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A dark-skinned boy, 5, sits in bed. A fly buzzes around him. He watches as the fly lands on the wall opposite his bed. He reaches over and picks a rubber band up off the nightstand. He aims and shoots. Direct hit. Dead fly. He smiles.

BOY  
Guess sometimes you just get lucky.

MOTHER (O.S.)  
Gabriel! Come eat!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Gabriel, now 14, pulls books out of his locker. THERESA, also 14, cute, walks past.

THERESA  
Hey, Gabriel.

GABRIEL  
Hey, Theresa.

Gabriel closes his locker with a stack of books piled up in his hands. He turns as three upper class JOCKS walk by. JOCK #1 pushes Gabriel's books down. They tumble out of his hands and all over the floor.

JOCK #1  
Dropped your books, Gabriel.

The other two jocks laugh. Gabriel glares at them as they continue down the hall. He starts after them with a purpose. JOCK #2 turns and sees him coming.

JOCK #2  
Uh oh. Now you're in trouble.

Jock #1 and JOCK #3 turn around.

JOCK #3  
Uh oh. Little man is coming to get you.

JOCK #1  
Oh what? You wanna make something of it?

Gabriel walks right up to Jock #1 and delivers a front kick to his knee, instantly buckling him. Gabriel then begins administering a savage beating. Jocks 2 and 3 try to intervene but soon meet the same fate.

His work finished, his clothes spattered with blood, Gabriel walks back to his locker. Other students line the corridor and stand back in shock and awe.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A nondescript car drives along a long and lonesome highway. It's the only car on the road.

INT. CAR (DRIVING) - DAY

A MOTORIST and his WIFE, both in their 30s, are cruising along, listening to classic rock. The MOTORIST begins to slow down and pull over.

WIFE  
What're you doing?

MOTORIST  
I gotta go.

WIFE  
Here?

MOTORIST  
Hey. I gotta go.

WIFE  
We're in the middle of the desert.

MOTORIST  
Hey. Babe. I gotta go.

He pulls over, parks and gets out.

WIFE  
Well, take Bandit with you.

MOTORIST  
C'mon, girl!

He whistles. Bandit springs to life, jumps onto the driver's seat and out the door.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The Motorist is taking care of business. He finishes up and starts walking back to the car. He whistles.

MOTORIST  
Bandit! C'mon, girl!

He looks over to find Bandit digging feverishly.

MOTORIST (CONT'D)  
Bandit!

He walks over to Bandit.

MOTORIST (CONT'D)  
Bandit, get your butt in the...

He stops short as he sees what the dog has unearthed.

INT. RECRUITMENT OFFICE - DAY

A Marine OFFICER, 55, sits behind a desk. Gabriel, now 18, sits in a chair opposite him.

OFFICER  
So, Gabriel, why do you want to  
join the Marines?

GABRIEL  
I want to kill people.

The officer raises his eyebrows.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)  
Bad people, I mean. The bad guys.

OFFICER  
Most kids come in here say they  
want to serve their country.

He gives a wry and sinister smile.

OFFICER (CONT'D)  
But I like your answer better.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

DETECTIVE ED WALKER, 40s, gruff but handsome, enters to find DR. SIMON, 60s, pleasant, standing over a small, dessicated body on a stainless steel table.

DR. SIMON  
Ahhh. Good morning, Ed.

DETECTIVE WALKER  
Morning, Doc. How's it going?

DR. SIMON  
Okay. You?

DETECTIVE WALKER  
Eh. Little hungover if you wanna  
know the truth.

DR. SIMON  
I got something for that in my desk  
if you want it.

DETECTIVE WALKER  
Nah, I'm alright. So whatta we got?

DR. SIMON

Well. What we have here is an eight year old girl who was tied up by her wrists and ankles and dragged to death behind a motor vehicle.

DETECTIVE WALKER

Ugh. Guess somebody didn't get their girl scout cookies.

DR. SIMON

Come again?

DETECTIVE WALKER

Nothing. Bad joke. So how long has she been dead?

DR. SIMON

Tough to tell, really. Bodies decompose differently in arid climates. I'd say anywhere from fifteen to twenty-five years ago.

DETECTIVE WALKER

So twenty years if we split the difference?

DR. SIMON

Twenty years is a pretty good guess.

DETECTIVE WALKER

Anything to help identify the body?

DR. SIMON

Well. Actually. There is one peculiar thing.

DETECTIVE WALKER

What's that?

Dr. Simon walks over and turns over the left arm of the body.

DR. SIMON

There's a mark here on her left radius. Looks like some kind of symbol or something.

DETECTIVE WALKER

Is it a marker?

DR. SIMON

No. I tested it. It's bone. Goes all the way through to the marrow. Just discolored. Very strange.

DETECTIVE WALKER

Huh.

EXT. TORA BORA MOUNTAINS - DAY

Gabriel, now 22, lies on his belly, peering through the scope on his rifle. Another MARINE, 20, lies on his belly next to him, looking through a scope and checking a device in his hands.

MARINE

Think this raghead has any idea he's about to die?

GABRIEL

Hey, hey, hey. No need for name calling.

MARINE

You're right. That was insensitive of me.

He peers through his scope again.

MARINE (CONT'D)

Think this camel jockey has any idea he's about to die?

GABRIEL

Well I didn't tell him. So unless you told him then no, he's got no idea. And aren't you Muslim?

MARINE

What's your point?

Gabriel looks at the Marine.

GABRIEL

Alright, what've we got?

The Marine looks at the device.

MARINE

Eight point three meters to the right.



GABRIEL  
Eight point three?

MARINE  
That's what it says.

GABRIEL  
Seems like a lot.

MARINE  
Well he is over two miles away.

GABRIEL  
Alright. If you say so.

MARINE  
I'm just tellin' you what the thing  
says.

GABRIEL  
Alright. Eight point three it is.

EXT. TORA BORA MOUNTAINS - DAY

A Muslim RECRUITER is addressing a group of young men. They watch him intently as he speaks passionately of the imperative for martyrdom.

RECRUITER  
(subtitled)  
As it is written in the Quran, the  
sword is the key to paradise. We  
must slay the infidels. It is  
Allah's will. To ignore this would  
be to...

He drops to the ground, right now. The recruits look on. They grow confused. They look at one another. Then they notice the large blood stain on his back, the blood running from under his body. They panic and flee.

INT. COLONEL PARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

COLONEL PARKER, 60S, sits at his desk, doing paperwork. DOCTOR RAYBURN, an attractive, professional woman in her late 40s, knocks tentatively on his open door.

DR. RAYBURN  
Colonel? You got a minute?

COLONEL PARKER  
Dr. Rayburn. Come on in.

Dr. Rayburn enters.

COLONEL PARKER (CONT'D)  
Have a seat.

DR. RAYBURN  
Thanks.

COLONEL PARKER  
What's cookin'?

DR. RAYBURN  
Well. I just got the news that  
Sergeant Ramirez is heading home.

COLONEL PARKER  
Yeah. Damn shame, too. Kid's the  
best shooter we got. Hell, he's the  
best shooter in the Middle East.

DR. RAYBURN  
Yes. Well, I was wondering... And I  
realize I should've asked this  
before but I never really worried  
about it until now...

Colonel Parker puts away a file and focuses entirely on Dr.  
Rayburn.

DR. RAYBURN (CONT'D)  
Does...the Army have any kind  
of...program...or...way...of  
keeping tabs on our snipers? I mean  
after they go back to civilian  
life?

COLONEL PARKER  
No. There's nothing like that. Why  
do you ask?

DR. RAYBURN  
Well. I've been doing this for a  
while now, as you know.

COLONEL PARKER  
Uh huh.

DR. RAYBURN  
And, I don't want to make any  
generalizations since every person  
is different...

COLONEL PARKER  
Uh huh.

DR. RAYBURN

Well...God, how do I say this? I have concerns about Sergeant Ramirez.

COLONEL PARKER

Why so?

DR. RAYBURN

Well, for starters he has a history of violence.

COLONEL PARKER

A history of...Carol, he's twenty-two years old.

DR. RAYBURN

Dr. Rayburn, please.

COLONEL PARKER

Seriously?

DR. RAYBURN

I prefer to be professional. Yes. Seriously.

COLONEL PARKER

Dr. Rayburn, Sergeant Ramirez is twenty-two years old. How much of a history of anything could he possibly have?

DR. RAYBURN

You've read his file. You saw his record.

COLONEL PARKER

Yeah. He got into a few scraps in high school. Big deal.

DR. RAYBURN

Big deal? He sent three kids to the hospital.

COLONEL PARKER

So? The kid's a bad ass. What do you want?

DR. RAYBURN

He's a violent person.

COLONEL PARKER

Carol, you'd be...

DR. RAYBURN

Dr. Rayburn, please.

COLONEL PARKER

Dr. Rayburn, you'd be hard pressed to find any Marine over here, male or female, who didn't get into a couple fights in high school.

DR. RAYBURN

Don't recall seeing where any of the others sent three people to the hospital.

COLONEL PARKER

They probably deserved it. I've known Sergeant Ramirez for over three years now and he's one of the calmest people I know. I've never seen him get violent.

DR. RAYBURN

You've probably never seen him get provoked.

COLONEL PARKER

No. No, I haven't.

DR. RAYBURN

From what I understand it doesn't take much to provoke him. But that's just a part of it. There's more.

COLONEL PARKER

What more?

DR. RAYBURN

Well, like I said, they're all different. But the one thing they all have in common is that, at some point, every soldier I deal with expresses some shred of remorse. In some cases it's small, in others it's significant but they all, every one of them, at some point...um...acknowledge, let's say...the fact that they are taking a human life. Except Sergeant Ramirez.

COLONEL PARKER

Like I said, the kid's a bad ass.

DR. RAYBURN

Yeah, I get that, Ben, but this is...

COLONEL PARKER

Colonel Parker.

DR. RAYBURN

Sorry. I get that, Colonel, but this isn't just a case of a guy being a...bad ass as you say. This points to sociopathy. The man has no remorse. None. And he's very good at hurting people. He's very good at killing people. And he doesn't care. This man is a natural born killer.

COLONEL PARKER

Okay. I hear what you're saying. I do. But I can't ignore the fact that a lot of soldiers throughout our country's history have killed in war and almost none of them have gone back to the states and run amok. The numbers don't lie. It simply doesn't happen that often.

DR. RAYBURN

So you're not worried?

COLONEL PARKER

Not at all.

DR. RAYBURN

Okay. Well, I've said my peace. Don't say I didn't warn you.

COLONEL PARKER

Fair enough.

DR. RAYBURN

Thank you for your time, Colonel.

COLONEL PARKER

Any time.

Dr. Rayburn gets up and starts to leave.

COLONEL PARKER (CONT'D)

Oh, Dr. Rayburn?

Dr. Rayburn stops and turns around.

COLONEL PARKER (CONT'D)

I like your blouse.

Dr. Rayburn rolls her eyes, exits. Colonel Parker laughs a little to himself then returns to his paperwork.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Gabriel lies on his belly up on a cliff. Through his scope he watches the back yard of a palatial mansion down below.

A man walks out through the French doors. This is CARLOS ESCOBAR, 60s, the same man who kicked the little girl out of the truck twenty years earlier. He talks on the phone as he paces back and forth by the pool.

Gabriel gets him in his crosshairs and readies to shoot.

GABRIEL

Adios, pendejo.

Just then a small boy comes running out of the house, flying a toy airplane in his hands. Gabriel pulls back suddenly. He pauses for a moment, weighing his options.

As he's pondering his next move, he notices two men exit the front door. He peers through his scope, watches them both get into an SUV and pull out of the long driveway. He begins to disassemble his rifle quickly.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

A pickup truck rolls slowly through a small downtown area. People mill about on the street.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK (DRIVING) - DAY

Gabriel looks around as he drives. He notices something and quickly parks.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Gabriel gets out of his hastily parked pickup and starts walking. He walks past the SUV he saw pulling out of the mansion. He opens the door to a dive bar and enters.

INT. BAR - DAY

Gabriel enters the dark, smoky barroom. He immediately walks over to two Mexican men standing at the bar. They are the same two men who flanked Escobar in the pickup truck twenty years earlier.

Gabriel stops right behind the men, stares them down. The men slowly turn around.

MAN #1  
Hola, amigo.

GABRIEL  
I know who you are and I know what  
you did.

The men look at each other, not sure how to handle this.

MAN #1  
Who are we?

MAN #2  
What did we do?

GABRIEL  
Twenty-two years ago you dragged an  
eight year old girl to death behind  
a pickup truck out in the desert.

MAN #2  
I'm afraid you have us mistaken...

Before the man can complete his sentence, Gabriel draws a pistol and shoots both of them in both their knees. They drop to the ground, screaming in agony.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Ed Walker sits alone in a booth, drinking coffee and talking on his cell phone. He's just finished a piece of blueberry pie.

ED  
(into phone)  
This afternoon? Bout what time?  
Huh. What's the guys name? No, the  
bartender.

With some fumbling he manages to take out a pad and pen and scribble something down.

ED (CONT'D)

Alright. No, no, I'm just finishing up with some dinner. I'm right across the street. Yeah. No problem. Bye.

He hangs up. The waitress, SUE, Asian, 30s, comes over with a pot of coffee.

SUE

How'd you like that blueberry pie?

ED

Best I ever had.

SUE

Well good. Can I get you some more coffee?

ED

Just one more.

She pours the coffee. Ed notices a mark on her inner wrist. It's similar to the one on the body of the dead young girl. He's somewhat taken aback.

ED (CONT'D)

Is that a birthmark?

SUE

(off Ed's look)

Huh? Oh, that? I've had that forever.

ED

Looks like some kind of symbol.

SUE

Yeah. Weird. Can I get you anything else?

ED

Just the check.

SUE

Alright.

Sue pulls a check out of her apron and sets it on the table.

SUE (CONT'D)

And I'll take that whenever you're ready. No need to rush.



ED  
Okay. Thanks.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

MANNY, the bartender, 50s, wipes down the bar. Ed enters and walks over to him.

ED  
Evening.

MANNY  
Evening. Get ya something to drink?

ED  
Oh, no thanks. You Manny?

MANNY  
Who wants to know?

Ed flashes his badge.

ED  
Detective Walker, El Paso Police  
Department. Understand you had a  
shooting here this afternoon.

MANNY  
Yes, sir.

ED  
The perp said something about  
dragging a girl to death?

MANNY  
That's right.

ED  
Then he shot two men in the knees?

MANNY  
Pretty much.

ED  
Ever seen the guy before?

MANNY  
I know the kid. He's a local boy.  
Bit of a head case. Just got back  
from the Mid-East. Look, I already  
told all this to the cops who  
showed up.

ED

Right. Right. They're looking for him now. I'm actually investigating the wrongful death of an eight year old girl. So when I heard the guy mention something about it...

MANNY

So there actually was a girl?

ED

Right. An eight year old girl. Dragged to death behind a moving vehicle. Couple travellers found her body out in the desert not too long ago.

MANNY

It was a pickup truck.

ED

Beg pardon?

MANNY

He said it was a pickup truck. He said twenty-two years ago they dragged her to death behind a pickup truck.

Ed takes his pad and pen out and starts writing.

ED

Did he say anything else?

MANNY

Nope. Just shot them and walked out.

ED

Just like that.

MANNY

Just like that. Although, now that I think of it...

ED

What's that?

MANNY

After the Ramirez kid walked out...

Ed looks at him, pen poised in anticipation.

MANNY (CONT'D)

After he walked out, one of the  
guys on the floor said...I think he  
said...she killed Miguel.

ED

She who? The girl?

MANNY

I don't know.

ED

The girl killed Miguel?

MANNY

I don't know. I guess.

ED

Huh.

INT. SUPPLY CLOSET - DAY

A nurse, 20s, talks in a hushed voice on her cell phone. This  
is NADIA, one of Escobar's heavies.

NADIA

I heard one of the nurses say the  
cops wanted to talk to them but I  
don't think they've talked to them  
yet.

ESCOBAR (O.S.)

(through phone)

They might talk.

NADIA

Maybe.

ESCOBAR

I can't take that chance. Let's  
take care of them.

NADIA

Both of them?

ESCOBAR

Yeah. Both of them.

NADIA

10-4.

She hangs up.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Nadia enters a room in which the two Mexican men are lying in beds, legs heavily casted and elevated. She carries a stack of rolled up sheets.

NADIA

Good morning, gentlemen.

The men grunt, eye her suspiciously. Nadia removes a pistol with a silencer from the folds of the sheets. She shoots both men squarely between the eyes.

She sets the gun down on a rolling table and exits while removing her latex gloves and throwing them away.

INT. COLONEL PARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Colonel Parker hunts and pecks on his computer keyboard. Dr. Rayburn tentatively knocks on his open door.

COLONEL PARKER

Come in.

Dr. Rayburn enters but remains standing.

DR. RAYBURN

So d'ya hear the news?

COLONEL PARKER

You mean about Ramirez?

DR. RAYBURN

Yes.

COLONEL PARKER

I heard.

He looks up.

COLONEL PARKER (CONT'D)

Oh, don't look so smug.

DR. RAYBURN

Well, I hate to say I told you so but...no, wait. I love to say I told you so, so...I told you so.

COLONEL PARKER

Okay, first of all I'm sure they had it coming to them. Secondly, they were criminals themselves. And thirdly, I don't know if you noticed but he didn't kill them.

DR. RAYBURN

But they were killed. How do you know it wasn't him?

COLONEL PARKER

Why would he shoot them in the kneecaps, then go to the hospital and shoot them in the heads? That doesn't make sense.

DR. RAYBURN

Well...sociopaths don't always think like you and I.

COLONEL PARKER

He didn't kill them.

DR. RAYBURN

You don't know that.

COLONEL PARKER

He would've killed them in the bar if he wanted to kill them. He didn't kill them.

DR. RAYBURN

Let's not forget that he did shoot people. Which is still a felony. You say these guys were criminals, well, Ramirez is a criminal too. And I told you this would happen. I told you so.

COLONEL PARKER

Fine. You told me so. Congratulations. You're a hero.

DR. RAYBURN

You don't need to be sarcastic. I don't like to be right about these kinds of things.

COLONEL PARKER

You sure? You seem pretty happy about it.

DR. RAYBURN  
That's just because I like to see  
you get all worked up.

COLONEL PARKER  
I hate you.

DR. RAYBURN  
You love me.

INT. ESCOBAR MANSION - NIGHT

Carlos Escobar plays pool by himself while smoking a cigar and intermittently sipping a snifter of brandy. A GUARD calls him through an intercom on the wall.

GUARD (O.S.)  
Uh, Mister Escobar?

ESCOBAR  
Yes?

GUARD  
There are a couple police officers  
at the gate. They say they would  
like to speak with you.

Escobar stands upright, holding his pool cue. He thinks.

GUARD (CONT'D)  
Mister Escobar?

ESCOBAR  
That's fine. Let them in.

INT. ESCOBAR MANSION - NIGHT

A GUARD, 30s, butch, escorts COP #1 and COP #2 through the double doors of the pool room. Escobar continues to play pool.

ESCOBAR  
Good evening, officers. Can I get  
you something to drink? Some  
coffee, perhaps? Or some water?

COP #1

We're fine. Thank you. Mister Escobar we regret to have to inform you that about two hours ago your brother was murdered at Corpus Christi hospital, along with a gentlemen named Carlos Chavez.

Escobar stops playing pool. Looks shocked.

COP #1 (CONT'D)

I believe Mister Chavez worked for you?

ESCOBAR

Yes. That's right. My God. My brother is dead?

COP #1

Yes, sir. I'm sorry.

ESCOBAR

Who would have done...

Before Escobar can finish his sentence, a bullet screams through the glass window behind him. It enters his back and exits the middle of his chest with explosive force. He instantly collapses onto the pool table, blood everywhere.

The cops immediately crouch down and reach for their weapons. Cop #2 radios for backup.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A woman, NEW MOTHER #1, 30s, average looking, sits in a wheelchair in the porte cochere, beaming down at her newborn daughter, waiting for her husband to pick her up. A nurse stands behind her.

The double doors behind them open automatically and NEW MOTHER #2, 30s, average looking, wheels out, pushed by another nurse.

She, too, has a newborn daughter in her lap. She comes to a stop beside New Mother #1. They exchange a warm look.

NEW MOTHER #1

Boy or girl?

NEW MOTHER #2

It's a girl. Yours?

NEW MOTHER #1

Girl. When was yours born?

NEW MOTHER #2

The day before yesterday.

NEW MOTHER #1

Ohhhh. They have the same birthday.

NEW MOTHER #2

Ohhhh. What time was yours born?

NEW MOTHER #1

Eight thirty on the nose.

NEW MOTHER #2

Wow. She was born right after that.  
Eight thirty-five.

NEW MOTHER #1

What's her name?

NEW MOTHER #2

Danielle. And yours?

NEW MOTHER #1

We named her Cynthia. After my  
husband's grandmother.

NEW MOTHER #2

Oh, how nice.

A car pulls up in front of them.

NEW MOTHER #1

Well, time to go home.  
Congratulations.

New Mother #1 gets up to leave.

NEW MOTHER #2

You too.

EXT. DESERT HILLS - DAY

With some effort, a CLIMBER scales a cliff in the desert. He reaches a plateau and sees Gabriel lying dead beside a sniper rifle on a tripod, his head in a pool of dried blood, a piston in his hand, flies buzzing around.

The Climber catches his breath, takes a bottle of water out of a holster and drinks. He takes a walkie talkie off his belt, speaks into it.



CLIMBER  
 Captain?

CAPTAIN (O.S.)  
 Whatcha got?

CLIMBER  
 Pretty sure I just found the guy  
 who killed Escobar. Looks like he  
 committed suicide.

CAPTAIN  
 Roger that. I'll send the chopper.  
 Good work.

CLIMBER  
 Thanks, Cap'n.

The Climber holsters his walkie talkie. He looks back into the distance at the Escobar mansion. It's over a mile away.

CLIMBER (CONT'D)  
 (to himself)  
 Jesus. That's a hell of a shot.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Four cadavers lie on stainless steel tables: Escobar, his brother, Chavez and Gabriel. Dr. Simon sits at his desk in the corner, typing on his computer. Ed Walker enters.

ED  
 Morning, Doc.

Dr. Simon looks up.

DR. SIMON  
 Morning, Ed.

ED  
 Standing room only, huh?

DR. SIMON  
 Yeah. Busiest week of my life.  
 World's gone mad.

Ed walks over and looks down at Escobar, who has a huge gaping wound in the middle of his chest.

DR. SIMON (CONT'D)  
 Be with you in one...minute.

Dr. Simon finishes typing something on his laptop. He closes it, gets up and walks over to Escobar, stands on the side opposite Ed.

ED

So. What do you think killed him?

DR. SIMON

Cancer, probably.

ED

Seriously? He had cancer?

DR. SIMON

No. I'm joking. He was killed by a six inch bullet travelling at a thousand miles an hour through his chest.

ED

Oh.

DR. SIMON

Yeah. All of 'em are pretty cut and dried. One bullet wound through the chest, three bullets to the head. Ramirez was a suicide. There is one thing, though.

ED

What's that?

DR. SIMON

You remember that little girl a while back? That mark she had on her wrist?

ED

Yeah.

DR. SIMON

Well...

He turns over Escobar's left arm.

DR. SIMON (CONT'D)

...different mark, but same size, same location.

ED

I'll be damned.

DR. SIMON  
 (pointing)  
 That last one has one too. And  
 here's where it gets really weird.  
 His mark is the exact same one as  
 the little girl.

The two men walk over to Gabriel and check it out. Ed sees  
 the mark.

ED  
 You sure it's the same mark?

DR. SIMON  
 I'm sure. Pulled her out of the  
 drawer and checked, just to make  
 sure.

Ed thinks to himself.

ED  
 Alright. Thanks, Doc.

He walks out.

DR. SIMON  
 Where you goin'?

ED  
 Get a cup of coffee.

DR. SIMON  
 We have coffee here if you...

He's gone.

INT. COLONEL PARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Colonel Parker writes on a pad at his desk. Dr. Rayburn  
 knocks tentatively on the door. Colonel Parker looks up, sees  
 it's her.

COLONEL PARKER  
 Don't start. I'm having a bad day.

DR. RAYBURN  
 I'm not here to gloat.

COLONEL PARKER  
 What then?

DR. RAYBURN

I just wanted to say that you're right. Ramirez was one in a million. All these other men will be fine. No need for concern.

COLONEL PARKER

Carol, I...

DR. RAYBURN

Dr. Rayburn.

COLONEL PARKER

I don't want you to think that I don't value your opinion. If you see any more red flags, please let me know.

DR. RAYBURN

Okay.

COLONEL PARKER

Thanks.

DR. RAYBURN

Dinner tonight?

COLONEL PARKER

Not in the mood.

DR. RAYBURN

My treat.

COLONEL PARKER

Okay, I'm in the mood.

DR. RAYBURN

Pick me up at seven?

COLONEL PARKER

Yes, Dr. Rayburn.

Dr. Rayburn smiles and walks away.

INT. DINER - DAY

Ed walks in the front door. A pretty young HOSTESS, 20s, greets him with a smile.

HOSTESS

Good morning. Eating by yourself?

ED  
Uh, not eating, actually. I'm  
looking for a waitress who works  
here. Asian lady.

HOSTESS  
Sue?

ED  
Is that her name?

HOSTESS  
She's the only Asian lady that  
works here.

ED  
Must be her then. Is she here?

HOSTESS  
No. She's off today. Sorry.

ED  
Any idea where I can find her?

The Hostess is unsure.

HOSTESS  
Fraid not.

Ed flashes his badge.

ED  
I'm Detective Walker with the El  
Paso Police Department. Can you  
give me Sue's address? It would  
help out a lot.

HOSTESS  
Um...I'm not sure...

Just then the OWNER, 50s, tough, heavy set, walks up to them.

OWNER  
Can I help you with something?

The Hostess slinks away quietly.

ED  
I'm Detective Walker with the El  
Paso Police Department. I'm looking  
for Sue. I understand she's off  
today. Do you happen to know where  
I can find her?

OWNER

What's this all about?

ED

I'm investigating some murder cases.

OWNER

Murder?

ED

No. They don't involve Sue. I just need to ask her some questions. Well, one question.

OWNER

What kind of a question?

ED

I'm afraid that's police business, sir. I can't tell you. Do you know where I can find her?

OWNER

Well, I'm not giving you her home address. You can get a warrant for that or whatever.

ED

She's not in any danger or trouble, I just need to ask her something.

The Owner looks Ed over.

OWNER

She goes to the Painted Wagon sometimes. You might find her there.

ED

Thanks. By the way, your blueberry pie is wonderful.

OWNER

Oh. Thank you.

ED

Have a nice day now.

OWNER

Yeah. You too.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Ed walks through the cramped office toward his desk. Myriad policemen work at their desks. His assistant, MITCH, 20s, sycophant, sidles up to him and walks in lockstep.

MITCH

Hey boss.

ED

Hey Mitch.

MITCH

Might want to take a look at this.

He hands Ed a DVD.

ED

What is it?

MITCH

The boys have been going through the surveillance tapes from Escobar's villa. Twenty-five years of it. Didn't find much but what they did find is pretty interesting. They put all the good footage together. You should take a look. I got the screening room all set up for you.

ED

Alright, thanks. It's set up now?

MITCH

Yep. All set up. Want me to get you some popcorn?

He chuckles to himself.

ED

Uh...yeah. That'd be great.

Mitch stops chuckling.

MITCH

Oh. I was just kidding.

ED

Oh.

Ed stares at him.

MITCH

Um...I think we have some microwave popcorn in the vending machine. I could...get some of that.

Ed keeps staring.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Put it in the...microwave. And stuff.

ED

Great.

He slaps Mitch on the arm.

ED (CONT'D)

See you in the screening room in five.

VIDEO

Black and white, low-quality surveillance camera video shows a car crashing through the gate of the Escobar mansion. The video then reverses, stops, and zooms in to reveal that the car is being driven by a young girl.

CUT TO:

INT. ESCOBAR MANSION - DAY

Bullets riddle the handle of the front door. Four men run through the foyer with guns. Just as they're approaching the front door, a little girl in a dress kicks it open and enters through a sudden burst of sunlight, two guns a blazin'.

She shoots one of the men in the chest. He goes down instantly. She shoots another man in the shoulder. He spins and drops to one knee. Before she can get off another shot, the other two men pounce on her and subdue her.

Escobar enters the foyer. He looks around, grasps the situation. He looks at the wrist of the young girl, barks some orders, does some pointing.

END VIDEO

INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY

The house lights come on to reveal Ed, eating a bag of popcorn. Mitch sits next to him.



ED  
Man. These girl scouts are getting  
aggressive.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Sue sits at the bar drinking a cocktail. Marty Robbins plays  
in the background. Ed climbs up on the stool next to her.

ED  
Evening.

Sue barely acknowledges him. The BARTENDER, 40s, cheerless,  
moves opposite Ed.

BARTENDER  
What kin I getcha?

ED  
Whiskey. Double. Neat.

BARTENDER  
Any preference?

ED  
Jack Daniels.

BARTENDER  
Comin' right up.

The Bartender turns to make Ed's drink.

ED  
You work over at Millie's, don't  
you?

SUE  
Not tonight.

ED  
Had dinner there the other night.

SUE  
Congratulations.

ED  
You probably don't remember me.

SUE  
Don't take it personally. Lotta  
folks eat there.

ED

I had asked you about that mark on your wrist.

SUE

Lotta folks ask about that.

ED

Did any of the other folks mention that they'd seen a similar mark on an eight year old girl who'd been dragged to death behind a pickup?

SUE

Wow. You really know how to pick up a girl.

The Bartender sets Ed's drink on the bar.

BARTENDER

You wanna start a tab?

ED

No thanks.

BARTENDER

Eight fifty.

Ed puts a ten on the bar.

ED

Keep the change.

BARTENDER

Thanks.

ED

You know I'd never seen a mark like that until a little while ago. And now I've seen it four times.

Sue twirls her drink indifferently.

ED (CONT'D)

Seen it on that little girl, seen it on you, and I saw it on two men who died violently the other day.

SUE

Mmmm. You are a charmer.

ED

One of the men shot the other, then killed himself.

SUE

Really. You need to stop or I'm going to take you home right now.

ED

I didn't come here to pick you up. Sue. What the hell does that mark mean?

SUE

Damned if I know. I was born with it.

ED

Born with it.

SUE

Yep.

ED

Ever seen anyone else who had a mark like it?

Sue fixes him with a look.

SUE

What's this all about?

ED

I wish I knew. All I know is I come to El Paso to work as a detective about a year ago, and in that year I've seen five violent deaths. And of those five people, three of them had marks like yours. And two of them were the same.

SUE

Which two?

ED

What?

SUE

Which two?

ED

Why?

SUE

Just curious.

ED

No you're not. You know something.

SUE  
Let's say I do. Which two?

ED  
What do you know?

SUE  
You know what? Forget it. Have a nice night.

Sue takes a twenty out of her purse, slaps it on the bar, finishes off her drink and leaves. Ed just watches her. After a couple beats the Bartender comes over, takes the money and tidies up after her.

BARTENDER  
No luck, huh?

ED  
No. No luck.

BARTENDER  
Yeah. She's a tough nut to crack.

ED  
You know her?

BARTENDER  
Not really. She comes in a couple times a week, though. Don't think I've heard her say more than three words at a time.

ED  
Huh. Dames.

BARTENDER  
Yeah. Dames.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

MISS KLAMMER, 20s, overly sweet, ugly clothes, speaks to her kindergarten class.

MISS KLAMMER  
Okay, did everyone throw away their cupcake wrappers?

CLASS  
Yes.

MISS KLAMMER

Kyle, I still see yours. Let's throw that away. Okay, now I need the birthday girls up here. Danielle, Cynthia, come up here please.

DANIELLE and CYNTHIA, both 5, walk sheepishly to the front of the room and stand by Miss Klammer.

MISS KLAMMER (CONT'D)

I got you both a little present. It's not much but I know how you both like to draw so...

She hands each of them a gift bag. They eagerly dig in and pull out packs of pencils.

DANIELLE

Colored pencils!

CYNTHIA

Me too!

MISS KLAMMER

I hope you like them.

CYNTHIA

Thank you, Miss Klammer.

DANIELLE

Yeah, thanks.

MISS KLAMMER

You're both very welcome. Now we're going to have drawing time so you can get to use your new pencils.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Danielle and Cynthia sit at a table opposite each other. They are coloring with their new pencils.

DANIELLE

Hey, what's on yours?

CYNTHIA

Dora. What's on yours?

DANIELLE

Sponge Bob. Wanna trade one?

CYNTHIA

Okay.

DANIELLE

Let's trade yellows.

CYNTHIA

Kay.

They each give the other a pencil with one hand and take a pencil with the other hand. At the exact same time, they notice the mark on the other's wrist. They lock eyes with bad intent.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A Mexican woman lies on a bed giving birth. Her elder female relatives attend her. The room is simple, the family poor.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

The Doctor sits at his table eating dinner with his wife. This is the same doctor who delivered Gabriel. His wife, it so happens, was the same nurse who helped at Gabriel's birth.

They eat quietly for a while. Classical music plays softly in the background.

DOCTOR

Had a strange birth today.

NURSE

How's that?

DOCTOR

We were delivering these twins c-section and the first one had a nuchal cord.

NURSE

Type A?

DOCTOR

Yeah.

NURSE

Oh dear.

DOCTOR

Yeah. He didn't make it.

NURSE

Oh. That's too bad. But the second one was okay?

DOCTOR

Oh yeah. Yeah. Second one was fine. Weird thing, though, is that the second one had a pretty tight grip on the cord. Like he was strangling his twin.

NURSE

Huh. Never heard of that.

DOCTOR

Mmmm. I'd seen it before where a baby's got a hold on its cord but...

NURSE

Guess sibling rivalry started pretty early.

DOCTOR

Yeah. (beat) Do you remember that Mexican baby we delivered about twenty-five years ago, right before we got married, and it had that peculiar mark on its wrist?

NURSE

Oh, yeah. That birthmark that looked like some kind of symbol?

DOCTOR

Yeah.

NURSE

Yeah. I remember that.

DOCTOR

Well, the babies this morning had marks like that.

NURSE

Really?

DOCTOR

Yeah.

NURSE

Huh. Weird.

DOCTOR  
Very peculiar.

NURSE  
They both had them?

DOCTOR  
Uh huh. Different marks but both in  
the same place.

NURSE  
Weird.

DOCTOR  
Yeah. Can I get some more of that  
wine?

NURSE  
Oh. Sure.

She fills his glass.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

Ed and Dr. Simon stand behind the bodies of Danielle and  
Cynthia, who have matching holes in the left sides of their  
necks. They stand there for a while, contemplating.

ED  
Tell me again.

DR. SIMON  
(points to one girl)  
Same mark as Escobar. (points to  
the other girl). Same mark as  
Ramirez.

ED  
You're sure?

DR. SIMON  
Positive.

ED  
Okay. Anything else I should know?

DR. SIMON  
You mean other than the fact that  
two five year old girls murdered  
each other at the same time?

ED  
Yeah.



DR. SIMON  
And that they both had the same  
date of birth and date of death?

ED  
Yeah.

DR. SIMON  
No. Just that.

Ed sighs deeply.

ED  
Two lucky shots, huh?

DR. SIMON  
Doubt it.

ED  
What do you mean?

DR. SIMON  
I mean it's not likely that they  
both just stabbed each other  
randomly in the neck and happened  
to hit a major artery. They knew  
what they were doing. They had to  
have. The jugular vein's not that  
big. It's not that easy to hit.  
That's why when people kill their  
victims that way they usually slit  
their necks laterally. Figure if  
they cut deep enough and long  
enough, they're bound to hit the  
jugular. This? No. These were no  
lucky shots.

ED  
So they were both up on their  
anatomy I guess.

DR. SIMON  
Something.

They both strike their contemplative poses again.

INT. DINER - DAY

Ed sits in a booth. Sue comes over.

SUE  
Hi, I'm Sue, I'll be taking care of  
you today. Have you been to  
Millie's before?

ED  
Long time ago.

SUE  
Okay, well, welcome back. I'm sure  
not too much has changed. Can I get  
you anything to drink?

ED  
Coffee, please.

SUE  
Okay, I'll get that right out.

ED  
Sue, what does your mark mean?

Sue is startled.

SUE  
Excuse me?

ED  
I just came from the morgue and  
there were two five year old girls  
there who had stabbed each other in  
the jugular vein. They both had  
marks similar to yours.

SUE  
Oh boy. Guess they're still at it.

ED  
Who's still at what?

SUE  
Don't worry about it. I'll get your  
coffee.

Sue starts to leave.

ED  
No. Wait a second.

Ed grabs her by the wrist but she quickly grabs his wrist  
with her other hand and twists it, nearly breaking it.

SUE  
Don't touch me.

ED  
Ow. Ow. Uncle. Uncle.

Sue glares at him.

SUE  
You'll have to go somewhere else  
for coffee. We're all out.

She walks off.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Ed leans on a garden variety sedan, waiting. Sue comes out of the back door of the diner and walks toward him. She recognizes him and stops short.

SUE  
What do you want?

ED  
You know what I want.

SUE  
What?

ED  
I want to know what that mark  
means.

SUE  
I don't know. I've always had it.

ED  
You're lying.

SUE  
Fine. It means I'm magic. I can  
summon unicorns. Fairies come out  
of my butt.

ED  
I'm not joking around here. People  
who have marks like yours keep  
showing up in the morgue. You might  
be in danger. You might be next. I  
don't know.

SUE  
Oh. So all this is about my well  
being? Is that what you're telling  
me?

ED

Yes. That and I'm trying to figure out what the hell is going on here.

SUE

Look. Get off of my car. I'm going to the Painted Wagon to get a stiff drink. Meet me there and I'll tell you what I know. But you're paying for the drinks.

ED

Okay.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Ed and Sue sit at the bar having drinks.

SUE

If you want my advice just forget everything. All these people murdered each other, right?

ED

More or less.

SUE

So the cases are closed, right?

ED

More or less.

SUE

Yeah. Walk away. Forget it.

ED

Wish I could.

SUE

Why can't you?

ED

Cause I can't help but think there's more to come. And if I can do something to prevent that then I want to do that. It's my job.

SUE

You can't stop people from murdering each other. It's in our nature.

ED

Back at the diner you said they're still at it. Who were you talking about. Who's still at what?

SUE

It's a long story.

ED

Closing time's not for another five hours.

SUE

You wouldn't understand.

ED

Try me.

SUE

Where were you before you were born?

ED

In my mom.

SUE

Before that.

ED

Before that I wasn't anywhere.

SUE

You were you just don't remember.

ED

Where was I?

SUE

Toledo.

ED

Toledo, Ohio?

SUE

Yes. Toledo, Ohio. Just forget it.

ED

Why would you say I was in Toledo?

SUE

You were everywhere. That's what I'm getting at. The things that make you have been around forever. They've been everywhere.

(MORE)

SUE (CONT'D)

The same atoms that make you also  
made Genghis Khan. And Rasputin.  
And Joe Shmoe from Toledo, Ohio.

ED

What does that have to do with your  
mark? Or all these murders?

SUE

You said you don't know where you  
were before you were born.

ED

Yeah?

SUE

Well I do. Everyone who has this  
mark does.

ED

You mean...?

SUE

Did you happen to see the dates of  
birth on those two girls who killed  
each other?

ED

Yeah. They were born on the same  
day.

SUE

And?

ED

And they murdered each other on  
their fifth birthdays.

SUE

And?

ED

And what?

SUE

Did you happen to see what time  
they were born?

ED

No.

SUE

Check it out. And while you're at it, check out what time Escobar died. And Ramirez. And that eight year old girl. You look like a pretty smart...well, I'll give you the benefit of the doubt. You'll figure it out.

ED

Why don't you just tell me what I'll find and save me the trouble?

SUE

Because my taxes pay your salary. And I like to see my tax dollars at work. Now can we just get drunk and stop talking about this?

ED

Sure.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

MRS. CROSS, late 30s, nurses her baby in a rocking chair. The front door opens. In walks CAPTAIN CROSS, 40s, in a military uniform, carrying a brief case.

He sets his briefcase down in the foyer, hangs his cap on a hook and walks into the living room. He kisses his wife.

CAPTAIN CROSS

And how's my little soldier?

MRS. CROSS

Hungry.

CAPTAIN CROSS

And how's his pretty mommy?

MRS. CROSS

Tired.

CAPTAIN CROSS

Yeah.

He pokes playfully at the infant.

CAPTAIN CROSS (CONT'D)

No more staying up late for you, young man.

He sits down next on the sofa next to Mrs. Cross.

CAPTAIN CROSS (CONT'D)  
So, did you have a good day?

MRS. CROSS  
It was okay.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Good.

MRS. CROSS  
That woman from Lubbock e-mailed me back.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Oh yeah?

MRS. CROSS  
Yeah. She actually gave me her number. Said it might be easier on the phone.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Did you call her?

MRS. CROSS  
I did.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
What'd she say?

MRS. CROSS  
Well, I told you her daughter had a mark like Samuel, right?

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Uh huh.

MRS. CROSS  
Turns out she had actually gone to an iconologist to see what it meant.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Hmmm.

MRS. CROSS  
Yeah. Her daughter's was different, though. But according to the iconologist it was an ancient symbol that first appeared in Catal Huyuk like 6,000 years ago.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Really?



MRS. CROSS

Yeah. Apparently it was a symbol for immortality.

CAPTAIN CROSS

Huh.

MRS. CROSS

Yeah. She gave me the name of the guy. He's a professor up at Bennington in Vermont. I found him on the internet. Thought I'd take a picture of Simon's mark and send it to him. See if he might've seen it before.

CAPTAIN CROSS

Yeah. That'd be interesting to know.

MRS. CROSS

Yeah. Sad story about her daughter, though. She was actually kidnapped and murdered by drug lords.

CAPTAIN CROSS

Good God!

MRS. CROSS

Yeah. Of course that was thirty years ago.

CAPTAIN CROSS

Yeah, but still.

MRS. CROSS

I know. I couldn't imagine losing a child like that. (cutesy, to the baby) But that's not going to happen to you, is it Samuel? No. No it's not.

MRS. CROSS (CONT'D)

So how did your meeting with Ross go?

CAPTAIN CROSS

It went well.

MRS. CROSS

Uh huh...

CAPTAIN CROSS

We're going to Hawaii.

MRS. CROSS  
Oh, yay! You got the job?

CAPTAIN CROSS  
I got the job.

MRS. CROSS  
Oh, honey, that's so wonderful.  
Congratulations.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Yeah, thanks.

MRS. CROSS  
You deserve it.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Ah...

MRS. CROSS  
I'm so proud of you.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Well...guess I was due.

MRS. CROSS  
You stop that. You deserve it.  
You're the best man in that outfit.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Thanks.

Mrs. Cross gets lost in her thoughts for a second.

MRS. CROSS  
You know, I wonder if Jesse had a  
mark. I never thought to ask.

CAPTAIN CROSS  
Hmmm.

They sit for a couple beats, thoughtful, saddish.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Ed and Mitch are standing in front of a large bulletin board on which have been pinned two parallel timelines. A printout of Escobar's mark is up in one corner, Ramirez's mark is in the other.

MITCH

So here are the two marks we've seen. Call them yin (points) and yang. Now yin...

ED

Don't call them that. It'll confuse me.

MITCH

Oh.

ED

Which one was Escobar's?

MITCH

(points)  
That one.

ED

Okay. Call that one Escobar and that one Ramirez.

MITCH

Right. So which one should we do first?

ED

Doesn't matter.

MITCH

Right. We'll start with Ramirez.

ED

Actually start with Escobar.

MITCH

Right. Okay. So. Carlos Escobar, born in Juarez Mayish, 1945ish.

ED

Ish?

MITCH

Records in Mexico ain't that great.

ED

Kay.

MITCH

So born around May 1945, died October 11, 2005 at around 9:30pm.  
(MORE)

MITCH (CONT'D)

At that same time, Cynthia Williams was born bearing the exact same mark on her left wrist. She died September 8, 2010 at around noon. At that same time, Samuel Cross was born with the same mark. He was the second of twin boys.

ED

Did the first one have a mark?

MITCH

He did. I'm getting to that.

ED

Sorry. Go on.

MITCH

Okay. Now on to Ramirez. His mark first showed up on record in 1975 when a man named Daniel Ludgate was found murdered in a hotel room in Lubbock. This was in April. At around that same time, Susan Sizemore was born bearing the same mark. She...

ED

In Lubbock?

MITCH

What?

ED

She was born in Lubbock?

MITCH

Yes.

ED

Kay.

MITCH

Susan Sizemore was then, as you know, dragged to death on a desert road about an hour away. The exact date of her death is unknown of course, however the way things are going it would be a pretty good guess to say she died on July 27th, 1983, which is when Gabriel Ramirez was born, bearing the same mark. You getting all this?

ED

Sure.

MITCH

I can go over it again if you...

ED

Nope. Good. Continue.

MITCH

Kay. Right. So. Okay, where was I? Oh, right, Ramirez. Ramirez then committed suicide after killing Escobar on October 11, 2005 and at that same time, Danielle Tate was born bearing the same mark. Danielle Tate was then murdered by her playmate Cynthia Williams. Now, here's where we get to the twins. Simon Cross's brother Jesse, the first born, died at birth due to the umbilical cord being wrapped around his neck. And, as you probably guessed by now, he had the same mark as Danielle Tate and Gabriel Ramirez and Susan Sizemore and Daniel Ludgate.

Mitch looks at Ed.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Weird, huh?

ED

What happened next?

MITCH

Whaddya mean?

ED

After the first twin died.

MITCH

Oh. I'm not sure.

ED

No other births around that time?

MITCH

I don't know. I didn't think to check.

ED

Okay. Well, let's check then.

MITCH

Right.

ED

So whaddya make of all this?

MITCH

I don't know. Looks like whenever one of these people with a mark dies, another person is born with the same mark.

ED

(sotto voce)

Or it could be the same person.

MITCH

Sorry?

ED

Nothing. Good work, Mitchell.

MITCH

Thanks, boss.

ED

Just find out about that last birth.

MITCH

Will do.

ED

And get me a cup of coffee.

MITCH

You got it, Chief.

Mitch runs off. Ed stands there looking at the board, rubbing his chin.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Ed sidles up next to Sue at the bar.

ED

So. Where were you before you were born?

SUE

I was a rice farmer.

ED

Must not've done too well. El Paso  
ain't exactly the best climate for  
growing rice.

SUE

Yeah, well, this may come as a  
shock but I wasn't born in El Paso.

ED

No?

SUE

No.

ED

Where were you born?

SUE

Take a wild guess.

ED

Dallas?

SUE

No.

ED

Wyoming.

SUE

Close. China.

ED

What?

SUE

Xuangzhing.

ED

Get out. You're Chinese?

SUE

I am.

ED

Huh. Oh yeah. Now I see it. Yeah.  
The eyes, the hair. Yeah.

SUE

I can't tell if you're cute or if  
I'm really drunk.

ED  
I'm cute.

SUE  
No. I think I'm just really drunk.

The bartender comes over and stands in front of Ed.

BARTENDER  
Evening.

ED  
Evening.

BARTENDER  
Double Jack neat?

ED  
That'd be great. Thanks.

BARTENDER  
You got it.

The bartender goes off.

ED  
So how many people are there like  
you?

SUE  
I don't know.

ED  
There's at least three, I know  
that.

SUE  
There's more.

ED  
Where are they?

SUE  
Damned if I know.

ED  
How is it that nobody knows about  
this?

SUE  
The crazies.

ED  
Who?



SUE

The crazies. The people who claim to have past lives. They're all put in the same basket as people who claim to have been abducted by aliens.

ED

So they're not lying?

SUE

Oh, I'm sure they're all looney. Believe me, nobody like me would ever tell anyone. We're happy hiding in plain sight, I assure you.

ED

Why wouldn't you tell anyone?

SUE

What's the use? People would just think I was one of the crazies.

ED

True.

SUE

So you believe it?

ED

You know, Sue, I'm a pragmatic person. But I've seen the evidence and it's pretty hard to ignore.

SUE

Well, you're not the first person to run across us.

The bartender places a drink in front of Ed.

ED

Thanks.

BARTENDER

You got it.

Bartender walks off again.

ED

So what's going on with the other two? They got some kind of vendetta going?

SUE

No idea.

ED

Why do they keep killing each other?

SUE

Wish I knew.

ED

You don't have anything to do with it?

SUE

Nope.

ED

But you know them.

SUE

Oh yeah. I know them. I was actually married to one of them once.

ED

Really?

SUE

Really. Looooong time ago.

ED

Which one?

SUE

Got a pen?

Ed gives Sue a pen. She takes a bar napkin and draws Ramirez's symbol on it.

ED

Ramirez.

SUE

You know her as Ramirez.

ED

What do you know him as?

SUE

Her.

ED

What's that?

SUE

Her. She was my wife when we were married.

ED

Man. That's weird.

SUE

Guess so. Anyway, they've always been like that. Soon as they find each other they set to killing each other. One gets better and better at gathering power and the other gets better and better at killing.

ED

Which one were you married to?

SUE

The killer. I don't like the other one.

ED

So the killer's the good guy? Or girl?

SUE

Don't think it's like that. I think they're like beta fish, just wired to kill each other. Maybe it's territorial. Who knows.

ED

And this has been going on for...

SUE

Ever.

ED

So how did you all wind up in El Paso?

SUE

I don't know how they got here. My adoptive parents brought me here when I was an infant. Turns out my biological parents wanted a boy. How original is that? At least they didn't drop me down a well.

ED

So you have no idea where they might be now?

SUE

I imagine they're around. We always come back near where we die.

ED

And you remember every past life?

SUE

Me? No. I didn't even remember my last one until I was about five or so. That's usually how it goes.

ED

But you remember being a rice farmer?

SUE

Bits and pieces. Shoot. I don't remember all of my current life. Do you?

ED

No. I suppose not. So you think they'll pop up soon, huh?

SUE

I'd give it at least five years. Probably more. Something will happen though. I never know what it is, but something will happen and they'll have to find each other and kill each other. They just know when it's time. It's like someone flips a switch in their heads.

ED

They were only five last time.

SUE

Oh, sure. If they meet each other it's on. Right away. No matter how old they are.

ED

God, that's weird. I can't imagine coming back after I die. It's hard to get your brain around, you know?

SUE

I imagine so. Took me a long time to realize that not everybody was like me.

ED  
So do you ever stash money away  
from past lives so that...

SUE  
Hey, how about we stop with all the  
questions?

ED  
Oh. Okay.

SUE  
Great.

ED  
It's just that it's so...

SUE  
Yeah, I know. It's amazing. Cheers.

ED  
Cheers.

They clink glasses. Ed visibly wants to ask more questions.

ED (CONT'D)  
So which do you like being better,  
boy or girl?

SUE  
Oh, for the love of God.

INT. COFFEESHOP - DAY

Sue, now 15 years older, stands at the counter, waiting for her drink. The BARISTA, 20s, pretty, sets her vente on the counter.

BARISTA  
Okay, and did you want a muffin  
with that or just the latte?

SUE  
Just the latte.

BARISTA  
Okay, that'll be six fifty.

Sue opens her wallet, which she'd been holding at the ready, and digs out the change. A latina girl, MARIA, 15, sidles up behind her and reaches for some napkins from a dispenser on the counter.

MARIA

Excuse me.

SUE

Oh, sure.

Sue moves slightly out of the way. Maria starts pulling some napkins out of the dispenser. Sue looks down and double takes as she recognizes the mark on Maria's inner wrist. She looks at Maria. Maria meets her gaze, unsure.

SUE (CONT'D)

Chena?

Maria goes wide-eyed. Sue holds up her wrist.

MARIA

Vadim?

Sue nods.

INT. COFFEESHOP - DAY

Sue and Maria sit at a table, drinking coffee and talking.

SUE

So where's your friend?

MARIA

Hawaii.

SUE

How do you know?

MARIA

Did some research. Turns out we were twins. How funny is that? He actually strangled me with his umbilical cord so I was stillborn. So then I came out in a poor Mexican family's bedroom.

SUE

How did he end up in Hawaii?

MARIA

His dad's in the military. He got transferred right after he was born. When I came to this time I couldn't figure out why I was a girl again. So I looked through the civil registry and there was my answer.

SUE

I've never been a girl twice in a row. Or a boy for that matter.

MARIA

It's happened to me a couple times. One time it happened but it turns out the bitch threw me off a cliff when I was a toddler.

SUE

Dear God.

MARIA

That one actually wasn't that bad since I don't remember. Couple times ago I got dragged behind a pickup truck.

SUE

So I heard. What's that like?

MARIA

It sucks.

SUE

Guess so.

MARIA

Eh. I've killed him in worse ways.

SUE

Have you ever considered not killing him?

MARIA

Yeah, that doesn't usually turn out so well. Remember?

SUE

I do.

MARIA

Do you remember our son?

SUE

Bits and pieces. I remember I thought I was going to lose you when you were in labor.

MARIA

Yeah. I thought that was the end of me. That time, anyway. Glad they didn't put leeches on me.

They laugh.

SUE

God. I'm so glad they don't do that anymore. How many times did we die from smallpox or typhoid or...

MARIA

Bubonic plague. That was my favorite.

They laugh again.

SUE

I'm glad those days are gone.

MARIA

Amen.

They pause for a beat.

SUE

Do it again.

MARIA

Do what?

SUE

Stay with me.

MARIA

I wish I could.

SUE

Why can't you?

MARIA

He'll come. You know he will.

SUE

So let him come.

MARIA

He'll use you against me again. I can't have that.

Sue says nothing. She knows Maria's right.

SUE

Stay with me anyway. What's the worst could happen?



MARIA

He could rape us, torture us, kill us.

SUE

Right. We'd just come back.

MARIA

Yeah. I don't like being hurt. The killing actually doesn't bother me. I like that moment of peace.

SUE

(dreamy)

Oh, God. That moment right when you go...

MARIA

(dreamy)

Yeah....

They both get lost in the thought.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Then of course you end up back here. God, I'm so tired of living.

SUE

When was the last time you were with someone?

MARIA

You mean...?

SUE

I mean in a relationship.

MARIA

Oh, God. It's been ages.

SUE

Maybe that's your problem.

MARIA

When was the last time you were with someone?

SUE

I was just married for 60 years. Before that I was married for 47 years. I'm taking a break.

MARIA

So why would you want me to stay  
with you?

SUE

You're different.

MARIA

Different how?

SUE

Different.

MARIA

Geez, I don't know.

SUE

There's a chance you'll get him  
first, you know.

MARIA

Maybe.

SUE

You've killed him as many times as  
he's killed you. More maybe.

MARIA

It hasn't been more.

SUE

Still...

Sue drinks her coffee.

SUE (CONT'D)

What's your family like?

MARIA

Poor. Sweet, though. Very kind.  
Very Catholic. Very poor.

SUE

And you were born in your parents  
bedroom?

MARIA

Yeah. It's still their room, matter  
of fact. It actually worked out  
well. I'm harder to find since I  
wasn't born in a hospital.

SUE

I've never been born in a hospital.

MARIA  
Really?

SUE  
Really.

MARIA  
I'm gonna leave home soon as I can.  
Nothing against my family but...

SUE  
So move in with me. I don't have a  
lot, I'm just a waitress. But  
what's mine is yours.

MARIA  
That's kind.

SUE  
I'm serious.

MARIA  
I know you are.

SUE  
Think about it.

MARIA  
Okay.

INT. ED WALKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Ed, now in his 60s, sits at his desk reading something on the  
computer. His phone beeps.

ED  
Yeah.

SECRETARY (O.S.)  
(through phone)  
Mister Cross to see you.

ED  
Send him in, please.

Momentarily Ed's door opens and in walks SAMUEL CROSS, 25,  
tanned, handsome, bespoke clothing. Ed stands. They shake  
hands.

SAMUEL  
Mr. Walker, thanks for seeing me on  
such short notice.

ED

Oh, not at all. Not at all. Nice to meet you. Please, have a seat.

SAMUEL

Thanks.

They sit.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

So let me get right to the point.

ED

Okay.

SAMUEL

I'm looking for someone but I don't know who they are.

ED

Okay.

SAMUEL

All I know is that they have a mark. Like this.

Samuel leans forward and pulls up his left sleeve, exposing his mark.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

They might be male or female. I don't know. Probably female. They would be about my age.

ED

And how old are you?

SAMUEL

I'm twenty-five.

ED

Is this a long lost twin or something?

SAMUEL

No. Why would you say that?

ED

I don't know. I guess I just figured...

SAMUEL

My parents told me my twin died at birth.

ED

Oh. I'm, um, sorry to hear that  
I...

SAMUEL

Who are you? Why would you ask  
that?

ED

Hey, easy. Easy. I am who I say I  
am. I'm a private investigator. My  
name is Ed Walker. Usually when I'm  
asked to find someone I know at  
least if it's a man or a woman I'm  
trying to find. I usually know  
something.

SAMUEL

Okay. Okay.

ED

I just figured that if all you know  
about this person is that they have  
a mark...

SAMUEL

No. You're right. You're right. I'm  
sorry. It's just very important  
that I find this person. And it's  
frustrating that all I know is the  
mark.

ED

If you don't mind my asking, how do  
you know about the mark?

SAMUEL

I just know. It's a long story.  
Look, I'll pay you double if you  
just don't ask too many questions.  
Just find them, okay?

ED

I'll do my best.

SAMUEL

That's all I'm asking.

Samuel stands up.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Here's my card. Give me a call if  
you find out anything. Anything at  
all.

Samuel walks to the door. He opens it, looks back.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Just so you know, I'm hiring every private eye in town. There's a million dollar bonus for the one who finds her. Or him. Probably her.

ED

Okay.

Samuel leaves. Ed gets up, goes to the window, and discreetly pries apart the blinds. He looks out the window.

EXT. PARKING LOT (ED'S OFFICE) - DAY

Simon walks briskly across the parking lot, gets into a Cadillac and pulls out quickly.

INT. ED WALKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Through the window Ed watches Samuel leave. He quickly grabs his keys off his desk and exits.

EXT. PARKING LOT (ED'S OFFICE) - DAY

Ed gets into his car and drives off.

INT. NADIA'S CAR - DAY

Nadia, now in her 40s, watches him leave, picks up her cell phone and hits some buttons.

INT. CROSS'S CAR (DRIVING) - DAY

Cross's phone rings. He hits a button on his bluetooth.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

CROSS

Go.

NADIA

He just drove off.

CROSS  
Okay, follow him. But make  
absolutely sure he doesn't know  
he's being followed or watched.

NADIA  
10-4.

INT. DINER - DAY

Ed enters and is greeted by the Hostess. This one is also in  
her 20s and pretty, but different than the previous one.

HOSTESS  
Good afternoon.

ED  
Afternoon.

HOSTESS  
Will someone be joining you?

ED  
No. Actually. Um, there used to be  
an Asian waitress here. Long time  
ago. Her name's Sue. Does she still  
work here by any chance?

HOSTESS  
Uh, yeah.

She looks around.

HOSTESS (CONT'D)  
She must be in the kitchen. Want me  
to tell her you're looking for her?

ED  
Would you mind?

HOSTESS  
No. Not at all. Be right back.

ED  
Thanks.

The hostess walks back to the kitchen. She returns  
momentarily.

HOSTESS  
She'll be out in a minute.

ED  
Thanks.

Ed fidgets as he waits. Sue comes up and joins them.

ED (CONT'D)  
Sue.

SUE  
Yes?

ED  
I don't know if you remember me or  
not, my name is Ed Walker.

SUE  
Oh right. The nosy cop.

ED  
Yeah...

SUE  
What is it this time? I know  
they're not at it again.

ED  
How do you know that?

SUE  
I just know.

ED  
Can I talk to you somewhere  
private?

SUE  
Like where?

ED  
I don't know. Outside, maybe.

SUE  
(loudly, to no one in  
particular)  
I'm going on break.

Sue takes off her apron and walks outside.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Sue and Ed exit the front door, go to the parking lot next to  
the diner.



SUE  
So what's up?

ED  
He's here.

SUE  
Who?

ED  
His name this time is Samuel Cross.  
He used to be either Ramirez or  
Escobar.

SUE  
Escobar.

ED  
How do you know that?

SUE  
I just know.

ED  
Do you know where Ramirez is?

SUE  
Maybe.

ED  
Well, Cross is looking for him.

SUE  
Her.

ED  
How do you know it's a her?

SUE  
I just know. How do you know Cross  
is looking for her?

ED  
I just know.

SUE  
That's my line.

ED  
I'm a private investigator now.  
Cross came in today. He hired me to  
find...her...Just thought you  
should know.

SUE  
I'm surprised you remembered me  
after all these years.

ED  
You're pretty hard to forget. I'm  
surprised you still work here.

SUE  
The trick is to not eat the food.  
She smiles faintly, then gets serious again.

SUE (CONT'D)  
Thanks for the heads up.

ED  
Yeah.

INT. NADIA'S CAR - DAY

Nadia watches Ed and Sue talk. She's talking to Cross through  
her bluetooth.

NADIA  
Asian woman.

CROSS (O.S.)  
(through phone)  
How old?

NADIA  
Fifty? Sixty?

CROSS  
That's not her.

NADIA  
Alright, well...

CROSS  
Follow her anyway. Might be  
something.

NADIA  
10-4.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Maria crawls out of a small cave with a large plastic bag.  
She opens it to reveal stacks of hundred dollar bills and  
various weapons, one of which is a sniper's rifle.

INT. NADIA'S CAR - DAY

Nadia idles in her car on the street in front of a gated apartment complex. She talks to Cross through her bluetooth.

NADIA  
It's gated.

CROSS (O.S.)  
(through phone)  
Alright, well, guess you'll be getting a place tomorrow.

NADIA  
10-4.

INT. SUE AND MARIA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sue fixes herself a plate from food in pans on the stove. Maria sits at the table with a plate of food in front of her but she's not eating. She's distracted. Far, far away.

SUE  
And then this dirty old man slaps my ass. And I'm like you gotta be kidding me. I'm almost sixty years old for crying out loud. So I turned to him and I said, 'Hey, don't touch my ass!' I said it loud enough for the whole joint to hear it too. You shoulda seen this guy. He turned like eight different shades of red. Everybody was just staring at him. He was so embarrassed he just left. I shoulda thought of that years ago.

She sits down. Notices Maria's vacant demeanor.

SUE (CONT'D)  
What's wrong with you?

MARIA  
I gotta go to Hawaii.

SUE  
Oh God.

MARIA  
I gotta go.

SUE  
Why now?

MARIA

It's time.

SUE

So that's it? After ten happy years  
you're gonna just throw it all  
away?

MARIA

I'm doing it for us.

SUE

You're gonna get yourself killed?  
For us?

MARIA

I have the upper hand. He has no  
idea who I am.

SUE

Fine. Go. I'll never understand you  
two.

MARIA

You know it's either him or me. And  
this time "me" could mean us.

SUE

Yep. You're right. You have the  
upper hand. Aloha. Have a nice  
trip.

MARIA

That's it?

SUE

Yep.

MARIA

Aloha? Have a nice trip? That's all  
you got?

SUE

Whaddya want me to say? You're  
gonna go no matter what I say. So  
go. Go to Hawaii, buy a knife, cut  
his head off. Whatever. Whatever it  
is you kids do.

Maria eyes her suspiciously.

MARIA

What aren't you telling me?

SUE

Nothing.

MARIA

Don't lie. What aren't you telling me?

SUE

What makes you think I'm not telling you something?

MARIA

I've known you for five thousand years, I can tell when you're not telling me something. What aren't you telling me?

Sue groans.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Out with it.

SUE

Oh fine. He's here.

MARIA

Here where? Here in El Paso?

SUE

Yeah.

MARIA

How do you know? And don't tell me you just know.

SUE

Back when y'all were at it last time there was a cop on the case. He saw my mark in the diner once, started asking a bunch of questions. Well, he's a private investigator now and you're friend came by his office earlier today. He's looking for you.

MARIA

So why would this guy tell you?

SUE

I dunno. He knows me. Thought I might know where you were.

MARIA

Did you tell him?

SUE

No. Course not. He just thought I might know. I think he used to have a thing for me. Kind of depressing, really. I've been at that damn diner for twenty...

MARIA

What's his name?

SUE

Who?

MARIA

The private eye.

SUE

Why?

Maria pulls a pistol out of her boot and points it at Sue.

MARIA

Tell me his name.

SUE

Really? Maria? With the gun? Again?

MARIA

Tell me his name.

SUE

Walker. Ed Walker.

Maria gets up quickly and leaves. The front door slams offscreen.

SUE (CONT'D)

Yeah. Bye. Love you.

She shakes her head and starts picking at her food. She puts her fork down and pushes the plate away. She buries her head in her hands.

SUE (CONT'D)

How do they know? God, how do they always know?

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

The LEASING OFFICE WOMAN, 40s, saleswoman type, leads NADIA around the apartment complex.

LEASING OFFICE WOMAN  
You said you wanted to be in one of  
these two buildings, correct?

Nadia spots Sue's car.

NADIA  
Correct.

LEASING OFFICE WOMAN  
Okay, well we actually have several  
one bedrooms available here so I'm  
sure we can find something you  
like.

NADIA  
Perfect.

EXT. ED WALKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Ed walks up to the entrance of his office carrying a cup of  
gourmet coffee, a briefcase slung over his shoulder by a  
strap. Maria's there waiting at his door.

ED  
Morning.

MARIA  
Morning.

ED  
Help you with something?

MARIA  
You Walker?

ED  
I am.

Maria rolls up her left sleeve, shows Ed her mark.

MARIA  
Ever see one of these?

ED  
Come on in.

Ed unlocks the door. They enter.

INT. ED WALKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Ed sits at his desk. Maria sits in a chair opposite him. They regard each other for a couple beats.

ED

You know you got a million dollar bounty on your head.

MARIA

Doesn't surprise me.

ED

You can understand my reluctance to help you.

MARIA

I don't.

ED

You want me to be an accomplice to murder.

MARIA

You don't know that I'm going to murder him.

ED

Ah, but I do. That's the problem.

MARIA

And yet you took his case, knowing full well he was going to murder me. How does that work?

ED

I took his case so I could help you.

MARIA

Why? Why me and not him?

ED

I don't want Sue to get hurt.

MARIA

She's not as innocent as you might think, you know.

ED

No?



MARIA

Just set up a meeting with him.  
I'll do the rest.

ED

Yeah, the rest is what's gonna put  
me in jail. You know what they do  
to ex-cops in jail? No thanks.

MARIA

So what if I hired you to find him?  
To counter find him?

ED

I wouldn't take that case.

MARIA

But you took his.

ED

I had no intention of finding you.  
Like I said, I'm trying to protect  
Sue.

MARIA

Well, the best thing you could do  
for Sue is to tell me where I can  
find Cross.

ED

I don't know where he is.

MARIA

How would you get in touch with  
him?

ED

I have his card.

MARIA

Well, why don't you make me a copy  
of that card?

ED

No can do. That would make me an  
accomplice.

Maria pulls a pistol from her boot. She readies the hammer,  
points it at Ed.

MARIA

What if I asked nicely?

ED

Well, since you asked nicely...

INT. CROSS'S OFFICE - DAY

CROSS'S SECRETARY, 30s, average looking, sits at her desk, typing on her computer. Her phone rings. She picks it up.

CROSS'S SECRETARY

Cross Realty, how can I help you?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

(through phone)

Um, yeah, hi.

CROSS'S SECRETARY

Hello.

FEMALE VOICE

Um. My name is Candi and...I'm trying to find Mr. Cross.

CROSS'S SECRETARY

I'm afraid Mr. Cross is out of town. Is there something I can help you with?

FEMALE VOICE

Um. Maybe. My name's Candi and...I was supposed to meet Mr. Cross for, um, an appointment and, um, I thought he said the Hilton but they say he's not staying here. Do you know what hotel he's staying in?

CROSS'S SECRETARY

I'm sorry, who are you again?

FEMALE VOICE

Candi. Mr. Cross, um, hired me to do...well, just between us girls, he wanted to dress up like Little Bo Peep and he wanted me to whip him.

CROSS'S SECRETARY

Excuse me?

FEMALE VOICE

Oh, honey, that's nothing. You'd be amazed what turns some guys on.

CROSS'S SECRETARY

That's really not my business. What exactly do you want from me?

FEMALE VOICE

Well, I thought he was at the Hilton but he's not here. It's a lot of money to do, you know, that kinda stuff so I'm trying to find him. Do you know what hotel he's at?

CROSS'S SECRETARY

No. I'm afraid not. I don't even know where he is, other than he's out of town. How did you get this number?

FEMALE VOICE

Oh, he gave me his card last night. He was pretty drunk though. Could've sworn he said the Hilton. Do you have a cell phone number where I could reach him?

CROSS'S SECRETARY

I'm afraid Mr. Cross told me explicitly to never give anybody his cell phone number. Sorry.

FEMALE VOICE

Shoot. That was five thousand bucks, too.

INT. COFFEESHOP - DAY

Maria holds a cell phone.

CROSS'S SECRETARY (O.S.)

(through phone)

Maybe you could just call all the hotels in town and see if he's there.

Her phone rings.

CROSS'S SECRETARY (CONT'D)

That's my other line. I have to go.

MARIA

(bimboish voice)

Okay, well, thanks anyways. Guess I won't need this whip.

CROSS'S SECRETARY  
Right. Well...goodbye.

MARIA  
Bye.

Maria hangs up.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
(to herself)  
Crap.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOF - NIGHT

Maria sits on the edge of the roof, looking across the parking lot into her and Sue's bedroom window. Sue flits about the room, putting away laundry.

A teenage girl, STACY, opens the door to the roof and walks out. Maria turns around.

STACY  
Hey.

MARIA  
Hey.

Stacy comes over and sits next to Maria.

STACY  
Whatcha doin'?

MARIA  
(points vaguely to her  
bedroom window)  
Watching her.

STACY  
Who's that?

MARIA  
My girlfriend.

STACY  
Oh. She's pretty.

MARIA  
Yeah.

STACY  
So you're a lesbian?

MARIA  
(slight laugh)  
Yeah. Guess I am this time.

STACY  
Whaddya mean, this time?

MARIA  
Long story. You live in this building?

STACY  
Uh huh. My mom's fighting with her boyfriend again. I always come up here when that happens so I don't have to hear it.

MARIA  
Good idea.

STACY  
Have you seen the new woman?

MARIA  
What new woman?

STACY  
She just moved in across the hall. Only she didn't have any furniture or anything. She kinda creeps me out.

MARIA  
Really?

STACY  
Uh huh.

MARIA  
What apartment number, do you know?

STACY  
She's in six b.

MARIA  
Huh. That's right below us, isn't it?

STACY  
Yeah. Guess so.

They sit quietly for a couple beats.

STACY (CONT'D)

So how come you're up here looking at her? Why wouldn't you just go home and be with her? Are you fighting?

MARIA

No. It's just that if I'm in the same room with her she'll want to talk to me. And sometimes I don't want to talk, I just want to look at her.

STACY

Awwwww. That's so romantic. How long have you been together?

MARIA

About ten years, I guess. Seems like we've always been together though.

STACY

Wow. Lesbians are awesome.

Maria looks at her with quizzical amusement.

INT. DINER - DAY

Ed finishes up a slice of blueberry pie. Sue walks over.

SUE

How's the pie?

ED

Good as ever. How are you?

SUE

Good as ever, I guess. You mind if I sit a spell?

ED

Please.

Sue sits in the booth opposite Ed.

ED (CONT'D)

So I met your friend the other day.

SUE

Who? Cross?

ED  
Well, him too. But no, your other  
friend.

SUE  
Maria?

ED  
Used to be Ramirez?

SUE  
Yeah.

ED  
Yeah. Her.

SUE  
Guess she was looking for Cross?

ED  
Yeah. Pulled a gun on me.

SUE  
Yeah. She does that.

ED  
Yeah, well, I don't come back.

SUE  
She wouldn't've shot you.

ED  
Just the same. Not very nice. I  
guess you told her Cross came to  
me?

SUE  
Yeah. That was the last thing I  
told her. She stormed out Monday  
night and I haven't seen her since.

ED  
Oh. Y'all are...living together?

SUE  
Ten years now.

ED  
Oh. I didn't realize.

SUE

Yeah. It won't last. In fact now that the two of them are at it again I figure it's pretty much over. But. It was nice while it lasted. You ever get married?

ED

Me? No. Longest I'd ever been in a relationship was two years.

SUE

What happened?

ED

Didn't work out. She wanted more, I just wanted a companion.

SUE

Companions are nice.

ED

Yeah.

SUE

In some ways they're better than lovers.

ED

Yeah.

SUE

Alright. I've had enough fun. I'm going home.

INT. APARTMENT 6B - DAY

A black and white TV monitor sits on a table in an empty apartment. There's a chair in front of the window but no other furniture. The monitor shows the outside corridor in front of Sue's apartment. Suddenly it goes dark.

INT. NADIA'S CAR - DAY

Nadia is driving along. Her phone rings. She hits her bluetooth.

NADIA

Hello?



CROSS (O.S.)  
 (through phone)  
 Whare are you?

NADIA  
 Had to run out and get some things.  
 What's up?

CROSS  
 The camera's down.

NADIA  
 Down?

CROSS  
 Down. Out.

NADIA  
 Alright I'll be back there in a  
 minute.

CROSS  
 Be on your toes. Cameras don't just  
 go down. Something's up.

NADIA  
 10-4.

INT. APARTMENT 6B - DAY

Nadia enters with some effort, carrying a bouquet of flowers and a bag of groceries. She sets both down on the counter and walks over to the window.

She pries the blinds apart to take a peek outside. Instantly a bullet pops through the glass and goes through her heart. She collapses instantly. Several beats later her phone rings ten times.

INT. SUE AND MARIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sue holds her cell phone to her ear as she brushes her wet hair. Faint ringing comes through the phone and seems to go on forever.

SUE  
 Come on. Pick up.

More ringing. Sue hangs up, frustrated. She finishes brushing her hair.

INT. APARTMENT 6B - DAY

Cross enters, assesses the situation. He looks at the window but purposely avoids it.

CROSS  
Okay. Playtime's over.

He picks up the flowers off the counter and exits.

INT. SUE AND MARIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

The doorbell rings. Sue walks to the door. She looks through the peephole.

SUE  
Yes?

CROSS (O.S.)  
(through door)  
Flower delivery.

Sue unlatches the door and opens it. Cross drops the flowers, barges in and clocks her hard on the jaw. Sue goes down for the count.

INT. SUE AND MARIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Cross sits in a chair in the corner, fiddling with a cell phone in one hand and a potato peeler in the other. Sue lays on the bed, her mouth duct taped shut. Each of her arms is tied to a knob on the headboard. She slowly comes to.

CROSS  
Well, good morning. Vadim. Or whatever your name is these days. How's Maria? You two get into a fight? Looks like you called her twenty times in the past three days but she never called you back. Wonder why that is? Oh, well. You'll have to do until she gets back? Ever been skinned alive? Happened to me once, courtesy of your girlfriend. Not pleasant. Especially the part when she rolled me in salt. Well, you'll feel what it's like soon enough. Too bad.

(MORE)

CROSS (CONT'D)

I thought you could call her and make her come back here so I could kill her but....looks like she doesn't want to talk to you. So I guess you'll just have to do.

He stands up and tosses the phone and the peeler onto the bed.

CROSS (CONT'D)

I'm so happy you're a girl this time. That way we can have a little bit of fun before the skinning.

Cross kneels on the foot of the bed and makes his way slowly up. Sue kicks with everything she's got but Cross easily grabs her legs and pins them down. He works his way up and straddles her thighs. Sue struggles, moans, turns red.

CROSS (CONT'D)

Oh, come on. Don't act like you don't like this.

He starts to unbutton Sue's jeans but suddenly the glass on the window breaks and a bullet blows out the side of Cross's head. He goes down. Sue cries, breathing heavily through her nose.

After several minutes Maria enters with the bouquet of flowers. She tosses them on the bed and quickly removes the duct tape from Sue's mouth.

SUE

Ow!

MARIA

I'm so sorry.

Maria works frantically to untie the ropes. Sue cries with abandon.

SUE

He was gonna skin me! He was gonna rape me and then he was gonna skin me.

MARIA

I know, baby, I'm so sorry.

SUE

He was gonna...

Maria finishes untying the ropes and holds Sue close. Sue clings to Maria for her life.

MARIA

Shhh. Shhh. It's okay, baby. I got you.

SUE

He was gonna hurt me.

MARIA

I wasn't gonna let that happen. Shh. Shh. It's okay.

SUE

I don't like it.

MARIA

I know, baby. I know.

SUE

Where were you?

MARIA

I was watching over you. I wasn't gonna let anything happen to you.

SUE

I tried to call...

MARIA

I know, baby. I know.

SUE

But you didn't pick up.

MARIA

It's okay, baby. It's okay.

Sue gradually composes herself and sits up.

SUE

You brought me flowers.

MARIA

Yeah. What's up with those?

SUE

He was posing as a flower delivery guy. I thought they were from you.

MARIA

I'm so sorry, baby.

SUE

Why did you leave?

MARIA

I knew he'd come for you. So I just waited.

SUE

Waited where?

MARIA

Up on the roofs mostly. I was watching you from up there.

She points out the window to the roof on the adjacent building.

SUE

All the way up there?

MARIA

Uh huh.

SUE

That's where you shot him from?

MARIA

Uh huh.

SUE

That's a really good shot.

MARIA

Thanks.

They sit quietly for a couple beats.

SUE

So you're gonna kill yourself now?

MARIA

Well. Not really.

SUE

Why do you have to this time? He doesn't know who you are.

MARIA

I killed the woman he had watching us.

SUE

Where?

MARIA

That apartment across the way.

SUE

But...

MARIA

No, baby. I killed her. I had to.

SUE

But they might not catch you. We can still be together.

MARIA

We can't. I wish we could but we can't.

SUE

So maybe you'll only have to go to jail for a little while. It was kind of self defense.

MARIA

No. I have to go.

SUE

I'll come visit you.

MARIA

I'm not going to jail, Sue. Never again.

SUE

We could go away. She's gonna come looking for me after a while if I stay here anyway.

MARIA

Do you want that? Do you really want to go away? Really?

SUE

No. I guess not.

MARIA

You love this.

SUE

I do.

MARIA

You love your life here.

SUE

I do. It's so simple. But maybe...

MARIA

No, baby. I gotta go. Don't worry, though. I'll be back. And I'll be a boy.

SUE

And I'll be an old lady.

MARIA

Yeah. But you'll be my old lady.

SUE

So this is goodbye then?

MARIA

Not goodbye. Just until next time.

Maria kisses Sue softly, strokes her hair.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I love you. I've always loved you.

SUE

I love you too.

MARIA

I kinda like you being a girl.

SUE

Yeah, this was kinda nice. I kinda like the latina thing.

MARIA

I knew you would. Some things never change.

They share a lighthearted tender moment. Then Maria gets up and pulls a pistol out of her boot.

SUE

Well don't do it here. I don't wanna see it.

MARIA

Oh, right. Sorry.

SUE

Got enough of a mess here.

MARIA

Okay. I'll go into the hills.

SUE

Don't do that. The animals will eat you.

MARIA

Where should I do it then?

SUE

I don't know. Somewhere where people will find you. Get rid of you properly.

MARIA

Okay. Well. I'll see you around, kiddo.

SUE

Yep. See you around.

Maria leaves. Offscreen there's a gunshot.

SUE (CONT'D)

Oh, Maria! Not there. Dammit.

EXT. SAVANNA - DAY

A primitive man crouches over a baby antelope, ripping it apart and eating it. A spear is stuck into the ground next to him. Another primitive man approaches with a spear.

In a wild, animal frenzy they attack each other with their spears.

EXT. SAVANNA - DAY

Two primitive men lay dead on the ground, each one with a spear sticking out of their chest.

A closer look reveals that they both have marks on their inner left wrists. One has the same mark as Ramirez and Maria, the other has the same mark as Escobar and Cross. The half eaten antelope lays off to the side.

FADE OUT.