City of Carnivores

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FADE IN:

EXT. FAIRGROUND - DAY

BUTCH GILMORE (40s), a well-dressed, no non-sense man steps onto the podium. He beams with confidence. Looks down at the crowd. Speaks into the microphone.

> BUTCH Thank you all for coming this afternoon. For many years, we've been looking for the vegan food reserve. We searched. We fought. And today, ladies and gentlemen, we succeeded.

He motions toward a mountain-sized pile of fruits and vegetables. A WORKER starts up the flamethrower. Fire shoots out and catches onto the pile, which blazes with glowing orange flames into the sky.

The crowd erupts into cheers.

BUTCH We're on our next step in exterminating those sneaky, selfish vegans. Without the food reserve, they'll scamper out like rats. We'll hunt and...

The scene becomes blurry as it is displayed on a TV screen in the

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

BUTCH ...trump every single one of them!

Butch stands up and raises his fist, repeating what he did on TV. His excitement is palpable.

> BUTCH That should be convincing enough. Don't you think, son?

ADAM GILMORE (18), T-shirt and jeans, stares at the TV. Emotionless.

ADAM I think your tie and suit don't match. Butch scrutinizes the image on TV.

BUTCH Well, they're both black...

He turns to Adam. But he's gone.

EXT. FAIRGROUND - NIGHT

A short fence surrounds the burnt pile of vegetables.

Adam crosses the secluded street. Climbs the fence.

He covers his nose from the smell. Digs his hand deep into the pile. Pulls out a burnt apple. And throws it away.

He rounds to the other side. A half-burnt corn rolls to his feet. He picks it up. Traces its path to ZOE (18), who wears tight outfit that outlines her slim, athletic body. A basket of burnt vegetables at her feet.

ADAM

Hi.

Startled, Zoe looks up. Adam hands her the corn.

A patrol car approaches. The headlights blind them.

Zoe grabs her basket. Hides out of sight.

The car parks next to the burnt site. A STOCKY GUARD climbs out. Flashlight in hand, he shines around, stops at Adam.

> STOCKY GUARD Hi, Mr. Gilmore.

Adam manages a smile.

STOCKY GUARD

With all due respect, sir, there's a curfew going on right now. We don't want to mistake you for those damn vegans. You know what I mean?

ADAM

'Course.

STOCKY GUARD By the way, you happen to see anyone wandering around here?

Adam shakes his head.

Sorry.

STOCKY GUARD That's okay. Have a good night.

He climbs back into his car and drives away.

ADAM

Hey, he's gone now.

No response. Adam looks around. Zoe is gone.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Butch takes a bite of his hamburger. He hears door opening and closing. Approaching footsteps. Adam walks past.

BUTCH Adam, where've you been?

ADAM Just out. Walking.

BUTCH At this hour? I don't put a curfew in place for no reason.

ADAM Well, apparently I don't see the reason.

BUTCH Just stay away from the fairground. We're luring those vegans out.

Adam walks away. Butch calls after him.

BUTCH The quards will shoot first, ask

later.

EXT. FAIRGROUND - NEXT NIGHT

Adam hides at an alleyway. He spots surveillance cameras that overlook the burnt pile.

A shadow looms behind him. He turns around. Faces Zoe. Only a few inches away.

ZOE What do you want?

ADAM

Hey, I don't mean no harm here. But you gotta listen to me, it's suicidal to just waltz out there.

Zoe sizes Adam up.

ZOE

Try me.

She swifts past him. Adam grabs her shoulder.

ADAM

No!

Zoe grips his wrist, spins around, and twists. Adam screams in agony.

A patrol car swooshes past. Pulls to a halt. A BALD GUARD steps out, swirls his flashlight into the alleyway.

Zoe kicks the flashlight out of the guard's hand. Elbows him in the gut. The guard groans.

More patrol cars arrive on scene. The blinding headlights wash over Zoe and Adam.

ADAM Com'on! Let's go!

Adam grabs Zoe's hand and breaks into a run.

INT. ADAM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Adam opens up the window. Looks down towards the driveway.

ADAM My dad's not home yet. (beat) This is probably the last place they're gonna search.

He turns to Zoe, who sits on Adam's bed.

ADAM By the way, I'm Adam.

He holds out his hand. Zoe doesn't shake it.

ZOE I know who you are. Adam Gilmore. Butch Gilmore's son. Why are you helping me?

Adam shrugs.

ADAM Well, why do you trust me?

ZOE I don't.

ADAM

You're sitting on my bed, in my room.

ZOE I have no time for this.

She gets up, heads for the door. Adam stops her.

ADAM

Look, I have nothing against vegans. I think we can live together in harmony.

Zoe chuckles. Mockingly.

ZOE

You still believe in Santa, don't you? I really appreciate that you don't think us as scum. But trust me, not in a million years we can live in harmony.

Adam breaks eye contact with her.

ZOE

Look at what you've done to us. We're starving right now because of you. I'm sent here to get to that damn reserve, steal our very own charcoal-burnt food, and bring it back to our people.

She swallows. Catches herself.

ADAM

I'm sorry.

ZOE No, I am sorry. It's not your fault.

Adam goes back to the window. A car is parked in the driveway.

ADAM Shit! He came back early.

A knock on the door.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Butch waits outside the room. No response. He knocks again.

BUTCH Adam, is someone with you?

ADAM (O.S.) No. No one's with me.

BUTCH Then whose shoes are they downstairs? Don't say they're yours. We have no women in our

He waits for a few seconds longer. The door opens a crack. Adam sticks his head out.

BUTCH

Well?

home.

ADAM There's actually someone with me. You know I've been out for the last few nights, right? Um...I'm actually seeing a girl.

Butch grins. Pushes open the door wide.

INT. ADAM'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zoe sits on the bed with her legs crossed. Butch moves forward, extends his hand. Zoe shakes it.

BUTCH Hi, I'm Adam's dad. You can call me Butch. Mr. Gilmore sounds old.

Butch turns to Adam behind him.

BUTCH Are you gonna introduce your friend to me?

ADAM Oh, her name is uh....

ZOE

Zoe.

ADAM Yes, Zoe. Oh dad, me and Zoe better head off now. It's getting late --

He takes Zoe's hand. Pushes her towards the door.

BUTCH Oh com'on, is that how you treat your girlfriend? (to Zoe) I don't want to be pressing here, but it'd be very nice if you can stay for dinner.

Adam and Zoe look at each other.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A plate of big, fat, juicy slab of steak sits in front of Zoe. She swallows hard.

BUTCH Go ahead, Zoe. This is one of my specialties.

Zoe glances at Adam. Picks up a fork and knife. And cuts out a small piece of steak.

She brings it to her mouth. Can't take it anymore. Bolts up and sprints to the bathroom. Sound of vomiting.

> BUTCH Is she okay?

ADAM Yeah, I think so.

Butch smells his own steak. Shrugs.

BUTCH The steak is fine.

He considers for a moment. Shakes his head.

Oh no...

Adam tenses up. Holds his breath.

BUTCH How long have you gone out with her?

ADAM Uh...about a month or so.

BUTCH That could be it. Son, did you use a condom?

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

The phone rings. Butch picks it up.

BUTCH Speaking. (beat) They're here. Why?

He looks towards the foyer. Adam and Zoe put their shoes on. Ready to leave.

Butch listens for a few seconds. His expression hardens.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Butch shakes hand with Zoe.

ZOE Thank you for inviting me. It's really a pleasure. I'm just not feeling too well today.

BUTCH That's okay. You live close by?

ZOE ADAM Just three blocks west. Just two blocks east.

Butch smiles.

BUTCH You have two homes? ADAM One's a cottage. For summer.

BUTCH I see. Have you ever had steak before, Zoe?

ADAM Of course she has.

BUTCH Shut up, Adam. I'm asking Zoe.

Zoe tightens up, puts away her fake smile.

ZOE No, I haven't. I never have. And I never plan to. It's disgusting.

BUTCH

Very well.

A knock on the door. Adam opens up. A GUARD greets him. In the background, flashing red and blue lights fill the night. Patrol cars pack the entire driveway.

INT. BUTCH'S OFFICE - DAY

Adam pounds his fists on the desk. Butch sits behind it.

ADAM You can't do that.

BUTCH Adam, wake up. She's a vegan scum. Do you get it?

ADAM No, I don't. What's wrong with people eating vegetables instead of meat? They look like us, they act like us. Why aren't we carnivore scum?

Butch slaps Adam in the face.

BUTCH That's enough! Eating meat is superior, we're more powerful, intelligent beings. And they-- They are worthless, sneaky, selfish. And I can go on and on. Zoe is just using you.

ADAM

What?

Butch opens a drawer and pulls out a photo. He shows it to Adam. It's a younger Butch and a woman of the same age.

BUTCH

I was like you. Fell in love with a woman who we're not supposed to love. My parents didn't like it at all. And I left home with her.

He points to the woman in the photo.

BUTCH

She's a vegan. I thought we'd live happily ever after.

ADAM

Then what happened?

BUTCH

She betrayed me. She was a spy for the vegan. Left me with a baby. You couldn't imagine how hard it was to get back here.

Adam is speechless. He stares at the woman in the photo.

BUTCH

Zoe ain't talking at all. If you can get her to say where they live, I might release her.

Adam puts the photo in his pocket.

BUTCH

But let me remind you. It's a double-edge sword. The vegan scum will use any method to save themselves. If Zoe can betray her own people, what's the chance of her betraying you?

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

Zoe lies at a corner. Her face and arms, bruised.

The metal door opens up. Adam walks in. Kneels by Zoe.

ZOE When's my execution?

Adam brushes her hair aside. She shies away.

ADAM It doesn't have to be this way.

ZOE Go away.

ADAM

I can save you.

He takes a deep breath.

ADAM If you can tell me where the vegans live, they can release you.

He waits for an answer. Zoe turns to him.

INT. BUTCH'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Adam stands upright in front of the desk.

ADAM It's fifty kilometers northwest of here. Hidden inside a valley.

BUTCH Well done. Very well done.

Butch gets up from his chair. Grabs his jacket and heads out the door. Adam stops him.

ADAM Where're you going?

BUTCH Setting up a press conference for tomorrow. This is great news.

ADAM No. That's not what I meant. Zoe.

Butch narrows his eyes. Sighs.

BUTCH Still? She's a traitor. I proved it for you. Forget about her. ADAM No. You said if I got her to talk,

you're going to release her. BUTCH

You're my son, Adam. I spent my life to hunt down the vegans and now you want me to release her? I won't allow my son to have anything to do with a vegan.

Furious, Adam clutches his fist. Throws a punch at Butch, who ducks away. The punch hits the glass door.

Blood drips from Adam's hand. Stains the carpet. Adam grimaces.

BUTCH Jesus, you crazy? (to outside) Somebody help!

ADAM Release her or I won't tell you the true location of vegans.

Butch's face turns red.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Reporters gather near the front of the room with their cameras and tape recorders. Camera flashes go off every second.

In the middle of the table sits Butch, beside him, Adam. Adam leans towards Butch, whispers into his ear.

> ADAM I need to see Zoe here before I say anything.

Butch glares at him.

Butch taps his microphone. The room becomes quiet.

BUTCH Today I have an announcement to make regarding our hunt for the vegans. With the hard work from our very best team, we've made some significant progress for the last few days as to the location of where the vegans live. He motions towards the long row of MEN in suits that span the entire length of the table. The reporters clap. Adam rolls his eyes.

BUTCH

I'm now giving over to my son, Adam Gilmore, to announce the location.

He motions Adam to speak. Adam looks around in the room. Spots Zoe half-hidden at the back of the room.

ADAM

The location of the vegan is....here. Right under our nose.

Confusion inside the room. Chatters and murmurs.

ADAM

I am a half-vegan. Our very own Butch Gilmore had a relationship with a vegan and fathered me.

He produces the photo and shows it up high. Butch attempts to grab it. Butch pushes Adam away and takes over.

BUTCH I'm sorry. My son has been having some problems lately.

The reporters now crowd toward the table and bombard Butch with questions.

Adam fights across the room, rushes over to Zoe.

ADAM Let's go.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Adam and Zoe run, holding hand in hand.

ADAM Where're we going?

Zoe smiles.

ZOE To my place.

ADAM Where is it? ZOE I'll show you.

FADE OUT.