

Dumb Animals

Copyright 2010
SimplyScripts OWC

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A sleek urban car stops in a remote rural backwater.

The window slides down revealing JULIE MITCHELL, 30s, a number crunching corporate operator.

NAVIGATION SYSTEM (O.S.)
You have arrived at your
destination.

JULIE
My fucking ass. Fucking farmers.

She shuffles through maps on the passenger seat, pausing to look at a child's drawing that's among them.

Stepping out in expensive shoes she stands up on the door sill to look around. Sniffing the air, she scrunches her nose and looks upwind at a distant ranch.

JULIE
There's no hiding that smell.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

Julie's car winds its way up the dusty track.

DELWIN BLACKWATER, a 10 year old attentive and curious farmer's son sees the car coming and hurries to the house.

As the car pulls up BLAKE BLACKWATER, 40s, an earnest life long farmer steps warily out to meet it.

BLAKE
(to Delwin)
Keep it quiet boy. This can only be
trouble for us.

Waving away dust and struggling with folders and bags, Julie gets out.

BLAKE
Welcome. Julie, did they say?

JULIE
Julie Mitchell, Mr. Blackwater.

BLAKE
This here is Delwin. I'm Blake. Can
we help you with those?

She tries to wave them away, but ultimately accepts help carrying the folders.

BLAKE
We're having bread and vegetables
for lunch?

She glances at a biometric screen on her cell.

JULIE
My E.P. level is down. Where better
to top it up than at source.

Blake grimaces and Delwin moves to say something but is shushed by Blake.

INT. RANCH HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Blake digs around deep in the freezer while Julie watches from the table.

BLAKE
I'm sure I've got some, somewhere.

JULIE
You're telling me that you, a
producer of Enriched Protein, never
eat meat?

BLAKE
Got it. Delwin.

Delwin hustles over and takes a package of processed meat from his dad who puts things back in the freezer.

BLAKE
The microwave.

JULIE
If Delwin doesn't eat E.P., how
does he keep up in school?

BLAKE
He does fine.

JULIE
But it's the wonder of the age.
Free to you.

BLAKE
Shall we discuss why you're here?

JULIE

I can't go a day without it.

Delwin pulls the processed meat from the microwave and hands it to Julie who ravenously eats.

Blake brings over plates of bread and vegetables for himself and Delwin.

LATER

Blake and Delwin have finished their plates and Julie is satisfied after eating half of hers.

JULIE

Do you mind if I take that with me?

BLAKE

It's no use to us.

Blake packs the meat into a tub.

JULIE

I'm here to help you with production rates.

BLAKE

Help me?

JULIE

Yes, the drive to increase meat enhancement means we have to maximize E.P. production. I'm here to review your processes.

BLAKE

And if I don't want a review?

JULIE

The company supplies you with key ingredients. They can be withheld.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

Julie throws the meat tub into her car and follows Blake and Delwin across the sun-baked yard to the sheds.

Blake stops her at the door.

BLAKE

Are you gonna be okay with this?
Disturbances are not good.

JULIE
Don't worry. I know what to expect.

INT. ANIMAL SHED, ENTRANCE - DAY

They step into a livestock holding facility and Julie grabs her nose. It's noisy with screams and hubbub.

The pens are walled off from each other, only the first one is visible.

The animals are base, uncivilized, unintelligent, mostly female humans. They ignore their visitors and scratch, bicker, fidget and fight in cramped conditions.

Julie's taken aback and turns away to check her papers.

Blake and Delwin check the watering and feeding apparatus which includes a chemical that sprays as steam onto the feed.

Julie begins a checklist.

JULIE
Small group holding pens?

BLAKE
Keeps them calmer. They're small group pack animals.

JULIE
Inefficient. Can I take a look at one of them?

Blake uses a long pole lasso to adeptly snag a female, and yank it close to the fence. He waves an electric prod in front of it and in fear it calms down.

BLAKE
Careful. They bite.

Julie checks over the female. Hair, ears, finally teeth as the female snaps and fusses.

BLAKE
We need to fix that little one. Do you want to review it?

Julie doesn't, but nods anyway.

Delwin dashes away and gets a rolling equipment tray with a flat clean surface.

Blake has pulled a baby boy out of the pen and he puts it onto the tray.

With minimal fuss Delwin and Blake put a band around the boy's testicles and Blake brandishes a set of surgical scissors.

Julie looks away as the baby cries out.

The bandaged baby is lowered back into the pen attracting minimal interest from its mother.

BLAKE
Shall we check the lactation?

He tries to steer the unsettled Julie quickly past another pen, however as they go by she looks over her shoulder.

JULIE
What on Earth is that?

In the pen all the humans are naked. In the middle the STUD has a female bent over and is roughly penetrating her.

BLAKE
That's our ovulating pen... With our stud.

JULIE
You're naturally inseminating?

BLAKE
Yes. It works.

JULIE
How does it work better than an insemination machine that holds the ovulators in place and inseminates every two hours?

BLAKE
They're my stock. I won't do that.

JULIE
You're crazy. They're dumb animals, especially created to qualify for agricultural methods.

BLAKE
I never liked agricultural methods.

JULIE
It's not your choice.

INT. LACTATION SHED - DAY

They enter a shed with milk flowing along pipes on the walls.

JULIE
(sarcastic)
Please tell me you are not hand
milking.

Along the side of the shed, bound to the wall are lactating females attached to continuously operating breast pumps.

BLAKE
We've supplied milk, hair, your
damned enriched protein, and
transplant organs, on time, and to
quota for years. Don't question my
methods.

Across from the lactaters in a small pen is a group of babies.

Julie checks around the equipment, nodding approval.

Blake waves Delwin towards the baby pen.

Delwin picks up a stick and stirs up the babies so that they cry more.

The lactaters pull on their restraints and the flow of milk increases.

INT. ANIMAL SHED, FAR END - DAY

They approach a door labelled "Slaughter House".

Julie stops to shuffle her papers.

BLAKE
You can skip this?

JULIE
I obviously can't. My report will
already have red flags. Management
will be all over it.

Julie drops a stack of papers several of which flutter into the nearest holding pen.

BLAKE
Damn it!

The humans scramble over, fighting excitedly for the paper.

Blake jumps to his knees and tries to pull some of it back.

BLAKE
I said no disturbances.

Blake pauses at seeing a crusty blue stain down the wall under the feeding machine where blue liquid leaks from the steam injector. He glances back at Julie.

Two of the humans get into a vicious fight, drawing blood.

BLAKE
Stop that! Stop it! Ah crap.
Delwin.

Delwin hurries over and braces to open the pen gate.

Blake nods at Delwin and charges into the pen stabbing angry humans with his electric prod until they are cowering backwards and order is restored.

Blake exits the pen.

BLAKE
Let's get on with this.

Julie accidentally leaves a bag behind.

INT. SLAUGHTER HOUSE - DAY

A sanitized washdown space with modern slaughter equipment. Julie's relieved it's clean and empty.

BLAKE
We bring them in, one at a time.
They breathe the subdurant and we
fix them into the rig.

He points at a set of hanging restraints.

BLAKE
A bolt gun to the back of the neck
dispatches them.

He shows her the bolt gun.

BLAKE
The hair is chemically shorn. Then
we move them here for organ
removal. In ten minutes I have the
major organs out and in storage.

JULIE

Good.

BLAKE

The remaining bio-matter goes into your company's machine.

They step around the "E.P. Machine" and see a rich liquid filling a large barrel.

BLAKE

And there it is. Enough E.P. to keep you super-intelligent for a lifetime. Happy?

JULIE

Your bio-adjuster?

INT. BIO-ADJUSTER ROOM - DAY

An early stage pregnant female is fixed into a machine.

JULIE

The eight point six model is much better.

BLAKE

Does it do the same thing?

JULIE

Yes.

BLAKE

Then this one's fine.

He pulls a panel around the bump of the pregnant female and they all stand back.

BLAKE

Don't look.

He pushes a button and bright light beams into the bump.

DELWIN

How does it work?

Blake won't answer.

JULIE

The radiation dose ensures that the foetus will only ever attain animal status, by purging self-consciousness from the brain.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

With the Sun sinking low in the sky they head to Julie's car.

BLAKE
Remember to note our production
record.

JULIE
It's all the more impressive
considering your methods. The
company will definitely send a
team.

DELWIN
You can't shut us down, it'll
mean...

Julie loads her car.

JULIE
You never did tell me why you don't
eat meat.

BLAKE
No I didn't.

Blake leads Delwin towards the house.

INT. JULIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Driving on a rural road Julie reaches to her bags and moves them about. She shakes her head and turns the car around.

EXT. RANCH - NIGHT

Julie pulls up and sees lights on in the house.

After getting out she decides to go straight to the sheds.

INT. ANIMAL SHED, ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Julie enters the now dimly lit and much more peaceful shed.

She reaches around in her bag for a flashlight and cautiously steps forwards.

A soft whimpering from the first pen gets her attention. Using the flashlight she sees the castrated baby male crying, but being comforted by its mother.

Further along she sees the ovulating females sleeping in a huddle. One of them has her head awkwardly placed and hair over her face.

The Stud, who is among them, briefly stirs awake and tenderly moves the female's head, pushing back her hair, before going back to sleep.

INT. ANIMAL SHED, FAR END - NIGHT

Julie approaches the last pen and quickly finds her bag.

Bending down to pick it up she sees the crusty blue stain and shakes her head.

After looking closely at it for a moment her eye is caught by the whiteness of a piece of paper inside the pen.

A five year old boy sleeps huddled around the crinkled paper.

Julie shines her flashlight at the paper, seeing excrement finger strokes on it. She gasps as she makes out a rudimentary image of the Sun and people dancing under it.

Fixed to the spot she initially doesn't notice the noise of people entering the Animal Shed. When she does notice she turns off the flashlight and hides behind the Slaughter House door.

Blake and Delwin walk up to the pen.

BLAKE

Under there. You see it?

Delwin hunches down to look under the feeding machine.

DELWIN

We have to destroy them?

BLAKE

It ain't right to do anything else.
We can't let them live like this.
You set up.

Delwin heads for the Slaughter House and Julie realizes she needs to hide.

INT. SLAUGHTER HOUSE - NIGHT

Julie scuttles behind some equipment as Delwin enters and turns on the lights.

He flips a switch to power up the bolt gun, straightens out the restraints, and prepares a "Subdurant" laced cloth.

To Julie's horror Blake leads in the five year old boy, still clutching his picture.

Delwin puts the subdurant cloth under the boy's nose and the boy drops unconscious.

They fix him into the rigging and Blake reaches for the bolt gun.

JULIE

Stop! You can't.

Blake jumps and spins around bolt gun in hand.

BLAKE

What are you...

JULIE

You can't kill that boy. He's self-aware.

BLAKE

And the others are not?

JULIE

Of course not, they're bio-adjusted.

BLAKE

That machine's just for show. Chemicals in the feed is what suppresses them. Take away the additive your company supplies and they'd all develop.

JULIE

That's impossible.

Blake pulls the paper from the boy's hand and thrusts it at Julie.

JULIE

But why don't people know?

BLAKE

You think the company doesn't know? Do you think everyone else wants to know?

He goes over to the boy and raises the bolt gun.

JULIE
Why? Why do you do it?

BLAKE
Because I care. If I didn't, how
much worse would things be for
them?

He pushes the bolt gun against the boy's neck and looks at Julie.

BLAKE
The subdurant wears off. I won't
wait any longer. Do you want to see
this?

Julie shakes with indecision, but turns away through the door.

INT. ANIMAL SHED, FAR END - NIGHT

As she closes the door Julie is punched by the pneumatic thump sounding out behind her.

EXT. RANCH - NIGHT

An outside light is on. Profoundly shaken, Julie gets into her car.

INT. JULIE'S CAR - NIGHT

She sits and cries.

The tub of left over meat catches her eye. She shudders and reaches for it.

EXT. RANCH - NIGHT

The tub of meat drops from the car window and spills open.

The car moves away leaving the tangled stain of meat seeping across the dirt.

FADE OUT.