

CAN YOU DIG IT?

INT. TRAILER - NIGHT

Filled with STUFF. Borderline hoarder. In the rear of the trailer, in the cramped bedroom --

ROLAND -- (80s) pale skin, on oxygen -- lying in bed.

In his prime, Roland was a badass. Now, he looks like death warmed over. Sitting beside the bed --

VERONICA -- (50s) trampy, low-cut shirt showing ample cleavage; if she has a nursing degree, she got it online.

Veronica PULLS APART PILL CAPSULES, pours the powder into a glass. She's done a dozen so far. After a few more --

ROLAND
(raspy)
Drawer.

Veronica opens the nightstand drawer, takes out a MANILA ENVELOPE with **TROY** written on it. There's also a small clutch of bills - \$20s and \$50s.

Veronica puts the Manila envelope and money in her purse.

ROLAND
(pumping his eyebrows)
One for the road?

VERONICA
Dirty old bastard.

Veronica stands and lifts her shirt, showing Roland her large breasts that were really something thirty years ago.

ROLAND
Mmm. Thanks.

Veronica pours whiskey into the glass with pill powder, sloshes it around, hands the glass to Roland and kisses him on the forehead.

VERONICA
God speed.

Veronica leaves the bedroom. We hear her exit the trailer.

Roland removes the oxygen canula from his nostrils, looks up.

ROLAND
I'm ready for you. You better be ready for me.

Drains the glass in one long pull.

SMASH TO:

EXT. DESERT - DUSK

Sun-baked. Devoid of water. Sand and scrub forever. Camera eventually picks up --

ROLAND -- (30s) nothing soft about him; carrying a SHOVEL, CANTEEN, SEXTANT and a SMALL SATCHEL -- walking with purpose.

Crests a hill, looks back at the camera for a beat before turning away, disappearing into the setting sun.

SMASH BACK TO:

80-YEAR-OLD ROLAND

Eyes frozen open in death.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TRASHY TRAILER PARK - DAY

Among the trashy dwellings, a PIECE OF SHIT DOUBLE-WIDE. Sitting out front, drinking coffee, smoking a cigarette --

JUNE -- (early-50s) dumpy, hair in rollers, wearing a cheap WalMart bathrobe. Ashtray overflowing with smoked butts.

TROY -- (mid-20s) blue collar to the bone -- drives up in an old clunker, gets out with a box of donuts. He's wearing a DISGUSTINGLY STAINED JANITORIAL JUMPSUIT.

When he walks up, June fans the air, wrinkles her nose.

JUNE

Ucchhhh! You reek!

TROY

Good morning to you, too, mom.

Troy sets down the donuts. She snatches one immediately and takes a huge bite, powdered sugar and jelly coating her lips.

JUNE

(mouth full)

What's so good about it?

TROY
Someone woke up on the wrong side
of the floor.

Troy starts for the neighboring trailer.

TROY
I'll see if Roland wants to join
us.

JUNE
Better bring a shovel.

Troy, instantly crestfallen, stops dead in his tracks.

TROY
NO! When?

JUNE
Two nights ago.

TROY
How come nobody called me?

JUNE
Why would anyone call you?

TROY
I don't know, I just... I never got
to say goodbye.

JUNE
Look at you, all gooey over some
old bastard who wasn't even kin.

TROY
He was my friend.

June rolls her eyes, motions to the MANILA ENVELOPE with
Troy's name on it.

TROY
That floozie nurse of his left this
for you.

Troy returns to the table, drops down into the empty chair,
looks at the envelope.

TROY
What is it?

JUNE
It's got your name on it, not mine.

Troy's about to open it when June pushes the pack of cigarettes across the table to him.

JUNE

Have a smoke. Make you feel better.

TROY

Gus had emphysema and you're offering me a cigarette?

JUNE

I've got a fat ass and you brought me donuts.

Troy shakes his head in disbelief. He opens the envelope, takes out a HANDWRITTEN NOTE.

SMASH TO:

ROLAND

Smoking a cigarette while on oxygen, drinking whiskey, and DRAWING SOME SORT OF PICTURE. Can't tell what it is yet.

ROLAND (V.O.)

Troy, if you're reading this, my time in this world has come to an end. I've enjoyed all the time we spent together, and only wish it could have been more.

His drawing is becoming more clear - DESERT LANDSCAPE.

ROLAND (V.O.)

Now I have a favor to ask. You're the only one I can trust, and I know you won't let me down. It's in my hiding spot. Thanks, kid. See you in the next life. Roland.

SMASH BACK TO:

TROY AND JUNE

Troy finishes reading the note. Tears slide down his cheeks.

JUNE

Bet you won't shed a tear when I kick the bucket.

TROY

I bet you're right.

Troy looks in the envelope, finds TWO KEYS - small and large.

Troy walks to the neighboring trailer - also a piece of crap but not nearly as bad as his mother's. Using the larger key, Troy unlocks the door and enters.

INT. ROLAND'S TRAILER - DAY

Troy maneuvers to the BEDROOM. Lifts the mattress.. Lifts the plywood platform, revealing a METAL STRONGBOX.

Takes out the strongbox, unlocks it with the small key... Finds a PHOTO ALBUM filled with OLD NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS.

One headline reads: **BRAZEN THIEVES GET AWAY WITH MILLION\$**

After the last news clipping, a PHOTO -- ROLAND (mid-50s) -- holding a NEWBORN BABY.

Troy removes the photo, turns it over.
Written on back: **HAPPIEST DAY OF MY LIFE**

A SEALED ENVELOPE with Roland's handwriting, reads: **FOR ALEX**
An address scrawled beneath it.

INT. TROY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Low rent bachelor pad. Troy enters, beelines to the kitchen --

Takes out an IRON out from under the sink, fills it with water, turns it on and STEAMS OPEN THE ENVELOPE.

From the envelope he removes a HANDWRITTEN LETTER.

SMASH TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY - CONTINUATION OF ROLAND'S DESERT SCENE

Roland (30s) walks through the desert with the shovel, canteen, sextant and satchel.

ROLAND (V.O)

My dearest Alex, in a lifetime of regrets, losing touch with you is my biggest. Perhaps if I'd stayed, things would have turned out differently... For both of us.

Roland comes to a DEEP ARROYO. Unslings his CANTEEN and takes a sip, then pours some water on a bandana and mops his brow.

Slings the canteen, starts down into the arroyo.

ROLAND (V.O)
But I hope to make amends, even
from beyond.

Roland follows the arroyo... Soon sees something that catches his eye - THE TOP OF AN IMPRESSIVE ROCK FORMATION.

Roland ascends the arroyo's far bank and walks to the foot of the MASSIVE ROCK FORMATION - even more impressive up close.

Lips arc into a smile. Sets down his items, begins DIGGING.

ROLAND (V.O)
I love you Alex. Always and
forever. Sincerely, your
grandfather.

SMASH BACK TO:

INT. TROY'S APARTMENT

In addition to the handwritten note, a PENCIL DRAWING --

Perfect likeness of the rock formation Roland found in the desert, surrounded by desert plants and cacti.

Below the drawing, letters and numbers -- COORDINATES.

INT. SKETCHY BAR - DAY

If you drink here, you better have a felony conviction.

After a beat, Troy enters -- catches dagger eyes from sketchy barfly patrons -- and walks to the bar where the...

BARTENDER -- (mid-20s) smokin' hot Tom Girl with impressive tattoos -- is wiping down the bar.

BARTENDER
What'll it be?

TROY
Actually, I'm just looking for
someone?

BARTENDER
Try Tinder.

TROY
Do you know Alex?

BARTENDER
Whattya want with Alex?

TROY
His grandfather asked me to deliver
a message.

BARTENDER
Alex isn't here.

TROY
Where can I find him?

BARTENDER
I'm not givin' out private info to
some dink off the street.

TROY
Sorry, it's just... The man's dead
and I made a promise.

BARTENDER
How'd he die?

TROY
Oh, so now you want me to give out
private information?

Bartender gives him a look. Troy chuckles.

TROY
I'm just messin' with you.
Emphysema, I think.

Bartender returns to wiping down the bar. Troy hasn't moved.

BARTENDER
You're not gonna let this go, huh?

TROY
Like I said, I made a promise.

BARTENDER
Give me the message, I'll see that
Alex gets it.

TROY
Can't. It's personal.

BARTENDER
You're just gonna have to trust me.

TROY
 Why should I? Like you said, you
 don't know me, I don't know you.

Bartender GRABS TROY BY THE SHIRT, PULLS HIM FORWARD and
 PLANTS A SERIOUS KISS ON HIM.

BARTENDER
 Now you know me.

Troy is absolutely gobsmacked. After a beat, he takes out the
 envelope - it looks perfectly sealed.

TROY
 I'm trusting you.

She snatches it from him before he changes his mind.

BARTENDER
 And I'll make sure he gets it.

EXT. DESERT - TROY'S CAR - DAWN

Troy drives into the desert, soon coming to a point where
 shitty terrain makes it impossible to drive any further.

Gets out, walks around to the trunk, pops it, and stares at
 the SHOVEL for a long beat until...

TROY
 Screw it.

Troy takes the shovel, heads out into the desert.

EXT. DESERT - LATER

Troy - carrying the shovel - walks through the desert.

His eyes repeatedly return to the PHOTOCOPY of Roland's
 desert rock formation drawing that he holds, comparing the
 paper to what he's seeing. Nothing looks remotely close.

EXT. DESERT - DUSK

Sun beginning to set when Troy crests an arroyo...

Sees something at its base. Quickly flattens himself, crawls
 to the edge, sees...

THE BARTENDER - casually sitting there with a shovel beside
 her, as if waiting for someone.

She stands, waves to Troy.

BARTENDER
C'mon! It's getting dark.

Surprised, Troy makes his way down.

BARTENDER
Took you long enough.

TROY
How'd you know?

BARTENDER
I should ask you the same question.
I'm guessing you were supposed to
deliver the letter unopened.

Troy postures for a beat before...

TROY
I was curious.

She takes out the envelope.

BARTENDER
Ditto.

TROY
I guess it'll be our secret.

BARTENDER
(laughing)
Deal. On one condition...

Off Troy's look...

BARTENDER
You do all the digging.

TROY
Fair enough.

Troy begins digging. With his back turned...

TROY
You know, I never got your name.
I'm Troy.

BARTENDER
Alexandra. But my grandfather
called me Alex.

Troy's world comes to a screeching halt as his expression reflects this revelation. Just as he turns around...

WHACK!

Alex smashes Troy in the head with her shovel.

He drops to the ground, blood from a nasty head wound seeping into the sand.

Unable to move, he looks up at Alex - now standing over him, raising the shovel.

ALEX

At least I'll only have one hole to dig.

She brings the shovel down with brutal force and...

SMASH TO BLACK.

THE END