

Desert Heat

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**EXT. CITY STREET - DAY.**

A blistering hot day in a midwestern American town. People languidly wander the streets, sit in parks watching their children play under water fountains and go about their daily business.

Suddenly the serenity is broken as a rust bucket of a car speeds along the road, barely weaving past other road users and managing to scratch a few on the way. Pedestrians stop and stare as the car screeches past them.

We follow the car as it screeches and brakes through the streets until it reaches the edge of town and heads down a straight open road.

**INT. CAR - SAME.**

SARA, 30, a cop, sits in the driver's seat staring intently ahead. Blood seeps from a wound just above her right ear, already matting her hair. Sweat runs from her forehead down her pretty face.

Wiping her face, she notices the blood mixed with the sweat.

SARA  
(angrily)  
Fuck. I need medical attention.

Sara looks into the rearview mirror at the passenger in the back seat. NICKI, 22, looks out each window nervously before staring into the back of Sara's head vaguely pointing a gun in her direction.

NICKI  
Shut up.

SARA  
Where are we going?

NICKI  
I said shut the fuck up.

SARA  
I'll bleed out before we get  
anywhere unless I know where we  
are going.

NICKI  
You'll bleed a lot quicker if I  
put a bullet through your skull.

Sara hears the threat in her words and decides to concentrate on the road.

Nicki slumps back on the seat and heaves a sigh of relief. Perspiration soaks her skin and her tight fitting, low cut dress clings to her body.

NICKI (CONT'D)  
Turn on the air con.

Sara touches around at the controls.

SARA  
Not working.

NICKI  
Zeke you cheap piece of shit.  
Open the windows.

Sara lowers the windows and the breeze whips at Nicki's hair. The air is still warm but it's still cooler than the car interior.

NICKI (CONT'D)  
Keep driving and I'll tell you  
where to go.

Sara nods and looks again in the mirror to see Nicki gently weeping. Placing the gun on the seat beside her, Nicki wipes the tears forming in her eyes before closing them and sighing deeply.

**EXT. DUST ROAD - LATER.**

The car winds its way up a long sandy track leaving huge plumes of dust in its wake. It eventually stops outside an isolated shack built beside a rock face. Nicki exits all the while pointing the gun at Sara.

NICKI (CONT'D)  
Get out.

Sara slowly gets out the car. The bleeding has stopped but is now congealed against her face.

NICKI  
Through the door, take a left and  
go into the bathroom. You got  
your cuffs?

Sara checks her belt and nods.

NICKI  
Put one cuff on your wrist and  
the other around the pipe, make  
one wrong move and I'll blow your  
fucking face off. Do you  
understand me?

Sara nods. In the bathroom Sara does as requested and Nicki quickly checks everything is secure.

NICKI (CONT'D)  
Give me the key.

Throwing the key to Nicki, Sara sits on the floor beside the bowl and closes her eyes.

Sara heads outside and runs to the lean to stuck to the side of the shack, pulling on a large tarpaulin she covers the car. Moving to the back of the shack she finds a generator and fires it up.

Lights illuminate the inside of the shack as Sara looks up at the newly lit bulb above her.

Outside, Nicki walks over to a nearby well and drops a bucket into the water below. Pulling up on the rope, she lifts the newly filled bucket and pours it over herself with a satisfaction.

Dripping wet she walks back into the shack leaving the gun on the kitchen table, she checks on Sara.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Has the bleeding stopped?

SARA

Yes.

NICKI

You got a name cop?

Nicki goes to a cupboard and pulls out two towels, she throws one to Sara who catches it mid air.

SARA

Sara.

NICKI

Nice name.

SARA

What's yours?

NICKI

Nice try.

Nicki takes off her dress and standing in her underwear she towels herself dry. Sara tries not to watch but can't help catching glimpses of Nicki's body.

SARA

Do you have any water?

Nicki looks at her then walks away, Sara tries pulling on the pipe.

Nicki returns wearing a fresh dress and carrying a glass of water.

SARA

Thanks.

Sara takes a long drink while Nicki sits on the edge of the bath.

NICKI

How did you get into that shop so fast?

Wiping her mouth with her free arm, Sara just stares back.

NICKI (CONT'D)

I mean we barely pulled our guns and you were standing beside me.

SARA

I had just gone in for a coffee and saw you. Why did your man shoot the clerk?

Nicki looks genuinely upset.

NICKI

I don't know, perhaps you spooked him.

SARA

Don't lay this on me, you were the ones who walked in armed with intent.

NICKI

We intended to rob the place not shoot it up.

SARA

Loaded weapons tend to go off at the most inopportune time.

Nicki walks into the kitchen, returns with the gun and points it at Sara's face. Sara tenses and pulls harder on the cuffs against the pipes.

SARA

No, please.

Nicki holds the gun in both hands and squeezes on the trigger.

Sara screams. And screams. Then realises the gun hasn't fired.

Nicki continues to pull on the trigger.

NICKI

This loaded gun?

Breathing heavily Sara looks at first afraid then angry.

SARA  
FUCK YOU. FUCK YOU, YOU FUCKING  
BITCH.

NICKI  
Not the kind of language I would  
expect from a cop.

SARA  
Fuck off.

Nicki walks away and returns a few moments later with more water and a chair.

NICKI  
I'm sorry, I shouldn't have done  
that.

Laying the water beside Sara she positions then sits on the chair.

SARA  
Sorry ain't gonna help you now.  
You've kidnapped a law  
enforcement official, that's a  
state and federal offence. You're  
going down for a long time for  
this one bitch. You and your  
asshole of a man.

NICKI  
If you find him.

SARA  
We'll find him. And if that clerk  
is dead, he'll fry for his  
murder.

NICKI  
I didn't know his gun was loaded,  
it wasn't supposed to go down  
that way.

Nicki puts her head in her hands as Sara adopts a softer approach.

SARA  
What was supposed to happen?

NICKI  
I need a drink, the beer should  
be cold by now, want one?

SARA  
Yes.

Nicki walks away and returns with two cold beers.

SARA

Thanks. Talk to me, what happened? Where is your man?

NICKI

Zeke. His name is Zeke. I met him six months ago, he has....habits. He needed cash so he came up with this plan. We had just started shouting to the clerk to open the till when you walked in.

SARA

And you blindsided me with the butt of your gun.

NICKI

Yeah, sorry about that too. I panicked, ripped your radio off you and lifted your gun from your holster.

SARA

Where is it?

NICKI

Safe, in case I do need a gun with bullets. I dragged you to the car and got out of there.

SARA

You abandoned Zeke. Why?

NICKI

When he pulled the trigger on the clerk, I knew he was many things but a killer, that's too much for me. So fuck him, he's on his own now.

SARA

And this place?

NICKI

It's my grandpappys, he died a year ago, Zeke doesn't know about it. I come here just to get away from things from time to time. I

Both take slugs of beer and an awkward pause follows.

NICKI (CONT'D)

What's your story? Shouldn't you be begging for your life around now? Telling me about your husband and family?

A wry smile crosses Sara's face.

SARA  
Husbands and families aren't my  
thing.

NICKI  
Career woman?

SARA  
Lesbian.

Nicki looks temporarily shocked.

NICKI  
Okay.

SARA  
You surprised by that?

NICKI  
Yeah, a little, I mean you're a  
real good looking women, I  
thought men would be falling  
after themselves to be with you.

SARA  
They are but that ain't ever  
gonna be thing.

NICKI  
I suppose it must be a change not  
having a sweaty lump of meat  
crawling all over you.

SARA  
I wouldn't know.

Nicki laughs a little and Sara smiles.

SARA  
Can I get something for my head  
please? And another beer, it's  
hot as hell and I'm sitting in a  
pool of my own sweat.

Nicki pauses for a moment and nods.

NICKI  
If I take the cuffs off do you  
promise not to try anything? I  
still have your gun.

SARA  
I'm too sore and hot to try any  
shit.

Nicki un-cuffs Sara and walks into the kitchen followed by Sara rubbing her wrists. Nicki opens the fridge takes out another two beers.



SARA  
Have you got a first aid kit?

NICKI  
No. But I'll cut up some towels  
and clean it up for you.

SARA  
I can do it myself if you'll let  
me use your shower.

NICKI  
I'll get you some towels, I don't  
think I'll have any clothes that  
fit.

SARA  
Don't worry about the clothes, I  
can put my uniform back on.

Walking back into the bathroom, Nicki turns on the shower and lets it run for a few minutes and collects some towels.

Sara goes behind the door to hide herself and gingerly undresses.

NICKI  
Should be warm enough but not too  
hot. Towels are on the sink. I'll  
leave you too it.

Sara quickly crosses the bathroom, steps into the bath and pulls over the flimsy shower curtain.

Sara gently shampoos away the blood in her matted hair.

Nicki quickly glances back and catches a glimpse of Sara's glistening body.

A short while later, Sara covered in only a towel joins Nicki in the kitchen.

SARA  
Thanks, I feel better for it.

NICKI  
I opened you another beer.

Sara takes a long drink from the bottle.

SARA  
I saw you looking at me in the  
shower.

NICKI  
I was curious what a cop looked  
like under the uniform.

SARA

And?

NICKI

Not bad. I can see why women would be attracted to you.

SARA

What about you?

NICKI

I don't think women would be attracted to me.

SARA

Don't be so sure.

Sara looks at Nicki and their eyes lock. Tension fills the air.

NICKI

Do you normally try and seduce criminals.

SARA

No, this is a new one for me.

NICKI

So you are trying?

SARA

Maybe, are you disgusted by the thought?

NICKI

Not entirely. What happen's next?

SARA

That depends on you, how far are you willing to go?

Nicki stands and walks around the table. Taking Sara's face in her hands she kisses her.

NICKI

Is that the answer you're wanting?

SARA

Needing.

They kiss passionately. Sara stands and Nicki leads her to the bedroom.

**INT. BEDROOM - MORNING.**

Nicki wakes and stretches.

She reaches over to the other side of the bed to find it empty. Suddenly panicked, she sits upright. Hearing a noise she looks around the room.

Sara stands in her uniform buckling her belt and holster which now has its gun.

NICKI  
What are doing?

SARA  
What does it look like?

NICKI  
Looks like your becoming a cop again.

SARA  
Well, that's my job.

NICKI  
You used me?

SARA  
You kidnapped me. Do you think I was just going to sit handcuffed to a toilet? A FUCKING TOILET?

NICKI  
But I thought.....

SARA  
You thought I loved you? You're a criminal, a scumbag, you took my liberty, you intimidated, threatened and scared me. Did you not think I would have used anything to gain my freedom?

Sara puts her hands behind her back and produces the handcuffs.

SARA (CONT'D)  
Get dressed you're under arrest.

Nicki jumps up from the bed but Sara pulls her gun. Holding it up for Sara to see clearly.

SARA  
I found it in the fridge. Take one more step and I'll put a bullet through your skull.

They stare at each other for a moment before Nicki starts to slowly collect her clothes.

FADE OUT.