FADE IN

INT. MOVING CAR - DAY

JOEL ALFREDO RAMIREZ (late 40s, preppy) drives quietly.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Open fields on either side. Desolate, except for Joel’s car and...

A FEMALE raises her light brown hand and sticks her thumb out.

INT. CAR

Joel spots her.

Getting closer, he sees her standing near a parked car with the hood up. She wears a t-shirt, jeans, and sneakers.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Joel parks his car near her.

EXT/INT. CAR

RACHAEL (20s), a light brown beauty, leans against the passenger window.

RACHAEL
Hi. My car broke down. Can you please give me a ride to the nearest gas station?

JOEL
Sure. Hop in.

She goes to her car, takes out a red backpack, and enters Joel’s car.

INT. CAR

She puts her backpack in between her legs.

Looking her over, he notices Rachael’s tattoo of a snake wrapping her arm.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: 2.

JOEL
Nice tattoo.

RACHAEL
Thanks.

EXT. HIGHWAY
He drives off.

INT. CAR

JOEL
Name’s Joel.

RACHAEL
Rachael.

JOEL
Where you coming from?

RACHAEL
Sterling.

THOMAS
Why so far?

RACHAEL
I was heading to a Halloween party that a couple of my friends are having till my car broke down.

JOEL
What you going has?

RACHAEL
An angel.

JOEL
Naughty or nice?

RACHAEL
I was planning to be nice for a while and then...

She gives a naughty look.

JOEL
Maybe you have a chance to still go. Don’t those parties last all night? Where’s the party?

(CONTINUED)
RACHAEL

King.

JOEL

You’re lucky. That’s where I’m going.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Joel’s car passes from right to left.

INT. CAR

JOEL

Stephen’s gas station is the best place. They’ll have it fixed no time.

RACHAEL

You’re from King?

JOEL

No, but I’m familiar with it. I travel and sell jewelry. Part of the job is to know where you’re going. Have you been to King?

RACHAEL

It’ll be my first time.

JOEL

Well, it’s a nice place. Usually quiet.

He grins at her. She returns the grin back.

JOEL

One advice of caution though, stay away from the Bachmann area.

RACHAEL

Why?

JOEL

It’s dangerous. A lot of poor families live there. Not all but some of them are animals. Some of them chose that life while others do it for surviving. It’s hard to tell which one is which.

(CONTINUED)
RACHAEL
(grins)
Thanks.

EXT. HIGHWAY
Joel’s car passes in frame from left to right.

INT. CAR

RACHAEL
What type of jewelry do you sell?

JOEL
All kinds, necklaces, bracelets, watches.

RACHAEL
Mind if I look?

JOEL
It’s in the trunk, but maybe a bit later?

Rachael nods and looks out her side window.

From the driver’s side interior storage compartment, Joel takes out a small crowbar and sticks it underneath his thigh.

RACHAEL
You’re going to King for business?

JOEL
Always. That’s one of the bonuses of this job. The traveling. the downside is sustaining the traveling. Gas, everything is expensive.

RACHAEL
Ain’t that the truth. Where you’ve been?

JOEL

RACHAEL
Your family must miss you.

(CONTINUED)
JOEL
The only family I have is this car.
And she’s happy traveling with me.
Does your family know about your trip?

RACHAEL
No.

JOEL
No.

He grins as she CHUCKLES.

JOEL
Youth. You have to enjoy it while you have the energy. We’re here.

EXT. HIGHWAY

They pass the "WELCOME TO KING" sign and enter an area covered with trees and bushes.

INT. CAR

Dark shade covers them.

RACHAEL
I was never going to make it walking.

JOEL
It’s about two miles. You would have gotten a great workout.

RACHAEL
If I lived. Dehydration would have gotten me a mile back wherever that was.

Rachael looks out through her window.

RACHAEL
How far is it to the gas station?

JOEL
Another mile or so.

She feels her left jeans pocket, next her right pocket, and then her back pockets.
CONTINUED:

She opens her bag and rummages inside.

   RACHAEL
   Shit.
   JOEL
   What?

   RACHAEL
   I forgot my cellphone in the car, my dead cellphone anyway.
   JOEL
   You can use mine. Let me pull over here.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Joel parks the car on the side.

INT. CAR

Joel removes his seat belt.

   JOEL
   I gotta take a leak so...

Digs into his pants pocket.

   JOEL
   while I’m doing that...

Takes out his cell.

   JOEL
   you can make a call.

Passing it with his right hand, he lets it fall. His cell lands underneath Rachael’s seat.

   JOEL
   Sorry.

Rachael goes for it.

Joel’s brings out the small crowbar and clunks her on the head.

He takes out a pair of handcuffs from driver’s glove compartment and binds her hands behind her back.

He exits.
EXT. CAR

He goes to the trunk, opens it, takes out a duffel bag, and closes it.

Opening the passenger side door, he carries Rachael out.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE WOODS - LATER

He puts her down and secures her to a tree.

Couple of feet away, he drops his duffel bag.

Opening it, he rummages through a variety of utensils before taking out a long bladed knife.

RACHAEL (O.S.)
Is this part of your job too?

JOEL
An important part.

She nods quietly and looks around. Behind her, she touches the keyhole and the handcuffs unlock.

Joel furrows his eyebrows.

She turns to him.

RACHAEL
You have to do what you have to do.
And I have to do what I have to do.

He walks over to her, bends down, and thrusts the knife at her belly.

She blocks it and punches him in the face.

He falls back, stunned.

Rachael stands up flinging the handcuffs away.

RACHAEL
Get up.

He aims a kicks at her shin but hits the tree.

RACHAEL (O.S.)
C’mon.

Looking behind he sees her in fighting stance. She blocks his path to his bag.

(CONTINUED)
RACHAEL
Come and get it.

He slowly gets up and charges at her. She easily sidesteps and trips him.

He falls flat on his face.

She gets on his back and rams his head to the ground once, causing Joel’s head to rise a bit.

It’s enough for Rachael to slip her arm around his neck and choke him.

Slowly, he passes out.

LATER
Rachael gives him smelling salts. He comes too.

He sees Rachael’s grinning face.

Trying to move, he quickly finds out that he can’t.

Looking at his wrists and ankles, he discovers that he’s tied up, spreadeagled style.

Rachael is knelt next to his chest, grinning. Her backpack rests open behind her.

He looks at her. She looks at him. So much is being said between them. This communication stops unfortunately with...

RACHAEL
I’m going to cut your balls off.

She turn and unbucks his belt.

JOEL
Help!

MOVING A FEW FEET AWAY

Joel and Rachael are slightly visible.

JOEL
Help!
MOVING FARTHER BACK

They’ve disappeared.

        JOEL
        SomeoAHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

EXT. SKY

Day turns to night.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE WOODS – NIGHT

A campfire is set. Rachael spins the rope around her hand and forearm.

A cellphone rings. Retrieving it from her back pocket and seeing whose calling, Rachael answers it.

        RACHAEL
        Hey Stace.

She holds the cell to ear with her shoulder and goes back to spinning the rope.

        STACEY (V.O.)
        Hey. The boss wants you for a group project.

        RACHAEL
        Whose the other members?

        STACEY (V.O.)
        Christian, Alexander, and Thomas.

        RACHAEL
        (upset)
        I’ll be there.

Hangs up and puts it back into her back pocket.

O.S. Joel MOANS.

Rachael spins the last of the rope and places it inside her backpack. She zips it up and puts the backpack on.

        RACHAEL
        Take care.

She takes a couple of steps before poof, vanishing. O.S. Joel CRIES.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Joel’s on his side. Naked, long and short cuts cover his back.

Blood covers his legs and buttocks. From the buttocks, a very long and thick tree limb sticks out.

FADE OUT