

ROUND ROCK
by
Clint Chandler

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expendablefilms@yahoo.com

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODED AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

A close up on a rabbit sitting and eating grass in a peaceful, quiet opening in a heavily wooded area.

Our focus shifts past the rabbit...twenty yards away we see 15 year old DENNY, holding a bow & arrow, drawn and aimed directly at the unsuspecting rabbit.

Denny exhales a heavy breath and releases the arrow. The arrow slams just outside of the bullseye of a wooden target nailed to a tree, 6' above the rabbit. The rabbit is scared away by the sound.

Denny slides one arm through his bow, wearing it across his shoulder, freeing up his hands as he walks over to retrieve the arrow.

SAM- 16 year old girl with strong southern drawl. 100% tomboy.

SAM (V.O.)

Denny never was the killin' type. He loves huntin'... but he never really catches nuthin'. His uncle says he ain't got no skills but that ain't what it is. Denny just don't wanna hurt nobody.

Denny turns and heads back through the brush. He knows his way well. He walks toward a wall of branches, pushing one forward, bending the branch like a piece of rubber.

It then reveals a large opening in the trees. When Denny releases the branch it forcefully swings back into place like a spring loaded door.

SAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I've been Denny's neighbor goin' on three years now. We moved in next door when mama lost her job at the fiberglass plant. He lives with his uncle Jack who own's the trailer me and momma live in. He's harmless but a mean ole sum' bitch. And a shitty landlord too.

EXT. TOOL SHED BEHIND FARM HOUSE - EVENING

Denny comes out of the woods and is next to a run-down storage shed that is right behind his house. He unhooks the shed's rusty old chain that barely holds the door shut.

He lifts the old door so it will open, takes one step inside to hang up his bow and quiver then steps out and goes to close the shed door.

When the door closes, out of nowhere, we see two police officers standing where the door once was. Denny jumps.

DENNY
(startled)
Jesus! What the hell?!

SHERIFF DIBBS
Easy, boy. And watch your language
when you're speaking to the law,
son.

OFFICER CARL
Hi Denny.

SHERIFF DIBBS- Large, slow movin' man in his 50's. Full of experience. And attitude. A real Buford T. Justice lookin' type, without the funny.

OFFICER CARL- Early 40's. In shape and handsome for such a small, country town. Always polite and easy to talk to.

DENNY
What are you doing here?
Did uncle Jack do somethin'?

SHERIFF DIBBS
Uncle Jack?

OFFICER CARL
Did you hear about the robbery?

DENNY
No.

OFFICER CARL
Well, somebody thought it would be
a good idea to rob the bank this
morning. Two men pulled a gun on
Mrs. Timmons right after she
opened. Made off with over fourty
thou...

Sherrif Dibbs cuts him off.

SHERRIF DIBBS
That's enough, Carl.

Beat.

Sheriff Dibbs steps closer to Denny.

SHERRIF DIBBS (CONT'D)
Did you see anyone suspicious
today, boy? Anybody else out there
in them woods?

DENNY
I ain't seen nobody today. Did you
talk to uncle Jack?

SHERRIF DIBBS
Hell, your uncle is passed out
drunk on the couch again.

DENNY
On the couch? Did you go in my
house?

Officer Carl attempts to be the calming voice between them.

OFFICER CARL
Now Denny, we saw him through the
screen door lying there, not
answering, so we took a step inside
just to check on him. No harm done.

SHERRIF DIBBS
Now son, if you don't like it....
...maybe you should call the
PO-leece.

Sheriff Dibbs drops his cigarette to the ground and puts his
oversized black boot on it and twists it into crumbles.

Uncomfortable silence as Denny doesn't respond and looks away
from the sheriff.

OFFICER CARL
Word is, they took off in a rust
colored Camaro and headed this way.
Just let us know if you see anyone
out here. Can you do that for me?

Denny nods his head.

The officer turns to walk away but the sheriff takes a step
closer to Denny. He looks him up and down before speaking.

SHERIFF DIBBS

(slowly leans in)

Tell me....does your uncle knock
you around like your daddy
did.....or are you a man now?

Denny looks back and stares at the sheriff then looks away again.

OFFICER CARL

Sheriff, shouldn't we be getting
over to Lester's place....see if
he's seen anything?

The sheriff stares Denny down then turns away.

SHERIFF DIBBS

I reckon.

Both officers walk away from the shed.

Denny watches them for a moment and then reaches for the shed door and slams it shut and re-chains it.

SAM (V.O.)

I remember this one time in 7th
grade, we'd gone on a field trip to
this amusement park. You know the
kind with a few big rides in the
middle and the little kiddy train
that circles the park?

Well, this older guy was there leading our group. He kept talkin' to me and puttin' his hands on me when the other kids weren't lookin'...Made me real uncomfortable. I told him to buzz off but he wouldn't listen.

Well Denny saw it happenin' and he wasn't gonna have it. He came over and punched that man one time in his big fat nose. Yes he did. Drew blood and ev'rythang.

It was quite a sight seeing Denny stand up for someone like that. Especially for me. We had to leave the park but I didn't mind none.

We've never really talked about that day but we've been best friends ever since.

EXT. FARM HOUSE/FRONT PORCH - EVENING

Denny heads toward the old farm house that is in desperate need of painting. He stops at a tree out front that has a yellow Labrador chained up to it. Denny stops to pet the dog.

SAM (V.O.)

Ya know...for as much as Denny gets knocked around and takes it, he sure does know how to protect people.

I just wish he'd protect himSELF sometimes.

That Uncle Jack's a real horses ass. Denny says he's just misunderstood. My jury's still out on that one.

INT. FARM HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Denny walks into the farm house, careful not to let the screen door slam behind him. It's almost completely dark in the room. From the darkness comes a slow speaking gravely voice...

UNCLE JACK (O.S.)

What was all that about?

Uncle Jack is sitting up on the couch, in the dark.

DENNY

What?

UNCLE JACK

What do you mean what?
The damn cops, that's what.

DENNY

They just wanted to talk.

UNCLE JACK

Well, hell I know they wanted to talk. What about?

Uncle Jack leans forward and opens a wooden, cigar sized box on the broken down coffee table in front of the couch. He opens it and surgically takes out the necessities to roll a filterless cigarette.

DENNY

They said there was a robbery in town today. Bank's money got taken. Wanted to know if I'd seen anybody.

Uncle Jack continues to roll and never looks up.

UNCLE JACK
Well - have ya?

DENNY
No sir.

Uncle Jack leans back into the couch and lights his freshly rolled cigarette. All in one motion he puts his feet up on the coffee table, spreads his arms wide on the back of the couch. Jack looks at the ceiling and takes a long drag, then he continues...

UNCLE JACK
Well, if ya do, send em on over
this way. We could use some of that
bank money, don't ya think?

Uncle Jack looks at Denny while Denny ignores the comment.

DENNY
I'm gonna go over to Sam's house
for a bit.

UNCLE JACK
Alright then. You be sure you tell
her mamma I said hello.

Uncle Jack winks at Denny. Denny stares silently.

Jack starts studying the ceiling again and takes another long drag.

Denny watches for a second and then turns and walks back out through the screen door.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - EVENING

Denny travels down the gravel driveway toward a run-down trailer house with a ragged American flag proudly flying high out front.

EXT. TRAILER HOUSE - EVENING

Denny bangs three times on the rattling screened door.

Sam's mom, Suzanne, answers the door, drying a dish pan. She is a somewhat attractive, late-middle aged woman, worn but welcoming. A face full of country kindness.

SUZANNE

Hey, Denny.

DENNY

Hey Ms. Collins. Is Sam here?

SUZANNE

She sure is. You wanna come in?

DENNY

No, I'll just wait out here if you don't mind none.

Suzanne chuckles under her breath as if this is always Denny's reply.

SUZANNE

Of course you will.

Sam walks up from behind her mom.

SAM

Hey, Denny.

SUZANNE

Well, speak of the devil.

Suzanne holds the screen door open and steps aside for Sam to exit.

SAM

Hi.

DENNY

Hey.

SUZANNE

You two love birds be good.

SAM

MOM!

Suzanne smirks as she lets the screen door slam and begins drying the dish pan again and heads back inside.

Denny looks up at the sky and tries to hide his smirk.

Sam and Denny begin walking down the gravel road with no real purpose.

SAM (CONT'D)

Don't mind her. She's just messin'.

Denny ignores the comment.

DENNY
Did you hear about the robbery?

Sam stops walking.

SAM
You got robbed?

DENNY
No, the bank did.

They walk again.

SAM
Oh. No. I've been stuck inside...
canning apricots all damned day. My
fingers are killing me.

DENNY
Yeah, they took several thousand
dollars and then made off in a
rusty old Camaro.
Sheriff Dibbs and Officer Carl
stopped by today and said they
thought maybe they headed out this
way.

SAM
(with an eye roll)
Sheriff Dibbs

Sam shakes her head in disapproval as they walk.

SAM (CONT'D)
I'm sure he was as heart-warming as
ever.
(beat)

SAM (CONT'D)
So how's your uncle actin' today?

DENNY
He's fine. Being himself.

They continue to walk side by side down the gravel road.

SAM
A rusty Camaro, huh?

DENNY
Yeah.

SAM

Well, I saw a dark orange Camaro earlier that I ain't never seen before.

DENNY

Where?

SAM

It was parked down by that house next to Dayton's Creek.

Denny stops.

DENNY

When was this?

SAM

Around lunch time, I guess.

DENNY

Come on! Let's go!

Denny turns and quickly walks toward the woods lining the gravel road.

Sam, still standing in the road, almost seems confused as Denny rushes off.

SAM

What.. the car??

Sam quickly follows, trying to keep up with Denny's pace.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - SUNSET

Cut to:

Next we see Sheriff Dibbs and Officer Carl in a patrol car driving down a farm road.

The sheriff stops the car, backs up and pulls into the driveway of an old house and stops. Officer Carl looks over at Sheriff Dibbs, curiously.

SHERIFF DIBBS

Now, I know that Mike and Deb Johan or Yohan or however you say it, they got this house when her daddy passed away about a year ago. We keep waiting for them to move in but they never do.

Sheriff Dibbs starts easing the patrol car down the long driveway that runs past the house.

SHERIFF DIBBS (CONT'D)
I was by here last week and I do
not recall a car playin' peek-a-boo
out behind the house.

Sheriff Dibbs turns on his car's spotlight and we see something back behind the house. It's an oversized large blue tarp...in the shape of a car.

The officers pull up to the covered car behind the house. They both get out and Officer Carl eyes the woods around them looking for any sign of life while Sheriff Dibbs circles the tarp-covered car.

The sheriff lifts up the corner of the tarp. They both lean over to look at the car and then look at each other. Then he pulls the rest of the cover completely off the car.

SHERRIF DIBBS
Now this here, is what I'd call
one-rust-colored-Camero.

OFFICER CARL
Actually, it's Sunset Orange.

The sheriff glances at Carl and chooses to ignore his statement, then looks back at the car.

OFFICER CARL (CONT'D)
Think it's just a coincidence?

SHERRIF DIBBS
Well...maybe.

The sheriff speaks slowly while shining his flashlight through the windows.

SHERRIF DIBBS (CONT'D)
Maybe they're handing these cars
out with the new phonebooks. Hell
of a Mayor we've got.

Sheriff Dibbs chuckles to himself as he walks back to the patrol car.

SHERRIF DIBBS (CONT'D)
I'll let 'em know we've found the
Camaro.

SHERRIF DIBBS (CONT'D)
(sarcastically to Carl)
The Sunset Orange Camaro.

The Sheriff leans into the patrol car and picks up the radio. He raises back up and puts the transmitter to his mouth and just before his first words can escape, Officer Carl's arm wraps around the sheriff's head, pulling it back when a knife jabs into the sheriff's pudgy throat.

The transmitter is dropped and blood runs down the sheriff's uniform and onto his badge. The sheriff falls to his knees, wheezing, struggling to breathe, then falls to the ground.

Officer Carl stands over him then looks up and scans the property with his eyes. He then walks to the trunk of the Camaro. He pulls the keys from his own pocket and opens the trunk.

He takes out a large duffle bag. As he walks toward the passenger door he unzips it to inspect the contents. We see it's full of money.

Carl eyes the blue tarp on the ground then sets the duffle bag on top of the patrol car.

Officer Carl flattens out the blue tarp and then drags the dead sheriff's body over on top of it. He struggles and slowly rolls the sheriff up inside the tarp.

Officer Carl is winded and wipes his brow. He pulls out a flip-phone and calls someone.

OFFICER CARL
(tired but calm)
Where are you?

We can only hear one side of the conversation.

OFFICER CARL (CONT'D)
Get over to the house. We hit a
small snag but it's nothing we
can't handle.

OFFICER CARL (CONT'D)
Ok. Hurry.

The officer hangs up the phone and looks up. He sees Denny and Sam watching from the edge of the woods.

OFFICER CARL (CONT'D)
Shit.

Denny and Sam turn to run into the woods. Officer Carl opens the passenger door and pulls out a shotgun. Carl runs towards the woods.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHTFALL

Denny and Sam run through the woods zig-zagging through the thick brush trying to lose officer Carl but he's gaining ground.

Denny makes a quick turn.

DENNY
This way!

Denny pulls Sam in a specific direction.

They run past the nailed up wooden target on the tree.

Denny pushes back the large branch that uncovers the opening in the trees. They hide behind the tree holding the branch pulled back tightly.

Officer Carl comes charging through and Denny releases the branch hitting Carl and knocking him to the ground. Denny and Sam take off running again, disappearing into the trees.

Carl lies there catching his breath. He slowly rises up on his feet, holding his side. He looks around and takes out his flip-phone. He dials....

OFFICER CARL
(winded)
We have a problem.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

Denny and Sam run up to the house and quickly make their way inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Denny and Sam lock the front door and run to the windows looking outside to see if Officer Carl has made it to the house.

DENNY
(out of breath)
Do you see him?

Sam shakes her head, trying to breathe.

Uncle Jack hears the slamming of the front door and makes his way out of the bathroom, still adjusting his pants.

UNCLE JACK
What the hell's going on out here?

Denny and Sam still peering out the front window.

OFFICER CARL (O.S.)
We're just having a little fun,
Jack.

Denny and Sam spin around from the window and Jack looks over to see Officer Carl coming out of the kitchen, breathing heavily, shotgun in hand aimed right for Denny.

UNCLE JACK
What's this about?

OFFICER CARL
Oh, nothing you need to worry
about. I just need to have a little
talk with ole Denny here. Seems
like we've have a little
misunderstanding.

DENNY
He killed Sheriff Dibbs!

OFFICER CARL
Aw, now... I don't think I'd go
around saying things like that,
Denny.

UNCLE JACK
You take that gun off him, Carl.

Carl slowly turns and aims the shotgun right at uncle Jack.

OFFICER CARL
I think we all need to calm down.

(beat)

Let's take a little stroll outside. We have some business to take care of.

DENNY
Leave him out of this! He don't
know nuthin!!

While still holding the gun on Jack Officer Carl turns and looks at Denny.

OFFICER CARL

(to Denny)

It seems to me like you just got him involved. This is YOUR fault. Now I think it's time you shut your mouth and start thinking about the...

Uncle Jack grabs the barrel of the shotgun forcing it into the air.

A BOOM rings out shooting the ceiling.

UNCLE JACK

RUN, DENNY!!

DENNY hesitates

UNCLE JACK (CONT'D)

RUN!!!

Denny and Sam take off out the front door of the house and head toward the trees.

Uncle Jack and Officer Carl wrestle in the living room and fall into the screen door, knocking it completely off it's hinges. They land halfway outside the doorway. The shotgun hits the ground and slides across the front porch.

It's obvious that Uncle Jack is no match for Carl. Jack is quickly overcome by the officer. A couple of strong punches from above and Jack is helpless.

Carl stands and grabs Jack by the feet and pulls him back into the house.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

Denny and Sam run down to the edge of the tree line. They stop just behind the first trees and look back at the house.

DENNY

I want you to run and get help. Anybody.

SAM

What are you gonna do?

DENNY

I have to help uncle Jack.

SAM

I'll hurry!

Sam turns to go and Denny grabs her hand to stop her. He pulls her close and presses his lips to hers. Sam does not resist. He finishes the brief kiss and eases away.

DENNY
(calmly)
Now go.

Sam, shocked and enamored, nods then turns away and runs for help.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Officer Carl has handcuffed uncle Jack and is now using a lamp cord to bound the uncle's feet. Jack's face is bloody.

UNCLE JACK
You ain't gonna get away with this, ya know. What happened to you? What happened to protectin' people...and bein' good....doing what's right....

Officer Carl talks while he finishes tying up Jack.

OFFICER CARL
What do you mean, Jack? Things are good. Didn't you hear the boy? I got a promotion today. Not to mention that mighty fine bonus I got sitting in the front seat of my patrol car.

Carl stands up, towering over Jack. He puts his hands on his hips as he admires his own handy work. He catches his breath then gives a heavy exhale.

OFFICER CARL (CONT'D)
(smiling at Jack)
It's kinda funny. It's just like they used to say in the old westerns, Jack. There's a new sheriff in town...

WHOOSH!!! Just then an arrow flies through Officer Carl's right shoulder. Carl screams in pain.

5 seconds later another arrow buries into Carl's left thigh. He falls to his knees.

Denny enters through the front door with his bow and loading another arrow from the quiver on his back. He aims it at Carl.

DENNY
(to uncle Jack)
You ok?

UNCLE JACK
(still groggy)
Getting better by the second.

DENNY
(to officer Carl)
Is this how you thought it would go
down?

Denny walks closer to Carl with his bow pulled tight. The blood hungry arrow aimed at Carl's face.

DENNY (CONT'D)
It's time we end this.

Suddenly we hear the sound of a gun's hammer being cocked. Denny looks back and there is a stranger standing in the doorway of the farmhouse and Sam is standing next to him with a bloody mouth.

In the stranger's hand is a silver revolver aimed right for Denny, in his other hand he has a fist full of Sam's hair, holding her tight.

STRANGER - late 30's, dirty and rough

STRANGER
I think you're right. I think it IS
time to end this. Now how 'bout you
drop that bow.

Denny looks at Sam, then at Jack, then back at officer Carl and slowly lowers his weapon.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Now toss it over there.

Denny complies.

Officer Carl tries to laugh but the pain ends it quickly.

OFFICER CARL
Now ain't this a predicament. I
thought for a second there you had
me. I didn't know if he was gonna
show up or not.

Officer Carl slowly stands up, still in pain.

OFFICER CARL (CONT'D)
God damn, Denny. You were THIS
CLOSE to being the hero and savin'
the day.

Carl holds up his thumb and finger to exaggerate his point.
Then he starts to laugh but stops with a wince.

STRANGER
Looks like tonight is my time to
shine.

The stranger, still aiming the pistol at Denny, looks at Sam
with an evil grin.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
And I think after this we might go
have a little hero's celebration.
What do ya say, honey?

Sam spits in the stranger's face. He throws her head forward
and Sam falls to the floor.

Denny jumps up.

Stranger looks up and quickly re-aims at Denny. Denny stops.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Sit down!!

Denny slowly sits.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
This bitch ain't worth the trouble.

The stranger spits back at Sam, who's still lying on the
floor.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Now enough of this fucking around.
(looks at Carl)
Where the hell is my money?

Then BOOM! The stranger's chest explodes and he falls to his
knees.

Eyes wide...blood drips from the strangers mouth, then he falls
face forward.

When the stranger falls we see Sam's mom, Suzanne, holding
Officer Carl's shotgun, standing in the doorway.

Suzanne has the gun low on her hip and ready to fire again. She makes her way through the open door and inside.

SAM

Mom!

SUZANNE

You ok, hun?

Suzanne kneels down to be closer to Sam while still aiming at Carl.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

I heard a gunshot and thought I'd better come check it out. Good thing I did, too.

Suzanne looks at Officer Carl and keeps the shotgun aimed at him.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Carl, I don't know what kind of mess you've gotten yourself into but it sure seems like a doozie.

Carl is silent.

Suzanne looks around the room.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

(with a nod to say hello)
Jack.

JACK

(with a friendly nod back)
Suzanne.

SUZANNE

(to officer Carl)
Get those cuffs off him and put 'em on. And don't try nothing. I've already made one mess today. No need in makin' another.

Suzanne stands up and raises the shotgun.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

But I will if I have to.

Officer Carl shakes his head in defeat.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)

Denny, grab that pistol and watch Carl. I gotta make a phone call.

Denny picks up the silver pistol and keeps it aimed right at Carl. Carl does as she says. He frees Jack and puts the handcuffs on himself. He knows he can't win this one.

Suzanne lowers the shotgun and walks over to a phone in the kitchen and dials a number.

SUZANNE (on the phone)
Yes, this is Suzanne Collins. I'm
over here at Jack Huddleston's
place and we've done had ourselves
a little shit-show.

Suzanne continues her call while Denny moves over to Sam

DENNY
Are you ok?

SAM
My face hurts....but I think I'm
fine.
(beat)
Are you up for a walk?

Sam stops rubbing her jaw and looks at Denny.

DENNY
(slowly begins to nod)
Absolutely

Denny hands the pistol to Jack and then helps Sam to her feet.

Officer Carl looks at uncle Jack. Jack slow grins at Carl and pulls the hammer back. Carl lets out an exhale in defeat.

Then we overhear Suzanne in the background still on the phone.

SUZANNE
(faintly)
Yep. That's right.
A real shit-show.

EXT. WOODS - EARLY SUNRISE

Outside, we see the sun peeking over the mountains.

We see the beautiful green landscape.

We see birds fly.

SAM (V.O.)

It was over an hour before the police from Macon showed up and took Officer Carl to jail. Turns out his partner was some drifter he'd arrested a few months prior. I guess they'd become fast friends or something and thought they'd make some easy cash.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - EARLY FOGGY SUNRISE

We see the patrol car still sitting behind the abandoned house, next to the Camaro. The passenger door of the car is still open. We see the duffle bag sitting on the roof of the patrol car.

SAM (V.O.)

We all made sure Sheriff Dibbs was taken care of and received a proper burial. He had a real nice funeral. Almost everybody in Round Rock showed up.

We see the duffle bag still filled to the top with cash. Past the duffle bag, off in the distance, we see Sam and Denny walk out of the woods and toward the patrol car.

Sam takes Denny's hand. He doesn't resist.

SAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The police found officer Carl's patrol car sitting right where he left it.
But, you know...they never did find that big bag of money. That's a real shame, ain't it?
Yep. A real shame.

THE END

Clint Chandler
expendablefilms@yahoo.com

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