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WGA#953471

SO LITTLE HOPE

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY - DAY

It's a warm day in modern-day Twin Rivers, situated on the plains of Southeastern New Mexico. WE HEAR the SOUNDS of the city as the LOCALS hurriedly go about their business.

We MOVE down a street to...

CITY HALL

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) A group of NATIVE AMERICANS, in cultural dress, pickets in an orderly fashion.

B) Some placards read NATIVE AMERICAN CHILDREN ARE NOT SECOND CLASS CITIZENS others read RESTORE FUNDING TO OUR ORPHANAGES.

C) The event is hardly paid attention to by passer-by CITIZENS although T.V. news cameras record the event. REPORTERS are restless hoping something controversial will break loose as...

A WOMAN

In her forties, SAMANTHA COLLINS, very attractive, follows a young woman carrying a small child.

The woman is having difficulty managing her child and the placard.

Samantha, Sam to her friends, shifts her placard and lends a hand smiling brightly but deep in her soul, in the recesses of her heart looms a seed of bitterness which is about to come to fruition.

We notice a certain unsteadiness in Sam's walk now, she begins to wobble,

CLOSE ON SAM

her eyes widen as she grabs her abdomen in pain

SCREEN FADES TO WHITE

as she collapses.

ON THE SIDEWALK

Sam is flat on her back when she regains consciousness...

P.O.V. -- SAM

and stares up into hovering faces, T.V. cameras and microphones shoved in her face.

LADY NO.1

Are you all right?

BACK TO SCENE

Sam nods yes and is helped to her feet.

LADY NO.2

You want us to call the paramedics?

Sam motions no.

EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Sam leaves the office of Buford T. Waterhouse, M.D. Something has upset her big time.

CLOSE ON SAM

A bit shaky, she makes her way to the elevator.

INT. JAKE'S OFFICE - DAY

JAKE COLLINS, a man with a plan, forties, Sam's husband, is seated at his desk preoccupied with a book,

INSERT -- TITLE

RETIREMENT THROUGH REAL ESTATE INVESTING

BACK TO SCENE

Jake strokes FITZHUGH, his brown Doberman, lying next to the desk.

Jake is an Ole Miss alumni. Memorabilia is everywhere.

A noticeable scar across his forehead, Jake, a private detective and surviving partner in Gunter and Collins' Detective Agency, is stocky and projects a confident air about him.

Looking around his office WE SEE it is a monument to order -- everything in its place. That could explain his confidence but his appearance certainly doesn't fit the pattern: faded jeans, boots and a raggedy Ole Miss T-shirt.

Paintings of Native American maidens cover one wall.

CLOSE ON ONE PAINTING

It is signed "Samantha Collins".

On the other walls hang photos of family, airplanes and Jake's bull riding days in the rodeo.

INT. TUTTLE HOME - DAY

The doorbell RINGS as AMY TUTTLE, late twenties, dries her hands in her kitchen.

She crosses to the front door and opens it. To her surprise there stands Sam looking troubled.

AMY

Mom? Are you all right?

Her eyes probing.

SAM

Hi Honey -- just wanted to see my babies.

Muddled, she forcibly smiles.

AMY

But you spent the whole day with them yesterday.

Unsettled now.

PLAYROOM

Swinging open the door, Amy and Sam find LIZZY and ALI, Amy's five and seven year-old daughters, playing with the doll house.

AMY

Girls, surprise.

They look up.

LIZZY

Maw Maw!

ALI

Maw Maw!

Running to Sam's embrace, she hugs and kisses them like there's no tomorrow.

Amy is definitely disturbed now.

INT. COLLINS' HOME - DAY

The sunlight streams through the overhead skylights into the studio illuminating Sam's paintings. She is of rare talent because her work is so vivid, almost like photographs. But...

CLOSE ON PAINTINGS

it's odd though, all the paintings, depicting Native American culture, have only one subject, an Indian maiden in various settings. None include families.

CLOSE ON FACES

But as WE examine the eyes of the maidens... sad, maybe even hurting, perhaps because there are no families. So, possibly this could be our first insight into the soul of Samantha.

Sam appears troubled as she stares at a photograph of her parents. She dials a phone number. A worried look as...

ANSWERING MACHINE (O.S.)

Roy Whitecloud here. Leave a message.
I'll get back to you.

BEEP. Samantha's lips curl with disgust.

INT. WHITECLOUD HOME - DAY

An indifferent ROY WHITECLOUD, sixties, sits at the kitchen table drinking coffee while reading the newspaper.

ANSWERING MACHINE (O.S.)

Dad, this is Samantha. I know you're there.

(beat)

I need to talk to Mom. Please, it's urgent! I'm in trouble!

Obviously not concerned, he turns a page and takes another sip of coffee.

EXT. COLLINS' HOME - DAY

Out of breathe, Sam's best friend and next door neighbor LUANN BARRINGER, an attractive divorcee in her forties, dressed in exercising attire, runs onto the patio.

She is surprised to see Sam SLAM down the phone down in a fit of anger and SMASH a picture frame.

She snatches open the door

STUDIO

and hurries in.

LUANN

Sam, what's wrong?!

Picking up the shattered pieces.

LUANN

I was exercising and there you were on the one o'clock news flat on your back! You're carrying this picketing thing too far?!

SAM

You know, LuAnn, I can't even talk to my own mother.

(yells)

I hate my parents! I will never forgive them!

LUANN

Sam, do you want me to leave?

SAM

No, please, I'm sorry.

Composing herself she walks to her easel.

LUANN

Sam, is there something wrong?

Sam hesitates, then...

SAM

I've been feeling weak, exhausted lately. At times I can hardly go.

(beat)

LuAnn, there's a condition among my people called Primary Biliary Cirrhosis...

LUANN

(probing)

And?

Sam doesn't answer.

LUANN
 Sam, what is it?
 (beat)
 You're scaring me now.

SAM
 (looks away)
 I have it.

LuAnn waits to hear the rest...

LUANN
 (nervous)
 But that's not all, is it?

Laboring to say the words, Sam utters:

SAM
 LuAnn, it's cancer.

Slapping the canvas with her brush.

Stunned... We HOLD ON Luann for a moment as she processes the information. Perhaps she misunderstood, she asks again.

LUANN
 What did you say?

Not really wanting clarification.

SAM
 LuAnn, I don't want to die! It's not fair!

Agonizing, she turns away.

SAM
 I want to see my grandchildren in their Christmas pageants ...and go to the PTA meetings... and watch them play dolls and...

She loses it.

LUANN
 Oh Sam, I can't believe this.

Her heart sinks. They clutch each other.

LUANN
 What about treatment?! They are constantly finding new treatments!

Grasping for any hope.

SAM
 LuAnn, it's too late.

Hanging her head. But LuAnn doesn't buy it.

LUANN

No... no! There's gotta be a way,
Sam.

Pacing... thinking, then... she blurts out...

LUANN

(confident)

There is someone I want you to see!
I'll meet you in the driveway in twenty
minutes!

Wipes her eyes and rushes out the door.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Three flashy Latin-Americans in their thirties, a loathsome
MANUEL VARGA and two large BODYGUARDS, sashay into the Gunter
and Collins' Detective Agency.

Strutting past the desk of young PATTI JUAREZ, the pretty
receptionist-secretary, Bodyguard NO.1 raps on her desk as
an act of superiority.

PATTI

Can I help you?

They ignore her as we FOLLOW them down the hall. Varga looks
into George's darkened office. Then they cross to

JAKE'S OFFICE

who is intrigued with a book. He is annoyed when the three
swagger into his office like they own the place.

Fitzhugh is on his feet taking an instant dislike to them.
He lets out a low resonating growl.

JAKE

(not intimidated)
You need help, friend?!

Bodyguard No.1 handles Jake's things.

JAKE

Put that down!

Standing to his feet.

Slowly circling, Fitzhugh waits for Jake's command.

JAKE

(to Bodyguard No.1)
He don't like you friend.

The bodyguard, intimidated, ceases.

VARGA

And we ain't your friends -- the name
is Varga, Manual Varga.

VARGA

Where's Gunter?

JAKE

I'm the surviving partner. What do you want?

VARGA

Surviving partner?

JAKE

Guess you haven't heard.

VARGA

Heard what?

JAKE

George died last week.

VARGA

Died huh. He owes me a hundred grand.

(beat)

So, friend, as surviving partner, then I'll collect from you!

Jake stares at Varga for a moment.

JAKE

(serious)

In your dreams Poncho.

Varga, wide-eyed, gets in Jake's face.

VARGA

Friend, I can be your worst nightmare!

Handling a photo of Samantha.

Fitzhugh, teeth flashing, growling, maintains serious eye contact with Varga who then realizes that he may be over extended here.

Jake raises his hand and Fitzhugh assumes attack position.

JAKE

He goes for the throat when he's upset, friend!

Varga lowers the photo as he eyes Fitzhugh.

The men back pedal as Fitzhugh herds them out.

VARGA

You've got five days, cowboy.

Flashing five fingers as they strut out.

OFFICE

Jake favors his leg wincing in pain as he stops at Patti's desk.

PATTI

Jake, when are you going to see a doctor about your leg?

JAKE

I'm okay. Just a twinge, probably gonna rain. See what you can dig up on Manual Varga. And put the word out on the street that I'm buying.

PATTI

Are we in trouble?

Jake nods yes.

INT. CAR, MOVING - DAY

LuAnn and Sam are in LuAnn's car driving through busy downtown.

LUANN

Have you told Jake?

Sam shakes her head no not wanting to go into detail.

SAM

I can't tell him, LuAnn?

Looking away, sighing.

LUANN

(shocked)

Why?! For goodness sake he's your husband!

SAM

You don't know the whole story.

LUANN

But he loves you.

SAM

(retorts)

I don't want to discuss this LuAnn!

Aggravated, LuAnn whips onto a side street.

EXT. HERBAL SHOP - DAY

LuAnn and Sam exit LuAnn's car in the front of an old building. The sign over the door reads APACHE HERBS AND REMEDIES. Sam is a little edgy.

SAM

I don't know about this, LuAnn.

SAM
How do you know about this place?

LUANN
Blair, my friend at work, comes here.
She believes in this mind-body-nutrition thing. She hasn't missed a day of work in over eight years.

Opens the door.

INT. HERBAL SHOP - DAY

The mixture of aromatic herbs prompts a response from Sam.

SAM
(sarcastic)
Smells like a barn.

LUANN
Hello?! Anybody here?!

BACK ROOM

A haggard INDIAN WOMAN, with frizzy hair and short on words, makes a tea to the intrigue of Sam and LuAnn. Sam is repulsed by the woman.

LUANN
What is in that?

The old woman stirs the pungent concoction.

SAM
(skeptical)
You want me to drink that? Smells like dirty socks.

Wrinkling her nose in defiance.

The woman pours the stuff into a styrofoam cup.

SAM
Hold it, I don't do styrofoam.
Carcinogenic, you know.

LUANN
Please, Sam... it's your only hope!

Provoked, the old woman squints and wipes out a dirty glass.

She slams the glass down, pours the tea.

Sam doesn't like the woman's attitude and holds her nose as she takes a sip.

OLD WOMAN
(squinting)
All of it!

Sam gags.

SAM

Satisfied!

Slams the glass down.

OLD WOMAN

You have four days to take the second part of the cure. It's from a rare flower called the Yellow Ginger.

Roughly anointing Sam's forehead with oil. Sam recoils.

SAM

What is that?!

OLD WOMAN

Anointing oil.

Sam, suspicious, looks at LuAnn.

OLD WOMAN

A tea must be made from the Yellow Ginger within thirty minutes of cutting the flower.

SAM

So I come back in four days?

The woman shakes her head no.

OLD WOMAN

Solomon's Pass is the only --

SAM

You mean you don't have it?!

The woman nods her head no.

SAM

(aggravated)

But what if I can't find it?

OLD WOMAN

(retorts)

Then, my dear, we can just ship your saddle home.

SAM

(cynical)

What are my chances if I do find it?

OLD WOMAN

With your attitude? Slim at best.

SAM

(indignant)

What do you mean, attitude?!

OLD WOMAN

It's the bitterness in your heart,
young woman!

SAM

(fires back)
I didn't ask for this!

Jumps to her feet.

OLD WOMAN

You have compromised your immune
system.

SAM

Ridiculous!

She's had enough and heads for the door.

SAM

Luann let's go!

When...

OLD WOMAN (O.C.)

Young lady!

Sam looks back.

OLD WOMAN

(warning)
You must forgive!

A stern look, wagging her bony finger at Sam.

SAM

You're not much on people skills, are
you?!

Slams the door.

INT. LUANN'S HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

Sam and LuAnn sit at the table. LuAnn pours herself a glass
of orange juice while Sam fidgets.

LUANN

Sam, how are you going to get to
Solomon's Pass?

SAM

(shrugs her shoulders)
Maybe Jake will fly me.

LUANN

But you said you couldn't tell him --
anyway you're afraid of flying.

Sam sighs. Changes the subject.

SAM
My marriage was arranged, you know.

LUANN
What?

SAM
When I was twenty, my father sold me
in marriage.

LUANN
(astounded)
He what? To Jake?

SAM
No. My father worked in the casino
on the reservation. And he always
wanted land of his own, but we couldn't
afford it. He was obsessed with the
notion. How everything would be all
right if we had land of our own.

Pacing.

SAM
Then one day a man was playing at his
table, he was a black jack dealer,
and the conversation got around to
land.
(beat)
This man owned a lot of it. And his
son, as I learned later, was infatuated
with me and --

LUANN
Wanted a wife and was willing to trade?

Sam nods yes.

LUANN
That's sick, Sam! You know it? What
father would do that to his own
daughter?

Sam gazes out the window.

LUANN
What did you do?

SAM
(sneering)
I said no!
(beat)
Then he disowned me. Just like that.
Like I never existed.
(beat)
I finally left home and moved in with
my aunt and uncle.

LUANN
 Didn't your mother do anything?

SAM
 (bitter)
 She said nothing, did nothing in my
 defense -- absolutely nothing!

LUANN
 How awful.

SAM
 (turning)
 You know my parents didn't come to my
 wedding, LuAnn? They don't even know
 who Jake is?!

LuAnn is puzzled. Sam is using presence tense regarding her
 parents.

SAM
 And Amy... and my granddaughters are
 deprived of their heritage because of
 my parents!

LUANN
 Know? Are? Sam, I thought you told
 me your parents died in a car crash?

Sam realizes her slip.

SAM
 (calmly)
 Well, that's true. But I still hate
 them!

LuAnn has a sense that something is not right, but...

LUANN
 So how did you meet Jake?

SAM
 My senior year at college, in the
 summer, I saw him at a rodeo. He was
 earning money for school bull riding.
 Seemed like he stayed on the ground
 more than he did on the bull.
 (beat)
 But he kept getting back up. Wouldn't
 quit.

LUANN
 Is that why he limps?

Sam nods yes.

SAM
 He was gored in the leg and forehead.

SAM

(beat)

That bull kept jabbing him. Nobody could stop it. It was awful, LuAnn.

(beat)

And I think that's what drew me to him.

LUANN

(chuckles)

What? Getting gored?

Sam turns.

SAM

No, his stubbornness, his reckless confidence. He thought he could do anything. But after his injury something changed inside him.

LUANN

Like how?

SAM

(sighing)

I think he realized just how really scared he was.

LUANN

He doesn't appear fearful to me. Especially in his line of work.

Sam sits down.

SAM

He copes by structure.

LUANN

Structure?

SAM

You've seen how he has to have a plan for everything. That's his security blanket --

LUANN

And he doesn't deviate. I see.

Then out of the blue, Sam slams her fist on the table.

SAM

He drives me crazy!

LuAnn flinches spilling the orange juice.

SAM

LuAnn, what's wrong with me?!

She weeps as the gut-wrenching torment inside herself surfaces.

LUANN

What is it?!

Cleans up the mess. Sam composes herself.

SAM

I'm sorry.

(beat)

There's something that I haven't told you.

LuAnn is all ears.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Photographs of family, rodeo days, airplanes and Sam's paintings make Jake's study a cozy refuge.

Fitzhugh peacefully naps.

Jake sits at his desk drinking chocolate milk while entering data into his calculator. Frustrated, He adjusts his

half-glasses and angrily rips a piece of paper off his note pad.

The floor is cluttered with crumpled up paper.

INT. LUANN'S HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

Sam straightens the counter as is her habit when something is bothering her.

LuAnn is sitting at the table.

LUANN

What is it, Sam?

Sam turns.

SAM

It's about Lisa.

LUANN

I remember your telling me she was your first child.

(beat)

She died of some rare disease about twenty years ago.

SAM

That's not exactly the story.

LuAnn gets up and crosses to the counter.

SAM

Jake had just delivered a capital murder suspect to the police.

Taking a deep breathe, trying to stay calm.

SAM

(gazing)

He met Lisa after school to take her for yogurt. She loved strawberry yogurt.

(beat)

Anyway, he hadn't spent much time with her because of the case.

Turns away, cries.

SAM

They were in Jake's truck stopped at a traffic light.

Pauses.

LUANN

What? What happened?

Sam wipes her eyes.

SAM

A van pulled along side of his truck. Some men starting shooting. Lisa was killed instantly and Jake was left for dead.

LUANN

(horrified)

Oh, Sam, how terrible.

SAM

I had a bad feeling that morning. I pleaded with him to wait until another day. But he was bullheaded. Now my baby is dead!

LuAnn holds her.

LUANN

Is this why you reject him?

Sam nods yes.

SAM

(seething)

LuAnn, I will never forgive him!

Clinching her fist.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Sam enters.

Fitzhugh springs to his feet and hurries to her.

SAM

Fitz, whatcha doing?

Jake doesn't acknowledge her.

SAM
I've been at LuAnn's. What's all
this?

JAKE
We're in trouble. Big trouble.

Throwing a piece of paper. Can't see anyway out.

SAM
What is it?

JAKE
George borrowed a hundred thousand
from a loan shark. They came looking
for him.

SAM
What? Why did he do that?

Sitting down.

JAKE
Medical expenses for Martha.

SAM
So, what does that have to do with
us?

JAKE
They want their money -- and they
want it from me!

SAM
(dazed)
Oh my. I've heard stories about people
who don't pay loan sharks -- they
wind up dead!

Jake rubs the back of his neck.

SAM
How could he do this to us?!

JAKE
(sighing)
Apparently his grief was just as deadly
as Martha's cancer.

SAM
But where we gonna get that kind of
money?

JAKE
We mortgage the house.

Sam explodes like a roman candle.

SAM

We will not! I have spent all my
income from my painting the last
fifteen years to pay off the mortgage!
(beat)
It's the only thing we have debt free!

JAKE

I've only got five days! These people
are not fooling around, Sam!

SAM

Then you sell off the rental
properties!

JAKE

No! That's for our retirement!

SAM

Then the plane!

JAKE

No! When I get my multi-engine ticket
I plan to trade it in on a twin-engine!

SAM

Read my lips, Jake! We're not
mortgaging the house!

Stomping out.

KITCHEN

Sam busily wipes the counters, straightens.

Jake enters.

JAKE

Look, there's gotta be another way.
(beat)
Must you constantly clean?

Putting his arms around, she cringe's at his touch.

JAKE

I need you, Sam!

Suddenly she feels faint. Jake catches her and helps her
into a chair.

JAKE

Sam, what's wrong?

SAM

A little dizzy. Probably my blood
sugar. I haven't eaten since
breakfast.
(beat)
I'm okay now.

He applies a cool rag to the back of her neck.

SAM

I nearly lost you once from fooling
with the slime dirt of society. And
Lisa is dead because of it!

JAKE

I didn't know it was going to happen!
Let her go, Sam! Your bitterness is
destroying us!

SAM

I begged you not to take her! Why
didn't you listen! I'll never forgive
you!

Runs out crying.

Fitzhugh, upset, barks continuously.

JAKE

(yells)
Are you forgetting that I was left
for dead?!

JAKE

Shut up dog!

Slings the rag across the counter and several glasses crash
to the floor.

BEDROOM

Jake enters. Fitzhugh follows.

Sam aimlessly straightens the room sobbing.

JAKE

Sam, I'm sorry.

She smacks a dresser drawer closed.

SAM

Why can't you close your drawers all
the way?

JAKE

What is it with you? What's got you
ticked you off?!

She sits down at her dresser and stares into the mirror.

SAM

Jake, do you think I'm still
attractive?

Glancing at a family photo. Jake kneels down beside her.
Fitzhugh lays his head in Sam's lap.

JAKE

You're more lovely than the first
time I saw you at the rodeo.

SAM

(weeping)
I saw a doctor yesterday.

JAKE

A doctor? Why?

SAM

Jake, I--

The phone RINGS.

SAM

Hello.

Clearing her throat.

HELEN (O.S.)

Sam, this is Helen... are you all
right?

SAM

Hi Helen. Ah, yeah, I'm okay.

Wipes her eyes with a tissue.

HELEN (O.S.)

Sam, Jenny has disappeared.

SAM

What do you mean? Isn't she at school?

HELEN (O.S.)

She hasn't been seen the last three
days.

SAM

(unconcerned)
Helen, what do you want me to do?!

HELEN (O.S.)

Can you come over?

SAM

(reluctant)
All right, I'll be right there.

Sighs and hangs up.

JAKE

What's wrong?

SAM

Jenny Crocker may be missing. Helen
panics at the drop of a hat. I'll be
at her house.

She leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

Jakes sits at his desk with his real estate portfolio in front of him. His's undoubtedly trying to come up with a way to get some quick cash when the phone RINGS.

JAKE

Hello.

PATTI (O.S.)

Hi it's me. I've found a man who has information about Varga.

JAKE

Who is he?

PATTI (O.S.)

Wouldn't give his name. He's from out of town.

JAKE

How did we find him?

PATTI (O.S.)

Through Henry, one of our regulars. I paid him five hundred.

JAKE

Good. Did you set up a meet?

PATTI (O.S.)

Solomon's Pass in two days at three o'clock. He said there's a country store a few miles from town.

JAKE

How will I recognize him?

PATTI (O.S.)

Henry said the man is missing his right thumb. And one more thing Jake, Henry said the man wouldn't wait.

JAKE

Thanks.

Hangs up.

INT. WHITECLOUD HOME - NIGHT

LYDIA WHITECLOUD, sixties, Sam's mother, is in the kitchen of her home and plays messages on the answering machine.

ANSWERING MACHINE

Dad, this is Samantha. I know you're there. I need to talk to Mom.

ANSWERING MACHINE

Please, it's urgent! I'm in trouble!

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Roy Whitecloud, I'm going to ring
your neck!

Her eyes narrow in disgust.

INT. HELEN'S HOME - NIGHT

HELEN, forties, and Sam sit at the kitchen table drinking
tea. Helen is beside herself.

HELEN

Sam, I can't go through this again.
I know you're busy, with the orphanages
and your painting and all. But I
don't have anyone to talk to.

SAM

(probing)

What about your mother? That's who I
would go to first.

HELEN

My Mother, ha! She thinks I'm neurotic
already. She doesn't want to hear my
troubles.

At that remark Sam HEARS --

ANSWERING MACHINE (O.S.) (V.O)

Dad, this is Samantha. I know you're
there.

(beat)

I need to talk to Mom. Please, it's
urgent! I'm in trouble!

Then...

SAM (V.O.)

You know, LuAnn, I can't even talk to
my own mother.

(yells)

I hate my parents! I will never
forgive them!

SAM

At least your mother talks to you.

Helen doesn't understand.

SAM

What did you mean that you can't go
through this again?

HELEN

You remember when Dee ran away from
school five years ago?

Sam nods, sipping her tea.

SAM

She was your first daughter?

Helen nods yes.

HELEN

After months of searching, I thought
I would lose my mind.

SAM

Then her body was found.

HELEN

And then Jack left me a widow two
years ago, and now Jenny.

SAM

What about the police?

Holding Helen's hands.

HELEN

They have just started an
investigation.

Sam eye's a small vial on the counter and reaches for it.

SAM

Helen, what is this?

HELEN

Anointing oil.

That strikes a note and Sam touches her forehead...

SAM

Anointing oil? What's it for?

The scent of the oil is familiar.

HELEN

I read where it brings angelic
protection. I put it on Jenny's
picture.

Sam wonders about that.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

Sitting at his desk, Jake plots a course on an aviation chart
and enters data into his flight calculator.

Fitzhugh catnaps.

Sam enters. Fitzhugh runs to her.

JAKE

Hi. What about Jenny?

Looking up over his glasses.

SAM

Helen is paranoid. Going somewhere?

She sits down.

JAKE

Patti got me a meet with an informant.
He says he has information on Varga.

SAM

How much?

Jake puts money in the survival bag.

JAKE

Ten thousand. This could be our way
out.

SAM

(sighs)

Can we afford it?

He shakes his head no.

JAKE

But it is cheaper than a hundred
thousand.

Checks his 9 mm and slips it into the bag.

SAM

Is that necessary?

JAKE

Part of my trade, you know that.

Zips up the bag.

Sam busily straightens.

JAKE

Honey, is there something bothering
you?

She nods her head yes.

SAM

Jake, I --

The phone RINGS. She is frustrated.

JAKE

Hello.

Removing his glasses.

INT. FLIGHT SERVICE STATION - NIGHT

ROGER YUMA, thirties, makes a phone call.

ROGER
Mr. Collins, this is Roger Yuma at
the Flight Service Station.

INTERCUT:

JAKE
What does it look like?

ROGER
The weather has cleared to Solomon's
Pass. But FYI, we have several reports
of magnetic disturbances from
commercial pilots flying to the north
of your flight plan.

JAKE
Like what?

ROGER
Sporadic navigation and radio black-
outs.

JAKE
I'll bare that in mind. File a VFR
for 5000 for Solomon's Pass.

Sam takes notice.

Jake hangs up.

SAM
Solomon's Pass?

Perks up.

Jake acknowledges.

SAM
(hesitates)
Can I come?

JAKE
(surprised)
I thought you were afraid of crashing?

SAM
I want to go the that botanical garden
there.

JAKE
Why?

SAM
There's a certain flower that I heard
about. I want a cutting.

JAKE
Well, I can get it for you. No need
to stress yourself out flying.

SAM
 (quickly answers)
 No I have to go!

Jake senses something is not right.

SAM
 What I mean is, it's time I faced
 this thing.

Half-heartedly smiling.

JAKE
 Well, all right. The meet is the day
 after tomorrow. We'll rent a car at
 the airport. Miller's Crossing is
 just a few miles from town.

The phone RINGS.

SAM
 Hello.

ANN (O.S.)
 (urgent)
 Sam, this is Ann. I just learned the
 city council has an emergency meeting
 tomorrow about the funding. We're on
 the agenda and Margaret Longbow is
 sick. Can we count on you as our
 spokesperson? Please say yes!

Quickly, Sam answers:

SAM
 I can't Ann -- there's something I
 have to do.

ANN (O.S.)
 What could be more important than
 those orphans, Sam?

A solemn look on Sam's face.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRIVATE AIRPORT - DAY

It is early morning. Fitzhugh waits anxiously while Jake
 opens the hanger door. Fitzhugh runs into the hanger barking
 and circles the Cessna Centurion.

Jake enters but Sam hesitates. She breaks out in a sweat,
 petrified at the thought of getting into the plane.

Jake turns back.

JAKE
 Sam, are you all right?

Putting his arm around her.

JAKE

I can do this, Honey. Why don't you go on back home.

SAM

No Jake... I've got to do this. Just got to.

They roll out the plane as WE HEAR Sam's voice --

ANSWERING MACHINE (V.O.)

Collins' residence. Please leave a message.

BEEP.

INT. COLLINS' HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

The answering machine records.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD (O.S.)

Samantha, this is your mother. I'm returning your call. What is it child?! I'll be at home -- call me.

CLICK.

INT. PLANE, FLYING - DAY

Jake and Sam are over Southern New Mexico. The engine drones.

Fitzhugh watches out the window from the back seat.

Sam is very nervous, tense as she watches the instrument panel.

SAM

Coming up on five thousand.

Jake reduces power to cruise. He trims the control surfaces.

JAKE

What's our first check point?

SAM

The oil refinery in forty-five minutes.

Sam's grips the navigation log so hard her knuckles turn white.

Jake glances at her.

JAKE

You all right?

She shakes her head no.

SAM

ETA Solomon's Pass is an hour and a half.

Makes a notation on the log.

SAM

When was your last survival training certification?

JAKE

Ninety days ago. Why?

SAM

(unsettled)

I don't know. Something's not right.

He scans the instruments.

JAKE

Instruments okay. Engine purring like a kitten. Clear sky. We've got a tail wind. What's not right?

SAM

I don't know. I've just got a bad feeling.

Fidgets in her seat.

JAKE

C'mon, try to relax. Look at that view. Magnificent. This is what flying is all about.

Holds her hand in support but she definitely doesn't see it that way.

INT. PLANE, FLYING - DAY

Fitzhugh is restless, agitated. He wines.

JAKE

What is, boy?

A troubled growl.

SAM

Something's just not right Jake!
Even Fitz knows!

Suddenly the engine backfires and the plane starts vibrating violently.

SAM

Jake, what's wrong with the engine?!

Grabbing his arm.

ANGLE ON INSTRUMENT PANEL

Radical fluctuation.

SAM

What's wrong?!

JAKE

The electrical system is dead!

TWO O'CLOCK POSITION

SAM

(pointing)

Jake!

A giant fireball streaks across the sky five miles ahead.

SAM

What is it?! Do something!

JAKE

I can't hold her!

They bounce in their seats. The engine SPUTTERS and stops. The prop WINDMILLS. He fights to gain control as the plane sinks.

JAKE

Get on the radio and call Mayday!

SAM

(screaming)

We are going to die! I know it!

Fitzhugh barks relentlessly.

JAKE

Get hold of yourself woman! Doq,
shut up!

Smoke streams from the engine. Difficult to see.

JAKE

Get on the radio, Sam!

SAM

It won't work!

She CLICKS the Mic repeatedly.

SAM

The radio won't work!

Jake cranks down the flaps and sets the plane in a glide.

JAKE

Look for an opening!

She hysterically scans below.

SAM

There!

JAKE

Get the pillows!

Crying, she hands one to Jake.

JAKE

Fitz, get on the floor!

They tighten their seat belts.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The tranquillity of the forest is suddenly disrupted as WE HEAR

SLOW MOTION

the eery SOUND of the powerless Cessna, smoke streaming from the cowling, coming into FRAME to low and to fast. The plane plows into the dense trees SNAPPING and CRUNCHING the tops

off. The wings RIP away and flames engulf the fuselage as it plunges onto a dry creek bed. The groaning SOUND of

twisting metal as the tail section TEARS away is quickly swallowed up by the stillness of the forest.

REGULAR MOTION

EXT. FOREST - DAY

All is quite. Metal parts are scattered throughout the trees. Small fires burn. Smoke seeps from the engine cowling.

INT. FUSELAGE - DAY

Fitzhugh is motionless. Jake and Sam stare straight ahead as if waiting for the next event. His hands rigidly grip the yoke. Sam sobs.

He shakes himself back into reality and places his hand gently on her's.

JAKE

You all right?

Sam nods yes.

He unbuckles his seat belt.

JAKE

Fitz, you okay?

He whines as he slowly moves.

Jake tries to open his door. It's jammed. Sam's door is bowed to the inside. So he kicks out the windshield.

Jake pushes Fitzhugh through and they follow.

They stand in awe at the destruction wondering how they it out alive.

SAM
I can't believe this.

Still shaking.

JAKE
Let's check the transmitter.

Pointing to the tail section.

Fitzhugh quickly explores as if nothing has happened.

TAIL SECTION

Jake locates the emergency transmitter.

JAKE
Fried!

SAM
What does this mean?

JAKE
No emergency signal.

Back to the fuselage.

FUSELAGE

Jake forces open the engine cowling.

JAKE
Careful it's still hot.

JAKE
Same here. The wiring is fried.

SAM
What happened?

JAKE
Had to be the magnetic field of that fire ball.

SAM
How will the searchers find us?

JAKE
All flight plans that are not closed are investigated.

Closes the cowling.

SAM
We'll just wait here until they come, right?

Looking at Jake for reassurance.

JAKE
We can't wait, Sam.

Sam does not want to hear that.

SAM
We don't know where we are. Look at
the denseness -- how we gonna get
through that?

Jake digs through the survival bag and pulls out a machete.

JAKE
Viola.

SAM
That doesn't change a thing.

JAKE
No, but with a plan...

Takes out the chart and slips on his glasses. Studying...

JAKE
(confident)
I estimate we are about ten miles off
course. We've got to get to Miller's
Crossing by tomorrow afternoon. We
head north to this rail line -- that
puts us about ten miles from Miller's
Crossing.

Pointing on the map.

Sam is incensed at his methodology.

SAM
(adamant)
I vote we stay with the plane and
wait for search and rescue!

JAKE
That may take days, Sam. I told you
we're off course. And besides we've
got to get to Miller's Crossing.

SAM
Then you go by yourself -- I'm staying
here!

Folding her arms in defiance.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jake implements his plan and begins by forcing open the right
side door of the fuselage. He loosens the seat with a wrench.

SAM
What are you doing?

JAKE
Phase One -- shelter. It will be
dark soon.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Sam is less than enthusiastic as she searches through the survival bag and removes the food and the water canteens.

B) Jake lifts out the passenger seat and then removes the other seats.

C) He lifts the windshield back into place and props a wing strut against it.

D) He unfolds the sleeping bags inside the fuselage.

E) Sam reconstitutes the food bags.

SAM
Are you hungry?

He nods yes.

JAKE
These beans are quiet tasty in the
wild.

Sam glares at him.

SAM
You always look for the bright side.
Don't you realize what happened here?

JAKE
Attitude determines altitude.

SAM
Please, spare me! I'm sick of your
predictability. You can't even brush
your teeth without a plan!

Pitches another bag at him.

SAM
Mash potatoes!

Wrinkling her face at the taste.

SAM
(beat)
As long as I've known you, you've had
this fixation about plans, backup
plans, contingencies -- it's like
your security blanket!

JAKE

Lack of planning courts disaster, you know. Besides look at the challenge -- us against the wild.

Sam sighs in frustration.

CUT TO:

INT. FUSELAGE - NIGHT

Jake and Sam are bedded down facing each other. A battery-operated lamp illuminates the cabin. Fitzhugh is sprawled out in the rear.

SAM

Would you do it over again, marriage I mean?

He places his hand on hers.

JAKE

In a flash. Why do you ask that?

SAM

Even knowing my parents would reject us. And losing Lisa?

Rolling over on her back.

JAKE

Sam, my vows were more than words. You of all people should know about covenant.

Sam's thoughts catch up with her and she weeps.

JAKE

Honey, what is it?

SAM

I need to tell you something.

JAKE

What?

She strokes his face and he touches her hand, smiling.

SAM

I have cancer.

We HOLD ON Jake a moment... he doesn't believe her... rejection isn't enough, she has to torment him to... then he rolls away. Tension mounts.

SAM

Jake? Jake!

JAKE

(snaps)
You hate me that much?!

SAM

Jake, you don't understand.

He ignores her.

SAM

Aren't you going to say anything?

JAKE

Rejection isn't enough for you, is it?!

Slams his fist against the fuselage.

Fitzhugh barks.

JAKE

When is it going to end, Sam?! When all of the life is sucked out of our marriage?!

SAM

I tried to tell --

He tunes her out.

JAKE

(retorts)
When was the last time your told me that you loved me?! Huh?

SAM

(beat)
The sad part is I can't tell my own mother either! And you turn away from me too!

Convincing now. He turns back over.

JAKE

(sighs)
You're serious, aren't you?

SAM

I'm dying, Jake.

Touching his rigid body, he cringe's.

SAM

Jake, please, don't pull away, not now! I need you! I love you!

The very words that he said to her earlier, but...

JAKE

(yelling)

You don't know what love is anymore!
Love is about need and trust! You
don't need anything but your own
bitterness!

She turns away crying. Fitzhugh comforts her.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

A thunderstorm RAGES. A CLAP of THUNDER and FLASHING
LIGHTNING.

INT. FUSELAGE - NIGHT

Jake and Sam are startled. Fitzhugh barks in alarm.

The wind rocks the fuselage as the rain POUNDS the skin of
the plane as...

A LIGHTNING BOLT

STRIKES a tree and EXPLODES a lodged wing tank. The fiery
tree and the wing parts CRASH onto the fuselage.

FUSELAGE

Sam springs to a sitting position screaming. Fitzhugh is
barking.

SAM

Jake, what is it?

The flames engulf the fuselage. They are trapped.

JAKE

Get down! Cover your face!

Sam buries her head in her sleeping bag while dragging
Fitzhugh to her. Smoke fills the cabin. They cough.

He pounds on the window.

SAM

(panics)

Jake do something! We can't get out!

He kicks the door, the windshield.

Another fiery tree CRASHES across the fuselage.

She grabs Jake, her defenses down, she:

SAM

(sincerely)

I want you to know how much I love
you!

(calling out)

I love you Mother.

They cough and gasp. As certain death looms, earlier events play through Sam's mind.

CUT TO:

INT. HERBAL SHOP - DAY - FLASHBACK

OLD WOMAN

You have four days to take the second part of the cure. It's from a rare flower called the Yellow Ginger.

Roughly anointing Sam's forehead with oil. Sam recoils.

SAM

What is that?

OLD WOMAN

Anointing oil.

Sam, suspicious, looks at LuAnn.

Then Sam's mind travels back to her conversation with Helen.

CUT TO:

INT. HELEN'S HOME - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Helen and Sam sit at the kitchen table drinking tea.

Sam eye's a small vial on the counter and reaches for it.

SAM

Helen, what is this?

HELEN

Anointing oil.

Sam touches her forehead.

SAM

Anointing oil? What's it for?

The scent seems familiar to her.

HELEN

I read where it brings angelic protection. I put it on Jenny's picture.

Sam wonders about that.

BACK TO SCENE

The fuselage is totally engulfed. The three slip into unconsciousness when...

CLOSE ON PASSENGER DOOR

it suddenly POPS open and

A MAN

reaches into the cabin and pulls them from the inferno to safety. We can't SEE clearly but he's tall, very tall. His silhouette is a soft glow much like a hologram but more real. And apparently he is impervious to the flames... strange.

The shadowy figure pulls the survival bag from the flames. Then he opens the bag and removes the two-man tent and erects it. He places the three inside.

The man touches Sam's forehead. She coughs and regains consciousness, confused.

The storm subsides.

Jake coughs and comes to. Fitzhugh stirs and wines.

JAKE

What happen?

(looking around)

How did we get out? How did we get here?

Sam weeps and holds him.

SAM

Honey, I don't know. But I felt like someone touched me.

Looking strangely at Jake. Then a revelation --

JAKE

Are you wearing perfume?

SAM

What?

JAKE

I smell your favorite perfume.

This can't be. She smells her blouse, Jake's hair, Fitzhugh's coat.

JAKE

What?

SAM

No smell of smoke.

JAKE

Are we dead? Are we in heaven?

SAM

(thinking)

You know, those three Hebrew boys didn't smell of smoke either.

JAKE

Who?

SAM

In the Bible, in that furnace, not
one hair was singed.

He doesn't make the connection. She wonders as they hold
each other and fall asleep.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

It is morning. Fitzhugh explores the woods as

Jake looks at the smoldering remains of the plane and is
baffled.

JAKE

How do we explain this?

SAM

Do you believe in miracles?

JAKE

No.

Rubbing the back of his neck reflecting... then he opens the
survival bag and removes the chart and compass.

SAM

Maybe someone is giving us a second
chance.

JAKE

A second chance at what?

SAM

I don't know.

He holds the chart at arms length.

SAM

Don't you have a spare pair of glasses?

JAKE

They were in the chart case. We need
to move out.

SAM

Why don't we wait for the search party?

JAKE

Sam, we have to stick --

SAM

(disgusted)
To the plan. Why do I bother?

Removes sandals from the bag. Jake takes out the 9 mm. He slips on the shoulder holster.

JAKE
Food and water for three days. We're in good shape there.

SAM
(gasps)
Jake, I forgot! This is the third day!

She gathers up things as if she's on fast forward.

JAKE
What?!

Sam's really wired.

SAM
That old woman said I had to take the second part on the fourth day!

JAKE
What woman? Second part of what?

SAM
How far is Solomon's Pass?

JAKE
About sixty miles.

SAM
We'll never make it in time!

JAKE
Sam, what's going on?!

Putting his arms around her.

SAM
(struggling)
We've got to go, Jake!

JAKE
What are you talking about?!

She relaxes. Time to fess up.

SAM
I saw an old Indian woman who gave me a cure or at least she said it was a cure. She said I had to take the second part by the fourth day.

JAKE
What fourth day?!

SAM
Tomorrow is the fourth day!

They pack up the tent.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Sam walks briskly through the brush.

Fitzhugh runs ahead.

Jake lags behind, still irritated, he grabs Sam by her arm.

JAKE

We're not taking another step until I get some answers.

SAM

The old woman said the only place the herb grows is in Solomon's Pass. We've got to go!

JAKE

(angry)

So that's what this is about? Who is this woman? How did you get to her?

SAM

LuAnn took me to see her. The old woman said the second part had to be taken in four days. This is the third day.

JAKE

And you decided all this by yourself?! What do you know about her? Maybe she's a quack! Maybe she gave you poison! Did you consider that?!

He's really ticked off.

SAM

Jake! Calm down!

JAKE

And me, your husband, where do I fit in all this?! Or is this part of the plot too? What did your doctor say?

SAM

Jake, will you shut up and listen?!

Suddenly,

FROM A STAND OF TREES

GUN FIRE RINGS out. Bullets slam into the trees around them.

Jake jerks Sam to the ground.

SAM

(screams)

What was that?!

JAKE

Rifle fire! Move back to that stump!

They hug the ground.

JAKE

Fitz! Get over here! Now you stay!

More SHOTS slam into the trees. Jake draws his 9mm.

A STAND OF TREES

Jake is couched in a gully where he hears the CLICK of sliding metal.

Another volley of gun fire RINGS out.

Jake slowly raises up to see the back of a MAN camouflaged from head to toe holding a rifle. He drops back to the ground. He waits for a moment.. then jumps up.

JAKE

Freeze!

The man is startled, turns, then quickly rolls to his right.

Jake gets off three rounds rapidly.

The man disappears into the brush.

Then Jake's face pales as he realizes the man may go after Sam. We FOLLOW him as he hurriedly crawls down the gully, the rocks cutting into his hands and knees. He reaches Sam's position and whispers:

JAKE

Sam?

SAM (O.C.)

(hysterical)

Jake, is that you?

Relieved, she grabs him in a tight embrace then she sees the blood.

SAM

(freaks out)

Jake! You're bleeding!

JAKE

Sam, calm down! I'm all right!

SAM

Who is shooting at us?

Attending to his cuts.

JAKE

I don't know. I shot at him but he got away.

They pull back into the

UNDERBRUSH

SAM

I don't feel good.

Jake spreads the tent on the wet grass and she lays down.

Fitzhugh draws close and whines. Jake supports her head on the survival bag. She whispers:

SAM

(in agony)

My stomach is on fire.

Sweating profusely, turning pale, her breathing is shallow and she licks her lips. Jake wets his handkerchief and wipes her forehead.

SAM

Jake, I'm so thirsty.

He squeezes water onto her lips, her eyes close, she restless and remembers...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

Sam busily wipes the counters, straightens.

SAM

Listen! I nearly lost you once from fooling with the slime dirt of society. And Lisa is dead because of it!

JAKE

I didn't know it was going to happen! Let her go, Sam! You're bitterness is destroying our marriage!

SAM

I begged you not to take her! Why didn't you listen! I'll never forgive you!

Runs out of the room crying.

Then...

INT. HERBAL SHOP - DAY - FLASHBACK

Sam and LuAnn listen as the old woman continues her instructions. Sam, suspicious, looks at LuAnn.

OLD WOMAN

A tea must be made from the Yellow Ginger within thirty minutes of cutting the flower.

SAM

So I come back in four days?

The woman shakes her head no.

OLD WOMAN

Solomon's Pass is the only --

SAM

You mean you don't have it?!

The woman nods her head no.

SAM

But what if I can't find it?

Aggravated at the woman's curt attitude.

OLD WOMAN

(retorts)

Then, my dear, we can just ship your saddle home.

SAM

(cynical)

What are my chances if I do find it?

OLD WOMAN

With your attitude? Slim at best.

SAM

(indignant)

What do you mean, attitude?!

OLD WOMAN

It's the bitterness in your heart, young woman!

SAM

(counters)

I didn't ask for this!

Jumps to her feet.

OLD WOMAN

You have compromised your immune system.

SAM

Ridiculous!

She's had enough and heads for the door.

SAM

Luann let's go!

When...

OLD WOMAN (O.C.)

Young lady!

Sam looks back.

OLD WOMAN

(warning)
You must forgive!

A stern look.

BACK TO SCENE

Sam is unconscious now. Jake wipes her fevered brow. He's at a lost as what to do being in the middle of no where with no way to get help. Then...

standing behind Sam WE SEE the mysterious man from the fire. WE SEE him more clearly now standing a good seven feet tall and he has that soft glow around him.

Jake is unaware of his presence but Fitzhugh knows something. He barks nonstop.

JAKE

(looking around)
What is it, boy?

The man touches Sam's forehead. Her eyes pop open like greased lightning.

SAM

Jake?

JAKE

(surprised)
Honey. You all right?

He feels her forehead. It's cool. But he doesn't understand.

She feels her brow and then her stomach.

SAM

I don't hurt anymore.

This is bizarre. Fitzhugh nestles in. Then...

A blood-curdling SCREAM echoes through the forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jake and Sam are lying in tall grass on the crest of a hill. Fitzhugh is crouched close by. Jake surveys the terrain below through binoculars

P.O.V. -- THROUGH BINOCULARS

viewing a compound of two shabbily constructed buildings nestled in the trees. There's a creek just beyond the compound.

Three young WOMEN work in a garden.

KIDNAPPER NO.1, fifties, low-life, dressed in military camouflage, exits one of the buildings. He practically drags another young WOMAN by her arm. The man's arm is bandaged.

Jake whispers:

JAKE (O.C.)

That must be the guy that shot at us.
His arm is bandaged.

BACK TO SCENE

Sam takes the binoculars.

SAM

Maybe we got to close... Jake... that
is Jenny Crocker!

JAKE

What?!

Takes the glasses back.

JAKE

What's she doing here?

Scanning the compound again.

SAM

And Helen thinks she's dead. We have
to tell the police.

JAKE

We can't leave her here, Sam.

SAM

But we can't wait! This is the third
day! We'll report it to the police
as soon as we get to Solomon's Pass!
Let's go!

JAKE

I can't believe you! What if she is
hurt or even killed?!

She's ticked off, her neck veins bulge as she whispers loud:

SAM

She's not the one dying here! You
want to risk my life for her's?

He gestures to pipe down.

JAKE

What if she is gone when the police
get here?!

SAM

You know, your pigheadedness has already caused one death in this family!

JAKE

Don't you put a guilt trip on me! We have time but maybe she doesn't! It'll be dark soon. We wait!

Jake and Sam pull back.

CUT TO:

EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT

The moon shines brightly. Jake and Sam stand next to a building.

There is a road leading from the compound over the ridge. No vehicle in sight.

Fitzhugh stands on alert as Jake views the building across the way.

JAKE

Fitz, watch that building.

Fitzhugh acknowledges.

Muffled VOICES from inside the building. Jake taps the door with his gun.

JAKE

(whispers)
Jenny, are you in there?

Silence.

SAM

Jenny Crocker, this is Samantha Collins.

JENNY (O.C.)

(cautious)
Mrs... Mrs. Collins? Is that you?

SAM

Yes. We've come to take you home Jenny.

JENNY (O.C.)

The door is locked from the outside.

Jake forces the door open and quickly pulls her out.

JAKE

Are you all right?

She nods yes as she embraces Sam who is not very affectionate.

JENNY

(shocked)
How did you get here? How did you
know?

She can't believe it.

JAKE

We don't have much time.

Checking the other building.

JENNY

Fitzhugh, it's been a long time.

Patting him on his head.

JAKE

Whose in here with you??

JENNY

Three and Janet is over there with
that despicable man.

JAKE

Any rope in there?

Jenny nods yes.

Jake checks the other building again.

JAKE

Get it! And bring the others with
you.

Jenny slips into the building.

SAM

(nervous)
Jake, how are we going to get Janet
out of there?

JAKE

We'll just have to wing it.

SAM

(sarcastic)
What, the great Jake Collins has no
plan?!

JAKE

I don't need this now, Sam!

Jenny returns with the girls.

ZAKIYA, jovial, is followed by SARAH, who is more standoffish.

JENNY

This is Zakiya and Sarah.

Zakiya half waves.

Jenny hands Jake the rope.

JAKE

Let's go.

He picks up the survival bag.

EXT. BEHIND BUILDING - NIGHT

The group is at the creek.

JAKE

(to Sam)

If I'm not back in fifteen minutes,
head north for the railroad tracks.
And stay in the water to cover your
trail.

SAM

No, I'm scared. I'm waiting for you.

JAKE

Sam?! One of us has to meet that
man!

She folds her arms in defiance.

JAKE

Fitz, you stay! Got it!

Fitzhugh acknowledges.

EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Jack sneaks a quick peek in the window.

P.O.V. -- JAKE

The interior of the building is scanty. Kidnapper No.1 sits
at the table. Janet serves his food.

BACK TO SCENE

With gun drawn, Jake slowly turns the door knob and enters.

INSIDE BUILDING

Jake quietly closes the door as he watches Janet at the sink
drying a plate. The kidnapper sits at the table with his
back to Jake slopping food into his mouth like a hog.

Jake FIRES a shot into the ceiling.

Janet is startled and the plate crashes to the floor.

The kidnapper whips around with food drooling from his mouth.

JAKE

Keep your hands where I can see 'em!

KIDNAPPER NO.1

Hey I know you! You're the --

JAKE

Shut up! Turn around! Hands on table!

Jabbing his gun into the man's back.

KIDNAPPER NO.1

Maybe we can make a deal.

JAKE

Let's go Janet!

She freezes. Not knowing what to do.

JAKE

(impatient)

Come on Janet, move!

Motioning to her.

OUTSIDE BUILDING

A pickup truck stops in front.

KIDNAPPER NO.2, sixties, grubby-looking, dressed in army green, tattoos on his arms, gets out.

He hears VOICES inside and pauses.

KIDNAPPER NO.1 (O.C.)

You're a dead man you know!

Kidnapper No.2 retrieves a sawed off shot gun from his truck. He slowly opens the door.

INSIDE BUILDING

Janet's eyes widen in alarm.

The man points the shotgun at Jake's back.

KIDNAPPER NO.2

Drop it!

KIDNAPPER NO.1

(grinning; turning)

I told you that you were a dead man.

Jake lays down his gun. Kidnapper No.1 shoves Jake and kicks his gun away.

OUTSIDE BUILDING

Sam peeks in through the open doorway then kneels down to Fitzhugh.

SAM

(whispers)
Fitz, that man is trying to hurt
Jake... get him!

She signals.

INSIDE BUILDING

All WE SEE is a blur as Fitzhugh rockets through the door with a vengeance. He locks onto the man's arm before he knows what happened. Blood everywhere.

The shotgun hits the floor and DISCHARGES and BLOWS out a window. Janet screams. The man falls on his back in pain and scurries away smearing a trail of blood but Fitzhugh is right in his face.

Jake pops Kidnapper No.1 in the face with a right and grabs the 9 mm. He kicks the shotgun away then forces Kidnapper No.1 on the floor in the prone position.

Sam enters followed by the girls.

KIDNAPPER NO.1

You think you're some hotrod -- you
punk!

JAKE

Ah shut up!

He's really ticked off and stomps the man's hand.

JAKE

That's for shootin' at us.

The man winces in agony.

Picking up the shotgun, he holsters his gun.

OUTSIDE BUILDING

Jake ties one end of the rope around the door knob and the other end to the truck bumper.

JAKE

(irritated;to Sam)
I thought you were going to wait at
the creek.

SAM

(amazed)
Jake? Hello?

JAKE

Oh yeah... thanks.

He makes the connection and blows out the truck tires with the shotgun.

EXT. CREEK - NIGHT

Jake leads the way with the flashlight. The group sashes through the water and is three hours from the compound. Sam can't go any farther.

SAM

I'm exhausted.

JAKE

Over there, under that tree. We'll rest there.

Jake spreads out the tent.

CUT TO:

EXT. CRASH SITE - DAY

A THREE-MAN rescue team arrives at the plane.

Two men examine the charred remains of the fuselage. Empty food bags are noted. Photographs are taken.

The third man examines the tail section.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Patti is at her desk. The phone RINGS.

PATTI

Gunter and Collins, may I help you?

LUANN (O.S.)

This is LuAnn Barringer, is there any news?

PATTI

Miss Barringer, their plane was located. It appears that they survived the crash.

Her voice quavers.

LUANN (O.S.)

What is it, Miss Juarez?

PATTI

There was a fire.

LUANN (O.S.)

They are dead, aren't they?

Jumps to conclusions, accepting the worst case scenario.

PATTI

All that was found was one of Sam's shoes and her handbag strap.

PATTI

(beat)

But there were three sets of foot
prints found at the crash.

LUANN (O.S.)

Oh thank the Lord, someone found them!

Hangs up excited.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The group is sitting on the tent. Jake reconstitutes the
food bags and passes the water around. He gives Fitzhugh
water and food.

JAKE

Ration the water. This is the last
of the food.

JENNY

What I wouldn't give for a hamburger --

ZAKIYA

(eyes closed)

Yeah, I can see the mustard oozing
out and... taste those pickles.

JANET

Mrs. Collins, what are ya'll doing
here?

SAM

We were flying to Solomon's Pass.

JAKE

Our plane crashed.

JENNY

I still can't believe you're here!

SAM

Why were you with those men?

ZAKIYA

Their slaves.

JAKE

You were kidnapped?

Janet nods yes.

SAM

Did they hurt you?

Sarah inches close to Sam.

JANET

They didn't touch us as long as we
played their game.

SAM

Sarah, where is your home?

SARAH

Southern Arizona.

Hangs her head.

Jake holds the chart at arms length. He references north with the compass.

JAKE

North is that way. The railroad tracks are about ten miles.

The group continues on. Sarah lags behind. Sam extends her hand and she steps up.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The group HEARS a commotion as they top a ridge.

TOP OF RIDGE

Down in the valley below, there are twenty heavily armed SOLDIERS and several military vehicles.

There are cases of weapons stacked to one side.

A portable wind sock is extended by the wind.

A MAN and a WOMAN, in their thirties, bound with rope, are forced from one of the vehicles.

The soldiers tie them to two trees.

The soldiers stand around and laugh not being very attentive.

Strangely enough, Sam and Jake swap positions:

SAM

Jake, we need to help those people.

JAKE

It's not our fight. We have to keep moving toward the tracks.

SAM

But if we don't --!

JAKE

We can't help everybody, Sam!

SAM

What's happened to you?

JAKE

This is the fourth day, remember? We've got to get to Solomon's Pass today! Let's go!

SAM
 Jake, they may die!

He sighs... and reluctantly lays out a plan.

JAKE
 (irritated)
 I'll slip down through the grass along
 that tree line behind them and untie
 'em. Now, if I get into trouble --

SAM
 I know.

Jake roughly hands her the 9 mm demonstrating impatiently.

JAKE
 Flip off the safety when you are ready
 to fire.

Sam acknowledges. He hands her the extra clips and takes
 the hunting knife.

JAKE
 (wagging his finger)
 And Fitz you stay put!

Taking his frustration out on Fitz who gives a coughing bark.

BOTTOM OF RIDGE

Hidden by the tall grass Jake slips up behind the man and
 woman.

The soldiers are laughing, preoccupied.

Jake cuts the ropes.

JAKE
 Don't turn around.

They are startled.

MAN AGENT
 Who are you?

JAKE
 I'm here to help.

WOMAN AGENT
 Why are you here?

JAKE
 It's a long story. Who are you?

MAN AGENT
 Federal agents.

WOMAN AGENT
 Are you alone?

Jake frees them.

JAKE

My family is up on the ridge. I
wouldn't move just yet.

A soldier looks in their direction.

JAKE

How did you get in this mess?

WOMAN AGENT

Got careless.

MAN AGENT

Those weapons were stolen from a
national guard armory.

Motioning with his head.

MAN AGENT

We believe this bunch is going to
link up with a larger force in Mexico
in a coup.

WOMAN AGENT

We were tracking the weapons when --

MAN AGENT

Suppose you could make your way over
to those crates.

JAKE

I don't know.
(hesitates)
I'll try.

He hasn't been in this tight of a spot since he brought in
Mathias Williams.

The crates are in the open.

TOP OF THE RIDGE

Sam, nervous, follows Jake's movements through the binoculars.

BOTTOM OF RIDGE

Jake cautiously crawls through the tall grass towards the
crates of weapons.

The SOUND of airplane engines is heard. The soldiers look
skyward.

Taking advantage of the distraction, Jake quickly drags a
crate into the grass. He pries it open with his knife and
removes two automatic weapons and clips.

Four soldiers walk to the stack of crates. One looks in
Jake's direction like he knows he's there.

Perspiration runs down Jake face as he lies motionless.

Then the soldier looks away.

Jake scurries back to the agents with the guns. He loads the clips into weapons.

A large twin-engine plane circles.

MAN AGENT

(looking up)
That's trouble.

WOMAN AGENT

You better clear out while you can.

JAKE

Can you use a diversion?

MAN AGENT

You have something in mind?

JAKE

My wife has my 9 mm.

The soldiers watch the plane as it touches down.

MAN AGENT

Wait until the plane stops, then give your signal.

Jake looks in Sam's direction.

TOP OF RIDGE

Sam watches through the binoculars.

SAM

Jake, hurry up!

The sunlight reflects off the lenses.

BOTTOM OF RIDGE

The reflection of the binoculars is picked up by one of the soldiers. He points to the ridge.

WOMAN AGENT

(to Jake)
They've spotted her! Give your signal!

Jake waves and Sam opens FIRE (O.C.).

The soldiers grab their weapons scattering for cover. But they're in no real jeopardy. Sam couldn't hit the broad side of a barn even if she was touching it.

Jake scurries up the hill.

The agents scramble behind the trees and grab the weapons.

TOP OF RIDGE

Sam reloads. Fitzhugh barks at a fever pitch.

The girls cover their ears.

Sam closes her eyes and opens fire again.

BOTTOM OF RIDGE

The agents step from behind the trees firing into the air.

MAN AGENT

Drop your weapons!

The plane's engines rev up attempting to takeoff.

TOP OF RIDGE

JAKE

Hold your fire, Sam!

Sam gives the gun to Jake.

BOTTOM OF RIDGE

The woman agent shoots out the tires motioning for the occupants to deplane. There is no movement. The woman agent fires in the air.

Six MEN deplane with hands on their heads.

The soldiers are forced into the prone position and searched.

The woman agent looks toward the ridge and waves.

TOP OF RIDGE

Jake raises his hand.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The railroad tracks are in view but a wide ravine poses a major obstacle.

Jake spreads out the tent and the group consumes the last of the water supply. Sam is exhausted and lies down.

Fitzhugh spots a squirrel and whimpers to give chase.

JAKE

(to Fitzhugh)

Don't even think about it.

Fitzhugh cowers and lies down.

ZAKIYA

Mr. Collins, what's our plan?

JAKE

We hop a train.

JANET

Then what?

JAKE

Miller's Crossing and then to Solomon's Pass. We'll contact the sheriff there.

JENNY

How are we going to get across the ravine?

JAKE

(sighs)

I haven't figured that out yet.

Walking a ways towards the ravine and looking across.

Sam feels better and sits up.

SAM

Jenny, I talked to your mother. She was awfully upset.

JENNY

(cynical)

She doesn't really love me.

SAM

How could you say such a thing?

JENNY

Because of my sister! She's dead and I still live under her shadow! I hate it!

Sam scoots close to her.

SAM

Your mother does not reject you. She loves you.

(beat)

Look, I'm a mother too. I know what it is to lose a child and I know how it feels to be rejected.

Jenny takes note.

SAM

I know your mother's heart. She keeps your picture on the kitchen counter and prays for you everyday.

Jenny picks at the grass discounting the notion.

Sarah is withdrawn.

SAM

Sarah, how do you think your parents will react to the news?

SARAH
 (insensitive)
 What news?

SAM
 Well, that you're safe.

That touched a nerve and Sarah runs into the underbrush.

Sam follows.

The group is puzzled.

WOODS

Sam finds Sarah aimlessly picking leaves from a bush crying, desperately wanting someone to care.

SAM
 Sarah?

Putting her hand on Sarah but she jerks away.

SARAH
 Just leave me alone, Mrs. Collins, I have nothing to go back to. Why did you have to come anyway?!

SAM
 Sarah, you want to tell me what's really bothering you?

Sits down.

Sarah makes eye contact with Sam. HOLD ON Sarah for a moment while she sizes up Sam's motive. Sarah then looks away.

SARAH
 I was fourteen when my father deserted us for another woman.

Wiping her eyes, sitting down.

SAM
 And your mother?

SARAH
 (indifferent)
 She sleeps around and has her own problems. I would complicate things if I went home. I hate her!
 (beat)
 Anyway, I don't even know where she is!

Shrugging her shoulders.

SAM
 I was rejected by my parents too.

SARAH

You were? Why?

SAM

Just because I married outside the nation.

SARAH

The nation?

Looking at Sam.

SAM

I married outside the Apache nation.

Doodling in the dirt.

SARAH

You, an Indian?

SAM

Mescalero Apache.

SARAH

(warms up)

You're the most beautiful Indian I've ever seen, Mrs. Collins.

Sam smiles and puts her arm around her.

SAM

When I married Mr. Collins, my parents disowned me. I haven't seen them since. And I can't even talk to my own mother.

(beat)

Don't end up like me, Sarah. Bitterness will poison your mind and body. You must forgive!

Sarah pulls away.

SARAH

Have you forgiven your parents?

Sam looks at her at a loss for words.

HILLSIDE

Sam and Sarah return.

JENNY

Mr. Collins, can we see if there's a way across that ravine?

JAKE

Don't wander too far. Fitz, go with them.

Fitzhugh jumps up excited and darts off.

Jenny motions for Sarah to come with them and they disappear down the hill.

SAM

I know we are not going to make it.

Jake starts to rebut but she quickly motions.

SAM

(serious)

Hear me out!

(beat)

When I'm gone, I want you to promise me that you will reconcile with my parents. Amy and our grandchildren must know their heritage.

JAKE

Look Sam, we're --

SAM

Promise me Jake! I want to hear it!

JAKE

Sam, we'll make it!

Reaching out to her.

SAM

I'm sick of your eternal optimism!
When are you going to face reality!
I'm as good as dead!

Shrinking at his touch.

SAM

You promise?!

Jake nods yes.

BEHIND TREES

The girls return and overhear Jake and Sam arguing but hold short.

JAKE (O.C.)

But, I'm not going to let you die,
Sam! We're going to grow old together!

SAM (O.C.)

Well, since you have all the answers,
where do we go from here?!

JAKE (O.C.)

The chart shows a railroad spur to
the west that will take us close to
Solomon's Pass.

The girls stare at each other not knowing how to react.

HILLSIDE

JAKE

Like I said earlier, we're going to hop a train and get off at the spur.

SAM

(yells)

Then what?! Suppose the train doesn't come in time?! Suppose we can't get on?! What if we can't get off?!

JAKE

Sam, will you calm down! We're going to make it if we stick to the plan!

The girls enter. The situation is awkward.

SARAH

(confused)

Mrs. Collins, what's wrong? Why are you screaming?!

Sam turns away.

JAKE

Girls, Mrs. Collins has cancer. We were on the way to get a treatment. But if she doesn't get it today....

The girls feel helpless. Then...

SARAH

(compassionate)

Don't worry Mrs. Collins, we'll help you.

Sam shoots a look -- "You pathetic child, what could you possibly do?".

Sarah is kinda taken back...

So Jenny quickly adds:

JENNY

Ah, Mr. Collins, we didn't find a way across the ravine but we did spot a farm house.

JANET

Maybe there's someone there who could help us.

They leave.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

The group stands in front of a small farm house with a broken down picket fence. No sign of life as Fitzhugh inspects the area. There is a pitiful looking garden on the side.

Jake walks up on the SQUEAKY porch and knocks. No answer. Knocks again. The window curtains are pulled back and he looks in.

JAKE

Hello?

Tapping on the glass.

JENNY

Maybe there's no one here.

OLD WOMAN (O.C.)

(gruff)

What do you want?

JAKE

Our plane crashed and we need food and water.

OLD WOMAN (O.C.)

Go away!

JAKE

Is there a way across that ravine?

SAM

Please, maybe some water?

No response.

SAM

Jake, it's no use.

OLD WOMAN (O.C.)

Around the side.

The curtains close.

AT THE WELL

Jake pulls up a bucket of water. All take their fill then he fills the canteens.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The group walks through the forest when Fitzhugh pauses, ears cocked, looking behind them, listening.

JAKE

What is it, boy?

Fitz growls.

SAM

What's wrong?

JAKE

Don't know. I need to check it out.

Jake ushers the group under cover.

JAKE
Stay put! That goes for you too,
Fitzhugh!

Pulling his 9 mm.

SAM
Be careful.

Jake retraces their path. He hides behind a tree and waits
as...

FOOTSTEPS come closer.

Placing both hands on his 9 mm, he jumps from behind the
tree and to his surprise

A HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

JAKE
Don't move!

She yells.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN
Please, mister, don't hurt me!

Fitzhugh on the run, barking, leads the group.

SAM
Jake, what is it?!

He holsters his gun.

JAKE
Who are you and why are you following
us?

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN
I live in the house back there.

Pointing.

SAM
But you told us to go away.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN
You seem like nice people. I had to
warn you of the danger.

JAKE
Danger? Like what?

Looking around.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

This territory is occupied by Major English, an old military recluse. He still thinks we are at war and he might take you for the enemy.

JAKE

It's imperative that we get to the railroad tracks. Is there another way?

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

The terrain is quite rugged to the east and west.

Jake rubs the back of his neck, searching for options.

JAKE

How far is it if we go through here?

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

About a mile.

SAM

Will this man let us pass?

The woman shakes her head no.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

But he thinks I'm Eleanor Roosevelt and he'll let me pass.

JENNY

What if he doesn't believe you?

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

Let me do the talking and stay close together.

The old woman leads the way when automatic gun fire (O.C.) RINGS out. They duck for cover.

THE ENCAMPMENT

is constructed of dilapidated WWII fortifications where

MAJOR ENGLISH

in his eighties and wearing a ragged WWII army uniform, wields a smoking Thompson sub-machine gun like he means business.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN (O.C.)

Major English, Madame Roosevelt here.

MAJOR ENGLISH

(shouting)

Madame Roosevelt, is that you?! Say the password!

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN (O.C.)

(yelling)
Geronimo!

The group enters.

Sam and Jake look at each other.

MAJOR ENGLISH

Madame Roosevelt, what's the nature
of your business?

JANET

(whispering)
This is bizarre.

The old woman turns to Janet.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

Hush!

Looking back at the major.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

I'm leading these civilians to the
rail head. Their plane was shot down.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

They have vital information for the
President.

MAJOR ENGLISH

Madame Roosevelt, are you satisfied
with their loyalty?

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

Affirmative.

MAJOR ENGLISH

Advise the President that I am still
holding.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

Will do, Major English.

Salutes.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

Move quickly!

They follow the woman pass a threadbare American flag waving
in the breeze. Sam and Jake stare in disbelief.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

Salute the flag! He is quite unstable.

Jake salutes as Fitzhugh stops to sniff. Jake hurries him
along.

The major follows them with a suspicious eye; his trigger finger poised.

EXT. RAVINE - DAY

The woman leads the group to a foot bridge that crosses the ravine. She points to the other side.

HAGGARD OLD WOMAN

The tracks are beyond those trees.

Sam tries to show the insensitive woman her gratitude.

SAM

It's strange that you showed up when you did. Thanks.

The woman points to Sam's forehead but Sam doesn't get it.

JAKE

Come on, Sam!

The bridge is shaky. Fitzhugh is hesitate so Jake carries him. They guardedly cross over the ravine.

On the other side Sam turns to wave. The woman is not there.

A train whistle is HEARD (O.C.).

INT. TRAIN, MOVING - DAY

The group relaxes in an empty box car. Jake looks at the chart.

JAKE

That spur should be about fifteen miles.

SAM

How do we get off? We're going to fast!

Jake crosses to the door and looks out. Fitzhugh follows.

JAKE

Not too close boy.

Fitz sniffs the breeze when...

Jenny shocks the group.

JENNY

(to Sam)
I can't go home.

SAM

What?

Taken by surprise.

JENNY

My abduction was no accident.

SAM

Jake!

JAKE

What's the matter?

SAM

Jenny said she can't go home!

JAKE

What?!

A look of "You've got to be kidding".

JENNY

I got involved in something at school that I shouldn't have. I can't face my mother.

Shrugging her shoulders.

SAM

Your mother loves you very much.

Jenny turns away in tears.

SARAH

Jenny, you are fortunate to have a mother that cares at all.

JAKE

But why can't you go home?

JENNY

(hesitating)

Professor Drake reported false grades.

She crosses to the door.

ZAKIYA

And you thought good grades would get your mother's approval?

Jenny nods yes.

JANET

What was his reward?

Jenny turns back to the group.

JENNY

(ashamedly)

Certain favors... you know.

The group is in disbelief.

JENNY

I threaten to blow the whistle.

JAKE

And he had you kidnapped to keep you quiet.

Jenny acknowledges.

JAKE

You have to file charges against him.

JENNY

I can't. I'm too embarrassed..

Turns back to the open door.

SARAH

Are you going to ask your mother for forgiveness?

Looking at Sam who looks the other way.

JENNY

How could she forgive me, Sarah?

SARAH

You must forgive. It will destroy you if you don't.

Jenny doesn't see it that way.

Sam gives Sarah a quick glance as the train slows down.

Sarah is staring a hole right through Sam.

Jake leans out the door.

JAKE

I don't see the spur yet. Wonder why we're slowing.

Fitzhugh sees something and barks.

An aged African-American MAN, wearing ragged clothes, waves, as he runs with surprising agility, alongside the tracks.

Jake pulls the old man aboard. The train gains speed again.

JAKE

Where did you come from?

There's something peculiar about the old man -- it's his eyes. Looking into them almost compels a body to tell the truth. He looks at Sam who turns away but can't resist looking back.

Fitzhugh doesn't like him and growls watching from a distance.

Jake takes note of Fitzhugh's behavior.

The old man smiles at Sam as if he knows her.

SAM

(curious)
Do I know you?

Catching Jake's arm a little uncertain.

OLD MAN

Don't you know?

SAM

Know what?

OLD MAN

The anointing oil.

Sam still doesn't get the connection to the anointing oil and:

JAKE

Now look old man, I don't know what your game is but --

Fitzhugh circles guardedly.

OLD MAN

No need to fear. I've come because of the anointing oil. You are in great danger!

Looking at Sam.

Sam stares at him. HOLD ON her for a moment as her mind races back to the herb shop:

SAM (V.O.)

What is that?!

OLD WOMAN (V.O.)

Anointing oil.

Then Helen's voice:

SAM (V.O.)

Helen, what is this?

HELEN (V.O.)

Anointing oil. I read where it brings angelic protection. I put it on Jenny's picture.

Then...

JAKE

Sam, what's he talking about?

OLD MAN

Get to the man at the store!

JAKE

What store?! What man?! All right,
you're getting off!

Grabing the old man by his arm.

SAM

No, Jake wait! The old woman at the
herb shop put something on me she
called anointing oil.

Jake releases the man.

SAM

Then Helen said she applied an
anointing oil to Jenny's picture to
protect her.

JENNY

My mother said that?

SAM

And that old woman back in the woods?

The light comes on. She's beginning to take this seriously.

OLD MAN

(to Sam)
You must forgive.

SAM

How do you know that, old man?

OLD MAN

I know all about you.

SAM

(yells)
How can I forgive! You don't know
what has been done to me!
(sassy)
Old man, do you know what it's like
to be rejected by your own family?!
(arms crossed)
Have you ever lost a precious child
like my Lisa?!

OLD MAN

But you haven't lost her.

Glancing at Sarah.

SARAH

But Mrs. Collins, you said that if I
didn't forgive --

SAM

(snaps)
Sarah, how would you know! You haven't
been through what I have been through!

JAKE

What would Lisa want, Sam?

SAM

(crying)

Lisa was the most loving child I have ever know. It's not fair, it's just not fair. I can't give her up -- no!

Turning away.

JENNY

Maybe the way to keep her is to release her.

ZAKIYA

Mrs. Collins, my auntie told me once that little children who die go to Heaven to be with God.

That gets Sam to thinking and she turns to the old man.

SAM

Old man, is that true?
(beat)

The old man is not there. Fitzhugh goes to ground trying to pick up a scent. All have a look of "What is going on here?" He did not get off.

Sam gazes out the door, shaking her head -- "This is too much".

INT. TRAIN, MOVING - DAY

The girls are stretched out and Sam is asleep in Jake's arms. He stares out the door, thinking. The train slows down as it rounds a curve.

JAKE

Sam, we're slowing down.

She awakens.

SAM

What is it?

JAKE

It's the spur. We get off here.

The train slows to a crawl.

Jake removes his shoulder holster. He slips it in the survival bag and heaves it out the door.

He jumps and helps the others out. Fitzhugh leaps out.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

A five-man WORK CREW is on the tracks at the spur.

CUMMINGS, cocky, fifties, is the foreman who lazily leans against the four-door truck. He signals to the engineer and the train CLANKS and JERKS as it picks up speed.

WORKMAN NO.1 turns to see the group approaching. The crew makes snide gestures as they eye the women.

WORKMAN NO.1

Well lookee here?

Jake stares at these degenerates and grits his teeth wanting to knock some heads together but he holds his peace.

JAKE

Afternoon. Could you direct us to Solomon's Pass?

Cummings points.

CUMMINGS

Twenty miles.

The group is elated.

JAKE

We need to get there as soon as possible. Can you help us?

CUMMINGS

I'm the foreman, who are you?

JAKE

(extending his hand)
The name is Jake Collins. My family.

CUMMINGS

Cummings.

A real jerk -- he rejects Jake's hand shake.

JAKE

Our plane crashed a few miles back.

Cummings doesn't buy that story.

CUMMINGS

Let's see some I.D.

Flexing his fingers. He's got a real ego problem.

Jake's justification for busting somebody in the mouth is gaining credence.

JAKE

All our papers were destroyed.

Sam sensing that Jake is near his flash point, interjects:

SAM

How far is Miller's Crossing?

CUMMINGS

Five miles.

SAM

We need to meet someone there at three.

CUMMINGS

(snickers)

Ten minutes to three. Looks like you'll be late.

Glancing at his watch.

JAKE

Can you give us a lift?

Cummings shakes his head no like he has the upper hand.

CUMMINGS

Company regs prohibit civilians from riding in our vehicles.

His cockiness amuses his men.

SAM

Please, couldn't you make an exception? It's very important!

CUMMINGS

Out of the question!

JAKE

Look, Mr. Cummings, it's urgent!

CUMMINGS

Why don't you take your squaw and go back to the reservation where you belong!

Snorts contemptuously. His men giggle.

That did it. Jake is incensed and the girls gather behind Sam expecting an explosion.

He draws back his fist fully intending to rearrange Cummings' face when...

the crew comes at Jake with their tools but

Fitzhugh evens the odds, snarling with nostrils flared and teeth flashing, he intimidates the men giving

Jake a chance to grab his 9 mm.

JAKE

You gutless bigot!

Cummings, wide-eyed, back petals looking down the gun barrel.

CUMMINGS

You men are my witnesses.

Wagging his finger at Jake.

CUMMINGS

This man is threatening to hijack a company vehicle and take railroad employees hostage!

JAKE

Shut up, you whimpering fool! Get in!

Waving the gun barrel.

Fitzhugh circles just itching for the attack command.

JAKE

(to the men)
Rest easy!

He opens the rear door of the truck. Sam and the girls pile in.

JAKE

Fitz, in the back!

Fitzhugh leaps into the truck bed and snaps at one of the crew who is standing a little too close.

Jake climbs into the passenger side. He slams the door.

The truck speeds down the tracks.

INT. TRUCK, MOVING - DAY

CUMMINGS

You're in trouble, Collins, you know that?

JAKE

(boiling)
Don't mess with me! It's three fifteen, can you go any faster?!

Looking at his watch.

EXT. MILLER'S CROSSING - DAY

The store is the only building in sight. The only thing moving is the dust stirred by the hot breeze. An old truck and a car are parked in front.

A sleazy WILLIE SLY in his fifties, walks out of the store. Takes a handkerchief from his pocket

CLOSE ON POCKET

as a piece of paper falls out.

Wiping his forehead, he paces and glances at his watch like he's waiting for someone. Then he gets into his car and drives off just as...

EXT. MILLER'S CROSSING - DAY

The railroad truck arrives.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

CUMMINGS

Miller's Crossing? The store is over there.

Coming to a stop.

INT. WHITECLOUD HOME - DAY

Of the family photographs in the room, WE SEE none of Sam and her family.

Lydia Whitecloud works needle point while listening to a TV broadcast.

TV BROADCASTER (O.C.)

Now to local news. A local private detective, Jake Collins and his wife Samantha,

Mrs. Whitecloud jerks her head up.

ANGLE ON TV

TV BROADCASTER (CON'T)

are presumed dead in a private plane crash. Collins was flying his Cessna Centurion over Southern New Mexico when the plane crashed and burned in a heavily wooded area yesterday, about sixty miles south of Solomon's Pass.

The crash site comes on the screen.

Mrs. Whitecloud is stunned.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Roy! Get in here quick!

CLOSE ON TV

Jake and Sam's photos appears.

TV BROADCASTER (V.O.)

Collins gained public attention when he captured the notorious Mathias Williams, wanted for capital murder, a few years ago. Williams was later executed.

Roy Whitecloud enters.

TV BROADCASTER

Collins is reported to have been an excellent pilot. There have been, however, unconfirmed sightings of a fireball in that area. It is not known if the alleged sighting played a part in the crash. The accident is still under investigation.

Mrs. Whitecloud wails in grief but he shows no emotion.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Roy, what's wrong with you! She's our daughter! We have to do something!

ROY WHITECLOUD

We have no daughter.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

(resolve)

I've been a fool to allow this to go on this long!

Makes a phone call.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Pattie answers the phone.

PATTI

Gunter and Collins, may I help you?

LYDIA WHITECLOUD (O.S.)

This is Lydia Whitecloud, I'm Samantha's mother. I just heard the news!

PATTI

(beat)

Who is this?! Sam's parents are dead! I don't know what --

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Please, Miss...

PATTI

Juarez.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD (O.S.)

Miss Juarez, I don't know what you're talking about. I'm very much alive.

(beat)

However, Sam and I haven't spoken to each other in many years.

Patti suspects this is a crank call and starts to hang up but decides to continue listening.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD (O.S.)
 She left a message on my recorder
 that she was in trouble. Did she say
 anything to you?

Patti still isn't sure about this, so...

PATTI
 Perhaps you should talk to Miss
 Barringer?

LYDIA WHITECLOUD (O.S.)
 Miss Barringer?

PATTI
 Sam's best friend.

Hangs up.

EXT. MILLER'S CROSSING - DAY

The group is across the road from the store.

Jake returns his gun to the survival bag.

JAKE
 That must be the store the old man
 was talking about.

They cross to the store.

SAM
 How will you recognize the informant?

JAKE
 He's missing his right thumb.

He opens the dilapidated screen door.

INT. WHITECLOUD HOME - DAY

Lydia Whitecloud is in the kitchen and makes a phone call.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

LuAnn, an executive secretary at a large oil company, is in
 her plush office. Her phone RINGS.

INTERCUT:

LUANN
 LuAnn Barringer, may I help you?

LYDIA WHITECLOUD
 Ms. Barringer, we've never met. I'm
 Samantha Collins' mother.

LuAnn has no time for this and hangs up.

The phone RINGS again.

LUANN

LuAnn Barringer.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Please Ms. Barringer, don't hang up!

LUANN

Who is this?!

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

I'm Samantha's mother. Did she tell you I was dead?

LuAnn doesn't know what to say -- suspects a crank.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Hello... are you there?

LUANN

Yes. How do I know you are who you say you are?

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

What do you want to know?

LUANN

What type of work did Sam's father do while she lived at home?

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

He worked in the casino on the reservation.

LUANN

Doing what?

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

A black jack dealer.

LUANN

(beat)

So, why are you calling me, Mrs. --

Still suspicious.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Whitecloud, Lydia Whitecloud. So you know about Samantha and me, Ms. Barringer?

LUANN

Yes.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

You must think I'm despicable.

LUANN

To say the least. What I don't understand is how a mother could disown her own child.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD
 Ms. Barringer, you don't understand
 our --

LUANN
 (angry)
 You're right, Mrs. Whitecloud! I
 don't! Sam needed you! You weren't
 there!

Nothing this woman has to say sways LuAnn.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD
 I've got to try and make it right,
 Ms. Barringer.

LUANN
 (retorts)
 It's a little late for that, don't
 you think?!
 (beat)
 Mrs. Whitecloud, what do you want
 from me?!

LYDIA WHITECLOUD
 Sam left a message on my recorder.
 She said she was in trouble. Do you
 know why?

The conversation is over.

LUANN
 You need to be talking to Amy, Sam's
 daughter. Not me.

Hangs up.

EXT. TUTTLE HOME - DAY

Lydia Whitecloud agonizes over the decision to ring the door
 bell or not. She turns to leave but... presses the BELL.

INT. TUTTLE HOME - DAY

BUD TUTTLE rough houses with Lizzy and Ali in the den when
 he hears the door BELL.

BUD
 (calling out)
 I'll get it!

Lizzy squeals as he carries her like a sack of potatoes while
 dragging a giggling Ali holding onto his ankle. Opening the
 door he finds Mrs. Whitecloud.

BUD
 Yes, can I help you?

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

(nervous)
Pardon me, but is this the Tuttle residence?

BUD

Yes.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

My name is Lydia Whitecloud...

BUD

And...

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

I am Samantha Collins' mother.

HOLD ON Bud for a moment while he studies her. Amy comes to the door.

AMY

Who is it honey?

BUD

This is Lydia Whitecloud... she says she's Sam's mother.

AMY

(beat)
That's absurd, my grandparents are dead.

Raking the woman with her eyes.

AMY

(beat)
That's cruel, lady -- you know that!

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Please, if I could have a moment of your time.

AMY

Close the door Bud!

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Please...

Bud and Amy look at each other but agree with some reservation.

INT. TUTTLE HOME, DEN - DAY

All are seated. Mrs. Whitecloud is uneasy and...

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

I hardly know where to begin.

AMY

Start with what do you want, Mrs...

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

Whitecloud... Lydia Whitecloud.

(beat)

I've been out of town for a few days.
Samantha left a message on my recorder
that she was in trouble.

(beat)

Then I saw the news.

Weeping. Amy is not convinced. Thoughts race through her
mind.

AMY

I don't understand. Why would my
mother tell me all these years that
you were dead?

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

(hangs her head)

Samantha's father arranged a marriage
when she was twenty... well to be
truthful, he sold her in marriage.

AMY

He what?!

BUD

That's nonsense.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

My husband is a very proud man but
shallow in self-esteem. He always
thought that owning land would fix
everything but we couldn't afford
any.

AMY

And someone offered land for marriage
to my mother?

Mrs. Whitecloud nods yes.

Bud doesn't believe one word.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

My husband disowned Samantha when she
refused.

BUD

Honey, your mother has never mentioned
this.

AMY

(thinking)

Probably why I've never been able to
get close to her -- she kept it all
inside.

Ali aggravates Lizzy who squeals.

AMY
 (irritated)
 Stop it Lizzy!

LYDIA WHITECLOUD
 Amy, may I call you Amy?

Amy just stares at her.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD
 I'm so sorry.

AMY
 I can't believe this. How could you,
 a mother, do this to your own child?!

She doesn't know what to believe. Bud senses Amy is about
 to erupt.

BUD
 Girls, go to the playroom, please!

The girls don't move.

BUD
 Now!

Ali quickly takes Lizzy by the hand and leads her out.

AMY
 You know Mrs.Whitecloud --

LYDIA WHITECLOUD
 Lydia, please.

Amy is not giving her an inch.

AMY
 (eyes narrow)
 You know Mrs. Whitecloud, I don't
 really know who I am because of you.
 I have no heritage... I mean
 (gesturing)
 it's as if I only began thirty years
 ago. All my Mother ever told me was
 that I was an Apache.
 (beat)
 She never would discuss her family
 and would always change the subject.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD
 I'm am so sorry Amy.

AMY
 (contemptuous)
 Sorry! Oh, it's real easy to be sorry!
 What about my children, huh?! They
 certainly have no heritage -- no roots!

Mrs. Whitecloud turns away ashamed.

AMY

Did you know she had cancer?!

Mrs. Whitecloud gasps in horror.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

What?! I didn't know, I didn't know!

AMY

And now because of you both my Mother and Father are dead! You killed them you wretched old woman!

BUD

You'd better leave Mrs. Whitecloud.

AMY

(yelling)

Yeah, go ahead and leave, now that you've ripped me open and spilled my guts!

This was obviously a mistake. Mrs. Whitecloud leaves. The front door CLICKS shut.

Amy weeps and Bud pulls her to himself.

INT. STORE - DAY

The group is in the country store. The indifferent atmosphere permeates the musty air stirred by WOBBLY ceiling fans. The SOUND of country music blares from an old radio.

Two elderly Native American MEN play checkers on a rickety table.

Across the room sits BUSTER YEHUDIT, thirties, a lackadaisical man, a country bumpkin wearing bib overalls, brogans, and

no socks. His size alone is intimidating but a teddy bear at heart. He leans against the wall in a chair sipping a Dr. Pepper.

Fitzhugh licks crumbs on the floor.

The elderly STOREKEEPER stands behind the counter swatting at unsuspecting flies.

JAKE

Pardon me, I'm suppose to meet a man here.

The storekeeper is not on the planet.

JAKE

Sir, did you hear me?

BUSTER

He was here.

Swaggers to the counter.

JAKE

Was?

BUSTER

He just left.

Jake runs out the door followed by Jenny.

EXT. STORE - DAY

Jake looks up and down the empty road. No vehicle in sight except the old truck parked in front.

Something attracts Jenny's attention on the ground.

ANGLE ON THE GROUND

She picks up a torn piece of paper.

INSERT -- PIECE OF PAPER

Sly and 112 East are barely legible.

BACK TO SCENE

JENNY

Mr. Collins, what is the man's name?

JAKE

Don't know.

JENNY

What do you want with him?

JAKE

He has vital information for me.

Could his name be Sly? she wonders... slips the paper into her pocket.

SARAH (O.C.)

Mr. Collins?! Hurry!

They hurry back inside.

INT. STORE - DAY

Sam has collapsed and is sprawled out on the on the floor. Fitzhugh whimpers with his head on her chest.

Buster crudely watches the show.

JAKE

Sam?!

ZAKIYA

She passed out, Mr. Collins!

Sam comes around.

JAKE
Honey, what happened?!

SAM
I'm okay -- just a little weak all of
a sudden.

He helps her to a chair and Janet offers her water.

Jake questions Buster again.

JAKE
Did you happen to notice if that man
was missing a finger?

BUSTER
Right thumb.

SAM
Jake, what do we do now?

JAKE
Mister, maybe you could help me with
something else. Have you heard of a
flower called the Yellow Ginger?

Buster nods his head yes.

SAM
You have? Where can we find it?!
Please, can you help us?!

Buster senses her desperation.

BUSTER
(to Jake)
Does help include these pretty's?

Making a graphic gesture reaching out to touch Sam.

Jake steps in front of Sam as he looks up at Buster.

BUSTER
Step aside, worm!

Fitzhugh snarls.

Buster eyes him.

JAKE
Mister, I wouldn't antagonize him.

SAM
Yes, he's very sensitive.

Fitzhugh, puts on his show: teeth flashing, a piercing look.

SAM
An apology usually appeases him.

Buster rethinks his position as he watches Fitzhugh.

BUSTER

(nervous)
Usually?

Fitzhugh circles. Buster backs away a few steps.

Sam covers her mouth snickering.

The girls grin.

BUSTER

Nice pooch.

Really concerned with his safety now.

JAKE

Maybe you need to kneel.

SAM

So he'll know you're sincere.

Buster kneels.

Fitzhugh growls.

BUSTER

Easy pooch. I'm sorry. I only want
to be neighborly.

Guardedly extending his hand. Fitzhugh sits and licks his
hand. Buster sighs in relief.

Jake and Sam chuckle.

JAKE

Okay neighbor, suppose you tell us
about the Yellow Ginger.

BUSTER

Yeah, sure. What do you want it for?

SAM

It's a matter of life and death!

BUSTER

Well, then it must be worth a price.

JAKE

(agitated)
Now listen, plow boy...

Buster cracks a glance at Fitzhugh who is on his feet glaring
at him.

BUSTER

Sure Mister. Anything you say.

SAM

Well?!

BUSTER

It's gone. Dead!

Eyes on Fitzhugh.

JAKE

What's dead?!

BUSTER

The Yellow Ginger.

SAM

(retorts)

How do you know?!

BUSTER

I work at the botanical garden in
Solomon's Pass part time. The garden
burned up yesterday.

SAM

Yesterday?! Jake, yesterday!

She wails and runs out.

Fitzhugh is upset at the commotion, his barking is deafening.

The girls follow Sam.

JAKE

Fitz, hush!

(to Buster)

Is there any other place that grows
it?

BUSTER

That's a delicate flower. Requires a
controlled environment.

Jake sighs. This is not good.

BUSTER

What? What did I say? What's wrong?

JAKE

My wife has cancer. We needed a Yellow
Ginger for treatment today.

HOLD ON Buster for a moment... his gentler side comes to
life. Then...

BUSTER

Come with me!

JAKE

What?

BUSTER
We're wasting time!

He rushes out the door.

EXT. CITY - DAY

WE HEAR The William Tell Overture play as...

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) The group is in the back of Buster's raggedy old truck, hanging on for dear life, as Buster flies through Solomon's Pass.

B) He turns off the main drag into a run-down area of town.

C) (The music fades as) Buster brings his truck to a screeching stop in front of a

EXT. TAVERN - DAY

Country and western music BLARES into the street.

Buster rushes inside. There's a COMMOTION.

Jake and Sam look at each other wondering what's happening.

Finally, Buster walks out the door with a bag of food in one arm and his other arm around the neck of EDDIE, thirties, a street person. Eddie is not too cooperative.

Buster passes out sandwiches and water.

BUSTER
Folks, this is Eddie. He has offered
his help.

The group gobbles up the food while Fitzhugh devours a sandwich in one gulp.

JAKE
What does he know?

Buster jabs Eddie.

BUSTER
Tell 'em Eddie!

EDDIE
I'm good at finding things.

Jake gives Fitzhugh water.

JAKE
Have you heard of the Yellow Ginger?

Eddie shakes his head no.

EDDIE

But if it's around here, I can find it!

Buster pats him on the back.

JAKE

Ah, maybe Eddie could turn up the man with the missing thumb.

The look on Jenny's face tells us that she has come to a decision.

BUSTER

I've instructed Eddie on that point too.

Eddie walks away.

JAKE

By the way, I'm Jake and this is Sam, Sarah, Jenny, Zakiya, and Janet.

BUSTER

Ladies. Buster Yehudit.

A puzzled look from the group.

BUSTER

(quickly responding)
My father was Jewish.

Ah, they see the connection.

BUSTER

Well, what's next?

JAKE

Sheriff's office.

Buster starts the truck.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, PARKING LOT - DAY

Buster drives his truck into the parking lot fast and slams on the brakes jerking the group around.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Buster steps out of his truck and lowers the tail gate.

BUSTER

(to Sam)
Don't fret little lady, when Eddie is on to something, he's like a hound gone to ground.

SAM

Thanks.

Fitzhugh leaps out followed by the group.

Buster squeals the tires as he drives away.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

An irritated African-American female DEPUTY, twenties, shuffles papers at the desk.

JAKE

Fitz, sit.

The group waits for recognition.

FEMALE DEPUTY

What?!

JAKE

Our plane crashed and we need to talk to someone.

FEMALE DEPUTY

(indifferent)

Your plane crashed, huh?! Were there any injuries?

Jake shakes his head no.

FEMALE DEPUTY

Have a seat over there. Deputy Hobart will be with you shortly.

She gives the group a look of "I don't need this today".

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The group is decked out in new clothes. The girls pig out on hamburgers. Sam picks at her food.

JAKE

Honey, you have not eaten anything.

SAM

(worried)

Jake, are you sure Buster knows where we are? We haven't heard anything?

Time is slipping by and so is her hope.

JAKE

I left word with the desk clerk. Don't worry.

He knows what's happening but he feels powerless. He needs to get her back to the motel. So he motions for the WAITER.

WAITER

Yes sir?

JAKE

A doggy bag please.

The waiter acknowledges.

JAKE

Fitzhugh is probably starving by now.

JANET

Thanks for the new outfits, Mr.
Collins.

ZAKIYA

Yeah, feels nice to wear something
clean.

Jake acknowledges.

The waiter returns with a styrofoam container. Jake rakes
the left over food into it.

He leaves a hundred dollar bill on the table and they leave.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jake and Sam lie across the bed holding hands. They are not
talking but we can imagine what's going through their minds.

Fitzhugh catnaps. There's a rapid KNOCK. He barks and runs
to the door.

JANET (O.C.)

Mr. Collins! Mr. Collins!

Jake crosses to the door and opens it. The girls are
hysterical.

Fitzhugh is barking at the commotion.

JANET

Mr. Collins, we can't find Jenny!

JAKE

Fitz, hush!

Fitzhugh sits.

ZAKIYA

She left our room to fill the ice
bucket!

SARAH

And that was two hours ago!

Sam covers her mouth in fear.

JAKE

Slow down girls!

He ushers them inside.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Jenny is in a phone booth. She removes the piece of paper from her pocket and flips the pages of the phone book.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Jenny, nervous, walks up the steps of 112 East Downing, a shabby-looking apartment building in a rough neighborhood.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

The girls have calmed down enough to explain:

JANET

Remember, Jenny said she couldn't face her mother?

SAM

She's run away! Jake you've got to find her!

Jake picks up the telephone.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Jenny examines the mail boxes. She locates

INSERT -- MAIL BOX NAME

W. Sly, Apartment 2 C

BACK TO SCENE

A awful-looking MAN exits an apartment. We can only wonder what's going through his mind as he scrutinizes Jenny.

Fearful, she quickly climbs the stairs to

THE SECOND FLOOR

From the shadows of the dimly-lit corridor,

P.O.V. -- JENNY

she watches the door of 2 C. The door opens and Sly exits.

BACK TO SCENE

Jenny strains to see his hand.

Sly closes the door

CLOSE ON RIGHT HAND

and WE SEE his thumb is missing. He disappears down the stairs.

Jenny tries the door. Locked. She jiggles it. It's loose in the frame. So she throws her weight against it and to her surprise the door pops open.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

DEPUTY HOBART, African-American, late twenties, polite, brings Jake and Sam up to speed. He sits at a small table.

Jake and Sam sit on the bed. Fitzhugh catnaps.

DEPUTY HOBART
Mr. Collins, Ma'am. I hope the accommodations are adequate.

Opening a folder of papers.

JAKE
Very nice, thanks. Deputy, what about Jenny?!

DEPUTY HOBART
Well, there's an APB out for her. We'll find her.
(beat)
And the girl's families have been notified.

Wiping his forehead, he pours a glass of water.

DEPUTY HOBART
Man, it's warm!

SAM
What about Sarah's mother?

DEPUTY HOBART
We learned that she's in a hospital from an overdose.

SAM
Oh, Jake.

Grabing his hand.

DEPUTY HOBART
Arrest warrants have been issued for those two men at the compound. FBI agents are in route as we speak.

Wiping his brow again.

SAM
And that professor?

DEPUTY HOBART
He's in custody.

JAKE
What about that fireball?

DEPUTY HOBART

(dubious)

Well... the news media has reported
an unconfirmed sighting of something.
No other details.

A swallow of water.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jake and Sam are lying across the bed. She's crying and Fitzhugh props his head next to her. Fitzhugh's sad eyes peer at her and she responds to his affection.

SAM

(giving up)

Jake, we're not going to make it.

One can sense the heaviness of fear.

JAKE

We don't give up until we win!

But he really doesn't believe that anymore.

There's a KNOCK. Fitzhugh barks and runs to the door. Jake crosses to the door and opens to find...

JAKE

Janet?

She's upset and he motions to enter.

SAM

Janet, honey, what is it?

Janet sits down on the bed crying.

SAM

What's wrong, child?

JANET

It's my mother. I talked to my Father
and he told me she died after I was
abducted. She couldn't stand the
pain.

Sam holds her as her own child.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Buster's truck speeds into the parking lot and comes to a screeching stop. He jumps out with a box under one arm and races up the steps to the second level.

Buster bangs on the door.

BUSTER

Jake! Sam!

Jake opens up. Fitzhugh barks at the commotion.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Buster is excited. Fitzhugh's barking is deafening.

JAKE

Fitz! Zip it!

Fitzhugh sits.

BUSTER

Got it!

Sam tears opens the box with expectation...

SAM

Bless you!

but then turns away in disbelief.

Jake takes the flower from the box

CLOSE ON BOX

to find it is wilted.

Sam is devastated.

BUSTER

(mystified)
What's wrong?!

JAKE

How long have has it been cut?

BUSTER

Ah, a couple of hours I guess. What is it?

JAKE

The compound evaporates within thirty minutes. It's no good.

Buster can't believe it.

BUSTER

Man, and that's all Eddie found.

SAM

You did your best, Buster, thanks.

She says this with an insensitive tone.

BUSTER

(teary eyed)
Little lady, you're a fighter! Please, don't give up! Please.

Numb and half listening, Sam lowers herself onto the foot of the bed. Fitzhugh snuggles close to her.

Looking at Sam, Jake doesn't have any more encouragement left.

JAKE

Do you know where Eddie found it?
Maybe there's more?

Buster shakes his head no.

SAM

Jake...

Grabs her abdomen in pain then collapses.

INT. HOSPITAL, E.R. - NIGHT

It is late evening of the fourth day. Sam is in a treatment room on a gurney hooked up to an I V.

DR. RUIZ, Latin-American, late thirties, administers. The doctor is strictly traditional medicine.

Jake holds her hand looking into her eyes. He loves this woman.

DR. RUIZ

Mr. Collins, could I speak to you
outside?

SAM

Jake, don't leave me. Jake, please!

Laboring to speak.

JAKE

I'll be right back, Honey.

He releases her hand.

WAITING ROOM

Buster and the girls pace anxiously.

NURSE'S STATION

NURSE ROBIN WASHINGTON, African-American, thirties, walks in. NURSE CYNTHIA ALEXANDER, forties, greets her.

There is a conspicuous yellow flower on the counter.

CINDY

Robin, I'm certainly glad to see you?

ROBIN

Rough shift?

CINDY

Depressing would be a better term.

ROBIN

That flower smells wonderful. Bob?

Cindy nods her head yes.

CINDY

Our twenty-fifth. It came by special delivery.

ROBIN

What is it?

Admiring it.

CINDY

Yellow Ginger.

ROBIN

Oh, that's rare, isn't it?

CINDY

Bob said there's not another one to be had in town since the botanical garden burned up.

Buster overhears and eyes the flower.

OUTSIDE TREATMENT ROOM

DR. RUIZ

Mr. Collins, how long has your wife had liver cancer?

JAKE

She was diagnosed a few days ago.

DR. RUIZ

Her liver enzymes are through the roof. She's in liver failure. Why wasn't she admitted to a hospital?

A little annoyed.

Buster butts in.

BUSTER

Jake, I need to talk to you!

JAKE

Just a minute, Buster.

BUSTER

Jake, now!

A NURSE in the treatment room calls out.

NURSE (O.C.)

Dr. Ruiz?!

DR. RUIZ
I'll be with your wife, Mr. Collins.

The girls follow him into the room.

JAKE
(irritated)
What?!

Buster points.

BUSTER
That flower over there.

JAKE
What flower?

Buster does a double take.

BUSTER
That nurse over there has a Yellow
Ginger. I saw it!

WE FOLLOW Jake as he crosses quickly to the nurse's station.

JAKE
(demanding)
Ma'am, there was a flower here a minute
ago. Where is it?!

ROBIN
A flower? Oh, that was Nurse
Alexander's.

JAKE
(insistent)
Where is she?!

ROBIN
Well, she just left.

Jake runs out to the parking lot. Buster follows.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A car leaves the parking lot. Jake waves frantically.

JAKE
(yells)
Hey! Hey Lady!

Buster WHISTLES.

Buster's truck is parked at the curb. Fitzhugh is inside
and is going nuts at the commotion.

INT. HOSPITAL, E.R. - NIGHT

Jake insistently questions Nurse Washington.

JAKE
Nurse, where does she live?!

ROBIN
Why?

JAKE
Look, I need that flower!

ROBIN
What?

Her tolerance pales.

JAKE
Look, nurse, I don't have time to explain! Where does she live!

ROBIN
We don't give out that information, Sir! And I don't like your tone! I'm calling security!

JAKE
Look, my wife is dying of cancer! That flower can save her life!

Nurse Washington sees Dr. Ruiz and hastily motions to him.

ROBIN
(yells)
Doctor Ruiz!

He crosses to the nurse's station.

ROBIN
Dr. Ruiz, this man is acting weird!

DR. RUIZ
Mr. Collins, what is it?

JAKE
That nurse has a flower that can save my wife's life!

DR. RUIZ
What?

This is ludicrous.

ROBIN
He's talking about Cindy Alexander.

By this time the girls join them.

JAKE
Doctor, it's the treatment I'm searching for!

DR. RUIZ

Look, Mr. Collins, I know you're under a lot of stress. I can give you a sedative.

JAKE

Don't humor me doctor! That flower has the chemical to cure my wife!

Blows his fuse and roughly grabs Dr. Ruiz by the collar.

BUSTER

Easy, Jake!

Pulls Jake's hands off the doctor.

SARAH

Doctor, why can't you believe him!

DR. RUIZ

I've never heard anything so absurd.

Straightens his collar.

ZAKIYA

Please doctor, help us!

Dr. Ruiz turns to Robin.

DR. RUIZ

Does Cindy have a cell phone?

Robin nods her head yes and dials the number.

ROBIN

(irritated)

Cindy, this is Robin. I'm sorry to bother you. We have a problem. Can you return to the hospital?

Giving Jake a scorching look.

CINDY (O.S.)

Robin, I've been in an accident.

ROBIN

Are you hurt?

CINDY (O.S.)

I'm okay. But I can't move my car.

ROBIN

Where are you?

CINDY (O.S.)

Medicine Bend at Long Bow.

ROBIN

I'll get back to you.

Hangs up.

ROBIN

She's been in an accident. She can't
move her car.

Jake is agitated as he looks at the clock.

JAKE

Sam has to have the potion before
midnight!

INSERT -- WALL CLOCK

shows 11:15 p.m.

BACK TO SCENE

BUSTER

Where is she?

ROBIN

Medicine Bend and Long Bow.

Buster runs out.

INT. HOSPITAL, E.R. - NIGHT

Jake and the group are gathered around Sam. He holds her
hand.

Dr. Ruiz examines her eyes then looks at Jake to say "she is
slipping way."

SAM

(whispers)
Jake. Jake.

He bends down close.

JAKE

I'm here Honey.

SAM

I'm dying Jake.

Tears slide down his face as he kisses her.

The girls weep.

SAM

Jake, I realize how wrong I've been.

JAKE

Don't try to talk, Sam.

SAM

No Jake, I've got to say it. I've
(MORE)

SAM (CON'T)

been wrong about a lot of things.
 What you said about love and need --
 I understand. I love you Jake. I
 need you! Will you forgive me?

Laboring to speak, coughing.

SAM

And Jake, tell my father and mother I
 forgive them. I've been wrong, so
 wrong. And tell Amy and Bud and...

Loses consciousness.

JAKE

Doctor!

Dr. Ruiz examines her eyes, her pulse and looks up at the
 monitors.

INT. BUSTER'S TRUCK, MOVING - NIGHT

Buster follows a sheriff's patrol car running hot weaving
 through traffic. Nurse Alexander holds the Yellow

Ginger in a rag. The flower was knocked out of its pot in
 the collision. Fitzhugh sits in the middle barking at the
 commotion.

BUSTER

How long has it been out of the
 container?

CINDY

Oh, about fifteen minutes. Why?

BUSTER

We've got fifteen minutes! Hang on!

He stomps the accelerator.

INT. SHERIFF'S CAR, MOVING - NIGHT

The deputy in the patrol car watches in unbelief as...

DEPUTY NO.2

Man, what's he got in that ole rattle
 trap?!

... Buster passes him by.

INT. HOSPITAL, E.R. - NIGHT

The group is at Sam's side. Jake turns and looks at the
 clock.

INSERT -- WALL CLOCK

shows 11:53 p.m.

BACK TO SCENE

SARAH

Mrs. Collins, please don't die.

Touching Sam, crying. She's beginning to bond to Sam.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Buster smokes the truck tires as he screeches to a stop at the emergency room entrance.

The sheriff's patrol car pulls in.

INT. HOSPITAL, E.R. - NIGHT

Fitzhugh gallops in sliding across the floor. A SECURITY GUARD tries to contain him but he growls flashing his teeth. The guard back pedals.

Buster and Cindy enter on the run followed by the deputy.

WE FOLLOW Fitzhugh as he searches for Sam, running in and out of the rooms with ORDERLIES chasing him. Then into the

TREATMENT ROOM

he finds her. He pines standing with front paws up on the gurney.

WAITING ROOM

CINDY

Buster, I'm going to the pharmacy!
Robin come with me!

They run down the hall.

Buster runs into the treatment room.

TREATMENT ROOM

BUSTER

Jake, we got it!

JAKE

(reassuring)
You hear that Sam?! You're going to
make it, Honey.

A look of relief on the group's faces.

EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE

Jenny runs in fearing the worst. An envelope is in her hand. She makes an inquiry. An ATTENDANT points.

Buster paces anxiously in the waiting room looking down the hall.

BUSTER

(bellows)
Where's that tea?!

Jenny hears his voice.

JENNY

Buster?!

Runs to him.

BUSTER

Jenny?! Where've you been girl?!

JENNY

What happened?! I went to the motel
and they told me that there was an
emergency!

BUSTER

It's Sam.

She follows him into the treatment room.

TREATMENT ROOM

Jenny loses it as she sees Sam lying there in a semiconscious
state.

JAKE

Jenny?!

Crying, Jenny embraces him and the girls.

Fitzhugh is barking nonstop.

Robin enters.

INSERT -- WALL CLOCK

shows 11:58 p.m.

BACK TO SCENE

Cindy enters carrying a cup of liquid. Dr. Ruiz follows
tripping over Fitzhugh.

DR. RUIZ

Get that dog out of here!

Buster leads Fitzhugh out.

ROBIN

Lift her up, quick!

Jake lifts Sam up. Cindy forces the tea. Sam makes a sour
face resisting.

JAKE

Sam, don't fight it!

Sam gulps the liquid... then loses consciousness.

INSERT -- WALL CLOCK

shows midnight.

BACK TO SCENE

ROBIN

Okay, get her to ICU.

Sam is quickly wheeled out.

ICU

Sam is unconscious. Monitors are attached to her and an

IV flows into her arm.

Jake, sitting at her bedside, feels a gut-wrenching helpless as he holds her hand. He reveals a side that we haven't seen before as he:

JAKE

God, if there is a God... I'm afraid.
I could always come up with a plan,
with an answer... but this... help
us... .

(beat)

please let this work.

The mysterious man from the crash suddenly appears. He touches Sam's forehead.

HOSPITAL LOBBY

Jenny makes a phone call.

JENNY

Mom... it's me, Jenny.

Crying.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ICU - DAY

Sam has made a miraculous recovery and is awake and alert. Doctor Ruiz looks at her chart.

DR. RUIZ

(perplexed)
This is bizarre. I can't believe
you're awake much less cognizant.
How do you feel?

Takes her pulse.

SAM
 Fine. I can't believe it myself.
 That old woman was right.

DR. RUIZ
 What old woman?

As he examines her eyes.

SAM
 Oh, it's a long story.

DR. RUIZ
 And you don't feel any pain, no
 weakness?

As he palpates her abdomen.

Sam shakes her head no.

DR. RUIZ
 There's still some distension but the
 numbers are down.
 (beat)
 I can't believe a flower made this
 much effect.

Sam smiles.

SAM
 I want to go home.

DR. RUIZ
 (hesitates)
 Ordinarily I would insist on your
 staying in the hospital. But --

He signs the discharge papers.

DR. RUIZ
 (stern)
 But you be sure to see you doctor as
 soon as you get home.

Sam acknowledges.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

An ORDERLY pushes Sam in a wheel chair to the front entrance.
 The girls are waiting. Jake walks beside her and...

JAKE
 Deputy Hobart called about Sarah's
 mother.

She knows that look on his face.

SAM
 Oh, Honey.

The girls gather around.

Sarah caresses Sam's face who responds with a glowing smile. For the first time, Sarah feels loved.

Buster pulls up in front driving a van. Fitzhugh is in the front seat barking continually.

Buster enters.

JAKE

Buster, where did the van come from?

BUSTER

It's Eddie's. Ah, Jake, Eddie located your man. His name is Willie Sly.

JAKE

Did he have my information?

Jenny is beaming and can hardly wait to deliver her good news.

BUSTER

Jake... Sly is dead. Evidently he was drunk and stumbled across the railroad tracks. A train ran over him. I'm sorry.

Jenny can't believe it.

Jake lowers his head in despair as...

Jenny hands him the envelope, grinning.

JAKE

What's this?

His face lights up as he views the contents.

JAKE

This is it! Where did you get this, Jenny?

JENNY

His room.

JAKE

You mean Sly's room?

Hugging her.

SAM

What is it Honey?

JAKE

The hundred thousand dollar cancellation.

Looking like a great weight has been lifted.

SAM
 Jenny, child, that took a lot of
 courage. Thank you.

She hugs her.

JENNY
 I had to do something to redeem my
 self respect.

She feels good about herself now.

JAKE
 Let's go home! Buster, my man, to
 the airport!

The group piles into the van as Fitzhugh goes nuts with
 excitement.

INT. AIRPORT, SOLOMON'S PASS - DAY

The group is in the terminal and prepare to board a chartered
 twin-engine Cessna.

Sam holds Buster's hand looking into his eyes trying to
 express what's in her heart.

SAM
 (crying)
 I wouldn't have made it without you.

She hugs a teary-eyed Buster. Then the girls hug him good-
 by.

JAKE
 Thanks, friend.

Shaking his hand firmly, He looks at Buster as if he could
 see into the very soul of this gentle giant.

EXT. AIRPORT, SOLOMON'S PASS - DAY

The Cessna lifts off.

Buster watches until the plane disappears.

EXT. AIRPORT, TWIN RIVERS - DAY

The Cessna lands.

INT. AIRPORT, TWIN RIVERS - DAY

The group enters the terminal to see their families anxiously
 waiting. The atmosphere is charged with emotion.

Janet and Zakiya run to their families.

Jenny and her mother cry as they embrace each other.

JENNY
 Forgive me, Mother.

The healing process begins.

LuAnn waits with anticipation.

Lizzy and Ali, rush to Sam and Jake. Sam hugs Bud and then LuAnn.

SAM

(to Bud)
Where's Amy?

LuAnn points.

Amy walks through the door with her arm around Mrs. Whitecloud.

Sam is stunned -- can't believe her eyes.

SAM

Mom? Mom, is that you?!

Slowly walking to her mother.

LYDIA WHITECLOUD

(whimpering)
I didn't know if you ever wanted to
see me again.
(beat)
Please forgive me, Samantha. I am so
sorry.

Sam cries as they share a tender embrace. Amy puts her arm around the two of them.

Fitzhugh runs to the children.

Sarah searches the crowd on the chance she'll see her mother, but as she feared she is not there. She feels down for the count when Sam confirms it...

SAM

Sarah, your mother isn't coming.

SARAH

She's dead, isn't she?

SAM

Oh Honey, I'm so sorry.

Holding her close. Then...

SAM

Family, this is Sarah. She's coming
to live with us... and be my daughter,
that is if she will have me.

All the women are crying as Sam pulls Sarah into an embrace solidifying their union.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Patti sits at her desk and looks up to see...

Jake and Sam enter.

Fitzhugh runs to Patti. She hugs him.

PATTI

Fitzhugh!

She just lets it all out as she embraces Jake and Sam.

The office staff gathers around.

PATTI

Jake, those men are in your office.

He looks toward his office.

JAKE

Let's go Fitz.

Fitzhugh barks.

JAKE'S OFFICE

Varga, cocky, sits in the chair with his feet on the desk.

The bodyguards handle Jake's personal things but quickly put them down as Fitzhugh enters growling.

Jake enters.

VARGA

Jake, my man.

Grinning like a Cheshire cat.

Jake slaps Varga's feet off his desk.

Bodyguard No.2 grabs Jake by his arm.

BODYGUARD NO.2

You show Mr. Varga some respect!

Fitzhugh charges and knocks him down. He stands poised at the man's throat.

JAKE

Let him up Fitz!

Throws the envelope at Varga.

VARGA

Hey payday!

But his cocky attitude quickly wanes.

JAKE

Now you dirt bag, get out and take
this slime with you!

HOLD ON Varga while he tries to save face.

BODYGUARD NO.1

What is it boss?!

VARGA

Shut up fool! Let's go!

Throwing the envelope down, they strut out under the watchful
eye of Fitzhugh.

The group enters.

SAM

Jake, what happened?

JAKE

It seems his real name is Adriano
Diego, not Varga. There's a contract
on him.

(beat)

It's over. He won't be back.

Putting his arm around Sam.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Jake paces in the waiting room.

EXAMINATION ROOM

A gray-headed DR. WATERHOUSE, African-American, examines
Sam's chart as she buttons her blouse.

DR. WATERHOUSE

Mrs. Collins, I don't understand.
(puzzled)

I've compared the x-rays and blood
work with last week's.

(beat)

What has happened here?

Looking at Sam who smiles confidently.

WAITING ROOM

Jake is flipping nervously through magazines. He looks up
to see Sam with her hand over her mouth. Thinking the worst,
his face pales, tears well up as he slowly stands.

She hurries to his embrace.

SAM

(crying)

Honey, it's gone! I'm clean!

(beat)

I love you.

Jake is relieved and they leave with their arms around each other.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER: FORGIVENESS IS THE SCENT THAT THE ROSE LEAVES ON THE HEEL THAT CRUSHES IT.

-- Author Unknown

THE END