

COYWOLF

Written by

Michael A. Levine

4415 Westchester Dr.
Woodland Hills, CA 91364
310 455 4455

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT (1840) - EARLY EVENING

A drop-dead gorgeous view of the majestic Mississippi river from a vantage point high on the Iowa bluffs. Iowa is not yet a state - barely even a territory. Looking across the river to the Illinois side there is nothing but wilderness.

Insects chatter, owls hoot, nightbirds call.

A waxing fingernail moon near the horizon.

SUPER: LOOKOUT POINT. 1840

A young NATIVE AMERICAN WOMAN, dressed in traditional garb, runs up the path to the point, looking behind her every few seconds. Exhausted, she pauses and catches her breath, warily monitoring any movement from the direction she came.

A pair of red eyes peer out ominously from a nearby copse.

From out of the shadows, behind her, a man emerges. As the moonlight crosses his face he is revealed as a 19th century FRONTIERSMAN.

He grabs her wrist and spins her around, holding a large Bowie knife to her face.

FRONTIERSMAN

I thought I'd find you here.

Her eyes open wide, petrified.

FRONTIERSMAN (CONT'D)

You squaws think this place is magic or somethin' doncha? Well, it ain't. It's just another place where a redskin woman has to answer to her white master - if she knows what's good for her.

(menacing)

You thought you could escape, didya? I'm gonna have to teach you a lesson.

The sound of her clothes being ripped by his knife. She SCREAMS. The frontiersman laughs. POV zoom in on the his back.

A ferocious snarl. He whirls around, eyes open wide in terror, his back to the cliff edge.

FRONTIERSMAN (CONT'D)

What the...?

A dark shadowy figure shoots out, howling as it leaps on the frontiersman, pushing him screaming into the abyss. We focus on his terrified face as he plummets to his death.

The howl crossfades to...

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT (NOW) - EARLY EVENING

...a coyote call.

Same gorgeous view of a majestic river as before except now there is a brightly-lit modern town on the Illinois side of the river.

We follow a winding path which leads to...

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

...Infinity House, an ominously imposing, oh-so-trendy Architectural Digest-type structure. It is a character in its own right and feels alive. Everything around it says high-tech, man-made, including the suburban-style lawn below a deck, fed by incessant water sprinklers.

Standing on the deck, we focus on the frightened face of SELENE, 20s, Native American descent. Holding her small dog, MINA, like a talisman, she stands next to JAMES LATIMORE, 30s, her handsome, charismatic, every hair-in-place, husband.

LEO CHANTRELL, 50s, oily, obsequious developer-to-the-deep-pocketed stands notices her discomfort.

LEO

Don't be alarmed. Just a coyote.
It's part of what makes Tukteni
Tukteni. Sure beats having a kid
parked out front with his playlist
cranked like in the city.

James leans over to Selene.

JAMES

So what do you think, honey? Pretty
amazing, huh?

SELENE

(not so sure)
Yes, amazing.

LEO
 (selling hard)
 All part of the property of
 Infinity House. The city crowd pays
 twice as much for a place half as
 nice just to get a view a tenth as
 inspiring as this. And yet we're
 only minutes from town. Tukteni is
magic.

James tenderly puts his arm around his still-freaked wife and
 talks softly to her.

JAMES
 Honey, are you OK?

SELENE
 I'm OK.

JAMES
 (gently)
 You sure?

SELENE
 (smiles)
 I'm sure.

LEO
 Check this out.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The living room has a giant picture window that looks out
 onto the uninhabited nature below. In front of it is an
 expensive-looking leather couch and coffee table. Opposite
 the couch is a fireplace with a huge VIDEO DISPLAY above it.

LEO
 ...24-hour security system via a
 line-of-sight tower in Tukteni
 which connects to an antenna on the
 roof. It also carries your
 cellphone and ultra high bandwidth
 wifi. Infinity House is the
 ultimate smart house - even the
walls are smart. Watch this.

House! Show living room!

The video display flicks on and shows a stylized silhouette
 of the two of them. James waves his hand and sees an outline
 of it in the monitor.

JAMES

Cool!

LEO

Give it a try, Mr. Latimore. Ask the house to do something you wouldn't think it could.

JAMES

Okay. Uh...House! Flush toilet in master bathroom!

We hear the sound of toilet flushing o/s. James laughs.

JAMES (CONT'D)

This is great. I can do all my business right from here.

LEO

What do you do exactly?

JAMES

You'd probably call it "managing a hedge fund" but it's a little more involved than that. I do a webcast called *James Latimore's TFM*.

LEO

TFM?

JAMES

The Future of Money. Or Too Frigging Much, whichever you prefer.

LEO

And it's about hedge fund stuff?

James looks out the window, admiring the view.

JAMES

These days mostly cryptocurrency. Crypto is the future.

James looks out a side window and sees Selene on the bedroom, looking lost.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(to Leo)

Give me a minute, could you.

We follow him as he walks down the hall toward the bedroom, through it, and on to the deck and Selene, still stroking the dog.

EXT. HOUSE (DECK) - CONTINUOUS

He puts his arm around her, reassuring.

JAMES
Are you, okay?

SELENE
James...It's just so *wild* here.

JAMES
We could take another look in town
if you like.

SELENE
But that's not what you want is it?

JAMES
It's not a matter of what I want
but of what you need.

You know what Dr. Friedkin says:
the best way for you to heal is
complete rest and relaxation. The
city is one overstimulation after
another. He thinks living in nature
would be better than upping your
dosage.

Speaking of which...Did you take
your pills, today?

Based on her reaction, clearly not.

SELENE
They make me feel so...*out of it*.

JAMES
You don't want to have more of
those "episodes" again, do you?

SELENE
(convincing herself)
Yes...I mean, no...You're right.
(more definite)
You're right.

Selene puts Mina down. The dog runs into the house.

JAMES
(to the dog)
Check it out for us, Mina.

She reaches into a pocket and pulls out a prescription bottle. She counts out two pills, throws her head back, and swallows them like a pro.

JAMES (CONT'D)
That's my girl.

She looks at his smiling face and caring eyes.

SELENE
You love this place, don't you?

JAMES
I do.

SELENE
Then let's get it.

He hugs and kisses her.

JAMES
Oh, my darling, Selene. I promise you, you won't regret it.

They walk back into the bedroom.

INT. HOUSE (BEDROOM/DECK) - CONTINUOUS

James and Selene walk into the bedroom together where Leo is waiting.

He turns to Selene.

JAMES
Check this out, honey.
(louder voice)
House. Open closet.

Like magic, the closet opens. Inside are two robes. James chuckles.

JAMES (CONT'D)
(to Leo)
These come with?

LEO
(shrugs)
I guess they could.

Selene looks uncertain. Leo notices.

LEO (CONT'D)

If the lady of the house would like, I can show you something a little closer to town. But I must warn you that Ashton Kutcher wants a getaway near his hometown and just yesterday his people were--

SELENE

No, no. WE love this place.

James smiles and turns back to Leo.

JAMES

So, Leo, as manager of the firm that built this house, you're the seller?

LEO

Just as soon as we agree on a number, do your inspections, the bank approves your loan--

JAMES

Full asking price. As is. Cash.

LEO

Well, then. It's a deal! A pleasure doing...

Leo sticks out his hand but James has already gone back out on the deck.

JAMES

And all this comes with?

LEO

Absolutely. 57 acres. You are the king of your domain.

James comes back in.

JAMES

I'm not classy enough for royalty. But Selene is. What do you think, honey - want to be queen of Tukteni?

SELENE

(laughs)
Okay.

LEO

Just as soon as we close.

JAMES

And how long will that take?

LEO

It should be quick. Just one or two little details--

JAMES

Like what?

LEO

Just some technicalities...

JAMES

Technicalities?

LEO

The River Commission is unhappy with the siting of the house.

JAMES

What does that mean?

LEO

They are concerned that it is situated on what some have described as "sacred Native American land." It's just some eco-prattle by the kind of people who always object to progress of any--.

JAMES

You're confident you can get it taken care of, right?

LEO

We have been successfully addressing these adversities with that classic and most effective of problem solvents.

He rubs his fingers and thumb together in the universal language of "payoff." The gesture exposes an expensive watch on his wrist.

James grabs Leo's wrist, unnerving Leo a little.

JAMES

Cartier. Nice. Gold?

LEO

24 karat.

James let's go of Leo's wrist shows him his own watch.

JAMES

Wouldn't you rather have one of these? Rolex. Platinum.

LEO

Are they better?

JAMES

Who knows? But people think they are, so they cost a lot more money. And that's what counts, isn't it?

Let us move in tonight - and when we close I'll get you one.

Leo is hesitant. James takes Leo aside. He speaks softly.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Look, my wife has a medical...condition. She really needs to get out of the city. It would be a huge help if we could just get settled.

LEO

It's highly irregular...

He does some greedy calculus.

LEO (CONT'D)

But I don't see why not!

He hands James KEYS.

LEO (CONT'D)

Congratulations on your wonderful new home, Mr. Latimore.

Leo faces Selene.

LEO (CONT'D)

There is a drawer-full of local business flyers in the kitchen - repairmen, yoga, home massage - even pizza delivery.

Leo hands her a business card.

LEO (CONT'D)

If you have any friends who you might like as neighbors - not too close neighbors - please pass on my name, Leo Chantrell, Chantrell-La Development and Realty.

Selene takes the card to be polite. She stays in the bedroom as James guides LEO to the door in the front hallway.

INT. HOUSE (HALLWAY) - CONTINUOUS

Leo opens the door. Leo and James shake hands.

LEO

A pleasure doing business with you,
Mr. Latimore. Good night.

JAMES

Likewise. G'night.

Leo goes out the door and waves as he climbs into his Mercedes which sits next to James' showy Porsche and Selene's tiny Mini Cooper convertible.

James waves back and closes the front door. On the front porch is a très moderne pyramid-shaped propane heater.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

James walks back into the bedroom and flops on the king-plus bed. Selene sits tentatively on its edge.

JAMES

...and it's OURS! I love it!

SELENE

That was a little impulsive, don't
you think?

JAMES

No, I've been scoping out this
place for weeks. Even made my own
set of command macros. Which will
now...go into effect.

He holds up his smart phone and pushes a button.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I just wanted to do what was best
for us. For you.

SELENE

(less convinced)
I know.

He notes her reluctance.

JAMES
But...do you love it?

SELENE
I'm getting there.

JAMES
(lightly)
Hey, I remember back in the old days when I could always get you there.

He rubs her back.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Speaking of which, my friend Ernie? Who works at the medicinal pot dispensary? Gave me something just for us.

He reaches into a pocket and pulls out a VAPE PEN. He holds it up.

JAMES (CONT'D)
They call it "Amour". It's supposed to take the edge off of that stuff Dr. Friedkin gives you.

SELENE
I don't know...

He radiates compassion.

JAMES
Look, I know that since we lost the baby...

She tenses.

JAMES (CONT'D)
...nothing has been right. But Dr. Friedkin...this place...we're working on making it right. Together. And even if we're still sad, we can celebrate. *Together.*

C'mon, give it a try.

SELENE
Well...okay.

JAMES
That's my girl!

He hands her the vape pen. She can't figure it out.

SELENE

What do you do?

JAMES

You suck on this end...

(points)

...until it lights up on *this* end.

(points to the other end)

She does a long toke and the pen lights up. She holds it in for a second, then explodes in a cascade of coughing.

SELENE

(laughing)

Wow...that was...intense.

She hands the pen to him and he tokes up.

JAMES

(holding his breath)

You know as much as I love this place...

He lets it out smoothly.

JAMES (CONT'D)

It's nothing compared to how much I love you.

He leans over and KISSES her. He pulls her toward him.

JAMES (CONT'D)

C'mon, Queen Selene. Show me how we did it in the old days.

They embrace.

Pull back and out...

INT. HOUSE (HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM) - CONTINUOUS

...to a video screen in the living room. It POPS ON with a silhouette of the two of them making love. The screen outlines just Selene and a photo of her ominously pops up in the corner.

Swivel around and see Mina, curled up on the floor. The front door slowly opens. She starts GROWLING. She goes out the door and it closes behind her.

INT. HOUSE (BEDROOM) - MORNING

Selene wakes up alone. She's wearing a nightgown. She sits up and looks around.

SELENE

Mina?

The sounds of hustle and bustle from outside the bedroom.

James walks in carrying a tray with eggs over easy, toast, orange juice and various other breakfasty things, topped off by a FLOWER in a tiny single flower vase.

JAMES

Good morning, sunshine. Breakfast is served.

He puts it on her lap. She is genuinely touched.

SELENE

This is amazing! You are *the best* husband in the world!

JAMES

I gotta confess, this house makes it easy. I just told it what to make and it did it all! Well, except the flower - I went outside and cut that from our garden.

SELENE

You didn't let Mina out did you? I haven't seen her this morning and she usually won't leave me alone until I've fed her.

JAMES

I'd say just call her but kindhearted you had to adopt a deaf rescue pup. She's probably still asleep in some dark corner - this place is *big*.

She looks down at the food and hesitates.

SELENE

This is spectacular. But what I'm really craving right now--

JAMES

--is a latte. How could I forget! But here, let me show you how easy it is to get one.

He puts her tray on a side table, takes her hand and leads her out of the bedroom.

INT. HOUSE (KITCHEN) - MOMENTS LATER

The kitchen is immaculate, with gleaming stainless steel.

JAMES
(whispering to Selene)
Say, "House. Make me a latte."

She hesitates.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Go on.

SELENE
House! Make me a latte!

The machines in the kitchen WHIR into motion. Coffee is brewed, Milk is frothed. She's enjoying this.

SELENE (CONT'D)
With sugar and cinnamon!

More activity from the 'bots. The house speaks in one of those way-too-nice male computer voices.

HOUSE VOICE
Your latte is ready, Selene.

Her eyes open wide.

SELENE
It knows who I am.

JAMES
I did a little customization.

He looks at his watch.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Whoa, look at the time. Gotta get ready to do my first webcast from Castle de Us. Can't keep 1.2 million followers waiting.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

James sits on the leather couch with the amazing Tukteni view in the background. His clothes say "wealthy hipster". His smart phone is on a stand, videoing him.

He can see his image on the video screen above the fireplace across from where he sits. It's real time video with space for viewer comments directly below the picture.

Selene, dressed casually, stands offscreen, just watching.

JAMES

House! Focus broadcast lights on me.

Lights in the ceiling become small spotlights, illuminating him.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Increase intensity.

They get brighter.

JAMES (CONT'D)

That's good.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(to Selene)

Honey - could you push the button on the side on my phone. I've got it preprogrammed to launch the show.

She walks over to the smartphone.

SELENE

This one?

JAMES

Yeah. Thanks. Hey, we're rolling!

The video image becomes a live feed - where it said OFFLINE it now says ONLINE - with real time comments below it.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Welcome to another installment of TFM, the show that tells you where money is headed - and you should be going.

As you can see...

(he gestures to the view)

...we've upped our game since the last installment. My beautiful wife, Selene, and I just bought this incredible house on the Tukteni Bluffs where we can look down on all you poor souls living in the lowlands.

COMMENTS

WannaBTimD:*Nice!***TFMFan:***Beautiful!***PepeTF89:***I want one.*

James motions to Selene.

JAMES

C'mon, Selene. Sit beside me.

She waves him off.

SELENE

I'm not dressed right, I -

JAMES

Oh, come on. You'd make a gunny sack look like high fashion.

He mouths, more emphatically, "Come on". She gives in and awkwardly sits beside him.

JAMES (CONT'D)

See what I mean folks?

COMMENTS

CryptoBro:*Oo la la!***WannaBTimD:***She's lovely.***TFMFan:***Needs some nicer threads, tho.*

JAMES

Well, today's subject should probably be what the Fed has been up to but...to heck with it. The Fed goes up, the Fed goes down. Booo-ring.

Let's talk about something exciting. Cryptocurrency. NuCoin in particular.

COMMENTS

WannaBTimD:*Now we're talking.***TFMFan:***I LOVE crypto.***NewDisOrder:***Didn't it go way down last week?*

Selene begins to sweat under the lights. She wipes it off with her hand.

JAMES

Now the naysayers will say to bail on NuCoin because it's taken a bit of a hit recently. I say, "Let 'em bail." More goodies for us smart folks.

She sees in the display that it's not sweat - it's blood. Her eyes open wide in alarm. But when we see the real Selene she is NOT bleeding.

JAMES (CONT'D)

This supposed "scandal" involving Elizabeth C. Doyle, the founder of NuCoin? Baloney. There's no there there. Just another attempt by Big Money to keep entrepreneurs like Doyle in their place.

COMMENTS

MAGAMax:

More Deep State bullshit.

TFMFan:

They didn't believe Tesla and Elon Musk, either.

NewDisOrder:

Elon really IS a dickwad.

In the display, blood begins to trickle down her face.

JAMES

But it's not going to work. These are people who wouldn't know blockchain from blockhead and --

Selene gets up and runs out of the room.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Honey? Honey? Are you okay?

He turns back to the camera.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Stage fright, no doubt.

COMMENTS

DarthDater:

What's wrong with the babe?

CryptoBro:

She a psycho?

(MORE)

COMMENTS (CONT'D)

Nikola710:*Probably that time of the month.*

JAMES

Now, where was I? Ah, yes, NuCoin. I'm not saying to double down. I'm saying to triple down. Quadruple down. Everything you got down. This is the currency of the future and you can own a piece of that future now.

And, until next time, remember: money isn't everything - *it's the only thing.*

The screen goes black. James hops up and runs to the bedroom.

INT. HOUSE (MASTER BATH) - CONTINUOUS

James finds Selene furiously splashing her face with water in the bathroom. Then wiping it with a towel.

JAMES

Honey, are you alright? What happened?

She looks at the mirror, and at the towel.

SELENE

I don't understand.

JAMES

You don't understand what?

SELENE

Nothing, nothing. I just thought my face was bleeding.

JAMES

Let me take a look.

He examines her face.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I don't see anything.

SELENE

I don't either. Now. But I saw blood on my face on the video screen. A lot of blood.

JAMES

Honey - do you think this might be another one of your...episodes.

SELENE

No! No! I- I- saw it. I swear.

JAMES

Maybe it was the lights. They're pretty hot. You were probably sweating a little and it looked like blood on the screen.

SELENE

(not buying it)

Yeah. That was probably it.

She looks in the mirror. The room around her **goes dark.**

FLASHBACK:

We see just her pained face which reacts to the remembered dialog.

DOCTOR (V.O.)

I'm sorry, Mrs. Latimore, but you have miscarried.

SELENE (V.O)

But...but...everything was fine just a couple of weeks ago.

JAMES (V.O)

Oh, honey. I'm so sorry. But you're going to be ok.

SELENE (V.O.)

But the baby...the baby...

BACK TO SCENE:

She puts her face in her hands.

INT. HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

House lights throb a bit. Subtle but menacing sounds convey that this is not a safe place.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Time has passed. The bedroom is more lived in. Personal items, some bits of clothing, a book or two are here and there. There is a guitar case - from the dust on it, clearly unopened in a long time - in the corner.

Selene rises and puts on a robe. James is still asleep.

She picks up a framed picture of her hugging Mina. She shakes her head - Mina clearly has not returned.

She walks to the kitchen.

INT. HOUSE (KITCHEN) - CONTINUOUS

She looks around. Sees a coffee-maker.

SELENE

House. Make me two lattes.

Nothing but the sounds of nature out the window.

SELENE (CONT'D)

House! Make me two lattes!

Still nothing. She goes over to the coffee machine. Opens it up. Nothing.

SELENE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Where do you keep the coffee,
house?

She opens a couple of cabinets. Empty. She tries a drawer by the sink. Inside are flyers and menus. She picks one up.

SELENE (CONT'D)

(reading)

Prairie Rose Cafe.

Let's see if you're really just ten
minutes away.

INT. PRAIRIE ROSE CAFE - DAY

The wood-walled cafe is filled with people who look to be from another time, specifically the psychedelic 1960s. Signs on the wall promote Qigong classes, Reiki, Mayan horoscopes, and a call to action against over-development on the bluffs.

Selene, in designer clothes, takes it all in.

The woman behind the counter, MADELEINE, young, friendly, checks her out.

MADELEINE
You're new here, aren't you?

SELENE
You can tell that easily?

MADELEINE
Most of the people here are
regulars.

She indicates an older couple, FRAN and JIM, dressed in classic Old-West-meets-Native-American hippie attire, reading a local newspaper.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
Fran and Jim have been coming here
since before I was born.

But even the others start to look
like them after awhile.

She indicates a young couple, JEAN and DWAYNE, who could be their fashion twins, except that they are on their smartphones.

SELENE
I see what you mean.

MADELEINE
They say you enter a time loop when
you drive onto Bluff Dr. off the
highway. Here it's always 1969.

Selene laughs. She is enjoying this human, almost flirtatious, connection with Madeleine.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
What's your name?

SELENE
Selene. What's yours?

MADELEINE
Madeleine.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
What'll you have?

SELENE
What do you suggest?

MADELEINE

The *mate* is popular. And the *cafe con leche* is excellent. But me, I like the Oyate tea.

SELENE

Oyate?

MADELEINE

Oyate meant "the people" in the language of the indigenous folk that lived here back in the day. Tukteni was their home.

SELENE

The tea sounds good. And a *cafe con leche*. Both to go.

Selene looks around as Madeleine brews.

SELENE (CONT'D)

Are there any Oyate left?

MADELEINE

No. Unless you include Creeker Joe.

SELENE

Who?

MADELEINE

Some old coot who lives down by the creek. Some say he's Oyate - a descendant of one of the ones who escaped by going West. Some even say he's their medicine man - their shaman.

SELENE

Shaman? Do you believe in that stuff?

MADELEINE

I believe we are all one great spirit. I believe we can communicate with animals. And plants. I believe some people have a purpose in this life because of something that happened to them in a previous one.

And I believe that Creeker Joe is most likely just another mentally-ill homeless guy.

Selene ponders this while Madeleine SINGS to herself as she prepares the drinks. BILL COSTER, perpetually annoyed and judgmental, looks up from a table in the back.

BILL

Give it up, Madeleine. The auditions for American Idol are over.

Madeleine stops.

SELENE

Never mind him. You have a beautiful voice.

Please sing some more.

Madeleine beams at Selene and flashes her the ILY hand signal for "I love you".

MADELEINE

(singing loudly)

Oh Freedom!

Oh Freedom!

Oh Freedom over me!

But before I'll be a slave...

Bill gets up with his hands over his ears.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I'll be buried in my grave...

BILL

Feh!

MADELEINE

And go home to my lord and be free!

He SLAMS THE DOOR as he leaves. Selene and Madeleine laugh.

SELENE

There now! That's better!

MADELEINE

Thank you. Do you sing?

SELENE

I used to. Before I was married.
And before I...I had a--

Jim (of Jim and Fran) SNAPS his paper angrily.

JIM

Goddam developers! They just built a humongous new house up on Ridgeline Rd. - looks like a giant you-know-what stuck out over the valley!

He shows Fran a picture in the paper - it's Selene's house. Selene is deeply uncomfortable about this.

FRAN

I wonder if the construction is the reason for all these new coyote attacks, too! Just yesterday, one killed the Frederick's dog and another broke into the Brown's chicken coop. Tore their rooster apart.

JIM

At least now I'll be able to sleep in.

Fran gestures in toward the door Bill has just stomped out of.

FRAN

Bill Coster says he's gonna lead a protest.

JIM

He's just looking for any excuse to get away from his goats. He's beginning to smell like 'em.

Feeling something, Selene looks out the window of the cafe. Across the street is a STRANGE-LOOKING MAN, old, grizzled, Native American, face discolored so that the skin around one eye appears to be a sort of patch.

He makes eye contact with her and nods his head, "yes".

SELENE

Who's that?

Madeleine comes out from behind the counter to get a better view.

MADELEINE

That's Creeker Joe - the weirdo I told you about.

He disappears into the brush. Madeleine puts Selene's teas on the counter.

SELENE

Can I get those to go?

EXT. PRAIRIE ROSE CAFE PARKING LOT - DAY

Selene opens the passenger-side door of her Mini Cooper convertible, its top closed, and puts the drinks on the seat. She sees Creeker Joe across the street again. He points at her and, as before, nods "yes".

He holds something up - then drops it. Then turns around and disappears into the brush.

SELENE

Mister! Mister! You dropped something.

She starts to cross the road. A LOUD HONK as she is nearly hit by a car. Reaching the other side there is no trace of Creeker Joe. Except for the object he dropped on the ground.

She picks it up. It's an old pendant made from a long, sharp animal tooth. It has an almost hypnotic power over her. She follows the path in the direction he went off in.

EXT. PATH - CONTINUOUS

The brush folds in behind her and the traffic noise subsides. The foliage is so dense it makes a kind of tunnel, dark and mysterious, with branches meeting above her head and blocking out the sun. It's dark.

SELENE

Mister? Joe? You dropped something.

No response. She turns to go back. There, watching her from the shadows, we can just barely see what looks like an ENORMOUS COYOTE. We will later learn this is a COYWOLF. It has a distinctive gray patch around one eye. Its red eyes almost glow as it observes her leaving the way she came.

EXT. WINDING ROAD - DAY

Selene drives her convertible, top down, up the winding road that leads to her house. The views are transcendent and devoid of civilization except for the occasional glimpse of town in the far distance.

Two large cups in a cardboard drink holder are strapped into the seat beside her.

She's wearing the animal tooth pendant around her neck.

She sees a deer in the brush. She smiles.

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - DAY

Selene drives toward the front gates of their house, top of the convertible still down. She sees a small crowd out front, waving signs and SHOUTING.

SELENE
(to herself)
What's going on?

Bill, the guy who told Madeleine to stop singing, hurls an empty wine bottle into the car.

BILL
Rich b--

The bottle lands on the drinks beside her, splattering them on her. She SHRIEKS.

The gates open and Selene floors it in as they close behind her. She parks and gets out, shaking both with fear and to get the drink splatter off.

James comes running to her from the house.

JAMES
Selene, are you alright? Where did you go? I was so worried!

SELENE
I just went into town to get--

JAMES
Into town! Where people like *that* live?

He points to the crowd.

JAMES (CONT'D)
(to the crowd)
You know the Sheriff is on his way, don't you?

Bill steps up to the gate.

BILL
(shouting back)
The sheriff is an elected official.
(MORE)

BILL (CONT'D)

Let's see what he thinks about your illegal crap-pile.

JAMES

This "crap-pile" as you call it will be here long after you're gone.

BILL

You think this gate can stop us? Maybe we'll just climb over!

He SHAKES the gate. The crowd shouts encouragement. ("You tell 'em Bill! Yeah, Bill!")

James marches up to the gate.

JAMES

You're trespassing on private property, but even worse, much worse, you assaulted my wife. I own a licensed firearm within easy reach inside. Come over that gate and no court in the land would convict me.

A siren shrieks as the Sheriff's car pulls up and parks in front of the gate, blocking the protestors. SHERIFF JUAN MORALES and DEPUTY CLARICE WILLIAMS get out of the car. Both wearing shades.

MORALES

Alright, everybody. Calm down. Calm down.

JAMES

(shouting)

I told you he was coming, jerks!

Morales turns to James.

MORALES

You, too, buddy.

BILL

Sheriff Morales, I demand you arrest that man. He just threatened me with bodily harm!

MORALES

And you're on his land, Bill. Look everybody, you made your point. But it's time to go home.

BILL
Or what, Sheriff?

MORALES
Or I have to call Emily and tell
her to come bail you out, Bill.
Again.

BILL
You know we wouldn't have to be
here if the Sheriff's office would
do its job and stop these illegal
developments.

The crowd shouts its agreement.

MORALES
Take it up with the River
Commission.
(shouting to the crowd)
Alright everybody. That does it for
today. Go home or get arrested.

The crowd starts to break up. Various taunts are yelled at
Morales.

MAN IN CROWD
Pig! Lackey!

Morales doesn't even notice.

WOMAN IN CROWD
Remember Liani Johnson!

This last one connects with him.

MORALES
You've got 30 seconds or I put
Deputy Williams to work.

Williams holds up a pair of handcuffs. The crowd begins to
disperse.

BILL
This isn't the end of it, you know.
We'll be back!

MORALES
(sighs)
Of that, I'm sure.

The protesters leave. Morales faces James.

MORALES (CONT'D)

May I come in?

He opens the gate. Morales turns to Deputy Williams.

MORALES (CONT'D)

Wait here just in case one of these fine citizens changes their mind and comes back.

Morales enters.

MORALES (CONT'D)

Mr. Latimore? James Latimore?

JAMES

Don't let them get away! I want them all arrested. They attacked my wife!

Morales pulls out a pad and writes on it. He turns to Selene, still shaking off liquid but otherwise unharmed.

MORALES

Your name?

SELENE

(barely audible)

Selene.

MORALES

Are you alright? Do you need medical attention?

SELENE

No.

MORALES

Were you physically assaulted?

JAMES

Yes, she was!

MORALES

Please, Mr. Latimore. Let you wife answer.

SELENE

Somebody threw...something. It landed on my takeout drinks from the cafe. It splashed all over me.

JAMES

What are you going to do about those trespassers?

Morales turns and looks behind.

MORALES

They appear to have dispersed. But Mr. Latimore, I highly recommend that should you encounter them again, you keep your cool and let the lawyers handle it. But be aware - Tukteni is not particularly friendly to illegal real estate development.

JAMES

Nothing illegal about it. I paid cash.

MORALES

That may be the case, Mr. Latimore, but the River Commission may have a different interpretation.

You also may have a more immediate concern than some hotheads with too much time on their hands. There's been an alarming uptick in coyote attacks these past couple of days. Must be a new pack on the hunt. I've never seen anything like it before. Dogs, cats, livestock - at least a dozen incidents reported. While attacks on humans are rare they are not unheard of. So please, don't go out after dark. And keep your pets inside. Coyotes view cats and small dogs as dinner.

SELENE

Do we report a lost dog to you?

MORALES

Uh...we aren't really set up for that. Nobody out here really is.

SELENE

I don't feel well.

She goes inside.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Selene, at the sink, fills her cupped hands with water and splashes it on her face. She dries off with a hand towel.

She notices the animal tooth pendant around her neck and, almost angrily, takes it off. She looks as though she is going to throw it into the wastebasket but then decides not to.

She opens a drawer by the sink, drops it in, and closes the drawer.

She opens the medicine cabinet and takes out a PILL CONTAINER. The label says *Zyprexa*.

She unscrews the top and shakes out two pills into her hand. She pauses. Then shakes out two more. Then downs them.

INT. FRONT DOOR/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

James enters the front door, annoyed.

JAMES

What. A. Loser. Wouldn't press assault charges because "no harm was done." He's clearly more concerned about getting re-elected than your safety.

(softens his tone)

Honey, are you ok?

He goes into the bedroom and sees her, still visibly distraught, standing in the bathroom doorway.

SELENE

Mina hasn't come back.

JAMES

Darling...

He holds her.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Why did you go into town?

SELENE

I wanted to get us some coffee.

JAMES

Oh, honey....Let me show you something.

He leads her to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JAMES
(whispers)
Say, "House. Make me coffee."

SELENE
But that's what I did!

JAMES
Just say it.

SELENE
House. Make me coffee.

The COFFEE MACHINE springs into action and begins brewing.

SELENE (CONT'D)
But I swear that's exactly...

JAMES
You probably just got...distracted.

SELENE
I did *not* get "distracted". I said,
"House. Make me two lattes," and
nothing hap--

HOUSE VOICE
*Do you wish me to cancel the coffee
order and make you two lattes
instead, Selene?*

SELENE
No. No. No. I don't want any of it.
This is so confusing.

JAMES
You've been getting confused a lot
lately. That's what the pills are
for. That's why we moved here.

SELENE
What do you mean by, "a lot?"

JAMES
I didn't want to make a thing out
of this - you've got enough on your
mind as it is. But, you know, like
that blood you thought you saw on
your face when we did the webcast.
(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

And, like, the first night we were here, when you let Mina out.

SELENE

I did *what*?

JAMES

Well, I sure didn't. So, didn't you?

SELENE

No!

(unsure of herself)

At least I don't think so...

His CELLPHONE RINGS.

He looks at the display.

JAMES

Honey, I gotta take this.

He disappears into the bedroom.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Selene enters the bedroom and sees James is standing in the master bath, its door open an inch.

JAMES

No...no...just be patient. A week.
Two weeks, *tops*. I guarantee.

James sees Selene listening from the bedroom, and almost unconsciously, reaches back and closes the door on her.

From the kitchen we hear the robotic voice of the house echoing:

HOUSE VOICE

Selene, your coffee is ready.

EXT. GOAT FARM - MORNING

Sheriff Morales stands with Bill and his wife, Emily, at their goat farm. A large sign says, *Don't Mow - Rent a Goat!*

There are dead goats everywhere.

BILL

Twenty-seven years - never had anything like this happen.

MORALES

A pack you say?

BILL

Yeah. At least a dozen. And they were *fast*. I heard the goats wailing. By the time I got my pants on...this.

MORALES

I'll call animal control and report it, but there's not a lot else I can do. Really sorry.

BILL

We never had problems like this before they built that house. It's like it finally pissed off the coyotes enough that they're taking revenge. Somebody ought to do the same for those rich city bastards.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The peaceful sound of night insects and birds floats in through the open doors to the deck. Soft moonlight cascades in.

We hear dog barks followed by a piercing yelp. Selene sits bolt upright in bed, James is not there.

SELENE

Mina? Mina?

She puts on a robe and goes outside on the deck.

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

Waxing crescent moon.

In the moonlight she sees the outline of an animal and two red glowing eyes looking straight at her from the brush. The red eyes vanish.

James comes bursting out of the bedroom, handgun in hand.

JAMES

What the hell was THAT?!

House! Outside lights. On!

The yard LIGHTS UP. It has been trashed. Garbage is strewn everywhere, the carefully coifed lawn is ripped up, the ceaseless sprinklers spraying water in random directions.

He takes a shooter stance. Nothing. He lowers the gun.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Maybe now the Sheriff will take the threat from these eco-nuts seriously.

SELENE

Mina...Where's Mina?

Selene goes running back into the house in a panic.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - MULTIPLE ROOMS - CONTINUOUS

Frantic, she runs through the bedroom, into the hall, and heads for the front door.

SELENE

Mina!

She opens the front door of the house and nearly steps on something. It is the severed head of Mina. She SCREAMS. James rushes to her and sees the bloody head.

JAMES

Oh *crap!*

SELENE

Oh my God. Oh my God. Mina.
(in tears)
Oh, Mina....

JAMES

My precious darling. We can't - we won't - let them intimidate us. This is *our* house, not theirs.

Pull back to reveal the wilderness around them. We hear the chattering of night-time insects.

INT. LEO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The offices of Chantrell-La Development. Pictures of Leo with celebrities - especially cheesy ones - line the walls. A few Napoleon Hill slogans are framed, some with exclamation points.

RONALD SULLIVAN, a portly nervous looking man in a suit and tie paces as Leo sits behind his desk.

SULLIVAN

You have no idea what the pressure has been like. Bill Coster and his bunch of enviro-hoods are really putting the screws on. I had to park my car down the lane so they wouldn't know I was here.

LEO

You know Bill has been trying to stop progress on the bluffs forever. Has he ever succeeded?

SULLIVAN

Yeah, but this time he's got some political muscle. Sheriff Morales is up for reelection and with that screwup last year with the Johnson case he needs all the votes he can get, especially with the keep Tukteni weird types. He's been talking with the District Attorney about looking into violations of zoning laws.

LEO

The District Attorney? That sounds serious. But you're o.k. You've been filing all the cash campaign contributions I've given you, right?

Leo knows full well he hasn't.

SULLIVAN

What are you saying?

LEO

There's no reason for them to look into the finances of Commission members. Unless, say, incriminating information was given to them anonymously.

This is a threat. Sullivan is sweating.

SULLIVAN

Why would someone do that?

LEO

Why indeed? Especially if the person who possesses that information benefits by your continuing leadership on the commission.

Beat.

LEO (CONT'D)

So, do you think you could sign this order that our construction is approved?

He places a paper in front of Sullivan. Sullivan signs it, unhappily. Leo smiles and takes the document.

LEO (CONT'D)

Oh, your envelope.

Leo hands Sullivan a bulging envelope. It says "Latimore" hand-written on the outside.

LEO (CONT'D)

There's a little something extra this time. In appreciation of your continued efforts on behalf of the business community.

A pleasure doing business with you, Mr. Sullivan.

SULLIVAN

Screw you.

He sticks the envelope in his jacket and walks outside.

EXT. THE ROAD - NIGHT

Just past waxing scresent moon.

This is a semi-rural Tukteni road - no sidewalk, the woods just beyond the periphery of the asphalt.

Sullivan walks toward his car, parked by the side of the road. He pulls out his keys - one of those rings that has too many things on it. A loud animal snarl startles him. He drops the keys on the ground.

He looks up and sees a pair of red eyes advancing toward him. He glances down at the keys, back up at the eyes - Screw it! He runs back in the direction he came.

Another snarlL, another pair of eyes in front of him. Then another to his right. He goes the only direction left - into the woods.

He flees in a panic through the trees, his nice suit gets caught on branches and underbrush, shredding it as he runs, and occasionally stumbles.

EXT. CREEKBED - CONTINUOUS

He reaches a rocky creekbed and, in the dark, trips and falls on his face. Out of breath, he lifts his head up and sees several pairs of red eyes in front of him, behind him, all around him.

SULLIVAN

No! No!

Our gaze is slowly lifted to the treetops as we hear the sound his screams of pain and terror interspersed with ferocious animal bites and growls.

INT. PRAIRIE ROSE CAFE - DAY

Madeleine behind the counter. The regulars, Fran and Jim and the rest at their usual tables. Fran is talking to Jean, the younger-Fran clone at the next table.

FRAN

Did you hear about the terrible attack on the Costers' goats?

JEAN

Just awful. Has this ever happened before?

JIM

Never in all the years we've been here. I've heard stories from back in the pioneer days, but I always thought they were tall tales.

FRAN

Sheriff Morales is calling a Zoom meeting Thursday night to fill everybody in on what's happening and how to protect ourselves.

Bill pipes up from the back of the room.

BILL

Might have been a good idea to be there the other day when we went up to that new mega-mansion up on Ridgeline. That's why the coyotes have gone crazy. They built it on sacred land!

FRAN

Oh, c'mon Bill. Your farm is on sacred land, too.

BILL

Yeah, well, so is half of Tukteni.

JIM

(softly to Jean)

He's mad 'cause he wanted that land to expand his farm. It was zoned agricultural. Then the city-folk came and bought it out from under him.

BILL

Sheriff was useless. But we really stuck it to those creeps. When the lady of the house drove in - you know, the fancy new broad who was here the other day -

Madeleine perks up at this.

BILL (CONT'D)

I threw a bottle at her. Just missed her but it hit some crap she had on the seat and it splattered all over her expensive designer clothes! Showed her!

He's pleased with himself. Madeleine shakes her head.

MADELEINE

Bill. Has anyone ever told you you're an asshole?

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Webcast time. James sits on the couch looking up at the video screen with the usual user comments below his image.

JAMES

Welcome to another installment of TFM, the show that tells you where money is headed - and you should be going.

Let's get right to it. I know some of you are concerned about NuCoin and, yes, it dipped a bit this week.

COMMENTS

CryptoBro:

Dipped? More like crashed and burned.

NewDisOrder:

Dipshit is more like it.

WannaBTimD:

James r u hosing us?

JAMES

But hang in there, folks. Help is on the way. NuCoin founder Elizabeth Doyle has hired Malcolm du Bois as her lawyer. He's the one who got the *President* out of trouble a few years back. The kind of guy who could make you believe there actually *is* a Nigerian Oil Prince.

This legal charade will be over shortly and we can go back to wondering who runs the Deep State. And counting our fortunes when the price of NuCoin skyrockets again.

COMMENTS

CryptoBro:

du Bois is kickass!

DollarsRDead:

Stick it to the Fed!

DisRupThor:

Shit's deep, tho.

JAMES

Until then, remember: Money isn't everything - *it's the only thing.*

The screen goes dark. He looks at his fancy watch.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(calling out)

Honey?

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Selene is on the bed, typing on her laptop, headphones on. The laptop page heading says *Diary*, with an entry space for Wednesday, the date obscured. We can hear a little of the female singer/songwriter music coming from her phones.

As she types we hear her voice inside her head.

SELENE (V.O.)

*I remember when I wasn't so afraid
all the time. Me and Mina taking on
the world. I miss Mina. I have zero
recollection of letting her out but
I don't know why James would have
said it if it wasn't true. I feel
like I'm losing it.*

James appears at the bedroom door.

JAMES

Hey, hon.

She pulls her headphones off so they hang around her neck.

SELENE

Sorry, I was listening to some old
music.

JAMES

Who?

SELENE

(embarrassed)
Me. Back in the day.

JAMES

That's great. Really great.

I have to go into town for a
meeting. Don't wait up for me to
eat - I'll catch dinner there.

Love you.

SELENE

Love you.

He leaves. Selene closes her laptop and puts it on the side table which also has a container of pills. She picks up the headphones from her neck, thinks the better of it, and puts them aside as well. She stares off into space.

She picks up the pill container and shakes out two - then four - pills. She downs them.

INT. LEO'S OFFICE - EVENING

James sits at Leo's desk SIGNING PAPERS. Leo sits beside him and stamps each page as James finishes with it.

JAMES

Is that legal for you to be your own notary?

LEO

(shrugs)

It's Suzanne's stamp - she won't mind. Less for her to do when she gets back from vacation!

James sits back.

JAMES

I think that's the last one.

LEO

And so it is!

JAMES

You did a fabulous job getting this past the River Commission so quickly.

LEO

It wasn't easy. Or cheap.

JAMES

Speaking of "not cheap" I have something for you...

He pulls out a small gift box.

JAMES (CONT'D)

...as promised...

He opens the box, revealing a platinum ROLEX WATCH.

JAMES (CONT'D)

TA-DA!!

He hands it to Leo, face aglow, who takes his own watch off and replaces it with the Rolex.

LEO
It is so beautiful. Yeah, it's
better.

JAMES
Oh, I almost forgot. The check for
the house.

He hands Leo an envelope.

JAMES (CONT'D)
It's getting late. I gotta get back
- the little lady's at home all by
herself.

Leo pulls the check out of the envelope. He smiles. Then
hesitates.

LEO
I'm so sorry - but this is not a
bank check.

Tries to hand it back but James doesn't budge.

JAMES
I'm good for it.

LEO
I'm sure, but it is required.

JAMES
Just as having a notary present is.
I've found there are two kinds of
people in the world: problem
finders and problem solvers. So
which are you, Leo?

Beat. James shifts to a lighter tone.

JAMES (CONT'D)
C'mon, if it bounces, the house is
yours.

LEO
Not exactly, but...

JAMES
Look, I don't really have time to
"run to the bank", so if you can
make this little technicality go
away, please accept *this* gesture of
my appreciation.

He hands Leo a flash drive

JAMES (CONT'D)

There's a hundred NuCoins on this drive. You know what that is in government money? Last month it was 74,323 dollars. It's down a little this week but it'll be back up soon. Because it's crypto, the government doesn't know about it or ever needs to know. All yours above and beyond your commission.

Leo's greed gets the best of him.

LEO

I'll work something out.

JAMES

I thought you would. You are definitely a problem solver.

Hey, I brought something to celebrate if you'd care to join me.

He pulls out a bottle of Irish Whiskey.

LEO

Ooo! The good stuff! But didn't you say you had to head back home?

JAMES

A few more minutes won't matter. Some things take priority.

Got any glasses?

Leo is momentarily distracted admiring his new watch.

LEO

(snapping out of it)
Coming right up.

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - EVENING

Establishing shot from the viewpoint of the brush. The house is cast in menacing shadows. The only light on is in the bedroom. Shift viewpoint to looking out from the house: red eyes are watching.

An evocative howl, like a call.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM - EVENING

Selene wakes, and sits up on the bed. She turns on the lamp by the bed. She picks up her laptop from the side table. She opens it to her diary.

As she types we hear her voice in side her head.

SELENE (V.O.)

I feel like I'm in a brain fog 24-7. I don't know what's real anymore.

The pills are supposed to make me feel better. The house is supposed to make me feel better. But nothing has felt better since I lost the baby. Sometimes I think the pills Dr. F gives me just make things--

Suddenly, the lights in the bedroom fade off. Then on. Then off again. Muffled noise comes from the living room. She puts down her laptop and walks out of the bedroom...

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...into the hallway and into the living room where the giant television has a tiny hard-to-discern image in its center and is playing unintelligible gibberish very softly. She get within three feet of the screen and...

EVERY LIGHT AND SOUND SOURCE IN THE HOUSE COMES BLARING ON!!!

Pillows fly off the couch and pelt her. The recliner shoots out in footrest and SMACKS her ankles. Meanwhile, lights are going off and on almost stroboscopically.

Startled, she stumbles backward. A giant face on the video screen appears to be trying to sell her something in a language she's never heard before. She flees to the...

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...kitchen. Upon her entry, every appliance in the room goes crazy! The coffee pot brews, the dishwasher starts washing, the microwave turns on and off. Liquid oozes out of the oven and begins to cover the floor. A standing vacuum cleaner bursts out of the closet and begins vacuuming furiously.

She screams, and runs back into...

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

...the bedroom. She dives under the blankets and, curling up in fetal position, pulls them over her head.

Suddenly...*silence*.

All has gone quiet and dark except for the one lamp by the bed that was on before chaos erupted.

Selene shakes and moans under the blankets.

An indeterminate amount of time passes...

The dark silhouette of a hand slowly reaches out and touches her form. She screams and throws the blanket off. James is standing by the bed. He jumps back.

JAMES

Sorry, honey. I didn't mean to startle you. I thought you were asleep.

Her eyes bulge.

SELENE

Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God. We have got to get out of here!

JAMES

Whoa! Whoa! What happened?

SELENE

I heard a noise, I got up and the house just went nuts. Everything came on - screaming at me - all the machines were turning--

JAMES

Calm down. It was just a bad dream.

SELENE

Bad dream? But the whole house went *crazy!* Let me show you.

She grabs his hand and leads him to...

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...the hallway and the living room. Everything is quiet. Every pillow and chair is back in place.

SELENE

But...

She runs into the kitchen with James following.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Not only are all the appliances turned off, but all is tidy and clean, as if nothing had ever happened. She is dumfounded.

JAMES

See...just a bad dream.

Off Selene's confused face...

EXT. WOODS - DAY

A TEENAGE GIRL and a TEENAGE BOY giggle as they slip merrily into the woods. Playing a very unserious game of tag, the girl avoids the clutches of the boy by ducking behind a tree or dancing away from him.

He finally catches her and they embrace, tumbling to the ground where they begin to make out, him on top, her on the bottom. She begins groaning - from sexual excitement or the stones digging into her back, it's hard to tell. She looks off to one side.

All of a sudden she begins screaming. Staring her in the face is a dead body lying in the creekbed.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

Sheriff Morales, Deputy Williams, police DETECTIVE GOLDMAN, and two CSI workers surround a DEAD BODY by the creek. There is just a little water in the creek, moving slowly - it's mostly rocks.

DET. GOLDMAN

Victim was apparently chased through the woods and killed when he stumbled on the creekbed rocks.

MORALES

And we're sure it was coyotes?

DET. GOLDMAN

Based on the teeth marks - but there are a lot of things that are strange about it.

(MORE)

DET. GOLDMAN (CONT'D)

First of all, the size of the animals. These are not your typical coyotes. These may have crossbred with wolves. They call them "Coywolves."

MORALES

Wolves? We haven't had wolves in Tukteni in over a hundred years. Longer.

DET. GOLDMAN

Yeah, strange. But what's really disturbing is that, the vic was surrounded by a pack in a highly coordinated attack. Human victims of coyote attacks are rare enough, but this...only in legends.

MORALES

Oh, the voters are going to love this.

DET. GOLDMAN

(to the CSI team)

Alright, we can remove the body.

They lift the body and put it on a stretcher.

MORALES

Who was he?

DET. GOLDMAN

Ronald Sullivan. Dubuque Businessman. He was chair of the River Commission.

This last bit gets Morales's attention.

MORALES

Really?

The CSI crew carries away the body and we see Sullivan's face, bloody and gray but recognizable. One of them says something unintelligible to Deputy Williams and hands her something.

WILLIAMS

Sheriff. I think you might be interested in this.

He holds up a blood-splattered envelope with the name "La..." on it (with the rest of the letters faded). It's the one Leo gave Sullivan. It's ripped open.

CSI TEAM MEMBER
Hey! Look at that!

He/she points to the creek. Slowly floating downstream are dozens of \$100 bills.

Off Morales's suspicious face...

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Half Moon.

Establishing shot shows the house surrounded by nature. Insect and night bird sounds. The house looks shadowy and imposing despite there being many lights on inside.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

James goes around the room picking up personal travel items. He puts them in a small open suitcase on the bed in the bedroom. Selene follows him around, upset.

SELENE
But I don't understand. You said
you could do all your business from
here.

JAMES
These are very particular clients.
I'll just be gone a couple of days.

His phone buzzes. He looks at it and pushes "Decline".

JAMES (CONT'D)
Look, I don't want to go, either.

SELENE
So why not tell them no?

JAMES
Because we just bought a house. *We
need the money.*

SELENE
OK, so I'll come with you.

James closes his suitcase and takes Selene by the shoulders.

JAMES
(softly)
You know you can't do that, hon.
Remember what Dr. Friedkin said?
(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

He said you need lots of rest and a stress-free environment.

The whole reason we bought this mountain paradise was to give you a place to curl up and *heal*.

SELENE

But I don't want to be left here alone! Please don't leave me, baby. Please!

James' phone buzzes again. He holds up a finger to silence her.

JAMES

Yeah...Yeah...It must be some kind of mistake - the money's there, I swear.

Horn HONKS outside.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Look, I gotta go.

He hangs up. The horn HONKS again.

JAMES (CONT'D)

That's my ride. I'll be back before you know I'm gone.

He kisses her quickly, grabs his suitcase, and heads toward the front door.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Call you just as soon as I get there. Love you!

SELENE

(softly)
Love you.

The front door CLOSES.

Time passes...

Selene is at a loss. She walks to the picture window in the living room and puts her fingers up to the glass. It's like an invisible barrier between her and the world.

Without warning, the lights in the house begin to slowly dim until they go off completely.

SELENE (CONT'D)

No! Not again!

She hears a sound from outside. Not a coyote, more like distant voices.

She goes out on the deck, but can't see anything. She takes a flight of stairs in the hallway that leads her to the outside downstairs.

EXT. YARD/PATH - NIGHT

Selene walks out into the yard that was torn up the first night they spent in the house. The voices are still distant. She follows a path into the brush. She crests a ridge and comes to a rise in a clearing. Still following the voices, they begin to sound like screams and cries of anguish.

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT - NIGHT

She approaches the bluff, the voices louder now.

She begins to see faint things that might just be a trick of the moonlight.

Silhouetted 18th century French soldiers are herding Native women and children at bayonet point and forcing them off the steep bluff. One woman runs toward their commander. She dives onto him and, with her momentum, both go plummeting off to their deaths.

Selene screams and runs back toward the house.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She runs up the stairs and into the bedroom. She picks up her cellphone and speed dials.

JAMES

(voice on phone)

Selene?

SELENE

(still out of breath)

Oh my God, babe. Oh my God. I heard some weird sounds so I followed them out to the bluff and just saw a bunch of men with guns pushing women and children off.

JAMES (ON PHONE)

What?!!

SELENE

The men were dressed like soldiers from the olden days and the women and the kids were all Native Americans. One woman ran at a guy who--

JAMES (ON PHONE)

Calm down, Selene, just calm down! Look, I can't talk - I'm in the middle of a meeting right now - but I assure you there is no massacre going on out in our yard.

Call Dr. Friedkin. Tell him what you saw and ask what he recommends.

SELENE

But--

JAMES

I gotta go, hon. A lot depends on this. Love you, bye.

She sits on the bed, confused and defeated. Slowly, the lights in the house come back up.

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - DAY

Sheriff's car pulls up to the gate.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Sheriff Morales sits at the kitchen table with James and Selene. James has a steaming latte in front of him.

MORALES

Thank you for seeing me about this matter, Mr. Latimore. I understand you just returned from a trip out of town.

JAMES

Yes. Some clients that required hands-on attention. Are you sure I can't get you a cup of coffee? Tea? Sparkling water?

MORALES

I'm fine, thanks. While you were out of town, we found the body of a man in the creek near the Inn of the Moon. We believe he was killed by a pack of...coyotes.

JAMES

That's terrible. But what does that have to do with me?

MORALES

His name was Ronald Sullivan, a local businessman.

JAMES

Don't know him.

James' phone buzzes. He looks down at it. The display says LEO CHANTRELL.

MORALES

Do you need to take that?

James hits "Decline". Then "Block".

JAMES

Junk call.

MORALES

So you're sure you've never had any dealings with Mr. Sullivan?

JAMES

Never.

MORALES

Then can you explain this?

He puts a transparent plastic evidence bag on the table with the bloody envelope with "La..." on it inside.

JAMES

What's is it?

MORALES

Forensics has determined that the rest of the name on the envelope spells out "Latimore".

JAMES

Wow...Trippy. What makes you think it's referring to me? Latimore is a pretty common name.

MORALES

You're the only one in Tukteni.

As they talk, Selene sees movement on the side porch. The porch is so shaded from the sun it's almost completely dark.

She begins to make out the outline and some features of the enormous coywolf she encountered in the woods across from the Cafe, the one with the distinctive gray patch. It looks straight at her through the closed sliding glass door. They make eye contact.

JAMES

So...?

MORALES

He was also chair of the River Commission. Immediately before he died he signed a document approving the citing of this house. Without a public hearing.

JAMES

Really?

Selene gets more and more nervous looking at the coywolf. The sheriff cranes his head to see what she is looking at. The coywolf is gone.

Selene, disturbed, suddenly gets up and heads toward the bedroom.

MORALES

Ms. Latimore...

JAMES

Sheriff. Please just let her go. She's dealing with some medical issues. Of a mental sort, if you know what I mean.

She's under a doctor's care. But I must admit she's been acting very strangely of late. Seeing things.

MORALES

What kinds of things?

JAMES

The lights in the house going up and down, things turning on and off. Plus some really kooky stuff: Soldiers and Indi - uh, *Indigenous people* - fighting.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

I think this coyote business has her a bit freaked out. Our dog was killed by them, you know.

MORALES

I'm sorry for what you're dealing with, Mr. Latimore. But that still doesn't explain the envelope. We also determined that until it was ripped open it contained several thousand dollars in cash.

JAMES

Whoa...If I had that kind of cash just lying around I'd put it where it belongs.

MORALES

Where's that?

JAMES

Crypto.

Morales doesn't understand.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Cryptocurrency. It's the future. I handle people's money for a living. Really wealthy people. I make them a lot wealthier.

But every now and then I help out a friend. I could help you out with your retirement investments, Sheriff. Make your estate planning more secure.

MORALES

Thank you very much, Mr. Latimore. But Phil Johnson - the lawyer with the office next to the Prairie Rose Cafe? - takes care of all my needs in that department.

Returning to why I came...Can you think of any way an envelope with your name on it could have found its way into Mr. Sullivan's possessions?

JAMES

Not a clue.

Morales isn't buying it.

MORALES

Well, if anything jogs your memory,
please call my office.

He places a business card on the table.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

James stands at the open front door waving goodbye to the Sheriff. He has his latte in his hand. He closes the door.

His phone buzzes. He answers in such a hurry he spills the coffee on his shirt.

JAMES

Hello?...Oh, it's you...Really? You
have? Must be some tech glitch...

He puts the coffee cup down and notices the coffee stain on his shirt.

JAMES (CONT'D)

No...no...Don't do that! Look I'll
come by. We'll work it out. Look I
have a big deal - a really big deal
- coming in the next few days,
Monday at the latest.

Just hold on a few more days and I
guarantee it will be worth your
while.

We good? Good!

He hangs up. He looks at the stain.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Crap.

He walks into the bedroom.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

James takes his shirt off and takes another out of the closet. His back is to Selene who is sitting on the bed.

JAMES

What was *that* all about? Did you
see another one of your Wild West
friends?

SELENE

James. I'm leaving. You can come with me or you can stay, but I'm leaving this--.

She sees a giant purple bruise all down the left side of his torso.

SELENE (CONT'D)

What happened to you?!

He puts the new shirt on.

JAMES

I ran into a doorknob. What's this nonsense about you leaving?

An overnight bag and her car keys are beside her on the bed. She rises and goes to him.

SELENE

(pleading)

I know you thought this place would be good for me, but it's actually driving me crazier than even losing the baby did. It's driving you crazy, too, I can tell. You've got to come with me.

JAMES

(explodes)

Everybody thinks they can tell me what to do!

He pushes past her, grabs her car keys and the bag. He stomps out on the deck and, with all his might, like an Olympic discus thrower, HURLS the bag out over the yard and into the wilderness.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You're not going *anywhere*.

House! Lock the doors!

The doors all obediently shut and lock with a definitive CLICK.

Don't let Selene out no matter what she says until I tell you otherwise.

SELENE

What the--

He turns to Selene.

JAMES

It's for your own good. You'll
thank me for this later.

Look, I gotta go into town to meet
somebody. I'll be back late. You
stay here and stay out of trouble.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Madeleine, the woman from the cafe, drives up the winding road to Selene's house in her beat-up Honda Accord. She has 2 drinks in a travel container on the floor of the passenger side.

She is nearly run off the road by an oncoming, lane poaching, Porsche. Its reckless driver HONKS at her - one long doppler-effected sustained horn. It's James.

MADELEINE

Moron.

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - DAY

Madeleine pulls up to the gate. She leans out the window and presses the intercom button.

Inside the house:

Selene runs to the front door where there are two buttons in a wall mounted panel marked "intercom" and "gate". She pushes the intercom button.

SELENE

(excited/desperate)
Hello! Hello!

At the gate:

Madeleine doesn't hear anything except for some faint distortion.

MADELEINE

Selene? Are you there? It's
Madeleine. Your new friend from the
cafe.

Inside the house:

Selene ferociously pushes the intercom and gate buttons.
Nothing happens.

SELENE

Yes, I'm here. Thank God for you,
Madeleine, this house--

At the gate:

Again, nothing but indistinct distortion.

MADELEINE

I brought by some Oyate tea. I
heard you never got to drink yours
last time...

Inside the house:

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

(on intercom)

...I thought maybe you could use a
friend, too.

SELENE

Yes! Yes! Please! Can't you hear
me?

She runs over to the kitchen window and frantically WAVES.
But Madeleine can't see her from this angle. So she runs
toward the bedroom.

At the gate:

Madeleine gets out of the car and walks up to the gate. She
looks toward the kitchen window but there is no one there.
She notices that Selene's Mini Cooper convertible is still
parked in the driveway.

MADELEINE

Hmm...

Inside the house:

Selene runs into the master bath and starts pounding on the
translucent window.

SELENE

Please! I'm here! Get me out! Get
me out!

At the gate:

Madeleine sees shadows moving in the bathroom window but
can't hear anything.

Someone - or someTHING - is watching her from the thick brush. A shadowy figure, almost the absence of light, it moves a closer, within striking distance.

Madeleine gets back in her car and drives off.

Inside the house:

Selene is devastated.

EXT. LEO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Waxing gibbous moon.(Almost Full)

We pan down to reveal a swanky building down near the beach area where Leo has his tacky, overpriced office.

INT. LEO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

James is pacing, a parallel to Sullivan in the earlier scene. Leo leans back in his chair, hand behind his head in a judgmental pose. We see his fancy watch.

JAMES

I don't know why the check bounced.
It must be a bank error.

LEO

They checked it three times. No error. You simply don't have the funds.

JAMES

C'mon Leo, I've always been good to you.

LEO

Oh, like that USB drive with 100 NuCoins? As of yesterday, they were worth, all 100 cumulatively, a grand whopping total of \$116.34.

JAMES

Just wait. They'll be back up.

LEO

That's what you said last week. I looked up some of your previous webcasts.

Our company's owner is very, very angry. He's a big *macher*.

(MORE)

LEO (CONT'D)

I could lose my job - I could lose my real estate license over this.

JAMES

I could lose a lot more than that.

LEO

As I see it you have two options. One - liquidate everything you've got, borrow money from your grandma, pimp yourself out on the street - *whatever it takes* - just get the money.

JAMES

And the other?

LEO

Go to jail. Go directly to jail. Do not pass go. Do not get out soon. Or maybe ever.

JAMES

I'll get it. I know what I have to do.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

James is on the couch doing his webcast. He's a bit disheveled.

JAMES

...Treasury Secretary believes it can be rectified through negotiation but with the leadership crisis and the trade situation in China, it's highly doubtful there will be any movement soon.

COMMENTS

Nikola710:

China? Who gives a crap about China?

WannaBTimD:

What about NuCoin?

MAGAMax:

Yeah, what about frigging NuCoin?

JAMES

As most of you know, NuCoin founder Elizabeth C. Doyle was indicted yesterday on charges of malfeasance and fraud.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

Even though these are utterly without merit - and she will be exonerated - it has caused another temporary downturn in the price of NuCoin.

COMMENTS

PepeTF89:

Downturn? It's DEAD.

NewDisorder:

This guy is drinking his own koolaid.

WannaBTimD:

I may have to go back to Jim Cramer.

JAMES

My advice remains the same. NuCoin is the future. This fall in the price is not a problem - it's an opportunity.

Remember: Money isn't everything - it's the only thing.

The screen goes black.

James' face shows that even he doesn't believe what he's saying any more. He takes his vape pen out of his pocket and takes a long inhale until well past when its end lights up. He leans back on the couch and closes his eyes.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James is still on the couch, pecking at his laptop, not looking very happy about it. The house lamps feel feeble in comparison with the powerful moonlight streaming in through the picture window.

Selene comes in.

SELENE

You know you can't keep me a prisoner forever.

JAMES

You're not a prisoner. You're on a medical retreat.

SELENE

Which I can't leave from.

JAMES
It's not safe.

SELENE
When will it be safe?

JAMES
When Dr. Friedkin says so. When you
stop seeing things.

Hon, I don't want anything bad to
happen to you. I can't afford to
lose you. I've lost enough already.

She comes over to him and sits beside him, sympathetic.

SELENE
I'm sorry about your Nubit-

JAMES
Nucoin.

SELENE
NuCoin. But that's not my fault.
Let's just sell this place and get
an apartment in town.

JAMES
(angry)
No. No. No. You don't understand--

All of a sudden everything in the house just winds down. The
lights...machinery...The only light is the moonlight pouring
in from the outside, the only sounds, those of the insects
and night birds.

JAMES (CONT'D)
What the hell!

House! House! Lights on!

Nothing.

JAMES (CONT'D)
House! House! Reboot!

Still nothing.

James picks up his phone and tries dialing.

JAMES (CONT'D)
No signal. Shit! Shit! Shit! I
gotta get on line tonight.

He tries a few more things. No luck.

JAMES (CONT'D)

OK. I'm going to go someplace they have decent wi-fi. I'll get one of the techies from the office to come out and fix this. It's pretty late so I may not be able to get anyone until tomorrow morning.

But don't get any ideas - you *stay put*. I have your keys...

He raises the keys to show her them, then puts them into his pocket.

JAMES (CONT'D)

...and if you're thinking of walking out, remember it's killer coyote country out there. Until this frigging computer is fixed we'll have to go old-school.

He takes a different set of keys out of his pocket and walks out into the hallway, then unlocks the front door. He slams the door behind him and locks it, with a loud click, from the outside.

The sound of his car driving away.

Off Selene's frightened face...

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM/DECK/HALLWAY - NIGHT

Selene sits upright on the bed in the dark house. The nearly full moon has risen high enough to flood the room with light. We hear crickets, owls, and *something else* - not a coyote - more like *whispering*. Or even distant *singing*.

She goes out on the deck, looks and listens. Nothing. Or does she hear something? She's not sure.

She goes to the front door - still locked. But then she goes down the stairs and tries the downstairs door. It's unlocked!

EXT. YARD - NIGHT

She stands in the ruined yard. Nothing but the usual night sounds minus the sprinkler, mercifully gone silent with the shutdown of the house.

She is about to return to the house when A FIGURE emerges from the brush.

It's Creeker Joe. Oddly, she is not frightened.

CREEKER JOE

You're not wearing the coyote tooth.

SELENE

Is that what it was? Don't get me wrong - but it seemed sort of...audacious.

CREEKER JOE

Audacious...interesting word. Does that scare you?

SELENE

No...it just doesn't seem "me".

CREEKER JOE

Are you sure you aren't audacious?

SELENE

Who's the one standing on someone else's property in the middle of the night?

CREEKER JOE

Ah...whose property is this really? Let me show you something.

They walk around the perimeter of the yard.

They follow the path to the rise where she saw the massacre.

CREEKER JOE (CONT'D)

Long ago this was the site of my people's village. One day, when the men were away, the soldiers attacked and killed everyone they could find. But first, they raped and tortured everyone. Including the children. Anyone left, they drove off the bluff. In the midst of the massacre, the Chieftess of the tribe, named for the Goddess of the Moon, disappeared.

She sees fleeting transparent images of mass murder, rape, and pillage. The sound of women and children screaming and dying, echo all around.

CREEKER JOE (CONT'D)

When the men returned, there was a pitched battle. They killed many of the invaders but the cost was high. Very high. It left the tribe decimated and they fled West. Their home had been where "your" house stands now.

Faint images of a battle.

CREEKER JOE (CONT'D)

The survivors were pursued by reinforcements from the army. But their *pejuta wi casa* - what you call a medicine man - knew powerful traditional magic. He transformed them into coywolves - an animal with the craftiness of a coyote and the fierceness of a wolf. They promised to come back to reclaim their ancestral land when their Chieftess returned.

A long time has passed. But now they think she's been found. And so they've returned.

The images and sounds fade away. They head back toward the house.

SELENE

To Tukteni?

CREEKER JOE

Tukteni. Right. That's what we told the Wasichu - the white people - it was called. Do you know what Tukteni means in our language?

She shakes her head.

CREEKER JOE (CONT'D)

Nowhere.

The tooth on your pendant is a symbol of Mica - Coyote - the shapeshifter who can take any form he chooses.

SELENE

Why do you say "my pendant"? It's yours - I just picked it up.

CREEKER JOE
Where are you from?

SELENE
I grew up out East.

CREEKER JOE
I mean, who are your people?

SELENE
Well, according to Ancestry.com I'm mostly Native American. But I was adopted. I never knew my birth parents.

CREEKER JOE
Do you know what your real name is?

SELENE
Selene. That's what's on my birth certificate.

Creeker Joe laughs.

CREEKER JOE
That's your Wasi'chu name. Your real name is Hanwi.

SELENE
That's pretty. What does it mean?

CREEKER JOE
It's our name for the Goddess of the Moon.

What he is implying begins to sink in on Selene.

SELENE
Whoa...Goddess? Chieftess? Me? No wonder people say you're crazy.

He shrugs.

CREEKER JOE
They say the same about you.

You heard the tribe singing. You wanted to join in, didn't you?

She did.

CREEKER JOE (CONT'D)
That's because you are Hanwi.

She absorbs this as they reach the house.

CREEKER JOE (CONT'D)

You know, back in the day, when someone took another as a prisoner, if that prisoner got free, the captor lost his scalp.

SELENE

Do these things still happen?

CREEKER JOE

No one takes scalps any more. Now there's social media.

She opens the downstairs door. She turns to tell him something...and he's gone.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM/MASTER BATH/DECK - NIGHT

Selene is alone, asleep in bed, looking restful for the first time since we met her.

The sound of coyotes howling come through the open deck door.

But now they feel less threatening, even more *musical*.

She awakens. And smiles. She gets up and goes to the master bath and opens the drawer where she put her pendant.

She takes out the pendant and puts it around her neck.

She opens the medicine cabinet and takes out her pill container. She puts two pills in her hand then pauses and looks in the mirror. She throws them and the rest of the contents of the container into the toilet.

SELENE

House. Flush toilet.

It complies. She smiles.

As if floating on air she walks out onto the deck. The coyote calls increase in tempo and volume in response. She begins to SING, softly at first, but then with greater intensity, unafraid and open for the first time.

The SOUND echoes across the bluffs as our gaze lifts to the nearly full moon.

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - DAY

James comes through the front door. He is expecting the worst. Selene stands in front of the picture window taking in the view.

JAMES

Honey, I didn't want to wake you.
One of the tech guys from the
office has been working on the Wifi
and--

She's not really paying attention.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Selene? Honey? Are you OK?

SELENE

I'm doing just fine. And you can
call me Hanwi.

Not what he was expecting. Has she lost it completely?

There is a KNOCK at the door. James opens it. We can't see the person outside or clearly hear their words as they speak in his pauses.

JAMES

...Really?...That's good
news...What?...*Teeth marks*?...on
the feed?...Never? Wow...

He is handed something.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Thanks.

He shuts the door and examines the object he was handed. It's a 3" thick bundle of wires, maybe 2 feet long and wrapped in thick rubber. The wires have been ripped apart and there are animal **teeth marks** in the rubber on both ends.

He looks worried.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

The usual piles of papers cluttering the walls and the desks of law enforcement. Morales sits at his desk. Williams sits on a chair beside it.

WILLIAMS

Animal Control has narrowed the
origin of the attacks.

(MORE)

WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

They think the pack has a den between Bluff Drive and Ridgeline Road.

MORALES

Ridgeline Road again. Maybe crazy Bill is on to something. Nothing new from the lab about the letter?

WILLIAMS

No. But they did find something interesting about the bite marks on Sullivan's body.

MORALES

What's that.

WILLIAMS

It was weird enough that they were coywolves. But it turns out this sub-species went extinct a hundred and fifty years ago.

MORALES

So?

WILLIAMS

So, where'd they come from? Animal time travelers?

MORALES

Wouldn't be the first time the lab made a mistake. Remember when they screwed up the chain of custody on the DNA of that wife-beater? He got on the stand and charmed the jury into believing it was all a conspiracy. They exonerated him and wiped his record. Changed his name so we didn't even know it was the same guy.

Then, when he did what he did to that Johnson woman, people blamed me!

WILLIAMS

Didn't help that she contacted us and got blown off.

MORALES

Yeah, she contacted us. We went out there, but when we got there she said everything was fine.

(MORE)

MORALES (CONT'D)

She said she'd just been mad at her boyfriend when she called, but it was all sorted out. It made sense. He seemed like a reasonable guy. And, you know women and their histrionics.

Williams looks at him like, "You're not really going there are you?"

MORALES (CONT'D)

How were we to know he said he'd kill her if she told?

WILLIAMS

Killed her anyway.

MORALES

Domestic disputes are *the worst*.

Madeleine stands in the doorway of Morales' office and knocks on the frame.

MADELEINE

Sheriff Morales? I want to report something suspicious.

MORALES

Unless it has something to do with killer coyotes, I don't have time for it right now.

MADELEINE

Look, there's this woman I met and, well, I think her husband is holding her captive.

MORALES

What?

MADELEINE

She came down to the cafe - nice lady - we hit it off. I went to bring her some tea from the cafe and -

MORALES

You do home deliveries now?

MADELEINE

- and she didn't answer the buzzer at the gate even though I swear she was home.

(MORE)

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I asked around - no one has seen her go out. I think she's being held against her will.

MORALES

Being a homebody who doesn't answer the door when a stranger shows up is not evidence of a crime. Look, I just don't have the bandwidth right now to deal with--

MADELEINE

A "domestic dispute"? Isn't that what you called the Liani Johnson situation - the *first* time she reached you.

This cuts him to the core.

MORALES

OK, we're done here, Madeleine.

She tries a different tack.

MADELEINE

Sheriff - there's something weird about this. They live up in that super-high-tech McMansion up on Ridgeline Road. and--

Suddenly his interest is piqued.

MORALES

Ridgeline Road? The new construction? Name's...

He rummages through some papers.

MORALES (CONT'D)

...Latimore?

MADELEINE

I don't know her last name. Her first name is--

MORALES

(reading off his notes)
Selene.

MADELEINE

That's her. So are you going to--

MORALES

I'll check it out.

He looks at the clock on the wall.

MORALES (CONT'D)

But right now I get to deal with a zoomful of citizens who are upset about murderous coyotes.

(to Williams)

We ready for this?

WILLIAMS

As ready as we'll ever be.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - EVENING

The sheriff sits at his desk with deputy Williams beside him. The Zoom screen shows an assortment of Tukteni residents of all ages and socio-economic statuses - almost all abiding by the unacknowledged 60s boho look with a few token hipsters thrown in.

Madeleine sits off to one side, still stewing about being blown off.

MORALES

Let me emphasize - these are not normal coyotes. They are some kind of mutation that we haven't seen before. We have experts setting up traps and setting out poison. We are confident we will capture or kill the rogue animals that have been doing this destruction shortly.

The best advice remains: keep small animals and children indoors at all times and don't wander off the road at night.

Bill Coster can't take any more. He pipes up.

BILL

(shouting)

These animals destroy my herd and kill a man and the best you can offer is "stay inside"? Why don't we do something about the cause of this "rogue animal behavior"? Why is that *monstrosity* up on Ridgeline still standing? Isn't it suspicious that the man who signed off on it was found dead only hours later?

MORALES

(muttering to Williams)
He's got a point there.

WILLIAMS

Even a stopped clock is right twice
a day.

Various others agree with Bill and shout out "Yeah!" and "You tell 'em, Bill!"

BILL

I got nothing left to lose. Who
wants to meet me there and do
something about it?

Various hot-heads in the group shout out support, "I gotta chain-saw!" "I'll get my Elon Musk flame-thrower."

MORALES

That's enough macho rhetoric for
the night. We're going to do this
right and that means within the
law. I know everyone is upset but--

A YAHOO wearing a "Pro Gun/Pro God" sweatshirt lifts up two dead BABY COYOTES.

YAHOO

I got these two with my AK today.
These suckers aren't going to hurt
anything or anybody else ever
again.

WILLIAMS

They aren't from the subspecies
that mounted the attacks.

YAHOO

A coyote is a coyote. And the only
good one is a dead one!

People online roar their approval. Morales turns to Williams.

MORALES

This is getting out of hand. I'm
going up to that house. You stay
here and do crowd control.

Madeleine pulls up to his side.

MADELEINE

I'm coming with you.

MORALES

That's against department - aw,
screw it. C'mon.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Leo drives on a winding road in the dark, the only illumination besides his headlights being glimpses of the moon. Suddenly A DEER jumps in front of his car. He SLAMS on the brakes but hits it anyway.

Leaving the motor running, Leo flips on his hazard lights and gets out of the car. Going around to its front, he sees the bleeding and dying deer lying in front of his car's dented grill.

LEO

Oh crap. What's *this* gonna cost me?

He hears a GROWLING from behind. A pair of red eyes. Then another. And another.

The camera pans to the deer as, off-screen, we hear the coyotes snarling attacks interspersed with Leo's SCREAMS.

A SEVERED ARM with a PLATINUM ROLEX lands on the hood of the car.

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Full Moon.

Establishing shot. Lights on in the living room and bedroom of the house.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/BEDROOM - NIGHT

James is in the living room, on the phone, laptop open in front of him. A flask is on the coffee table in front of him.

Selene is in the bedroom, sitting on the bed, playing the guitar and HUMMING to herself. The coyote pendant hangs around her neck.

IN THE LIVING ROOM...

JAMES

...that's not a problem, Franco.
I'll have it for you Monday,
Tuesday at the latest. Okay, okay,
Monday, for sure.

He hangs up.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Shit.

He takes a swig from the flask. A long one. He picks up his phone and dials.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Leo. Answer the phone. Answer the frigging phone.

He get's Leo's answering message. "*You have reached the cellphone of...*". He hangs up.

He takes another swig from the flask.

He starts typing furiously on his laptop.

IN THE BEDROOM...

The video display in the bedroom comes to life. It mirrors James' laptop.

IN THE LIVING ROOM...

James' laptop displays a legal document from New Horizons Trust. He scrolls down.

IN THE BEDROOM...

Selene looks up and sees the display. She stops playing the guitar. She softly reads the words on the screen.

SELENE

(reading)

Durable financial power of attorney: In the event of her institutionalization for mental incapacity or death, any and all disbursement will be conducted by her attorney-in-fact, James Latimore.

(calling out)

James...? What's a durable financial power of attorney?

He comes rushing in.

JAMES

How the fu-- It's nothing, honey.

(command voice)

House! Bedroom screen off!

The screen goes black.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Remember last year, after we lost the baby, and you started with Dr. Friedkin? You were pretty out of it. So we made the trust your grandfather left for you - the one you can't touch until you're 30? - my responsibility. To take it off your plate.

She is confused.

SELENE

I don't understand. If I couldn't touch it until I was 30 why would you need to do anything?

JAMES

I don't know, honey. Just something the lawyers recommended.

SELENE

But why did it just come up on my screen?

JAMES

Beats me.

Off his face revealing he really doesn't know. And it bothers him.

Our view moves out of the bedroom, into the hall, and into the living room.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The video screen above the fireplace comes to life. A huge silhouette of a COYWOLF - walking across the room is displayed on it.

INT. INFINITY HOUSE - BEDROOM/HALLWAY/STAIRS - NIGHT

James is passed out, flask in hand on a chair. Selene still sitting on the bed with her laptop hears an animal howl. She sits up and looks down at the pendant hung around her neck. The coyote tooth glows, faintly. It might just be the moonlight, streaming in from outside. Or something coming from *inside* the tooth.

She gets up and stealthily goes out the bedroom door and carefully down the stairs. One of the stairs creaks. She stops. Looks back up. Nothing.

She gets to the bottom of the stairs and extends her arm to try to open the downstairs door. She never actually touches it, yet it mysteriously opens.

She walks out into the yard.

EXT. YARD/PATH - NIGHT

Selene follows the sound of the increasingly musical animal howling. She crosses the yard and follows the path into the brush until she reaches the clearing.

EXT. THE CLEARING - NIGHT

There are a dozen ghostly coywolves arranged in a circle, howling sometimes together, sometimes in succession. They range in size but all are smaller than the coywolves we saw before. They include a few pups. They quiet as SELENE arrives, all watching intently with red eyes.

She sits down in the circle, her back to the full moon framing her upper body, and she begins to sing. Or is it a howl? One by one the coywolves join in until all are singing/howling in an animal version of a campfire singalong.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Sheriff Morales driving and Madeleine in the shotgun seat of a Sheriff's car. They wend their way up the road to Selene's. There is no illumination except for the moonlight.

Without warning, a stopped car appears on the road in front of them. It's Leo's, hazard lights blinking, engine still on.

MORALES

Excuse me.

Morales' reaches across Madeleine and takes a flashlight out of the glove compartment.

MORALES (CONT'D)

You stay here.

He gets out of the car, closes the door, and walks toward Leo's car.

Stillness. Night insects.

Suddenly, a burst of shadowy motion, a ferocious SNARL, a SHOUT, then...

SLOW-MO...the flashlight flies through the air.

Then *silence*. Madeleine's terrified face: Is he dead?

The driver's side door opens, a freaked-out Morales hops in.

MORALES (CONT'D)

We gotta get out of here!

He hits the gas. The engine REVS as he shifts gears. Then sputters off. All the lights in the car fade out.

MORALES (CONT'D)

What the--?

A cacophony of scratching on the sides of the car.

The sound of animal feet landing on the roof.

Faces of coywolves appear in all the windows, looking in.

A distinctive pair of red eyes stares in through the front windshield. The outline of the face indicates it is the coywolf with the gray patch. It looks at Morales, then straight at Madeleine. Almost against her will, she looks back. They lock eyes.

Then, as suddenly as they came, the coywolves are gone.

EXT. THE CLEARING - NIGHT

Selene and the coyotes sing with gusto. Their faces sometimes, for a fraction of a second in the moonlight, look like Native American faces. Moms and kids, no men. She is comforted. Suddenly, the coywolves stop.

Behind Selene, silhouetted by the moon, looms a **GIANT MONSTER**. The small coywolves scatter.

The monster grabs her by the hair and pulls her up to standing. The "monster" is James, clothes askew, and hair gone crazy.

He roughly grabs her arm with one hand and points a gun at her with his other.

JAMES

Come on. We have to go someplace.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Morales and Madeleine in the car, still dark, stunned.

MADELEINE

Are they gone?

MORALES

Hell if I know.

The car lights suddenly pop up and the police radio erupts with static-y distorted voices. He turns the key and the engine starts.

MORALES (CONT'D)

That's better.

MADELEINE

Look, I know you're supposed to wait for the CSI crew to arrive but I have an awful feeling. We have to get to Selene right away before there's another...

MORALES

I agree.

MADELEINE

(surprised)

You do?

MORALES

The dead guy in the car? That's, Leo Chantrell, the developer who sold the Latimores their house. And, yeah, I don't want another Liani Johnson. Mr. Latimore needs to answer some questions, *now*.

He slams the car into gear and they take off.

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

James drags Selene past the house and up the side stairs to the driveway. They head for his Porsche when, out of nowhere, three huge creatures hop up onto the hood, top, and back of the car: coywolves.

Startled, he points his gun at them and shoots several times, wildly, missing the coywolves, but succeeding in putting a hole in his car's back tire. He hears a snarl from behind him and turns and shoots at it. A pair of red eyes disappears, but he does manage to hit the fancy propane heater.

It **BURSTS INTO FLAMES** and catches the front porch on fire.

JAMES
Shit! Shit! Shit!

He drags Selene toward her car.

JAMES (CONT'D)
You drive.

He keeps his gun trained on her as she gets in the driver's seat and he gets into the passenger seat.

He hands her the keys.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Drive.

The whole front of the house is burning.

She starts the car and drives to the gates. They are closed. She stops.

James takes out his phone.

JAMES (CONT'D)
House! Open the gates.

HOUSE VOICE
(on phone)
Fire. I have detected fire.
Evacuate immediately.

JAMES
Yes. That's what we're trying to do. Open the frigging gates!

The gates open. She drives through.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

JAMES
(to Selene)
Take a left.

SELENE
Where are we going?

JAMES
I'll tell you when we get there.

EXT. PATH - NIGHT

The pull up to the Lookout Point trailhead.

JAMES

Stop!

She stops. He opens his door, grabs her hands, and as he steps out of the car, yanks her out his side. The car is still running.

JAMES (CONT'D)

This way.

They walk up a dirt path, clearly illuminated by the full moon. Selene walks ahead with the occasional prod from James' gun.

We can see the house burning in the distance.

SELENE

Why are you doing this?

JAMES

For the same reason everybody does everything. Money.

SELENE

I don't understand.

JAMES

You have a trust from your grandparents. It's worth a *lot*. It's one of the reasons I married you. Hell, maybe THE reason. But you can't get at that money until you're 30. Unless you are declared mentally incompetent. In which case the durable power of financial attorney kicks in. And your attorney-in-fact gets to choose how the money is spent.

SELENE

And that attorney-in-fact is...

JAMES

Yeah, me. I didn't think we'd need it any time soon. But then NuCoin tanked. And kept going down. And down. I had bought a lot with some other people's money. Some not very nice people.

SELENE
I saw the bruises.

Beat.

JAMES
I staged that "attack" on our house to try to buy some time with the sellers - "undisclosed dangers" makes a good legal maneuver. I thought the greenies would be blamed for the dog, too.

SELENE
Mina?

JAMES
Yeah, she made you just a little too comfortable. You needed a little push. So I told the house to let her out and not let her back in. But I had to do the rest.

SELENE
You killed Mina?

JAMES
Yeah, not sorry. But I am sorry about the baby.

SELENE
(slowly)
What do you mean?

JAMES
If we'd had a baby, well, then the trust would have automatically gone to the kid in the case of your incapacitation or...demise.

SELENE
What did you do?

He doesn't reply. She stops.

SELENE (CONT'D)
What...did...you...do?

He shrugs.

JAMES
Those pills you were taking to manage your morning sickness?
(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

I got something from my buddy,
Ernie at the dispensary. Looked
just like 'em. Except...a different
result.

The true horror begins to sink in.

SELENE

You KILLED our baby? For MONEY?

She attacks him. He pistol-whips her. She hits the ground. He
roughly grabs her arm and yanks her to her feet.

JAMES

Enough of this bullshit. Keep
walking.

You were getting pretty crazy
there. I mean, I helped a little -
the blood thing on the video
screen, the crazy lights and
appliances going on and off and
all. Easy to do with a "smart"
house. But those soldiers? And the
Indians? That was all you, baby,
all you.

EXT. INFINITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Morales and Madeleine pull up to Infinity House, engulfed
in flames. Morales picks up the radio mic.

MORALES

10-80 Code Red. Fire in progress.
The new construction on Ridgeline.

VOICE ON RADIO (V.O.)

Roger that.

Through the trees, Madeleine sees a red taillight parked up
in the road at the head of the Lookout Point trail.

MADELEINE

Look! I'll bet that's them. Let's
go!

MORALES

I got to wait for the fire
department. But just as soon as
they get here we can--

The door on Madeleine's side slams. Through the windshield we
see her running up the road.

EXT. PATH - NIGHT

Selene and James continue up the path. In the distance, the house's gigantic protruding deck collapses in flames and the rest of the house disintegrates into rubble.

JAMES

(shrugs)

It was never ours anyway.

SELENE

So, if your plan was to have me declared insane, why are we walking up here?

JAMES

That *was* the plan.

But I was running out of time. And something else happened. You... *changed*. "Hanwi".

So...new plan!

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT - CONTINUOUS

They have reached Lookout Point, the cliff that overlooks the river.

He yanks her hard and brings her to the edge.

JAMES

You know all that crazy crap you said and did - I have video of it all, on the cloud. The house never stopped watching, you know.

The story is going to be this: Still distraught by your miscarriage, in a dissociative state, you set our beloved home on fire, then decided to throw yourself off the cliff at Lookout Point. I will be terribly sad for a month or so - then cash in the trust. Leo Chantrell will testify that I just came from a meeting with him. No one will ever know I was even here.

SELENE

I wouldn't be so sure.

She lifts up his smart phone which, somehow, she has gotten a hold of. The pendant on her chest is brightly lit.

SELENE (CONT'D)

I've been livecasting on your channel ever since you knocked me down and your phone fell out of your pocket. You showed me how.

JAMES

Wha...

FLASHBACK IN SLO MO:

We see him pistol-whip her, the phone tumbles to the ground, and she picks it up, unseen by him, pushes a button and sticks it in her back pants pocket with just the camera showing.

BACK TO SCENE:

She hits a button on the phone. It's the usual webcast format he uses with the video image on top and comments below.

VIDEO IMAGE OF JAMES

"...story is going to be this: still distraught by your miscarriage, in a dissociative state, you set our beloved home on fire, then decided to throw yourself off the cliff at Lookout Point. I will be terribly sad for a month or so - then cash in the trust."

COMMENTS

WannaBTimD:

WTF! Anyone know what's going on?

DarthDater:

Is this some kind of stunt?

DisRupTHOR:

I just called the cops.

She turns it off with a click. The pendant glows even brighter.

JAMES

Screw THAT!

He grabs the phone out of her hand and throws it, with all his might, over the cliff into nothingness.

SELENE

Too late. Your 1.2 million followers just heard it all. And at least one of them has a conscience or, more likely, figured they could turn your online confession into five minutes of fame which could be worth some bank. Remember: money isn't everything - *it's the only thing.*

Betcha the authorities are already on their way.

JAMES

(enraged)

Too late for you, though!

He starts to push her toward the precipice. They are interrupted by growling and snarling. A dozen huge coywolves surround them, led by the one with the distinctive gray patch.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Oh, SHIT!

James starts shooting at them. They just stand there. The bullets do nothing. We see momentary flashes of Native American faces and bodies in place of the coyotes.

Creeker Joe's face flashes on the graypatch coywolf.

James is out of bullets. The coywolves close in.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Selene. They're your friends, right? If you ever loved me, get them to back off.

Selene begins singing the same song she sang with the coywolf mothers and kids. James eyes bulge in disbelief.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Selene?

A NEW COYWOLF, one that is slightly smaller and colored a little differently, steps forward. It has Selene's pendant around its neck. It/she comes right up to James and snarls in his face. He closes his eyes, shaking in terror. She opens her jaws as if she is going to rip his throat open - then turns, yips to the others and they head toward the woods.

JAMES (CONT'D)
(eyes still closed,
whimpering)
Please don't hurt me. Please,
please, please don't hurt me.

Madeleine arrives, breathing hard. As the other coywolves go off into the woods, the Selene coywolf pauses and locks eyes with her. A smile of recognition crosses Madeleine's face. She makes the "I love you" hand signal. The Selene coywolf nods and disappears into the woods.

The SUN creeps over the horizon, flooding the land with red light. James looks up.

We see sheriffs' cars coming up the road and the sound of sirens in the distance. There is no trace of the coywolves.

THE END