

AMERICAN SLEEPERS

Written by

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Address
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HUES of RED shimmer across calm CLEAR LIQUID. A toxic lake of volatile juice surrounded by the plastic of a gasoline jug.

INT. GAS JUG

WE HEAR the muffled compression of air. Commotion outside. A body falls to the ground near us.

A shadow reaches down and picks us up. The gasoline tilts and splatters on the sides of the container as it funnels out of a black nozzle and onto-

ISAAC, 20's, bound with zip ties behind his back and gagged. He cringes as gas pours over his eyes and mouth. Muted groans of agony echo out as he screams in pain. His skin bulges with blotchy blue spots. His eyes swollen.

EXT. RED ROCK PLAINS, SOUTHERN UTAH -- DAY

DANNY, 20's, empties the last drops of fuel onto Isaac's clothes and wipes the sweat from his forehead with the back of a glove. His eyes are ruthless but controlled, a hitman for hire.

DANNY

Does it burn? I knew you didn't
hide all that money. Get up. Look
at me.

He reaches down and grabs a fist full of Isaacs wet hair and pulls him up to his knees.

DANNY (CONT'D) (CONTD)

I'm looking forward to finding your
sister, she looks like a good ride.

Danny chuckles to himself as he pulls off his gloves and steps away to the bed of a FORD PICKUP. He lifts out a BLOWTORCH and a bottle of lighter fluid. Gas on. Flame bursts to life.

POV ISAAC: Blurred vision of Danny with his back halfway turned. Now is Isaac's only chance.

He leaps onto his right leg, pivots, and thrusts himself into a sprint for his life.

Danny sees from the corner of his eye. He turns and squeezes the bottle of lighter fluid into the flame towards Isaac. A JET OF FIRE shoots out and IGNITES the ground laced with gasoline, where Isaac had just been.

It SCORCHES after Isaac, burning a path after him, and lighting up drops of gas that drip inches from his body, before the flames fizzle out.

Isaac stumbles around the front of the truck in a panic.

BANG. A bullet ricochets off the hood of the pickup. Danny tries to get a better view, he moves around the truck and fires his HANDGUN again but hits dirt.

Isaac scrambles away, he jukes like a wild man trying to dodge bullets while running in zigzags across the desert.

Danny props his arms onto the hood of the truck to stable his handgun. He has Isaac in his sights, pulls the trigger.

Isaac DIVES behind a small tree, and then runs faster. He is making distance now, putting a gap between himself and his attacker.

DANNY (CONT'D) (CONTD)

Fuck! You're dead amigo.

Danny climbs into the ford, turns the ignition, and punches it into gear.

The truck tears over the landscape in pursuit of the escaped man.

EXT. GAS STATION -- DAY

EMILY, 20's, stands against a pay phone and pleads into it. Behind her Isaacs sits with a cardboard sign, and sticks his thumb out.

EMILY

We're stranded, and broke. I don't know what we're going to do.

MALE VOICE

I'm not coming to get you.

EMILY

Don't you even want to see us?

MALE VOICE

I can't. I'm sorry. It's time to get clean sweetheart.

The phone call ends. Emily hangs up. She plops down next to Isaac and their few bags of luggage.

ISAAC
Do you like my sign?

He shows it off, "Free Colorado Weed", it says.

EMILY
Do you want us to get arrested?

ISAAC
For what? Who doesn't like free weed?

EMILY
Cops. We're not in Colorado anymore. It's illegal here.

ISAAC
Cops love free weed, everyone loves weed. The only reason they make it illegal is for job security. This way there will always be some hooligans to round up, and the porkers can take their drugs for free. It's a brilliant idea actually. What did dad say?

EMILY
What do you think? He says it's time get clean.

ISAAC
Well of course. It makes perfect sense. Make us face the cold hard streets. Where we'll be forced to give hummers to dirty homeless guys so we can afford more crack rocks. That will teach us the error of our ways, and we'll clean up and get desk jobs. Then we can use our newly acquired bj skills on our middle aged white collar boss. At least then we'll be we sucking dick for pay raises instead of drugs. (Beat). Hey, It's gonna be alright. We'll find a place to stay.

Emily smiles but doesn't take comfort in his words. She's heard them before.

Isaac turns his sign over. It reads: Nowhere in Particular.

EXT. RED ROCK PLAINS, SOUTHERN UTAH -- DAY

BLACK RUBBER tears along the dry cracked dirt, tires spinning. The desert fades around the Ford Truck as it gives chase.

In a blind panic Isaac sprints weakly away from his pursuer. No sign of refuge in the bleak flat distance.

The truck gains on him as it picks up speed.

Isaac tries desperately to avoid the truck as it SLAMS into him. His body rolls partially over the hood and he face plants into ground.

INT. TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Brakes screech as Danny brings the truck to a stop. He finds Isaac's body laid out in his side view mirror. He throws the truck into reverse and backs up alongside Isaac.

EXT. RED ROCK PLAINS, SOUTHERN UTAH -- DAY

Danny steps down out of the truck and slowly moves around the front of the vehicle, 9mm in hand.

Isaac writhes in pain, breathing heavily, he tries to move.

Danny rounds the front end of the truck, he raises and points the 9mm down at the ground, but Isaac is gone. He stretches his neck to look behind the truck but no one is there. Quickly he kneels to see under the truck.

Isaac shimmies his way out from underneath the truck and jumps into the drivers seat. He uses an elbow to down shift the gear into drive and hits the gas.

Danny stumbles back and catches himself. He rises to his feet and takes off after the truck. Inches away he swipes at the truck bed, trying to latch on, but can't hold his grip.

He raises the gun and fires off three rounds.

The back windshield explodes and Isaac ducks from the spray of glass shards.

The truck fades further away from Danny who fishes a cell phone from his pocket and dials a number, someone answers.

DANNY
We have a problem.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME -- DAY

Blue eyeballs made from ink stare at us. An unholy tattoo that's been needled onto the back of a pair of eyelids. CARLOS, 20's, opens his eyes, blinks, and sits up.

The world shifts sideways as he rises. He takes a hit off a bong that's been built into a coffee table. Soft music vibrates through the haze of marijuana smoke.

He glances at his giant plasma TV. Above it hangs a Double Barrel Stoeger 12 gauge on metal racks. He stands and drifts out of the room.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

A fridge bursts open. Carlos reaches in and brings out a beer. He cracks the lid and makes his way down a hallway to his room.

INT. BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

A brown bombshell wrapped in white sheets lays asleep in a king sized bed. This is ANABEL (20's) stunning and sexy without effort her long black hair drapes down her chest. She stirs awake as Carlos enters.

CARLOS

You left me on the couch.

ANABEL

Your bed is too comfortable papi.

He climbs into bed and lays back sipping his beer. Anabel kisses his chest.

ANABEL (CONT'D) (CONTD)

I wanted to play last night, but you fell asleep. Too much drinking.

She takes the beer away from him.

CARLOS

You don't drink enough.

ANABEL

I'm not Mexican. I can't handle your tequilas.

He rolls her onto her back and take his beer back seductively.

CARLOS

That's not true. I put a little Mexican in you everyday.

She moans as he kisses her neck.

ANABEL

No one does me like you do papi.

He sets his drink down on the bedside table next to a cell phone and lifts her up and rolls her over on top of him. The lovers melt into a passionate embrace.

CELLPHONE buzzes and sounds an alarm. Carlos reaches for it.

CARLOS.

Yeah. Fuck. I have to go.

EXT. RED ROCK PLAINS, SOUTHERN UTAH -- DAY

Isaac pulls the truck over and jumps out. He forces his wrists apart but can't break the zip ties.

A thin stream of blood leaks from his ear as he raises his arms behind his back and SLAMS them into his body, until the zip ties break.

Isaac throws his head back and plucks at one eye with his thumb and index finger, and pops out a hard contact lens. His eye has a burnt red ring with bubbles of flesh around the outside, but is white where the contact was.

CUT TO:

Danny runs past shrubs, he's sprinting with endurance. An empty highway stretches pavement along the desert. He leaps onto it and waves his hands over his head to flag down an oncoming Toyota Camry.

Isaac climbs into the truck and grabs a 44oz soda. He rips off the lid and scoops the drink into his eyes frantically rinsing them. He dumps the last drops over his face.

Danny approaches the drivers window.

DANNY

I'm stranded, my car broke down.

He flings open the door and PUNCHES the DRIVER and yanks him out of the car GTA style. Then whips his 9mm out and pops the driver in the head. He jumps into the car and speeds off.

Isaac uses his shirt to dry off his face. A faint RUMBLE in the distance captures his attention. He fears the worst.

Cresting over the horizon is a RED SPORTS CAR driven by a young college looking couple. He sighs in relief and drives away in the truck.

Danny races along the old highway towards Isaac, hellbent on ending him. Speedometer passes ninety and then ninety five.

EXT. GAS STATION -- DAY

Isaac and Emily share candy outside the small station.

ISAAC

I don't think I can survive off
twix and m&m's for much longer.
Plus I think the attendant might be
getting wise to our criminal ways.

EMILY

I am not sleeping here. Find us a
ride.

ISAAC

From who? There's no one here to
ask.

INT. STATION WAGON -- DAY

JUAN 20's puffs the life out of a joint and flicks the butt out the open window. He spins the steering wheel and turns.

EXT. GAS STATION -- DAY

An old beat up station wagon creeps next to one of the gas pumps that stands alone in an empty parking lot.

EMILY

Well what's your excuse now?

ISAAC

Oh alright.

Isaac makes his way over begrudgingly with his sign.

INT. STATION WAGON -- DAY

Juan shuts off the engine. He is distracted by Isaac who appears at the window opposite him and waves.

ISAAC
Hey pal, free weed for a ride?

EXT. GAS STATION -- DAY

Juan steps out half ignoring Isaac as he fills the gas tank with unleaded, his eyes bloodshot.

JUAN
What do you want?

ISAAC
Do you smoke weed? Can we hitch a ride with you?

JUAN
No.

ISAAC
C'mon man, my sister and me are stranded. We just need a lift into town.

JUAN
Fuck off. I don't have time for this.

Juan hoists the gas nozzle back into the pump and shuts the gas tank. He shoots Isaac an ice cold stare and disappears into the gas station.

ISAAC
There's no need to be rude. What a dickhead.

Isaac observes the unattended car. He peers through it's windows and sees the KEYS on the drivers seat, and a SMARTPHONE in the center console. It's now or never.

ISAAC (CONTD) (CONT'D)
Emily, grab the bags. He said he would absolutely love to give us a ride.

Emily gathers a backpack and two duffle bags in her arms and heads towards the car.

Isaac slumps behind the steering wheel and cranks the engine over until it bursts to life. He swings the car around and pulls up next to his sister.

ISAAC (CONTD) (CONT'D)
Get in.

Juan exits the station and in sheer horror darts for his car. With Emily in the passengers seat, Isaac flips the car around and cruises past Juan.

ISAAC (CONTD) (CONT'D)
Fuck you buddy.

EXT. GAS STATION -- DAY

Isaac parks the silver ford in a stall and enters the station.

INT. GAS STATION -- DAY

He limps down an isle until he finds a bottle of pain meds. He rips off the lid and pours out a handful of pills.

He steps to the refrigerated section and swings open the glass door and pulls out a soda and downs the pills.

An ATTENDENT looks over and stares in surprise and worry.

ATTENDENT
Are you alright?

ISAAC
I need your help.

Isaac makes his way to the counter.

ISAAC (CONTD) (CONT'D)
There's someone trying to kill me. I don't know what he'll do if he knows I'm here. He'll see my truck.

ATTENDENT
Well we could park it behind the car wash.

ISAAC
I'll pull it around.

He starts heading out the door.

ATTENDENT
Should I call the police?

ISAAC.
Go for it. Tell them two murderous thugs are on the loose, and they're running the country.

EXT. GAS STATION -- DAY

Danny cruises past the empty parking lot, no truck in sight. He parks and strides into the convenience store.

INT. GAS STATION -- DAY

Attendant stands behind the counter unpacking boxes.

DANNY

You haven't seen a silver ford pickup truck around here have you? I'm looking for a friend of mine.

ATTENDENT

Well you got here first. No ones come looking for you. Your the first person I've seen all morning.

Danny knows it's a dead end. He looks up at a SECURITY CAMERA, then back at the attendant.

DANNY

Does that work?

ATTENDENT

I can't have people stealing in my store can I?

Danny levels his 9mm and thrusts it into the attendants face.

DANNY

Give me the tape.

ATTENDENT

I lied. I'm sorry. It's just to scare people. It doesn't work.

IN SLOW MOTION the pistol fires as Danny squeezes the trigger. Sparks and flames erupt from the barrel and the top slides back to eject a shell.

INT. GAS STATION -- LATER

Isaac exits the custodial closet and cautiously makes his way around the front of the store. He passes the Attendant who has a bullet hole in his head with blood slowly draining into a small pool on the bland tile floor.