

# reprisal

## Episode 101

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**OPEN.**

1

**EXT. A CORNFIELD - NIGHT**

1

And by "night", let's be perfectly clear: *it is fucking DARK.*

Insects mindfully chirp to a sliver of moonlight. All while TAIL LIGHTS barely outline the frame of a GIRL: **KATHERINE.**

No older than 20. Dainty with the prettiest of features. And here -- *she's struck with a horrendous fright.*

Her face sticky with dried tears, trembling as we pull back to find that she stands before the bed of an OLD PICKUP TRUCK --

-- *and that her wrists are bound to it with CHAINS.*

All of this as -- FOOTSTEPS O.S. Her frame tensing as they approach, boots crunching in the soil. Steady. Methodical.

That's when **HE** enters frame, his back to us as he opens the truck bed, jumps into a sit. And even though her throat catches:

KATHERINE

*Burt --*

**BURT.** But we don't get to see him. Not yet. We stay behind him as he lights a CIGARETTE, puffs some smoke off to dance in the red flare of the tail lights.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

-- please don't do this.

He exhales as he looks her over, the light revealing DARK BRUISES about her arms, waist, the side of her face.

BURT

Ah, Kathy.

KATHERINE

I didn't mean to go so far.

(beat)

*Why can't you see that?*

Burt draws off his cigarette, jumps from the truck, his frame slithering behind her.

BURT

I had a nightmare last night. You were there as this -- small girl. In front of a massive forest. Had on that -- orange twirl dress Mom used to put you in.

He lingers out of view, shifting from one of her shoulders to the other, a blur to us as he carries on.

BURT (CONT'D)  
And from these gigantic trees, I  
could hear it. This great *beast*.  
(beat)  
Wouldn't show itself, but -- I  
knew it was coming. Could **feel** it.  
(beat)  
Could feel there was nothing I  
could do to protect you.

Let's make one more thing clear: whoever Burt is -- we can all agree that he is a flagrant fucking lunatic.

BURT (CONT'D)  
What I've built with these men.  
Ain't no words for it.  
(beat)  
And you tried to harm that --

KATHERINE  
-- no --

BURT  
-- yes. Kathy. You did.  
(beat)  
Because **you** are the beast. You  
are your own undoing.  
(beat)  
But you won't be ours.

He tosses his cigarette, comes around to gently place a hand on her face, her tears bleeding into his fingers --

KATHERINE  
*PLEASE*. You're not thinking straight.

He kisses her on the cheek, touches his forehead to hers --

BURT  
There are worse ways to go, Katherine.

-- and her tremble mutates into a shake, a violent and visceral terror -- *AS BURT IS NOW WALKING AWAY*.

KATHERINE  
BURT!  
(nope)  
*BURT!*  
(nope)  
***BURT!! PLEASE!!***

ANGLE ON the truck's rear window, Burt jumping into the passenger seat, SLAMMING THE DOOR SHUT.

KATHERINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

**BURT!!!**

Shrouded in darkness, his head turns slightly, stealing a glance through the open window -- before HE SLIDES IT CLOSED, revealing a FADING DECAL stuck to the glass:

**A SKULL WITH SPIDER LEGS SPRAWLING BENEATH IT.** We home in on this decal a beat -- before Burt looks to **THE DRIVER** --

-- **AND NODS.** AND THE ENGINE REVS TO LIFE.

The driver throws it in gear.

AND THE TRUCK MOVES -- *accelerating quickly* --

KATHERINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

**NO! BURT!! BURT, PLEASE!!**

-- and we stay with the truck, PULLING BACK TO THE BED:

**WHERE A PILE OF CHAIN IS QUICKLY UNRAVELING** --

-- *KATHERINE'S PLEAS GROWING DISTANT* --

KATHERINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

**PLEASE!! PLEASE NO, BURT!!**

-- **UNTIL THE CHAIN PULLS TAUT** -- *and Katherine goes quiet.*

An eerie silence as we move down the length of chain, *fiercely dragging through soil and stalks* -- no other sound to be heard.

And in the interest of a morbid juxtaposition -- our show's THEME SONG kicks in. Something poppy. Jazzy. *Fun* --

-- as NARROW, ANIMATED BARS begin to wipe our frame, taking us away from this horror-show -- and bringing us into our --

-- **SUPER FUN-BUT-VERY-DARK ANIMATED OPENING CREDITS.**

end open.

**ONE.****SOME YEARS LATER:**

ANCHORMAN (V.O.)  
*And the mystery in the North Pole  
 continues tonight, with a controversy  
 brewing over leaked satellite images --*

2

**INT. A LIVING ROOM - DAY**

2

OPEN ON: A TELEVISION. Square and classic. A stoic **ANCHORMAN** crackling beneath the restraints of a shitty signal.

ANCHORMAN (ON TV)  
*-- that appear to depict what many  
 are calling a bizarre hoax --*

Grainy images of EARTH'S NORTHERN POINT APPEAR. Where once was crisp blue and white, now an ORANGE SQUARE. Unnatural. *Unclear.*

REVEAL: On a sofa, KATHERINE, watching the news. Many years older -- years that have clearly been good to her.

She's now in her late 30s. Healthy skin. Wholesome head of hair. Thick glasses reminiscent of a cat detective's.

And if we look close, just barely there -- **A LONG SCAR.** Thin and faint. Nothing egregious -- *but it's there.* Snaking calmly down her neck and into her blouse. Her past now a part of her.

ANCHORMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*-- but, while both authorities  
 have declined to comm--*

--CLICK. Doris switches the television off. Considers it.

MAN (O.S.)  
*-- Doris --*

A frail man's voice. From another room. Telling us: *her name is no longer Katherine. Her name is now DORIS.*

3

**INT. DEN - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

3

Peaceful. Pleasant. Outdated furniture lends a certain charm to the room, all of it from a time long before where we are.

It's a gentle contrast to the machines that beep. The valves that breathe. The colorful world of HOME HOSPICE.

Doris enters to find a hospital bed, networks of tubes and wires encasing **THOMAS QUINN**. Mid-60s and on the brink of corpsehood. His face sallow. Eyes sunken, yet bright.

He waves a feeble hand to a nearby **NURSE**, cueing her to leave as Doris sits next to him, looks him over. Smiles small.

THOMAS  
How you doin', button?

DORIS  
I'm well.

THOMAS  
You look worried.

DORIS  
Some strange news on the  
television. Some sort of hoax.

But Thomas doesn't care about any hoaxes. He's fucking dying.

THOMAS  
Who all's coming?

DORIS  
Most of them.

Thomas nods a beat. Before he takes her hand in his, both of them regarding the moment -- as Thomas looks to her.

THOMAS  
Mmph. Well. I'm sure they'll be in  
more of a hurry to leave than you  
will be to see them go.

DORIS  
You shouldn't say that. I enjoy  
their company just fine.

Thomas smiles. Because what a polite thing for her to say.

THOMAS  
Just don't want you concernin'  
yourself with anything -- *unnecessary*.  
Especially after all this --  
(re: his machines, lack of health)  
-- *nonsense* is over.

DORIS  
It isn't nonsense, dear. And it's  
far from over.

THOMAS

Well, I wish it'd get on with it.  
The suspense is killing me.

He looks to her coyly, *grinning*, awaiting approval for that little quip. And she does. She approves with a loving smile.

DORIS

Always so silly.  
(beat)  
They'll be arriving shortly. Look  
your best.

She goes to stand, but Thomas tightens his grip.

THOMAS

Thank you for this.  
(beat)  
All of this.  
(beat)  
You've been better to me than I deserve.

A beat as she looks him over. Considering those words.

DORIS

You're a good man, Tommy. You  
deserve plenty.

And she leaves us with Thomas, watching her go, as --

-- ***tik-tik-tik-tik-tik-tik-tik-tik-tik*** -- a PRE-LAP, to:

4

**INT. THE QUINN KITCHEN - LATER - DAY**

4

AN OVEN TIMER. The source of our *tik-tiks*. Its dial doing its thing in a hasty fashion -- as we come around to find Doris.

Seated nearby. Expressionless, patient, her hands in her lap as she waits on the timer -- *and we PUSH IN on her* --

-- the timer ticking along as we get closer to Doris, the ticking somehow getting louder -- as we get closer --

-- *because there's a great change on the horizon*. Closing in faster and faster with each day -- which is why the timer --

-- *it gets even louder* -- until now we're with Doris, when:

5

**INT. THE QUINN KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

5

THE OVEN DOOR ABRUPTLY OPENS. An end to the timer's reign as Doris swiftly removes a FOIL-COVERED TRAY, taking us to:

6 **INT. DEN - LATER - DAY**

6

A narrow table stretches long from the other end of the room. Doris gently places different silver platters on it:

Cured meats. Rich dips. Vegetables aplenty. All arranged in a beautiful, delicate display of culinary flair --

-- just in time for the DOORBELL TO **RING**. Doris looks to Thomas -- and Thomas looks right back at Doris. Because ready or not, the onslaught has arrived at their doorstep.

7 **EXT. QUINN RESIDENCE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

7

Which is when THE FRONT DOOR OPENS, revealing Doris, pleasantly poised as she looks O.S., takes a beat, a breath, before:

DORIS  
Good afternoon.

Another beat -- before a long line of **FAMILY MEMBERS** move on in, past Doris. A few greet her -- most don't care enough to bother.

And last in line: **COLIN QUINN**. 40s. Thomas' son. A young professional with a volatile gleam in his eye.

Doris looks to Colin's wife, **MOLLY**, at his side. A timid young woman pinned beneath a devil's shadow.

DORIS (CONT'D)  
Hello, Molly. My, don't you look lovely today.

MOLLY  
Thank you, Doris.

DORIS  
Colin. Your father's been looking forward to seeing you.

Colin nods, something about Doris under his skin, straining to even look at her.

COLIN  
Yeah, alright.

He shuffles Molly into the house. And off Doris, considering his demeanor a beat before she closes the door.

8 INT. DEN - LATER - DAY

8

With Doris, at the opposite side of the room, watching the family surround Thomas.

These spoiled descendants making obligatory appearances. Dipping and gnawing on Doris' hors d'oeuvres. All of it one last hustle for any inheritance they can get their hands on.

A9 INT. DEN - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

A9

MOLLY (O.S.)

It's a nice spread you've laid out.

Doris looks to find Molly approaching.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

You know your way around a charcuterie board.

DORIS

Thank you, Molly.

(beat)

May I pour you more wine?

Molly looks to her wine glass, *empty*. Doris, ever the dutiful host, lifts a bottle of red before Molly can answer --

-- and Doris pours, as Molly tries to read her.

MOLLY

How are you holding up? With everything going on?

Doris considers that a beat.

DORIS

It's a process.

Molly nods, drinks as they stand there a few beats. When they notice Colin. Drink in hand, buzz in full effect.

MOLLY

He doesn't like not knowing things.

DORIS

What's not to know?

MOLLY

You.

DORIS

It's been enough years.

MOLLY

Nothing's ever enough for him.  
It's more -- the *restaurant*. And  
you. That he's concerned with.

Doris smiles small, a strange expression of innocence as she continues to watch Colin and the rest of the family.

DORIS

Can't say I blame him.

Molly looks to her -- and we can see it. She's not fishing for information here -- *she's trying to connect with Doris*.

MOLLY

You ever feel this way, too?  
(off Doris' look)  
Like an outsider?

And there it is: *Molly's words resonating hard with Doris*.

DORIS

I try to keep things in perspective.

MOLLY

I'm not sure perspective could  
ever save either one of us.  
(beat, embarrassed)  
Sorry. The wine, it --

Doris looks to her, *acknowledging Molly's struggle*. Her relationship with Colin so clearly a troubled one.

DORIS

Surely, Colin had his charm once.

Molly forces a fraction of a smile at that. Because *surely*.

MOLLY

What do you plan to do?  
(re: Thomas)  
After all of *this* is over?

Doris, reluctant to answer. And that's when Colin notices them. He approaches, the booze now more apparent in his step.

COLIN

*Molly*.

MOLLY

Yes, dear.

COLIN

Go start the car.

Molly nods meekly. Exits. Doris taking in this exchange as Colin finishes his drink, sets the glass down, looks to her.

COLIN (CONT'D)

You're gonna be there tonight --

DORIS

-- I can make it, sure.

COLIN

Wasn't fuckin' *askin'*, Doris.

And he leaves. Doris' expression unreadable as she looks to Thomas. Oblivious to this interaction. Has his own problems.

9           **INT. TOMMY'S CHOP HOUSE - ELSEWHERE - LATER - NIGHT**           9

Here's a posh little restaurant. Hip with a classic vibe. Reservations most likely backed up a month or four.

And right now, it's closing time. Chairs up on the tables. Waiters and waitresses counting out cash, filing away checks.

10           **INT. THE CHOP HOUSE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**           10

CLOSE ON: A PHOTO OF THOMAS. Forty years younger, happily presenting a slab of meat in a very modest restaurant kitchen.

**THOMAS QUINN. FOUNDER. FRIEND. FAMILY.**

Pull back to find that this kitchen has grown by leaps and bounds. Now equipped with the upper echelon of culinary tools.

KITCHEN STAFF work in their white smocks. ZIP TYING THICK PLASTIC BAGS OF MEAT. Find Doris at a table, watching them.

And she's transfixed by their process here. Familiar with it. She moves to take a drink -- *and notices her wrist, where --*

-- **A TINY BLACK HEART** is tattooed like a scribble. Fading. She moves two fingers over it in a quiet bout of nostalgia.

A DOOR OPENS O.S. She looks to find Colin approaching, clothes looser than before, a long day of drinking under his belt.

He says nothing. Moves to a BACK DOOR, opens it to reveal:

**BIG GRAHAM.** 60s. A brick shit house of trouble. He's been kept waiting -- *and he's none too fucking pleased about it.*

BIG GRAHAM

Th'fuck took so long?

COLIN

Sorry.

BIG GRAHAM

How's your Dad?

COLIN

Not good.

BIG GRAHAM

Yeah, shit. Some well-earned years, I can tell ya that.

DORIS

Evening, gentlemen.

BIG GRAHAM

(to Colin)

You didn't tell me she was pretty.

Colin shrugs, produces a flask, takes a pull as Big Graham looks to the kitchen staff.

BIG GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Kitchen! Time to go.

The kitchen staff hesitates a beat, looking to Doris. As she takes a moment to look at Big Graham here --

-- because the staff is waiting on *her*. *Their boss*.

Which is when she NODS, giving them the go-ahead. So, they go. All of them. As Big Graham takes a seat at the table, sizing Doris up after that tiny little power play of hers.

BIG GRAHAM (CONT'D)

You know me?

DORIS

Lander Graham. Sure. They call you Big Graham, but. *Semantics*.

(beat)

We've met a time or two actually.

BIG GRAHAM

That right? Don't recall.

(beat)

You know what I do?

DORIS

More or less.

BIG GRAHAM

Lotta business with your husband.  
Goin' back many years now.

DORIS

Come to think of it, it was just once.

Big Graham winces a beat, unable to place this broad *as she is so clearly fucking with him*. So, he nods. Takes her in, then:

BIG GRAHAM

He's leaving you the restaurant.  
And some money to boot.

DORIS

He is.

COLIN

You been married, what -- *six years?*

DORIS

It'll be eight in August, Colin,  
but I'm sure you knew that.

BIG GRAHAM

(echoing as he reads her)  
*Eight in August*. Hm.

Big Graham looks to Colin, hunched over the table --

BIG GRAHAM (CONT'D)

See this kid? Known him since he was  
*born*. Back when Tom gave me my first job  
out the joint washin' fuckin' dishes.

-- and he looks back to Doris.

BIG GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Now. I want you to ask yourself  
something: with everyone that's been in  
Tom's corner all these years -- what in  
the mother Mary of *fuck* makes him think  
you're entitled to this place?

DORIS

You'd have to ask him.

BIG GRAHAM

He's got a day or two. I'll ask you.

Doris looks around the massive kitchen.

DORIS

Well. If I had to guess -- it's because all of this was me.

COLIN

Bullfuckinshit.

DORIS

Tommy hired me to start our catering branch. And we're now Detroit's *premiere* catering service. Won all sorts of awards, as I'm sure you know.

Big Graham nods, smiles a smile no one should live to see.

BIG GRAHAM

Listen to me -- Darla --

DORIS

-- Doris.

He leans in closer, eyes boring into her, all business now.

BIG GRAHAM

Nobody knows who the fuck you are, *Doris*. You came walkin' in here ten years ago and next thing we all know, you talked Tom into *marrying* you.

DORIS

It was the other way around, I'm afraid, but sure.

BIG GRAHAM

You shook shit up. And no one likes strangers shaking shit up with the ones they love. Because we've been around long before you -- and we're gonna be here long after.

Colin slides a FOLDER across the table, a PEN clipped to it.

BIG GRAHAM (CONT'D)

You're signing it all over to Colin.

She smiles, a true knack for masking whatever brews beneath.

DORIS

Truth is, Mr. Graham -- I know plenty of what you do. Of your business with Colin here.

(beat)

(MORE)

DORIS (CONT'D)

You two have been using this place to funnel your dirt money for lord knows how long and I don't know why poor Tommy ever allowed it. But if you're asking yourself *why Doris*, rest assured. It's because he wants this place to get cleaned up.

Big Graham's face slowly shifts. Less business, more punishment.

**SLAP.**

And he's just slapped her -- *HARD*. Doris' head tilting to the side, absorbing it -- before she brings it back, looking to Big Graham as if nothing had happened.

BIG GRAHAM

What's the little lady gonna do with all that big money?

DORIS

Buy a new hat.

BIG GRAHAM

What?

DORIS

Buy a new--

**--SLAP.**

*Harder*. The crack of skin echoing throughout the cavernous kitchen. She digests a beat, comes back up, eyes on Big Graham --

-- *and her glasses now missing*. Knocked clear off her face.

DORIS (CONT'D)

-- *hat*.

COLIN

Don't be dumb, Doris.

DORIS

Your father wants so much for you. And yet here you run -- with gangsters and thugs.

And deep in Colin's drunk eyes -- *this hits hard with him*.

**FWUMP.**

Big Graham, this bull of a human being has just *SLUGGED* poor Doris in the stomach, knocking her off her chair as she catches herself on the table, heaving, wheezing --

-- as Big Graham leans down to her ear --

BIG GRAHAM

*Gangsters and thugs?* What is it you think Tom does?

(beat)

Dirty little secret he's had, ain't it? All these years, right under your nose.

-- he puts two fingers to her chin, brings her eyes to his --

BIG GRAHAM (CONT'D)

See, I can make it so Colin *inherits* this place. You can't figure that out?

(beat)

This offer? *It's a fuckin' courtesy.*

-- and we see it in her: *that gut punch was a fucking doozy.*

BIG GRAHAM (CONT'D)

So, sign. Please. Before this has to get dirty.

A beat as she catches her breath. And rises back to the table.

She opens the folder, takes a long hard look at the papers a few beats -- before Big Graham unclips the pen, slides it over to her -- *and she signs.*

Colin takes the folder back, tucks it away as Big Graham pats Doris on the hand.

BIG GRAHAM (CONT'D)

You're a nice lady, Doris Quinn. Try to stay that way.

And they leave her to herself -- as she looks to the floor, spots her GLASSES, now twisted and crooked. She bends down, picks them up -- *to reveal that they've broken* --

-- the cracks spider-webbing throughout the lenses. And while looking at the glasses, her eyes are drawn back to:

That little black heart tattoo. Doris considering this collision of past and present, as we:

end one.





**A SKULL WITH SPIDER LEGS SPRAWLING BENEATH IT** -- we've seen this logo before -- but here, a name is printed beneath it:

**THE BANISHED BRAWLERS**. And off that, Bru looks to Ethan.

BRU

Don't got a damn clue where you are, huh?

As Ethan looks through the windshield to find that the entrance is a neon tunnel, **707** marked on its side with flickering bulbs.

BRU (CONT'D)

Yeah, well. Sometimes I don't either.

That's right as the line of cars makes it through, revealing:

17

**EXT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG, BRANCH 707 - NIGHT**

17

Here it is. Chaos. Smut. A REGULAR PSYCHEDELIC PUNK ROCK FUNHOUSE. Neon signs illuminate the space, reading shit like:

**BURT'S BANG-A-RANG! LIVE GO-GO BOUNCING!! FUMES AND BREWS!! TEASERAMA FUNFEST!! LOTS OF LOVE!! BYRDS!! BYRDS!! BYRDS!!**

Hot rods. Trucks. Motorcycles. Miscreants. Misfits. Boring folk. Electric folk. Wolf folk. Flappers. Fawners. All of them.

It's as if Frank Zappa and the Sex Pistols went back in time to reboot Rocky Horror at the peak of America's Jazz Age.

And we move through the parking lot, away from Bru's Bel-Air as we absorb the crowd, PARKING LOT USHERS dressed up like old school **BELLBOYS** -- and off Ethan, taking this in, we go to:

18

**INT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG - A DARK NEON HALLWAY - MEANWHILE** 18

CLOSE ON **MEREDITH**. Smoking a cigarette, a moment to herself. Eyes pensive as she *waits*, burnt out before the night's even begun. That's when a **DOOR OPENS** O.S. Footsteps approach --

-- and TWO GIRLS IN SPLENDID OUTFITS pass, **TINA** and **JODIE**, laughing, having a good night -- as Tina side-eyes Meredith.

TINA

Chop-chop. Wouldn't wanna miss your cue, Daddy's-girl.

And Meredith turns to watch them a beat. *Daddy's-girl* catching with her -- so, she steps from the wall, takes a firm stance, squaring up with these girls from afar.

MEREDITH

Hey.

And we reveal that *Meredith herself is in a similarly splendid outfit.*

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

Th'**FUCK** did you just say to me.

And Tina and Jodie stop, find Meredith, her eyes firm.

A silent showdown begins here, until Tina and Jodie try to hide their concession, right when: A *HARMONICA SOUNDS.*

The girls leave Meredith, the showdown over. And the harmonica? Well, that's "**LONG JOHN'S JUMP**" by DADDY LONG LEGS.

Which prompts Meredith to move down the corridor, smoking her cig down to its butt as she reaches A DOUBLE-DOOR, snuffs her cigarette out on the wall -- *and goes through --*

-- to lead us into the **GRAND BARROOM**, Meredith instantly coming to rhythmic life as she reveals **ONE HELL OF A DIVE:**

Revealing that she's one of the **PINUP BYRDS**. OUR VERSION OF *GO-GO DANCERS*, strategically placed about, shaking the night away.

And Meredith leads us through in *ONE GLORIOUS SHOT*, one fantastic sequence that allows us the breadth of this place.

Examples: She makes her way on stage as the **SINGER** sings. She then makes her way her into a seemingly improvised dance number with other Pinups. And so much more magic that's **TBD**.

Point being that **IT'S THE SINGLE LARGEST SEQUENCE OF OUR PILOT.**

Eventually, Meredith makes her way back to the ENTRANCE, just as BRU AND ETHAN walk in. Ethan pausing at the sight of it all.

But Bru nudges him, nods for them to move along -- and they do, right to the bar -- where they find: **JOEL**. 40s. Same mechanic's shirt as we saw on Bru --

-- which is to say that he's a **BANISHED BRAWLER**. Swilling a beer, been waiting awhile now --

BRU

Hey, Joel --

(beat)

-- this is him.

-- and he homes in on Ethan in particular, looking him over a few beats -- before Joel smirks, antagonistic as he nods.

JOEL

*This is him? Looks fragile.*

Ethan's eyes narrow, flicker with a touch of ignition as he looks to Bru for an answer -- then back to Joel.

ETHAN

*What's that.*

JOEL

I said --  
*(he moves closer)*  
-- you look **fragile**.

A beat as Joel silently gives Ethan a chance to do something about it -- *which he doesn't*. So. Joel looks to the other end of the bar, where we see:

**MATTY**. 20s/30s. Scrappy and sturdy. Smoking a cigarette like a real cool dude -- and wearing **A BLACK VELVET BLAZER**, somehow just as rugged as the Brawlers' mechanic shirts.

Joel nods to Matty, who promptly approaches.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Matty. This is your candidate.  
Take him back. Do your thing.

MATTY

*(to Ethan)*  
C'mon.

And Ethan, uncertain as all holy fuck -- *hesitates* --

BRU

Go on, kid.

-- a beat -- until Ethan follows Matty. Leaving us with Bru and Joel, watching them go.

JOEL

See anything?

BRU

Nah. Did as he was told. Waited a full hour. Didn't use the phone. Didn't go nowhere.

And off Joel, watching Ethan disappear behind a door, as he looks to his beer a beat -- and we go to:

20 **OMITTED** 20

21 **OMITTED** 21

22 **EXT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG - THE REAR COMPOUND - NIGHT** 22

A GARGOYLE STATUE. Staring blankly at us. Its knees tucked beneath its arms. Watchful. Content. Yet still out of place.

A WORK-IN-PROGRESS HOT ROD is positioned in a station -- as Matty drags a chair over by the hot rod -- gestures to it.

MATTY

Siddown.

Ethan timidly has a seat, Matty pulling over another chair --

MATTY (CONT'D)

Lemme guess: college boy, right?

-- and Matty positions it adjacent to Ethan, sits, leaning forward into Ethan's space, intrusive. *Testing him.*

ETHAN

I dropped out.

MATTY

Didn't like what you were studying?

ETHAN

Didn't know what to study.

Matty looks to the corner, nods to **JOHNSON**. A strange young man SMOKING A CIGARETTE because cigarette. Ageless, slimmer than slim -- and wearing the same BLACK BLAZER as Matty.

MATTY

That there's Johnson. My other third.

Johnson holds up a hand. Silent. Awkward. His lanky frame making things more uncomfortable than they already were.

MATTY (CONT'D)

He ain't that talkative, but. I can rely on him. And that's important in what we do.

(beat)

Heard your parents are dead. How long's that been goin' on?

ETHAN

My dad since I was twelve. My mom --  
(beat)  
-- not dead. She bailed a little after.

MATTY

No brothers, no sisters?

ETHAN

No.

MATTY

And what d'you know about The  
Banished Brawlers?

ETHAN

Just that --

MATTY (CONT'D)

-- and the Phoenixes?

ETHAN

The what?

MATTY

*THE THREE RIVER PHOENIXES. The  
reason you're here.*

ETHAN

I don't -- I don't know.

MATTY

How could you wanna be a Phoenix  
if you don't know who we are?

ETHAN

I heard it pays.

MATTY

You heard it *pays*?

ETHAN

And that it could be an opportunity.

And with that, Matty *SIGNALS TO JOHNSON* -- who promptly  
begins to make his way over to them -- Ethan watching as:

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Maybe if I -- knew a little more --

And Johnson *PUNCHES* Ethan. His head cocking, *BUT HE DOESN'T  
RESPOND*. He simply stares at the ground. Numb. *Processing*.

As Johnson quietly returns to his corner.

MATTY

This isn't an *opportunity*. This is *my trust*. This is *Johnson's* trust. This is *privilege*. You don't walk in here because it's something to *do*. You walk in because you wanna leave whatever dark bullshit you got behind you to be a part of something bigger than *any* of us.

(beat)

You walk in because you *want* to be a Phoenix.

Matty leans in to Ethan, eyes hell bent on finding his soul.

MATTY (CONT'D)

So, *Ethan*. You better start telling me *WHY*.

And Ethan stares right back at Matty, finally *with* him here.

ETHAN

'cause I killed a guy.

Matty pauses, looking at him. A direction he didn't expect.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

And for awhile, it looked like he was gonna live. And if I woulda stopped hittin' him sooner, maybe he would've. So -- I got nowhere to run. And no one to run to.

(beat)

But I heard this might be a good place to start.

Ethan coming with this rush of honesty, he himself surprised by it. And off Matty, absorbing -- *because that just might do*.

23

**INT. A CAR - MOVING - NIGHT - LATER**

23

ETHAN. A velvet bag now over his head. In the back seat of a car, moving fast. Until it pulls in somewhere, stops.

THE CAR DOOR OPENS O.S. -- a few beats -- and then ETHAN'S DOOR OPENS, Matty RIPPING THE BAG FROM ETHAN'S HEAD.

MATTY

Outta the car.

Ethan's eyes adjust, as he climbs out to find --

24

**EXT. MURRAY'S MADHOUSE MOTOR STOP - NIGHT**

24

-- a shit hole of a bar far from anything of importance. Certainly far more modest than our esteemed Bang-A-Rang.

Matty places a pair of BRASS KNUCKLES into Ethan's hand.

MATTY

Know what to do with those?

Ethan, considering them -- as the bar's door opens, Johnson trotting out in a half jog, beer in hand.

JOHNSON

Five of 'em.

MATTY

(to Ethan)

You say you got nothin'? Well, this is your chance at *something*. You come in there with us -- no questions asked -- you walk out a River Phoenix. Yeah?

Ethan, slowly putting this together -- but Matty doesn't wait --

-- he turns into a strut, revealing: a different INSIGNIA sprawled on the back of his blazer -- **THE 3 RIVER PHOENIXES**.

And at this point, it's still a-okay to not have a single clue as to what in the fuck that might mean. We'll get there.

25

**INT. MURRAY'S MADHOUSE MOTOR STOP - CONTINUOUS**

25

Our boys enter, gauge the room, catching suspicious eyes until Matty comes to what he's looking for -- THE BAR. Where FIVE MEN sit. Brown leather jackets. Dung for skin.

These upstanding gentlemen are part of **THE HAPPINESS GHOULS**. And don't worry -- we'll get there, too.

MATTY

The five of you. You're Ghouls, ain't ya?

A look between the men -- **GARY THE GHOUL** looks back to Matty.

GARY THE GHOUL

Fuck you, Matty. You know who we are.

MATTY

This here's a Brawlers bar.

GARY THE GHOUL

This ain't no goddamn Brawlers bar --

MATTY

-- this *here's*. A *Brawlers bar*.  
Got no room for no stool-pigeonin'  
Happiness Ghouls.

And with that, Gary the Ghoul stands, towering over Matty.

GARY THE GHOUL

This place been part of the Ghouls'  
turf since before you were born. And  
besides: *WHAT-THE-FUCK-EVER*. You  
three ain't even Brawlers --

MATTY

-- yeah, well, we're throwin' it back  
tonight. Reclaimin' a little territory.

The other four Ghouls rise from their seats.

GARY THE GHOUL

Leave, Matty.

But here stands Matty. Contemplating, willing himself to  
not back down -- *AS A FUCKING CHAIN UNCOILS FROM HIS HAND*.

MATTY

Ethan. Got those knucks?

Ethan looks to his brass knuckles -- *AS MATTY SUDDENLY  
LUNGES O.S.* -- and Ethan, his world falling into silence --

-- and now Johnson rushes past him, joining in O.S. -- and  
*now* Ethan *makes his move* -- forcing himself in as --

-- we pull back through the bar to find: *it is fucking **ON***.  
Five on three, The Happiness Ghouls v. our River Phoenixes.

Nothing choreographed. Just raw, filthy, back-alley brawling.

Ethan SQUARES OFF with a Ghoul, also gripping brass knuckles,  
but these with fucking SPIKES PROTRUDING -- *goddammit* --

-- and the Ghoul SWINGS, catches Ethan in his side, *sticking  
him* -- he CRIES OUT -- and instinctively hits the Ghoul with  
a hell of a **FWIKPF**, knocking his ass to the floor --

-- and immediately: **THWACK** -- Ethan's knocked O.S. -- the  
fight ramping up even more. Until, without warning:

26

**EXT. MURRAY'S MADHOUSE MOTOR STOP - MOMENTS LATER**

26

Ethan and Matty go crashing to the ground, dusty and bloody, beaten and spent. Matty rolls onto his back.

MATTY

What about Johnson?

And Johnson promptly *walks out*, beaten to absolute shit, literally the fucking worst of the three -- and yet this slender young man strangely just dusts himself off.

And here stand The Happiness Ghouls, surprisingly just as badly beaten as the Phoenixes.

GARY THE GHOUL

You ever come back here, we'll kill ya.

MATTY

Yeah, yeah.

The Ghouls, frustrated in spite of being victorious, retreat into the Motor Spot. Matty, on his back, lights a cigarette.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Johnson. Rejoice. We got a new Phoenix in our midst. May trumpets sound and the heavens shine upon this fucking moment.

(puffs, smirks)

Gotta get you a jacket.

ETHAN

I got stabbed.

MATTY

What? No shit?

Ethan opens his jacket, his white shirt sopping wet with blood.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Pffftt. You got *stuck*, son. Not stabbed.

(beat)

Don't worry. Ol' Johnson here's a regular wizard with the gauze.

It'll be good.

So, that's when Ethan looks back to the MOON. *Now in one piece*. Which means all must now be well. And from there, we:

end two.

THREE.

27

**EXT. SHIRLEY'S DRIVE-IN EXTRAVAGANZA MOVIE PLACE - NIGHT 27**

Filling our frame: *AN OLD TECHNICOLOR FILM*. However. Something about its image is distorted. Twisted. Shifting along to its monophonic audio a few beats -- *until we pull back* --

-- to reveal that this image is reflecting off of a WINDSHIELD. Of a **CAR**. Because drive-in movie theater.

And in the driver's seat is DORIS. Watching the film, sipping a soda. And that sound a straw makes when one slides it in and out of a plastic lid? Well, that. Here.

And that's when the passenger door opens -- and **WITT PALMER DROPS INTO THE PASSENGER SEAT**. 50s. Denim jacket straight from the Lee outlet store.

He shuts the door as he settles, Doris not looking to him as he looks to her to notice -- *Big Graham's affections burning red upon Doris' cheek*.

WITT

What happened to your face?

DORIS

They have beer here.

Witt lightly maneuvers her face in the projected light.

WITT

Thomas give this to you?

DORIS

*Of course not.*

A beat as Witt takes one last look, turns his attention to the film. Uncomfortable here. Impatient.

DORIS (CONT'D)

How'd it go?

WITT

Went fine.

And Doris stops a passing **ROLLER-GIRL DRIVE-IN MOVIE THEATER WAITRESS** (20s/30s/40s) --

DORIS

Excuse me. One lager for the gentleman, please.

-- and the waitress nods, moves along, Doris and Witt quietly watching the film a few beats.

DORIS (CONT'D)

We have a problem with the will.  
Thomas' son. And an *associate* of his.

(beat)

Have you heard of Big Graham?

Witt clams up -- *of course he's heard of Big fucking Graham --*

-- as just like that, **SOMEONE TAPS ON WITT'S WINDOW**, *startling him*. He looks. It's the waitress. *Already*. He rolls down his window, aggravated -- *and she hands him his beer*.

WITT

Thanks.

DORIS

I'm sure I don't have to tell you:  
without the inheritance -- funding  
this expedition might prove  
difficult. I can deal with Colin.  
But this Big Graham fella?

(beat)

I'll need you to find me a crew  
sooner than we thought.

WITT

Hard gettin' guys without any cash  
to front.

DORIS

I'm sure.

WITT

And what you're asking --

DORIS (CONT'D)

-- it's ambitious. I  
understand.

Witt takes another drink, looks to the dashboard for this part:

WITT

What if you called it off?

DORIS

I'm sorry?

WITT

This little rescue mission. Call  
it off.

DORIS

*Little rescue mission?*

WITT

Maybe read the tree leaves here --

DORIS

-- that's not how you say it --

WITT

-- I'm sayin' this could be a sign --

DORIS

-- no --

WITT

-- Doris --

DORIS (CONT'D)

-- **NO.**

They sit a beat. Tensions high as she watches the film.

DORIS (CONT'D)

And what about her?

WITT

She's fine. She's in her element.

Doris *tsks* in her own subtle way. Her own version of aggravation as she looks to him, frustration taking hold, the cracks in her sweet facade starting to show.

DORIS

She's not *fine*. And you know that.

WITT

Seems fine to me.

And Doris pauses at that. Whoever this ally is slipping from her grip. Her eyes bore into Witt a few beats, growing impatient -- before she turns back to the screen.

DORIS

I once knew a man who *understood* what needed to be done --

WITT

-- and I understand what needs to be done. And I'm tellin' you *it can't be. Find you a crew?* How do I ask for that, Doris? *Hey, there's a nice lady on the east side that wants to hire you to drive nine hundred miles to take on The Banished **fucking** Brawlers, but first, now you also gotta kill the most notorious mobster in Detroit and **ALSO** -- we don't have any money.*

Doris says nothing, hitting Witt harder than any words could.

WITT (CONT'D)

What if you just -- kept it to **her?** I can lure her out. Take her. We go. Shed no blood in the process.

DORIS

Except maybe I wouldn't *mind* shedding a little blood in the process, Witt. Any one of them to have ever put on that idiotic shirt --

WITT

-- that's a *suicide* mission --

DORIS

-- and if I have to do it on my own? If you don't think you can help me? *Then.*

And she leaves it at that. Witt takes a drink, tries to level himself -- *because it's time to lay it all on the table:*

WITT

Yeah, I just -- I thought we could start over. *Here.* You and me.

On Doris -- finally getting where this is coming from, as Witt looks to her with this desperate vulnerability.

WITT (CONT'D)

I wanna be your Bogie.

Come on, man. Stop.

DORIS

You're a very sweet man.

And that's it. She leaves it at that, avoiding his gaze, offering no reciprocation whatsoever. And Witt gets it, falling silent, his throat catching.

WITT

Might be hard to find some guys without cash. That's all I'm sayin'. But I'll look into it.

DORIS

That'd be nice of you.

Witt nods aimlessly, chokes his beer down, opens his door.

DORIS (CONT'D)  
You don't have to go.

WITT  
I'd rather not stay.

DORIS  
*Witt.*

He stops. Doris gracefully places her hand on his thigh. He looks to it -- and takes it in this strange moment of comfort.

DORIS (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

A beat before Witt leaves us with Doris and the film. A song being sung onscreen now. Bacall-style. Just beginning. The melody, relevant. The man, her instrument.

MATTY (PRE-LAP)  
Let me explain how this works.

A28 **EXT./INT. A MONTAGE - EVERYWHERE/ANYWHERE/ALL-THE-WHERE** A28

And this is where we start our MONTAGE, where for starters, we come in hot to find Johnson standing in front of --

-- **A BLACK 1977 CADILLAC FLEETWOOD BROUGHAM**, a vintage beast with **A SHODDY UHAUL TRAILER** attached to its rear.

MATTY (V.O.)  
Want you to meet Betty the Brougham. And our dear Uncle Lug. And us? We're not Brawlers.

JOHNSON (V.O.)  
We're more than that.

MATTY (V.O.)  
We're The 3 River Phoenixes, the lifeblood of the Brawlers.

And what begins here but shall not be described on the page is an assault on our senses with an array of visuals detailing the existence of The 3 River Phoenixes.

JOHNSON (V.O.)  
There are 13 Bang-A-Rangs, all of 'em across the southland.

MATTY (V.O.)  
And we're here: Branch **707**. The *ORIGINAL* Bang-A-Rang.

JOHNSON (V.O.)

**BURT'S** Bang-A-Rang. Can call it  
our fuckin' home room if you want.

MATTY (V.O.)

And what we do? We make sure 707  
keeps its satellites provided for.

JOHNSON (V.O.)

Can't rely on banks. Can't rely on  
fuckin' FedEx. So they rely on us.

MATTY (V.O.)

Cash. Booze. Product. Supply. We  
handle it all.

JOHNSON (V.O.)

Bang-A-Rangs are all off the grid.  
Someone wants in, they gotta hit a  
checkpoint. Pass a test to get a ticket.

MATTY (V.O.)

We deliver. We pick up.

JOHNSON (V.O.)

And we leave.

MATTY (V.O.)

Every checkpoint.

JOHNSON (V.O.)

Every branch.

MATTY (V.O.)

And then we drink.

JOHNSON

A lot.

MATTY

And a lot.

JOHNSON

And a lot.

MATTY (V.O.)

And then we rinse. We repeat. And  
go right back where we started.

And our MONTAGE ENDS -- as we CUT TO:

29	<b>OMITTED</b>	29
30	<b>OMITTED</b>	30
31	<b>OMITTED</b>	31
32	<b>OMITTED</b>	32
33	<b>OMITTED</b>	33
34	<b>OMITTED</b>	34
35	<b>OMITTED</b>	35
36	<b>OMITTED</b>	36
37	<b>OMITTED</b>	37
38	<b>OMITTED</b>	38
39	<b>OMITTED</b>	39
40	<b>OMITTED</b>	40
41	<b>OMITTED</b>	41
42	<b>OMITTED</b>	42
43	<b>INT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG, <u>BRANCH 707</u> - THE GRAND BARROOM</b>	43

And we find *Meredith*. At a JUKEBOX. Selecting a track before:

She begins to move through the Bang-A-Rang as she does. But, here -- as she passes various men, she's discreetly exchanging *something* for money in swift little hand-offs.

And she brings us to the front -- WHERE OUR PHOENIXES ENTER --

-- *and separate*. Ethan, Johnson one way -- as WE FOLLOW MATTY to the bar, met by **AGNES**. The wartime bartender who also tattoos.

MATTY

Agnes. Three beers, three strychnines.

AGNES

Sure thing, Prince.

A PUNK ASS VOICE (O.S.)

Runnin' late tonight?

Matty looks to find **AVRON** approaching. A different demeanor here than when he was with Joel. Cocky. Entitled. Asshole.

AVRON

How's the road?

MATTY

Better now you're off it.

AVRON

Shouldn't be sore about this, y'know? You weren't ready.

Matty downs a shot, **SLAMS** the glass down, staring straight ahead with eyes of steel -- *very sore about whatever it is*.

MATTY

You don't take your hand off me, I'm gonna drive this glass through your heart.

As Matty looks to Avron, neither one of these boys ever letting up in a million years. And that's right when:

JOEL (O.S.)

Problem, Matty?

And maybe we were about to see something. *Maybe*. But here's JOEL appearing behind Matty, breaking this exchange up.

MATTY

Nah. No problem.

Avron smirks, leaves as Joel approaches the bar. He doesn't even have to order -- Agnes just places a beer in front of him.

JOEL

Jukes phoned me the other day. Said you and your dandelion boys tuned up some of his Ghouls this week.

MATTY

Little initiation for the new guy.

JOEL

And since when's breaking truces  
ever been part of initiations?

MATTY

Ghouls ain't gonna start a war  
over a *bar fight* --

JOEL

-- a **TRUCE**, Matty. *With the  
Ghouls*. You been around long  
enough to know better.

MATTY

And long enough to know they ain't  
gonna do *shit* --

JOEL

-- they're callin' a meeting.  
*Tomorrow* at the track. Want all  
three'a you there.

(beat)

That don't scare you, huh?

(beat)

How 'bout when Burt hears of it?

And Matty goes a little white, keeping his eyes to his drink.

JOEL (CONT'D)

You think he's gonna wanna protect  
you three for runnin' around  
diggin' up old fights when we got  
a fuckin' business to run?

MATTY

Burt ain't been around in forever --

JOEL

-- the answer's **no**. He won't.

And Joel gets closer to Matty here.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Because when we fought -- when The  
Brawlers fought, *not the fucking  
Phoenixes*, **THE BRAWLERS** -- it was  
for a **REASON**.

(beat)

And we ain't had a fight in a long  
fuckin' while, Matty. Tell me why.

MATTY

'cause we don't have to.

JOEL

'cause we don't fucking have to. Until maybe now after you three waltzed into a goddamned Ghoul's bar --

MATTY

-- c'mon, Joel --

-- and Joel snaps, GRABS Matty by the back of his neck, Matty tensing, the pain disabling --

JOEL

-- there's no C'MON JOEL. You're fuckin' *errand boys*. Goddamn pledges. And you work for The Brawlers which means you keep The Brawlers' interests your fuckin' priority. You don't decide who we go to war with or when or fucking why. *Tell me you understand that.*

As we angle on Matty, zero options at his disposal.

MATTY

*I understand.*

And with that, Joel lets a humiliated Matty go, Joel stepping away -- until --

MATTY (CONT'D)

It was my turn, y'know?

-- Joel stops, turns back. Knows where this is going.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Been runnin' that route seven goddamned years. Avron was a Phoenix, what? Seven *months*?

Matty looks to Joel here -- a wistful nostalgia in his eye. Trying to not make it obvious, but it's absolutely there.

MATTY (CONT'D)

Before I ever came around -- I heard about what The Brawlers did. And I wanted to be a part of it more than anything.

(beat)

*A part of somethin'*. Where I'd know everyone had my back same way I had theirs.

Joel gets closer to Matty here, eyes sharp and narrow.

JOEL

Lemme ask you then: how's it you  
got our backs when you keep  
puttin' your people in danger?

And that hits hard with Matty, Joel hippping him to the big  
wide world he's so horribly unprepared for.

JOEL (CONT'D)

You just worry about tomorrow. And  
fucking pray we can smooth things over.

Joel walks away for real this time, leaving us with Matty  
to wash all of that down with another shot -- right as:

Meredith ENTERS FRAME again, and WE FOLLOW HER, when she spots:

44

**INT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG - WITH ETHAN AND JOHNSON**

44

ETHAN AND JOHNSON at a table. She moves for them.

MEREDITH

Hi, Johnson.  
(to Ethan)  
You're new.

Ethan looks to her, this odd girl. Little bit hot jazz,  
little bit Joan Jett.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

You like scratch? I've got twenty-twos  
for fifteen, or two for twenty-two.

ETHAN

What's that?

MEREDITH

What's your name?

ETHAN

Ethan. What's yours?

MEREDITH

Where you from, Ethan?

ETHAN

Michigan.

MEREDITH

You got a lady back in Michigan?

Just as Matty drops down at the table with an arsenal of booze.

MATTY

Got somewhere to be, Meredith?

And there's a slight pause in Ethan here. We don't know why, but her name *triggers* something. Forces him to retreat.

MEREDITH

Here was working just fine.

MATTY

Nope.

He shoots her a very knowing look -- and Meredith concedes.

MEREDITH

Alright then.

(to Ethan)

See ya 'round, Ethan.

Before he can respond, she saunters away, jumping right back into the groove -- and once again, *WE FOLLOW HER* --

45

**INT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG - CONTINUOUS**

45

-- moving with Meredith a few beats as she sizes up the tables, scanning for more customers --

-- until someone SNATCHES her wrist -- *JOEL* --

JOEL

Goddammit, Meredith.

-- and she looks to his hand clutching her -- a deadpan expression as she looks right back at him.

MEREDITH

(*"it's fine"*)

Ouch.

-- until he holds up **A BULLET CASING WITH A TINY CORK IN PLACE OF ITS SLUG**. *A KITTEN WITH A WITCH HAT PRINTED ON IT*.

Meredith regards it blankly. Looks back to Joel.

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

Never seen it. Not in all my life.

Joel looks to her, knows she's fucking with him.

JOEL

This toxic *shit's* not allowed in here.  
How many times I gotta tell ya?

(MORE)

JOEL (CONT'D)

(beat)

How many times *Burt* gotta tell ya?

She looks to him. Smiles small, subtle, sad.

MEREDITH

Burt's a million miles away.

JOEL

He's a *phone call* away.

Her expression stumbles, fading slightly.

MEREDITH

He ain't never been a phone call  
away, Joel. But if you ever get a  
hold of him?

(beat)

Go ahead an' tell him I said *hi*.

And with that, she jerks her wrist free, defiant as all  
hell as she moves past him, leaving Joel troubled as he  
watches her go.

MATTY (PRE-LAP)

Any girl in here. Anyone you want.

46

**INT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG - WITH ETHAN AND MATTY - CONTINUOUS**

-- as Matty lights a cigarette, looks to Ethan.

MATTY

But not her. She's tethered, man.

ETHAN

Tethered?

MATTY (CONT'D)

Besides --

\*

MATTY (CONT'D)

-- Johnson, how many Pinups you fall  
in love with since you been a Phoenix?

JOHNSON

Probably all of 'em.

MATTY

And how many ever loved you back  
free of charge?

JOHNSON

Probably none of 'em.

And right then, AVRON DROPS INTO THE EMPTY SEAT, clearly  
drunker than before, heavy eyes looking to Ethan --

AVRON

What do you -- what'dya suppose a china doll like you is doing 'round a group like this?

Ethan stays silent because new guy.

AVRON (CONT'D)

I mean. Look around. Look where you're at. Then -- look at you. A little boy in a man's worl--

MATTY

--you forget we know your secret, Avron?

(to Ethan)

Caught him lettin' some junkie dude suck his dick behind a bar outside'a Greenwood.

(to Avron)

Remember that?

(beat)

But, shit. Phoenixes don't care. Only you cared. Phoenixes never cared. Queer or not, don't matter to us.

Another beat. Avron's eyes drunk and narrow, fucking furious, *embarrassed* -- while Matty plays it cool --

-- AND AVRON JUMPS TO HIS FEET -- and in an instant --

ETHAN

Hey --

-- Avron looks to Etha-- **KRRRRRKKKKKSSSSHHH** -- *ETHAN HAS BUSTED A BOTTLE OVER AVRON'S FUCKING HEAD* --

MATTY

-- *shit* -- !!

-- Avron MOVES FOR ETHAN -- but Matty's right there, darting up -- GOES FULL-FORCE SWINGING ON AVRON --

-- and by now: JOEL -- *SEES THIS* -- **GODFUCKINGDAMMIT** --

-- on Matty, taking another swing -- as he's GRABBED BY JOEL, THROWN AGAINST THE WALL -- and JOEL SOCKS MATTY TO THE FLOOR.

JOEL

What I *just* tell you, huh?!

MATTY

Joel -- this guy, he --

Matty goes to stand -- but JOEL KICKS HIM IN THE RIBS.

JOEL  
-- and now you're pickin' fights  
with *BRAWLERS?!*

AVRON  
It was the new one.

*JOEL STOPS. LOOKS TO ETHAN.* Ethan's momentary courage gone.

JOEL  
That right?  
(beat)  
Then let me give you some  
pointers, fragile one: *you don't  
touch Brawlers --*  
(beat)  
-- and you sure as shit stay the  
*fuck* away from Meredith.

And another beat as Ethan processes that one, Joel having  
clearly been watching him from afar --

-- before JOEL SHOVES ETHAN AWAY -- *and leaves* -- something  
deeper burning away at Joel --

-- as Matty winces onto his feet.

MATTY  
Jesus. Would ya look at that, Johnson?  
Little strychnine in our rookie and he  
ain't so fuckin' rookie.

And that's when Ethan SPOTS MEREDITH across the room, moving  
in all of her nimbleness -- their eyes connect, she smiles --

-- while Ethan, still shook up with adrenaline, simply nods,  
takes a drink, enough is enough tonight.

*Welcome to the party, Ethan.*

**end three.**

**FOUR.**47 **INT. THE DEN - NIGHT**

47

The valves have slowed. The beeps less frequent. At first glance, THOMAS would appear to be sleeping.

DORIS (O.S.)  
How are you feeling?

Thomas, eyes coming to life, looks to find Doris seated near his bed, smiling pleasantly. As always.

THOMAS  
Mm. Some weird dreams. Make me  
feel like I'm in a puzzle.

And Doris simply smiles small. Considers that a beat. Before:

DORIS  
Have you eaten?

And off Thomas' hollow look --

48 **OMITTED**

48

49 **OMITTED**

49

50 **INT. DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

50

The two of them now sit across from one another. The table set. Chandelier dimly lit, candles flickering between them.

And Thomas is looking at Doris here, intently as she lays her napkin over her lap, trying to read her frame.

THOMAS  
There's something wrong.

DORIS  
There's nothing wrong.

She shakes her head. Dismisses the notion. Doesn't want him troubled -- Thomas simply watching as she takes a sip of wine.

THOMAS  
All these years. You've never told me  
where you came from. Before we met.

DORIS  
I've told you a great deal.

THOMAS  
None of it true.

And Doris looks at Thomas here, noting his persistence.

DORIS  
And how about what you've told  
me of yourself?

On Thomas, clearly with no intention of ever letting his eyes leave hers as he forces this next part out:

THOMAS  
*Very little* of it true.

She looks to him a beat. Thomas opening up the truth box here. So, Doris sets her utensils down, props her elbows up on the table, clasps her hands, ready to play ball.

DORIS  
I come from bad blood, Tommy. Bad  
blood and dark days.  
(beat)  
You changed that though. A good  
man like yourself.

THOMAS  
I'm not that good --

DORIS  
-- and perhaps that's why we've  
gotten on so well, wouldn't you say?

Thomas shifts. Considering her words a few beats.

THOMAS  
I can tell you about it if you  
want. About the bad in me.

And Doris looks at him a beat. Processing. As she smiles.

DORIS  
Is that what you'd prefer? For  
this to end in full disclosure?  
(beat)  
Or perhaps we let the curtain  
fall on these years untainted.

Thomas considers that. This next part hard for him to muster:





And with that, she shuts the door behind her.

53

**INT. JOEL'S TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT**

53

Joel opens his fridge. Pulls a beer. Cracks it. Drops down into the La-Z-Boy. Drinks. Television. Drinks.

Amidst all this madness we've come to know these last 45 pages, here simply sits a man trying to unwind after work.

Except, something in Joel's expression. As if he were looking *through* the television. Beyond it. Losing himself, when --

A VERY YOUNG GIRL (O.S.)  
Sammy Simpleton lives in the forest.

-- that's when he looks to find **LYLA**. 7. Beer-blond hair, the curious eyes of a child with a NOTEPAD tucked under her arm.

JOEL  
You're supposed to be asleep.

LYLA  
He has a cabin.

Joel looks to her -- and smiles. As tired as he may be, he *knows this game*.

JOEL  
What kinda cabin?

LYLA  
Wood.

JOEL  
A *wood* cabin. And what does he do in his wood cabin?

Lyla sits at a table suspended from the wall, regarding her notebook and judging by her expression -- *this is some serious fucking work we're talking about here*.

LYLA  
He reads. And talks to his pets.

JOEL  
What pets does he have?

LYLA  
A cat. A horse. And a night giraffe.

JOEL  
A *night* giraffe?

LYLA

It's a giraffe allergic to the sun.

JOEL

Sammy must have a big cabin to be able to fit a giraffe.

LYLA

No. He spends all day fixing the roof because it keeps poking holes in it.

Joel smiles. Too tired to chuckle as Lyla flips a page.

LYLA (CONT'D)

Then there's Beatrice Beodorff.

JOEL

*Beatrice Beodorff*. What's her story?

LYLA

She has a broomstick that doesn't work anymore. It broke because she was flying too fast on it.

JOEL

She's a witch?

LYLA

No. But she knows magic.

JOEL

So, she's a good witch?

LYLA

No, Daddy-O. She just knows magic.

JOEL

Uh-huh. And what does she look like?

LYLA

She has a black pointy hat, and a big nose like a hook, and stinky teeth.

A beat. Because, yeah, that -- sounds like a -- *nevermind*.

LYLA (CONT'D)

And then there's Harold.

JOEL

Harold who?

LYLA

Harold Horpus. I don't know his story yet though.



Find Joel. Looking to this Enormous Figure, the likes of which we still haven't gotten a look at. As we tend to do.

JOEL (CONT'D)  
Gotta go meet the Ghouls.

ENORMOUS FIGURE  
Mmph.  
(beat)  
Mmk. Lemme grab my shirt.

And this Enormous Figure leaves frame as we stay on Joel, watching him O.S., a concern in his eye --

JOEL  
Remember. No fightin', yeah?

-- as the Enormous Figure comes back, pulling his *BANISHED BRAWLER MECHANIC'S SHIRT* on -- and simply moves past Joel --

57 **EXT. BASH'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS**

57

JOEL  
*BASH.*

-- and we'll finally have it -- as the Enormous Figure turns to REVEAL himself as: **BASH BRANNIGAN**. 50s. A beast in glasses.

BASH  
You worry too much, Joel.

Bash turns again, leaving Joel with a troubled expression.

58 **OMITTED**

58

59 **EXT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG - THE REAR COMPOUND - LATER**

59

Bustling by night, abandoned junk yard by day. Automobiles from various eras strewn about. All works in progress.

And as if orchestrated, here comes *the entire chapter of The Banished Brawlers*, this massive horde of men in identical outfits, making their way for a line of HOT RODS --

-- prepped and waiting for them -- as we find Ethan, keeping up with Matty and Johnson, moving among the Brawlers -- as Ethan looks, spots Joel -- *and BASH.*

ETHAN  
Who's that? With Joel?

Matty looks -- but doesn't answer -- as we CUT TO:

60 **EXT. THE HI BOY - DAY**

60

**VRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRMMMMMMMM.**

We're CLOSE ON JOEL. Behind the wheel. *Moving fast.* As a CACOPHONY OF ENGINES surround us. AND WE PULL BACK. *Slowly.*

Find Bash in the passenger seat. AND PULL BACK FURTHER TO REVEAL: **AN ENTIRE FUCKING MOTORCADE BEHIND THEM.** *Because here, The Banished Brawlers are amassed and en route.*

We come to Betty the Brougham, dead last. The Phoenixes in tow with Uncle Lug sitting this one out. And Ethan, in the passenger seat -- absorbing his new bizarre-O world.

61 **EXT. OCTANE HAUSER'S RACEWAY - DAY - LATER**

61

And here's a makeshift RACEWAY. The Brawlers' motorcade of hot rods now a wall on this ancient artifact of Americana.

The Brawlers sit in their cars -- save for Joel, front and center, looking out beyond us, unsettled by what he sees.

REVEAL: On the other side of the track, A CLUSTER OF BROWN LEATHER JACKETS ON VINTAGE MOTORCYCLES -- **THE HAPPINESS GHOULS.**

Long time rival of the Brawlers. And it should be known: these are no *Sons*. There are no Harleys. These guys rolled straight out of an exploitation flick and never stopped.

Bash joins Joel at his side -- right as a *SINGLE TINY GHOUL* walks to meet them -- this is **KONSTANTINOV.**

KONSTANTINOV

Long time, Joel.

BASH

(to Joel)

You know this man?

JOEL

This is Konstantinov. He's a Lieutenant.

KONSTANTINOV

Your boys. The runners. They picked a fight with some of our guys.

JOEL

And from what we heard, your guys won.

KONSTANTINOV

Don't matter. Violation of our truce.  
And they gotta pay for it.

(beat)

Turn 'em over to us, we can  
forget it ever happened.

BASH

*Turn 'em over to you? What for?*

A beat as Konstantinov timidly glances at Bash. Because dealing with Joel is one thing -- *but Bash is another story.*

KONSTANTINOV

That's up to us.

BASH

But what is it you'd like to do with 'em,  
huh? Turn 'em into your *fuck puppets?*

KONSTANTINOV

You don't turn 'em over, you risk war.

JOEL

No need for war over a bar fight --

KONSTANTINOV

-- it was a violation of our--

BASH

--does your boss know you're here?

Another beat. Konstantinov. Bash. A hopeless battle.

KONSTANTINOV

Does *yours?*

BASH

Would you like Burt to know?

KONSTANTINOV

Yeah, see. That's the problem with you  
Brawlers. All'a ya. Been on top so long,  
you forgot how far the fall is.

BASH

You talk good. It's enjoyable to  
listen to, but. It changes nothing.

JOEL

Konstantinov. We respect the truce, but --

BASH

-- can I ask you something?

Bash takes a step towards Konstantinov, standing strong in the face of this ox. And there's a beat --

-- before Bash GRABS KONSTANTINOV NOT JUST BY HIS THROAT, **BUT HIS ENTIRE FUCKING NECK** -- *two full hands* --

-- and The Happiness Ghouls all TENSE. We can feel it. And yet they stay on their cycles -- *compliantly* --

BASH (CONT'D)  
I grab you up like this.

-- as Bash maintains a firm grip on Konstantinov, who HACKS, GURGLES, *STRUGGLES FOR ALL THINGS LIFE* --

BASH (CONT'D)  
And look at your men. Look at them do nothing. **NOTHING**. I can even -- I can *drag you*. Right in front of 'em --

-- he drags Konstantinov *towards* the formation of the Ghouls, Konstantinov's feet scraping about, crooked and disabled.

BASH (CONT'D)  
-- right along here. And look:

And it's an embarrassing sight, really. Bash marching a struggling Konstantinov along the length of the Ghouls, nervously standing over their bikes, watching helplessly --

-- until. **ONE GHOUL GETS OFF HIS MOTORCYCLE**. And Bash brightens.

BASH (CONT'D)  
There's one. One. One will do *something*.  
(calling out to the Ghoul)  
You there! *Will you do something?!*

The Ghoul pulls a large **IRON FILE**. Stands at the opposite end of the Ghouls -- staring at Bash and Konstantinov a beat.

And another beat. And another. Until:

BASH (CONT'D)  
Maybe not.  
(back to Konstantinov)  
And do you know why that is?

Bash starts to drag Konstantinov back down the line -- *and he tosses Konstantinov at the feet of the Ghoul* --

-- locking eyes with the Ghoul, done with Konstantinov.

BASH (CONT'D)

Because you all know -- my  
brothers back there? You **sneeze** on  
me -- and they'd do something.

(beat)

You know this. So you stand there.

Konstantinov struggles to even get to a knee. Catching his  
breath. As Bash continues to stare down the Ghoul --

-- until the Ghoul helps Konstantinov up -- and they retreat to  
their flock of motorcycles. Bash watching -- *it's over.*

And Joel, knowing this is Bash's way, but -- also looking to  
Konstantinov. A humiliated and dangerous man, Joel knowing:

*This is not over.* He looks to Bash as he passes, who's not at  
all looking back at him. He's just ready to fucking leave.

BASH (CONT'D)

Worry too much.

And Bash continues towards the Hi Boy -- *as we move with him.*  
The morning sun enveloping his frame more the further we go --

-- until Bash disappears into the stabbing sun rays as we:

**end four.**



And he wakes with a start. Eyes heavy as he looks to find Molly in a nearby chair, watching him. *Unsettling him.*

COLIN  
Th'fuck you doin'?

MOLLY  
You have a visitor. In the kitchen.

And off Colin --

67

**INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

67

-- Colin enters, pausing to find -- Doris seated at the table.

DORIS  
I wanted to drop by. Check in on you. This whole thing has been a tough ordeal for all of us.

Colin looks to the table -- THE FOLDER containing the papers.

DORIS (CONT'D)  
Molly pulled the file for me. I wanted to look it over. Hope you don't mind.

He moves to a coffee pot, pours himself a cup of day-old as Doris lifts a mug, takes a warm sip of tea, pleasant.

Colin sits across from her, chugs a gulp of stale joe, slightly shaking from alcohol withdrawal.

DORIS (CONT'D)  
Your father met me at a challenging time in my life, Colin. I was very confused. Very young.

COLIN  
You weren't that young.

DORIS  
I suppose not at heart, no.  
(beat)  
You two were right though. You and Big Graham. About not knowing much about me. *Tommy* especially. I just always thought it'd be best to keep it all tight-lipped.  
(beat)  
So, I'll tell you -- there are some men down south. Many miles away. Have you heard of The Banished Brawlers--

COLIN  
--you're not stupid, Doris.

Colin stopping her. *Could not care less.* As she looks to him, this impatient man with even less patience for her.

COLIN (CONT'D)  
You see him for what he is. Just like you see me for what *I* am.  
(beat)  
So, please. Listen to me. This is the one eighth of a fucking ounce of shit that I might possibly give about you, *and that's being nice:*  
(beat)  
Go away. You don't want guys like Big Graham up your ass.

DORIS  
Your father loves you. His biggest fear in life was always that you'd inherit his flaws.

Colin slumps back into his chair, rolling his eyes -- *it's fucking hopeless* -- as Doris takes another sip of tea.

DORIS (CONT'D)  
When I see that you already have. And that makes me sad.

COLIN  
Yeah, well. Life's tragic, ain't it?

She touches two fingertips to the FOLDER. Makes a point:

DORIS  
You can't file until he passes.

Colin looks to her, no response as she rises, moves to the other side of the kitchen, places her mug in the sink --

DORIS (CONT'D)  
I wish we would have learned to understand one another.

-- Colin staying put, his back to her -- *foolishly* --

DORIS (CONT'D)  
Because -- maybe you would have seen that the bad you have in you?

-- because suddenly, *DORIS IS THERE BEHIND HIM* --

DORIS (CONT'D)

Pales in comparison to the bad I know.

-- **zzzzrrrrppppp** -- and has TIED COLIN'S WRIST TO AN ARM OF HIS CHAIR WITH ONE OF THE KITCHEN STAFF'S **ZIP TIES** --

COLIN

-- wh'th'FK--

-- but before he can say it -- she's dropped a loop around his neck -- **ZZZZZZZZRRRRRRRRRRPPPPPPPP** --

-- another tie. So swift, so fast from this petite little lady.

And Colin's eyes fill with surprise, panic -- AS HE CHOKES, frantically pulling at the zip tie with his free hand --

-- but to no avail. Durable industrial plastic holding tight around his throat, the skin breaking --

-- and Colin jumps to his feet, tethered to the chair. HE THRASHES, the chair flailing about, heavy and destructive --

-- as Doris pours herself another cup of fucking tea --

DORIS

The honest truth of it? With everything happening, I feel as if something's -- *waking up* inside of me. It's an awful feeling, really. This darkness like a sickness.

-- Colin FLIPS THE TABLE OVER, Doris noticing THE FOLDER, picks it up from the floor, moves back to the stove --

-- as Colin clamors over to the counter, RIPPING OPEN a drawer, emptying its contents in an awful racket.

68 **INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

68

MOLLY. Still sitting in her chair. The muffled chaos from the kitchen creeping into the living room.

An expression of emotion and pain, fear and confusion -- but, countless years of abuse and corruption keeping her seated.

69 **INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

69

A ZIPPO FLICKERS a flame to life. Doris brings the lighter to the folder, watches it catch fire.

DORIS

I'll be going away for a short while.  
Until all of this blows over.

And the folder disintegrates into crisp, black ash, Doris letting it crumble into the sink -- turns on the faucet --

-- as Colin rips open another drawer -- FUMBLES THROUGH IT --

-- and produces a PAIR OF SCISSORS, on his last ounce of oxygen, he frantically brings them to his throat --

-- tries to close them over the zip tie, the plastic too tough to go so easily -- until -- **SNIP** --

-- HE CUTS IT LOOSE -- and fucking collapses over the counter in relief. Huffing, puffing, this medium bad wolf --

COLIN

-- *jesusfuckinchrist.*  
(*Hrrf-Hrrf-Hrrf*)  
You fucking cu--

**--BLAM.**

-- **COLIN'S NECK EXPLODES.** A violent splatter of blood against the taupe cabinets, dropping him to the floor, revealing Doris at the other end of the kitchen --

-- *WITH A MASSIVE **REVOLVER** IN HER HAND*, pearl white handle with a single crack in it -- *VINTAGE CLUTCH PURSE NOW EMPTY.*

She walks over to him, taking his last bubbling breaths --

DORIS

I'm not sure this is what your father meant.

COLIN

-- *w-w-wai--*

**BLAM.** She's shot him through the head. Colin falling silent.

70

**INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

70

Molly. Still seated. Doris enters from the kitchen. A strange beat as they look to one another.

DORIS

Okay, Molly. As we discussed.

Molly nods. And Doris leaves.

71 **INT. ORIGINAL QUINN RESIDENCE - THE DEN - DAY**

71

No machines beep. No valves breathe. The NURSE sits beside Thomas' hospital bed. His frame still. She looks O.S., stands.

NURSE

I -- I tried to call.

Reveal Doris, entering, looking to Thomas' lifeless body.

DORIS

Oh.

(beat)

I see.

Silence. Her eyes never leaving Thomas.

NURSE

If you need anything --

DORIS

-- no. It's okay.

A beat. And the nurse moves to leave -- until she stops, turns.

NURSE

I'm sorry for your loss, Mrs. Quinn.

DORIS

Harlow.

(off the nurse's look)

My maiden name. It's Harlow.

The nurse nods, uncertain -- and finally leaves. As Doris sits next to Thomas. Doesn't look at him. Shifting a beat, before:

DORIS (CONT'D)

I see you've gone then.

And she looks to his hand. Takes it. Considers its weight.

When she notices: A DOT OF WATER ON HER HAND. Curious. She touches her face -- *reveals the streak of a fallen tear.*

**PRE-LAP: A PHONE RINGS** from the dialing end.

72 **INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER**

72

Doris. On the couch again. Telephone to her ear as it RINGS.

Reveal: THE TELEVISION. On MUTE. More images of EARTH. This time not so grainy. A little clearer.

The orange square. Even more unnatural. *IT'S SPREAD.* The stretch of planet in its wake now covered in an orange glow.

Fucking strange. And the PHONE RINGS AGAIN.

*And also kind of fucking scary.*

73           **INT. BETTY THE BROUGHAM - MOVING - DAY - MEANWHILE**           73

Ethan. In the back seat this time. He feels something in his pocket, looks ahead at Matty and Johnson, makes sure they're not watching -- and he pulls a shitty little flip phone from his pocket -- and on its screen: **ONE VOICEMAIL.**

                          ETHAN (PRE-LAP)  
                          *It's Ethan. Leave a message.*

**BEEEEEP.**

A beat. Until we reveal:

                          DORIS (PRE-LAP)  
                          Hi, pumpkin. It's me.

74           **INT. QUINN RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MEANWHILE**           74

Back to Doris. Because here she is -- *speaking into Ethan's voicemail. Because, it turns out they fucking know each other.*

**BECAUSE ETHAN IS DORIS' MOLE.**

                          DORIS  
                          I wanted to see how you're doing.

75           **EXT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG - THE REAR COMPOUND - MEANWHILE**   75

And we're on Ethan, watching as the horde of Brawlers dissipates, moving on with their day -- this, now his life --

                          DORIS (V.O.)  
                          And to let you know that I really  
                          appreciate what you're doing here.  
                          (beat)  
                          For me --

-- and he looks to spot MEREDITH a ways away. Smoking a cigarette inside of a fenced-in enclosure.

                          DORIS (V.O.)  
                          -- and for her.



And a beat, until -- **BEEEEEP.**

The voicemail ends. Ethan, our newly-revealed lynchpin, flips the phone closed. And he simply sits there.

79 **INT. LIVING ROOM - MEANWHILE**

79

Come back to Doris. Now standing before a mirror, where she puts on her glasses. Still twisted. Still broken.

And she looks at herself in them a beat. Before she takes them off, sets them down -- and leaves us with them --

-- as we slowly push in on the broken glasses, before we go to:

80 **INT. BURT'S BANG-A-RANG - DAY**

80

And now it's dead in here. As we slowly push in on one of our PINUP COLUMNS, years of having been painted over with different Pinups --

-- and we home in on the slightest glimpse of KATHERINE. Years ago. Another life. And from there, we go to **BLACK.**

end 101.