

SALLAD DAZE

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Created & Written by
John J King

FADE IN:

EXT. HUTCH FAMILY HOME, PORCH - NIGHT

ON TARA'S FACE

Sweat beads the face of TARA Hutch (25), an African-American woman in a funky silver-studded hijab. Her teeth gritted, eyes fixed on someone in front of her, she breathes heavily through her septum-pierced nose.

In her hands, pointed at the unseen person before her, is a smoking shotgun.

Under the image, ANAHI (57), a matronly Mexican immigrant with a wary, darkly comic view of the world, speaks.

ANAHI (SPANISH)

Many weeks later, with her father's gun in her hands, Radical Islamic Tara remembered that distant morning when there was no good coffee in Texas.

EXT. TARA'S STREET - EARLY FRIDAY MORNING TWO MONTHS PRIOR

A run-down suburb dense with old wooden single-family houses, each with a patch of dead grass in front, and a few dying trees. This world is gray before the sun rises.

A cab stops in front of Tara's house. She steps out, hauling a backpack and a piece of luggage, slams the door.

EXT. TARA'S PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Tara flips back the doormat: nothing. She tilts a plant holder up: nothing. She tries the door: locked. She sighs, picks up her bags.

EXT. TARA'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Tara stashes her bags behind bushes in the backyard. She peers through window: no sign of life or lights.

TARA

Can't go home again.

The neighbor's dog barks aggressively on the other side of a wooden fence. Tara growls back, pushes through the gate.

EXT. PARK ROW INTERSECTION - MINUTES LATER

The traffic lights blink red, not switched on for the morning. Tara crosses the empty street.

EXT. PATTY'S PANTRY - CONTINUOUS

Old brick and glass building squats between a liquor store and gas station. An old-school diner with retro booths and stools inside, utterly dark.

Tara reads the handwritten sign taped on the door.

ON SIGN

- "After 35 years, Patty's Pantry is closed due to rising rents. Thank Y'all to our loyal customers. The Pantry is now empty. - Patty"

BACK TO SCENE

TARA

Damn.

She sighs, and looks across the street: A Starbucks, with several cars waiting at the drive thru.

A hissing sound pulls her attention to the liquor store.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - CONTINUOUS

A MAN IN ALL BLACK spray paints his tag to a fresh image on the brick wall: a portrait of President George W. Bush, a butthole where his mouth should be, labelled "DUBIYA"

Tara watches over his shoulder.

TARA

You spelled "Dubya" wrong.

The man spins around.

TARA (CONT'D)

There's no 'I.'

DERBY Piper (25), a white dude who looks like he needs a bath and a meal, pulls his airmask down and stares at Tara.

DERBY

Tara? Hutch?

TARA

Derby Piper.

DERBY

You're back.

TARA

Barely, and not for long. Still making art?

DERBY

Oh. Um. Art. Yeah.

He shrugs and looks at his cans of paint.

A short, squat, Mexican woman in glasses smokes on the street - Anahi in the flesh, looking at the painting.

ANAHI (SPANISH)

You spelled "Dubya" wrong.

DERBY

I know. Thanks very much.

Anahi walks down the sidewalk.

TARA

I'm around this summer. We should grab lunch.

DERBY

Aren't you gay now?

TARA

Gay people eat lunch, Derby. Tomorrow?

DERBY

Okay.

TARA

Dope. I'll text you. Shame about Patty's, huh?

DERBY

There's always Starbucks.

TARA

Ugh.

DERBY

Join the dark side, Tara. I should finish this.

Tara crosses the street to the Starbucks. Derby spray paints the 'Y' thicker to swallow the 'I'.

A car swerves onto the sidewalk, TWO HICKS leap out, hollering, paunchy in ballcaps, plaid cut off shirts.

HICK 1

That's our president, you scum!

HICK 2

Respect the office!

Derby backs away, his eyes widening. He drops his cans, runs to the back of the lot, the Hicks in hot pursuit.

Derby leaps up the fence and climbs over. The Hicks give up, kicking the dirt.

INT. HUTCH FAMILY HOUSE, KITCHEN - AN HOUR LATER

ON STOVE

A lit match held to gas jets erupts into blue flames.

BACK TO SCENE

Yellowing linoleum curls up from the floor, the window curtains are faded to colorless.

Tara's father MARCUS (52), a solid African American man in glasses and a robe, works bacon and eggs on the stove.

Tara sits, drinking coffee. It's raining outside, causing a drip in the corner by the door.

TARA

This the new guest bathroom?

MARCUS

Why don't you grab the bucket.

Tara goes to the corner for a mop bucket. She takes the mop and broom out, and sets the bucket under the leak.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Had that ever since the April hail.

He scoops eggs onto a plate, and a few strips of bacon.
Tara opens the fridge and takes out a yogurt, a banana.

TARA

In Boston, landlord can't let a house
go without heat, even if the tenant
can't pay. That's unliveable.

MARCUS

Ain't that cute of Boston.

He sets the plate in front of Tara.

TARA

I'm good with yogurt.

MARCUS

Eat up. Bony ass might play in Boston
but not with these Texas boys.

TARA

I don't eat pig. Ought to at least
get a tarp up there.

MARCUS

No pig? That one of those Islam
rules?

TARA

I don't eat any meat. And I don't
mess with Texas boys.

Marcus slurps up a slice of bacon, playfully.

MARCUS

Lotta don't in this house today.

TARA

I'm leaving in two months, dad. Texas
boys not worth the time it takes.
Besides, I got to make money.

MARCUS

Ain't the United Nations paying you?

TARA

It's an internship. Food and housing but there's no salary. And I got to get there.

MARCUS

Always a job for you at the Super 8.

TARA

I'm not working the hotel.

MARCUS

This afternoon you are. Mattress flipping day.

Marcus does a dad's excited dance. Tara scowls.

TARA

I have plans.

MARCUS

Oh you got plans?

TARA

Errands.

MARCUS

Genny'll be there, won't you?

Genesis (called GENNY - 17), rushes in with a backpack and math book. She's slim, high school pretty, and anxious. She splashes down at the table, writing notes.

GENNY

Morning Tara.

TARA

Math. Still?

GENNY

Retaking my SATs.

TARA

You hear from UT about your
scholarships?

Genny glances up at Marcus, who shrugs and sets a plate in
front of Genny.

GENNY

Not yet.

MARCUS

Nothing wrong with Dallas County
Community College.

TARA

Unless you want to experience the
world outside Dallas.

MARCUS

Excuse me - we still pray before
meals in this house.

Tara sets her yogurt down. Genny closes her book. They take
hands.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Lord Jesus, we thank you for this pig
what gave its life to save ours. And
for bringing our family together, no
matter how far apart we pull. Amen.

GENNY

Amen.

TARA

Bismillah.

MARCUS

Bless you.

Genny shoves her book in her bag grabs a fist of bacon.

GENNY

Bus is coming.

MARCUS

Don't forget: hotel after school.

He kisses her forehead.

GENNY

I know. Bye Tara.

Genny rushes out. Marcus sits by Tara, digging into eggs.

MARCUS

I been researching about Islam. Know what they say on the google?

TARA

Hmm?

MARCUS

They say a Muslim owe a duty to obey your parents, no matter what their religion.

TARA

That's true.

MARCUS

Well, your Christian daddy say you working at the hotel today.

He tosses a plate of bacon next to Tara.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Allah back.

EXT. THE ENCLAVE APARTMENTS - MORNING

A pod of tall, cheap apartments built in the 1980's surround a dirty community pool.

The "en" on the sign out front has fallen off; it reads "The Clave".

INT. THE CLAVE, DERBY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Derby snores on a mattress on the floor, a paper air respirator still around his chin.

The room looks more like a storage space than a home - stacks of milk crates full of stencils and paint cans. At the foot of his bed, cardboard boxes stack on their sides, makeshift shelves for clothes that are put away.

Other clothes cover the worn-beyond-recognizing-the-original-color carpet, which also has evidence of a few stains of paint and other substances.

On the windowsill, an ashtray quite full of butts.

BANG BANG BANG on the door.

BRETT (OS)

Derby.

Derby slowly rises and opens the door.

INT. THE CLAVE, DEN - CONTINUOUS

BRETT (24) a former marine and looks it: close cropped hair, muscles on display since he's wearing only briefs.

A smallish den-kitchen combo with a shrine of an entertainment system at one end: huge tv, game consoles, shelf of dvds. No windows, and no couch, just two bean bag chairs and an overturned box. Weights scatter the floor.

Brett pulls Derby's air mask and pops it at Derby's chest.

BRETT

I need rent, D-Bag.

INTERCUT BETWEEN DERBY'S ROOM AND LIVING ROOM

DERBY

Today's the 28th.

BRETT

First is Monday. Five-seventy-five.

DERBY

Rent's five-fifty.

BRETT

Internet's up. Somebody streaming a lot of porn.

In and out of the room is SHANNON (25), Brett's girlfriend who doesn't live here but may as well. Small and athletic, dressed prettily for a retail job, she makes coffee.

SHANNON

Mornin' Derby.

DERBY

Hey Shannon.

SHANNON

Bye Derby. Bye babe.

Shannon kisses Brett on the cheek from behind.

BRETT

Get back in there, I ain't through with you.

Brett grabs her by the waist and carries her back to his bedroom. Over his shoulder he calls to Derby.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Five-seventy-five, Sunday.

Brett slams the door behind him.

DERBY

Those tighty whities are neither.

INT. THE CLAVE, DERBY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Derby finds his phone, pulls up his bank app.

ON PHONE

Derby's account registers \$167.86.

BACK TO SCENE

DERBY (CONT'D)

Fuck me.

Derby looks at the clock: 10:52.

DERBY (CONT'D)

Fuck me.

He grabs a uniform from the floor: black pants, a branded shirt and hat, and he runs out.

INT. DERBY AND BRETT'S DEN - CONTINUOUS

Derby closes his bedroom door, clutching his uniform, phone and keys. He hears from Brett's bedroom.

SHANNON (OS)

Fuck! Me!

Derby scowls, and yanks his air respirator off. He leaves and slams the door.

INT. US POST OFFICE, NORTH ARLINGTON - LATE MORNING

Tara stands against a white wall. A USPS EMPLOYEE (40's), wearing an ill-fitting uniform, snaps a digital camera. The flash bursts in Tara's eyes.

USPS EMPLOYEE

Don't smile.

Tara drops her smile. Another flash explodes.

INT. US POST OFFICE - 10 MINUTES LATER

Tara at the desk with paperwork and newly printed photo.

She hands it to a USPS EMPLOYEE (50's), a short Latinx woman with a lot of make-up.

USPS EMPLOYEE

Cash or check?

TARA
Cash?

USPS EMPLOYEE
One forty-five.

Tara counts out the cash and hands it under the window.

TARA
And I'll get my Passport in July?

The USPS Employee laughs.

TARA (CONT'D)
I'm leaving the country in August.

USPS EMPLOYEE
Two to three months.

Tara grimaces.

USPS EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)
You want expedited? Six week
turnaround.

TARA
I'll take that.

USPS EMPLOYEE
Sixty bucks.

Tara frowns at her wallet.

TARA
You take credit?

EXT. DERBY'S CAR - LATE MORNING

An eight-year-old Toyota sedan hand-me-down with a few bumps and a lot of miles. Derby drives fast, smokes, and sings along loudly to the radio.

Approaching a yellow light, he punches the brakes and screeches to a stop.

DERBY

Whoa, Silver!

Derby uses the stoppage time to take off his black tee and pull on his branded PERKY'S PIZZA uniform shirt.

EXT. PERKY'S PIZZA PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Derby's car squeals into a spot. He hops out, opens the trunk and takes a car-topper out. He sticks it to the roof of his car and takes a last puff of his cigarette before smashing it under his foot.

Derby tucks his shirt in as he enters the store.

INT. PERKY'S PIZZA, KITCHEN - 10 MINUTES LATER

Back of the shop, where the magic happens. Shelves of ingredients. A huge oven with two tiers of rolling belts.

Derby faces off with MAYO (38), a chubby white guy. They both hold flat sheets of cardboard: unfolded pizza boxes.

ON DERBY

His eyes squint, staring daggers into Mayo's eyes.

ON MAYO

His nostrils tremble with feigned rage.

BACK TO SCENE

Without signal, both men furiously fold their cardboard into a box: this is a lightning duel to the finish.

Derby whips his box together, shoving it onto a stack of other boxes while Mayo still fumbles.

Mayo falls to the ground, mock dead upon losing this duel.

INT. PERKY'S PIZZA, KITCHEN - 5 MINUTES LATER

JON MANN (48), the boss, middle aged white guy who looks like a former bassist in a rock band, with salt and pepper hair sprouting under his Perky's ball cap, spreads toppings on a pie before shoving it into the oven.

NESTO (19) the assistant cook, a lanky Latinx kid who wants power but has none. Hardest working guy here, currently whipping hot pies off the oven, slicing and boxing as quick as he possibly can, then shoving into bags.

Derby follows Jon back and forth.

DERBY

Hey Jon, man, you need drivers tomorrow night?

JON MANN

Saturday? Those guys guard that shift like gold.

NESTO

Order up!

DERBY

I need some fast cash. How's Sunday?

JON MANN

Ask around - someone might swap you.

NESTO

Derby. Piper. Order. Up.

Nesto stands next to a tall stack of pizza bags. Derby spins a box on his finger like a basketball.

DERBY

You say something, Nesto?

NESTO

You heard me.

DERBY

You gotta yell louder so the sound escapes your fat head.

Nesto spreads his arms and eyes at Jon Mann: "see what I put up with." Derby grabs the bags and nods at the oven.

DERBY (CONT'D)

Nesto. Your line.

Nesto turns to see pizzas crowding the edge of the oven, just in time to watch one splatter to the floor.

Derby whistles and kicks the door open, leaving the store.

INT. DERBY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Derby drives, his back seat piled high with pizza bags.

EXT. ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Derby's car peels into the parking lot of a large local high school, as other cars stream out.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Mobs of high school students flock the hallways. They gather in corners, on benches, and clumps.

Derby carries his pizzas to a food cart with a long line. Standing behind it is COACH (50's), a gone-to-seed white guy in a polo shirt, sweating and pacing.

Derby sets the bags down, removes the boxes.

COACH

Lunch started three minutes ago.

DERBY

School zone slowed me down.

COACH

This is strike two, Perky's.

DERBY

One-twenty.

Coach hands Derby the cash.

COACH
Keep the change.

Derby collects his bags as frantic kids crowd the pizza. He counts the money: exactly one hundred and twenty. No tip. Derby growls.

EXT. PERKY'S - LATE AFTERNOON

Derby leaves the restaurant, shirt untucked. He lights a cigarette and counts his tips.

DERBY
Twenty-five lousy bucks.

A gorgeous, metallic blue sports car roars into the parking lot. Out steps ENRIQUE (35), an athletic Mexican man with gold aviator sunglasses, and a side order of swagger. No pizza uniform looks cool, except on Enrique.

He tosses an empty delivery bag in the air and does a sweet spin-kick move, shooting the bag at Derby's chest.

DERBY
Yo, Enrique, you driving tomorrow?

ENRIQUE
Si, amigo.

DERBY
Can I take your shift?

ENRIQUE
You need dough? You don't need dough.

He pats Derby's tummy. Derby swats him away.

DERBY
I gotta make rent.

ENRIQUE
I have kids, amigo.

Enrique lowers his sunglasses, looks at the Derby's cash, and laughs. Enrique flashes a twenty in Derby's face.

ENRIQUE

Veinte, Amigo. In one hour. Why don't you just deliver more pizzas faster?

DERBY

Screw you, Enrique.

Enrique taps Derby in the chest.

ENRIQUE

"Violence is my last option. But it is an Option." Chuck Norris.

Enrique enters the store. Derby draws his cigarette, sighs.

INT. SUPER 8 MOTEL, FRONT DESK - LATE AFTERNOON

Front check-in desk of a run-down motel. Kitschy black and white photos of cowboys, cattle, and oil rigs on the walls. Tara snoozes, a coffee in her hand, feet up on the desk.

Genny comes in the front door - back from school. She glares at Tara, slams the bell on the desk. DING DING DING.

Tara startles and her feet fall off the desk, coffee dropped on the floor.

TARA

Genny? What the hell.

GENNY

Break's over, T. Let's go.

Genny drops her bag, grabs keys from behind the desk. Tara rubs her eyes, lays a paper towel over the spill.

TARA

I was done with that anyway.

Tossing the cup in the trash, she follows Genny out.

INT. SUPER 8 HOTEL ROOM - MINUTES LATER

A double bed, nightstand, an old lamp. A squat gray TV circa 2002 sits on a beat dresser. Over the bed, a bad watercolor of a bull skull in the desert.

Genny and Tara on either side of the bed. Genny strips the duvet, Tara moves pillows, and pulls back the top sheet.

They grab opposite corners, lift the mattress, and rotate it 180 degrees, Genny climbing over the bed to do this.

Genny pulls the top sheet up. Tara re-sets the duvet while Genny replaces the pillows. They do this like a machine.

INT. SUPER 8, ROOM NEXT DOOR, CONTINUOUS

Nearly identical room. The same process, a perfect rhythm.

GENNY

Why'd you come back?

TARA

To see you before I go to Europe.

GENNY

I thought you weren't working here.

TARA

Got to save money for this trip.

She tosses the pillows to the floor.

GENNY

It seems so big. The U.N.

TARA

Everything seems big when you never left Dallas.

They spin with the mattress.

TARA (CONT'D)

I'm glad you going to UT. Do you good.

GENNY

If I go.

Tara grabs the pillows and throws one at Genny.

TARA

Do not let him send you to Community.
Can't stay in daddy's house forever.

GENNY

That's the problem isn't it?

Tara glares at Genny and tilts her head. Genny bites her lip and looks down. Tara scowls.

INT. TARA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Marcus reads a paper at the kitchen table. Tara busts in.

TARA

When did you get evicted?

MARCUS

Slow your roll. We not being evicted.
We just can't stay there no more.

TARA

Do you know what evicted means?

MARCUS

God gonna look after us.

TARA

God don't own any low rent property.

MARCUS

I'm buying a new home.

TARA

Your cheap ass gonna buy a new house.

Marcus folds his paper, slams it on the table.

MARCUS

Don't you read any kind of news. The city is paying us for the property, and a bonus for moving costs. Genny and me headed to Plano.

TARA

Genny going to Austin. She is getting out of this town.

MARCUS

Don't have the money for UT. Genny will go to -

TARA (OVERLAPPING)

What about the city's money?

MARCUS

It's not that much. Sixty, sixty-five percent what the house is worth.

TARA

This is our family home.

MARCUS

For twenty-five years, yes. Before that, cattle grazing. Next year, a football field.

TARA

Football field.

MARCUS

Don't you read any damn thing?

Marcus hands the newspaper to Tara.

ON PAPER

A thumbnail portrait of Cowboys' owner BOBBY CLARK (60s) - white and pouting, thinning hair, southern gentleman meets Bond Villain. The headline reads "Bobby Clark brings Cowboys to Arlington."

BACK TO SCENE

Tara's jaw drops as she reads the paper.

MARCUS

Don't worry, baby. You going to the United Nations.

INT. DERBY'S CAR - EVENING

Derby changes his clothes as he drives. He takes off his Perky's shirt, wearing a white undershirt beneath it.

At a stop light, he unbuckles his belt and pulls his black slacks down. As he does so, the cherry of his cigarette drops onto his bare legs.

OUCH! He swats the cherry away.

DERBY

Dammit.

Derby throws the butt out the window and reaches to grab a pair of jeans from the passenger seat.

They light has turned green. The car behind him honks.

DERBY (CONT'D)

Yep. Thank you, that's helpful.

Derby holds up a middle finger, drives on.

INT. UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS GALLERY, WEST DALLAS - EVENING

Storefront art gallery in a seedy part of Dallas. Windows face the sidewalk. A small desk at the front for greeting. Several rooms and small gallery spaces.

Tarps, lumber, and supplies stacked in a front. Several pieces of art line the front wall. The glass front door is open to allow air flow on this brutally hot night.

Derby, in jeans and t shirt, paints one wall a dark shade of pink. OTHER PAINTERS work away at other walls: all hues of pink, purple, red.

BTTA (24) - pronounced BUTTA - a confident Vietnamese-American artist strides in the front door, in heels that might be half her short height. She wears leather pants and a tank top, her arms covered by a combination of jewelry and tattoos. She never removes her sunglasses.

She's followed closely by GRETA (40's), the white woman owner curator of the gallery, looking cool and chic but slightly out of her league.

They enter with a clattering of heels and voices, and the painters all look at them.

GRETA

...adding the paint now. With this heat, it'll dry fast.

BTTA

Yes. Heat.

GRETA

It's a dry heat.

BTTA points at different walls, calling out colors of each like seeing an old best friend from college.

BTTA

Rosewood! Ballet Slipper! Fuscia
Fuscia! This is my hot pink box!

GRETA

Your box is lovely. Behind schedule,
but I think -

BTTA

No. I create in time with my cycle
and this is perfectly on schedule.

GRETA

Great.

BTTA yips and runs to the art set along the front wall. The workers go back to painting.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS GALLERY - MINUTES LATER

Derby finishes his wall. He sets his roller into the tray, peels his gloves off.

Greta and BTTA whisper animatedly to each other, looking and pointing. BTTA alternately nods or shakes her head.

Derby takes supplies to the back room. As he walks past, BTTA excitedly points at him.

BTTA

That one. Yes.

Derby looks at them as they whisper excitedly. Greta smiles and waves. Derby continues with his paint.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS GALLERY, BACK ROOM - MINUTES LATER

A storage and workspace. A deep sink, next to a dry rack full of paint rollers. Hundreds of brushes hang on the wall. Opposite the sink, a work desk buried with papers.

Derby at a sink, washes supplies. Greta comes in from around the corner.

GRETA

Oh. Darryl. Dermott.

She presses her palm to her forehead.

GRETA (CONT'D)

Remind me?

DERBY

Derby.

GRETA

Derby! Sorry. The...lists.

She points to her head with wild fingers to show the millions of things contained in her mind right now.

DERBY

S'okay.

GRETA

Can you work the opening tomorrow night? The artist has requested some additional male bodies.

DERBY

Male. Bodies?

Derby sets his roller in the dry rack and gives Greta his full attention.

GRETA

Very simple: We'll have apps,
champagne. You've served before?

Derby shrugs.

GRETA (CONT'D)

And then the performance -

DERBY

Performance?

GRETA

Yes. BTTA is an experiential artist.

DERBY

I don't act or -

GRETA

No acting. We just need you present.
Exactly who you are.

Greta squeezes Derby's cheeks with a vise hand covered with rings. Derby frowns.

GRETA

I'll pay one fifty.

Derby closes his mouth and stares for a moment.

DERBY

What time?

EXT. CHULA VISTA TRAILER PARK - SATURDAY MORNING

A checkerboard of old and new trailers between gravel paths. There are some posh trailer parks; this one is not.

Among the horde, a Spartanette on cinder blocks, it's silver shine clouded by dirt and rust. In the quiet of the early morning comes the PECKITY PECK and SLING of typing.

INT. CHULA VISTA, ANAHI'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Blackout curtains over the windows keep the morning out.

A red and white, silver-wrapped dinner table with red banquettes on one side, a galley kitchen on the other. They'd call it retro if it wasn't the same set up from when it was made in the 1950's.

At the table, Anahi types at furious speed, the paper whipping through her 1980's electric typewriter.

Nestled next to her a large, scaly, but passive Iguana: IGGY.

BRIIINNNG! A timer rings off. Anahi finishes her sentence. On a small pad she writes the day's progress.

ON PAD

Anahi's handwriting scrawls: "May 29, 2007: 3300 words."

BACK TO SCENE

Anahi picks up Iggy and kisses his snout.

ANAHI (SPANISH)

Breakfast for Iggy.

She steps to the kitchen, piled with appliances in impressive fashion. Anahi majored in efficiency.

She fills a bowl with iguana food and sets it on the table for Iggy. On the other banquette, where company would sit

if she had any, stands a small shelf with VHS tapes and a small box TV. Anahi turns it on.

ON TV

A commercial for the Lust & Loaded Cowgirl Corset. A CLUMSY MAN repeatedly pulls a hideaway holster from his pants, clumsily. Voice of BILLY BUTLER (38), a deep, confident Southern drawl, speaks over their foibles.

BACK TO SCENE

Anahi pulls a gallon of Blue Bell ice cream from her freezer, and scoops herself a bowl: Cookies and Cream. She also pours herself three fingers of whisky.

BILLY BUTLER (FROM TV)

Millions of people just like you feel safer with their concealed weapon. They don't want anyone to know it's there. They don't want it to be complicated. They just want immediate access in a dire situation. And if you're a woman who likes to carry: you want it to be sexy!

A spoon full of ice cream stops en route to her mouth.

ANAHI

Sexy.

ON TV

BIG HAIREB BLOND (32) with hourglass figure holds a glock.

BIG HAIREB BLOND

You can have this silhouette when you pry it from my cold dead hands!

Billy Butler, a sharp dressed salesman with a cowboy hat and bolo tie, strolls through a shooting range.

BILLY BUTLER

Hi, I'm Billy Butler, and thanks to my new Lust & Loaded concealed carry wear for women, you'll never sacrifice glamour for safety again!

Big Haired Blond stands in front of a mirror, wearing a sexy red corset, fills it with ammo and guns as she talks.

BACK TO SCENE

Anahi digs into her ice cream and her face lights up at a surprise catch: a full cookie, unbroken.

She sucks the ice cream off the cookie, and sets it onto a napkin on the table.

ANAHI (SPANISH)

Look Iggy: our lucky day.

BIG HAIRE D BLOND (BACKGROUND TV)

I love my new Cowgirl Corset. It holds my glocks, four clips of ammo and a lipstick. It's perfect for a night out with my gals...

ON TV

Big Haired Blond spins in the mirror. Fairy tale effect and lights and she's in a sexy cocktail dress.

BIG HAIRE D BLOND (CONT'D)

Or a blind date.

BACK TO SCENE

Anahi sips her whiskey and goes through her mail as she watches. She finds: a bill, a bill, a landlord notice, and a nice envelope, addressed to her. She tosses the rest.

On TV, Billy stands in a Country Western club. A date nearby between Big Haired Blond and a HANDSOME COWBOY (28).

BILLY BUTLER

The Dallas Dating scene is tough. A gal shouldn't give up her trigger, OR her figure.

ON TV

The Cowboy invites the Big Haired Blond to dance. On the dance floor, they hold each other tightly.

HANDSOME COWBOY

Is that a pistol in your pocket, or are you just happy to see me?

ON BIG HAIREB BLOND

BIG HAIREB BLOND

I'll never tell.

BACK TO SCENE

Anahi pulls a letter out of the envelope and unfolds it.

ON LETTER

"Dear Writer..."

The word writer has been crossed out and "Miss Bustillos" handwritten above it.

"We are sorry to say we cannot accept your manuscript for publication at this time."

BACK TO SCENE

Anahi re-folds the letter. She downs her whiskey and puts the glass in her sink.

Above the sink she opens a cupboard: it is squished full of folded pieces of paper, like the letter she's holding. She squeezes the latest rejection in with the rest.

EXT. ANAHI'S TRAILER - MINUTES LATER

Anahi stubs out a cigarette on the dirt. She flips a sign on the door as she steps inside. She closes the door.

ON SIGN

Handwritten English and Spanish: "Quiet Y'all - Daysleeper"

INT. ANAHI'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Anahi draws her black out curtains tight over the window. She pets Iggy in his cage and makes kissy faces to him.

ANAHI (SPANISH)
Sweet dreams, my love.

Anahi drops her robe and climbs into bed. She switches off the lamp on the nightstand, and pulls on an eye mask as she settles into bed.

A clock next to her bed glares red numbers: 8:00am.

EXT. VETERANS PARK, ARLINGTON - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

One hundred acres of nature including untended woodland trails, a disc golf course, and a 30 year old pavilion used by local high school rock bands.

Today it plays host to a mini art market. Booths and card tables set up to display knitting, cowboy watercolors, and bead work. Too bad the heat has kept away the crowds.

Derby leans against his car in the parking lot, sketching. His trunk hangs open, displaying unframed paintings, re-imaginings of classics with dinosaurs subbed in:

- The T Rex with the Pearl Earring
- The Last Supper (velociraptor bloodbath edition)
- Whistler's Megalosaurus (in a nice white bonnet)

TIMMY - 13, black, scrawny but with swagger - wheels his bike next to Derby's car.

TIMMY

Can I borrow your lighter.

DERBY

Buy a painting, I'll give it to you.

Timmy digs in his pocket.

TIMMY

I got two tokens for Putt Putt.

DERBY

What do you need a light for?

Timmy opens the plastic bag he's holding.

TIMMY

Dead bird. Their eyes pop good if you burn em fresh.

Derby stomps out his cigarette.

DERBY

Let's go.

EXT. VETERANS PARK PICNIC AREA - TEN MINUTES LATER

ON BARBECUE

A fire blazes from the barbecue pit. The dead bird lays on the grill.

BACK TO SCENE

Derby and Timmy stand past the BBQ, faces shimmering in the heatwaves from the fire.

TIMMY

Shoot. I got chores.

He fist bumps Derby and climbs on his bike.

DERBY

Wuss. Hey - Lighter.

Timmy gives back the lighter and rides away. Derby stares into the fire and watches the bird slowly blacken.

Tara approaches from behind Derby and watches too.

TARA

You good, Rainman?

Derby nods, eyes stuck on the fire.

TARA

Come on.

EXT. NORTH ARLINGTON STREETS - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Business district with shops and restaurants. Tara and Derby walk down the street.

TARA

You making the art thing work, though.

DERBY

Yeah. Picasso never had a day job.

TARA

Basquiat did.

Derby goes to open a restaurant door.

TARA

Naw, La Bajada. Tacos'll do you good.

Tara keeps walking. Derby lets the door drop. They turn the corner.

EXT. NORTH ARLINGTON STREETS - CONTINUOUS.

Tara and Derby walk down the front of a strip mall.

DERBY

Every great artist had time to develop, to fail, to learn.

TARA

They also had rent paid.

DERBY

Exactly!

A Mexican HOMELESS MAN (50's), wears an "AIKMAN" Cowboys jersey and an army jacket, holds a change cup out pulls open the door to La Bajada so Tara and Derby can enter.

DERBY (CONT'D)

It sucks being poor.

TARA

Suck it up, princess.

INT. LA BAJADA TACOS - CONTINUOUS

Bustling local-owned taco joint, signs in Spanish, and tables full of brown folks chowing on legit Mexican food.

Derby and Tara step into the line at the counter, looking at the menu.

TARA

You got ten bucks? Get the Four Taco Combo. And the guac.

DERBY

Wow. Hungry?

Derby steps up to order.

INT. LA BAJADA TACOS - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Derby and Tara sit at a booth, bag of food and empty wrappers strewn. A plastic basket of chips and a large - now nearly empty - dish of guacamole.

Derby chews on his second taco, staring at the table.

DERBY

You're leaving, like - for good?

TARA

For better or worse.

Tara wipes the bowl with her finger.

TARA (CONT'D)

This place ain't what we grew up with. You know that.

DERBY

I'm okay as long as gentrification includes year round guacamole.

Tara crumples a wrapper and throws it in the bag. Derby looks out the window.

DERBY (CONT'D)

City's not the only thing that changed.

TARA

Derby, I was a lesbian in high school.

Derby nearly spits out his taco.

DERBY

But. We dated. You let me finger you.

TARA

You were prettier back then.

Tara wraps up the trash and stands up.

EXT. LA BAJADA TACOS, CONTINUOUS.

Tara and Derby exit the restaurant. Homeless Man holds the door. Tara hands her second taco to him.

TARA (SPANISH)

Friend - you hungry?

HOMELESS (SPANISH)

I am. Thank you, sister.

TARA (SPANISH)

Have a good day. As-salamu alaykum.

She walks down the sidewalk. Derby double takes, dumbfounded, runs after her.

DERBY

I just bought those tacos.

TARA

Kind of you to help a man in need.

DERBY

I thought you were hungry.

Tara turns to confront him.

TARA

You got more money in your pocket?

His shrug and wavering eyes say yes.

TARA (CONT'D)

You got a bed to go home to tonight?
With a roof? You are not poor, Derby
Piper.

She walks away. Derby chases after her.

DERBY

I've just never seen a lesbian turn
down a 2nd taco.

TARA

They say his heart grew three sizes.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS GALLERY - EVENING

Opening night for BTTA's show and the hipsters are out in full effect, a few wealthy and chic middle aged women. Paintings, photographs, and mixed media cover the walls.

Derby wears dark gray coveralls and squeezes through the room holding a tray with champagne in mason jars.

Tara wears a fab dress and maybe a new vibrant hijab. As Derby slides beside her, she's looking at a photograph:

- B.T.T.A. wears full geisha make-up and hair from the neck up. From the neck down she wears nothing but her tattoos. Her back is to the camera but she turns to look directly at the viewer. From her buttocks oozes a Buddha made of poop, wrapped in an American flag.

DERBY

That's...

TARA

Yes. Very.

They step to the next piece: a photo of a table in a white room, piled with fruits that have been painted on top of the photographed image. Derby stares, perplexed.

TARA

What's this one called?

Derby leans to the info card next to the painting.

ON CARD

Title in VIETNAMESE reads "Still Life with Fruit" (2007).

BACK TO SCENE

DERBY

Something in Asian.

Tara tilts her head to the side.

TARA

Those look familiar.

Derby tilts his head as well.

DERBY

What. Mango or something.

TARA

Those are vaginas.

Derby frowns and squints. Tara gulps back her champagne.

TARA (CONT'D)

Where is she?

Derby scans and points, where a laughing Greta stands with a BTTA and a chic older woman.

DERBY

Over there. The short one.

TARA

I'ma eat that.

Tara takes a full jar from Derby's tray and saunters to the circle. Greta signals Derby from across the room and points at her watch: "It's time."

INT. DOWNSTAIRS GALLERY - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Darker now, with lights focused towards space in front of a blank pink wall. Derby and two other YOUNG WHITE MEN wearing coveralls and plastic goggles, stand in a circle.

BTTA wears a flesh-baring but powerful costume: not dominatrix but similar impact. She has two guns holstered around her shoulders. She marches from man to man, part drill sergeant, part homeland security.

BTTA

You were not invited to My Bink box.
You don't have the proper paperwork.
My Pink Box takes no immigrants,
White Man. This is no refuge.

She gets real close and personal with Derby.

BTTA

Colonizer!

She pulls the guns from her holster and struts the circle.

BTTA

What do we do when White Men invade?

She holds one gun to Derby's forehead. His face scrunches.

BTTA

On your knees, White Man.

DERBY

I don't -

BTTA slaps him.

BTTA

No talking! On your knees.

Derby kneels. BTTA circles him, slithering the guns around his shoulders and leaning close, nearly kissing him.

BTTA

You will be an example, Colonizer.
A warning!

She points the guns at him. MUSIC BLASTS and BTTA begins to shoot her guns, spraying paint all over Derby's chest. She dances wildly to the music, spraying all of the men, sometimes dancing off of their bodies, covering them and herself in wild dark colors.

She reaches a point of wild ecstasy, and Derby breathes heavily, a strange smile on his face.

EXT. DOWNSTAIRS GALLERY - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Derby - in jeans and tee - smokes on the sidewalk. Through the windows he watches Tara chat animatedly with BTTA.

Tara hugs BTTA and joins Derby on the sidewalk.

DERBY

I thought you were gonna hit that.

Tara walks past him.

TARA

Nope. Not on my team.

EXT. EAST ARLINGTON STREET - CONTINUOUS

Tara and Derby walk down the street to his car.

DERBY

What did you think of the show.

TARA

Sexy. Daring. A little green, but I like it.

They stand by his car, but the doors are locked. Derby smokes and stares at the ground.

DERBY

I thought it was -

TARA

Stop. I don't want to hear what you thought.

Derby exhales smoke, shakes his head.

DERBY
I just don't get it.

TARA
You wouldn't. You're the medium. You think canvas knows what that dinosaur with the earring means? I don't.

She climbs into the car. He smashes his cigarette into the street.

INT. DERBY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

DERBY
I just mean, like, I could do that.

TARA
But you don't.

DERBY
But I could.

TARA
But you paint dinosaurs into the paintings of dead white dudes. You want people to see your art? Have something worth them looking.

Derby starts the car and drives.

TARA (CONT'D)
I told her I know her conquest.

Derby's eyebrows arch and he glances at Tara.

TARA (CONT'D)
She called you the cute one.

DERBY
Oh. What?

TARA
Down, colonizer.

He drives on. Tara looks out at the streets, her gaze lands on a billboard

ON BILLBOARD

A giant image of smiling Bobby Clark with the Cowboys Logo behind him and the large words: "A Winning Season For Arlington." It's the same portrait from the newspaper.

BACK TO SCENE

Tara sucks her teeth and shakes her head.

EXT. J.B. MILLER ELEMENTARY - NIGHT

Derby and Tara sit in the deserted swingset outside the back of the school, overlooking decrepit soccer goals and a chain link backstop for a baseball field, and parking lot.

Next to the school, several temporary classroom buildings stand like oversized RVs.

Derby passes a joint to Tara. She slowly inhales.

TARA

Remember three legged race.

DERBY

I can't believe we lost to Ricky and Biddy. I did a backflip right there, under that tree.

TARA

You cracked your skull open.

DERBY

Only because I flipped too far.

She hands him the joint. He waves it off.

DERBY (CONT'D)

What do you mean, getting rid of?

TARA

Like, sorry: you can't live here
anymore. Get out.

She looks across the baseball field, at the houses beyond.

TARA (CONT'D)

They'll tear the whole neighborhood
down for a football stadium.

DERBY

End zone'll be right here.

Tara rolls her eyes.

DERBY (CONT'D)

How many houses?

TARA

One hundred and seventy six.

DERBY

Jesus, Tara. Sorry: Muhammed.

TARA

I will cut you.

She swings, pumping high.

TARA (CONT'D)

We should do something.

DERBY

What.

TARA

For the neighborhood.

DERBY

Sure, Miss "I'm blowing this joint."

TARA

Shit like this stadium is the reason
I want out.

She leaps from the highest reach of her swinging arc. She
crashes to the ground in a spray of pebbles and gravel.

TARA (CONT'D)

This place. The school, Taco shop.
This is the blood in my veins, man.
They digging us up by the roots.

DERBY

So what do we do?

Tara stares out at the night. She nods and looks at Derby.

TARA

You tag.

DERBY

Don't talk about that.

TARA

But you do.

Derby spins in place on his swing. Tara nods.

TARA (CONT'D)

They want this place cuz it's right
off the highway.

DERBY

So.

TARA

So you got a big ass wall right
there. Whole highway passes by. You
want people to see your art?

Derby looks at the big open wall, tilts his head to Tara.

INT. DERBY'S BEDROOM - MID MORNING SUNDAY - MONTAGE

Edited to the BEAT of some driving SONG popular from the
mid aughts, various angles and jump cuts of Derby designing
the tag, filling countless pages with sketches and words.
An hour is compressed into seconds here.

It's a brutally hot day and he's doing this in jean shorts
and safety goggles, nothing else.

- Lists of words, rhyming phrases, and chants. Along the lines of "Chalkboards, not scoreboards"; "Dear Readers, Not Cheerleaders." Rejects get scratched out
- Sketches of football players, the Cowboys Star, footballs, goal posts.
- Derby makes stacks of specific colors of paint: Black, Red, White.
- Derby pulls on a latex glove - it rips over his fingers. The rest of the box is empty
- Derby makes a shopping list: Gloves, 3 cans Black, 2 cans White, 5 cans red, POLE.

The montage winds down and Derby hears the song continuing through his bedroom door, from the den. A steady set of grunting noises from both Shannon and Brett. Derby's face scrunches: They aren't...fucking in the den?

INT. APARTMENT DEN - CONTINUOUS

Derby whips the door open, chest glistening with sweat.

In the den, Shannon and Brett joyously exercise in the way that only super fit, hot couples do, in tandem. Shannon does push-ups with Brett sitting on her back.

BRETT

Yo, D-Bag. You going out?

SHANNON

Forty-seven. Forty-eight.

DERBY

Yeah. Shopping.

BRETT

Hey D-Bag. See the counter?

Derby looks at the kitchen counter, frowns.

DERBY

What am I looking for?

BRETT

That empty space where your rent
check goes.

DERBY

Have it tonight, Brett.

His eyes fall on a stack of papers: a real estate contract
and a congratulations card. Brett and Shannon switch: Brett
does pushups. Shannon watches Derby from her perch.

DERBY (CONT'D)

You guys buy a house?

SHANNON

Yesterday.

BRETT

I bought a house. Marine Corps!

SHANNON

Moving in July.

BRETT

You are not invited!

DERBY

I wasn't -

SHANNON

Where you going, Derby?

Derby tilts his head.

DERBY

Going?

BRETT

Demolition starts Eight-One, broheim.

Derby taps the papers with his gloveless finger.

INT. DERBY'S CAR - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Derby smokes and drives. He's got a dead stare out the
window like he's watching a film only he can see.

DERBY

Eight weeks. I have eight weeks.
That's. I'll make money. Do art. Sell
it. Move to Austin maybe. I need
what, a few thousand. That's - how
many pizzas. I could sell my car. I -

He slams on the brakes at a red light.

He looks out the window at an old local ice cream shop. The
sign out front says "Closing July 4th. Thanks for the COW-
Lories."

Derby smirks.

EXT. HOME DEPOT PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

Derby leans against his car, dialing his flip phone.

INT. ARLINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Tara, Genny, and Marcus stand next to each other in a pew.
It's the middle of a hymn; Marcus and Genny sing proudly;
Tara sways.

RING goes Tara's phone. Marcus glares at her as she digs
through her purse and mouths "I'm sorry."

Tara walks up the aisle to the back of the church.

EXT. ARLINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Tara steps out of the church into the sunlight.

TARA

Derby - what is it?

INTERCUT BETWEEN HOME DEPOT PARKING LOT AND CHURCH

DERBY

I need supplies. We're gonna need a
lot of paint.

TARA
You usually know where to get that?

DERBY
It's out of my budget right now.

TARA
I'll pay you back.

DERBY
I can't exactly buy this stuff with a credit card. They can trace that. If..

Tara sighs and rolls her eyes.

INT. HOME DEPOT CHECKOUT LINE - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

An over-it Tara stands by Derby as he places spray cans, gloves, and a pole on the conveyer belt.

A portly, middle aged white CLERK (54) runs the stuff through the check out.

CLERK
You folks have I.D.? Can't sell this if you're not eighteen.

Derby reaches for his wallet. Tara grabs his arm.

TARA
He don't look 18?

Clerk laughs and waves him off.

CLERK
I'm playing with you. You're old. It's sixty five, seventy-three.

Tara counts out cash and hands it to the clerk. The clerk takes it and makes change. Derby bags the stuff.

CLERK (CONT'D)
Y'all like graffiti, huh?

Derby stops bagging and stares. Tara scowls. Clerk laughs.

CLERK (CONT'D)
I'm playing. Y'all Warriors fans? Go
Tribe!

He hands over the change.

CLERK (CONT'D)
Here is your change, miss. Y'all have
a nice day.

Derby grabs the bags and they walk out.

EXT. HOME DEPOT PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Tara and Derby walk up to Derby's car.

TARA
Why are white people so damn weird.

DERBY
So. We good?

TARA
What about clothes?

DERBY
Wear all black?

TARA
I'm not going to sling paint in my
clothes. We got to be stealth.

DERBY
We can just be careful.

Tara glares at him.

DERBY
OK. I got it.

TARA
I can trust that?

DERBY
Yup. I'll pick you up at 9.

He climbs into his car and starts the engine.

EXT. DOWNSTAIRS GALLERY - DUSK

Across the street from the gallery, Derby steps from the car. He sees BTTA and Greta locking up.

Derby ducks behind his car and peeks over the hood to watch them. They embrace, and Greta walks away.

Derby crouch runs across the street, hides. He peers around to see BTTA light a cigarette. She exhales up, the smoke catching a streetlight and shimmers on the air.

Derby frowns and hides again. He looks back at BTTA, then eyes the alley next to the gallery. He grits his teeth.

Derby darts across the sidewalk into the alleyway.

EXT. ALLEY NEXT TO DOWNSTAIRS GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

Not much light enters this narrow passage. A dumpster and trash cans along the wall. Derby digs around.

He pushes aside bags of trash, leftover wood trimmings, empty paint cans. Nothing. He searches the trash cans, knocks the lid CRASHING to the ground.

DERBY

Dammit.

Derby glances at the street, digs through the trash. Three coveralls, spattered with dry paint from the night before. He grabs them, turns to leave, but

BTTA

Hey. White man.

BTTA watches him from the sidewalk. Derby freezes. Her sunglasses reflect streetlight like robot eyes.

BTTA (CONT'D)

You were my art last night.

DERBY

Yeah.

She nods at the coveralls in his hands.

BTTA

Keepsake?

DERBY

What?

BTTA

You enjoyed yourself? My little white bitch.

She blows smoke in his face.

BTTA (CONT'D)

Want to get fucked?

Derby's mouth drops open, closes.

DERBY

I - can't come in your Pink Box?

BTTA hands him a card.

BTTA

New rules out here, sweetie. This is my number.

On the street behind her, a yellow cab stops, honks.

BTTA (CONT'D)

Call, White Man.

She turns to the cab.

DERBY

Why "BUTTA"?

BTTA stops, turns to him, and slides her sunglasses off.

BTTA

Not BUTTA. B - T - T - A.

DERBY

Oh.

She turns to the cab. Derby steps forward into the light.

EXT. GALLERY SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

BTTA puts her hand on the door handle. Derby steps forward from the darkness of the alley.

DERBY (CONT'D)

What's it stand for.

BTTA Turns, laughs, puts her sunglasses back on.

BTTA

Big Tits, Tiny Asian.

She steps into the cab, and drives away. Derby looks at the card, then stares at the cab as it turns the corner.

Grasping his coveralls, he runs to his car.

EXT. JB MILLER SCHOOL - NIGHT

Derby's car swerves to a stop in the shadow of the school, across two parking spots: one handicapped spot, the other with a sign designating it for PRINCIPAL THOMAS.

Derby and Tara hop out, wearing coveralls. Tara zips hers up.

TARA

Let's do this.

EXT. JB MILLER SCHOOL, BACK WALL - MONTAGE

Edited to the BEAT of something hipper than the workout song, Derby and Tara unload supplies and wreak havoc on the outer wall of the school. Flashes and details of the work - a letter here, a color there - but never the full piece.

- They run to the back wall, Derby with sacks of paint, Tara with pole, pretending to hunt with a javelin.
- They pop on safety goggles and gloves.
- Tara dumps the spray cans out of a paper bag and wraps that bag around a nearby light, spreading darkness.
- Derby traces huge letters across the wall, hopping on an air conditioning unit to reach high.
- Tara double fists cans of black or red paint and fills in the letters Derby traces.
- Tara tosses empty paint cans into an empty paper bag, and re-loads.
- In a moment of silliness, Derby accidentally tags Tara. She sprays him back, and he responds. She kicks his leg and he falls on his ass.
- Together they fill in the last letter.
- Tara shrugs and points to one corner: they look to see a large empty space still there.
- Derby grabs the pole again fills in the space. Tara packs supplies loads them to the car.
- Tara watches Derby finishes the new spot. She gives a thumbs up. He turns to add a last blast. Tara cheers.

POV: DERBY'S TRUNK

Derby and Tara load the supplies into the trunk. Derby removes his coveralls as Tara leans on the pole.

Returned to civilian clothes, they high five. Derby notices paint on his left forearm - from when Tara sprayed him. He points at it and points at her frowning. She shrugs.

INT. LUISA'S BOCA Y TOCA - LATE NIGHT

All-night Mexican fusion diner, a hybrid of cool and weary found in a neighborhood on the edge of gentrification.

Derby and Tara drink coffee at the corner table in the smoking section. Elsewhere, Laborers and Students.

Near the host stand is LUISA ABRIL (47), a stylish and pretty Latinx trans-woman, the owner/op of the place.

DERBY

You remember Mr. Abril? Cafeteria dude at Miller.

TARA

Sure. Always snuck me extra fries.

Derby nods towards Luisa.

DERBY

He's Miss Abril now.

Tara looks over at Luisa, mouth gaping. She tilts her head, frowns, nods.

TARA

Go girl. She look good.

DERBY

How does it work. Her, you know.

TARA

That's that thing, when the mouth turns on when it should be off.

Anahi, in her waitress uniform, comes to their table.

DERBY

You notice, "strap-on" backwards -

Tara's eyes pop wide and she waves him to STFU.

ANAHI

"No parts."

Tara hangs her head in her hands. Derby sips water and coughs.

ANAHI

Dallas backwards is Sallad.

Tara glares at Derby. She looks across the room and locks eyes with RACHEL (19) a young blond in Daisy Dukes and a tank top, sitting with students at the other end.

ANAHI (CONT'D)
Anything else tonight?

DERBY
One order of sopapillas?

Tara stares at Rachel, exchanging a sly smile. Derby snaps her back to attention.

DERBY (CONT'D)
Yo. Tara.

TARA
What? No, I'm good.

Anahi takes their empty plates. Derby looks to see that Tara has been staring at Rachel.

DERBY
You don't want something off the kiddie menu.

Tara rolls her eyes.

DERBY (CONT'D)
What's this gig. The UN?

TARA
Human Rights Council.

DERBY
That sounds... big.

TARA
It's a glorified internship.

DERBY
Five years of school to be an intern.

TARA
I shoulda dropped out to be a pizza man with you

DERBY

It's cool. That's, what, impact.

TARA

Impact. Maybe.

Anahi returns with dessert. She sets it in front of Derby.

ANAHI

Your sopapilla.

Derby slides the plate to the middle, gestures to Tara, offering. She frowns: what? Sharing? She snacks on one. Derby turns to Anahi, glancing at her name tag.

DERBY

Anahi. You all have to move too, right? For the stadium.

ANAHI

Si. We close August. Luisa, she tries to find a new place, but...

TARA

What are you gonna do?

Anahi shrugs.

ANAHI

I move a lot.

DERBY

What do you do besides wait tables?

ANAHI

I write science fiction novels.

DERBY

Amazing. So you just travel, and -

ANAHI

Yes. Each town a new book.

TARA

Do you publish these "science fiction novels."

ANAHI

Si. Some of them. Some not.

TARA

Better than your art, Derby.

Derby's mouth drops open, appalled.

ANAHI

So, I know it coming. I see this a lot, different places. As soon as I see Patty's Pantry close, see the Starbucks. I know.

She points to her watch.

ANAHI (CONT'D)

Ticking.

TARA

Yep. Starbucks is the third horseman.

ANAHI

Third horseman? What -

TARA

The Four Horsemen of Gentrification. First a yoga studio moves in, then an organic food shop, then Starbucks. Next thing you know: Luxury Condos.

Anahi stares at her, mind churning.

ANAHI (SPANISH)

Yes. The four horsemen.

DERBY (to Tara)

You need a ride home?

But Tara is making eyes with Rachel, as the blond struts by their table.

TARA

Watch this.

Tara licks sugar off her finger. Rachel, poor thing, bumps into a REDNECK (50's) sliding out of a booth. Rachel drops her books, blushing, and bends over to pick them up.

Tara hops up to help her, smiling.

Tara sits down and watches Rachel walk away.

DERBY

Too bad. I thought you were in there.

TARA

Naw, school night. But I'ma walk her to class. Make sure she get an F.

DERBY

Too bad she's leaving.

TARA

S'all right. Slipped her my number.

INT. LUISA'S - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Derby and Tara leave the smoking room, passing the kitchen and host stand on the way to the exit.

At the host stand Luisa sobs, burying her face in her hands. Anahi's arm around her shoulder.

Tara watches them and nods to get Derby's attention. They walk out, quietly.

ANAHI (SPANISH)

It's okay, my love. You'll figure it out. Find a new home.

LUISA (SPANISH)

This place is my life. It is my home.

ANAHI (SPANISH)

Yes. Yes. Just as you transformed, so will Boca y Toca. It has to leave the cocoon.

Luisa raises her head, eyes wide, and forces a smile. She grabs Anahi's hand and nods.

INT. DERBY'S CAR - TEN MINUTES LATER

Derby and Tara sit at a red light. Derby lights a cigarette and rolls down the window. He growls with frustration.

DERBY

This light never changes after 11pm.

TARA

Right on red, bro.

Tara's flip phone lights up and she checks it: a text.

TARA (CONT'D)

Snap. Blondie sent her address.

She stares at the phone, her voice suddenly distant.

TARA (CONT'D)

And a picture. Dayum.

Derby leans over to see it; Tara hides her phone and holds her finger up to him.

TARA (CONT'D)

Turn right, You dropping me off.

DERBY (OVERLAPPING)

I can't turn right.

TARA (OVERLAPPING)

Right on red.

DERBY (OVERLAPPING)

I'm not in the right lane.

TARA (OVERLAPPING)

Dammit Derby!

DERBY (OVERLAPPING)

All right! I'm going!

He looks behind him, turns right. He takes another drag on his cigarette. Tara is absorbed with the photo.

Red and blue lights flash behind the car and a siren wails.

DERBY
Goddammit.

TARA
Did you not signal?

Derby pulls over.

INT. DERBY'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

OFFICER COLLINS (42) a white cop, approaches the driver's window.

COLLINS
Ran a red, young man.

DERBY
Sorry officer. I waited four minutes.

TARA
I timed it.

Derby and Collins both give her a look.

DERBY
That light shuts off at night. So I
looked all directions and went.

TARA
It's my fault, officer. I have a
curfew. School night.

Tara smiles a wide and perfect smile. Collins looks at Derby's wrist.

COLLINS
What's with the paint?

Derby looks at Tara, mouth wagging up and down.

DERBY
That. That's. Uh.

TARA
Spirit team. We made signs.

COLLINS
All right. Go Warriors.

DERBY
Go Warriors.

TARA (under her breath)
Gotta change that name.

Derby slaps her arm.

COLLINS
Just a warning this time. Make sure
you're in the right lane to turn
right. Careful out there.

Collins goes back to his car. Derby drives off slow.

They are tensely silent, staring ahead, then darting
glances back at each other.

DERBY
Did. Did you just convince him you're
in high school.

Tara cackles.

DERBY (CONT'D)
You know what they say. Black don't -

Tara silences him with a glare and a hand if necessary.

TARA
Don't you dare.

Derby turns his eyes back to the road. Tara looks at that
photo one more time and smiles, sighing.

EXT. BANK OF AMERICA ATM - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Derby slides his card into a reader. The light goes green,
he opens the door.

INT. ATM - CONTINUOUS

Derby inserts his Discover Card and pushes buttons. An ATM RATTLE, and a wad of bills shoot out.

Derby takes them, and looks behind him. Coast is clear.

Derby takes his credit card from the machine. He inserts his Bank of America card.

ON SCREEN:

Derby's finger pushes the button next to "DEPOSIT"

BACK TO SCENE

Derby inserts the cash he just took out. The machine gobbles it. Derby takes the receipt out.

ON RECEIPT

Derby's account shows the updated balance: \$582.76.

INT. DERBY'S APARTMENT, DEN - LATER

Derby scribbles and rips a check off his check book. He drops the check in the blank spot on the counter. Derby goes into his bedroom and closes the door.

ON CHECK

Derby's pigeon handwriting scrawls out the amount of the check: \$575.00.

EXT. PARK ROW INTERSECTION - MONDAY MORNING

Anahi passes the strip mall next to the Starbucks that Tara visited on Friday morning.

She looks at each store in turn. Ticks them off.

ANAHI (SPANISH)
Yoga. Organic Food. Starbucks.

She sighs and waits for the light at the corner.

ANAHI (CONT'D - SPANISH)
Three little horses.

She looks out at the dark neighborhood. And in her mind, envisions the future.

In the dark sky she sees traced out in stars - like a constellation - the looming walls of a huge stadium. Around the stadium stand tall luxury hotels and condos.

The fantasy stadium rests unevenly on top of the homes and businesses of the area, lopsided.

And in her apocalyptic vision, the neighborhood buildings explode into dust. The stadium crashes to the ground, kicking up dust from the graveyard of lives it rests upon.

ANAHI (CONT'D - SPANISH)
Four. Four little horses.

EXT. CHULA VISTA, ANAHI'S TRAILER - MINUTES LATER

Anahi trudges through the dark gravel to her front door. Taped to the door: a bright orange flyer with black type in Spanish and English.

ON FLYER

"Eviction Notice / Notificación de Desalojo"

Anahi pulls it off the door and goes inside.

INT. ANAHI'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Anahi sits at her typewriter, a glass of whisky to one side, and Iggy nestling against her leg on the bed.

She runs a piece of paper into the typewriter.

ON PAPER

Bold, all caps letters pump out as Anahi types (SPANISH):
The Fourth Rider.

BACK TO SCENE

Anahi scrolls the paper down, rests her eyes, then types
with speed and fury.

EXT. ARLINGTON - CONTINUOUS

The sun sizzles up from the eastern horizon as a large
plane zooms over the city.

EXT. DFW AIRPORT - CONTINUING

PARKER Lewis (33), white guy, expensive suit, clean shaven
and close cropped, his sunglasses black against the morning
light, walks out of the airport with a briefcase. He takes
a deep snort of the air.

Under the images of Parker, Anahi's voiceover slow,
narrative, like telling a fairy tale to a child.

ANAHI (VO - SPANISH))

Many weeks later, with her father's
shotgun in her hands, Radical Islamic
Tara remembered that distant morning
when there was no good coffee in
Texas. The morning the fourth rider
entered the sleeping town at dawn.

A black SUV with tinted windows pulls up. CLAYTON (24), a
chipper and fat guy in a cheap business suit, jumps out.

CLAYTON

Parker Lewis?

Parker eyes him, nods.

CLAYTON (CONT'D)

Hop in.

He holds the back door open.

EXT. ARLINGTON, HIGHWAYS - CONTINUOUS

The Black SUV weaves through traffic on the highways. In the distance, the towers of Dallas. Along this road: hills, giant churches, strip malls.

ANAHI (VO - SPANISH)

He rode over the rolling hills.
Looked out at the Grand Prairies. Saw
the smiling, friendly faces.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Parker stares out the back windows, watching the city wake up. Clayton drives, watching Parker in the rearview.

CLAYTON

No luggage?

Parker turns to Clayton, gritting his teeth.

PARKER

What?

CLAYTON

Just a briefcase. I thought you were
here for the summer.

Parker touches a button and a glass wall rises between him and Clayton. He turns back out to the city.

EXT. ARLINGTON, HIGHWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Outside the SUV, a large billboard advertising a gun show. Another advertising a church.

ANAHI (VO - SPANISH)

And, as with prior gringos who came
to fall in love with Texas, the
Fourth Rider looked out at the land
and thought to himself...

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Parker smiles to himself at the billboards.

ANAHI (CONT'D - VO - SPANISH)
 "Yes. I will conquer this."

Parker takes a file from his briefcase and reviews the papers there:

- Maps of Arlington, red lines around the soon-to-be-gone neighborhood.
- Demographic information: race, gender, education, income
- A sketch of the stadium design; he sets this aside.

ANAHI (CONT'D - VO - SPANISH)
 He entered the town quietly, nearly unnoticed. Nearly.

Clayton hits the breaks. Parker looks up - what's wrong?

EXT. ARLINGTON, HIGHWAYS - CONTINUOUS

The SUV stops behind a herd of traffic, slowing and bottlenecking.

ANAHI (CONT'D - VO - SPANISH)
 For there were watchers in the windows. Those who had seen the three riders and awaited the fourth.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Parker's eyes land on something out the window.

ANAHI (CONT'D - VO - SPANISH)
 He was expected, this Fourth Rider.
 Even here, in this sleeping town.

Parker opens the door to step out.

EXT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Parker stands in the midst of stalled traffic, looking up at something by the side of the road.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - CONTINUOUS

Scan along the traffic and up a hill to a school perched over the highway.

ANAHI (CONT'D - VO - SPANISH)

And one thing you should not do to a town fast asleep...

Along the wall facing the road, a giant mural, traced in white and filled in with red and black:

- A football field end zone, where Dallas Cowboys player spikes a ball. Except it's not a ball, it's a child's head wearing a dunce cap
- Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders kick line, wearing graduation caps & gowns

ANAHI (CONT'D - VO - SPANISH)

...is wake it up.

And, in the far corner, a portrait. It's Bobby Clark, the same portrait from the papers seen earlier.

Except in the middle of his face, where his mouth should be, is a giant, black butthole.

END OF PILOT.