

"GRAVE SIGHT"

by

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FADE IN:

DESERT - MOONLIT NIGHT

A muted landscape. Vague. Mysterious. Still.

Abruptly invaded by bouncing, blinding headlights -- evicting jackrabbits and other night creatures past prickly phantoms.

OVERSIZE TIRES

skid to a dusty halt.

A strange hourglass-shaped SHADOW in snakeskin cowboy boots pursues a flashlight beam toward the rear of the offroad vehicle where exhaust chugs.

A Land of Enchantment vanity plate, "OBSEQUIY," rises as the Shadow lifts "Something" out of the vehicle.

DESERT DWELLERS

freeze in anticipation, gauging the beam probing toward them, then suddenly turn into a kaleidoscope of SCURRYING spiny shadows punctuated by a

VENOMOUS RATTLE

as a Diamondback coils -- strikes at the staggering boots. "Something," in a plastic garbage bag, drops to the sand with the flashlight.

DANCING BOOTS

tow the impaled rattler with them.

Finally, one boot traps the slithering snake behind the head. The other jerks away from the pumping fangs.

A DOUBLE-EDGED KNIFE

glints in the light as it decapitates the rattlesnake. Its headless body thrashes against itself in futile flight.

The desert audience scatters.

THE SHADOW

picks up the flashlight and the garbage bag. Beam focuses on the desert floor, leading slowly toward

A DEEP DRY ARROYO

where the garbage bag drops. One boot kicks the bag, Rolling it past the beam into the darkness.

SKY - DAWN

Buzzards circle high above.

JORNADA DEL MUERTO DESERT - DAWN

A spiny mesquite tree with outstretched limbs the transient home to several Buzzards.

Waiting. Patiently, watching

THE PLASTIC GARBAGE BAG

containing "Something," lifeless at the bottom of the deep dry arroyo.

JORNADA DEL MUERTO DESERT - DAY

One of the Buzzards blinks his eyes, cranes up at the noonday sun and decides to fuck patience. "IMPATIENT" hopflies over to the garbage bag and plucks at it with his beak.

The others watch with dispassionate interest until he strikes through the plastic, coming up with flesh and blood.

All the Buzzards wade in, clawing and pecking.

Suddenly, blood curdling SCREAMS from "Something" inside the garbage bag sends the buzzards scattering.

"SOMETHING"

moves, tears at the plastic coffin from inside -- desperately trying to get out.

A NAKED WOMAN

emerges gasping for breath. Battered. Bloody. Barely alive.

Early/Mid/Late-20's-30's? Hard to tell. Her opalescent throat and wrists, collared with glowy welts.

This beautiful headturner squints at the horde of buzzards.

"Impatient" stares back.

JORNADO DEL MUERTO DESERT ARROYO - LATER

Woman's blood-shot eyes close. "Impatient" moves in, pecks testingly at her foot -- No reaction.

Encouraged, he goes for another piece. Her bruised ribs shudder. She yelps in pain and tries to kick him away.

"Impatient" backs off, just out of reach.

The Woman stretches out her hand, painfully, frantically searching for a rock, a stick, anything.

Mustering what remaining strength she has to throw several impotent pebbles at the impatient vulture.

Finally, she lands one on his featherless head -- "Impatient" backs off, humiliated, joins his smirking peers to wait.

WOMAN

takes a deep halting breath, grits her teeth, sits up.
Okay, so far, so good.
She tries to stand. No good.

BUZZARDS

watch as she uses her teeth to rip the plastic bag.

JORNADA DEL MUERTO DESERT - DUSK

The Woman scratches her way up the side of the arroyo on plastic-wrapped hands and knees.

On her left buttock, an extraordinary tattoo. An ancient Mimbres design of a gimlet-green swan with a long neck and the head of a horned serpent. Fangs bared, a lightning-bolt forked-tongue probing between her firm cheeks.

Finally, clawing her way to the top, she rests for a moment, looks around for a protected spot... there isn't one. Just barren prairie desert as far as she can see. She takes a final look at the Buzzards.

WOMAN

(hoarse whisper)

Find another link in your fucking
food chain.

They hopfly away. She crawls toward the setting sun.

EXT. ENCHANTED SANDS CEMETERY - BERNALILLO COUNTY, NM - DUSK

Bernalillo County Coroner's 4x4 Wagon winds through large stately trees that grace spacious memorial lawns with views of the Sandia Mountains.

A man with a sleek good-looking face, AGUSTIN "GUS" CUERVO, M.D., M.E., 40, exits 4x4 next to one of the caléndula flower gardens and makes his way up the lawn.

He carries a handwoven basket filled with caléndulas in one hand, a half-empty blue bottle of tequila in the other. He drains the bottle and scatters caléndula petals, making an orange, yellow, red and maroon trail behind him...

EXT. GRAVESITE - ENCHANTED SANDS CEMETERY - CONTINUOUS

Gus approaches a flat marble gravestone and spreads the remaining rainbow of petals over the gravestone, obscuring the engraving.

GUS

Lights a cigaret and stares at the petal covered gravestone.

GUS
Mentiroso y sabia que usted mentia!
(takes a drag)
Vete al carajo!

Gus crushes his cigaret butt out with one of his cowboy boots on the obscured gravestone, and staggers back to the 4x4.

GUS
(shouting)
Quien carajo es usted? Quien carajo
es usted?!

EXT. MORGUE - ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO - NIGHT

The parking lot of this southwestern twostory appears deserted until approaching headlights illuminate the Bernalillo County logo on the Coroner's 4x4 Wagon.

Gus leans against the 4x4 studying the lighted end of his cigaret until the headlights douse.

STRETCH LIMOUSINE

Gus opens the rear door for a wealthy and distressed CHICKASAW INDIAN COUPLE. The Chickasaw Man wears his long hair in traditional braids, turquoise and silver bolo tie, and fringed moccasins. The Chickasaw Woman wears a dark Chanel Suit and a traditional turquoise, tube- and heishi-beaded choker.

The cigaret in a corner of Gus's mouth wags with his words as he says something to the Chickasaw Couple.

The Chickasaw Woman slumps against her companion, he tries to persuade her to wait in the car but she refuses.

They follow Gus into the building.

INT. MORGUE - VIEWING ROOM

Gus presses intercom button under a "NO SMOKING" sign.

GUS
(into intercom)
Walt?

WALT'S VOICE
(over intercom)
Ready, Dr. Cuervo.

The Chickasaw Couple watch anxiously as Gus limps to the curtained wall, draws the drapes from the window separating them from a white tile room.

The morgue man, WALT, 50's, in green scrubs, stands behind a sheet-covered body on a gurney. Gus nods, Walt peels back the sheet from the half-eaten-away face of a TEENAGE GIRL.

The Chickasaw Couple still recognize her, cling to each other and sob. Walt's sad eyes go to Gus, who casually studies his cigaret-stained fingers.

Just what you'd expect from a man who has seen as much death as Gus has -- he's numbed to the pain, right? Wrong. Gus feels the pain, it's the only thing he does feel.

EXT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Gus and Chickasaw Man assist the sobbing Woman into the limousine.

Chickasaw Man takes a plainwrapped package out of the back and hands it to Gus.

CHICKASAW MAN
(slight drawl)
These were my mother's.
(composes himself)
You'll see she gets home okay?

GUS
Enchanted Sands Mortuary will take care of everything. They're the best we got.

They shake hands.
The Chickasaw Man gets in.
Gus closes the door and watches the limousine drive off.

INT. GUS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Spartan. Cluttered.

One wall covered with photographs of missing persons.

Gus drops the package on his desk, opens it, reveals -- an oversize envelope on top of a neatly folded antique beaded doeskin "Puberty Dress" with a matching pair of knee-high moccasins.

Gus opens envelope, dumps contents on top of the dress.

A folded piece of paper, a school photograph of the dead Teenage Girl, and three pieces of Native jewelry:

A girl's antique "Puberty T-necklace" featuring multicolor beads woven with a peyote stitch on brain-tanned leather and a matching pair of Lander Blue Web turquoise drop-earrings.

He lights a cigaret, pulls the morgue photo of the Teenage Girl off the wall, drops it on the uniform.

Gus picks up the necklace, studies it as he punches a button on his speaker phone -- DIAL TONE. He punches another button -- a rapid series of TONES, then, it rings somewhere.

VOICE

(over speaker-phone)
Enchanted Sands, how may we be of service?

GUS

Roy, Gus. Special Delivery for Tulsa.

ROY'S VOICE

(over speaker-phone)
First-class or coach?

Gus unfolds the paper -- a blank check drawn on a Tulsa, Oklahoma bank for \$25,000.

GUS

Polish up a bronze.

ROY'S VOICE

(over speaker-phone)
On our way, Doc.

Gus CLICKS phone off, lays the necklace reverently on the photo of the Teenage Girl.

JORNADA DEL MUERTO DESERT - MOONLIT NIGHT

Distant GUN SHOTS wake the sleeping Woman with a start. Disoriented momentarily then suddenly aware of night eyes examining her from their desert camouflage. She hugs her knees to quiet her chattering teeth as a shooting star attracts her attention... Distant GUNFIRE takes us to:

EXT. MAXWELL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY - ALBUQUERQUE - NIGHT

Bernalillo County Sheriff's squad cars and unmarked vehicles wash the adobe threestory in bubblegum light.

Deputy Sheriffs Detective BILL WRIGHT, 39, who looks like a cop, and Sergeant FRANK POWELL, 44, who doesn't, squat with several Uniforms behind open car doors with drawn weapons.

Their attention focused on the entrance where a BODY lies sprawled out before them on the steps.

A small caliber revolver and gunnysack in the man's outstretched hands.

Frank and Bill approach cautiously their weapons leveled at the body.

Frank kicks the revolver away.

Bill checks the carotid artery... no pulse.

They holster their weapons as a couple of Uniforms quickly maintain control over the gathering crowd.

Bill takes the gunnysack from the dead man's hand, opens it, looks inside and pulls out a shallow bowl with an interlocking black-on-white design and a hole in the bottom.

BILL

What some people will die for.

Frank points to the banner stretched above the entrance:

"Buried in the Past: The Enigma of Mimbres Painted Pottery"

SIRENS doppler in b.g.

SKY - NIGHT

Two bright stars compete for dominance with a thousand minor points of light.

WOMAN'S FINGER ENTERS SHOT

traces across the two stars until it finds Orion's belt and sword defining this equatorial constellation.

WOMAN

Rigel... Betelgeuse... Orion.

She painfully gathers herself to shakily stand.

Using Orion as her guide, she limps toward the unknown.

SKY - NIGHT

Hanging from Orion's belt, his sword... made up of three fainter stars. CLANGING METAL intrudes from somewhere.

UNROOFED ROOM WITH NO DOOR - GUS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Gus lies on a weight bench staring at the central "star" of Orion's sword, the great Orion Nebula, and pumping iron.

Pumping may not be the right word, because Gus desires to drain his body rather than build it. BEEPS interrupt.

Gus suddenly stops, lowers the weight and reaches for his Blackberry, checks number on its digital miniscreen.

EXT. MAXWELL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY - UNM - NIGHT

Bubblegum light from squad cars, unmarked vehicles and a UNM Ambulance illuminates SHERIFF BOLIVAR with his OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTING TEAM questioning Frank.

Other SHERIFF'S BRASS and CSU PERSONNEL work the crime scene.

4x4 pulls in next to a BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SUV, stops.

SPECIAL AGENT KNIFEWING JICARILLA, Archaeological Theft Investigator, 40, full-blooded Apache, gets out of the BIA SUV as Gus exits 4x4 with his M.E. bag.

AGENT JICARILLA

Gus.

GUS

Knifewing. They called you in on this?

AGENT JICARILLA

Since NAGPRA it's standard procedure when artifacts are involved.

Agent Jicarilla shows his I.D. to a Uniform maintaining crowd control, ducks under the police tape and follows Gus.

CRIME SCENE - MAXWELL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY STEPS

Agent Jicarilla gives Gus a nod then peels off toward Sheriff Bolivar as Gus approaches the body where a Sheriff's Photographer flashes photos of the dead man.

Gus opens his bag, slips on nitrile disposable gloves and proceeds with his examination of the body...

In the b.g. Agent Jicarilla shakes hands with Sheriff Bolivar and enters the Museum.

INT. MAXWELL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY - UNM - NIGHT

In the twostory gallery reconstruction of an ancient Anasazi kiva at Chaco Canyon -- Archeology Professors DIANE BRODY, Ph.D., Director of the Maxwell Museum and DWAYNE HILL-RUNNER, Ph.D., co-curators of the "Buried in the Past: The Enigma of Mimbres Painted Pottery" exhibit, painstakingly examine the pottery from the gunnysack.

PROFESSOR BRODY

All evidence of the Mimbres virtually vanished from the archeological record around 1150.

(reverently displays
bowl to Bill)

This black-on-white bowl survived because they buried it beneath the floor of a house with their dead.

BILL

(defensive)

The hole was already in it when I took it out of the sack.

DR. HILL-RUNNER

Usually the bottom of the bowl was punched out 'killed' before it was placed over the head of the corpse.

BILL

"Killed"?

PROFESSOR BRODY

Some in the community speculate that these so-called 'kill holes,' were meant to release the spirit of the bowl when it was buried with its owner. The reality is these bowls represent a vocabulary that has been lost. It is unlikely their real purpose will ever be known.

AGENT JICARILLA

(approaching)

They were meant to stay in the ground, meant to go on their journey. Instead, they've been desecrated by white hands, put on exhibit, where all the life is sucked out of them.

PROFESSOR BRODY

That's just wrong, Agent Jicarilla. By exhibiting their artifacts we honor the memory of these ancient people. We in essence bring them back to life.

AGENT JICARILLA

If you really feel that way, Professor, why don't you dig up one of your own ancestor's graves put them on display?

PROFESSOR BRODY

Would that I could... but you know the law as well as I do.

INT. MAXWELL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY - UNM - LATER

Bill and Agent Jicarilla walk through a cave setting with artwork of recent ancestors reproduced on the walls in red and black and resembling those found at Lascaux, France.

AGENT JICARILLA

You know if you desecrate a white grave, you go to jail.

(beat)

If you desecrate an Indian grave, you get a Ph.D.

They exit through the permanent collection representing four million years of human evolution.

EXT. MORGUE - NIGHT

A single lit window, the only sign of life.

INT. MORGUE - AUTOPSY THEATER

Two stainless steel examining tables sparkle under the bright florescent lights. The third has a body on it. The Body from the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology. "John Doe #11022" scrawled on a tag dangling from a pedicured toe.

WALT

(reads off a clipboard)

One hundred seventy five, seventy two and a quarter.

(beat)

I heard one of those holey bowls sold in New York for \$95,000.

Gus, in scrubs and rubber apron, adjusts the microphone suspended from the ceiling by a chrome gooseneck.

GUS

That's under market. In Europe and Asia the going price's \$400,000.

WALT

Talk about your pot-a-gold!

GUS

(into microphone)

The body of a fully developed male comma Caucasian comma approximately sixty years of age period small entry wound comma nine centimeters cranial and one point seven centimeters lateral to the left nipple period area appears to be raised...

Walt photographs the wound -- lightflash synchronizes with the WHIRRCLICK of the shutter.

Gus takes a scalpel from the stainless steel tray and makes a "Y" incision.

GUS

Making thoracoabdominal incision --

JORNADA DEL MUERTO DESERT - SUNRISE

Dunes. Dunes. Dunes.

The Woman sleeps under a blanket of white gypsum sand directly in the whirlingswirling path of a Dust Devil, that pirouettes over her, then continues on its random course...

Leaving the Woman sputtering for air.

She brushes her face, spits sand out of her bruised mouth.

WOMAN

That's one hell of a wakeup call.

She gathers herself, squints into rising sun, staggers on.

A DIAMONDBACK

Slithers between some rocks, seeking relief from its sloughing skin.

Suddenly, a rock splatters the rattlesnake's head flat.

The Woman squats on her haunches and watches calmly, almost serenely, until spasms and death RATTLE stop.

The Woman approaches cautiously, reaches for the snake -- it convulses in her hands -- She screams, drops the snake and scampers away.

SKY - DAY

A lone Buzzard circles above.

WOMAN

Squints up at the Buzzard, then her gaze drifts back to the crushed snake, almost as if the bird reminded her.

The Buzzard and the Woman move at the same time --

The Buzzard swoops down --

The Woman grabs the carcass just in time.

FRUSTRATED BUZZARD

lands on a nearby mesquite tree.

The Woman crouches in a cluster of rocks with petroglyphs.

They eye each other for a moment.

She recognizes "Impatient."

Then, with a strange sense of pride and glee,
The Woman ravenously bites into the impotent snake.
Spitting out the skin with a primal, guttural laugh,
Relishing the moist meat and the cool blood.

Disconcerted, "Impatient" studies this primordial Woman
devouring the spoils of the hunt.

Laughing, naked, bloody... triumphant.

Then, with a slight bow from his bald head,
"Impatient" gathers himself and hopflies into the sky.

WOMAN

holds the remains of the snake in her outstretched arms...

She watches "Impatient" climb until he spreads his majestic
wings, catches a thermal and glides away.

Then, sliding down into a separation between the illustrated
rocks, she licks her lips in satisfaction and spreads the
snake's skin over her body.

THUNDER CRACKS somewhere in the distance.

SKY - NIGHT

Violent lightning backlights quickly gathering thunderheads.

JORNADA DEL MUERTO DESERT - NIGHT

THUNDER CRACKS.

The Woman stands in the cloudburst, head stretched up, mouth
open wide, taking in the liquid manna.

LOW RUMBLING builds in the distance.

She looks at the turbulent light show, reading the clouds
then suddenly gets a knowing, panicked look.

FLASH FLOOD

Surges through the desert floor, collecting rocks, shrubs,
animals -- anything unfortunate enough to get in its way.

WOMAN

Wedges between two boulders, turns her back on the coming deluge. Like molten lava, the flash flood envelopes the rocks and the Woman in its opaque path.

For several anxious moments the Woman disappears...

Then we glimpse her -- swept along, fighting her way to the surface, catching a gasp of air, towed below again.

Then as suddenly as it came, the flash flood passes --
Leaving in its wake

BOULDERS

covered with gray-brown silt. For a while nothing moves...

Finally, a hand appears as the Woman painfully claws her way out. Covered in silt, like a grainy body-stocking, She glares at the Moon.

WOMAN

What's the matter Mother Moon? Was
I having too good a time?

Woman climbs up on a large boulder, sits, checks her bearings.

SKY

a few minor and major points of light, but no Orion.

WOMAN

picks a delirious direction at random, staggers on.

JORNADA DEL MUERTO DESERT - PRE-DAWN

In the red morning glow, the Woman stumbles, falling across a small depression.

Her tattered fingers reach out, trace the impression of several wide tires.

Encouraged, she crawls along them...

Abruptly, she stops in the tracks, stares at something ahead.

ENCHANTED GARDEN - WOMAN'S P.O.V.

Floating on a small misty lake.

An oasis of pastel green and blue surrounded by marble columns with some sort of pennant fluttering in the cool fog.

WOMAN

crawls on, strength rapidly failing, hypnotically drawn toward her pastoral vision.

OASIS

The Woman collapses into the deep green, embracing it, hands outstretched toward the cool blue.

SKY - DAWN

A lone Buzzard circles above.

EXT. TOWA GOLF RESORT - POJOAQUE, NM - DAWN

The Aztec influenced club house, apparently carved out of the boulder canyons, dominates this exclusive golf course.

STARTER'S VOICE

(over P.A.)

Dwight, first tee. Elgin, tenth tee.

TENTH TEE - TOWA GOLF COURSE - DAWN

Par 4, dogleg left to a hidden green, sculpted out of the serenity of the desert with breathtaking views.

Three men take practice swings.

Bill, Frank and EX-MAYOR ROY ELGIN. 40's, virile, bald, expensive wardrobe, expensive clubs.

FRANK

Let's see how this new weapon works.

BILL

What's the matter with the old weapon, Frank?

FRANK

Like screwing with someone else's dick.

ROY

'Tis a poor workman who blames his own tool.

FRANK

Thanks, Mayor. Spoken just like a politician.

ROY

Ex-Mayor. I lost, remember?

STARTER'S VOICE

Let's go gentlemen, the birdies and eagles are waiting.

FRANK

My honor, your honor, it's the only one I'll get all day.

Bill and Roy exchange a look as Frank tees up a ball then goes through his elaborate stretching and preshot routine.

BILL

Come on, Frank. Hit the goddamn ball!

Roy quiets Bill with a gesture, Frank hooks one into the rocks.

FRANK

Dammit! Mulligan.

Frank tees up another ball and slices it into the desert.

Bill tees up and prepares to swing just as Gus comes limping up on the run, carrying his golf bag.

GUS

Sorry I'm late.

BILL

(to Frank)

What the fuck is he doing here?

ROY

It's been three years, Bill. Can't you let her rest in peace?

BILL

Maybe he can. He put her there.

Bill grabs his bag and storms back toward the clubhouse.

FRANK

Bill, c'mon. Doc...?

Roy quiets Frank as Gus obliviously tees up and drives, A soft draw about 250 yards.

ROY

Nice shot.

Gus puts his bag on Roy's cart. Frank moves over to him as Gus pulls off his cowboy boots and slips on golf shoes.

FRANK

You confirm cause of death?

GUS
Heart attack.

FRANK
Heart attack? Bullshit.

Gus raises his hand, Frank holds his tongue as Roy knocks one down the right center of the fairway.

FRANK
My .38 put a hole in the middle of his chest, one shot, he dropped like a stone.

GUS
I'm sure. You hit his pacemaker. Stopped it cold. Heart attack.

FRANK
I'll be a sonovabitch.

GOLF CARTS - MOVING

Frank in one. Roy and Gus in the other.

ROY
You get a positive?

GUS
Got the make and model number off the pacemaker, should have an I.D. soon.

ROY
Oh, that's no good.

GUS
What's the matter, got some empty plots you can't unload?

ROY
The county doesn't care where you put the 'Does' just that the body gets buried. So long as it's a 'Doe,' Enchanted Sands can plant it anywhere.

GUS
What if somebody identifies your 'Doe' later?

ROY
At Enchanted Sands we have a special service, we simply dig them up and deposit them wherever the family can afford.

GUS
Grave market just keeps on giving.

ROY
Real estate, Doc, real estate. Six-foot lots. Only nobody's buying. They all want bake-n-shake.

Gus comprehends.

ROY
Not like the old days, we used to sell the climate and throw in the land. That bronze job you sent me just got me even for last year.

GUS
That's more than it did for the girl.

ROY
You see that outfit they wanted her in, took two tins of pancake just to cover the needle tracks.

EDGE OF DESERT

The carts stop close to where Frank's ball entered the hazard.

GUS
I would concur if she was a viewer, but wasn't all that effort wasted on a closed casket?

ROY
Ethics, Doc. Hard top or convertible, I treat them all the same.

Frank goes to his bag, takes out a sand wedge and his .38.

ROY
Don't you want to take a drop?

FRANK
That's a ten-dollar golf ball.

Frank cautiously disappears behind several juniper bushes.

Abruptly the SOUND of a RATTLESNAKE.

FRANK'S VOICE
Rule 24 dash 1, movable obstruction.
(a GUN SHOT)
Okay. It's playable.

Frank's golf ball flies out, disappears over the next rise.

FAIRWAY

As the two carts appear over the crest of the hill that hides the green from their view.

GREEN - THEIR P.O.V.

Surrounded by a pinon and juniper dotted landscape, an emerald peninsula in the rising mist of a man-made lake.

Its limp flag visible in the morning air with something else -- Something stretched out on the putting surface -- A BODY.

GOLF CARTS

Race toward the green where they skid to a stop. The men run up to the body.

ROY

Is she dead?

Gus feels her carotid artery for a pulse.

GUS

Weak and thready.

He quickly rolls her over, gives her mouth-to-mouth.

Frank rushes to his cart, grabs a towel and bottle of water.

Roy stares at the exquisite figure covered in the streaky sandy bodystocking as Gus places an ear close to her face, listens for breath.

Frank rushes back, hands the bottle to Gus, covers the Woman with the towel. Gus pours water between her parched lips.

She sputters trying to swallow. The Woman's eyes flutter open, dart from face to face to face at the three men staring down at her.

GUS

Take it easy, just breathe.

Gus gives her more water, she drinks, staring at the men.

GUS

Better?

The Woman starts to shake, then passes out.

GUS

Got to get her out of this sun.

(to Frank)

Help me put her on the cart.

Frank and Gus carry her to their cart, place her on the seat. Roy pulls a cellular out of his bag as Gus slides under the Woman's head behind the wheel and takes off.

Roy and Frank jump in the other cart and follow.

GOLF CARTS - MOVING

Frank drives as Roy punches numbers into his cell phone.

FRANK

Call Lifeguard dispatch!

ROY

(into phone)

This is Mayor Elgin. Let me talk to my wife. Alright, Ex-Wife. It's an emergency.

(moment, then)

Claire? We need a helicopter immediately at Towa Country Club...

PARKING LOT - TOWA GOLF RESORT - DAY

A red and white University of New Mexico Medical Center "Lifeguard" Helicopter lands...

Gus drives his cart near the turning blades.

TWO PARAMEDICS and the FLIGHT DOCTOR emerge.

They move the unconscious Woman to a stretcher, Slide the stretcher into the helicopter. Gus jumps in behind them, closes the rear cabin door. Helicopter blades REV-UP.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Roy, Frank and the gathering crowd of golfers recedes into the distance as the Helicopter lifts off.

PARKING LOT

Roy watches the helicopter fly away as Frank throws his clubs into the trunk of his unmarked sedan, climbs in and takes off after it.

INT. HELICOPTER - FLYING - DAY

One Paramedic, MIKE, pilots. The other Paramedic checks for vitals, preps, hooks the Woman up to various machines, etc.

CLAIRE ELGIN, M.D., trauma surgeon, flight doctor, attractive mid-30's sits next to Gus, performs a systematic sweep of the Woman -- head, ears, eyes, nose, throat...

CLAIRE
What happened to you last night?

GUS
I had an early tee time.

CLAIRE
(indicating Woman)
Little rough on your 'caddie' weren't
you?

She hits a nerve.
Gus starts to say something, thinks better of it.

CLAIRE
No frank bleeding or clear fluids,
no puncture wounds.

She continues her examination down the Woman's chest, probing with her fingers for a moment -- then she takes a large hypodermic syringe and injects saline solution into the Woman's abdomen.

She waits a moment, then releases the plunger -- Hypodermic fills with pink liquid.

CLAIRE
(to Pilot)
Mike! Call surgery, stat!

Mike talks into his headset...
The Helicopter banks toward the city.

EXT. UNM EMERGENCY MEDICAL CENTER - ALBUQUERQUE - DAY

The Trauma Team anxiously watches the Helicopter settle on the helipad.

Claire pushes Gus out of the Helicopter.

Organized panic as the Trauma Team does its number.

CLAIRE
She's alive, Gus. If she dies you
can have her back.

Claire rushes the stretcher with the Woman on it through the swinging Emergency Room doors.

INTENSIVE CARE - MEDICAL CENTER - AFTERNOON

The unconscious Woman lies in the small room next to an empty bed. An I.V. drip curls into her bruised arm. Claire and Frank watch through the glass as the DUTY NURSE checks various monitoring systems.

CLAIRE
 Exposure, dehydration, several
 contusions and lacerations, possible
 concussion, three cracked ribs,
 lacerated liver, bruised kidney,
 and...

An uncomfortable pause.

FRANK
 Sexually attacked?

CLAIRE
 Not in the classical sense.
 (reads from chart)
 Pubis shaved. Multiple deep piercings
 on upper back. Ears, nose, nipples,
 navel, major and minor labials, hood,
 all pierced.

FRANK
 Needle tracks?

CLAIRE
 (shakes head)
 Toxicology showed MDMA in her blood.

FRANK
 XTC?

CLAIRE
 Unfortunately, the amount could not
 be quantitated.

FRANK
 How long you think she'll be out?

CLAIRE
 Vitals are good, she should regain
 consciousness once her electrolytes
 stabilize.

FRANK
 Thanks, Dr. Elgin. Let me know when
 I can question her.

Claire nods, Frank exits.

EXT. "10-20" BAR - ALBUQUERQUE - NIGHT

Coroner's 4x4 among several unmarked cars.

INT. "10-20"

A cop/fireman's bar. One of those dark, smoky joints.

Southwestern country whines from the juke.

In a side room, Gus and Agent Jicarilla play 9-Ball.

AGENT JICARILLA

(sets new rack)

Respect for the dead is more important
than knowledge of the past.

GUS

(chalks cue)

But doesn't the past belong to
everyone?

Gus breaks -- the balls move around the table.

AGENT JICARILLA

Not our past.

Nothing drops. Agent Jicarilla takes over.

AGENT JICARILLA

We know more about our past than the
archeologists do and we don't have to
dig anything up.

He uses his shots for punctuation.

AGENT JICARILLA

When I was nine-years-old, my father
took me to a museum and on display
was this white manta wedding dress,
made from an all white deer, an
albino. Very rare. Vary sacred.

(beat)

My father recognized the dress.

(shoots)

It was the same dress we buried my
grandmother in less then a month
before.

(ball drops)

GUS

Aren't museums more sympathetic now?

AGENT JICARILLA

More sympathetic? Maybe.

Knifewing shoots again. Makes combination.

AGENT JICARILLA

Private collectors are the malignant
problem.

He lines up another shot.

AGENT JICARILLA

We're monitoring a site in the
fourcorners where looters went in,
bulldozed and took what they wanted.
Within days some of the artifacts
were up for auction on the Internet.

He shoots... Two balls drop, including the "9".

RING TONES. They both check their digital mini-screens.

AGENT JICARILLA

Mine. Settle up with you later,
Doc.

INT. INTENSIVE CARE CORRIDOR - NIGHT - MOVING P.O.V.

CAMERA CREEPS down the polished hallway past several stainless
steel carts toward the Nurse's Station where two DUTY NURSES
work on patient charts.

CAMERA waits until their attention shifts elsewhere...

Then swiftly and silently moves past them toward the

INTENSIVE CARE ROOM

CAMERA enters and cautiously approaches the unconscious Woman
in the railed bed.

Just as the CAMERA gets within arm's reach -- The Woman wakes
with a start, pulling out several needles and attached tubes.

INTENSIVE CARE - NURSE STATION - MONITOR

Flashes. BEEPS. One of the DUTY NURSES rushes into

INTENSIVE CARE ROOM

The Woman panics as Duty Nurse struggles to replace the tubes.

NURSE

Easy, easy. You're safe, you're all
right now, you're safe. I'm, you're
in the University Medical Center,
I'm Nurse Sims, Terry.

The Woman sits up, pulling out remaining tubes.

NURSE/TERRY

Please, try and be still so I can
reconnect your I.V.'s.

(calling out)

Penny! Penny!

The other Duty Nurse rushes into the room holding a hypodermic syringe -- She grabs the Woman's flailing arm -- injects needle. The Woman's fearfilled eyes widen, glaze over, then close as she succumbs to the sedative.

WOMAN

Do it. Do it! Hook me. Hook me...

Nurses exchange puzzled glances as they buckle restraints on the unconscious Woman's thrashing wrists, ankles.

EXT. SKY - DAWN

A lone Buzzard circles above.

EXT. GUS'S HOUSE - P.O.V THRU WINDSHIELD - DAWN

A Shadow watches Gus drive up in the 4x4 wagon.

4x4 parks next to an offroad vehicle in the austere forecourt of a singlestory spreadout affair set back off the road.

GUS

gets out, SHUTS door and heads towards his residence.

Another car door SHUTS behind him. He stops in his tracks.

GUS

This better be an emergency.

He knowingly turns toward:

CLAIRE - GUS'S P.O.V.

walking toward him.

Her dark SUV with its oversize tires in the b.g.

CLAIRE

You could call it that. I got a love hangover and I don't care where you been.

EXT. FORECOURT

Gus lights a cigaret as Claire comes up to him.

She grabs his hand, pulls him toward the front door -- He resists.

GUS

Claire, it's over. Go back to your husband.

CLAIRE

Ex-husband. Make love to me one more time and then say that if you can.

GUS

We weren't making love, we were just chasing the dead.

CLAIRE

You don't chase the dead, Gus, they chase you.

(beat)

It's still Linda, isn't it?

GUS

No.

CLAIRE

Then what?

GUS

Let's stay friends, okay?

Gus takes her by the arm and walks her back to her vehicle.

CLAIRE

Come on, Gus.

He opens the car door and guides her inside.

CLAIRE

What are you afraid of? I'm a big girl. I can take it.

Gus studies the lighted end of his cigaret, then:

GUS

I would never have been able to stay faithful to you Claire.

A moment between them, then Claire starts engine.

CLAIRE

You're assuming that would have been a problem for me.

GUS

No, I'm not.

(beat)

It would have been a problem for me.

Claire slams the transmission into gear, scattering sand and rocks -- as she drives away.

EXT. CENTRAL COURTYARD - GUS'S HOUSE - DAWN

Where pierced walls of masonry; completed on three of four sides, around a reflecting lap-pool, filter desert environs.

Gus walks by the pool then stops and contemplates one of the oversize handcarved wooden doors...

He crushes his cigaret butt on one of the Terra Cotta pavers, reluctantly opens the door and enters.

INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DAY

Bill and Frank approach as Claire confronts the I.C.U. Supervisor, NURSE MARTIN, a thick woman in her forties.

CLAIRE

I was specific. No restraints. I mistakenly assumed your 'staff' would follow instructions and not improvise.

NURSE MARTIN

It is hospital procedure to restrain violent patients.

In b.g. the unconscious Woman struggles against her restraints.

CLAIRE

She's in intensive care for Christ's sake. God only knows what this poor woman has been through, if you'd have bothered to read her chart.

NURSE MARTIN

I read it. She probably asked for it, her sort usually --

CLAIRE

I want those two Night Nurses replaced and the restraints removed now.

Nurse Martin retreats into Intensive Care Room and removes the Woman's restraints.

BILL

Morning, Claire.

CLAIRE

Bill. Frank.

FRANK

Dr. Elgin.

BILL

She has a point you know.

CLAIRE

Oh, I have to hear from you now, how most victims ask for it? That's bullshit and you know it.

A MOAN, from inside room, then:

NURSE MARTIN

Dr. Elgin. I think your patient is coming around.

Claire rushes into the room.

Bill and Frank follow. Claire stops them with a look.

CLAIRE

I'll tell you when you can talk to her, just wait here. Please.

Bill and Frank do as they are told.

INTENSIVE CARE ROOM

The Woman's swollen eyes flutter open, focus on Claire's face.

CLAIRE

It's all right. I'm Dr. Elgin.
You're in the UNM Medical Center.

Woman looks around... Her gaze locks on Nurse Martin.

CLAIRE

Thank you, Martin.

Nurse Martin exits.

WOMAN

Thank you.

CLAIRE

There are a couple of Deputy Sheriffs here who would like to talk to you. It's just routine, I think.

Claire motions to Frank and Bill,
They enter.

FRANK

(shows badge)

I'm Sergeant Powell and this is Detective Wright. We'd like to ask you a few questions if you feel up to it.

The Woman cautiously nods.

FRANK

First, we'd like to know who you are
and how you got on the tenth green.

WOMAN

What? Tenth what? What are you
talking about?

FRANK

That's where we found you. On the
tenth green. On the golf course.
The Towa Country Club?

WOMAN

Golf course? I don't play golf, I
don't even like golf.

FRANK

You don't like golf?

CLAIRE

Maybe I can help.

(to Woman)

Let's start with your name. Okay?

The Woman opens her mouth to speak but nothing comes out.

Her confused eyes search the three eager faces...

CLAIRE

Bill, Frank. This is premature.
Can't this wait? She's still in
shock.

(to Woman)

You just rest.

BILL

What do you remember?

WOMAN

(stumbling through
the fog)

First there was this buzzard. We
were flying. And then this rattle-
snake. I ate it. I remember Orion
and sand dunes. Rain for forty days
and forty nights, and then a flood
and a fairy castle with a moat...

Bill and Claire exchange a look, Frank takes notes.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATER

Frank, Bill pursue Claire through busy Medical Staffers.

BILL
What do you make of that?

CLAIRE
Confabulation.

FRANK
Confabu-what?

CLAIRE
Confabulation. Chunks of information
used at random.

BILL
(mocking)
Lacunar amnesia?!

CLAIRE
No. That's memory loss about one
specific event. This is traumatic,
transient amnesia, maybe... Most
likely a fugue.

Bill grunts.

FRANK
What is she a composer?

CLAIRE
Close. It's called Ravel's syndrome.
People with Ravel's make up facts,
create identities, compose if you
will.
(beat)
Usually lasts a few hours, sometimes
longer.

Bill and Frank watch Claire peel off down another corridor,
waving back over her shoulder at the two Deputy Sheriffs.

EXT. CENTRAL COURTYARD - GUS'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Gus carries two swollen garbage bags out of the room guarded
by the oversize handcarved wooden door, heads toward...

EXT. FORECOURT - GUS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Gus throws the swollen garbage bags into the back of the
offroad vehicle where they join others.

EXT. ENCHANTED SANDS CEMETERY - DUSK

An SUV winds through stately trees that grace the spacious
memorial lawns.

Detective Bill Wright exits the vehicle next to one of the caléndula flower gardens, he carries a small bunch of violets.

As he makes his way up the lawn, he deliberately obliterates Gus's rainbow caléndula petal path along the way.

EXT. GRAVESITE - ENCHANTED SANDS CEMETERY - DUSK

Bill approaches the flat marble gravestone and angrily brushes the rainbow of petals away, revealing the engraving.

It reads simply:

LINDA WRIGHT CUERVO
1979 - 2008

Bill puts the violets in the gravestone urn.

BILL

Three years. We were supposed to
grow old together. If only you had
come to me...

(composes himself)

What do you know that I don't know...?

EXT. CENTRAL COURTYARD - GUS'S HOUSE - DUSK

Gus carries a locked footlocker out of the room guarded by the oversize handcarved wooden door, heads toward...

EXT. FORECOURT - GUS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Gus starts to place the footlocker on top of the swollen garbage bags in the back of the offroad vehicle.

But he balks --

Gus clutches the footlocker in his arms, deciding...

INT. SEMI-PRIVATE HOSPITAL ROOM - MEDICAL CENTER - DUSK

The Woman sits up staring at her emergency-room haircut and peeling sunburned cheeks in a hand-mirror.

WOMAN

I know I know who I am. I have all
this information inside my head, I
just can't seem to keep on track. I
keep losing my train of thought.

CLAIRE

That's normal.

WOMAN

Normal?

CLAIRE
Yes, it's only temporary.

WOMAN
How temporary?

CLAIRE
Not long. Usually a few days.

A FEMALE SHERIFF'S PHOTOGRAPHER enters.
The Woman gathers the sheets up around her.

CLAIRE
We need a record of your injuries.
It will only take a moment.

Photographer moves into position as Claire pulls back the sheets, revealing one bruised body part at a time.

A flash, WHIRRCLICK.

CLAIRE
Will you roll over, please?

She does.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Oh, my!

Using the hand mirror the Woman sees:

On her upper back, a series of deep piercing wounds --
Two rows of six holes about two inches apart, starting three inches out from her backbone and rising toward her shoulders, forming a large irregular double "V" pattern --

Flash, WHIRRCLICK.

Woman spots something else,

lower, on her butt.

WOMAN
(a wail)
Jesus! What is that?

CLAIRE
A tattoo, looks like.

WOMAN
(rubbing it)
My God! It won't come off!

CLAIRE
They're usually permanent.

ANGLE ON WOMAN'S BACK

above the tattoo -- At the base of her spine -- A small, uniquely shaped scar -- A brand in the shape of an hourglass.

Flash, WHIRRCLICK.

WOMAN'S VOICE

When can I get out of here?

CLAIRE'S VOICE

In a few days as long as everything checks out okay and you remember who you are.

Flash, WHIRRCLICK.

MATCH CUT TO:

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE HOURGLASS BRAND

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Bill and Frank going over photos of the Woman's body in the busy HOMICIDE/VIOLENT CRIMES SQUAD ROOM of the BERNALILLO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE.

FRANK

Are you sure? Maybe we oughta check the file.

BILL

Check the file? I don't need to check the fuckin' file. She was my sister for Christ's sake!

FRANK

We better call Gus.

BILL

Fuck Gus.

In b.g. Roy comes out of the Sheriff's Office with Sheriff Bolivar.

Sheriff Bolivar points Roy toward Frank and Bill, then they shake hands and Roy approaches carrying a stack of paperwork.

ROY

Hi, guys.

BILL

We're busy gravedigger.

FRANK

What is it, Mayor?

ROY

Ex-Mayor. I need a body release signed on your 'Doe' pottery robber. Gus was right, the pacemaker turned an I.D. One Clifford Berle Watts of Topeka. Turns out the dumb bastard was a writer, doing research on the Native antiquities blackmarket.

FRANK

Well, Ex, that isn't our department. Body releases have to go through channels, just like government work.

ROY

I know, but the Sheriff said you guys would walk it through for me.

FRANK

What's the rush? Got a golf date?

ROY

No, but if I can get the body to Kansas tomorrow I can do a full service including an open casket. If I have to wait, my only option is to send the cremains. I'll make it worth your while, say two strokes on each nine. What do you say?

BILL

No we can't, we gotta go question a witness.

Roy looks down on the open folder of scattered photographs.

INT. SEMI-PRIVATE HOSPITAL ROOM - MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Bill and Frank watch the Woman stare at the photographs of her pierced body.

She picks up one of her tattoo.

WOMAN

If I don't remember getting this.

She picks up one of her hourglass shaped scar.

WOMAN

What makes you think I remember getting this...? Or these...?
(indicates other marks)

Frank points to one of the photographs.

FRANK

This scar connects you with an open murder investigation.

WOMAN

I wish I could help you, but I just don't remember.

BILL

Linda Wright. Linda Cuervo. Does that name mean anything to you?

The Woman shakes her head.

Bill shows her a photograph of another woman --
-- Linda Wright Cuervo --
A raven-haired beauty with open intelligent eyes.

BILL

Three years ago she was found in the desert. She'd been beaten to death.
(calms down)
Your brand and wounds match the ones on her body!

WOMAN

I'm sorry, I just don't remember.

Frank steps in front of Bill, picks up the file of photographs, hands her his card.

FRANK

(indicating Bill)
The victim was his sister.
(beat)
Thank you for your cooperation...
but if you should remember anything please let us know.

The Woman nods.

Frank leads the reluctant Bill out of the room.

The Woman studies Frank's card a moment...
Then presses her Nurse's buzzer.

NURSE'S VOICE

(over intercom)
May I help you.

INT. ROOM - OFF CENTRAL COURTYARD - DUSK

Sheets cover the floor and a large object in the middle of the otherwise empty room.

Gus stands on a ladder painting the bare adobe walls stark white...

INT. ROOM - OFF CENTRAL COURTYARD - NIGHT

A bridge floor lamp with a twisted wrought iron pole illuminates the new white walls via its milkglass shade.

Gus climbs the ladder and pounds a small tenter-hook into one adobe wall.

EXT. ROOM - OFF CENTRAL COURTYARD - GUS'S HOUSE - DAWN

Gus comes out of the room carrying folded sheets and the ladder.

He closes the door...

INT. RELEASING COUNTER - MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Claire watches the Woman -- bruises fading, in simple cotton blouse and skirt -- sign papers for a CLERK.

CLERK

Everything seems in order Miss Dupe.
Is this your current address?

WOMAN

Dup-ay. Yes, that's my current address.

CLAIRE

You had us going Barbara, but the rest
will come back in bits and pieces.

Claire hands the Woman an envelope.

CLAIRE

I've made a list of doctors. When
you get back to Corpus Cristi, I
recommend you seek some therapy.

WOMAN

Thanks for the clothes. I'll send
them back.

CLAIRE

They're yours. I'm not sure I ever
looked that good in them anyway. Do
you need a lift anywhere?

WOMAN

No, thanks. I'm just walking over
to Western Union. My mother is
sending me some money.

CLAIRE
Take care of yourself.

WOMAN
Thanks, Dr. Claire.

They shake hands. The Woman walks toward the entrance.

CLAIRE
Oh, Barbara?

The Woman turns around.

CLAIRE
Just checking.

The Woman smiles and waves goodbye.

EXT. UNM MEDICAL CENTER - P.O.V. THRU WINDSHIELD - DAY

A Shadow watches the Woman emerge from the medical building.

As she walks toward downtown, the engine starts and oversize tires creep after her at a discrete distance.

EXT. LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE - MOVING P.O.V. THRU WINDSHIELD

Opened 1939. Remodeled 1997. The city's most historic hotel.

The Woman makes her way through the Native American jewelry vendors where a KRQE-TV NEWS CREW shoots some local color.

She goes inside. The oversize tires stop.

INT. LADIES ROOM - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE

Two working girls, TASSEL and MOONBEAM, freshen their makeup in the wall of mirrors.

MOONBEAM
I'm tellin' you, Tass, he was gettin'
me damp all over, and we was just
settin' the price.

They laugh.

TASSEL
Shhhh. You hear something?

Tassel turns off the water in the ceramic tile sink --

And there it is, a FAINT WHIMPERING, like muffled tears. Moonbeam looks under the doors in the row of stalls, motions she's found a live one.

TASSEL
Is everything all right, dear?

Crying stops. Moonbeam tries the stall door... Locked.

MOONBEAM
C'mon, honey. Open up.

A moment, then the Lock CLICKS.

Moonbeam opens the door, revealing the Woman sitting on the toilet, daubing red eyes with toiletpaper hands, hyper-ventilating.

The two working girls exchange a knowing glance before Moonbeam reaches into her oversize bag, hands the Woman a lace trimmed handkerchief.

WOMAN
Thank you.

MOONBEAM
He's not worth it, sister. None of 'em are.

The Woman laughs.

TASSEL
How long you been in the Life, honey?

WOMAN
The life?

TASSEL
Take off your mask, doll, you're among friends.

INT. THE LOBBY BAR - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE - BOOTH - DAY

The Woman sits between Moonbeam and Tassel in the nearly deserted, dimly lit room. Several different drinks in front of the Woman. She tries each one, a sip at a time.

MOONBEAM
What's wrong with Barbara? It means 'stranger' in Greek or Latin I think.

WOMAN
I made it up just to get out of the hospital.

TASSEL
So what? You think we was christened Tassel and Moonbeam?

MOONBEAM
Tassel earned hers.

Tassel shakes her breasts.

MOONBEAM
My first boyfriend gave me mine,
along with a dose.

WOMAN
(sips drink)
Mmmm. What's this? I like it.

TASSEL
Alcatraz Añejo.

WOMAN
You'd think I'd remember flavors.

They laugh.

MOONBEAM
Incoming!

Tassel and Moonbeam exchange a knowing look as Bill and Frank approach. Bill pins the Woman with his eyes.

BILL
Miss Dupe?

WOMAN
(uneasy)
It's Du-pay, but call me Barbara.

BILL
Barbara?!

FRANK
(to Bill)
Easy, Partner.

Frank turns to Tassel and Moonbeam

FRANK
You two friends of the lady?

Before Tassel can respond, Moonbeam slides out.

MOONBEAM
Well, it was nice, Barbara is it?
Good luck. -- C'mon, Tass.

Moonbeam pulls the reluctant Tassel out of the booth and hustles her away.

Bill and Frank slide in -- bookending the Woman.

FRANK

You told us you'd let us know if you remembered anything or anyone.

WOMAN

(re: Tassel and Moonbeam)
We just met.

BILL

There's no Barbara Dupe, Dup-ay, in Corpus Cristi. And you're forwarding address is bogus.

WOMAN

Got me out of the hospital.

FRANK

Whoever you are, you've never been busted.

BILL

Up 'till now.

FRANK

We didn't get a match on your fingerprints anywhere. There have been no missing person files that fit your description and nobody's come forward.

WOMAN

So what is this? A social call?

FRANK

Ms. Dupay, most violent crime's committed, perpetrated, by someone who knows or is close to the victim. Like a friend or a relative. Whoever did this to you, isn't looking for you, and neither apparently is anyone else.

WOMAN

You want to de-code that?

BILL

Whoever did this to you, thinks you're dead, at least for the time being. Maybe we should place her into protective custody?

WOMAN

For how long?

BILL
 Until you finally decide who you
 really are.

WOMAN
 What if I don't remember?

BILL
 Frankly lady, it'd be easier on us if
 you were dead. Our boy Gus'd figure
 out who the hell you were and we could
 move on it because we'd have an
 identity, instead of some bullshit
 story.

(slides out of the
 booth)

If you really don't remember, you're
 a homicide waiting to happen, a body
 waiting to be bagged. You just might
 pick up the guy who did this to you
 and let him finish the job.

The Woman refuses to cry as the Deputies exit.

INT. ORNATE HALLWAY - OUTSIDE THE LOBBY BAR

Bill and Frank pass the Ladies Room on their way out.
 The door stands ajar.

FRANK
 What the fuck are you doing?

BILL
 Ask me that when your sister marries
 a fuckin' wetback!

INT. LADIES ROOM - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE

The Working Girls eavesdrop, and before Moonbeam can stop
 her, Tassel checks hallway, exits. Moonbeam tags behind.

MOONBEAM
 No more strays, Tass. You promised.

INT. THE LOBBY BAR - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE - BOOTH - DAY

Tassel slides in on one side of the Woman.

A moment later Moonbeam reluctantly slides in on the other.

TASSEL
 We need to keep a low profile.

WOMAN
 I understand.

TASSEL

Where you staying, honey?

WOMAN

I haven't looked for a place yet.

TASSEL

That's no good. The whole town's booked. You got your Greater Southwestern Open, the Gem show, the Balloon Festival, the Relic show. All that pumps a lot of money into this here local economy.

MOONBEAM

An' they're plenty a pumps to go round.

TASSEL

Yeah, if you got the goods, and honey, you got the goods. But you could use some help with the packaging.

(beat)

Who does your hair, Barbara?

The Woman runs her hand through her uneven locks.

WOMAN

You wouldn't have a pair of scissors, would you?

Tassel gives Moonbeam a silent plea, who calms herself with Tantric breath technique.

MOONBEAM

Girl, have I got a pair of scissors.

Moonbeam reaches into her oversize bag, pulls out a pair of enormous scissors that could punch metal.

INT. SUITE - BEDROOM - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE - DAY

The Woman sits in front of the vanity mirror as Moonbeam trims her hair. Tassel rummages through the closets.

TASSEL

We reserve this suite every year. Usually we split it, but with this economy I figure we could use a third and we don't know any local talent. We crash here in the daytime, you're welcome to stay if you want, just don't abuse the privilege.

(holds up mini-skirt)

This should fit you.

Moonbeam resigns herself, reaches into her oversize bag, pulls out a pair of huge "diamond" studs.

MOONBEAM

These cubics will heat you up.

THE WOMAN

I couldn't.

MOONBEAM

Relax, honey, we all do it.

TASSEL

Think of it as Borrower's Boutique.

THE WOMAN

No, I mean I don't think I can.

TASSEL

Like getting thrown off a horse, honey. The sooner you get back in the saddle.

MOONBEAM

(studies her handiwork)

There now, ain't that better?

Moonbeam steps behind as the Woman stares at her reflection.

MOONBEAM

It's not quite right yet, is it?

EXT. ENCHANTED SANDS CEMETERY - BERNALILLO COUNTY, NM - DUSK

Gus exits 4x4 next to the caléndula flower garden with his handwoven basket of caléndulas and his bottle of tequila.

A cigaret dangles from his lips as he gets a knowing look on his face and scans what's left of his rainbow petal trail.

He scatters more petals, making a new orange, yellow, red and maroon trail to Linda's flat marble gravestone where he spreads the remaining rainbow of petals over the gravestone.

GUS

takes a long pull on his bottle...

Stares at the petal covered gravestone.

GUS

(Spanish, subtitled)

Are you happy now...?

He takes a drag on his cigaret and waits for an answer...

EXT. SPRAWLING DESERT RESIDENCE - SANTA FE, NM - NIGHT

Expensive. Taliesin-influenced, set off the road. A maroon Jeep with oversize tires and vanity plate, "OBSEQUY," squats in the driveway.

INT. PLAYROOM - RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Low lights reveal a tastefully dark, paneled, SM dungeon decorated with the latest in bondage furniture and a breathlessly beautiful collection of "First American" artifacts.

A Kachina "fire-god" figure overlooks a pair of ancient Mimbres "killed" pots, several "dream catchers" and a locked lighted fifty-gallon terrarium --

Old Dead Pawn jewelry and Native American artifacts, turquoise, coral, lapis, other precious gems in antique settings, sprawl across its sandy surface creating a sequined rainbow of light.

An antiquated darkhaired doll with peyote-stitched clothing stares at: A pilfered sign partially hidden behind a pile of Clovis and Folsom projectile points and arrowheads in the back reading: "...logical Site."

Additional security provided by a diamondback rattlesnake.

Fleeting glimpses of Moonbeam's skin reveal wrists, ankles and neck secured by fleece lined leather restraints attached to a submissive kneeler table by short stainless steel chains.

The strange hourglass-shaped Shadow secures the last of the locking roller buckles.

Moonbeam's breathing quickens under her blindfold as the Shadow opens up a small autoclave with his latex covered hands, removes a highly polished X-acto blade and attaches it to an Acme tattoo machine.

Snakeskin cowboy boots move to Moonbeam's bare ass.

SHADOW'S VOICE

(whispers)

Art thou willing to suffer to see
the light?

MOONBEAM'S VOICE

Yes... oh, yes.

The WHIRRING blade breaks through her skin drawing blood as it saws a thin wet circular outline on one of her dewy buttocks.

SHADOW'S VOICE

(a whispered command)

Shhh... Center yourself!

Moonbeam exhales every ounce of air inside her, followed by a thin half-pleasurable squeal.

SHADOW'S VOICE

Now, I'll open it up.

The Shadow pops an amyl under Moonbeam's nose, leaving her writhing in erotic anticipation as he proceeds to "open up" the design in quick precision cuts, punctuated by Moonbeam's intense MOANS and

SHADOW'S VOICE

Breathe... Relax... Focus...

The Shadow pours some liquid across the design, which makes Moonbeam stiffen. The Shadow wipes off the blood and presses a fresh paper towel over the cutting.

SHADOW'S VOICE

Good girl. This will be your blood print.

MOONBEAM

Let me see it. Let me see it...!

SHADOW'S VOICE

In a minute. There's something I want to ask you, first.

The Shadow moves to a cabinet, removes a padded pair of vice-grips and a small propane torch, then pulls off her blindfold.

Moonbeam's dilated pupils watch the Shadow light the propane torch and focus its intense blue flame on the strangely shaped piece of sheet metal held in the vice-grip's claws --
The blue flame HISSSES... rapidly turning the darkened eighteen gauge metal surface red-hot.

MOONBEAM

Mercy...!

EXT. "10-20" BAR - ALBUQUERQUE - NIGHT

A cab lets the Woman out in front. She spots the Coroner's 4x4 loitering with several unmarked cars in the moonlight.

INT. "10-20"

The Woman enters the front door, dressed for dancing. Face made-up, sheared locks now the color of corn silk. She looks like a new woman.

Rescue and Lawenforcement eyes follow her long liquid stride to the bar, where she says something to the Bartender, who points her toward the

SIDE ROOM

Where Mike, the Helicopter Pilot, sets a new rack of 9-balls for Gus. When Gus bends down to break -- The Woman eases up to the pool table, interrupting him.

WOMAN

How about a little nine-ball, Gus.

GUS

Do I know you?

WOMAN

I don't know, do you?

She takes his pool cue, swings it like a golf club.

GUS

You...?

She smiles and chalks the tip suggestively.

WOMAN

Barbara.

GUS

Barbara. Greek for stranger.

Several EMTs and police officers gather around as the Woman tugs at the hem to keep her mini-skirt from riding up.

WOMAN

A C-note against who takes me home...?

(strokes cue)

How about it, Gus?

MIKE

(hands Woman a beer)

I'd like some of that action.

The Woman takes an easy sip, eyes on Gus. She sets the bottle down, bends over provocatively, breaks the rack of balls -- Sinks two.

Mike and Gus exchange a look.

The Woman stalks the table, sinks ball after ball.

Mike's expression shifts from astonishment to embarrassment as two more BALLS DROP, but he can't take his eyes off her. The gathering crowd cheers, pound their cues on the floor and guffaw as the BALLS DROP.

She fires a table-length shot that rockets the nine-ball into the corner pocket, permits herself a small private smile.

The crowd cheers. Mike reluctantly hands her a \$100 bill.

MIKE
 (reracks)
 You're even better than you look.
 How about another go?

WOMAN
 (indicating Gus)
 No, I want him.

More guffaws. The Woman breaks the rack of balls.
 THREE BALLS DROP, one of them the "9."

MIKE
 You're on your own, Doc.

EXT. "10-20" BAR - P.O.V. THRU WINDSHIELD - NIGHT

A Shadow watches Gus and the Woman wander through the thinned-out parking lot toward the 4x4.

WOMAN
 You the cor-o-nor man?

GUS
 Far as I know.

WOMAN
 Know what I always wanted to do?

GUS
 Let me guess.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING - NIGHT

Gus drives. The Woman, all over him, unzips his pants.

GUS
 Easy tiger, that's not a toy.

WOMAN
 Ooooh? An' I was gonna play with
 it.

A vehicle with oversize tires, glimpsed behind them.

EXT. STREET - 4X4

Swerves into the deserted Morgue parking lot.

EXT. MORGUE - P.O.V. THRU WINDSHIELD

A Shadow watches Gus fumble with his keys...

The Woman clings to him kissing his face...
Gus finally gets the door open. They enter.

INT. AUTOPSY THEATER

Light from the hall spills into the room revealing three empty stainless steel examining tables.

WOMAN'S VOICE

(blunt)

Give me a minute.

She enters the darkened room, alone.

Gus waits in the hallway taking several deep breaths and studies the lighted end of his cigaret...

WOMAN'S VOICE

(flat)

Ready.

Gus enters, his eyes adjust to the light...

He sees a body on one of the tables, breathing.

WOMAN

(matter-of-fact)

Do your stuff, Cor-o-nor man.

Gus puts out his cigaret, unbuckles his belt.

WOMAN

No. Not that. Turn on the light.

Gus flips the switch.

The Woman lies in the anatomical position, nude with her hands at her side, palms up, her beautiful body a cache of pale bruises against the white sheet beneath her.

GUS

Christ.

WOMAN

Tell me who I am, Doc.

GUS

I don't do living.

WOMAN

I'm dead, Gus, as dead as it gets.

GUS

I've seen deader.

Gus goes to a chrome cabinet, opens it, takes out a tall blue bottle and two vials, pours some amber liquid.

WOMAN

I've no identity, no memories.

GUS

Memories aren't all they're cracked up to be.

The Woman sits up, pulling the sheet to cover herself.

WOMAN

You have any idea what it's like to look into a mirror and not recognize the face staring back?

GUS

(hands her a vial)
You need a therapist.

WOMAN

What do I have to do to get you to help me?

GUS

You might try the truth. I heard about your little hospital stunt.

WOMAN

I had to get out of there, all they care about is who pays the bill.

She takes a long slow drink.

WOMAN

Mmmm... What's the first thing you do when you examine a body?

(beat)

A dead body.

GUS

Height. Weight. Sex.

WOMAN

Five seven, one twenty two, female.

GUS

Then, cause of death.

WOMAN

Missing identity. What's next?

GUS

I look for marks.

WOMAN

Marks?

GUS

Like a birth mark or a scar, tattoo.

WOMAN

What can you tell from a tattoo?

GUS

A jillion things, signed or not,
right- or left-handed shading, style,
type, stuff like that.

The Woman swings her legs up, rolls over, throws the sheet back revealing her fine butt.

WOMAN

Take a look, Doc, ever seen one like
this?

Gus takes a magnifying glass and looks through it at:

TATTOO

Gimlet-green swan with a long neck and serpent's head.

GUS'S VOICE

Very nice single needle work. Looks
like some kind of photo-realistic
blackwork.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Blackwork?

BACK TO SCENE

The Woman raises her head and looks over her shoulder at Gus examining her tattoo.

GUS

Tribal tattooing. It's a very old
technique.

WOMAN

Can you tell who did it?

GUS

No, it's not signed.

WOMAN

Figures.

Gus's attention shifts to:

The healing puncture marks and underneath them, in the small of her back, the delicate, unique hourglass-shaped scar.

Gus recognizes the brand. He impulsively reaches for something on his chest -- Something underneath his shirt.

SERIES OF SURREAL STACCATO CUTS:

-- National Park vehicles wash Gus's face in bubblegum light.
 -- A woman's nude body sprawled lifeless in the desert.
 -- An hourglass-shaped scar on bruised creamy skin.
 -- Bill strangles the griefstricken Gus.
 -- Frank and Park Rangers pull them apart --

BACK TO GUS

The Woman stares at him.

Gus takes a sip of his drink.

GUS

Be patient, you'll remember, memories aren't lethal.

WOMAN

When I think I know who I am, I'm afraid I invented it. It's all jumbled up like a dream, like someone else's dream. I can't just sit and wait. I'll go crazy. I'd rather be dead.

Gus tosses her her clothes.

GUS

Yeah, life's a bitch, death on the other hand --

WOMAN

(jumps off table)
 You owe me a life.

GUS

It's the other way around. When you save someone's life, they owe you a life.

The Woman takes off Moonbeam's faux "diamond" studs.

WOMAN

These are worth a lot of money.
 (proffers them to Gus)
 After you find out whose life you saved, you can collect.

Gus takes earrings, examines them as he considers her offer.

WOMAN

Now, do you mind giving a girl a little privacy? This is as far as I go on the first date.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING - PRE-DAWN

Gus drives, the Woman stares out the window.

GUS

Where are you staying?

WOMAN

La Posada de Albuquerque.

GUS

Doing all right not knowing who you are.

WOMAN

A sweet little old lady staked me to a room.

GUS

Uncoil will you? I was just asking.

EXT. LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE - PRE-DAWN

The 4x4 pulls up in front of the ornate Moorish entrance.

INT. 4X4

Gus looks across the seat at the Woman.

The DOORMAN's yawning face appears in the passenger window, he opens car door.

DOORMAN

Evening. Morning.

The Woman holds out an open palm toward Gus.

WOMAN

After you identify the mystery guest.

Gus drops the "diamond" stud earrings into her palm.

GUS

Don't bother hocking these. Cubic zirconium. Synthetic. I'll pick you up this afternoon anyway, we'll check out your bird.

The Woman beams, exits. The Doorman closes the door.

INT. SUITE - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE - PRE-DAWN

The Woman enters, stops, listens.

MOONBEAM'S VOICE

I kept tellin' him I didn't know no fuckin' Carmen. You know any fuckin' Carmens?

TASSEL'S VOICE

No.

MOONBEAM'S VOICE

Ouch, goddammit! Take 'er easy.

TASSEL'S VOICE

Take it easy yourself, I told you to stay out of there.

Woman tiptoes toward bedroom, pushes ajar door open.

INT. BEDROOM - SUITE

Moonbeam sprawls across the bed, a deep pattern cut into one of her buttocks, a man-in-the-moon complete with beams...

Above that, on the small of her back -- a raw hourglass-shaped welt.

Tassel soothes the battered skin with ointment.
Moonbeam soothes herself with some wine.

WOMAN

Jesus, what happened?

TASSEL

She bottomed some limp dick in Gehenna's. He cut and burnt her.

MOONBEAM

How did I know? He looked real frosty in that leather an' I mean, I never seen such a tiny waist on a man -- Ow!

TASSEL

Sorry.

MOONBEAM

I tole him I wanted always wanted, you know, a cuttin'. He says he could do it, real fine, an I can take it out in trade. So, he gives me some shit and...

TASSEL

What?

MOONBEAM

I don't know, Amyl, I think.

(takes a long drink)

Well, we finish an I want to see it, you know. But then, he takes out this goddamn flame thrower. I give him the safe word, you know, 'mercy,' but he just keeps cookin'... Ouch!

(drinks)

He axes me if I know where Carmen is. I tole him I don't know no fuckin' Carmens. Ohh.

(beat)

I never seen a trick get so goddamn mad, he hits me with this red-hot poker. Oho.

Moonbeam shoots Tassel a sharp look.

TASSEL

Sonovabitch did it on purpose. Brands don't have to hurt. If you know what you're doing they can be orgasmic. The bastard just burned the first two layers of skin. That way the nerves stay alive and all you get is the pain.

MOONBEAM

You gonna let me download or what?

TASSEL

Sorry.

MOONBEAM

I thought the sonovabitch was gonna kill me, he got so crazy. I guess he finally believed me 'cause he paid real good. Ouch!

(an afterthought)

You know any fuckin' Carmens?

WOMAN

No. I don't know.

The Woman picks up the phone, punches 9-1-1.

TASSEL

What are you doing?

WOMAN

Calling the police.

TASSEL

Get real. I know you're still giving it away, but don't go totally stupid on us.

The Woman glares at Tassel, hangs up, Pulls three \$100 bills out of her pocket, Slaps them down on the nightstand.

WOMAN

On account.

TASSEL

I told you, like riding a bicycle.

The Woman frowns down at Moonbeam's tortured body.

MOONBEAM

Don't worry, sister. I'll be fine. I been hurt worse than this, ain't half as bad as a broken heart.

TASSEL

I told her to stay outta Gehenna's unless she's packin'.

(beat)

Bod-Mod... They're all into bangin' an' clangin', cuttin' an' burnin', some sisters get off on that shit --

(to Moonbeam)

Did all that pain make you see God...? No...? You should know better.

Tassel slaps the other cheek of Moonbeam's butt.

INT. BEDROOM - SUITE - DAY

Dark, with the double curtains drawn.

The Woman lies in bed, next to the snoring duo, Moonbeam and Tassel -- staring at the ceiling...

Finally, she closes her eyes.

SERIES OF THREE-FRAME SUBLIMINAL CUTS:

-- LUMINOUS BRIDGES of static electricity.

-- A SEQUINED RAINBOW of light.

-- A thin piece of RED-HOT METAL.

INT. BEDROOM - SUITE

Abruptly, the Woman's eyes snap open. She eases out of bed, tiptoes to the bathroom, quietly closes the door.

INT. BATHROOM - SUITE - CONTINUING

The Woman prods and pokes through the contents of Moonbeam's oversized bag looking for something. She withdraws a prescription bottle, reads its label, returns it to bag, withdraws another, reads, returns.

The third prescription bottle holds her interest. She shakes out several pills, recaps bottle, returns it to bag. Dry pops one of them into her mouth. The Woman relaxes until she sees Tassel's reflection in the mirror, watching her from the doorway.

An anxious moment between them until Tassel flashes her a reassuring smile as she reaches into Moonbeam's bag and takes out another one of the pill bottles.

EXT. TIERRA DEL SOL JEWELRY MART - ALBUQUERQUE, NM - P.O.V.
THRU WINDSHIELD - AFTERNOON

CARMEN AVES, 40's, slender and sexy, emerges from a doorway.

Two Shadows in a sedan watch this stunning headturner stroll toward the next door in this exclusive row of gem shops.

EXT. TESORO DEL SOL - TIERRA DEL SOL JEWELRY MART

Expensive. Stone and glass. Blinds shuttered, a brass "Closed" sign. Carmen knocks anyway.

A moment, then manicured fingers part the wooden blinds and a pair of eyes stare at her through the reinforced glass under gilded letters -- "Indian Jewelry - Direct from the Reservation to You."

MAN'S VOICE
(from behind glass)
We're closed, inventory.

Carmen slips a large Lander Blue Web turquoise drop-earring out of her ear and holds it up to the glass.

Blinds snap closed, lock SNICKS, door opens.

INT. SHOW ROOM - TESORO DEL SOL

Carmen stands before a glass counter, with a brass sign reading: "If it's old, it can be sold," waiting for the threepiecesuit, ROLAND SYDNEY, to complete his examination of the turquoise drop-earring with his jeweler's loupe.

SYDNEY
Lander Blue. You know your turquoise,
Miss...?

CARMEN
Aves, but call me Carmen.

SYDNEY
Chalchijuitl, Carmen.

CARMEN
What?

SYDNEY
Navajo. Based on an ancient Nahuatl
term modified by the Dine.

Sydney's magnified eye rakes Carmen, optically undressing her.

SYDNEY
Means 'fallen skystone.'

TURQUOISE DROP-EARRING - SYDNEY'S MAGNIFIED P.O.V.

Its "spiderweb" surface creates cobalt confetti in the light.

SYDNEY'S VOICE
'The temple I frequent is high, A
turquoise-vaulted dome - the sky,
That spans the world with majesty.'

BACK TO SCENE

Sydney unscrews the jeweler's loupe from his eye.

SYDNEY
Omar Khayyam.

He turns the drop-earring over and over, pausing to admire
the web of lines that form the matrix.

SYDNEY
(reverently)
Pieces of heaven... See how the lines
flow through the turquoise? Flowing
like veins through Mother Earth.

Sydney taps the stone against his teeth. Satisfied, he places
the drop-earring on the velvet cloth before him.

SYDNEY
Hand wrought setting. Nice patina.
Probably fifteen to twenty carats.
I'd rather have a pound of Lander
Blue than any diamond, it's got zat.

CARMEN
Zat?

SYDNEY

It's a heavenly quality that reveals
the Life in the Stone.

CARMEN

What's it worth?

SYDNEY

Hard to say.

CARMEN

Come on, Mr. Jewelry Man, ballpark.

SYDNEY

Per earring? Wholesale around five
thousand, give or take an inning or
two. I couldn't possibly go that high.

CARMEN

I'm reasonable. They're not hot.

SYDNEY

I'm sure. May I ask, how much Indian
are you...? Do you have a CDIB card?

CARMEN

(slips drop-earring
in her pierced-ear)

You want to know my blood quantum?
I belong to three nations. I'm one-
eighth this and one-eighth that.
I'm tired of explaining myself in
fractions. I know who I am.

(moves to the door)

Thanks anyway.

SYDNEY

Could I have your address for our
files? In case I talk to someone
who is interested in Old Dead Pawn.

CARMEN

Pawn? I want to sell them.

SYDNEY

Of course, but it would be a shame
for you not to get something close
to their value.

Sydney moves from behind the glass counter.

SYDNEY

This is Relic month. I could make
some calls. A lot of buyers in town.

CARMEN

See what you can do, I'll check back
in a couple days. Okay?

Sydney follows her to the door, lets her out and studies her long liquid stride for a moment...

Until he spots the plain sedan with the Two Shadows inside.

He quickly locks the door, crosses to a desk, picks up the telephone, punches several numbers, nervously plays with his unique keychain -- several keys held together by a large stainless steel hook.

He listens a moment, then:

SYDNEY

(into phone)

Who the fuck is Carmen Aves..?

(beat)

Why? Because I just appraised one of my own earrings, you dumb sonovabitch! The pair I made up special for that little Chickasaw junkie, the late Miss Begay from Tulsa... Don't tell me, 'calm down,' somebody's watching the store...! I don't know who! What the hell is going on...?!

EXT. DESERTED STREET - SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO - DUSK

4x4 parked in front of a neon storefront.

EXT. TASMANIAN TATTOO PARLOR

Gus and the Woman stand in front of the motorcycle chain-locked door staring at the sign in the window. In a fine artist's freestyle, it reads:

Gone inkin'
Southwestern U.S. Tattoo Exposition
Shiprock, New Mexico
Tasmanian "Tas" Tucker

EXT. NEW MEXICO HIGHWAY 44 - NIGHT

4x4 dodges tumble weeds crossing the macadam road near the turnoff for the Chaco Culture National Historical Park.

REPORTER'S VOICE

(on radio)

The ring of pick on stone and thud of earth on earth alone disturbs the peace of the prairie.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING

Gus drives, the Woman rides shotgun.

REPORTER'S VOICE
(on radio)
Archaeologists and looters at Mesa
Verde both dig for artifacts...

Gus shakes out a cigaret, takes it in his mouth.

REPORTER'S VOICE (on radio) ... Interrupting the long journey to the afterlife...	GUS You smoke?	WOMAN I don't know.
---	-------------------	------------------------

He shakes out another one, she takes it, he lights it.

She takes a deep drag, coughs and sputters, rolls window
down, throws cigaret out.

REPORTER'S VOICE (on radio) ... for the souls of the First Americans buried in centuries- old graves. Why...?	GUS I guess not.
--	---------------------

The Woman feels her purse for something inside, checks out
Gus, then decides against it. She turns the radio dial from
Gus's NPR station to a younger one with less talk.

GUS
Hey.

WOMAN
I may not know who I am, but I know
what I like.

She stifles a yawn, leans back against the seat,
Gets comfortable, opens her eyes wide to stay awake.
She stares at the hypnotic flashing white line...

Finally she can't keep her eyes open any longer,
Reluctantly they close...

SERIES OF SURREAL CUTS:

-- A thin piece of red-hot metal.

MAN'S VOICE
(a whisper)
Ready...?

-- Moist wrists strain against leather restraints.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Do it...

-- Red-hot metal SIZZLES tender skin.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING - NIGHT

Gus watches the Woman's face twitch. Her hands balled into tiny fists, pulling away from something unseen holding them.

WOMAN

(smells something; smiles)

My sacrificial incense to the gods...

GUS

Hey. Hey!

Gus nudges her. She wakes with a start.

WOMAN

What?

GUS

You were dreaming, Barbara, talking in your sleep.

WOMAN

No I wasn't. What did I say?

GUS

Something about incense to the gods.

WOMAN

Why is it the things I remember are the things I don't want to know?

(watches desert phantoms go by)

And don't call me Barbara, my name is Inez.

GUS

Inez?

EXT. BISTI BADLANDS - NORTHWESTERN NEW MEXICO - NIGHT

The full moon casts nature's hoodoo palate in a pale glow as the 4x4 appears over a crest in the twolane.

EXT. SOUTHWESTERN U.S. TATTOO EXPO - SHIPROCK, NM - NIGHT

Crisscrossing klieg lights surrounding a huge circus tent pitched in the oversized shadow of the sacred Indian site.

Gus eases the 4x4 by a long line of Harley Hogs, through the colorful crowd around the entrance, parks next to a Pickup with several picks and shovels in the bed.

INT. TATTOO EXPO TENT

A tattoo wonderland, festive atmosphere filled with pierced, illustrated people. A rock-band, THE INK STAINS, entertains from a raised stage next to the beer bar.

Someone watches Gus and the Woman make their way through the usual conglomeration of vendors selling everything from sterile needles and gloves to whips and chains.

Gus stops at a booth selling tattoo flash and asks a few questions. The VENDOR points off toward a leather fashion show and tattoo competition where the crowd fights for viewing space behind several photographers.

Gus and the Woman walk past several beerbelly bikers comparing their tattoos for the afterlife and stop in front of a:

TASMANIAN TATTOO BOOTH

A bodysuit of tattoos in a bikini brief, TASMANIAN "TAS" TUCKER, works on the butt of a MAN stretched over his table.

The Man's pants droop below his knees, his hiked-up boxer shorts exposing a cheek, but otherwise he's fully clothed.

The Acme tattoo machine WHIRRS as Gus and the Woman enter the booth.

They notice the tattoo Tucker applies -- a large red apple with a bite taken out of it.

GUS

Tas.

TUCKER

Give me a heartbeat, Bro, just got to sign this.

Tucker puts final touches on the apple, then under it -- A small star with one point missing.

TUCKER

(to Man)
Sneak a peek.

Tucker holds up a mirror for the Man to look back over his shoulder and see the work.

MAN

Heavenly.

Tucker applies salve and a bandage. The Man gets up, pulls up his pants, exposing snakeskin cowboy boots.

MAN

What do I owe you Tuck?

TUCKER

Just call it an act of contrition.
Okay, Father?

The Man/Priest blesses Tucker, exits into the milling crowd toward Pulsating Paula's Piercing Paradise where a NeoSporic FleshMechanic sells suspension paraphernalia and gives a demonstration of "The Face Lace."

TUCKER

looks up at Gus and the Woman.
His grinning face and tongue laced with pierced jewelry.

TUCKER

Doc! How's it hangin'?
(wiggles his pierced
big toe in the air)
Or should I say danglin'?

GUS

Good. Tas... uh, Inez.

TUCKER

Charmed. Didn't know you're into
ink.

GUS

Only red.

Gus hands Tucker photo of the Woman's tattoo.

GUS

Recognize this?

TUCKER

Nice piece of work. Oh, that. That's
Lyre's swan.

GUS

Lyre?

TUCKER

Yeah, Martin Lyre. The master of
single needle photorealism. Hamlet
Tattoo in Taos.

Gus takes photo from Tucker.

GUS

Thanks, Tas.

TUCKER

Don't go pullin' the scab, Doc. I didn't say it was his. It could be, he liked to use that Chinese chin-chin.

GUS

What do you mean?

TUCKER

Its Lyre's blueblack flash all right, I copied it from Lyre. Everybody copied it from Lyre.

Tucker takes photo back, gives it a closer look.

TUCKER

I don't see his mark, but that doesn't mean anything. I could tell more from the original.

Gus and the Woman exchange a look.

EXT. EL MALPAIS LAVA FLOW - NIGHT

4x4 dips below a rise in the twolane blacktop and disappears.

WOMAN'S VOICE

I've never been so embarrassed in my life.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING

Gus drives, the Woman at his side.

GUS

How do you know?

A hungup moment, then:

WOMAN

Gus... You ever hit a woman?

GUS

Once... Once.

WOMAN

Did she like it?

Gus shoots her a look.

WOMAN

Some women do you know?

GUS

So I've heard.

WOMAN

What'd it feel like?

GUS

Frightening.

WOMAN

Why?

GUS

That I let myself get that out of control.

WOMAN

Maybe you weren't responsible.

GUS

We were both responsible.

WOMAN

Is that the reason you became a coroner? No responsibility?

GUS

No.

WOMAN

I'll bite. Why?

GUS

It's quiet.

That tears it.

EXT. BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT - NIGHT

4x4's taillights disappear behind a rise in the twolane.

Moments later, another set of taillights appear and pursue the 4x4 over the rise and disappear behind it.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING - NIGHT

Gus drives, the Woman rolls down the window, ruffles her hair and dries her perspiring face in the wind.

WOMAN

I thought the desert cooled off at night.

GUS

It does.

EXT. GUS'S HOUSE - MOVING P.O.V.- THRU WINDSHIELD - NIGHT

A Shadow in an SUV creeps by the 4x4 parked in the forecourt.

INT. CENTRAL COURTYARD - GUS'S HOUSE

Gus sits on the edge of the pool in his bathing suit.
 An antique key on a chain around his neck.
 Watching the Woman swim laps underwater...

Finally, she surfaces.

WOMAN

You live here alone?

GUS

Yes.

WOMAN

Pity. It was built for a woman.

GUS

I thought so.

WOMAN

You should finish it.

She gets out of the water, grabs a towel, puts it over her
 drenched t-shirt.

INT. TESORO DEL SOL - NIGHT

In the back room, Sydney sits at his computer listing a "girl's
 antique Puberty T-necklace featuring multicolor beads woven
 with a peyote stitch on brain-tanned leather" for sale on an
 Internet auction. Abruptly his phone RINGS.
 Sydney picks up.

SYDNEY

(into phone)

Tesoro del Sol... Miss Aves! I'm
 glad you called, Carmen. I've found
 a buyer for your earrings.

(beat)

No not here. We'll have to come to
 you --

(beat)

Okay if that's the way you feel, but
 he said he would pay top -- Okay,
 sure.

(beat)

What's the address?

INT. LIVING ROOM - GUS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sparse. Minimal. Unlived in.

Gus and the Woman, wearing robes, sit on the Saltillo tile floor in front of the kiva fireplace with its raised ceramic tile hearth eating bocados and drinking tequila shooters under a huge singular piece of psychedelic art:

A tattooed man swimming in a sea of butterflies.

GUS

It's based on the Chinese story of a man who dreams he is a butterfly. When he wakes, he wonders if he is a butterfly dreaming he is a man.

WOMAN

I know how he feels. I'm surprised you bought it.

GUS

It was a gift.
(rises)
I guess I better take you home.

WOMAN

What time is it?

GUS

Why? You got a pill to take?

WOMAN

My little old lady friend goes to bed early, I'd hate to disturb her. I'd like an early start on tomorrow.

A moment between them.

EXT. CENTRAL COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Gus opens two oversize handcarved wooden doors, leads the Woman through the courtyard to another oversize handcarved wooden door. They enter.

INT. ROOM - OFF CENTRAL COURTYARD -- CONTINUOUS

Gus turns on the wrought iron lamp illuminating the bare white adobe walls, a wooden crucifix over the only other piece of furniture -- an oversize wrought iron bed.

GUS

This used to be my wife's room. You can sleep here if you want.

He fluffs the bed scattering cotton dust.
 The Woman starts to say something -- BEEPS.
 He checks message on his Blackberry digital miniscreen.

GUS

I'll be back before you wake up.

SNAKESKIN COWBOY BOOTS

CRUNCH across a darkened gravel driveway to a tired neon-lit threshold. One of the boots TAPS on the door.

EXT. UNIT #1 - SEEDY NO-TELL MOTEL - ALBUQUERQUE - NIGHT

The door opens revealing Capri pants, open-toed mules, bare feet with chipped polished toenails.

CARMEN'S VOICE

Oh... Hi... I... I was just going
 to call you.

The bare feet back into the room... The boots follow...

The door closes.

INT. LINDA'S BEDROOM - (ROOM OFF CENTRAL COURTYARD) - NIGHT

The Woman lies in the bed staring at the beamed ceiling.

Reluctantly, she closes her eyes.

FLASH CUT - STAINLESS FLESH-HOOKS radiate sequined light.

THE WOMAN'S eyes pop open.

INT. UNIT #1 - SEEDY NO-TELL MOTEL - NIGHT

Several empty bottles of cheap whiskey, opened cans of half-eaten soup, remnants of fastfood feasts, litter the room.

Carmen lies spreadeagle across the waterbed, her wrists and ankles tied to the posts, watching the hourglass-shaped Shadow pace back and forth across the lava lights. A double-edged knife glistens in his gloved hand.

CARMEN

I didn't mean to take them, but I
 panicked, I just grabbed the first
 thing I saw and ran.

The Shadow takes the double-edged knife, taps one drop-earring in her ear then decides to slice off the buttons of her heaving blouse, revealing pierced nipple rings and crisscrossed pierced navel rings dangling above her low-rise waistband.

CARMEN

I never would have sold them. I only did it because you really scared me. I was afraid everything was getting so out of control but...

The Shadow starts slicing apart one leg of her Capri pants.

CARMEN

... when I had time to think about it, I realized I was wrong and...

When the double-edged blade reaches Carmen's crotch, it hesitates a moment...

CARMEN

I knew you were right and, Gaby... Gaby was just an accident.

CLOSE ON CARMEN'S FACE

Water bed SLOSHES as her remaining garments are viciously RIPPED away.

CARMEN

Please don't hurt me, please. Mercy. Mercy! Please...!

INT. MANAGER'S UNIT - NO-TELL MOTEL - SAME TIME

MANAGER, 40's, overweight, seedy like the motel, watches the disturbing documentary, "Thieves of Time," tracing the history of archaeological exploitation of Native American burial grounds on the TV from his overstuffed chair behind the counter.

Abruptly, a bloodcurdling SCREAM from somewhere. He checks his set then turns down the TV volume and listens...

Another bloodcurdling SCREAM.

Manager looks out the window and sees the hourglass-shaped Shadow dancing across the drawn shades in Unit #1.

He checks his watch, then turns the TV volume back up.

INT. LINDA'S BEDROOM - GUS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Woman lies in the bed still staring at the beamed ceiling.

Frustrated, she rolls over, fishes in her bag for something, finds it, dry pops the last of Moonbeam's pills into her mouth.

Abruptly, CLANGING METAL intrudes from somewhere.

INT./EXT COURTYARD - NIGHT

The Woman pursues the CLANGING, moving quietly toward another room off the lap-pool.

UNROOFED ROOM WITH NO DOOR - WOMAN'S P.O.V.

Gus lies on a weight bench pumping iron. She enters SHOT.

WOMAN

Need a spot?

GUS

Can't you sleep either?

WOMAN

Too hot. Too noisy.

GUS

Sorry.

She notices a huge multicolored, rip-shredded piece of plastic sprawled across something wicker-like in the corner.

WOMAN

What's that?

GUS

Hot air balloon.

The Woman pull-folds the multicolored plastic away from the remnants of a wicker gondola. It lies next to a pick, dirt-encrusted shovel, metal probe and a small sifting screen.

WOMAN

You into ballooning?

GUS

Not any more.

WOMAN

I'd like to try that someday.

Gus sets the weight in the hooks, slides out, limps over to the weight rack.

WOMAN

What's the matter with your leg?

GUS

Shattered tibia. Balloon accident.
Want to pump a little iron?

The Woman slides under the weight.

NIGHT SKY - WOMAN'S P.O.V.

She recognizes her old friend Orion.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Nice view.

GUS'S VOICE

I like an open house.

BACK TO SCENE

She presses up, no good, too heavy.

WOMAN

Could you put on another plate?

Gus grins, slides off a couple twenty-pounders.

GUS

No pain, no gain.

The drug kicks in. She presses the weight with abandon.

Finally exhausted, she slides out from under the weight.

GUS

I'm impressed.

WOMAN

Don't handle me, Gus.

Moment between them, then:

GUS

Inez. We'll see Martin Lyre tomorrow.
Let's follow your tattoo before you
go circling the drain. Okay?

INT. LINDA'S BEDROOM - LATER

The Woman twists and turns on the oversized bed, drenched in perspiration.

SERIES OF FRAGMENTED ALMOST SUBLIMINAL CUTS:

- A naked woman hangs face down from a suspended rack.
- A nude hourglass-shaped Shadow moves toward her.

SHADOW'S VOICE

Gaby. Oh, Gaby!

- An extraordinary TATTOO.
- A gimlet swan with the head of a horned serpent.
- The Woman SCREAMS!

INT. LINDA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUING

The Woman writhes on the bed SCREAMING.

GUS'S VOICE

Inez!

GUS

wearing undershorts and t-shirt, shakes her awake.

GUS

Inez!

The Woman eyes Gus with a confused look...

then, she abruptly slides up... letting the sheet drop away.

WOMAN

I'm Gaby. Call me Gaby.

GUS

Okay, Gaby... Do you have any other names?

WOMAN/GABY

Just Gaby.

A moment as their eyes meet.

Gus takes her in his arms. They kiss.

Gus pulls the wet sheet from between them, moves over her.

GABY

Not like that.

Gus backs off.

GABY

Tie me up, tie me down first.

GUS

What?

GABY

Use socks, ties... anything.

Gus impulsively touches the antique key on the chain underneath his t-shirt and stares at Gaby.

GABY

What's the matter, Doc? Afraid?

SERIES OF FRAGMENTED ALMOST SUBLIMINAL CUTS:

- Linda Ravin naked on the bed.
- Her wrists and ankles bound with leather restraints.
- Her angry face laughing and taunting Gus.

INT. LINDA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gus pulls the locked footlocker from under the bed, opens it with the antique key on the chain, takes out a set of fleece lined leather restraints. They exchange a look.

GABY

Always the Boy Scout.

Gaby impatiently watches Gus secure her wrists and ankles with the restraints attached to the bed by short stainless steel chains. Gus locks the last of the roller buckles.

GABY

Hurry. Do it. Do it now.

Gus drops his shorts and t-shirt, moves over her, covering her twisting body...

Abruptly, Gaby bucks him off, screaming:

GABY

Stop it. Stop it! Get off me. Get off me!

Gus impulsively raises his fist to strike her --

GUS

What are you, some kinda goddamn tease!

GABY

No. No. The woman in my dream, it's not me, she's not me! It's not me!

Gus gets off the bed.

GABY

I didn't make this happen, I was bait. I didn't know. I brought them. It's not me! It's not me.

Gus quickly unbuckles her. The Woman rolls over and quietly sobs... Gus studies the wounds and hourglass brand on her bare back as he pulls the covers over her.

EXT. TAOS, NEW MEXICO - DAY

4x4 turns off Paseo del Pueblo Sur onto a side street.

EXT. HAMLET'S - TAOS, NM - DAY

Feeble garish neon spells out:

Hamlet's
"Conceptual Skin Art for the Undecided."

INT. HAMLET'S

The walls covered with tattoo flash surrounding a sign:

-- MARTIN LYRE --
Tooling flesh from the Old School.
"As Ancient as Time, as Modern as Tomorrow."

JANET "NEEDLES" GIBSON, 33, of the Smiling Buddha School, pierces the nipple of a crewcut SAILOR. As Gus and Gaby enter, "Needles" jabs too deeply -- pops a vein -- needle breaks -- blood spurts.

SAILOR
(feeling no pain)
A gusher! Don't cap it, let 'er
blow 'erself out!

Needles grabs a cotton swab, presses it on the erupting vessel.

GUS
Is Martin in?

NEEDLES
Like who wants to know?

GUS
Friends of Tas... Tucker.

NEEDLES
He's hangin' round back.

She indicates frosted door behind her with bloodsoaked swab.

INT. BACK ROOM - HAMLET'S

SAILOR'S VOICE
Thar she blows!

Gus and Gaby enter... their eyes adjust to the dimly lit cluttered room outfitted with sterilizers and examining table.

GUS
Martin? Martin...?

Gus switches on flickering florescents, illuminating all that remains of Martin Lyre: Tacked, spread-eagle, on the far wall -- A full-bodysuit of tattoos.

A tanned collection of ancient single needle designs, Anasazi petroglyphs, mixed with Japanese color work with some highpower multineedle modern Zuni tribalism thrown in.

INT. HAMLET'S - LATER

Gus and Gaby wait as Needles drinks out of a mason jar and studies the photograph of Gaby's tattoo.

NEEDLES

That's Marty's bird fur shur. Called it his 'Gimlet Swan', 'cause of this green shadin'. See it comin' in from the south? Marty was a lefty.

(points)

An' this red, 'Eye of the Armadillo.' Ruby-vermilion, hard to get the dept' jus' right.

GABY

Any idea when he did this?

NEEDLES

Had to be 'for last fall, fur shur. Sonovabitch promised he'd teach me. Tol' me that's when I'd eat my sweet bread...

(stifles a sob with a swig from her jar)

... You saw everything he left me.

Gus and Gaby exchange a look, head for the door.

GUS

Thanks for your help, Needles.

NEEDLES

Tell you one thin' fur shur. Marty always did 'em in pairs.

GUS/WOMAN

What?

NEEDLES

Said swans mate for life, least he could do the same.

EXT. EL MORRO NATIONAL MONUMENT - AFTERNOON

4x4 passes by the 200-foot-high sandstone mesa with its two Zuni pueblos on top.

GABY'S VOICE

Is it painful?

GUS'S VOICE

I think so.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING - AFTERNOON

Gus drives.

Gaby watches the bugs kamikaze the windshield.

GABY

Does it leave a scar?

GUS

Sometimes.

GABY

Goddammit! Mated for life! Why
can't I remember?

GUS

I think it's beautiful.

GABY

Really?

GUS

Yes.

Gaby's eyes well up, some distant memory tugs.

GABY

For a woman to be truly beautiful
she has to rate thirty si.

GUS

Thirty times?

GABY

Yeah, thirty si. First, you have to
describe her in ten adjectives.

GUS

Ten?

GABY

Yeah, ten, each one applicable to
three parts of her person.

GUS

Three?

GABY

Three.

(beat)

And three things black.

GUS
Like eyes, lashes and eyebrows?

GABY
And three things delicate.

GUS
Fingers, lips and hair.

GABY
Describe your beautiful woman, Doc.

GUS
Tall, willowy, wild and savage.
Hair, black with blue, blue
reflections like a raven's wing.
Smooth skin, spotless like fresh
squeezed milk. Her face, which
astonishes you at first, can never
be forgotten.

GABY
When did she die, Gus?

GUS
Three years ago...
(beat)
Balloon accident.

GABY
Wonder if anyone remembers me like that?

EXT. ALBUQUERQUE CONVENTION CENTER - LATE AFTERNOON

4x4 crawls through the congestion.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING

Gus, behind the wheel, watches Gaby stare out the window,
trying to catch her breath.

GABY
(blurts out)
Stop the car.

GUS
What?

GABY
Stop the car!

Gus pulls over. Gaby opens door, gets out.

GUS
Are you all right?

GABY
What do you think?

She shuts door. Gus watches her disappear into the crowd.

EXT. GUS'S HOUSE - DUSK

Frank's sedan babysits the 4x4 in the forecourt.

BILL'S VOICE
So you let her go. Just like that?

INT. UNROOFED ROOM - GUS'S HOUSE

Gus sits on a weight bench, with Roy and Frank on either side, perspiring, obviously from working out.

GUS
What was I supposed to do? Tie her down?

Frank and Bill exchange a look.

FRANK
Jesus, Gus. She's a material witness in a homicide. Even if she doesn't remember it.

GUS
We've got a date tonight.

FRANK
You think she'll turn up?

BILL
Yeah, in Chaco Canyon.

GUS
El dios lo maldice! Eso es suficiente!

Gus and Bill jump at each other.

Frank gets between them.

FRANK
(to Bill)
Cool off, will you? This isn't doing anybody any good.

Bill shakes out of Frank's grip and storms off.

FRANK
I'm getting to old for this shit.

Frank sits down on the bench, winded.

FRANK

You got the benefit of my doubt, but
Bill's like the lone holdout on a
hung jury.

GUS

Just keep him away from me.

FRANK

I hope for your sake she shows.

Moment, then Frank exits as Gus goes back to his workout.

EXT. BALCONY - SUITE - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE - NIGHT

Gaby stares at the stars. On the TV, glimpsed in the room
behind her, Native American vendors being removed from their
traditional spots in front of the hotel.

Tassel and Moonbeam dress for the evening in the b.g.

<p>KRQE-TV REPORTER (V.O.) ... because of our report about the fakes, they are ending decades of tradition, banning American Indian jewelry vendors from selling their wares in and around the landmark hotel...</p>	<p>TASSEL (over TV) Go. MOONBEAM (over TV) Go.</p>
--	---

Tassel joins Gaby on the balcony.

Moonbeam rifles through her oversize bag in the b.g.

MOONBEAM

Tass, you been chippin' my diet pills?

Tassel exchanges a look with Gaby.

TASSEL

(to Moonbeam)
Yeah, you mind? I been putting on
weight.

Tassel checks a nicked .38 Smith & Wesson Airweight in her
shoulder-holsterbag.

TASSEL

(to Gaby)
You need to get yourself rung, girl.

GABY

What's the point?

TASSEL

Ain't like a trick. Giving it away
clears your head. Gets everything
flowin' right.

Moonbeam joins them, pulls an accordion pack of condoms out
of her oversize bag, tosses pack to Gaby.

MOONBEAM

Everythin' works better after t'big
O... Even your memory.

Gaby gives them both a look.

INT. HIGH FINANCE RESTAURANT - ALBUQUERQUE, NM - NIGHT

Located at the top of Sandia Peak. Gus sits alone at a table
near the spectacular, panoramic views of the city lights and
the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

He impatiently twirls a tequila shooter in his hand, waiting.

GABY

appears next to the MAITRE D', breathtaking in her silk
cocktail dress. He escorts her to Gus's table... several
eyes follow her.

Gus rises as the Maitre d' seats her.

Maitre d' awards Gus a look of envy, departs.

GUS

That dress could raise the dead.

GABY

Borrower's Boutique.

WAITER approaches, delivers another tequila shooter and setup.

They raise their glasses...

Gus's Blackberry BEEPS. Gus checks message.

GUS

Sorry.

INT. 4X4 - MOVING - NIGHT

Gus smokes behind the wheel. Gaby watches the radio.

GUS

Do you mind if I stop on the way?
Shouldn't take much time, just a
simple D.B.

GABY

You been dealing with the dead too long, Doc. There's nothing simple about death.

Gus studies the end of his cigaret.

EXT. SEEDY NO-TELL MOTEL - NIGHT

Tired neon promotes: Waterbeds, Closed-circuit TV, Air-conditioning, Adult videos and hourly rates.

Squad cars and unmarked vehicles wash the dingy adobe in bubblegum light. 4x4 pulls in next to an UNM ambulance... Gus gets out.

GUS

I'll just be a moment.

GABY

I hope so, I'm no good at waiting.

Gus ducks under police tape, heads toward Unit #1.

INT. UNIT #1 - SEEDY NO-TELL MOTEL

A dingy bloodsoaked sheet covers a sprawled body on the sloshing bed. Frank and Bill speak with TWO UNIFORMS and the Manager.

UNIFORM #1

The manager heard a disturbance around midnight last night --

MANAGER

Disturbance, hell. Sounded like World War three in here.

Gus enters.

MANAGER

She checked in nine, no, ten days ago, sweet as can be, on a weekly. Not a peep out of her, until last night. I mean I don't even see her.

(to Frank)

I didn't want to disturb her.

(to Bill)

Jesus, you know how often we get a weekly?

BILL

Okay, okay. Officer Meminger will take your statement.

The Uniforms escort the Manager outside.
Frank spots Gus, waves him over.

GUS
What we got here?

FRANK
Multiple injuries. We thought you'd
want to see this before we moved the
body.

Frank grabs a dry edge of the sheet. Bill studies Gus.
Frank flips back the soggy shroud revealing --

WOMAN'S BODY

40? 45? 50? Hard to tell. Her back crawling with cuts
and bruises.

But Gus isn't looking at the bruises, he's staring at
something on her right butt.

A TATTOO -- another gimlet swan. The mirror image of Gaby's.

GUS'S VOICE
I'll be damned.

EXT. MORGUE - NIGHT

4x4 and Frank's sedan supervise the crickets.

INT. MORGUE - WHITE-TILED CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Walt pushes the gurney with the sheet-covered body on it.

Gus, Bill and Frank, carrying a manila case file, follow a
scrawled tag, "Jane Doe #11033", fluttering ahead of them
from a bruised toe with its chipped polished toenail.

Gus and Bill honor their uneasy truce.

FRANK
(flips through notebook)
Name's Inez Carmen Aves. Forty-two.
Single. Her rap sheet's a history
book. Former R.N., a scrub-nurse.
Highpriced piece for a while, then
turned common flat-backer.

BILL
Her last bust was fourteen years
ago. Contributing to the delinquency
of a minor. Her daughter. One
Gabriella, age thirteen.

Walt pushes gurney through swinging double doors into:

WHITE TILE DISPLAY ROOM

Walt turns the gurney around in the center of the room.
Gus, Frank and Bill come along side.

FRANK

There's no record on the kid 'cause
that's juvie and they eighty-six
them at maturity.

GUS

Anything else?

BILL

Yeah. Mom used the daughter for
bait, had her teenager picking-up
guys in bars, bringing them home for
Mother to punch. Easy money.

Gus looks into the Viewing Room above them where Gaby waits
behind the glass.

FRANK

Here's the file you asked for.

Gus takes the file, studies it.

Scrawled under the printed "BERNALILLO COUNTY SHERIFF - CASE
FILE" -- "Jane Doe, #11027" with a line through it. Next,
"Barbara Dupe," with a line through it, followed by "Gaby..?"

FRANK

You determine cause of death?

GUS

Massive hemorrhaging from multiple
lacerations and contusions.

BILL

Somebody scalped her, cut off her
tongue, her nipples, her vagina and
you just say she bled to death?

Moment between them.

Gus moves off toward far door.

BILL

That's it?

GUS

Whoever did it, enjoyed it.

BILL
How do you know?

GUS
He took his time.

Frank and Bill exchange a look.

INT. MORGUE - VIEWING ROOM

Gus enters and finds Gaby impatiently staring through the glass at the sheetcovered gurney and the cops.

GABY
I told you I was no good at waiting.

Gus walks over to her, signals Walt.

WHITE TILE ROOM - GABY'S P.O.V.

Walt peels back the sheet from the face of the dead woman from the motel, Inez Carmen Aves.

One split earlobe had something torn out of it.

BACK TO GABY

staring at the now peaceful face, some distant memory maybe?

GABY
Sorry, no bells.

VIEWING ROOM - FRANK AND BILL'S P.O.V.

Gus turns toward them, shakes his head, goes to intercom.

GUS
(into intercom)
Okay, Walt.

INT. VIEWING ROOM

Gus turns to Gaby as Frank pulls the reluctant Bill out of the white tile room in the b.g.

GUS
Something else you should see.

He opens the viewing room door, they exit.

INT. MORGUE - AUTOPSY THEATER - NIGHT

Walt attaches a new tag to the sheet-covered body on an examining table. "Inez Carmen Aves #11033," dangles from the bruised toe which now points toward the floor.

Gus and Gaby enter, he leads her to the body.

She takes a moment, nods. Gus raises the sheet from the dead Carmen's backside, revealing the tattoo.

He studies Gaby -- She just stares... then reaches out to trace the outline of the gimlet swan.

Gus opens the manila file, pulls out the hospital photographs of the tattoo, the piercing wounds, and the brand on Gaby's back.

He selects one and compares it to the same pattern of pierce marks and the irregular series of brands extending up Carmen's back to the nape of her neck.

GUS

Do you remember now how you got this brand?

Abruptly Gaby's eyes jump, shift focus up -- to the brands above the tattoo -- to the photograph in Gus's hand.

SERIES OF RAPID IMPLICIT CUTS:

- Stainless steel flesh-hooks pierce alabaster skin.
- A naked woman suspended from stainless flesh-hooks.
- A white-hot piece of hourglass shaped metal.

GABY

In the autopsy theater, tears in her eyes, slowly shakes her head, barely breathing as she stares at the brands.

GABY

I guess I'm not mated anymore.

Gus exchanges a look with Walt.

EXT. LINDA WRIGHT CUERVO'S GRAVESITE - AFTERNOON

Bill stands by his sister's gravestone watching a burial service on one of the memorial lawns below.

EXT. OTHER GRAVESITE - ROY'S P.O.V - DAY

A trail of multicolored caléndula petals leads from the road to the bright orange caléndula spread over the casket.

TATTOOED PRIEST

reads the 23rd Psalm for the small gathering: Gaby, Gus, Frank and Roy. Off to one side, Moonbeam and Tassel.

TASSEL

Is there anything sadder than a
hooker's funeral?

MOONBEAM

Short and sweet, remember that will
you?

TASSEL

If I'm behind you. If I'm not I
want the works. Color guard,
bagpipes, the whole she-bang.

MOONBEAM

What's with the marigolds?

TASSEL

Some Mexican thing, Festival of the
Dead, I think, wandering spirits see
the bright trails and follow the
correct one or something to --

Priest shoots them a look, then concludes with a Latin
benediction.

GRAVESITE SERVICE - A SHADOW'S P.O.V.

The Priest gives his condolences to Gaby. Frank, nods to
Gaby, pulls Gus aside as Roy speaks privately to Gaby.

ROY AND GABY

ROY

I hope everything was satisfactory.

GABY

Doesn't really matter now, does it?

GUS AND FRANK

FRANK

Be careful, Doc. She's trouble. I
know the type. Professional victim.

GUS

Thanks, Mom, I know what I'm doing.

Gus watches Claire step out from behind some trees and walk
up behind Gaby.

CLAIRE AND GABY

CLAIRE

Maybe she liked it rough, some women
do, you know?

A startled Gaby turns around.

CLAIRE
Do you? Does Gus?

GABY
What's the matter? Couldn't you two agree on price?

CLAIRE
I never thought he'd get over Linda.

GABY
Linda?

CLAIRE
Gus's wife, Bill's sister. She was my best friend.

GABY
I see.

CLAIRE
No, you don't. Park Rangers found her naked body in Chaco Canyon. Death was do to massive brain trauma.

GABY
I thought she died in a balloon accident.

CLAIRE
It's called honoring the dead. Gus is still protecting her memory.
(beat)
I don't know why. He was cleared of all the charges.

GABY
Well, sometimes the dead take the truth with them.

GUS

watches Claire move away. Roy walks up, hands Gus a small suitcase.

ROY
Her mother's effects.

GUS
Thanks, Roy.

They shake hands, Gus looks back at

GABY, MOONBEAM AND TASSEL

MOONBEAM

Why's a body treated better when
it's dead than when it's --

TASSEL

Look on the bright side, Gaby. You
found a good man, you can walk away.

GABY

Didn't you tell me the time to walk
away is when you know what you're
walking away from?

Moment, then they hug... The pro's leave. Gus joins Gaby.

GUS

Who are they?

GABY

Just a couple little old ladies.

GUS AND GABY - A SHADOW'S P.O.V. THRU WINDSHIELD

as they leave the gravesite and walk toward Gus's 4x4.

EXT. 4X4 - ENCHANTED SANDS CEMETERY

Gus lets Gaby in and walks around to the driver's side.

In the b.g. a car with TWO MEN watching them.

CAMERA MOVES IN ON THE TWO MEN.

One is Agent Jicarilla. The other one -- the Chickasaw Man
with the long braids who identified the dead teenager.

Chickasaw Man points at Gus and waves his late daughter's
beaded-leather Puberty T-necklace as Agent Jicarilla restrains
him from getting out of the car.

INT. LIVINGROOM - GUS'S HOUSE - DUSK

Gaby sits under the butterfly painting, her mother's meager
effects spread out before her on the Saltillo tile floor.

Gus enters, fiddling with some kind of a gas valve.

GABY

Not much of a life.

GUS

She's remembered. That's all any of
us can hope for.

GABY

But I don't remember her. I don't remember her turning me out when I was thirteen. I don't remember being in the Life.

GUS

You're not your mother, Gaby. She doesn't define you.

Gaby studies a tattered picture of a little girl.

GABY

What does?

GUS

Who you are now. You own your own past, Gaby. Walk away from it.

GABY

That works for you? Balloon accident?

GUS

Linda was into things... Things like Gehenna's. That crowd. Things I couldn't deal with...

He plays with the valve, then:

GUS

... I couldn't satisfy her, okay!

(beat)

I tried, but I couldn't.

(beat)

Do you have any idea how that makes a man feel?

GABY

What makes you think men are unique?

GUS

I don't.

GABY

At least you remember Linda.

GUS

Yes, I do. At first I didn't want to... Maybe that's your problem? Maybe you don't want to remember.

GABY

How can you say that?

A moment.

Gus takes Gaby in his arms, dries her tears with his kisses.

Gus picks her up, carries her into the bedroom...

EXT. GUS'S HOUSE - MOVING P.O.V. THRU WINDSHIELD - NIGHT

Foggy headlights rake across the 4x4 parked in the forecourt as oversize tires creep to a stop.

An hourglass-shaped Shadow crosses through the misty beams toward the

CENTRAL COURTYARD

where fingers of light punctuate the muffled tread as the Shadow enters through one of the handcarved wooden doors and moves toward the

BED

where Gaby sleeps peacefully in Gus's arms. Suddenly, a gloved hand presses down on Gaby's mouth. Her eyes snap open, focus on

A MAN'S FACE - GABY'S P.O.V.

Dark curly hair. Mustache. Nose ring. Malevolent eyes over a gloved finger pressed to pursed lips, he licks his pierced lips with his pierced tongue.

SHADOW'S VOICE

Shhhh...

BACK TO GABY

she struggles against her assailant, stares at his face --

MAN'S FACE - GABY'S P.O.V.

It's Gus's face now, staring down at her -- Frozen lips curled back, throat slit -- the smile of a dead man. In his hands: A small propane torch and a pair of padded vice-grips.

Gaby's dilated pupils watch the Shadow focus the HISSING blue flame on the piece of metal in the vice-grip's claws. It rapidly turns the darkened eighteen gauge hourglass-shaped surface red-hot.

Abruptly, BEEPS startle us back to:

INT. GUS'S BEDROOM

Gus turns off his BEEPING Blackberry, turns to Gaby -- who stares at the ceiling, perspiring, breathing heavily.

GUS
Another bad dream?

GABY
No, illuminating.

He checks message on digital miniscreen.

GUS
Sorry, got to go.

EXT. SPRAWLING DESERT RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Bubblegum light from squad cars, unmarked vehicles and a UNM Ambulance illuminates a gray Mercedes S600 in the driveway.

4x4 pulls in next to a NM FISH & GAME VAN, stops.
Gus gets out walks past the vanity plate, "JEWELS", ducks under police tape, passes a vomiting EMT, enters residence.

INT. SPRAWLING DESERT RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

"Ogalala Sioux Warrior in final throes of the Sun Dance" painting hangs above the kiva fireplace.

Gus moves through the semidark, elegantly furnished room toward the

HALLWAY - RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Bill, Frank, Mike, and a Sheriff's Photographer hold handkerchiefs over their noses and mouths as Gus enters.

Gus fights his gag reflex, grabs his handkerchief and joins them.

MIKE
You ever get used to the smell?

FRANK
Like I got used to my prostate exam.

BILL
Another thing you never forget it.

Mike exits. Gus approaches... exchanges an unfriendly stare with Bill. Frank steps between them and points toward the broken-in doorway where shoes SHUFFLE and a snake RATTLES.

FRANK
Should be just another minute.

Moments later: a NM FISH & GAME WARDEN emerges with a locked case, containing a diamondback rattlesnake, in one hand, a long snake hook in the other.

WARDEN

You guys can go in now.

The Photographer enters the room. Gus, Frank and Bill give the Warden a wide berth, then follow the Photographer.

INT. PLAYROOM - RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Garish light reveals, empty spaces where the breathlessly beautiful collection of First American artifacts were, and now --

Several large sharp-pointed flesh-hooks hang from a ripped section of light weight nylon rope attached to a stainless steel suspension rack several feet above:

The Sheriff's Photographer bending over something.

Flash, WHIRRCLICK -- illuminates a nude BODY, sprawled in a pool of coagulated blood, covered with a blanket of broken glass.

Gus gingerly moves over to the body, a swollen mass of dried blood, glass shards and several imbedded flesh-hooks. He bends down for a closer look -- Roland Sydney. Flash, WHIRRCLICK.

GUS

You got this?

Photographer nods. Gus bends Sydney's wrists then pulls a long meat-thermometer out of his bag.

FRANK

Cleaning lady couldn't get in so she called us, complained of the stench.

GUS

It's the blood. Decomposition starts almost immediately in this heat.

BILL

(indicating apparatus)
What the fuck is that for?

GUS

O-kee-pa.

BILL

What?

GUS

Mandan suspension ritual. Mystical Ogalala Sioux ceremony for an out-of-body near-death communion rite.

FRANK

Near-death...?

Gus feels Sydney's bloated stomach, complete with navel ring and petroglyph tattoo.

GUS

He had a hell of a last supper.
Couple more hours it'd been all over
the place.

Gus pushes the meat-thermometer through the bruised skin into Sydney's liver.

The two Sheriffs turn their attention to the source of the broken glass and the garish light -- The terrarium. Sydney's unique keychain -- hanging from its lock. A few precious stones scattered across the sandy interior.

BILL

points Frank to something else in the cabinet --
The pilfered sign, now reads: "Protected Archaeological Site."

GUS

performs a preliminary examination of the body, withdraws meat-thermometer, reads it, wipes it off.

GUS

Day before yesterday, roughly between
seven p.m. and midnight.

Gus puts thermometer back in bag, Frank makes a note.

FRANK

We'll check out his shop and meet
you at the morgue.

Gus pulls a folded plastic bodybag out of his case.

INT. MORGUE - AUTOPSY THEATER - NIGHT

Walt unzips the distended plastic bodybag on one of the stainless steel examining tables, gets a whiff.

WALT

Jesus!

Gus, in scrubs and rubber apron, adjusts the gooseneck microphone.

GUS

I warned you.

Walt pulls something from a pocket, dabs "VapoRub" in his nose, smiles as he cuts off the bodybag.

He weighs and measures Sydney's bloated body, makes notes on his clipboard.

WALT

Two thirty three, sixty-six and a quarter.

GUS

Walt, get a shot of this.

Walt grabs a camera as Gus pries open Sydney's mouth.

Walt photographs what's inside -- Flash, WHIRRCLICK.

MATCH CUT TO:

SERIES OF PHOTOS - INSIDE TESORO DEL SOL

Flash, WHIRRCLICK -- A crusted pan on a hotplate contains "stove-top" turquoise next to several wax molds for rings, earrings and necklaces on a jeweler's cluttered workbench.

Flash, WHIRRCLICK -- Boxes of knock-off "Native Indian" jewelry and fake plastic "heishi" stacked in the back room.

Flash, WHIRRCLICK -- Black metal detector, sifting screen and soil density probing rod stacked in a corner.

Flash, WHIRRCLICK -- The girl's beaded-leather Puberty T-necklace lying next to the computer in the back room.

INT. BACK ROOM - TESORO DEL SOL - NIGHT

Bill, Frank and Agent Jicarilla confer as several BIA and FBI Agents inventory and seize objects from Sydney's shop.

A BIA Agent tags and bags the Puberty T-necklace.

Agent Jicarilla pulls another girl's beaded-leather Puberty T-necklace, in a glassine evidence bag, out of his pocket.

AGENT JICARILLA

This one is junk. A copy. Her father brought it to us from his daughter's coffin. We traced her burial dress and moccasins to a London auction house. They sold before we could even list them on the Art File.

They move into the

SHOW ROOM

and gather near one of the display cases. Several items spread out over the top. Including, New Mexico archival and topographical maps, an oversized Park Ranger Uniform complete with Sydney's false Park Ranger identification.

Sitting next to the brass sign: "If it's old, it can be sold," a Mimbres black-on-white burial bowl with a pair of stylized tortoises on either side of the "kill" hole.

AGENT JICARILLA

Every time I pick up one of these, I hope it's going to be the Pueblo Rosetta stone. It'll connect the past, tell us where these people went after they left Chaco Canyon.

FRANK

What about this one?

AGENT JICARILLA

(shows bowl decoration)

The Mimbres believed the tortoise made the earth after the great flood. The modern Zuni have a turtle dance ritual that is an offering to the gods who bring the rains.

FRANK

Sounds like a connection to me.

AGENT JICARILLA

Not clear enough for repatriation.

(disappointed)

All we got here is counterfeit Indian jewelry and trafficking in stolen Native relics.

BILL

I'll settle for that.

FRANK

Easy partner, we got no proof.

BILL

He had access. He had opportunity.

FRANK

So did a lot of people!

AGENT JICARILLA

Who?

FRANK

Gus.

AGENT JICARILLA

Gus...?

BILL

You know, some things are worse than robbing a grave.

INT. LINDA'S BEDROOM - GUS'S HOUSE - DAWN

Gaby pulls the locked footlocker from under the bed. She uses one of Gus's weights to break the lock -- opens lid.

Inside, under the fleece lined leather restraints, a tarnish-framed picture of Linda Wright Cuervo and some yellowing letters placed on top of a carefully folded wedding dress.

Gaby lifts the dress and pulls out some other clothes, mostly black, mostly leather, until she finds a pair of thigh-high black patent leather boots with six-inch stiletto heels.

Under a shiny black corset made out of PVC and several other SM toys and tools Gaby picks up something else:

An hourglass-shaped piece of eighteen gauge sheet metal -- The same shape as the scar on her back.

Suddenly she can't breathe.

She drops the brand, moves quickly to the window, opens it.

A cool desert breeze fluffs her hair.
Gaby desperately draws in a deep invigorating breath.

INT. AUTOPSY THEATER - MORGUE - DAY

Gus and Walt place a sheet over Sydney's body as Frank and Bill enter, handkerchiefs over their faces.

FRANK

Snake bite?

GUS

Suffocation. Gagged on his own penis.

(beat)

He was scalped, too.

Bill pulls back the sheet from a portion of Sydney's body revealing nipple and navel rings along with several hourglass-shaped scars and brands.

BILL

What about these?

FRANK
Same as Gaby's and her mother's?

BILL
And Linda's?!

Moment between them.

GUS
Similar... not an exact match.

BILL
What's the connection? What's your
connection?

GUS
My connection?

FRANK
Walt, could you excuse us?

Walt checks with Gus, exits.

GUS
(to Bill)
You got something to say. Spit it
out!

FRANK
Settle down you two.
(easy)
We'd like to talk to Gaby, Gus, that's
all. You know the routine.

A hung-up moment.

EXT. CENTRAL COURTYARD - GUS'S HOUSE - DUSK

Gus crosses reflecting pool with Bill and Frank in tow.
He enters Living Room. Bill follows him, Frank doesn't.

GUS'S VOICE
(from Living Room)
Gaby... Gaby...?

Frank enters Linda's Bedroom.

FRANK'S VOICE
(from bedroom)
Bill.

INT. LINDA'S BEDROOM - OFF CENTRAL COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Gus and Bill enter.

Frank points to the open footlocker --

Its SM contents spill out onto the hardwood floor.

BILL
What the fuck...?

He picks up one of the leather restraints.

BILL
(to Gus)
What did you get my sister into?

GUS
What did I get her into?
(beat)
This is all her stuff!

BILL
(sarcastic)
Her stuff?!

Frank picks up something from among the SM objects on the floor -- shows it to Bill -- The hourglass-shaped piece of sheet metal.

BILL
(fights anger tears)
That the brand you used on my sister?!

GUS
I used -- ?

Bill yanks out his handcuffs and moves toward Gus.

BILL
I been waiting three years for this
you sonovabitch! Now I got you for
murder!

Frank steps between the two men.

FRANK
Easy, Partner. That's not necessary,
is it Gus...?

Gus raises his hands in surrender... Then suddenly knocks the unsuspecting Frank back into Bill.

They trip over the opened footlocker and sprawl in a heap on the floor...

Gus overturns the wrought iron bed on top of the two men.

Bolts out of the room --

INT. CENTRAL COURTYARD - GUS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Gus runs past the reflecting pool --

EXT. GUS'S HOUSE - DUSK

Frank and Bill emerge from the forecourt just in time to see Gus's offroad vehicle scattering dust behind as its taillights retreat down the street.

Frank and Bill rush to their sedan, jump in, start the engine and try to pursue Gus -- but something is wrong.

Bill gets out, notices the MEAT-THERMOMETER sticking out of the sidewall of a FLAT TIRE.

He angrily reaches inside for the radio.

INT. BATHROOM - SUITE - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE

Gaby sits in the oversized marble tub, filing her nails into talons.

Moonbeam enters holding up a black patent leather mini-skirt, a sheer silk blouse, the PVC corset and the pair of thigh-high boots.

MOONBEAM

Dread threads.

GABY

They'll do.

Moonbeam picks up a boot, points at the sharp six-inch stiletto heel.

MOONBEAM

Comes with its own prick.

TASSEL'S VOICE

Let her soak, Dildo.

Moonbeam flashes a toothless smile, exits.

INT. BEDROOM - SUITE - NIGHT

Gaby at the vanity table putting final touches on her makeup.

Moonbeam adjusts a blue-black wig on Gaby's head as Tassel looks on. Moonbeam looks at the framed photo of Linda Wright Cuervo and Gaby's new reflection in the mirror.

MOONBEAM

Your own mother wouldn't recognize you.

TASSEL

Moonie!

MOONBEAM

Sorrys.

Gaby gets up, moves over to the bed where the corset lies next to the miniskirt and silk blouse.

She slides into the corset and backs toward Tassel.

GABY

Do me?

TASSEL

(tightens lacing)

Gaby, you sure you want to do this?

GABY

What do you suggest? 9-1-1?

Gaby stares at herself in the mirror for a moment, the tightened corset forcing her body into an exaggerated hourglass-shape, she recognizes the silhouette.

TASSEL

Now that's BodMod.

Gaby pulls on the boots then wraps the miniskirt around her new 19" waist. Moonbeam pulls a prescription bottle out of her oversize bag. Shakes it, RATTLING pills at Gaby.

GABY

No thanks. I don't need 'em.

Tassel slides her .38 S&W revolver into one of Gaby's boots.

Gaby tests the weapon's fit, then approves her arsenal.

EXT. GEHENNA - WRONG SIDE OF TRACKS - NIGHT

A mixed bag of Harley's, 4x4's and expensive wheels litter the parking lot around this sprawling adobe.

A cab lets Gaby out in front. She stares at the crimson moon a moment, then moves toward entrance.

INT. GEHENNA

A dark cubicle, with a Clothes-Check counter on one wall and a narrow stairway on the other.

A sign above the stairway: "Levis and Leather Only." Behind the counter, a multi-ring-pierced ARYAN, complete with Teflon implants on his forehead, studies a Heavy Metal Comic Book.

Gaby enters -- a vision in black, skintight leather -- airbrushed fit.

ARYAN
Clothing optional. Locker, five and change.

Gaby descends the stairs leading into:

MAIN ROOM

In the dimly lit room, "For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge" by Van Halen blasts eardrums and quickens heartbeats.

Several SM COUPLES, gay and straight, grope and cling, each moving to their own drummers.

Gaby surveys the shuffling dancers. She passes the sudsy beer bar, eyes searching, until a tall FEMALE in gray confronts her with a cold smile. Gaby flirts with her a moment... Shakes her head and slides away heading for the:

POOL ROOM

In this dark, smoke-filled room, several would-be HUSTLERS line a shelf around the wall, watching the action.

A broadshouldered MAN. 30's/40's? Hard to tell. Dark curly hair and mustache, wearing an expensive leather jumpsuit over his theatrical hourglass-shaped body.

A jewel-handled knife in a beaded snakeskin sheath hangs from his tiny waist -- what appears to be The Face in Gaby's nightmare, runs the table on a Q-BALL in denim shorts...

The last ball DROPS, Q-Ball breaks cue over his bald head.

Q-BALL
Sonovabitch! You lucky bastard!

MAN
That's two you owe me.

Q-Ball forks over two \$100 bills, stomps away.

A gnome, SHORTROUND, creeps up to Gaby.

SHORTROUND
Little pocket pool?

A Shelf-sitter drops his longneck beer bottle, splashing glass and suds everywhere.

MAN
Watch it you dumb sonovabitch!

The Man lifts a snakeskinned cowboy boot on the rail, polishes it with a red handkerchief.

SHORTROUND

How 'bout it, tall sister?

Gaby stares through the haze at The Face from her nightmare, there is something vaguely familiar about him.

GABY

No thanks, I want him.

Gaby picks up a cue, strokes it suggestively.

MAN

Are you as good as you look?

GABY

Just a wet dream walking, a bitch with balls.

MAN

I always rise to a challenge.

GABY

Table stakes?

The Man drains his longneck and licks his foamy lips.

MAN

C-note against me dragging you home.

GABY

Rack 'em.

MAN

Shortround!

Shortround racks the balls.

MAN

Let's lag for break.

GABY

Pussy.

Each shoots a ball, bouncing them off the back cushion. They wait for which one stops closest to the front rail.

MAN

Your break.

She grabs the cue-ball. Shortround reracks.

The Man hands Gaby a fresh longneck, she drains it.

GABY

I'm going to enjoy this.

Gaby bends over the table provocatively, flashing her thong panties and tattoo.

As the shelf-sitting Hustlers whistle and guffaw, she makes her break shot.

TABLE

Cue-ball glances off the rack of balls, freezes on the rail, sending two balls out and back leaving the table as it was before the break except for a bare edge of the one-ball sticking out -- a superbly executed precision poolshot.

BACK TO SCENE

Gaby turns to the Man.

GABY

Didn't leave you much.

MAN

You left enough.
(chalks cue-tip)
One-ball, side.

He shoots. The cue-ball clips the corner of the one-ball. The other balls spread wide open as the one-ball DROPS into a side pocket.

SHORTROUND

Tragedy.

EXT. GEHENNA - DARK PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Man leads Gaby, wearing a studded dog collar/mask, by a leash to a maroon Jeep with the vanity plate -- "OBSEQUY." A pick, metal probe, dirt-encrusted shovel and a sifting screen glimpsed in the back.

MAN

Take a load off your sex appeal.

Gaby gets in, the Man buckles her seat-belt, then suddenly pulls her hands up to the roll cage. Above them a couple of fresh scalps hang from a long stick strapped to the cage.

Gaby resists until the Man wedges his double-edged knife under her chin.

MAN

You having a problem?

She watches warily as he ties her hands with the leash.

GABY
Tighter, tighter.

The Man grins as he walks around the offroad vehicle, gets in, starts the engine, drives off into the night.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE SUITE DOOR - LA POSADA DE ALBUQUERQUE - NIGHT

A fist KNOCKS... Moonbeam opens door, drops her big smile.

MOONBEAM
(announcing)
Incoming!

She backs away as Bill and Frank enter.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

"OBSEQUIY" chases the ribbon of twolane.

INT. JEEP - MOVING AT SPEED ALONG DESERT TWOLANE

The Man drives, his double-edged knife glints in moonlight.

GABY
Cut me. Cut me.

The Man slices the pearl buttons off her blouse, revealing the PVC corset.

GABY
I'm ready, liberate me.

The Man's hand roams all over her heaving body, feeling between her legs, using the knife to force them apart. He slides his hand down her legs, then grins as he pulls Tassel's nickeled .38 out of Gaby's boot.

MAN
Nice touch, Gaby.

She struggles against the ties that bind.

MAN
Don't bother. You know I know my knots. Tight, but not tight enough to bruise. Remember?

GABY
Remember...?
(beat)
I remember everything.

MAN

Everything?

He races Jeep off the twolane, leaping into the desert,
Taillights bounce past several cactus shadows...
Disappear into the night.

EXT. GEHENNA - NIGHT

Several Bernalillo Sheriff's vehicles drive up and surround
Frank's empty unmarked sedan idling near the entrance.

INT. GEHENNA

An angry line of leather-clad men and women outside the
bathroom, SHOUTING. A hostile PUNK POUNDS on the door.

INT. BATHROOM - GEHENNA

Frank holds the door as Bill pins Shortround against a urinal
in the foul nook.

Bill repeatedly flushes, water floods Shortround's head.
He sputters, Bill pulls him up.

BILL

I know you get off on this shit,
Shortround, but how would you like
to be shit?

Shortround grins. Bill plunges him back into urinal.

SHORTROUND

(sputtering)
Obsequy. Obsequy!

BILL

(recognition)
Obsequy...? You sure?!

A door CRASH. Bill drops Shortround as a couple of PEROXIDES
enter, block Frank and Bill as they try to leave...

Bill drops one with a right-cross.

Frank shows the other his badge and gun.

FRANK

Private party.

PEROXIDE

Party pooper.

He backs away as Bill and Frank exit.

EXT. DESERT - CHACO CANYON ANCIENT RUINS - MOONLIT NIGHT

A muted landscape. Primordial structures stand pitted against the elements on a lonely bluff overlooking Chaco Canyon.

Abruptly invaded by bouncing, blinding headlights -- jackrabbit bolts across the beams --

INT. JEEP - MOVING

The Man jerks the steering wheel. Gaby takes advantage of the moment. She kicks the 4-wheel shift-lever into low.

The gears GRIND -- noisily attempting to lock up. The Man struggles for control. The double-edged knife CLATTERS to the floorboards.

OVERSIZE TIRES twist, skid to a dusty halt, Leave the ground.

DESERT DWELLER'S eyes measure the headlight beams somersaulting over them.

GABY AND THE MAN SCREAM.

JEEP tumbles -- finally comes to a jary rest on its side.

EXT. HELICOPTER PAD - NIGHT

TWO SILHOUETTES run toward a "LIFEGUARD" helicopter.

EXT. DESERT - OVERTURNED JEEP - NIGHT

OVERSIZE TIRES spin impotently. GASOLINE drips from ruptured auxiliary tanks. HISSING as it hits the CHUGGING exhaust. A moment, then the ENGINE abruptly DIES.

EXT. HELICOPTER PAD - NIGHT

Turning blades of a helicopter silhouetted against the red-moonlit sky REV-UP.

EXT. DESERT - OVERTURNED JEEP - NIGHT

TIRES slowly stop turning.

A still moment, then one stiletto-heeled boot hits the sand. Gaby shakily limps through the stacked headlight beams, Double-edged knife dangling from one hand... toward the opposite side of Jeep where the Man lies stunned.

Gaby pulls Tassel's .38 out of the Man's belt, sinks down straddling his head, his heaving shoulders pinned between her knees. Gaby holds the revolver to his throat.

She tears off the hairpiece -- Revealing Roy Elgin's bald head. Roy's eyes snap open, he starts to say something.

GABY
(knife blade to lips)
Shhhh...

She presses the stubby barrel under his chin -- Roy holds his breath... Gaby hesitates.

ROY
(whispers)
What are you doing?

GABY
Deciding.

ROY
(panicking)
I smell gas.

EXT. HELICOPTER PAD - NIGHT

Silhouetted helicopter lifts off.

EXT. DESERT - OVERTURNED JEEP - NIGHT

Gaby lets him up. Roy carefully backs away from the .38 to the end of the stacked headlight beams.

GABY
That's far enough. Now strip.

ROY
What?

GABY
Shed everything.

ROY
If you can do it. Just do it. I'm tired of your theatrics.

Gaby fires revolver, sending a SHOT between his legs.

EXT. TWOLANE BLACKTOP - NIGHT

A red and white UNM Helicopter races along the white line at cactus height.

EXT. DESERT - CHACO CANYON ANCIENT RUINS - GABY AND ROY

In the light of the stacked headlight beams, Roy slowly and sensually strips off his boots and bodysuit...

His body sports deep chest piercings, complete with jewelry, tubes in both nipples, symbolic blackwork tattooing and --

A tortured little 20" waist, constricted by a wide screw-on locking belt -- An hourglass silhouette, his arms akimbo.

ROY

And the White Light said: 'Behold, I am you and you are me.'

GABY

Quit trying to be Indian, Roy... you don't have the soul for it. You don't have a clue about the true O-kee-pa... Just come clean about my mother.

ROY

Carmen? She was the best partner I ever had. We handfasted for life. Nobody got me off the way she did.

GABY

You offed her, you piece of shit!

ROY

The bitch knew everything. She stole a pair of earrings right out of an open casket. I know she was going to turn me in.

(beat)

It's a shame, as much as I loved domming her, she loved subbing more.

GABY

You sick bastard, she didn't love it! She was afraid of you. Afraid to say, No! Afraid to ask for 'mercy'! She couldn't give consent!

Roy's down to a leather loincloth.

ROY

You did.

GABY

You promised I'd see god! See the true light! I trusted you and you tried to kill me!

Gaby levels the .38.

ROY

(incredulous)

Kill you?

GABY

You shot me full of XTC, hung me until I went into coma, dumped me in the desert like some piece of dead meat. What do you call that?!

Roy recognizes the cold, lethal look in Gaby's eyes.

ROY

A favor. I gave you bliss. I punched you into a whole new level of being. Took your memory and gave you courage to make changes in your life. What's a little pain compared to that?

GABY

You want pain? I'll show you pain.

Gaby stares at the tattoo on his stomach -- The jeweled handle of a knife, its double-edged blade disappearing into his loincloth.

GABY

I said shed everything.

She cocks the gun. Roy slinks out of his loincloth. Pierced genital jewelry glistens from his crotch.

GABY

You're into BodMod. How about a little subincision.

ROY

What?

GABY

I think I'll geld you, first.

Roy stumbles back into the desert darkness.

Gaby moves after him, gun and knife flashing in the light.

Roy trips, falls to the ground. Gaby's on him in a heartbeat. She presses one stiletto heel to his throat. Roy instinctively grabs his crotch.

ROY

(a hoarse whisper)
'I am as close to God as you will ever be.'

Roy's eyes close in anticipation as Gaby raises the knife.

ROY

Take me now.

Her blazing eyes look down at him as he slowly moves his hands away from his crotch.

Abruptly, Gaby stops, backs off.

GABY

I can't do this, this isn't me.

Roy's eyes bulge. Perspiration flowing with the blood. His trembling fingers prod and pull at her boots.

ROY

(sobbing)

No. No. Do it. Please, please...!

Gaby pulls her legs out of reach, Roy crumbles into a foetal ball. She looks down at this worthless whimpering excuse of a human being and walks away.

INT. HELICOPTER - MOVING

Gus and Mike search the desert on either side of the macadam.

GUS

Northwest, Mike. Chaco Canyon!

Mike moves the cyclic, banking the helicopter northwest.

GABY

appears in the stacked headlight beams,
walking toward the toppled Jeep.

ROY'S VOICE

(hysterical)

No. No! You can't do this! You
can't leave me like this!

GABY

Watch me.

She picks up Roy's clothes and carries them toward

OVERTURNED JEEP

as Gaby approaches, the stream of gasoline ignites.

She stops, illuminated by the flames, mesmerized, triumphant,
tosses Roy's clothes into the flames.

EXT. CHACA CANYON ANCIENT RUINS - MOONLIT NIGHT

Roy, crazed, out of control, creeps in and out of shadow,
sneaks up behind Gaby, a rock in his trembling hand.

Glowing night eyes gauge the licking flames...

Roy moves closer, raises the rock, brings it crashing down toward Gaby's unsuspecting head -- Gaby sees him just as the Jeep explodes -- Desert creatures scatter --

INT. HELICOPTER - FLYING

GUS
Over there, over there!

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Helicopter banks toward the fireball.

SILHOUETTES

Gaby and Roy struggle for control of the .38 against the flaming Jeep.

DESERT FLOOR - HELICOPTER'S MOVING P.O.V.

Desert dwellers scatter like soldiers in an air raid.

ANOTHER FIREBALL

As the main gasoline tank erupts --

The concussion catapults Gaby and Roy savagely to the ground --

Knocking them both unconscious.

FIRE GLOW - HELICOPTER'S MOVING P.O.V.

Looming as they rush toward the burning Jeep.

CHACA CANYON ANCIENT RUINS - MOONLIT NIGHT

Roy carries the unconscious Gaby toward the fireglow.

ROY AND GABY - HELICOPTER'S MOVING P.O.V.

Spotlight pins Roy and Gaby...

The helicopter scatters dust and debris from above them.

INT. HELICOPTER - HOVERING

Gus speaks into a microphone.

GUS
(over loudspeaker)
Give it up, Roy. Put her down.

ROY

Drops the lifeless Gaby to the desert floor --

Shields his face from the swirling sand --

Shoots at the hovering helicopter --

INT. HELICOPTER - HOVERING

Mike pulls back on the cyclic and up on the collector to get out of range.

Suddenly, several rounds pierce the fuselage -- windshield -- and -- Mike -- who slumps across the controls --

EXT. HELICOPTER

Starts to gyro out-of-control --

INT. HELICOPTER

Gus expertly grabs the collective and pushes down, hard --

EXT. HELICOPTER

Stops gyro, drops down rapidly toward the desert floor --

INT. HELICOPTER - DROPPING DOWN

Gus pushes forward on the cyclic and braces himself --

EXT. HELICOPTER

Drops lower as the helicopter accelerates into an arroyo --

EXT. DESERT - CHACO CANYON ANCIENT RUINS

Helicopter noses into the ground --

ROTOR BLADES

Flap down to the ground then rebound back up --

HELICOPTER

flips over on its side --

TURNING ROTOR BLADES

disintegrates on impact --

EXT. DESERT - CHACA CANYON ANCIENT RUINS

The crash scatters sand and --

DESERT CREATURES

scurry for their lives --

INT. HELICOPTER - ON ITS SIDE

Gus unbuckles seat belt and scrambles from the flaming chopper --

EXT. HELICOPTER - SECONDS LATER

Erupts in a terrific explosion --

Hurtling GUS into the air --

ROY

approaches the stunned and injured Gus lying on the ground.

GUS
Did you have to kill her?

ROY
Who?

GUS
Linda.

ROY
Linda? You think I killed Linda...?
She wasn't leaving me --

Roy aims .38...

Only to be interrupted by the singular sound of metal lacerating flesh and bone.

He coughs once and slowly turns to face Gaby standing behind him with the bloody double-edged knife in her hand.

Roy starts to say something, blood bubbles up in his mouth.

He crumbles to the desert floor like a rag doll.

GABY

stumbles over to Gus...

Kneels down beside him, pulls off the wig, drops it in Gus's lap.

GABY
Did you kill her?

GUS
I don't --

GUS

sees something come up behind her --

ROY

slowly raises the .38.

GABY

lunges forward and plunges the knife deep into his abdomen.

ROY

stares at her with lifeless eyes...

GUS

watches Roy topple to the desert floor...

Then, searches for Gaby in the darkness...

GUS

Gaby... Gaby...?!

GABY

Now I know what she knows.

Gus impulsively touches the key around his neck underneath his torn shirt as Gaby backs away into the darkness...

GUS

Gaby...? Gaby...?

GABY'S VOICE

Shhh...

(cold, sarcastic)

Maybe you'll make it out of here...

I did.

Gus tries to stand...

No good.

GUS'S P.O.V.

A muted landscape. Vague. Mysterious. Still.

GUS'S VOICE

Gaby...? Gaby...!

Abruptly invaded by bouncing, blinding headlights --

Coming straight at Gus.

EXT. DESERT - CHACO CANYON ANCIENT RUINS - DAWN

From the flat red sea of sand rise great rock mesas, resembling vast cathedrals, the desert, the mountains and mesas all continually reformed and recolored by the cloud shadows.

BILL

It's like desecrating a church.

Bill's doubting eyes turn from this amazing vista toward the pillaged Anasazi site where Agent Jicarilla pokes through the smoldering remains of Roy's Jeep.

AGENT JICARILLA

A hiker tipped the Park Rangers to digging here so they placed a seismic sensor to monitor human activity. It activated last night.

Several Park Rangers search the site in the b.g.

BILL

I knew my sister all her life. I know Roy Elgin twenty years. I never would have figured this.

AGENT JICARILLA

You were too close to her and he had the perfect cover. He was in the business of honoring the dead.

Agent Jicarilla heads toward his BIA SUV where a Sheriff's Helicopter, and a UNM "Lifeguard" Helicopter wait for EMTs to bandage Gus.

FRANK

watches two Park Rangers slip Roy into a body bag lying amongst shards of fragile archaic pottery.

FRANK

(to Gus)

I've never known a rich fuck yet who wasn't kinky.

Through the smoke in the b.g. Bill wanders through the vacant structures on the lonely bluff overlooking Chaco Canyon.

FRANK

(indicates Bill)

Give him a little time, some prejudice die hard. He was so sure it was you.

EMTs put Gus on a stretcher,
Take him to the Helicopter.

Frank tags.

GUS

Gaby...?

FRANK

Like words plucked from the middle of
a sentence. No sign of her anywhere.

GUS ON THE STRETCHER - MOVING INTO HELICOPTER

fiddles with the antique key on the chain around his neck.

UNM "LIFEGUARD" HELICOPTER - RISING

Creates a sandstorm over the fragile Chaco Canyon Ancient
Ruins "Protected Archeological Site."

INT. UNM HELICOPTER - FLYING - GUS ON THE STRETCHER

Gus pulls his neck chain with both hands --
Desperately trying to saw it through his neck...

Suddenly, he can't breathe...

He finally breaks the chain and desperately draws in a deep
invigorating breath.

But with the next breath: Gus spots something through the
greenhouse window above the pilot --

A CIRCLING BUZZARD - GUS'S P.O.V.

"Impatient"... Drifting on a thermal...

Waiting...

EXT. ENCHANTED SANDS CEMETERY - DAY

Bill's SUV winds through the stately trees that grace the
spacious memorial lawns.

Bill exits the vehicle next to the caléndula flower garden
and walks up the green lawn to:

LINDA WRIGHT CUERVO'S GRAVESTONE

BILL'S VOICE

Now I know what you know...

BILL

stares down at Linda Wright Cuervo's engraved marker.

BILL
... I have to get used to that now.
I guess I can.

LINDA WRIGHT CUERVO'S GRAVESTONE - DAWN TO DUSK

Time passes as a cascading rainbow of caléndula petals falls on the marker, eventually obscuring the engraving.

GUS'S VOICE
(Spanish, subtitled)
Now I know what you know...

GUS'S

healing face stares down at Linda Wright Cuervo's gravestone.

GUS
(Spanish, subtitled)
... I have to get used to that now.
I guess I can.

CAMERA TILTS DOWN OFF GUS'S FACE

To his handcuffed-hands as they scatter the last caléndula petals over the gravestone.

In the b.g. past the rainbow petal path...

Frank's unmarked sedan where Bill and Frank wait.

FADE OUT.