

WEATHER WORN

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FADE IN:

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - EL CAJON PASS - DAY

Desolate. Not a car in sight.

Wind-whipped sand pelts the pavement.

The air has an eerie orange hue, the effects of the hot sun filtered by clouds of dust.

Dry vegetation on both sides of the highway. Brown, dead pine trees dot the hillside. One spark away from a forest fire.

SUPER: EL CAJON, CALIFORNIA, 2043 - 122 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT

A POLICE CRUISER speeds by spreading the dust in its wake.

We can now see a digital highway sign that reads: "NEXT STOP FOR DRINKING WATER 50 MILES - \$112 A GALLON."

EXT. RANCH - DAY

Barren land. The earth cracked and dry.

A metal bucket hanging from a chain above a dry well CREAKS as it swings in the breeze.

A corral next to a weather-worn barn holds a half-dozen HORSES. Their coats covered in dirt. They stand still, as if any movement would be their last.

In the corner of the corral, a dead COLT crumpled on the ground. Flies swarm above its corpse.

Fifty yards away, a small Ranch House. A white, dirt covered pick-up truck parked next to it.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Dim and shadowy.

A double-barrel SHOTGUN propped up in the corner of the room.

ROY CALLAHAN (35), sweat-soaked white tee-shirt, torn blue denim jeans sits at a dinette table. His bowed head supported by his left hand as he rhythmically pounds the table with the closed fist of his right hand - total anguish.

Roy leans back in his chair, closes his eyes. His long unruly hair and scraggly beard gives him the look of Old West Jesus.

EXT. BANKS OF COLORADO RIVER - DAY

Electrified fences, as far as the eye can see, on both sides of the evaporating river - now really just a stream.

Two armed GUARDS stand by an opened metal gate waving a WATER TANK TRUCK through. It clears the gate, parks near the river.

A male DRIVER (30), wearing a red baseball cap exits the cab of the truck.

He fixes one end of a suction hose to the back of Tanker and walks the other end towards the river.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Roy reaches inside a cabinet, removes a shot glass, places it on the counter.

He opens the refrigerator, removes a half-gallon sized bottle of water, fills the shot glass - puts the bottle back.

Roy sips the water slowly, as if it were fine Scotch, swishing it in his mouth before swallowing.

Roy wipes the sweat from his brow, turns his focus to the shotgun in the corner of the room.

LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Dim and dark, covered windows muting the light from outside.

Everything in boxes on top of cheap furniture - obvious that a move is pending.

Roy enters from the kitchen, shotgun in one hand, a case of shotgun shells in the other. He scans the room - reminiscing.

He grabs a brown, soiled, COWBOY HAT from a hook on the wall, places it on his head and heads out.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Roy, shotgun in one hand, the case of shells in the other, marches across the arid earth towards the horse corral.

As he nears, a large BLACK STALLION emerges from the other horses and slowly wobbles towards the corral rail.

Roy places the shotgun against the railing, reaches up and pats the neck of the Stallion, caresses its forehead.

Roy takes a deep breath, before retrieving the shotgun. He loads two shells, takes four steps back - takes dead aim.

ROY'S POV - DOWN THE BARREL OF THE SHOTGUN

The Stallion's eyes crusted with dirt, but peaceful - calm. As if he somehow he knew this was inevitable.

The other horses behind the Stallion stirring, sensing something wrong.

BACK ON ROY

Roy's arms tremble. His chest heaves up and down.

Moments pass. He lowers the shotgun.

Roy paces around - angry, shouting at no one. He wipes the sweat from his eyes and takes dead aim again.

Moments pass. Dirt and dust swirl in the arid air. The tension in Roy's arm evaporates. He lowers the shotgun again.

Roy approaches the Stallion, puts his arm gently around the horse's neck, nuzzles his head up against the Stallion's.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Roy at the dinette table tapping the soft keyboard of a smart phone. In the search box on the phone screen: "COLORADO WATER DELIVERY SCHEDULE."

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DUSK

Roy, shotgun in one hand, the bottle of water in the other approaches, the white pickup truck.

He opens the passenger door, tosses the shotgun and water bottle inside. Then walks towards the Barn.

MOMENTS LATER

Roy returns, carrying heavy chains and metal hooks. He tosses them in the truck bed then enters the truck cab.

Fumes sputter from the exhaust pipe as the truck moves away.

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - EL CAJON PASS - NIGHT

A full moon rises in the sky casting a shadow over Roy's pick-up truck parked, on the shoulder of the highway.

INSIDE THE PICK-UP TRUCK

Shotgun and bottle of water on the passenger seat.

Roy's eyes frozen on his rearview mirror. They narrow as he spots the white dots of approaching headlights.

Roy's hands nearly choking the wheel as the Water Tank Truck from the Colorado River lumbers by.

Roy hits the gas.

BACK ON THE INTERSTATE

Roy's pick-up truck zooms past the water tanker truck. His red tail lights disappearing in the darkness.

INT. WATER TANK TRUCK - MINUTES LATER

The Driver yawns, then slaps his cheek, shakes his head in an attempt to stay alert.

He removes his red cap, wipes sweat from his brow. Then -

Full panic in his eyes.

The Driver slams his brakes. They SQUEAL as the water tanker comes to a jolting stop.

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - EL CAJON PASS - NIGHT

Roy's pick-up truck parked sideways on the highway.

The water tanker just a few feet away. The Driver exits the cab of tanker walks towards the pick-up truck - a what the fuck look - on his face.

The sound of boots on gravel as Roy emerges from the highway shoulder, shotgun aimed at the Driver.

The Driver instinctively raises his hands in the air.

TWENTY MINUTES LATER

The Driver, twenty feet away sits on the highway shoulder.

Roy, at the rear of the water tanker secures the heavy chains now hooked to his pick-up truck to the rear of the tanker.

Roy gives the chains a yank. Satisfied that they're secure, he opens the passenger door of the pick-up truck, grabs the bottle of water.

Roy walks towards the Driver, hands him the bottle of water. Says something. The Driver nods as though he understands.

Roy returns to the water tanker, enters the cab. The truck RUMBLES signaling that Roy has turned the ignition.

The Driver watches as the water tanker, pick-up truck in tow, drives away. The moment the red taillights disappear, the Driver removes a hand-held radio from his pocket.

EXT. RANCH - CORRAL - NIGHT

Roy's shotgun leans against the open corral gate.

The water tanker, parked inside the corral. The horses stir around it as if they could smell the water inside.

AT THE BARN

Roy emerges, a large pipe wrench in his hand. He strides towards the

CORRAL

And reaches the back of the water tanker.

Just as Roy's about to turn the wrench on the tanker's water release valve, the night air fills with the strobes of blue and red lights.

Roy turns. Spots an approaching POLICE CRUISER. A cloud of dust as the police cruiser stops, twenty feet away.

Roy's instincts take over. He grabs the shotgun from the corral rail. Waits.

The door of the police cruiser swings open. A BANG and a FLASH.

Roy, still grasping his shotgun, falls to his knees. A red stain spreading across his white tee-shirt.

Roy's eyes flutter. His body wobbles before falling over, prone on the ground. Roy clasps the arid dirt, gasps for air.

SLAM - the sound of the cruiser car door shutting. The dull THUD - THUD of heavy footsteps approaching.

Roy, vision now blurred, catches the eye of the black stallion, stoic - peaceful.

With his life oozing away, Roy lifts his shotgun, takes dead aim at the water tanker. Squeezes the trigger.

BANG - echoes in the night air.

Water sprays from the tanker down on the horses from the holes made by the shotgun blast - like a rain shower.

The horses drink from the pooling puddles. The black stallion shakes water from his coat.

Roy smiles. Blinks twice. Fades away.

FADE OUT.