

THINGS CHANGE

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EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT.

A late model pick-up truck sits on the gravel shoulder. CHRISTINE FARADAY, mid-40's with the look of a cougar, real cougar, not the urban kind, sits on a collapsible chair in the bed. A second chair sits empty. A sliver of moon provides the dimmest of light. She peers into the darkness.

CHRISTINE

Seba. You irrigating out there?
Get your ass back here.

Out of the darkness emerges SEBASTIAN, late-20's, strong and slow in a backwoods brother/cousin/father way. He's fumbling with his fly.

SEBASTIAN

I really had to pee.

Sebastian takes his seat. They sit in silence. Christine lost in thought, Sebastian, just lost.

He fidgets, stealing the occasional glance at Christine. After three of these, Christine shifts to look at him.

CHRISTINE

Okay, what?

SEBASTIAN

It's just you're, you're kinda pretty. Well, for an older woman. Kinda like Mom a few years ago.

CHRISTINE

Pretty, huh? Like some fantasy MILF you get off on?

SEBASTIAN

I don't know what that means.

Christine takes a moment to see if he's serious.

CHRISTINE

You don't, do you.

SEBASTIAN

Why are we here?

CHRISTINE

What did I say in the truck.

SEBASTIAN

Uh, oh, "I don't like questions".

A few moments pass. He raises his head to look at the sky.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

I don't mind. I like the quiet. And we got old moon in new moon's arms. I feel good when I see it like that.

CHRISTINE

What's that. What you said?

SEBASTIAN

It's what Aunt Peg calls it. When the moon looks like it's smiling, you know. You can just see the old moon, kinda faint like. See there. And the new moon's holding it. It makes more sense when it's like it is now, under it.

CHRISTINE

That's actually kind of sweet.

SEBASTIAN

She'd tell all sorts of stories about the sky, and the stars and stuff. Aunt Peg. She's gone now. Like Mom. Dad's getting better.

CHRISTINE

Wait, your dad's alive?

SEBASTIAN

Oh, yeah. Doctors said 'touch and go' a couple of times, and then said he was an ox. I never thought of him as an ox. It was funny. But not when he was bleeding.

Christine bolts out of the truck bed. The gun in her shoulder holster is exposed for Sebastian to see. He looks away.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

You gotta pee too?

CHRISTINE

Yeah. That's it.

She treads quickly away until out of earshot. Taking out her phone, she dials and waits.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Mr. Evans.

Well, this is his direct line, so,
you tell me, who the hell is this?
Shit.

Christine ends the call. She stands for a moment considering her options. Disassembling her phone, she walks back to the truck leaving the bits in her wake.

SEBASTIAN

I heard talking. You were mad.

CHRISTINE

Shit!

SEBASTIAN

You said that too.

CHRISTINE

Seba, we're going for a drive.

SEBASTIAN

Okay. What about the job?

CHRISTINE

Trouble with the payment.

SEBASTIAN

Why'd you wreck your phone?

CHRISTINE

You saw that?

SEBASTIAN

I heard it. Aunt Peg said the reason I can hear better at night is the air being cooler. My dad's friends did the same thing before the other men came. I remember the sound; like crickets.

CHRISTINE

Listen, Seba.

SEBASTIAN

(worried))

Is this about, the job?

Christine takes a moment to see whether he understands that 'he' is the job.

CHRISTINE

Yeah. But things change sometimes.

SEBASTIAN

No.

CHRISTINE

No?

SEBASTIAN

Things change all the time.

CHRISTINE

Ha. Got that. Aunt Peg?

SEBASTIAN

Uh huh.

CHRISTINE

Well, this is one of those 'all the time's. Come on. Out of the back. Leave the chairs on the road.

SEBASTIAN

For the next people who come by.

CHRISTINE

Sure. Yeah. Let's go.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

CHRISTINE

Seba, in there. Grab a phone and turn it on. Put it on the holder.

Sebastian complies. She starts the truck and pulls onto the road. After a few moments she dials and waits.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Jeri, don't talk.

JERI (O.S.)

Chris. Jesus.

SEBASTIAN

She said, "don't talk".

JERI (O.S.)

Is that...?

CHRISTINE

Jeri, not now. And you too, Seba. Shit. It's gone to shit.

Silence.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
 We're going dark. They're going to
 throw a net around this and I need
 to get us out from under it.
 Okay. Short answers, got it?

Silence.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
 Mr. Evans?

JERI (O.S.)
 Dead.

CHRISTINE
 Who?

JERI (O.S.)
 Family, then Feds. Seven bodies
 equals Feds.

CHRISTINE
 Shit. Okay. I need a car.

JERI (O.S.)
 Chris, am I marked?

CHRISTINE
 Car.

JERI (O.S.)
 Yeah, a minute. Supplies?

CHRISTINE
 Mossburg and Sig: two-twenty
 threes, and nine mil.

INT. CHRISTINE AND JERI'S OFFICE - NIGHT

JERI, mid 30's, working a computer and 2 cell-phones
 simultaneously, completes the arrangements for Christine.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)
 Jeri. Don't go home.

JERI
 Location and model on their way.
 Confirm, and lose the phone.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)
 Got it. Get gone. Stay quiet.

Jeri shuts down the electronics, scans the office and turns to leave. She opens the door to see a handgun pointed at her face. She instantly blocks it to the side and strikes the man in the face. A hand holding a gun strikes her head from the side. Jeri collapses.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Christine hands the phone to Sebastian.

CHRISTINE
Make it chirp like a cricket.

SEBASTIAN
Okay.

Sebastian disassembles the phone and holds the pieces.

CHRISTINE
Out the window.

Sebastian complies.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
We've got a drive ahead. Why don't
you get some sleep.

SEBASTIAN
I am tired. It's been a long day.

CHRISTINE
You and me both.

Sebastian leans back, shuts his eyes, and almost immediately his breathing becomes regular and deep.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Jesus.

She takes her gun out her holster and points it at Sebastian's head. He doesn't stir.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Shit.

She returns the gun to its holster and turns her attention to the road. The rural road becomes the freeway and soon the oncoming lights foretell the city, and a bed.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The 'WHATEVER, SOME KINDA TREE' MOTEL room is decorated in 'usually-rent-by-the-hour' brown and nicotine varnished paintings of flowers. Clothes lie on two empty slept-in beds.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, BATHROOM - DAY

Christine emerges from the shower to see Sebastian sitting on the toilet.

CHRISTINE

What the hell? You couldn't wait to have your dump?

She doesn't move to cover herself, but stands defiantly naked. Sebastian turns his head away.

SEBASTIAN

Oh, no. It's just sometimes, my aim's not so good, so I sit down to pee. And I really had to pee. I thought I'd be done before you got out. You were in here a long time.

Christine grabs a towel and exits the bathroom.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Grab a shower while you're in there. I'll be back soon.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Christine parks a pale, nondescript sedan outside the room. She emerges, calmly walks to the trunk, opens it, and moves the packing blanket to reveal a rifle case, a backpack containing a handgun and boxes of ammo, and two labeled cell phones. She takes number '1' and turns it on.

CHRISTINE

That's my girl.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Sebastian is sitting on the bed reading the Gideon's Bible. Christine enters.

CHRISTINE

Looking for salvation?

SEBASTIAN

You can't find it in a book. But if you let it, it'll find you.

CHRISTINE

Sebastian.

Sebastian closes the book and places it gently beside him on the bed. He gives his full attention to Christine.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Do you understand what's happening.

SEBASTIAN

I think so.

CHRISTINE

Do you want to tell me?

SEBASTIAN

No.

CHRISTINE

No?

SEBASTIAN

Aunt Peg said that when I'm scared of something that isn't real, talking makes it go away, but if it's real, it's better to just listen.
This is real, isn't it.

CHRISTINE

Yes, it is.

SEBASTIAN

I saw the men.

CHRISTINE

Yes, you did.

SEBASTIAN

You don't want me to tell.

CHRISTINE

Well, not me. Other people.
But things change.

SEBASTIAN

All the time.

CHRISTINE

Yeah.

SEBASTIAN
Like now. You called me
'Sebastian'.

Christine takes out her phone and checks a text message.

CHRISTINE
Damn. Let's go. More driving.

They gather their belongings and exit the room. Sebastian looks around for the truck. She points to the sedan.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
That one.

She unlocks the doors. Sebastian opens the driver's side for Christine. She waits. He stops at the passenger side.

SEBASTIAN
You can still call me 'Seba', I
like the way it sounds. 'Seba'.

CHRISTINE
Okay...Seba.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Two imposing men, one with a bandaged nose, stand at the door to a private room warily tracking Christine's approach. She stops a body length away.

CHRISTINE
Sebastian.

The uglier, bandaged man knocks and enters the room.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Why is it the eye candy always
stays behind?

The man smiles, catches himself and turns stoic. The other guard emerges and motions her to approach. Eye Candy stops her. She raises her arms to be frisked.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Not that I mind.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

VINCENT MCKAY, late 50's, sits in his bed, the back elevated, with IV's and cables extending from his muscular frame. Although pale and in discomfort, he is far from 'weak'.

Christine steps calmly until a few feet from the bed.

VINCENT

I expected someone younger.

CHRISTINE

You're still breathing. It's been a week of surprises.

Christine waits.

VINCENT

How's my boy?

CHRISTINE

Quoting Aunt Peg.

Vincent's face turns hard and cold at the name.

VINCENT

I loved my wife, but she was a part of my work. I grieve, yet also understand her killing. But Margaret, Aunt Peg, she had no truck in this. Her world was elsewhere, and to the comfort of my son. It was not sullied with the vulgarity of ours. Until now. Of those that killed her, there's but two remain: one theirs, one mine - a traitor who would eat his gun if he had the wit.

The door opens. Eye Candy wheels Jeri into the room; her face swollen, an arm in a sling. Vincent nods and the guard leaves. He continues to look at Jeri.

JERI

Hey, Chris.

Christine, remaining calm, does not move.

CHRISTINE

Hey, Jeri.

VINCENT

Everything you need to know of someone, you learn from those who love them. Your woman would not betray you, and that told enough.

Christine continues her stance, looking directly at Vincent, waiting.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Ms. Faraday, I grow fonder of you by the minute. How should we proceed?

CHRISTINE

What do you want of me?

VINCENT

By God, I swear, if I had a company of you both, I would sleep as a babe; as my son sleeps.

Christine smiles.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Ah. He's found his way into you, my Sebastian has. Yes. Then this is how it will be. Ms. Faraday, you will find the two remaining vermin. This should not be difficult as they will, by now, be looking for you. Then you will kill them. Sebastian you will keep safe. I know you will do this.

CHRISTINE

Yes.

JERI

Chris?

CHRISTINE

Mr. McKay, Ms. Purcell has not yet met Sebastian. I look forward to their introduction.

VINCENT

Ms. Purcell. Please stand.

Jeri rises from the wheelchair. Christine keeps her attention focused on Vincent. Moments pass in silence.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

By God, you truly love this woman. So be it. Ms. Purcell will be no pawn in this affair. Ms. Faraday. Please, step closer.

Christine approaches the bed and takes Vincent's outstretched hand.

CHRISTINE

Mr. McKay.

VINCENT

Ms. Faraday. It has been years
since such a pleasant introduction.

Vincent releases her hand. Christine steps back and turns to face Jeri. Smiling, she approaches, takes her available hand, and leads her to the door.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Ms. Purcell.

Jeri releases Christine's hand and turns.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I appreciate your role in this
business, and regret the
unpleasantness it has caused you. I
trust you will watch well Ms.
Faraday. And my son.

Jeri nods her understanding and they leave the hospital room.

INT. NONDESCRIPT SEDAN - NIGHT

The car moves steadily in light evening traffic.

CHRISTINE

You look like the domestic abuse
poster girl.

JERI

I've got Oxycontin kicking in, so,
I'm good.

Christine pulls her close and kisses her head.

JERI (CONT'D)

Mmm. Ah, careful. They popped my
shoulder in and out a few times.
What now?

CHRISTINE

Hotel. Bath. Food. Load for bear.
Then Seba, uh, Sebastian.

JERI

Yeah, what's up with that?

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Far surpassing previous accommodations. Christine and Jeri settle in. The case and backpack lay on one of the beds.

JERI

Everyone knows we're here.

CHRISTINE

Black hats shouldn't do anything with the white hats around. White hats want to figure out what's up.

JERI

You do remember we're 'black hats' too.

Christine draws Jeri near. She gently kisses her face, hair, and mouth. She steps back and points to the bathroom.

CHRISTINE

You. Bath. Then order food. For three. Better make it four, Seba's a big boy. I'll be back soon. Keep the 9 millimeter with you. I could be wrong about men in hats.

She gives Jeri another kiss...

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

If we wore hats they'd be grey.

...and leaves the room.

INT. ANOTHER HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Christine enters.

SEBASTIAN

Hi. You were gone awhile, but I wasn't worried. Did you meet dad?

CHRISTINE

Yes, I did. We talked. You and I will be together a little longer, with his blessing.

SEBASTIAN

Do we have to drive again?

CHRISTINE

Not yet. I want you to meet someone; a friend. You hungry?

SEBASTIAN

The man who called asked if I wanted food. I said 'no', but now I'm hungry.

Christine races to the bed and pulls her gun from underneath. She checks it, preps it, and holds it ready.

CHRISTINE
Sebastian, you must do exactly what
I say, when I say it. Understand?

SEBASTIAN
I understand. The men I saw?

CHRISTINE
Or men like them. Lie down, and
don't move until I say "Seba".

Sebastian complies. Christine kneels against the wall.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Come on you idiot! Get your ass out
here! We gotta move! Let's go!

Moments pass and then bullets tear through the center of the door. Christine waits a beat and fires three times through the door. A slump is heard and she fires again. A cry of pain and then hobbled steps down the hall.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Seba, with me. Stay behind me.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Save for a body on the floor, the hallway is clear. There is a trail of blood in the direction of the exit stairs.

CHRISTINE
Shit. Jeri.
Seba, this way, down two floors.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Christine and Sebastian emerge from the stairwell and gunfire is heard from Jeri's room. They run to the room.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jeri is standing over a man bleeding from the chest. The women lock eyes. Sebastian moves further into the room.

Christine looks again at the body. There is only one wound.

CHRISTINE
SEBA!!

She places herself between Sebastian and the door. She turns as two bullets strike her and she falls.

JERI

CHRIS!

The injured man leaning in the doorway takes aim at Sebastian, then at Jeri as she raises her weapon and fires striking him in the chest. He falls and she fires twice more.

JERI (CONT'D)

Chris.

She grabs her phone from the bed but hears the shouts of police in the hallway. She takes in the scene before her.

Sebastian is cradling a still conscious Christine in his arms. She is bleeding from the side and shoulder.

CHRISTINE

Seba, your dad's info is shit. Oh, never mind. Sebastian, this is Jeri; Jeri, Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN

Hello, Jeri. That's a different name for a woman.

JERI

Hello, Sebastian. That's an old name for a young man.

SEBASTIAN

Old names have better stories to tell.

Christine looks to the bemused Jeri.

CHRISTINE

That'd be Aunt Peg.

Through the window, just over the horizon, the old moon in new moon's arms is rising.