

**Juarez Blues**

Written by Kyle W Bergersen

631 S Pickard Ave  
Norman, OK 73609  
310.497.4859

OPEN

FADE IN:

EXT. HIGH-SECURITY ZONE - DAWN

The rising sun chases endless loops of razor wire. A chain-link fence stretches for miles across steep concrete bunkers. Infrared cameras maintain their constant vigil.

It's not a Supermax prison or the Iraqi Green Zone but the Rio Grande river passing between El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Mexico.

An abandoned car sits on the center of a bridge connecting these widely divergent worlds. Blocking multiple lanes. The trunk wide open. Three dead men stuffed inside.

Barbed-wire wraps tightly around the necks of the corpses. "Fed" spray-painted on the chest of the man in the middle. The brutal violence eerily juxtaposed against the morning calm.

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAWN

Texas scrub and switchgrass surround an isolated single-wide. A beat-up 70's Ford pick-up sits nearby. Nothing else for miles.

INT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAWN

A RUMBLING SOUND startles DWIGHT HARRIS (35) awake. He takes his cowboy lifestyle a bit too seriously and should use sunscreen.

Dwight's clearly not alone. Grabbing the heavy half of a split pool cue, he cautiously searches for source of the sound.

Reveal a body lying on his couch. Covered with newspapers. The sound could be gas rumbling through a corpse in the throes of rigor mortis or a bear digesting a fresh kill.

His cudgel held high, Dwight snatches off the newspapers. Reveal RJ (60's). Gray scrubble on his gaunt face. Homemade tattoos on his neck. Way too buff for a man of his advanced years. Think Nick Nolte or Kris Kristofferson.

RJ  
What the hell?

Shock and confusion fill Dwight's eyes. Unsure what to do, as RJ rubs the sleep from his eyes.

RJ  
(off the pool cue)  
That's how ya greet yer father?

DWIGHT  
My father's doing twenty-to-life in  
La Tuna.

Dwight winds up to beat down his old man. From beneath the newspapers, RJ pulls out a handgun. Freezing Dwight in his tracks.

RJ  
Just got parole. And need a  
roommate who won't rip me off. Mind  
if I stick around for a bit?

The frown on Dwight's face says it all. Too bad he can't do anything about it.

EXT. HIGH-SECURITY BORDER ZONE - DAY

Police tape surrounds the bridge near the abandoned car. DEA Special Agent, HOPE ROMERO (30's) leads the investigation. Pain fills her large brown eyes, as she examines the lifeless bodies stuffed in the trunk. Unable to build that emotional wall that's so vital to those in law enforcement.

HOPE  
Why did it have to be Jerry?

CASSANDRA "CONNIE" CONNORS (20's) eyes Jerry's body. A pilot for the US Customs Air Interdiction Team. Her grief overwhelms her. Cutting into her onlookers like a rusty saw.

Hope turns to JOHNNY "GERONIMO" SCHNEIDERMAN (20's), a Border Patrol Agent assigned to her special task force. A blonde frat boy whose nickname stems from his rugby days.

HOPE  
Get Connie out of here. And don't  
leave her alone.

GERONIMO  
Got it, Chief.

Hope's lieutenant, FBI Agent CLINTON ROBINSON (50's) stands beside her. An outsider would assume this handsome black man has Hope's job.

HOPE

Never get involved with cops.  
Especially undercover ones.

CLINTON

She knew the risks, Hope. They both  
did. The cartels play for keeps.

HOPE

I put him out there, Clinton. He's  
my responsibility.

CLINTON

You didn't blow his cover. But I'd  
sure like to know who did?

Hope turns her back on the carnage. Looking at the shanties  
shrouding the perimeter of Juarez.

HOPE

Jerry was supposed to collect the  
cartel's monthly tribute to the El  
Paso Sheriff's office. So we sure  
can't turn to the local cops for  
help.

Clinton looks back at the modest El Paso skyline. A typical  
small American city.

CLINTON

Wouldn't be surprised, if one of  
'em wrote his death sentence.

Hope eyes El Paso. Her remorse and guilt, slowly, turns to  
resolve.

HOPE

Me either.

FADE OUT.

END OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAY

Dwight struggles to pull on his boots. It doesn't help that his Wranglers are way too tight. Wearing a t-shirt with the Arabic word, Al-haq, emblazoned on his chest.

DWIGHT

I've got a run, today. By the time  
I get back, I want you gone.

RJ

What the hell is that, anyway?

DWIGHT

What the hell is what?

RJ

That thing on your shirt.

DWIGHT

It's Arabic. Means *The Truth*.

RJ spits on the ground in disgust. A prison habit that will be hard to quit.

RJ

Whatta them Arabs know about truth?

DWIGHT

They know enough not to spit on my  
living room floor.

RJ eyes the loogie on the carpet. Too proud to apologize.

RJ

Whatever.

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAY

Dwight exits the trailer. RJ on his heels. Dwight tries to start his old truck but the engine won't turnover.

RJ

When ya gettin' back?

DWIGHT

Tomorrow, if I can ever get this  
damn thing started.

Dwight gets out with an aerosol can. Lifting the hood, he pulls off the air filter and sprays the can down the carburetor's throat.

RJ  
How can I leave, if you got the truck?

Dwight eyes his father, disdainfully. Not a shred of respect.

DWIGHT  
You got legs. Use 'em.

Dwight gets behind the wheel and fires up the engine. Putting the truck in gear.

RJ  
Why the hell d'ya live out here, anyway?

DWIGHT  
Sometimes, I hafta bring my work home with me. And we're just inside the Tigua Indian Reservation. Which, as far as the cops are concerned, is strictly verboten.

RJ smiles. He's got a bright kid.

RJ  
If that's the case, can ya pick-up a few things for me?

Dwight shifts the truck back in park. Waiting impatiently, as RJ fishes a list out of his pocket.

RJ  
I need some Sudafed, iodine, a multi-pack of them little wooden matches. Coleman camping fuel, fingernail polish remover and denatured alcohol.  
(beat)  
Oh, and a box of panty-liners.

Dwight stares, coldly, at his father.

DWIGHT  
I'm surprised a man of your advanced years still menstruates.

RJ smiles with the same churlish charm, as his son.

DWIGHT

Don't think, for one moment, you're  
turnin' my home into a meth lab.

RJ

Why not? You bringin' back so much  
dope and cocaine back from Me-hee-  
co there won't be enough room?

Dwight gets out of the truck. Wanting to make his point  
perfectly clear.

DWIGHT

For the record, I smuggle dope.  
That's it. Nothing else.

RJ

Good to know my son's a dealer with  
strong moral fiber.

DWIGHT

I'm not a dealer. I'm a smuggler. A  
middle man. I don't use it and sure  
as hell don't sell retail.

(beat)

And I don't hafta justify myself to  
a former Sheriff who's spent the  
last twenty years in prison for  
taking bribes from the cartel.

RJ

I served my time. I'm  
rehabilitated.

Dwight snatches the shopping list from his father's hand and  
crumples it up.

DWIGHT

Dope makes you stupid and lowers  
your sperm count. A combination  
that's damn near a public service,  
around here.

Dwight gets back in his truck and puts it in gear. Hesitating  
before he leaves.

DWIGHT

I was hoping to avoid this but  
today's my birthday.

RJ

Oh.

DWIGHT

The best present you can give me is  
to be gone, when I get back.

Dwight drives off. His father waves goodbye.

RJ

Happy birthday.

EXT. HIGH-SECURITY BORDER ZONE - DAY

Dwight approaches the US border in his beat-up truck. Fueled by propane tanks strapped on the bed. A US CUSTOMS AGENT recites, from rote, his mundane questions.

US CUSTOMS AGENT

Where are you coming from?

DWIGHT

El Paso.

US CUSTOMS AGENT

What's your citizenship?

DWIGHT

I'm an American and damn proud of  
it too.

US CUSTOMS AGENT

What's your reason for going to  
Mexico?

DWIGHT

Business.

US CUSTOMS AGENT

Can I see your ID?

Dwight hands over his license and the Customs Agent runs his name on the computer.

US CUSTOMS AGENT

It appears you cross the border on  
a frequent basis, Mr. Harris.

DWIGHT

(off his beat-up truck)  
That's why I make the big bucks.

The Customs Agent is not amused.

US CUSTOMS AGENT

Pull over there, please.



The Customs Agent searches Dwight's cab. Finding nothing. Then searches the flatbed which only holds two propane tanks and a small toolbox.

US CUSTOMS AGENT  
What's in the box?

DWIGHT  
My tools.

US CUSTOMS AGENT  
What kinda tools?

DWIGHT  
Business tools.

The Customs Agent opens the toolbox and finds it stuffed with \$20 bundles. Busted.

US CUSTOMS AGENT  
Turn around, please.

Dwight, nervously, turns away. Scrambling for a way out.

DWIGHT  
Surely, we can find a way to  
resolve this misunderstanding.

The Customs Agent closes the tailgate.

US CUSTOMS AGENT  
I dunno what you're talking about.

Dwight turns back. Eyes the empty toolbox.

US CUSTOMS AGENT  
Have a nice day in Juarez.

Dwight flashes a wink and a smile.

DWIGHT  
Thanks, I will.

Dwight drives across the same bridge that was a crime scene, just a few short hours ago.

EXT. NACHO BARRERA'S HOUSE - JUAREZ - DAY

Dwight parks his truck outside one of the few middle class homes you'll find in Juarez. Eating a frozen popsicle made from smoked milk.

His partner, NACHO BARRERA (40's), pushes one of his EIGHT CHILDREN on a tire swing. The others swarm around in bare feet.

DWIGHT  
Buenos tardes, mi amigo.

NACHO  
(off his watch)  
You're cutting close. These people  
don't like to wait.

As Dwight gets out of his truck, he holds a paper bag. Nacho's children swarm him, as he hands out exotic popsicles made from horchata, yellow cherries and hibiscus.

DWIGHT  
Last time, I didn't stop for  
paletas, your kids nearly killed  
me.

Nacho's visibly-pregnant wife, SOLEDAD (30's) greets Dwight with a warm hug.

SOLEDAD  
Dwight, como esta?

Dwight returns the hug enthusiastically.

DWIGHT  
Bien, Soledad.  
(off her swollen belly)  
I need the Spanish word for condom  
but somethin' tells me you wouldn't  
know.

EXT. ISOLATED CANYON - JUAREZ - DAY

Dwight and Nacho wait in the sweltering heat.

NACHO  
Ever think about getting a truck  
with a working air-conditioner.

DWIGHT  
Nothing says "smuggler" more than a  
brand new pick-up. I don't need  
that trouble.

Dwight looks at his watch.

DWIGHT

I thought you said these people didn't like to wait.

NACHO

They don't. But they don't mind makin' us do it.

DWIGHT

Who are these guys, anyway?

Nacho looks like he's holding a guilty secret.

NACHO

Pablo Sanchez's crew.

DWIGHT

(nervously)

Are you shittin' me? Why would anyone wanna do business with a guy nicknamed the crazy pig?

NACHO

I'm tired of dealing with pretenders and wannabees, Dwight. We need to make some real money.

(beat)

Which means getting in bed with "El Señor." And that means dealing with El Cerdo Loco.

DWIGHT

Next time, you pull a stunt like this, I'd appreciate you tellin' me first.

Three brand new, full-cab F-450's roll up to greet them. Complete with smoked bullet-proof windows and naked lady mud flaps.

PABLO SANCHEZ (30's) steps out. Followed by his AK-7 toting CRONIES. Pablo's all muscle. Barely reaching five feet in high-heeled cowboy boots (which he's never without).

Dwight gets out of the truck in disgust.

DWIGHT

If I end up dead, don't think that'll stop me from getting payback.

As Dwight and Nacho approach Pablo, the guards raise their weapons.

DWIGHT

Nice touch. Very terrorista. I'm surprised they don't got grenade launchers.

NACHO

Isn't that one?

Dwight eyeballs a grenade launcher.

DWIGHT

Holy shit.

Our heroes, politely, wait for Pablo to speak first.

PABLO

You speak English, bolillo?

Pablo's henchmen laugh. He's the funniest guy they know.

DWIGHT

Enough to get by.

Pablo eyes Dwight's tight Wranglers.

PABLO

Something tells me you're not carrying \$40,000 in those pockets.

DWIGHT

I like to see the goods before I flash my cash.

More laughter from the henchmen.

PABLO

I give you one minute.

A worried Nacho motions for Dwight to get the damn cash. Reluctantly, Dwight pulls a propane tank off his truck. Dragging it to Pablo, Dwight unscrews the false top and presents the cash inside. Pablo flashes his grill of gold teeth.

PABLO

I'm starting to like you, bolillo.

Pablo's henchmen grab the tank of cash. Dwight tries to stop them.

DWIGHT

Hold on! What about my dope?

The butt end of a rifle knocks Dwight to the ground. Nacho, instinctively, laces his fingers behind his head and drops to his knees.

PABLO

You should be more careful about who you trust in this business.

Dwight touches the gash on his head. A small load of marijuana unceremoniously drops around him.

DWIGHT

Hey, where's the rest of it?

Pablo returns to his truck.

PABLO

Consider it a cost of doing business for the first time with "El Señor."

Pablo drives off with all the cash. Leaving our heroes to eat their dust.

DWIGHT

Call me crazy but I prefer pretenders and wannabees.

NACHO

We just need to earn their trust. After that, we'll be sitting on easy street. You'll see.

Dwight grabs a kilo brick.

DWIGHT

They took my tank. How do you suggest I get this stuff back?

NACHO

We can hire one of the tunnels.

DWIGHT

A tunnel? That's bush league. Playground pushers use tunnels. Dime-bag dorm dealers.

NACHO

You're just don't wanna pay for it.

Dwight resigns himself to his costly fate.

DWIGHT

That too.

EXT. SMUGGLING TUNNEL HOUSE - JUAREZ - DAY

On the surface, it looks just like any other rundown shack along the border.

DWIGHT (O.S.)  
25 percent? You'll need a bigger  
gun to get that price.

INT. SMUGGLING TUNNEL HOUSE - JUAREZ - DAY

Dwight and Nacho haggle with HECTOR (20's), who manages his father's tunnel. A .32 caliber pistol on his hip for protection.

HECTOR  
This is the best tunnel in Juarez.

Dwight walks over to the concrete-lined hole in the living room. Wired with electricity.

DWIGHT  
I ain't payin' that much for a damn  
hole in the ground.

Dwight grabs a stapler off Hector's desk and drops it down the hole. Seven long seconds transpire before it HITS BOTTOM.

HECTOR  
That hole goes down 85 feet and  
crosses under the Rio Grande. It  
has five exits on the US side. All  
rigged with dynamite, if the cops  
ever get wise.

Dwight still can't believe how deep the damn thing is.

HECTOR  
I'll give you a better deal, if you  
got cash.

Dwight shoots Nacho the evil eye.

DWIGHT  
Unfortunately, I'm havin' a  
cashflow crisis. Will you take 15?  
That's more 'an fair.

Hector won't budge.

DWIGHT  
Come on, it's my birthday. And  
except for this head wound, I've  
got jack.

HECTOR  
Birthday? How stupid do I look?

Dwight pulls out his driver's license.

DWIGHT  
I can prove it. See! Happy damn  
birthday to me.

With this evidence, Hector reconsiders his offer.

HECTOR  
Okay, I'll give you twenty. Just  
don't let my father find out.

NACHO  
Why didn't you tell me it was your  
birthday?

Dwight eyes Nacho with hopeless resignation.

DWIGHT  
Cause you're a dick.

EXT. HIGH-SECURITY BORDER ZONE - DAY

Dwight crosses the bridge in his truck. Smiling and waving at  
the Customs Agent, as he re-enters the United States.

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAY

Dwight finds his father dozing in a hammock under the only  
shady spot for miles.

RJ  
You're back, awfully, quick.

DWIGHT  
I need help getting the camper on  
my truck.

They carry the camper top to Dwight's truck and latch it  
down.

DWIGHT  
Good thing I love my job cause it  
sure don't pay.

RJ  
Wanna tell me what happened?

DWIGHT  
My partner's eyes are bigger than  
his stomach. And it's costing me a  
bundle.

(beat)  
This would be a decent business, if  
the people had any integrity.

RJ  
Maybe you should walk away from  
this one. Sometimes, fixing  
mistakes cost more than it's worth.

DWIGHT  
You're advice would be more  
valuable, if you used it yourself.

Dwight gets in the cab and fires up his engine.

RJ  
Can I come along?

DWIGHT  
No, thanks. I've had my fill of  
criminals for one day.

RJ holds up a small present.

RJ  
Before you go, I got you somethin'.

Dwight, reluctantly, opens the present. Revealing a pack of  
cigarettes.

RJ  
I know it ain't much.

DWIGHT  
I don't even smoke.

RJ  
Then re-gift it. It won't hurt my  
feelings.

Dwight drives away in complete dismay.

EXT. BIG BOX BARN - NIGHT

Sodium vapor lights illuminate a vast empty parking lot.  
Dwight parks his truck on the edge of the lot.



He shuts off his engine, HONKS his horn twice and slides into the truck bed.

A hydraulic jack lowers the concrete slab under Dwight's truck.

Dwight removes a false bottom on the bed of his truck. One-by-one, they hand kilo bricks up to him.

Back behind the wheel, Dwight heaves a sigh of relief. Fires up his engine and turns on his headlights.

Revealing Hope's well-armed task force around him. Flood lights blind Dwight.

HOPE

Keep your hands on the wheel where  
we can see them.

Dwight can't believe his bad luck.

DWIGHT

Worst birthday yet.

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - EL PASO - DAY

The one takeaway from this generic building is that the DEA is underfunded.

INT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Handcuffed to a metal chair, Dwight's cocky veneer vanishes. His brain spins a mile a minute. Wanting to outsmart this problem but with no clear idea how.

HOPE

Do you want a lawyer?

DWIGHT

Do I need one?

HOPE

We caught you with 20 kilos of marijuana. That translates into a twenty years in Federal prison. You may want to consider it.

DWIGHT

A kilo a year? That's a little overkill, don'tcha think?

HOPE

It's the mandatory minimum. Judges have no lea way in the matter.

Hope sits next to him.

HOPE

My sources tell me you've been dealing since high school. And yet, you don't have a criminal record. How do you explain that?

DWIGHT

I'm not a dealer.

HOPE

Too good to sell to kids but perfectly willing to wholesale to any hustler who does.

This takes the wind out of Dwight's sails.

DWIGHT  
Something like that.  
(beat)  
Who told you where to find me?

Hope shows Dwight the crime photos taken on the bridge.

HOPE  
First, tell me what you know about  
this?

Dwight grimaces and looks away.

DWIGHT  
I smuggle dope, okay. I admit that.  
Guilty as charged. But that's all I  
do. I don't even carry a gun so  
don't think I had anything to do  
with that.

HOPE  
This man was an undercover cop. One  
of the few I could trust. I'm  
responsible for sending him out  
there and I'm going to get his  
killer.

DWIGHT  
Know who did it?

HOPE  
Nope.

DWIGHT  
Know where it happened?

HOPE  
Mexico.

DWIGHT  
Can you be any more precise?

Hope shakes her head, a bit forlornly.

DWIGHT  
I know most of the cops in Ciudad  
Juarez. They won't be much help.

HOPE  
Neither will the cops on this side.  
That's why I need you?

Dwight, instinctively, bursts into LAUGHTER.

DWIGHT

That's good. You had me there. For a second, I thought you meant it.

HOPE

I did.

Sensing a shift in power, Dwight's cocksure attitude slowly returns.

DWIGHT

I dunno, Hope. I don't wanna go to prison. But I don't wanna end up like your friend either.

Hope shouts outside.

HOPE

Geronimo!

Geronimo enters. His arms bigger than Dwight's legs.

HOPE

Take him to his cell.

DWIGHT

Hold on. I thought we were negotiating.

HOPE

You have the mistaken notion that you control your fate.

Before Geronimo leads Dwight out the door. Hope gets in one last dig.

HOPE

If you wanna survive in La Tuna, first thing you should do is find the biggest, meanest guy in the yard... and blow him.

GERONIMO

Let's go, lover boy.

Geronimo leads Dwight out.

DWIGHT

Hold on, Geronimo. I don't wanna be unreasonable. I'll do what you want. Anything.

Hope smiles triumphantly.

EXT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

A deflated Dwight waits on the sidewalk for his ride. Holding his hat in his hands. RJ pulls up in Dwight's old truck.

RJ  
Ya think the impound guys would  
have had the decency to wash it.

Dwight climbs in the passenger seat. No fight left in him.

RJ  
Looks like you got off easy.

DWIGHT  
Looks are deceiving.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

RJ drives Dwight through downtown El Paso.

RJ  
Wanna talk about it?

DWIGHT  
No.

RJ  
They turned ya, didn't they?

DWIGHT  
How'd you know?

RJ  
Why else would I be drivin' you  
home?

They pass Divine Sisters of Malverde, a K-8 parochial school.

DWIGHT  
Pull over.

EXT. DIVINE SISTERS OF MALVERDE - DAY

Standing outside the chain link fence, Dwight and RJ watch an 8th grade gym class. Dwight points at one of the girls in her gym outfit.

RJ  
What are we doing here?

DWIGHT

Since you're so hellbound to re-establish your family ties. Thought you might wanna see your granddaughter. She's the one with the skinny legs.

CHRISTMAS NORTENO (13) plays volleyball next to her friend ABBIE (13). The embodiment of awkward adolescence.

RJ

Her mother should try feedin' her.

DWIGHT

Now that I've gone straight-ish, maybe her mom'll lemme talk to her.

RJ

You can't tell her mother anything about this, Dwight. Or anyone for that matter. If word gets out yer a snitch, you won't last till supper.

Abbie spots the two men watching them.

ABBIE

Who are those creepy guys? They keep lookin' at us.

CHRISTMAS

I've never seen the old guy before. But the other one's my dad. Got a picture of him at home.

ABBIE

Your dad? Let's go talk to him.

CHRISTMAS

You kidding? My mom would freak. I gotta pick my battles.

Dwight grabs a handful of fence.

DWIGHT

I'd sure like to know how the Feds knew I'd be at that parking lot?

RJ

Oh, that's easy. I told 'em.

DWIGHT

What?

RJ

They need someone who can work both sides of the border. So I offered your services in exchange for my parole.

DWIGHT

Just when I thought you couldn't mess me up any worse.

RJ

Probably the best turn I'll ever do ya. Ungrateful little turd.

Dwight gets into his truck. Locks the passenger door so RJ can't join him and drives off alone.

RJ

Very mature.

INT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Clinton walks into Hope's office with fresh satellite photos.

CLINTON

Hope, look what I just found.

He hands her some printouts.

CLINTON

A new field of high-grade sensimillion has sprung up in the desert, outside Juarez.

(off the photos)

Guarded by Mexican soldiers.

Hope grabs another set of satellite photos on her desk.

HOPE

This didn't turn up on the CIA's last satellite survey. Where'd you get this?

CLINTON

Google Earth.

(beat)

Think this might be connected to Jerry's death.

HOPE

D.C. won't give us enough money to do our jobs right. And now they're playing games with our intel.

(MORE)

HOPE (cont'd)

(beat)

Until we know who we can trust, I want a lock-down on all information leaving this unit. Especially our undercover op.

CLINTON

Sure, thing. We'll phony up some reports so we don't tip our hand.

HOPE

The last thing we need is another dead gringo smuggler in the Mexican desert.

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAY

Dwight tops off fluid levels to his crop duster. Getting ready for take-off. RJ hovers close.

RJ

So lemme talk to Christmas for ya. My name's not on any restraining order.

DWIGHT

You're like a stray dog, ya know that. A sinister stray who won't go away.

RJ

You've never respected anyone else's boundaries. Why her?

DWIGHT

Just stay out of it, okay?

RJ

Text the girl. What harm can it do?

DWIGHT

I'm trying my best to be unpleasant. But you refuse to get the hint.

Hope pulls up in a new black Explorer. Making Dwight's day even worse.

DWIGHT

Just what I needed.

Hope approaches.



HOPE  
I'm glad I got here before you  
left.

RJ  
Aren'tcha gonna introduce me?

DWIGHT  
This is my father, RJ. He's more  
trouble than he's worth.  
(beat)  
And this is Esperanza Romero, who  
for some inexplicable reason,  
prefers the English translation of  
her name.

RJ and Hope shake hands.

RJ  
My boy's a jack-ass. Afraid he gets  
it from me.

Hope fishes through her purse.

HOPE  
It goes against every rule in the  
book but I want you to have this.

She puts a Glock 21 on the wing of his plane.

HOPE  
It's plastic so won't set off metal  
detectors. And can't be traced to  
anyone in the States.

DWIGHT  
Without wanting to sound like a  
wuss, I don't do guns.

HOPE  
You deal drugs but don't carry a  
gun?

DWIGHT  
I don't deal drugs. I smuggle 'em.  
There's a difference.

RJ  
The boy's got baggage.

Dwight boards his plane.

HOPE

Keep your head up. I don't want to lose anyone else on my team.

From Dwight's POV, he can easily look down Hope's shirt.

DWIGHT

I'm a skateboarder. I don't do team sport. But then again, the coaches never looked like you.

HOPE

Maybe you should've tried softball.

DWIGHT

Too late now.

Dwight fires up the engine and takes off towards Mexico. Leaving RJ all alone with Hope.

HOPE

I'd like my gun back, please.

RJ, reluctantly, hands over the weapon. Then flashes a sexy smile.

RJ

You like beer?

HOPE

It's not even nine yet.

RJ

I'm gonna guess you colored inside the lines, when you were little.

EXT. MEXICAN DESERT - DAY

From his plane, Dwight catches sight of the well-guarded marijuana field that escaped CIA detection.

A MEXICAN COMMANDER monitors Dwight's plane with binoculars. Unhappy about the fly-by but even unhappier with his SOLDIERS who fire at the plane.

EXT. NACHO BARRERA'S HOUSE - JUAREZ - DAY

Dwight lands his plane on the dirt road outside Nacho's home. Another good reason for zoning laws.

INT. NACHO BARRERA'S HOUSE - JUAREZ - DAY

Nacho's face is beaten and swollen. His arm in a sling. As he drinks tequila to numb the pain, Soledad tends to his wounds.

DWIGHT

What the hell happened to you?

NACHO

It's the price I paid to set up our meeting with El Señor. A test of my loyalty.

DWIGHT

I dunno, Nacho. I say we bail. Nothing can be worth this.

NACHO

I didn't let "El Cerdo Loco" beat on my face for two days just to quit, now.

Nacho downs another shot.

NACHO

There's something wrong inside that guy's head.

DWIGHT

What was your first clue?

NACHO

He had a hard-on the whole time.

EXT. CASTILLO ESTATE - JUAREZ - DAY

Dwight and Nacho approach the impressive compound set on a hillside. Surrounded with thirty foot walls and crawling with ARMED GUARDS.

DWIGHT

Looks like El Señor's built his own version of North Korea.

NACHO

The man has more money than God.

INT. CASTILLO ESTATE - DAY

Guards frisk Dwight and Nacho before leading them to an outdoor pool set on a lower plateau. Sitting ducks for the armed guards towering above them.

DWIGHT  
Guess, there's no turning back.

NACHO  
This will be good for us. You'll see.

Dwight and Nacho stand, as RAOUL CASTILLO (40's) approaches with Pablo on his heels. A man with so much power and wealth, he's lost touch with reality.

CASTILLO  
Please, sit. Can I get you anything?

NACHO  
No, thank you, Don Castillo.

CASTILLO  
(off Nacho's face)  
I'm sorry about your face but it's necessary for people to earn my trust.

DWIGHT  
I'll trust you a whole lot more, when you give my money back.

Castillo LAUGHS.

CASTILLO  
Most Americans have little respect for authority. I can see you're no exception.

DWIGHT  
If we didn't, your whole business model falls apart.

Pablo frowns.

PABLO  
But respect can be taught.

Castillo eyes Dwight. Admiring his pluck.

CASTILLO  
I think I would like to do business with you, Mr. Harris. But first, you must prove your loyalty.

Dwight looks at Nacho's bruised face.

DWIGHT

I'm sorry, your price is too steep.  
So if you'll excuse me.

Castillo frowns, as Dwight walks away. Off Pablo's signal, the guards take aim at Dwight.

Dwight stops. Closes his eyes. Shaking ever so slightly. His life hangs in the balance.

Castillo proves his point. Ordering his guards to stand down with a wave.

CASTILLO

I'll give you one chance to change  
your mind.

Dwight wipes the sweat from his upper lip and nods meekly.

Castillo shows Dwight a lo-res telephoto picture of Hope.

CASTILLO

This woman's DEA. She heads a task  
force whose sole purpose is to put  
me out of business.

DWIGHT

I could talk to her. Ask her to  
back off for the right price.

CASTILLO

Attempts at bribery have proven  
futile. You must kill her.

Dwight frowns.

CASTILLO

And if you don't, I will kill you.

Dwight likes that even less.

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

It's not even 10 am but it's already hot as hell outside.

INT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Dwight debriefs Hope's team which includes Clinton, Geronimo and Connie.

HOPE

Guess, we're doing a better job  
than I thought.

DWIGHT

You heard the part about them  
killing me, if I don't kill you,  
right?

Hope says nothing. Letting him twist in the wind.

DWIGHT

And since that option's clearly off  
the table, I'm burnt. Crispy.  
Toast.

Dwight stands.

DWIGHT

So I suggest we just shake hands  
and check me into the most  
comfortable witness protection  
program, you got.

(beat)

If it's okay with you, I'm kinda  
partial to the name, Deacon.

HOPE

Sit.

Dwight sits.

CLINTON

(to Hope)

Told you to take those bribes.  
They'd think they were safe and  
we'd be spending their own money  
putting 'em outta business.

HOPE

I've seen too many good cops slide down that slippery slope. It's not worth it.

GERONIMO

And walking around with a target on your back is? These guys don't make idle threats.

CLINTON

What else did ya learn from Castillo?

DWIGHT

Nothing, you guys don't already know with all your high-tech spy satellites and super x-ray vision.

Hope and Clinton share a look -- if he only knew.

CONNIE

Do you know who killed Jerry?

Dwight senses that Connie's vested more than professionally in this answer. Wisely, choosing to dial down his glib charm.

DWIGHT

No. But I'd put my money on Pablo Sanchez.

GERONIMO

The Crazy Pig? How does a guy get a name like that anyway?

DWIGHT

The same frat house where you got Geronimo.

Hope smiles and Geronimo frowns. You don't want to get on his bad side.

HOPE

Got any proof?

DWIGHT

Nope. But the guy acts like he invented murder.

CONNIE

You just find out if he killed Jerry. We'll handle the rest.

DWIGHT  
And what d'ya plan to do?

Connie loses it. Tired of the rules.

CONNIE  
Drop an incendiary grenade on their  
goddamn heads.

HOPE  
You okay, Connie?

Emotional and embarrassed, Connie turns and leaves.

CONNIE  
I've gotta go.

Once she's gone, Geronimo gets back to business.

GERONIMO  
So what's next?

CLINTON  
We get proof Sanchez killed Jerry.

GERONIMO  
How? Just walk up and ask?

DWIGHT  
No. We just gotta think like  
Republicans.

CLINTON  
Careful how you use the "R" word  
around her.

Clinton and Geronimo look at Hope.

HOPE  
What? You guys voted for Romney  
too. And Bush. Twice!

DWIGHT  
Republicans know you can't get  
rich, if you don't make your  
friends rich, first.  
(beat)  
And the best way to make those  
friends is to hang out at their  
country clubs.



INT. STRIP CLUB - JUAREZ - NIGHT

Unfortunately for Dwight, Pablo's idea of a country club includes karaoke, tequila and full-frontal nudity. Sharing a table with Nacho and SEVERAL SKANKY STRIPPERS.

MUSICA DE BANDA fills the club. Dwight observes the strippers. There's something not quite right. He leans over to shout privately in Nacho's ear.

DWIGHT

We've got ugly strippers in Texas  
but these gals make my eyes bleed.

NACHO

They're not women.

DWIGHT

What?

Dwight checks them out again. They're transvestites.

NACHO

Do you know the difference between  
a gay Mexican and a straight one?

Dwight shakes his head.

NACHO

One too many Tecates.

Pablo buys another bottle of tequila. An attentive stripper on both sides.

PABLO

Having a good time, bolillo?

DWIGHT

Absolutely. This place is both  
fascinating and educational.

PABLO

When do you kill the woman?

DWIGHT

Gotta figure out how to do it,  
first?

Pablo casts his analytical eye on Dwight.

PABLO

You look like you need distance. A  
sniper rifle maybe.

Dwight looks more like a rodeo clown than a sniper.

PABLO  
Or maybe a car bomb.

DWIGHT  
There was that one Russian fella  
who died from radiation poisoning.

PABLO  
That's no way to kill a man.

DWIGHT  
I wouldn't know.

PABLO  
The right way is to feel his  
breath. Getting weaker and weaker,  
as you squeeze the life from him.

DWIGHT  
What about the noise? Don't wanna  
tip off the neighbors.

PABLO  
I have a place that works just  
fine.

A transvestite stripper distracts Pablo with a passionate  
tongue in his ear. Quickly changing Pablo's subject. Dwight  
looks creeped out.

EXT. STRIP CLUB - JUAREZ - DAWN

Pablo stumbles outside with his "girlfriends." Followed by  
Dwight and Nacho.

PABLO  
You have 48 hours to kill that  
bitch or I come for you.

Supported by his dates, Pablo walks away. Dropping an empty  
tequila bottle that Dwight scoops up.

DWIGHT  
You guys have a nice day.

Nacho doesn't look happy.

NACHO  
Always have to be a wise ass, don't  
you?

DWIGHT

Nacho, my man. If I could turn it off, believe me, I would.

They climb into Nacho's truck.

DWIGHT

D'ya remember where Pablo worked you over?

NACHO

Are you kidding? I'll never forget it.

DWIGHT

Take me there.

NACHO

Why?

DWIGHT

You're the one who wants do business with these guys. I just wanna know more about 'em.

NACHO

I don't think so.

DWIGHT

Don't make me play my Sinaloa card.

NACHO

We're square on Sinaloa.

DWIGHT

You'll never be square on Sinaloa. If it wasn't for me, half your kids would never have been born.

(beat)

And don't make me tell Soledad you missed your 20th wedding anniversary because a hooker stole your clothes.

Nacho, angrily, puts his truck in gear.

NACHO

Maldita, mierda, gringa perra.

DWIGHT

Hey! I speak Spanish, ya know.

NACHO

I know.

Nacho drives away.

EXT. ABANDONED SHANTY - JUAREZ - DAY

A strong wind could easily knock down this old cattle station.

INT. ABANDONED SHANTY - JUAREZ - DAY

With ghosts of unthinkable and unspeakable crimes choking the air, Dwight searches for clues among garbage, bloody clothes and barbed wire.

The bad memories and smell are too much for Nacho.

NACHO  
I'm waiting outside.

Dwight uses his cell phone to take pictures. The hair on his skin stands on end. Covering his nose with a bandana.

In some refuse, Dwight uncovers a tooth. He hides it in his pocket.

EXT. ABANDONED SHANTY - JUAREZ - DAY

Dwight squints, as he steps into the blinding sunlight.

NACHO  
Happy?

DWIGHT  
Until today, I thought I was too  
jaded to be shocked by the ugly  
realities of life.

Nacho shivers involuntarily.

NACHO  
Let's get out of here. I wanna go  
home and hug my kids.

Dwight takes one last look at the shanty and then to the hazy El Paso skyline. It seems like a million miles away. His carefully-sculpted isolation offers no reprieve.

DWIGHT  
I know the feeling.

EXT. DIVINE SISTERS OF MALVERDE - DAY

Christmas leans against the statue of Jesus Malverde (the patron saint of drug traffickers who stole from the rich and gave to the poor). Waiting for her mother to pick her up.

Christmas gets a text and fishes out her phone. Revealing a hopeful and slightly anxious picture of Dwight. His message reads: *Hi, I'm your dad. Wanna talk?*

Instinctively, Christmas looks around for trouble. No idea how she'll respond.

HONK-HONK. Her mother, RACHEL NORTENO (30's), sits inside a Volvo wagon. Calling Rachel a "safety mom" puts it lightly.

Christmas tucks her phone away and runs to the car.

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAY

Holding his phone, Dwight waits for a reply that never comes. RJ sits next to his son and hands over an ice-cold Coors.

RJ

The waiting is the hardest part.

DWIGHT

Tom Petty.

RJ

What?

DWIGHT

Tom Petty said that. In song.

RJ

Well, if he did, he got it from me.  
Or was it Neruda.

DWIGHT

You've read Pablo Neruda?

RJ

Don't look so surprised. Your  
mother ate that up. And came in  
handy on more than one occasion.

DWIGHT

Can we change the subject before  
you get all graphic on me?

RJ

Always had a mouth on you.

DWIGHT  
Smacking it sure never worked.

RJ casts his eyes to the ground.

RJ  
Yeah. Back then, my parenting skill set was rather limited.

DWIGHT  
Sound like you've read up on the subject.

RJ  
Damn near read every book in the library at La Tuna. And it goes without saying the parenting section was somewhat neglected.

Dwight shakes his head, as he drinks his beer. He'll never figure out his old man.

RJ  
(off Dwight's phone)  
She'll call. Helln on the curiosity factor alone. Kids just hafta do things in their own time. Learned that from you.

Dwight eyes his father suspiciously.

DWIGHT  
Since you're making so much damn sense, what do I do about Hope? Once the cartel realizes I'm not gonna kill her, they'll be comin' after me.

RJ  
Ooh, that is a toughie.

RJ sips his beer and contemplates the options.

RJ  
I think you should nail her like a naked Jesus to the cross.

DWIGHT  
That's it? That's the best fatherly advice you got?

RJ crumples his empty can and tosses it in the yard.

RJ  
Better than anything my dad told  
me.

EXT. NACHO BARRERA'S HOUSE - JUAREZ - DAY

Nacho and Soledad play with their children, as Pablo pulls up in his bad-ass F-450. Getting out of his truck, Pablo eyes the children with a look of morbid glee.

PABLO  
Talk to your bolillo, today?

NACHO  
Not yet.

Pablo looks friendly enough but the kids, instinctively, maintain a safe distance. Hovering around their mother.

PABLO  
Know when he'll do the job?

NACHO  
No. He won't tell me.

PABLO  
I don't want your friend to have a  
change of heart.

NACHO  
He doesn't like being pushed. It  
makes him reckless.

PABLO  
I'm holding you responsible,  
understand? You and your family.

Pablo hands Nacho some C4 plastic explosive.

NACHO  
This is enough C4 to blow up a  
house. You may want to solve this  
problem yourself.

Nacho weighs the C4 in his hands. Sharing a sober look with Soledad.

PABLO  
I understand.

INT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Connie bursts into a meeting between Hope and Dwight. Holding fresh lab results.

CONNIE

The lab confirmed the tooth belongs to Jerry. And the prints we got off his body match the ones on the tequila bottle your cowboy brought back from Juarez.

HOPE

That's great. Now, we can get Sanchez.

DWIGHT

You can't arrest him in Mexico. How d'ya plan to lure him across the border?

CONNIE

I'll drag him over here, myself. Even if it means resigning.

DWIGHT

I'm not really comfortable being the "voice of reason" but there's gotta be a better way.

HOPE

Didn't Pablo give you 48 hours to kill me?

DWIGHT

Yeah. So?

HOPE

Well, there's only 24 left. Let's just sit back and let him come for you.

DWIGHT

I like playing human target, as much as the next guy. But what if he delegates the job?

HOPE

Guess, we'll just have to wait and find out.

Hope and Connie smile. Dwight looks trapped.



DWIGHT

I'm starting to like Connie's plan  
a whole lot better.

Dwight gets a text on his phone. It's from Christmas. *Can u meet now?* Dwight quickly types a response.

DWIGHT

Can I bum a ride? I need to see my  
daughter.

This fun fact intrigues Hope immensely.

HOPE

You have a daughter?

EXT. DEA PARKING LOT - DAY

Hope walks Dwight to her car.

DWIGHT

When I asked for a ride, I didn't  
mean you.

HOPE

You're under 24-hour watch. This is  
my shift.

DWIGHT

Maybe you can talk to the boss and  
get on the graveyard shift. It'd be  
more romantic.

Hope won't even dignify that with a response.

HOPE

Besides, I'm dying to meet your  
daughter. How old is she?

DWIGHT

Thirteen.

Dwight stops dead in his tracks.

DWIGHT

Damn! I forgot my hat. I'll be  
right back.

Dwight runs back to the building.

HOPE

Nothing I'd rather do than stand in  
the middle of a parking lot on a  
hot day.

Hope presses the remote on her keychain. WOOP-WOOP. Unlocking  
her doors.

INT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Dwight runs into Hope's office and grabs his hat. As he  
passes a window, HOPE'S CAR BURSTS INTO FLAMES. Dwight can't  
believe his eyes.

EXT. DEA PARKING LOT - DAY

Dwight, Clinton, Geronimo and Connie run toward the rising  
flames.

DWIGHT

Hope! Hope!

Dwight tries to run up to the flaming car but Clinton holds  
him back. It's too late.

In frustration, Dwight throws his hat into the fire.

From a parking garage across the street, Nacho watches. His  
sober face reveals nothing.

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. KTEX ACTION NEWS STUDIO - DAY

A perfectlyly-coiffed ANCHORWOMAN reads the news.

ANCHORWOMAN

Details are sketchy but sources inside the Drug Enforcement Agency say Special Agent Hope Romero died in the explosion. Yet another victim swept into the endless wave of violence stemming from the Mexican drug cartels.

INT. DEA REGIONAL COMMAND CENTER - DAY

Clinton turns off the television. Sitting behind Hope's desk, he takes the helm. Addressing Dwight, Connie and Geronimo. They're collective morale finds a whole new low.

CLINTON

Looks like the El Señor got what he wanted.

DWIGHT

He usually does.

GERONIMO

(to Dwight)

How do we know you weren't part of this?

DWIGHT

Guess my word won't suffice.

Geronimo stands. Ready to start a fight.

GERONIMO

You'll need to be a little more convincing.

CLINTON

Sit. Now.

As Geronimo, reluctantly, takes his seat, all eyes fall on Clinton.

CLINTON

Outrage over Hope's death has given us some mojo with D.C. and the clout to rattle the cartel's cage.

CONNIE

So what's the plan?

CLINTON

We simply play by the rules. Every rule. Check every car crossing the four bridges to and from Juarez. Sit on every light aircraft crossing the Rio Grande and dynamite every tunnel under it.

(beat)

Effectively, shutting down the cartel, until they hand over Hope's killer.

Geronimo smiles confidently. Followed by Connie.

CLINTON

So let's get to work.

Geronimo and Connie exit with purpose. Dwight remains behind.

CLINTON

You want something?

DWIGHT

Castillo thinks I killed Hope. If he gives up her killer, he'll just say it's me.

CLINTON

You make it sound like that's a bad thing.

DWIGHT

You can yank my chain all you want but it won't deliver her real killer. You can see that can't you?

CLINTON

If you want to find Hope's killer, I suggest you do that.

Dwight doesn't like this answer but is powerless.

EXT. HIGH-SECURITY BORDER ZONE - DAY

Witness the traffic jam from hell. Endless honking, sweltering heat and a couple fist fights.

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - NIGHT

A bare bulb illuminates a small patch of Dwight's yard. The rest shrouded in darkness. A dark figure cautiously makes its way to his trailer.

INT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Dwight cracks open his third Coors.

DWIGHT

Those idiots are so bent on revenge, they're blind to reason.

RJ watches the Dallas Stars in a heated play-off game.

RJ

You ever try watchin' hockey? I can't see the damn puck.

Dwight HEARS A THUD from outside that puts him on edge.

DWIGHT

You hear that?

RJ

Hear what?

DWIGHT

Someone's out there.

Dwight quickly turns off the lights inside the trailer and RJ's television.

RJ

Now, I can't see anything.

Dwight peers out a window. Unable to see anything useful.

DWIGHT

Shhh!

RJ

You may be too good to carry a gun but we ain't in Canada...yet.

RJ ratchets his semi-automatic .45 pistol.

RJ  
This home's protected by Smith and  
Wesson.

DWIGHT  
You better have the safety on that  
thing.

RJ  
I do.

RJ hits the safety.

RJ  
Now.

DWIGHT  
You're on parole, Dad. If you get  
caught with that thing, they'll  
send you back to La Tuna.

RJ smiles smugly.

DWIGHT  
What?

RJ  
You called me, Dad.

DWIGHT  
No, I didn't.

RJ  
Whatever.

ANOTHER THUD OUTSIDE. This time RJ hears it too.

RJ  
You stay put. I'm goin' huntin'.

RJ slides open the glass door leading to the back deck and  
disappears into the darkness.

DWIGHT  
(whispering loudly)  
What are you doing? Get back here.

RJ's gone. Dwight finds his trusty pool cue and readies  
himself for the worst.

Dwight HEARS A SCUFFLE OUTSIDE.

RJ (O.S.)  
Gotcha, you sumbitch.

CLANK, RATTLE, BAM. That doesn't sound good.

DWIGHT  
Dad! You okay?

RJ SCREAMS in pain.

Dwight throws open the door to rescue his father. Revealing Christmas caught up in RJ's half-nelson.

CHRISTMAS  
Maybe I should have called, first.

CUT TO:

Dwight cracks open another Coors then discovers his other can still half-full.

CHRISTMAS  
Can I have one?

DWIGHT  
I didn't get drunk till I was 15  
and no kid of mine's pushin' the  
bar any lower.

CHRISTMAS  
15. Cool.

RJ  
What in blue blazes brings you out  
here in the middle of the night?

Christmas holds a backpack in her lap.

CHRISTMAS  
I ran away.

DWIGHT  
You did what? Yer mother's gonna  
tweak, when she finds out.

CHRISTMAS  
She's gotta learn her limits.

DWIGHT  
And what does that mean?

CHRISTMAS  
She saw your text and flipped a  
tit. Can I stay here for a while?

DWIGHT  
You couldn't have picked a worst  
time.

RJ  
I'm not sharing my couch. Ya hear?

DWIGHT  
For the record, neither of you  
should be here. It's too dangerous.

CHRISTMAS  
Who's the old guy?

DWIGHT  
Your Grandpa RJ.

CHRISTMAS  
My mom told be about you. You were  
in prison, right?

RJ  
Twenty long years.

CHRISTMAS  
So did you get gang-raped and  
stuff?

RJ  
You know anything about inner  
thoughts, Christmas?

Dwight polishes off his can and grabs his keys.

DWIGHT  
Grab your stuff. I'm takin' you  
home.

CHRISTMAS  
You can't do that. Mom'll kill me.

Dwight looks out into the darkness.

DWIGHT  
Better her than someone else.

INT. DWIGHT'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Dwight drives Christmas home.

CHRISTMAS  
You're a drug dealer, huh?



DWIGHT

I'm a drug smuggler. There's a difference.

CHRISTMAS

You, sure, don't look like one.

DWIGHT

Oh, yeah? What should they look like?

CHRISTMAS

They should have a better house and truck. I know that much.

DWIGHT

I'm keepin' a low profile.

CHRISTMAS

Maybe a little too low.

Dwight catches himself getting worked up. Trying to turn off his parenting instincts.

CHRISTMAS

Think I can score some weed?

DWIGHT

That's a boundary I will not cross.

CHRISTMAS

Whatever.

Dwight monitors his frustration level. Counting heartbeats with only partial success.

CHRISTMAS

Is something wrong? Or are you always like this?

DWIGHT

I'm mixed up in some serious trouble. I shouldn't have contacted you.

CHRISTMAS

So why did you?

Dwight searches for a clever answer. Coming up empty.

DWIGHT

I dunno. I just had to.

EXT. NORTENA HOME - NIGHT

Rachel opens the door. Overwhelmed by mixed feelings of finding her daughter and Dwight together.

RACHEL  
I'm calling my lawyer, tomorrow.

DWIGHT  
Just make sure he talks to Chrissy too.

CHRISTMAS  
I'm tired. Can we deal with this in the morning?

RACHEL  
You know we will, Little Miss. Every day for the next two months.

Christmas enters and disappears upstairs.

RACHEL  
I never want to see you two together ever again.

DWIGHT  
It's not that easy, anymore.

RACHEL  
For the last thirteen years, you've kept your distance. What changed?

DWIGHT  
Been askin' myself that same question.

RACHEL  
What can I do to make you go away forever?

Dwight shakes his head with a sober calm.

DWIGHT  
I've got a situation down in Mexico. There's a real good chance you'll get that wish.

EXT. RIO GRANDE RIVER - DAY

Dwight drives his pick-up across a shallow and scenic bend in the river. Probably the only guy who's jacked up his four-wheeler for a useful purpose.

Lucinda Williams' *World Without Tears* plays on his stereo. Dwight's always preferred to be alone but this is the first time he's ever felt lonely.

INT. NACHO BARRERA'S HOUSE - JUAREZ - DAY

Dwight meets with Nacho.

DWIGHT

Castillo got what he wanted. I just want my money back.

NACHO

El Señor makes the rules and breaks them, whenever he wants.

Dwight tears at his hair.

DWIGHT

This is all your fault. You know that, don'tcha?

NACHO

It's too late to change that, now.

This familiar sentiment rings loudly in Dwight's ears.

DWIGHT

I'm tired of being pushed around. Tell El Señor I want my money.

NACHO

Are you sure? You may not like his answer.

Dwight holds his face in his hands. Tired of being bullied. Tired of being afraid.

DWIGHT

This world's full of goddamn bullies and thieves. But they've got no hold on me.

NACHO

You look tired.

DWIGHT

Smuggling's not as fun as it used to be.

EXT. CASTILLO ESTATE - JUAREZ - DAY

El Señor isn't having much fun either. Holding conference with Pablo and his OTHER LIEUTENANTS.

PABLO

Nothing's getting across the border. I've never seen anything like this.

CASTILLO

The Americans can't keep it up, forever. At some point, their political resolve will break.

PABLO

But how long will that take? It's business as usual for the cartels in Tijuana and Nogales. If we look weak, how long will it take before they test us?

Once pressed, the decision comes quite easily to El Señor.

CASTILLO

The Americans want that woman's killer. Dead or alive. Find that bolillo and grant them their wish.

Pablo smiles wickedly. He loves his job.

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - NIGHT

RJ watches Dwight get ready to leave.

RJ

I've got a bad feeling about this.

DWIGHT

The only way I can get my money back is to deal with Pablo directly.

RJ

I'm going with you.

DWIGHT

What? No way.

RJ digs out his pistol and sticks it in his waistband.

RJ

Don't think you can stop me.

EXT. RIO GRANDE RIVER - NIGHT

A smuggler's moon hangs overhead, as Dwight slowly rolls up to the riverbed. His rollbar headlights illuminate the way.

Inside the cab, RJ cracks open his door.

DWIGHT  
What are you doing?

RJ  
Don't slow down. I've got your  
back.

RJ hops out of the truck. He tucks and rolls in the tall grass.

Dwight stops on the US side of the riverbank. Leaving on the lights, he gets out of his truck. Checking his watch, nervously.

RJ signals his position.

RJ  
Ka-kaw. Ka-kaw.

This startles Dwight, unnecessarily.

DWIGHT  
I was better off alone.

Pablo's convoy of F-450's, ominously, crosses the river. MUFFLED NARCO CORRIDOS play on their sound system. Dwight stays close to his truck for protection.

Pablo and his henchmen get out their trucks.

DWIGHT  
Tell your men to get back inside.  
I'll only deal with you.

With a nod, Pablo orders his men back in their trucks. He approaches Dwight with a leather satchel.

DWIGHT  
That's close enough. Leave the  
money there.

PABLO  
You make it sound like you're  
calling the shots.

DWIGHT

I'm trying to stay alive. It's an involuntary reflex.

Pablo holds up the satchel.

PABLO

You don't want to count it, first.

DWIGHT

No, thanks. Never took my teachers, seriously, when they said I'd need math in the real world.

PABLO

Have it your way.

Pablo sets the bag on the ground. Reaching inside, he pulls out two handguns. Emptying both clips at Dwight.

Dwight gets hit in the chest. Falling to the ground.

Floodlights in the weeds blind Pablo. A FIRE STORM of bullets from the tall grass rip Pablo apart. More firepower than RJ could ever muster.

Bullets shred the F-450's and the men trapped inside. One truck explodes in flame.

Dwight gets to his feet. The tear in his shirt reveals a bullet-proof vest. Clinton, Geronimo and Connie join him. A SPECIAL FORCES SQUAD behind them for support.

CLINTON

We did some good work, tonight.

Dwight rubs his chest.

DWIGHT

These vests may keep ya alive but it still hurts like hell. You could have intervened before Pablo started firing. He was on US soil.

CLINTON

Taking him alive would have been problematic. Besides, prison doesn't even slow down these guys.

Hope emerges from the weeds. Exhilarated by their quick and efficient victory. Dwight can't believe his eyes.

DWIGHT

You're alive? You've been yanking my chain this whole time?

HOPE

We had no choice. We didn't know who we could trust.

DWIGHT

But you trust me enough to take one for the team.

HOPE

If you put it that way. Yeah.

DWIGHT

You got your man. I'm outta here. It's been nice knowin' ya.

HOPE

Not so fast. I won't be happy, until we bring down Castillo.

DWIGHT

But he'll know I betrayed Pablo.

HOPE

Officially, this operation will look like an ambush from a rival cartel.

DWIGHT

And what about the well-publicized news of your death?

HOPE

Castillo just needs to know you set the bomb. It's not your fault I'm too smart for you.

DWIGHT

I've noticed that.

HOPE

Make sure to thank Nacho for his help. We couldn't have done it without him.

DWIGHT

What help? How d'ya even know about Nacho?

HOPE

He came to us with the C4 and the idea to blow up my truck. It's amazing what a man will do to protect his family.

Dwight tries to wrap his head around this operation.

HOPE

Despite the obvious drawbacks, you've proven to be a valuable member of this team.

Dwight pulls off his vest and hands it to her.

DWIGHT

Drawbacks? What drawbacks? Like maybe you're hot for me and don't want me to get hurt.

Hope punches Dwight in the gut. Bending him over in pain. She walks away with her team in tow.

HOPE

Think harder, cowboy.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR



CLOSE

FADE IN:

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAY

RJ stokes an oil drum converted into a barbecue smoker. Brisket and beef ribs slow-cook to tender perfection. UPBEAT MEXICAN POLKA FILLS THE AIR.

Dwight, nervously, adjusts the condiments on his newly-built picnic table. Party lights hang from the lone tree. He wants everything to be just right.

RJ

Calm down and have another beer.

DWIGHT

Calm down? I navigate a world of cops, killers and thieves with practiced ease. I've got ice water in my veins, old man.

RJ

Whatever.

INT. HOPE'S NEW EXPLORER - DAY

Hope and Christmas drive along a dirt road. A nervous silence between them.

HOPE

Does your mom know about this?

CHRISTMAS

Yeah. But she's not happy about it.

HOPE

We don't have to do this. I can turn this thing around and take you home.

CHRISTMAS

No. I wanna go.

HOPE

Okay.

Christmas flashes her brace-filled smile. Her stomach full of butterflies.

EXT. DWIGHT'S TRAILER - DAY

Hope pulls up in her Explorer. Dwight knocks over the ketchup, as Christmas climbs out. Damn!

DWIGHT  
Welcome everyone.  
(off the decorations)  
So, whatta ya think?

Hope eyes the compound. She and Hope are the first females to ever set foot here.

HOPE  
(politely)  
It's sure...secluded.

DWIGHT  
In my business, it's best to be a stickler, when it comes to privacy.

HOPE  
Mission accomplished.

Hope hands Dwight a box. Inside he finds a new cowboy hat.

HOPE  
Considering what I put you through,  
I figured I owed ya.

DWIGHT  
Thanks. It's classier than I'd pick  
but sure sits right. Wanna beer?

HOPE  
Sure.

RJ lugs a platter full of smoked meat.

RJ  
Christmas, can you help get these  
vittles on the table?

CHRISTMAS  
I hate that name. Everyone else  
calls me Chrissy.

RJ hands her the tray.

RJ  
Okay, Chrissy. And you can call  
me...well...whatever the hell you  
want.

Christmas helps RJ serve the grub.

Nacho arrives with his large family. PULL BACK as Nacho's children swarm the compound. Amping up the festivities.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END