

Shotgun Wedding

by

Tiffany Zehnal

Writer's First Draft

May 22, 2006

FADE IN:

EXT. A SMALL TEXAS TOWN - EARLY MORNING

The kind of town where people get by and then die. The morning sun has no choice but to come up over the horizon.

A SQUIRREL... scurries across a telephone line... down a pole... over a "DON'T MESS WITH TEXASS" sticker... into an apartment complex parking lot...

EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST APARTMENT COMPLEX

...and under a BLACK EXTENDED CAB PICK-UP TRUCK that faces out of its parking spot. It's filthy. As evident by the dirt graffiti: "F'ing Wash Me!" The driver's side mirror hangs by a metal thread. On the windshield, ONE DEAD GOLDFISH, eyes wide open...

...and in the back window, an EMPTY GUN RACK.

INT. BATHROOM

A box of AMMUNITION.

A pair of female hands with a perfect FRENCH MANICURE loads bullets into a SHOTGUN. One by one. The only jewelry, a THIN, SILVER BAND on the middle finger of her left hand.

INT. BEDROOM

A clock radio -- the numbers flip from 5:59 to 6:00.

COUNTRY MUSIC fills the room as a hand reaches over and HITS the snooze button. A millisecond of silence.

An OFF-SCREEN SHOTGUN IS COCKED.

The mound in the middle of the bed lifts his eye mask. This is WYATT, 34, handsome in a ruggedly casual never-washes-his-jeans way. He has a SMALL MOLE on his neck which, if you squint, looks like Texas. Wyatt's all about maintaining the status quo. If he used words like status quo. Still, doesn't much care for the...

BARREL OF A SHOTGUN in his face.

SAM (O.S.)
Morning, baby.

SAM, 34 1/2, with gun in hand, stands on the bed over Wyatt. She holds her weapon steady and her gaze even steadier. It's as if she's been waiting for this one moment in time for hours. If not all her life.

WYATT
(half asleep)
Mornin'?

SAM
I'm not getting any younger.

WYATT
What?--

SAM
And I want to have kids before I
die.

WYATT
Sam?--

SAM
So I just need to ask you a question.

WYATT
Yeah, okay, me first-- What's with
the goddamn gun pointed at my goddamn
head at...
(looking)
...six o'clock in the goddamn
mornin'?

SAM
It's a mighty important question.
And could you please, with the
swearing?

WYATT
Hey, is that *my* youknowwhat gun?

SAM
Yes it is. Now I just need to know
one thing.
(with import)
Do you love me?

WYATT
Do I love you? Are you serious?

SAM
What do you think?

WYATT
I think we live together. In the
same apartment. We share the same
bed. We piss in the same goddamn
toilet.

SAM
 I was referring to the gun--
 (re: swearing)
 And what'd I just tell you?

Wyatt doesn't know what to make of any of this. His gun.
 His girlfriend. His girlfriend holding his gun.

WYATT
 This is Oprah, isn't it?

SAM
 Oprah's got nothing to do with
 this, Wyatt. Not this time. This
 is about us and I'm really going to
 need an answer. Or else.

WYATT
 Or else what, Sam? You catch and
 release spiders.

BLAM! Wyatt's sneakers next to the bed take a bullet.

WYATT
 HEY!--

SAM
 You're not a spider. Now answer
 the question, Wyatt.

WYATT
 You just shot my good work shoes!

SAM
 Only because I missed your ear.

WYATT
 (cornered)
 O-kay, okay. Fine. Yes.
 (off her look)
 I love you.

SAM
 (softens)
 I love you too, baby.
 (then, back to business)
 Now, get up and put some pants on.
 We're going to Vegas.

FREEZE FRAME: On Wyatt. About to blow.

SAM (V.O.)
 This is my fiance, Wyatt. We've been
 together a little over ten years.
 (MORE)

SAM (V.O.) (cont'd)

Ten years and two days to be exact. We actually just celebrated our ten-year anniversary. He surprised me with a water filtration system. Well, the promise of a water filtration system. He gave me a brochure for one. In a really small could've-been-a-ring box.

END FREEZE FRAME.

WYATT

Hell we are!

INT. BATHROOM - A MINUTE LATER

Wyatt stands in his underwear, pissed and pissing, as Sam waits in the doorway with her gun aimed at him.

SAM (V.O.)

Which is why I'm bearing arms. Not only is it my constitutional right, it's my emotional right after dating Wyatt for ten years and two days and getting a water accessory pamphlet as an anniversary gift.

WYATT

Jesus, Sam, my pecker's out. Can't you point that thing elsewhere?

SAM

Nope.

He finishes up, flushes and faces Sam.

WYATT

Why are you doin' this?

SAM

Because you won't. Hands, please.

Sam motions with the gun to turn around. Wyatt begrudgingly goes to the sink and passes his hands under the water.

SAM

Face it, Wyatt. I'm onto you. And a little soap wouldn't kill you.

An angry squirt of hand soap.

INT. BEDROOM - ANOTHER MINUTE LATER

Wyatt puts on a pair of crumpled up jeans off the floor.

WYATT

I don't know what you think you're onto me about but I didn't do nothin'. Not one thing.

Sam waits with her gun.

SAM

Exactly. It's called stalling, Wyatt. You were stalling and everyone knew it. Trixie. Alex. Lauren Steinberger. Everyone but me.

INT. HALLWAY - ANOTHER MINUTE LATER

Wyatt pulls on a t-shirt as Sam follows him closely with her weapon. A small EMPTY FISH TANK is in the hallway.

WYATT

I wasn't stalling. I was just... waiting... for the right time-- I am a lot younger than you are.

A DUFFEL BAG is near the front door. She bends down, picks it up, and shoves it at his torso.

SAM

Six months is not younger.

WYATT

In man years it is. And who the heck's Lauren Steinberger?

SAM

Doesn't matter. What matters is the promise you made to me five years ago.

Sam holds up her left hand. With the thin, silver band.

SAM

You wanted to spend the rest of your life with me? Well...

Sam picks up a LARGE RECTANGULAR BOX off the ground.

SAM

We'll need this for it.

EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST APARTMENT COMPLEX - MORNING

Sam escorts her hostage down the steps to the parking lot. They approach Wyatt's truck. She gestures for him to drive.

SAM

Get in.

Wyatt can't help but notice a DEAD FISH on his windshield.

WYATT

Is that Lucy--

SAM

There was an accident.

Sam kisses her fingertips, touches the dead fish...

SAM

Sorry, baby.

...and FLICKS it off the truck, into the parking lot. Wyatt looks at Sam, in shock.

WYATT

It's like I don't even know you.

SAM

Get in.

INT. TRUCK

Wyatt is driving. Sam and her gun are next to him. She leans into Wyatt to document the moment with her digital camera.

SAM

Okay, now, smile. This one's for the album.

He doesn't and she knows it. Without getting out of position, Sam tries to talk Wyatt into participating.

SAM

Wyatt? I said smile.

WYATT

I said don't kidnap me.

SAM

No, you didn't.

WYATT

It was a given.

SAM

(posing, smiling)
Smile--

WYATT
 (overlapping, not smiling)
 Don't kidnap me.

FLASH.

MAIN TITLE: Shotgun Wedding

FREEZE FRAME: On the picture of Wyatt and Sam. A pissed-off hostage and half of the face of a beaming bride-to-be. The tip of the shotgun peeks in at the bottom.

SAM (V.O.)
 Obviously this isn't exactly how I
 imagined our engagement would go. But
 from what I've heard on Oprah, you've
 got to let go of your childhood
 fantasies and embrace your reality.
 This is my reality. This man. That
 shotgun there in the corner.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. STEPHEN F. AUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL - FLASHBACK

Students socialize on the front lawn.

SAM (V.O.)
 And a thirteen-year-old
 troublemaker who goes by the name
 Lauren Steinberger.

The BELL RINGS.

Everyone pauses to ponder the bell and then, as if on cue,
 returns to their yammering.

SAM (V.O.)
 It all started two days ago. On
 the tenth anniversary of my first
 date with Wyatt.

INT. SAM'S OFFICE

A small, sad desk plaque: SAMANTHA JUDD, GUIDANCE COUNSELOR.

Sam sits in a small, sad office behind a small, sad but
 orderly metal desk. She looks at a report card.

SAM (V.O.)
 I wasn't the only one who was
 starting to have concerns about this
 thing I called my 'relationship.'

A bespectacled student dripping in pink sits in front of her. This is the infamous LAUREN STEINBERGER. She's much wiser than her years and her outfit.

SAM

So, Lauren, you want to tell me what happened in Geometry?

LAUREN

The Pythagorean Theorem. Are you married?

SAM

(caught off guard)
Am I married? Well, no--

LAUREN

Don't you have a boyfriend?

SAM

Yes, I have a boyfriend -- but we really should be talking tutors here.

LAUREN

Tutors are for dorks. Why aren't you married yet?

Lauren spots a framed photo of Wyatt and picks it up.

SAM

Tutors are not for dorks. I had a tutor--

Feeling like a dork, Sam takes the photo away from Lauren.

SAM (CONT'D)

And Wyatt and I are just waiting for the right time, that's all.

LAUREN

He's stalling.

SAM

No he's not. Being an adult is just much more complicated than it looks. And I am much older than he is.

LAUREN

Now you're just making excuses for him.

SAM

(nervous laughter)
Why would I make excuses for him?

LAUREN

My guess? Low self-esteem, sucky eggs and overwhelming middle-aged peer pressure. My boyfriend says he's going to marry me as soon as we graduate.

Unbeknownst to Lauren, she has just poked the bear.

SAM

Uh-huh and have you ever thought that maybe your boyfriend is just telling you what you want to hear so you'll do things with him? Because he is, Lauren. Men tend to say one thing and do another. And boys are just little men.
(scribbling down a name)
Here's the name of a tutor. If you ever want to go to a college without the word junior in front of it, I suggest you call him.

As Sam crosses to open the door, she hands her student the number. Lauren stands and flashes Sam her left ring finger.

LAUREN

Kyle gave me a promise ring.

SAM

Yeah, well, a promise isn't a proposal, now is it?

Lauren exits and turns to say something else just as Sam SLAMS the door on her face.

INT. BEAUTY SALON - LATER THAT DAY

A STYLIST works on Sam's hair. It's pretty big, even by Texas standards. Sam's younger sister ALEX, 31, the mother hen of the family, gives Sam a french manicure. Alex's TWIN FIVE-YEAR-OLD BOYS wreak havoc as her SIX-MONTH-OLD SON sleeps in his car seat carrier.

ALEX

(re: Sam's hair)
Bigger.

STYLIST

Ten years?

SAM

Ten years.

ALEX

Big-ger.

STYLIST

Girl, you're a saint.

SAM

When it's right, it's right.

ALEX

(to stylist, re: hair)

Hello hi, is this as big as you got?

STYLIST

Any bigger and she's gonna need a wide load sign and a red flag dangling off it.

ALEX

Then we'll get a wide load sign and a red dangly flag. A proposal is happening tonight. Now, we don't know *when* tonight because that's the kinda hand Wyatt plays-- Jonah, put the curling iron deee-own!-- but bottom line is, this hair has got to go the distance and not one inch less.

SAM

Alex, please. It's fine. He might not even do it tonight. You have to be prepared for that.

ALEX

Sam, the only things I *have* to be prepared for are hurricanes, April 15th and the inevitable sex talk with those three sperm donors.

Sam thinks Alex might have a point.

SAM

(to stylist)

We're just looking for something with a six- to eight-hour hold. Minimum.

EXT. CARNIVAL - THAT NIGHT

The pick-up pulls into the crowded parking lot of a two-bit carnival. The shotgun is properly mounted on its rack in the back window. A FERRIS WHEEL glows in the distance.

INT. TRUCK

Wyatt puts the truck in park. Sam sits in the passenger seat with her inappropriately fancy hair.

SAM

I thought we were going to dinner.

WYATT

We are. Won two free tickets at work.

(re: carnival)

Sweet, huh?

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL

Wyatt and Sam are on the Ferris wheel with a couple of hot dogs. Their bucket seat jerks back and forth as the ride stops to pick up passengers.

Sam's hair is not handling the ride or humidity well. Wyatt notices.

SAM

(re: hair)

This would be better indoors.

WYATT

No need to apologize.

SAM

I didn't.

WYATT

Great.

An awkward beat.

SAM

So. Sure is nice up here. The fresh air, the stars-- Safety bar. Probably doesn't get much more romantic or safe than this, huh?

WYATT

You forgot free.

SAM

No I didn't.

Sam takes a bite of hot dog and gives Wyatt an encouraging 'c'mon, you can do it' smile. He politely smiles back then is distracted by something off in the distance.

WYATT

Would you look at that? You can see the Depot from here-- Hey, is someone in my spot?

Wyatt turns back to Sam. She's waiting for him.

SAM

You hate my hair.

WYATT

What? No. That's the store I work at.

SAM

No.

(the other direction)

That's the store you work at.

(then, upset)

I knew it. My hair's too big.

WYATT

Your hair-- It's not too big. I've seen bigger. I grew up with bigger. My mom ducks for doorways and you know that woman's five two on a good day.

This elicits a smile from Sam.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Come here.

Sam scoots closer to Wyatt and he strokes her hair. As best he can. This is his go to move. Sam melts.

SAM

I just wanted to look special.

WYATT

For what?

SAM

Tonight.

(then)

You know.

(then)

This.

WYATT

The Ferris wheel?

She pulls away from him, judgment formed.

SAM

You have no idea, do you? I'm an idiot. An idiot with freakishly large hair.

(calling down)

Excuse me, I'd like to get off now.

WYATT

Wait, why--

SAM

Please don't talk to me.

(calling down)

Sir? Hello?

The ride starts to move.

SAM (CONT'D)

(sotto, near tears)

Thank you.

It stops again. Presumably to pick up more passengers.

SAM (CONT'D)

(screaming down)

For the love of God!

Their bucket is now stationed at the very top.

Sam just sits there, upset.

WYATT

I was saving this for the Whirly Bird but now seems good, too.

Wyatt pulls out a SMALL BLACK VELVET BOX from his jacket and offers it to Sam. She GASPS--

FREEZE FRAME: On Sam's overly delighted face

SAM (V.O.)

Okay, we all know where this is going and it's not gonna be pretty. A word to you boyfriends out there. Never put anything but a ring in a ring box because the first sight of black velvet, it's on.

END FREEZE FRAME.

Sam's GASP IS EXHALED.

SAM (V.O.)
 (as if just exhaled)
 Early summer, 2007...

WYATT
 Surprise!

She attacks him with a hug. Her hair ends up in his face and mouth. Resulting in a COUGHING fit.

SAM (V.O.)
 Outside, under a tree, at or around
 sunset for optimal lighting...

WYATT
 I'm okay.

Sam looks Wyatt straight in the eye as she takes the box from him.

SAM
 I knew you didn't forget. You'd
 never forget something as important
 as our ten-year anniversary.

SAM (V.O.)
 Fifty to sixty guests, children will
 be discouraged...

WYATT
 Never. Wait-- ten years?

Wyatt looks over the side. If she pushed him, he would die.

SAM
 I know, I can't believe it either.
 (re: gift)
 Boy, sure is light.

SAM (V.O.)
 White cala lillies, Reverend Frank,
 roasted herb chicken...

WYATT
 Yeah-- You sure we're not on nine?

SAM
 Nope. Ten.
 (shaking box)
 I thought it'd be much heavier.

SAM (V.O.)
 Oh, and absolutely no Village People
 whatsoever not on my day...

WYATT
 Didn't we meet in '97?
 (counting on his fingers)
 '97, '99, 1999--

Sam stops everything and looks at Wyatt.

SAM (V.O.)
 (annoyed)
 What's he doing?

SAM
 (annoyed)
 What're you doing?

SAM (CONT'D)
 We met in '96. At your sister's
 twentieth birthday party. She's thirty
 now. Thirty minus twenty is ten.

WYATT
 Julie's thirty?

SAM
 (getting agitated)
 Rebecca and your card's in the mail.

Caught between a rock and Sam, Wyatt jumps on board.

WYATT
 Rebecca! See? That's right.
 (then, re: box)
 So? You gonna open that or what?

And Sam is back in her fantasy. She's all smiles as she
 grabs her digital camera and hands it to Wyatt.

SAM
 For the scrapbook.

SAM (V.O.)
 White cake with buttercream frosting,
 a seven night, eight day honeymoon in
 Kauai and a...

She open her box. A tightly folded WATER FILTRATION SYSTEM
 BROCHURE pops out. Confusion and anger fill Sam's face.

FLASH!

SAM (V.O.)
 Water filtration system?!

Wyatt with the camera.

WYATT
 Got it.

INT BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

A BEAM OF MOONLIGHT is fixated on Sam. She is wide awake. Wyatt SNORES next to her.

The crinkled WATER FILTRATION SYSTEM BROCHURE is on the night stand next to the clock. The clock reads 11:59.

Sam still has hope Wyatt will do the right thing.

The numbers LOUDLY FLIP to 12:00. Anniversary over.

All hope vanishes from Sam's face. The snoring is now unbearable.

INT. BATHROOM - AN HOUR LATER

Sam grieves in the bathtub, little wads of used tissue surround her.

The door handle turns.

Sam stops mid-weep and waits. Has he come to his senses? She holds her breath in anticipation.

Wyatt, half asleep, enters in his underwear. On automatic pilot, he lifts up the toilet seat and pees. Completely oblivious to the other person in the room. He finishes his business, flushes and exits. Seat still up.

Sam is disgusted. He didn't even wash his hands. She hurls a TISSUE at the door in frustration.

It TRAVELS A TOTAL OF SIX INCHES then FLOATS to the ground.

INT. TRIXIE'S APARTMENT - NEXT MORNING

Sam looks like she's been crying for hours. Her best friend TRIXIE, 30s, sits next to her. Trixie can't hold down a job or keep a boyfriend. It's the curse of being too pretty, she says. The two are having their way with a couple of wine coolers.

SAM

I just don't know what he's waiting for. I thought I was perfect for him.

TRIXIE

You are. Quiet. Non-confrontational. Obnoxiously loyal. If I were you, I'd make the shit shit or get off the pot so someone else can.

(off her look)

(MORE)

TRIXIE (cont'd)

What? He's a shit. I think he established that.

SAM

Trixie. I'm not gonna force Wyatt into a wedding or a marriage or a bowel movement. It's just not me.

TRIXIE

Right. You would rather sit around and wait and hope and long and torture yourself. Fun.

SAM

It's not torture. It's patience.

TRIXIE

It's delusional and you should have a refillable prescription for it.

Sam knows her best friend is right but still can't deny her feelings for the man.

SAM

I'm sorry, I love him. I can't imagine my life without him. He's my in case of emergency person.

TRIXIE

How many emergencies are there, really? Look, I know you love him. I do. But after ten years, don't you gotta ask yourself, why? I mean, if he loved you the way you love him, would you've really been on my doorstep at eight thirty in the morning with Bartles or Jaymes?

SAM

Eight fourteen. I waited sixteen minutes to knock so you wouldn't think I was a loser--

She loses it and SOBS into her hands.

SAM

God, I am such a loser!

Trixie removes Sam's hands from her face. Black mascara is everywhere.

TRIXIE

You're not a loser. You're just too good for him.

(MORE)

TRIXIE (cont'd)
 Sometimes it's hard to tell the
 difference between the two.

She spits on a napkin and tries to wipe away her friend's
 sadness.

TRIXIE (CONT'D)
 And Wyatt? It's like I've always
 said, just 'cause a cockroach has
 wings doesn't mean it can fly.

SAM
 I don't know. Seems like if a
 cockroach has wings, that's exactly
 what it means...

TRIXIE
 Not yours, sweetie.

Sam knows she must be right. Trixie looks at her watch.

SAM
 I don't want to go.

TRIXIE
 Then you probably shouldn't've rsvp'd
 yes and checked the beef. Up.

Trixie stands and helps Sam to her feet. Something hideous
 catches their eye.

TRIXIE (CONT'D)
 It's not that bad.

A really bad CANARY YELLOW BRIDESMAID DRESS hangs on the back
 of the door.

TRIXIE (CONT'D)
 But eleven more ounces could only
 make it better.

Trixie opens two fresh coolers and hands one to Sam. The two
 of them take a drink, never taking their eyes off the beast.

INT. CHURCH - NOON

The church is lightly filled with TEXAS' SEMI-FINEST. Sam and
 Alex, both in the ugly yellow bridesmaid dresses, wait at the
 altar with the GROOM and his GROOMSMEN. The RING BEARERS,
 Alex's rambunctious twin boys, follow a timid three-year-old
 FLOWER GIRL down the aisle.

Trixie sits in a pew, next to Wyatt, refusing to acknowledge
 his existence. Wyatt spots Sam and gives her a wave.

Sam doesn't reciprocate. Alex witnesses it all. The following exchange is spoken in varying levels of WHISPERS:

ALEX

I've warned you about this, Sam.

SAM

What?-- What're you talking about?

ALEX

Men. They need directions.

SAM

Can we do this later?

ALEX

They won't ask for them or read them yet they're completely lost without them. That's where divine female intervention comes in. We give them direction 'cause if we didn't, they'd be running around in circles chasing their tails forever.

SAM

We're in the middle of our sister's wedding.

ALEX

My point exactly. Take Jerry.

Alex's husband JERRY is in a pew, wearing the baby in a Baby Bjorn. He's busy getting gum off the bottom of his shoe with his wedding program.

ALEX

If it were up to him, we'd still be living together, "testing the waters." You don't test water, Sam. You drink it or you flush it, end of story. And Pete...

PETE, the nervous groom-to-be, rocks back and forth in his rented shoes. His sweat is becoming a problem.

ALEX

Do you think he'd be standing here today if Billie didn't do what she had to do?

BRIDAL MARCH BEGINS. Everyone rises.

SAM
 (explodes)
 Seriously?!
 (off people's looks)
 Look! The bride.
 (then, in a harsh whisper
 to Alex)
 I am *not* going to do anything to
 make Wyatt marry me so drop it!

At the entrance of the church, a BRIDE and her FATHER stand. Their silhouettes outlined in golden and blinding sunlight.

ALEX
 Grow up, Sam. This is Texas. If
 you don't, somebody else will.

The bride and her father glide down the aisle and into full view, revealing BELLIES the size of Texas. One belongs to BILLIE, late 20s, who is seven months pregnant but looks ten; the other, LEO, mid-50s, likes a thick rib-eye.

Alex becomes a little teary-eyed.

ALEX
 Look at her. In my dress. I'm
 speechless. Absolutely speechless.

Sam is overcome with emotion. For many reasons.

SAM
 (truly speechless)
 I... She... Kleenex.

Alex passes Sam's extended hand a tissue as Leo helps his enormous daughter climb the one step to the altar.

SAM (V.O.)
 As much as I didn't want to, I
 started to see Alex's tail-chasing
 logic.

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - LATER THAT NIGHT

Sam's very clean, gently used Honda Accord pulls off the well-lit premises and turns left into a SEA OF BLACKNESS.

INT. HONDA ACCORD

Wyatt comes to an intersection and takes a right. Sam, in the passenger seat, looks confused.

SAM
 Weren't we supposed to take a left?

WYATT
This is right.

SAM
Let me just get the directions--

She turns on the overhead light to look through her purse.
Wyatt snaps it off.

WYATT
I don't need directions.

Silence fills the car.

A small yellow road sign appears up ahead. It gets bigger
and bigger. It reads DEAD END.

WYATT
(continuing; 'lightbulb')
You know what, it's the *other* way.

Wyatt turns the car around and heads in the other direction.

SAM (V.O.)
It was finally clear. Wyatt needed
me to do something.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - THAT NIGHT

Sam opens the medicine cabinet and takes out her BIRTH
CONTROL WHEEL. It's next to many boxes of floss.

Saturday's pill is tucked neatly behind its little aluminum
foil door. She pierces it and the pill pops out.

Sam is about to put it in her mouth then doesn't. She lays
it down on the counter, next to the sink, and stares at it.
The pill taunts her.

Out of nowhere, Sam SNEEZES...

And sends the PILL INTO THE SINK. It rolls toward the drain
and stops precariously on the edge. It's a miracle. Sam
contemplates this miracle. Then, with the handle of her
toothbrush, pushes the PILL over the edge and DOWN THE DRAIN.

SAM
Oops.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Wyatt lies in bed with his eyes closed. Sam, now in a tiny tank and boy shorts, slips under the sheets next to him and plants soft, sensual kisses down his neck.

Wyatt suspiciously opens an eye.

WYATT

What're you doin'?

SAM

I flossed my teeth.

She continues her seduction down his chest. He stops her.

WYATT

I dunno, Sam. Things really haven't been right between us lately.

SAM

Yes they have.

WYATT

You ran into the bathroom in tears tonight.

SAM

Weddings make me emotional, you know that.

WYATT

Yeah, but your sister was in the middle of her bridesmaids' speech.

SAM

It wasn't my favorite.

WYATT

You mouthed the words 'I'm so pissed at you' to me after that flower girl intercepted the bouquet.

SAM

Okay, that was *my* bouquet...
(then, putting on a smile)
And what I said was 'I'm so blissed at you.' Haven't you ever heard that expression before?

WYATT

No.

SAM

It's very popular. Hallmark makes a card.

WYATT

Really?

SAM

Probably-- Look, I know we have our ups and downs every now and then but, that's what makes us great. We work through our issues and then we're better because of it. So, maybe things haven't been right lately, so what? That just means our up is right around the corner.

(as she dispenses kisses)

Because... bottom line... we love each other.

She moves her kisses down to his belly. Wyatt stops her.

WYATT

(a confession)

Sam. I had a lotta cake tonight.

SAM

Good for you, baby.

She goes back to her stomach seduction. He stops her again.

WYATT

A lotta cake.

Sam's been down this road before with Wyatt and free food. Her attitude quickly shifts.

SAM

How much cake are we talking, Wyatt?

WYATT

Well, my piece, your piece, those crab cakes in the beginning-- then there was the groom's cake--

SAM

There was groom's cake?!

WYATT

You were in the bathroom, and I was in a zone.

Sam gets Wyatt's message loud and clear, and slugs him.

WYATT

Ow!-- I thought you weren't pissed
at me!

SAM

I'm not!

SAM (V.O.)

I was. And Wyatt not seeing that
only made it worse.

Sam storms out. Wyatt is clueless.

WYATT

(calling off)

I snuck a piece out. You can have
it-- HALF of it if you want!--
Save me the rose!

EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST APARTMENT COMPLEX - MINUTES LATER

Sam sits on the apartment steps, flossing her teeth. Unable
to control her rage, she throws her floss as hard as she can.
It TRAVELS SIX INCHES and FLOATS to the ground.

SAM (V.O.)

And then I heard the final straw
scream next door.

A PIERCING SCREAM from next door.

Sam looks around, worried. Unsure of its context, she gets
up and presses her ear to her neighbor's door. Silence.
Then another SCREAM. LOUDER and LONGER.

Sam gently KNOCKS...

SAM

Caileen?

...which becomes a firm but concerned KNOCK...

SAM

Caileen, it's Sam. You okay?

...which quickly segues into rapid, knuckle-breaking, please-
don't-cut-her-throat KNOCKING...

SAM

(miming phone)

Don't worry, Caileen, I'm calling
the police. Right now. Here I
go... Nine... ONE... ONNNNN--

The door opens. CAILEEN P. BAKERSFIELD, in her early thirties and light three hundreds, appears in a pajama tent, petting a cranky cat.

SAM (CONT'D)
(in a small voice)
Oh, hey.

CAILEEN
Samantha? I'm so embarrassed. Did I wake you, too?

SAM
No no, I was up. I'm part of the neighborhood watch. There's not really a uniform-- Are you okay?

CAILEEN
Well, I was gonna tell my mom first but snooze, you lose, LOOOOKKKKKK!

Caileen thrusts her left hand into Sam's face.

A .25 CARAT DIAMOND RING

Is on her finger. For such a tiny diamond, it's blinding.

SAM
Oh. Is that a-- What is that?

CAILEEN
It's an engagement ring, goof.

SAM
For marriage? I'm sorry, I didn't realize you were dating anyone. Or date.

CAILEEN
I wasn't. Until I met Bob.

SAM
Bob?

CAILEEN
Bob. He lives in Denver. Met him in a chat room, three months ago today. When it's right, it's right. That's what Bob says.

SAM
Bob says that?

CAILEEN

All the time. Can you believe he Fed-Exed a box to me and told me to open it the minute he first laid eyes on me? Well, Caileen2000. It was 11:42. Isn't that romantic?

SAM

(practically in tears)
Uh-huh.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sam closes the door with her back. She's in shock. Self-pity numbs every inch of her body.

INT. BEDROOM

She quietly packs a few things as Wyatt violently SNORES in the background.

INT. KITCHEN

Sam writes a note.

"Dear Wyatt, when it's right, you should know it's right. I'm sorry you don't. Sam."

She slides it under the piece of leftover cake from Billie's wedding on the kitchen table and exits.

A beat.

Sam returns, SLAMS her fist down on the cake and exits again.

EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST APARTMENT COMPLEX

Sam carries a suitcase and a clear bag containing TWO GOLDFISH down the stairs. She crosses to the parking lot and passes the dirty pick up truck.

The license plate reads WYATTZ.

Next to it, her HONDA ACCORD.

INT. HONDA ACCORD

Sam looks for a place to rest the bag of fish but decides to hold them instead. Safety reasons.

She straps on her seat belt, puts the key in the ignition and waits for her hand to start the car. It won't. She catches her reflection in the rearview mirror. She's stalling.

Deep breath, Sam turns the key. WHRR-RRR-RRR. Nothing. She turns it again. WHRR-RRR-RRR. One more time. WHRR-CLICK. It's dead.

Sam sees the HEADLIGHTS were left in the ON position.

EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST APARTMENT COMPLEX

WYATTZ LICENSE PLATE -- Sam's foot kicks the fuck out of it.

SAM (O.S.)
You are so stupid!...

Sam, with her bag of fish, attacks the personification of Wyatt. His truck. Next up, the TIRES.

SAM
And chicken!...

Then driver's SIDE DOOR.

SAM
And wroooooooooooooong!...

She wrestles the SIDE MIRROR until it snaps.

SAM
And completely undeserving of a side mirror!...

Dirt covers her hand. She writes "F'ING WASH ME!" with her finger on the hood...

SAM
And MY GOD, YOU'RE FREAKIN' LAZY!

Caught up in her fit, she involuntarily whips the baggie of fish at the truck's windshield.

SPLAT!

The baggie breaks upon impact. There are no survivors.

The gravity of what Sam has just done sets in.

SAM
(continuing; crushed)
My babies.

She scoops up one fish and cradles it in her hand. She then looks up at the other one on the windshield and something behind it catches her eye. And quiets the storm inside her.

SAM (V.O.)

And then it hit me. What was I doing? I wanted to leave and punish Wyatt but all I was really doing was punishing myself. Wyatt just needed a little direction.

Sam spots the SHOTGUN IN THE GUN RACK.

SAM (V.O.)

And I finally knew how to give it to him.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Sam is at the kitchen table, eating the smashed cake. She has a new sense of purpose.

SAM (V.O.)

But, first, I had to eat my cake.

She opens her mouth for the last bite -- the ROSE.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - BACK TO PRESENT

THE SHOTGUN

Rests on Sam's lap in the passenger seat. It's aimed at Wyatt. Wyatt's not happy with this arrangement. All the WINDOWS ARE OPEN as Sam studies a highlighted road atlas.

SAM

I can't believe this is our first road trip. How come we've never done this before?-- Know what? Doesn't matter. The past is the past and the future is, well, only eleven hundred and thirty-two miles away.

The rectangular box in the back seat catches Sam's eye.

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh, shoot.

She takes off her seat belt and starts to turn around.

SAM (CONT'D)

Don't look.

With gun still on Wyatt, Sam leans over the seat and opens the box. A WEDDING DRESS is compactly folded inside. She takes it out. It's a beautiful white wrinkled mess.

SAM (CONT'D)

Dangit.

She straightens it out as best she can then replaces a jacket that was hanging on a hanger with the dress. It is directly behind Wyatt's seat.

REARVIEW MIRROR: Wyatt SEES the dress and winces.

His eyes return to the road as Sam turns around and puts her seat belt back on.

SAM (CONT'D)

It'll be fine--

She turns the rearview mirror towards her.

SAM (CONT'D)

If you don't use this anymore--

Sam notices her wedding dress THRASH about in the back from the wind.

SAM (CONT'D)

And, baby-- the windows?

Wyatt silently and angrily closes all windows.

SAM (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(a long awkward beat)

Look, Wy, I know you're mad at me and I don't blame you. I mean, I *blame* you but not for being mad at me. It's just-- You really didn't give me any choice.

WYATT

(loses it)

I gave you-- I gave you no choice?-- I woke up eskimo-kissing a firearm-- my firearm and I gave you no choice?! Have you lost your mind?

SAM

Yes, and yes.

WYATT

Come again?

SAM

I kidnapped you. I think I'm sane enough to know how crazy this is. I'm also sane enough to know it had to be done. I mean, Caileen P. Bakersfield got engaged after only three months. Three months, Wyatt.

WYATT

Who?

SAM

The fat cat lady in 3B. The point is, the sooner you realize all I'm doing is helping you take that leap of faith, the better.

WYATT

The only thing you're *helping* me do is lose my job.

SAM

Home Depot is not going to fire you.

WYATT

I'm sorry, I didn't realize you were the regional manager in charge of all hirings and firings in my store.

SAM

Wyatt, you've been there longer than anybody else. You've gotta have some sort of job security and, besides, even if you didn't... maybe it'd be for the best.

WYATT

Here comes the 'why have a job when you can have a career' speech.

SAM

No speech. It's just-- You haven't had a raise in forever and maybe you're just a little too comfortable in a job that's really going nowhere. And, yeah, okay, why waste your time on a job when you can just as easily focus your energy on a career?

WYATT

I am senior assistant manager at the world's largest home improvement retailer. I have my own parking spot. Does that sound like nowhere?

CUT TO:

INT. HOME DEPOT BREAK ROOM - SAME TIME

MIKE, 28, a nerd in an orange apron, clocks in.

JORGE, 38, enters, also in an orange apron, playing a hand-held video game. He's the cool guy who works in lumber.

JORGE

Hey, bro.

MIKE

Jorge, my man! Hey, Wyatt didn't show up for work today. Dude, you should take his parking spot.

JORGE

That shit spot. Fuck no.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. TRUCK

Sam pulls out a cell phone and starts dialing.

SAM

Wyatt, I have to be honest with you. Thought you'd be a little more on board with this by now.

WYATT

Well, you thought wrong.

SAM

I know, which is why you may fight me on this. Ignore your instinct.

Sam hands him the cell phone.

WYATT

Nuh-huh... no way...

SAM

It's ringing.

WYATT

I'm not taking that phone.

SAM

Okay, but it's your phone and we're roaming.

Wyatt grabs the phone from her to hang up.

SAM

I wouldn't do that if I were you. My father has caller ID, and the only thing he hates more than guys who won't marry his daughters are crank callers.

Wyatt's screwed and he knows it.

SAM

Just speak from the heart...

Sam hands Wyatt a 3 x 5 index card as he puts the phone to his ear.

SAM

And this card. Words underlined should be emphasized.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LEO'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Leo bolts out of his bathroom, tying his robe shut. A FLUSHING TOILET in his wake. He picks up the RINGING cordless phone and glances at the caller ID: WYATTS CELL. Instantly irritated, he answers it.

LEO

Wyatt, this had better be good. You just cut my shit short.

WYATT (O.S.)

(nervous and wooden,
reading)

'Mr. Judd, good mornin'. This is Wyatt'--

LEO

Have you been drinkin'?

INT. TRUCK

WYATT

No, sir. 'I'm callin' to ask you a question'--

(in one frantic breath)

Unlessofcourseyou'retoobusy--

Sam pulls the phone out of his hands and tweaks his nipple.

WYATT

Owwwwww!

SAM

If you don't see it, don't say it.

WYATT

I cut the man's shit short!

Sam gives him a cautionary look and hands the phone back.

INT. LEO'S BEDROOM

LEO

Boy, this better not be some sort of retarded crank call.

INT. TRUCK

WYATT

No, sir, *that* is not what this is--
(off Sam's look)

'Please forgive me for takin' ten long years to do this. I had some issues to work through and with the help of your incredibly patient daughter, I've done just that.'

LEO (O.S.)

Uh-huh, you wanna know who's not incredibly patient?

WYATT

(speeding it up)

'Mr. Judd, with your permission, I'd like to ask Sam, my soulmate, for her hand in marriage'--

(again, in one breath)

Unlessofcourseyouwanttosayno--

Sam yanks the phone out of his hand and tweaks his nipple again. This time harder.

WYATT

OWWWWWWMOTHEROFMARY!

SAM

(into phone)

Daddy, hi!

INT. LEO'S BEDROOM

LEO
Has he been drinkin'?

SAM (O.S.)
No. We're actually getting
married.

LEO
No kiddin'? Well, it's about time.
When's the baby due?

INT. TRUCK

SAM
Daddy, not every proposal involves
a pregnancy test.

LEO (O.S.)
Are you saying that boy came to his
senses all by himself? I'll be
damned.

SAM
(eager to get off)
Uh-huh. So, we're on our way to
Vegas now. I'll call you when we
get home. Okay, bye--

LEO (O.S.)
Vegas? Well, you can get married
at my old army buddy Tony's chapel
then. It's where me and your mom
got married.

SAM
Oh... shoot! If only I had known.
We're actually exchanging our vows
tomorrow. I know, short notice, huh?

LEO (O.S.)
Yesterday's short notice. Tomorrow's
a phone call. I didn't save Tony's
life in Vietnam for nothing. Now,
how many doves you thinkin'?

SAM
(panicking)
Doves?

INT. LEO'S BEDROOM

Leo has his reading glasses on and is now making a list.

LEO

The lil' white birds. Your mother had to have a bunch of 'em. She also had to get married at sundown. I s'pose you want a five o'clock ceremony, too.

SAM (O.S.)

Five o'clock?-- Is fine, Daddy, but--

LEO

But nothing. I'm taking care of everything. Soup to nuts. It's not every day one of my daughters gets married the right way. So, why don't you just meet us at the Golden Nugget at four thirty and we'll take a limo from there?

INT. TRUCK

SAM

(almost hyperventilating)
Us?

LEO (O.S.)

The only way your sisters will do better is if they know better. Drive safe, baby.

SAM

'kay. Bye.

CLICK. Sam hangs up the phone and goes for Wyatt's chest again. He swerves the car to save his nipples.

WYATT

What're you doin'?! I read your stupid card!

SAM

Half of my stupid card! There is a whole other side. About how we wanted to be *alone* at our wedding 'cause we were *alone* as a couple and we were gonna be *alone* in our marriage! I worked in a huge *alone* theme that you just skipped right over.

WYATT

You yanked the phone out of my hands and attacked me.

SAM

And I'd do it again. Now, thanks to you, my whole family's coming and there will be doves! Doves, Wyatt!

WYATT

Hey, don't 'Doves, Wyatt' me. It was your idea to call him. On *my* minutes, I might add.

SAM

And you just asked him for my hand. So, like it or not, you're in this as much as I am now. And if this is gonna work, I'd suggest you start treating your fiancée better.

WYATT

You are not my fiancée.

SAM

Yes, I am.

WYATT

No. You're not.

Wyatt looks at her NAKED RING FINGER. Sam follows his gaze.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Their truck abruptly veers off and exits the freeway. An OUTLET MALL is in the distance.

EXT. DIAMOND DISCOUNT CENTER

An empty parking space in front is filled with Wyatt's truck.

INT. TRUCK

Wyatt puts the truck in park as Sam moves her promise ring from her middle finger on her left hand to her middle finger on her right hand. Sam turns to Wyatt.

SAM

I'm ready.

WYATT

I don't have that kinda money on me.

SAM

Citibank does. Let's go.

She gets out of the car. Wyatt doesn't budge.

WYATT
I'm over my limit.

Sam sticks her head back in the car.

SAM
What'd you say?

WYATT
I forgot to send in my payment last month and maybe the month before...
(off her look)
I tried to buy a muffler yesterday.

SAM
(wild-eyed)
I need a ring, Wyatt.

WYATT
Hey, I need a new muffler.

INT. DIAMOND DISCOUNT CENTER - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Sam and Wyatt stand at the entrance of the store. He wears a baseball cap, a jacket and Sam's sunglasses. A FINGER GUN is in his pocket. Sam, with a veil covering her face, has her SHOTGUN TRAINED ON WYATT. A poor man's Bonnie and Clyde.

Sam nudges Wyatt with her gun.

WYATT
(halfheartedly)
Okay, people, this's a hold up.

SAM
(in a harsh whisper)
George, we talked about this. If you want them to take you seriously, you're gonna have to put a little feeling in it.

WYATT
I think they take me seriously, Sam.

SAM
It's Martha and I'm not seeing it.

The store has a FEW CUSTOMERS in it and a COUPLE EMPLOYEES. All completely unaware of the robbery in progress.

Wyatt, now aware and peeved he's being ignored, puts his finger and thumb to his mouth and lets out an EAR-PIERCING WHISTLE.

WYATT

HEY! Y'all are being robbed so why don't you do me a favor and start acting like it!

The customers and sales clerks dramatically REACT. Wyatt, powerless for the past few hours, enjoys this.

WYATT (CONT'D)

That's what I'm talkin' about.
Now, chew the floor!

Confused, nobody moves.

WYATT (CONT'D)

(explaining)
Down on the ground!

As everyone drops to the ground, Wyatt looks to Sam for her approval. She's visibly impressed. They are interrupted by a CLERK standing behind the counter. He could be the manager, could be the employee of the month -- hard to tell with his arms up so high in the air.

STORE CLERK

Excuse me--

WYATT

Jesus Chrysler! I am talking about lying horizontal on the carpet.

STORE CLERK

Yes, sir. Got that with 'chew the floor.' Very clever. Just thought maybe you'd want to keep one of us upright. Y'know, open jewelry cases, the safe, that sorta thing. Our key ring's a pretty complicated system.

WYATT

Well, now, I s'pose I do...
(reading tag)
Larry.

LARRY

It's short for Lawrence. And just so you know, I'm not gonna try to be a hero or anything. Our company manual specifically advises against such actions.

Larry's nemesis, STEVE THE OVERWEIGHT CO-WORKER, lying prostrate on the ground, can't help but add his two cents.

STEVE
 (muffled cough)
 KISS ASS!

LARRY
 (ignoring Steve)
 So where you wanna start? Watches?
 We just got some real beauts in.

He points to the case of watches directly in front of him.

WYATT
 (re: a watch)
 Those diamonds?--

SAM
 Larry, we'd just like to see your
 engagement rings, please.

LARRY
 Engagement rings? Well, you've come
 to the right place then. I don't know
 if you've seen our billboards...
 (off Wyatt's look)
 Follow me.

Larry steps over Steve and crosses to another jewelry case.
 Sam and Wyatt follow him.

LARRY
 Largest engagement ring selection
 in all of West Texas.
 (re: complicated key ring)
 Lemme just find the key. Nope,
 nope, nope, nope-- Here it is.

Larry holds up one of the keys on the key ring. It has an E
 written in Sharpie on it.

LARRY (CONT'D)
 See? "E." Stands for "eternity."

STEVE
 It stands for "engagement."

LARRY
 No one's talking to you, Steve!

WYATT
 Open the case, Larry.

LARRY
 I'm just going to open the case.

The case is opened.

LARRY (CONT'D)

And there we go. Now, this is my first one of these-- am I supposed to use our bags or did y'all bring your own?

WYATT

No bag. We just need one.

LARRY

One? Don't be ridiculous.

STEVE

The woman is wearing a veil, Einstein.

LARRY

(to Steve, instantly hot)
Oh, and I suppose you think all fat women are pregnant!

SAM

Actually, Larry, we are getting married.

LARRY

(back to Sam)
Well, why didn't you say so?! Every engaged couple who crosses our threshold gets two free glasses of champagne in our embossed keepsake Diamond Discount Center flutes. These are the moments, after all.

Wyatt firms up his finger gun. Larry notices.

LARRY

Or not. See anything?

WYATT

How 'bout that one?

Wyatt points to one of the less impressive rings in the case.

LARRY

This one? *Really?*

WYATT

It's fine.

Sam looks over his shoulder at the ring in question.

SAM
Fine? George, I don't want fine.

WYATT
What?

SAM
We're not holding up this place for fine. I need pretty. It's gotta last forever, George.

WYATT
(to Larry)
You see what I'm dealing with?

LARRY
Engagement rings do have their expectations.

Larry notices the MOLE on Wyatt's neck. Wyatt sees this and covers it with his free hand.

SAM
(re: another ring)
That one's pretty.

LARRY
One and a half carats of pretty to be exact.

WYATT
(wanting to disappear)
Whatever fine we don't have all day.

EXT. DIAMOND DISCOUNT CENTER

Sam and Wyatt sprint out of the store. She carries their two keepsake flutes as he concentrates on hiding his mole with his jacket.

INT. DIAMOND DISCOUNT CENTER

Larry waves bye to Sam and Wyatt as he reaches down and presses a RED BUTTON.

INT. TRUCK

A SCREECHING ALARM goes off.

Sam knows Larry is just doing his job as Wyatt puts the truck in reverse. He automatically goes to adjust the rearview mirror. Sam stops him.

SAM
 (re: mirror)
 No you don't. I'd rather have no
 luck than bad luck.

Wyatt reverses with the aid of his broken side mirror.

EXT. BACK ROAD - LATER

Off the beaten path. The pick-up truck -- the only vehicle.

INT. TRUCK

Sam, still wearing the veil, takes pictures of her new ring. On the dashboard, in the air, on her leg, etc. It's at least one size too big but she's too smitten by it to notice.

SAM
 I love my new ring, Wyatt.

WYATT
 Well, enjoy it while you still got
 it. When the law gets us, the only
 jewelry you're gonna be wearing comes
 with tiny keys and a wrist rash.

SAM
 Do you mind?

WYATT
 Hey, you saw the way Larry was looking
 at my mole. Betcha he's telling a
 sketch artist all about it right...

INT. DIAMOND DISCOUNT CENTER - SAME TIME

Larry talks to a SKETCH ARTIST.

LARRY
 ...here. Exactly two inches from
 his earlobe. Do you have a ruler?

SKETCH ARTIST
 No.

LARRY
 Well, that's about right but more in
 the shape of Texas. The Pan Handle
 region was real irregular. You know,
 if I were him, I'd get that thing
 looked at asap.

Steve stands behind them, drinking a diet cola.

STEVE
It wasn't that big.

LARRY
Excuse me, you weren't face to face
with George like I was. My life
flashed before my eyes.

STEVE
Did it suck?

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Sam puts the camera back in her purse.

SAM
We just took one little ring. Why
would the police care about one
little ring?

WYATT
You were armed and we robbed 'em.
That's what you'd call armed
robbery, Sam. Way I figure, you'll
get three to four for that and two
to three for the kidnapping. Now
the fish--

Sam has the gun and her eyebrow raised and AIMED at him.

SAM
I suggest you leave the fish out of
this, Wyatt.

WYATT
(sotto)
And you wonder why we never go on
road trips.

The truck then CHOKES. A beat. More CHOKING.

SAM
What was that?

WYATT
Probably my muffler.

It CHOKES again.

SAM
We're not out of gas, are we?

WYATT
The light's not on.

Sam sees the gauge is on EMPTY. The truck is practically coasting.

SAM
Wyatt, we're on "E."

WYATT
So? The light's not on. I don't get gas until the light goes on.

SAM
Doesn't the "E" mean anything to you?

WYATT
Not when the light's not on.

The GASOLINE LIGHT POPS ON and the car rolls to a stop.

EXT. BACK ROAD - IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

Sam exits the car and SLAMS the door. Wyatt gets out, too.

WYATT
What's wrong with you?

SAM
You never take care of anything until you absolutely have to!

WYATT
My warning light just came on.

SAM
And mine's been on FOREVER!

WYATT
Okay, calm down. We'll get some gas--

If Sam were a cartoon character, steam would come out of her ears now. Her anger carries her into the middle of the road.

SAM
This isn't about the gas! This is about this! This wasn't supposed to be like this! It has been TEN YEARS!

WYATT
You seem to be forgetting that I thought it was our nine-year--

SAM

Nine years, ten years, light years!
It doesn't matter. The number
would've never made a difference!

WYATT

You don't know that.

SAM

(gesticulating like crazy)
Actually, Wyatt, that is the only
thing I do know and you know why?
Because you may have wings but you
will NEVER be able to fly with them!

And just like that, HER ENGAGEMENT RING FLIES OFF and into
the air... it LANDS in the middle of the two-lane highway and
proceeds to BOUNCE down the center stripe...

SAM (CONT'D)

(barely audible)
My ring...

THE RING continues on its journey, down the middle of the
road, towards the HORIZON just as a FUEL TANKER TRUCK rises
up in the distance...

SAM can't believe her eyes.

THE TANKER TRUCK gets closer.

The RING SPINS to a standstill. Exactly where tires will
roll. The sun catches the diamond and a FLASH of light...

Hits SAM in the eye. She blinks then takes off RUNNING down
the middle of the road. After her ring. Toward the gas
truck. With her shotgun. In her veil. As fast as she can.

WYATT doesn't know what to do.

WYATT

Sam?! What're you-- You know I'm
no good with blood!

SAM -- her only focus is saving the ring.

THE TANKER TRUCK gets closer to Sam.

SAM gets closer to the ring.

INT. TANKER TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

The truck driver behind the wheel strains to see what's ahead. This is COWBOY, boyish and 40, like the trucker next door. A SELF-HELP TAPE drones on endlessly.

COWBOY

Huh. Where's she goin'?

EXT. BACK ROAD

Sam DIVES and reaches out to save her ring.

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Cowboy SLAMS on his brakes. Hard.

EXT. BACK ROAD

The gas truck's brakes SCREECH.

Sam SCREAMS. Hand over ring.

SCREECH.

SCREAM.

WYATT doesn't want to watch but can't turn away.

SCREECH. Tires smoke.

SAM'S SCREAM turns into a last minute desperate prayer...

SAM

(in one breath, if possible)

Our father who art in Heaven sorry about a
cidentally killing the fish and wishing t
errible things would happen to Lauren for
thine is the kingdom the power now and fore
ver AMEN!

THE TANKER TRUCK STOPS a few inches away from Sam and her ring. A beat. She opens her eyes. Towering above her...

A SHADOW surrounded by the bright ethereal glow of the sun.

COWBOY

Hey there.

SAM

Are you God?

Cowboy squats down and Sam sees him for the first time.

COWBOY

If I were God, you really think I'd be driving a truck for a living?

SAM

Jesus was a carpenter.

COWBOY

Yeah, well, so was Tim Allen but I'm not him either. And you're not dead. Lucky for you, I got a great deal on brakes yesterday.

Cowboy offers Sam his hand and helps up. Feeling self conscious, she takes off her veil.

SAM

I can't believe I jumped in front of your truck like that-- My ring fell off. I just got engaged. It's a size six. I'm a size five. The hints were there. I don't know why I'm telling you this.

COWBOY

Hey, I have a wife. I know all about hints.

SAM

Thank you.

There is a hint of a connection. Then Cowboy sees Wyatt in the distance. Wyatt WAVES. Cowboy waves back.

COWBOY

Is that your fiancee?

Sam glances at Wyatt back at the truck.

SAM

That's him.

Cowboy sees Wyatt wave again. But harder.

COWBOY

Is he having a seizure?

Sam looks again and sees Wyatt is trying to signal for help. She turns back to Cowboy to wrap it up.

SAM

No. Just an enthusiastic waver-- Real friendly guy. I should probably go--

(MORE)

SAM (cont'd)
(re: watch)
We got a thing.

Cowboy picks up her SHOTGUN off the road and hands it to her.

COWBOY
You need this for it?

SAM
I do. It's a hunting thing.
(off his look)
I hunt.

COWBOY
I see. Can I give you a lift?

SAM
Oh, no. Thanks. The truck, it's
just right back there--

COWBOY
I was talking about to wherever
your fella there's headed.

Sam looks back at their vehicle and sees Wyatt is hightailing it down the road, away from both them and the pick up. She turns back to Cowboy.

SAM
Would you mind?

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Cowboy's driving. Sam's got her eye on Wyatt, who's running way ahead on the side of the road. They pass Wyatt's truck on the shoulder.

COWBOY
You guys have a break down?

SAM
You could say that.

EXT. BACK ROAD

The tanker truck is closing in on Wyatt. Sam sticks her head out the window.

SAM
Baby! That's far enough!

Wyatt continues to run.

WYATT
(to Cowboy)
Call the police!

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Sam looks at Cowboy.

SAM
He's not so good with heat. Or
reading a gas gauge, if we're making
a list.

COWBOY
You ran out of gas? I got gas.

EXT. BACK ROAD

Sam sticks her head out the window again. With her weapon.

SAM
Baby, stop running! This nice man
has gas!

Wyatt sees Sam's gun surreptitiously aimed at him. She's
Tommy Lee Jones; he's the fugitive. He slows down to a walk,
exhausted but relentless.

WYATT
Call. The. Pol--

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Sam quickly rolls up the window as the truck comes to a stop.

SAM
That's just the dehydration
talking.

Cowboy hands her a gallon of gas from behind her seat.

COWBOY
Here you go.

SAM
Oh, great. How much do we owe--

COWBOY
I'm guessing you didn't see the
sixty thousand gallons of gasoline
that I wear like a backpack.

SAM
This is a gas truck, isn't it?

COWBOY
It ain't a compact.

SAM
Ha. Well, thank you...

Sam reaches out for a handshake.

COWBOY
Cowboy.

They shake hands as Sam ponders him and his name.

COWBOY (CONT'D)
Like the guys with the Indians. I
was one once in elementary school.
It stuck.

SAM
Sam. As in Uncle. We weren't
allowed to wear costumes in school--

Cowboy has a concerned look on his face as he stares out of
Sam's window. She follows his gaze.

Wyatt's hyperventilating into his SOCK.

SAM (CONT'D)
(explaining)
Middle child. I better go.

Sam smiles and hops out of the truck.

COWBOY
Hey, before I forget, congratulations.
(off her clueless look)
On your engagement.

SAM
Right. Getting married. Yay me.

EXT. BACK ROAD

As the TANKER TRUCK disappears in the distance, Sam and Wyatt
walk down the empty road. The gun is wedged in Wyatt's spine.

WYATT
I was gonna come back.

SAM
(incensed)
Oh, I know all about your gonnas.

INT. TRUCK - NEAR DUSK

Wyatt, exhausted from his attempted escape, drives as Sam sits next to him, seething, her eyes glued to the empty road in front of her. The gun in her lap is equally as fixated on Wyatt.

WYATT

Hey, look, a rest stop.

Nothing.

MINUTES LATER --

Silence.

WYATT

I could eat.

Nothing.

MINUTES LATER --

More deafening silence. Wyatt tries to swallow but can't.

WYATT

I think I just lost the ability to make spit.

SAM

Spit? Now you're crying about spit? I just about lost the ability to be a walking, breathing human being back there and you're worried about your stupid saliva production! I almost died, Wyatt! Doesn't that mean anything to you? After all these years, doesn't my almost death mean anything to you?!

WYATT

Of course it does. But, c'mon, Sam. You didn't.

SAM

How would you even know?

WYATT

Well, for starters--

SAM

For starters!... I could be lying on the road, all bloody and run over and dead, and if it weren't for me chasing you down, you'd be halfway to Mexico by now.

WYATT

Mexico? You know how I feel about Mexico--

SAM

THIS ISN'T ABOUT MEXICO!

An explosion of tears.

WYATT

Hey, I'm not the one who brought up Mexico-- Look, I know I got some issues with commitment and the future and forever and, yes, Mexico, but I'm not the kinda guy who'd leave you in the middle of the road if I thought you were dead. Or almost dead. That guy's a real jackass.

SAM

Yes you are. I don't even know why I'm bothering with you anymore.

WYATT

Don't say that.

SAM

Why? It's true. If you loved me-- if you really loved me, you wouldn't be putting me through all this.

She's a mess. Wyatt's uncomfortable with the frenzy of feelings as well as her uptight finger on the trigger.

WYATT

Not necessarily-- I mean, just cause you're over there, and you're armed and angry, and I'm over here, gunless and, well, kidnapped, doesn't mean I don't love you.

These unsolicited words catch Sam's attention.

SAM

What'd you just say?

WYATT
 Gunless isn't a word, is it?

SAM
 No. After that.

WYATT
 'Doesn't mean I don't love you?'

SAM
 That. What do you mean by that?

WYATT
 (answering a pop quiz)
 I love you?

SAM
 (a sudden calmness)
 Still?

Sam removes her finger from the trigger. This does not go unnoticed by Wyatt.

WYATT
 Yes.

SAM
 Then why? All these years, why?

WYATT
 In alphabetical order? Guess I was
 afraid of losing my freedom and
 independence--

SAM
 Those are the same things, Wyatt.

WYATT
 The point is, people can change,
 Sam...

He reaches over and puts his hand on hers. The one with the ring on it. The one on the gun.

WYATT
 You just gotta let 'em.

A DINER is up ahead. Wyatt and Sam both spot it.

WYATT
 And then you gotta let 'em pee.

A beat.

SAM

Okay.

Wyatt smiles victoriously as he turns into the parking lot.

EXT. DINER

The get-away truck pulls up next to the side of the building. By the dumpsters. Out of sight.

INT. DINER

A near empty restaurant. The only patron, AN OLD TATTERED LOCAL, in a booth. He smokes a cigarette and drinks a cup of coffee. Simultaneously.

Wyatt enters with Sam right behind him. She has her gun with her. Much to Wyatt's surprise.

WYATT

Baby? Thought we talked about leaving that in the car.

SAM

Sorry. Old habit.
(re: bathroom sign)
There it is.

She follows Wyatt to the back. They're stopped by BITTER BETTE, a waitress in her early fifties, who's just as bitter as the coffee she's carrying.

BITTER BETTE

And where do y'all think you're goin'?

SAM

Don't worry, we'll order as soon as we get out.
(re: gun)
We're on a hunting trip.

BITTER BETTE

Uh-huh. One at a time.

SAM

But I need him to go with me. Medical reasons.

BITTER BETTE

Sorry. House rule reasons.

Bitter Bette points to the sign on the wall.

BATHROOM CAPACITY: ONE.

SAM
Just five minutes.

BITTER BETTE
That's nothing the motel down a
piece can't handle.

SAM
You don't understand--

BITTER BETTE
I understand plenty. I've done
five minutes in that bathroom.

WYATT
Sam, you can trust me.

BITTER BETTE
You can, but I wouldn't.

SAM/WYATT
Excuse me?

BITTER BETTE
Wouldn't trust him. I've seen more
Tom, Dick and Harrys come through
here than water through a faucet and
I've learned one thing from them.
Can't trust none of 'em.

WYATT
(to Sam)
She don't know.

BITTER BETTE
Wanna bet?

SAM
Well, he's not Tom, Dick or Harry.
This is Wyatt and he's very
trustworthy. We're actually
getting married tomorrow.

Sam holds up proof of their commitment: her stolen ring.

SAM (CONT'D)
See?

WYATT
That's one and a half carats. Got
a certificate to prove it--

SAM

(suddenly distrusting)

That's not to say at one time he wasn't a little nervous about the whole idea. Because he was.

(looking at him)

Really nervous. And apprehensive. Wasn't really into it--

Wyatt senses Sam's on a downward spiral.

WYATT

But that was yesterday, Sam. Today's today. Remember, baby?

SAM

Oh, I remember.

Bitter Bette looks him up and down.

BITTER BETTE

Yep. Don't trust him.

(then, to Sam)

Still, one at a time.

WYATT

Hey, rules are rules.

Bitter Bette crosses off as Sam stares at Wyatt.

WYATT

Rules are rules, I didn't make that up.

SAM

What about what you said in the car, Wyatt? That you changed-- That you were ready to get married-- That you loved me-- Did you happen to make any of that up?

WYATT

What?-- No! C'mon, Sam, you've known her for like ten seconds. You've known me for ten years. She's just a bitter ol' waitress with a bitter ol' pot of coffee. Baby, seriously. If you can't trust me, the man you're about to marry, who can you trust?

Wyatt makes a valid point. Sam has no choice but to get it.

SAM

You're right.

She crosses into the bathroom and closes the door. Right before it shuts, she opens it again for one last thought.

SAM (CONT'D)

Thank you.

WYATT

Thank me in there. You're not the only one with a bladder here.

Sam goes back in and locks the door. At the first sound of TINKLING, Wyatt takes off for the exit.

Bitter Bette, wiping down the counter, confronts Wyatt.

BITTER BETTE

Well well well, look who doesn't have a bladder.

Wyatt spins around to see who she's talking to. The old tattered local just looks at him as he sips his coffee and cigarette.

WYATT

Mind your own business, lady.

He grabs a biscuit off some dishes at an empty table, shoves it in his mouth and continues on his way.

An OFF-STAGE SHOTGUN is cocked.

BITTER BETTE (O.S.)

Call me Bette.

Wyatt stops, mid-flee and mid-bite, and turns around.

Bitter Bette has a SHOTGUN pointed at him.

WYATT

(with mouth full)

For fuck's sake, it's just a lousy old biscuit.

BITTER BETTE

Save your sweet talk for someone who cares.

Wyatt realizes how serious this situation is.

WYATT

Okay, you know what, Bette, you got it all wrong. First of all, this ain't no hunting trip.

BITTER BETTE

Why don't you tell the bitter ol' waitress something she doesn't know?

WYATT

Look. You don't have all the facts-- I am younger than she is.

BITTER BETTE

So?

WYATT

So, I don't like whose side you seem to be on here, so I'm gonna go.

He turns to leave.

BITTER BETTE

Go ahead but don't be surprised if you find a bullet lodged up your ass on the way out.

WYATT

She kidnapped me. Against my will. She killed my fish!

BITTER BETTE

You insulted my biscuit.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Sam and Wyatt finish eating in silence. Then.

WYATT

I am a tall man, Sam. I was in that truck for a long time. Can't a tall man who was in a truck for a long time stretch his legs every now and then?

Bitter Bette comes over with a pot of coffee and an answer.

BITTER BETTE

No.

(to Sam)

Coffee?

Wyatt holds up his empty cup. Bitter Bette ignores him.

SAM

Better not. We're gonna be holding it from here on out.

BITTER BETTE
 Nothing wrong with that.
 (to Wyatt, filling up his
 cup)
 Drink up, Buttercup.

SAM
 We'll just take the bill.

Sam gestures for Wyatt to get out his wallet.

BITTER BETTE
 (waving her off)
 Pfffff.

SAM
 No.
 (gesturing again)
 Wyatt.

Wyatt apprehensively takes out his wallet.

WYATT
 She said 'pfffff.'

BITTER BETTE
 (to Sam)
 The egg scrambles are overpriced for
 a reason and, trust me, it is not
 because of the quality of the eggs.

Wyatt looks at his empty plate then pushes it away.

SAM
 Well, thank you. That's real nice.

BITTER BETTE
 No, what's nice is you making one
 of these cowards step up to the
 plate and do the right thing.

WYATT
 The right thing? You wouldn't know
 the right thing if it walked in
 here and ordered an egg scramble.
 I feel sick.

BITTER BETTE
 Good.

Bitter Bette takes off a necklace with a WEDDING BAND draped
 on it and offers it to Sam.

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)
Here. Something old from someone old.

SAM
Bette? I can't take this.

BITTER BETTE
(re: Wyatt)
If you can take that, you can take this.

SAM
No, really-- Is this platinum?

BITTER BETTE
It was my mama's. She wore it for fifty-eight years. Always thought it would happen for me but, well, here I am.

Sam accepts the necklace from Bitter Bette.

SAM
It sounds like it was good luck.

Bitter Bette helps Sam put on the necklace.

BITTER BETTE
It was. Until my dog of a father ran off with her bridge partner on their fifty-ninth anniversary.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

It's dark. The neon diner sign provides the only light.

Wyatt walks ahead of Sam and her gun to the truck. Gravel CRUNCHES with every step. Sam, with a to go bag, touches the ring around her neck.

SAM
How much did you leave her?

WYATT
What're you talkin' about?

SAM
A tip. How much did you leave?

WYATT
Nothin'.

She stops dead in her tracks.

WYATT (CONT'D)

It was free.

SAM

Wyatt. The food was free, the service wasn't.

WYATT

Service? She pulled a gun on me.

Sam pulls her gun on Wyatt.

SAM

Go back in there and leave her a ten.

WYATT

That woman called me a coward!

Sam COCKS the gun.

SAM

Make it twenty.

WYATT

So what, you're gonna shoot me over a tip now?

SAM

I'm not gonna shoot you over a tip. I'm gonna shoot you over a principle.

WYATT

A principle?-- Okay, you know what, gimme my gun...

Wyatt grabs the gun. Sam tries to pull it away. There's a struggle. Gravel is kicked up. The barrel is pointing down.

SAM

Don't, Wyatt!

WYATT

Gimme my gun!

SAM

Over my almost dead body!

Both sets of hands are on the gun, yet no one has control of it. It's a textbook scuffle. Then.

BLAM!

Sam SCREAMS. Wyatt SCREAMS.

WYATT
What happened?

SAM
You shot my foot.

WYATT
You sure?

They look down at Sam's foot. A small hole near the edge of her shoe. BLOOD appears at the point of impact.

WYATT
Okay, let's not freak out. I'm sure it's fine. Sit down. I'll just-- I'll take a look at it and...

Sam sits. Wyatt takes a deep breath and pulls off her shoe.

WYATT (CONT'D)
(freaking out)
Okay, it's bad.

SAM
Wyatt?!

WYATT
I meant bloody. There's some blood-- But it's okay. I think it's just your little toe. Looks like it's grazed. Wouldn't hurt to go to the hospital though.

SAM
We can't go to the hospital.

WYATT
But there's blood--

SAM
No hospital.

WYATT
Vet?

SAM
Wyatt, for once in your life, do something!

MINUTES LATER --

SAM'S FOOT is wrapped in bandages made out of Wyatt's shirt and propped up on the to go bag.

She lies flat on her back on the gravel. Wyatt is next to her, shirtless. Both a little spent from the experience.

SAM

That was your favorite shirt.

WYATT

It was either wrap your foot in it or pass out in it. Any way I sliced it, the shirt was goin' down.

SAM

Still.

Sam realizes that she doesn't have the gun on Wyatt and he's still there. Maybe he was just afraid of losing his freedom and independence. Wyatt notices her staring at him.

WYATT

So, how you feelin'?

SAM

Pretty much like I was shot in the foot and am now lying in parking lot full of gravel.

WYATT

I could put you in the truck?

SAM

In a minute. It's kinda nice to just sit here and talk. If you don't count the fifty or so jagged little rocks poking into my head.

WYATT

Here.

Wyatt grabs her purse, lifts her head and slides it under. It's the little things that get Sam and it shows.

WYATT (CONT'D)

You know, I'm sorry--

SAM

It's okay.

WYATT

It's just-- I feel bad.

SAM

Don't.

WYATT

I just need you to know it was an accident and, well--

SAM

Accidents happen. I know.

WYATT

Okay.

They share a moment. Just like old times. Then.

WYATT (CONT'D)

(suddenly guiltless)

I'll see you later then.

Wyatt abruptly stands and makes a run for it.

SAM

Wait-- Wyatt-- Where're you goin'--

Sam lifts her head and, across the empty parking lot, sees him sprint behind the building.

SAM (CONT'D)

Wyatt?! You can't leave me! I'm your fiancee!-- I have a GUN!

The GUN is too far to reach.

SAM

(weakly)

Right over there.

Alone. Frustrated. Throbbing. Sam starts to cry.

CRUNCHING GRAVEL.

Sam opens her eyes and sees that Wyatt is back.

SAM

Wyatt?

REVEAL Bitter Bette is behind him with her gun.

BITTER BETTE

Guess what I found when I was taking out the trash?

INT. BITTER BETTE'S TRAILER - LATER

A POLICE SCANNER quietly squawks on the kitchen counter.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

'All units, we are still UTL on that 211. Be on the lookout for two suspects. One, a Caucasian woman in a veil in her mid- to late-thirties--'

Bitter Bette, with a gloved hand, CLICKS OFF the scanner and returns to dunking a needle in and out of boiling water with a pair of tongs. Sam, resting on the couch with a cold washcloth on her forehead and foot elevated, lifts her head.

SAM

Did she just say *late-thirties*?

BITTER BETTE

Different 211.

Sam puts her head back down, deep in thought.

SAM

I can't believe this is my life. I just don't get it. Why is Wyatt making this so difficult?

BITTER BETTE

Because they all do. Now, just sit tight and let the Tylenol PM do your thinking.

SAM

Are you sure he's okay?

BITTER BETTE

Sugar, he's fine. I've done this a million times.

SAM

I just don't want him to be uncomfortable. I mean, I know he's a liar and a jerk and I can't trust him but he's still my fiance.

INT. CLOSET

Bitter Bette opens the door, tongs in hand. Inside is a shirtless, agitated Wyatt tied to a chair. A bandana around his mouth prevents him from talking.

BITTER BETTE

(calling off)

Snug as a tied-up bug--

The door slams shut.

BLACKNESS.

INT. BITTER BETTE'S TRAILER - LATER

Sam is asleep on the couch. Bitter Bette covers her and her newly bandaged foot with a blanket and heads to her room down the hall. A beat. The faint buzz of SNORING. It's coming from the closet. It gets louder and louder. Then.

THUD!

The closet door whips open and Wyatt, still tied to the chair and gagged, falls forward on his face. He's awake now.

WYATT

Whammff tff fucmph?

Wyatt lifts his head off the carpet and suddenly remembers where he is.

On the couch is Sam, deep in her Tylenol PM-induced sleep.

Wyatt looks around the room and sees a PAIR OF SCISSORS on the table next to Sam. He smiles wickedly. As much as one can smile wickedly with a bandana tied around his mouth.

INT. BITTER BETTE'S TRAILER - THE NEXT MORNING

A MUG OF COFFEE is set on the coffee table in front of Sam. She is just waking up.

SAM

Oh, good. Coffee.
(takes a sip)
Yep, that's the stuff.

BITTER BETTE

It's pretty much what keeps the regulars coming back. Well, that and my above average cleavage.

Bitter Bette realizes her cleavage is less than impressive at this hour.

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)

I have to be in the right bra. Or a bra-- So, today's the day, huh?

SAM

Yeah, I guess it is. I can't believe it.

BITTER BETTE

Well, you better believe it 'cause
it's here...

Bitter Bette opens the curtains. A PERFECT DAY pours into the pre-fab living room. The bluest of blue skies, not a cloud as far as the eye can see, and are those songbirds?

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)

...and in my front yard.

There is no front yard.

Bitter Bette turns around just in time to see the screen door swing shut.

EXT. BITTER BETTE'S TRAILER - A MINUTE LATER

A handful of MELODIOUS BIRDS fly past overhead.

Sam stands in the middle of the dirt driveway, transfixed. Bitter Bette appears on her steps with her first aid tackle box.

BITTER BETTE

I didn't mean literally in my front
yard.

SAM

This-- This is my dream day.

BITTER BETTE

Here we go.

SAM

The sky, it's the perfect blue.
Not a cloud as far as the eye can
see-- And did you hear those birds?

BITTER BETTE

Only every morning ten minutes
before my alarm goes off.

SAM

Do you know I've been dreaming
about this day since I was six
years old and it has always looked
exactly like this?

BITTER BETTE

Do you know you got driveway all
over my wrap job?

Sam looks down and sees her bandaged foot is dirty. She hops over to Bitter Bette and sits on her steps.

SAM
Sorry. It's just--

BITTER BETTE
This is your dream day. I heard.

Bitter Bette, not wanting to engage in this conversation, begins redressing Sam's wound. Sam notices.

SAM
Is something wrong?

BITTER BETTE
Yeah, I'm all out of medium. You want large or small?

Bitter Bette holds up two rolls of wrapping tape.

SAM
Surprise me. I don't mean to pry but, don't you believe in dreams?

BITTER BETTE
I didn't grow up dreaming I'd be single and slinging coffee for a living, so no.

SAM
Well, I do. I had to. My mother died when I was six.

BITTER BETTE
Shug. That's terrible.

SAM
She left me and my sisters two things when she died. A note and her wedding dress.

Sam pulls a folded up piece of paper out of her back pocket and hands it to Bitter Bette.

SAM (CONT'D)
The wedding dress is in the truck.

Bitter Bette unfolds the paper. The worn creases indicate it's been opened and closed numerous times.

BITTER BETTE
(reading)
'My darling daughters.
(MORE)

BITTER BETTE (cont'd)
 Live, laugh, learn -- and promise
 me one thing. That you'll find
 someone who loves you as much as
 your daddy loves me and when you
 do, you'll marry him in my dress.
 That way, I can be there, too.
 Until then, I love you. Mom.'

Bitter Bette is caught off guard by her emotional response to
 this letter. She carefully folds it and hands it back.

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)
 Well, that's just beautiful. I s'pose
 just like this day. So, you gonna be
 the first to wear it or last?

SAM
 Both. My two sisters were too far
 in their third trimesters to even
 look at it.

BITTER BETTE
 Good.

Sam smiles until something across the road catches her eye.
 The smile disappears.

SAM
 (instantly hurt)
 Bette.

BITTER BETTE
 I'm sorry. You're my favorite.
 Don't act so surprised.

SAM
 Where's the truck?

The parking lot at the diner is EMPTY. Even by the dumpsters.

INT. BITTER BETTE'S TRAILER

Sam and Bitter Bette open the closet door.

An EMPTY CHAIR. A pile of cut rope.

Bitter Bette slams the door shut.

INT. SEMI-TRUCK

Cowboy drives as he listens to a report on his CB radio.

TRUCKER (V.O.)

'...The other suspect is a white male with a weird Texas-shaped mole on his neck. These two are armed and dangerous and a lil' bit argumentative...'

Cowboy shakes his head in disappointment.

INT. BITTER BETTE'S TRAILER - HALF HOUR LATER

Sam is slumped at the kitchen table with a plate of eggs, a bottle of whiskey and a shot glass in front of her. Bitter Bette angrily cooks bacon.

SAM

I'm not hungry. I'm too stupid to be hungry.

BITTER BETTE

Stop saying that and start drinking that. The only one who's stupid around here cut my good rope and escaped.

Sam pours herself a shot and slams it back.

SAM

I just don't know what I thought I was doing.

BITTER BETTE

I do. You were going after what was rightfully yours, Sam. A wedding. Your wedding.

SAM

I know but why? Wyatt and I, there was no momentum left. We were just... together. Not moving forward or growing or progressing. Our relationship was dead in the water. Sharks should've eaten it.

BITTER BETTE

Don't be too sure about that. I work in a diner. I know things. His name was Roy.

SAM

Was Roy a couples' therapist?

BITTER BETTE

Janitor in E.R. He once told me about this woman who fell off a horse. All the equipment and the doctors, they all said she was dead. Fifteen minutes later, Roy was in there, cleaning up whatever that good for nothing cleaned up, and accidentally bumped her gurney with his mop. The woman popped back to life, just like that.

SAM

Just like that?

Bitter Bette offers Sam the plate of bacon.

BITTER BETTE

Just like that. Do I need to take you on a field trip outside?

Sam hesitates then takes a strip of bacon.

INT. AIRPORT

Leo, Alex and Billie are in line at the ticket counter. Billie gnaws on a Slim Jim. Alex sees this, yanks the beef snack out of her hand and tosses it in the trash can.

BILLIE

(to Leo, pissy)

I should be on my honeymoon right now.

LEO

Well, if you'd gotten yourself knocked up by someone who had vacation time, maybe you would be.

INT. GAS STATION - LATER

A FLYER. With the picture of Wyatt and half of Sam from the digital camera. Sam's smiling. Wyatt, not so much. Tip of gun.

MISSING: GROOM-TO-BE. NEEDS MEDICATION ASAP.

It is slowly being SUCKED into a fax machine.

ED the old timey gas station clerk watches it go. Bitter Bette and Sam wait on the other side of the counter.

ED

Don't get much of a chance to use this thing. Pretty amazing little gadget if you ask me.

BITTER BETTE

That's great. Is it done yet?

ED

Almost. Almost. Look at it go.

SAM

Bette, you sure this is a good idea? I mean, you know.

BITTER BETTE

It's a great idea. We're faxing this to every truck stop and gas station up and down this parade route, and the people who work at 'em? Don't worry, shug, they're all wanted for something or another.

ED

(raises hand)

Tax evasion.

SAM

Okay, but who's to say he's still even on this road?

BITTER BETTE

Me. I took his wallet.

Bitter Bette flashes Wyatt's wallet.

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)

Trust me, they never get very far without these things.

INT. TRUCK

Wyatt, shirtless, is getting very far without his wallet. The windows are down as a MALE CHAUVINISTIC COUNTRY SONG BLASTS out of the speakers.

In the back of the truck, Sam's WEDDING DRESS is being tossed around. Parts of the dress intermittently whip out the back window and then, POOF! The WHOLE DRESS IS SUCKED OUT.

Wyatt is oblivious as he SINGS along with the chorus.

EXT. BACK ROAD

The wedding dress in mid-air. Wyatt's truck gets smaller as it pulls off into the distance.

A SPEEDING SEMI comes out of nowhere and violently runs right into the gown. Catching the treasured heirloom in its grill.

The semi and ITS WEDDING DRESS ENCRUSTED GRILL accelerate, cross the dotted line and PASS WYATT'S TRUCK as Wyatt continues to work on his vocals.

EXT. GAS STATION

Bitter Bette and Sam emerge with a couple of flyers.

SAM
I'll take the phone booths.

BITTER BETTE
Yep.

Bitter Bette crosses off to the restrooms as Sam tapes a flyer on the telephone booth.

COWBOY (O.S.)
Thought you'd be long gone by now.

Sam turns to find COWBOY standing behind her, holding a hose connected to his tanker truck.

SAM
Hey. I know. We're just taking our time, seeing the sights...

Cowboy spots the flyer.

SAM (CONT'D)
And we accidentally got separated.

COWBOY
Huh.

Cowboy bends down and inserts his hose into the fuel receptacle in the ground. He spots her wrapped foot.

COWBOY (CONT'D)
And what happened down here?

SAM
This?-- Happened while I was hunting. There was this raccoon.

Cowboy stands to respond to this.

COWBOY

Are you telling me you hunt
raccoons?

SAM

It might've been a possum.

COWBOY

So you hunt possums?

SAM

Depends. Do people hunt possums?--
Look, I don't want to get you
involved. Can't I just give you ten
dollars and you forget we ever met?

COWBOY

Sure.

He crosses to his truck to start the gas flow.

COWBOY (CONT'D)

If I wasn't a law-abiding citizen.
But I am. And ten dollars is,
well, ten dollars and I bet there's
a jewelry store outside of Amarillo
that'd have to agree with me.
(studying flyer, re: mole)
Has he had that thing checked out?

SAM

You don't understand.

COWBOY

I don't understand a lot of things.
But I do know how to pick up a phone
and call the New Mexico state police.
They are offering a reward.

SAM

Fine. You want to know what
happened? Wyatt shot me in the foot.
After I kidnapped him out of our bed
yesterday morning. After I waited
ten years and two days for him to
propose to me. Pathetic, huh?

Cowboy processes this new information, then.

COWBOY

Depends. You love him?

SAM

I kidnapped him, didn't I?

COWBOY

Well, then, nothing pathetic about
love. This half of a face though,
looks just like you...

Cowboy tears down the flyer that Sam just put up.

INT. AIRPLANE

Alex, Billie and Leo settle into their seats as the last
passengers board. Trixie, out of breath, is one of them.
She takes her seat next to pregnant Billie who's inhaling a
bag of nuts.

ALEX

You made it.

TRIXIE

Had to. It's not every day my best
friend gets married.

BILLIE

I bet you anything she's pregnant.

TRIXIE

(annoyed, to Billie)
Shouldn't you be on your honeymoon?

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Cowboy, Sam and Bitter Bette are in the cab. Bitter Bette
rifles through Wyatt's wallet.

COWBOY

(into CB)

That's right. Black Chevy pick-up
truck, license plate...

Cowboy looks to Sam.

SAM

Wyatt'z.

COWBOY

Wyatt's?

SAM

With a "z."

BITTER BETTE

With a "z"?

SAM

Don't get me started.

COWBOY
 (into CB)
 License plate reads WYATTZ. W-Y-A-
 T-T-Z as in zebra. Over.

OTHER TRUCKER (V.O.)
 Well, that's just about the gayest
 thing I ever did hear. Over.

BITTER BETTE
 He can say that again.
 (then, to Cowboy)
 Wait, what kinda reward we talkin',
 lost dog money or Patty Hearst money?

Sam shoots Bitter Bette a look.

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)
 Like you don't want to know.

COWBOY
 Lost dog.
 (off Sam's look)
 Maybe Patty Hearst's lost dog.

SAM
 Why're you helping me?

COWBOY
 It's your wedding day and I didn't
 have time to go to Macy's.

SAM
 I'm serious. I'm on a manhunt --
 literally hunting down a man with a
 gun-- his gun -- and you're on my
 side? Driving?

COWBOY
 It's simple. You love him. How
 can I not be on the side of love?

This stops Sam in her tracks. They exchange a look.

COWBOY (CONT'D)
 Not all truckers are made of mud
 flaps and chewing tobacco, you know.

BITTER BETTE
 (aside to Sam)
 Oh, I do not trust him.

Bitter Bette finds a twenty dollar bill in Wyatt's wallet.

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)
 Andy Jackson, on the other hand?
 With my life. Thanks for the tip,
 Wyatt.

As Bitter Bette shoves the money down her top, Sam spots Wyatt's truck on the side of the road.

SAM
 There he is.

BITTER BETTE
 (re: wallet)
 See? What'd I tell you?

EXT. BACK ROAD - SIDE OF THE ROAD

His license plate: WYATTZ.

The four of them inspect the dirty empty truck. All the windows are down. Cab deserted. Sam looks in the back.

BITTER BETTE
 Usually they stay with their
 vehicles.

COWBOY
 I bet they usually get gas every
 now and then, too.

An EMPTY HANGER where the dress used to be. This hits Sam hard. She marches back to the tanker, COCKING her gun along the way. This is a new Sam. She's mean.

SAM
 (not looking back)
 I don't have all day.

Cowboy looks at Bitter Bette. Assessing the situation.

BITTER BETTE
 I call shotgun.

INT. TANKER TRUCK - MINUTES LATER

Sam doesn't take her eyes off the road.

BITTER BETTE
 Well, at least he's on foot. He
 couldn't've gotten very far.

COWBOY
 You obviously haven't seen the guy
 run.

BITTER BETTE

Actually, that's all I have seen
him do.

SAM

Does this thing go any faster?

COWBOY

Only one way to find out.

Cowboy pushes down on the gas pedal.

EXT. BACK ROAD - ELSEWHERE

Wyatt, now in a different shirt, walks on the side of the road with the duffel bag draped across his body. He looks back every now and then. A futile attempt at hitchhiking. No cars or people or anything anywhere.

About to give up, he looks back again and sees it. A CAR, off in the distance, heading his way. Wyatt gets in position, extends his thumb and waits.

The vehicle approaches, gets closer and then SPEEDS right by.

WYATT

ASS-shit!

Wyatt kicks gravel into the road and just about falls on his butt. He looks around to see if anyone saw him.

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Driving. Sam scans the road for traces of Wyatt. Cowboy notices she's been white knuckling her weapon for the past hour.

COWBOY

You doing okay?

SAM

Fine.

BITTER BETTE

(to Cowboy)

She's better than fine. She's focused. This is a girl who has her eye on the prize. Even if he isn't the most cooperative teddy bear in the booth.

COWBOY

(not taking his eyes off
road)

Sounds like she's not the only one.

EXT. BACK ROAD - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

Wyatt lies on his back on the side of the deserted road.
It's hot and he's exhausted.

An ORANGE TOUR BUS with bright red flames painted on the side stops on the other side of the road. The DRIVER rolls down his tinted window. He is a man in his mid-sixties. He chews on a toothpick as he checks out Wyatt in his prostrate state. He then takes out his toothpick and lets it drop to the ground.

DRIVER
Need a lift, son?

Wyatt wearily lifts his head.

INT. TANKER TRUCK

The sun beats through the windshield and into Sam's eyes.

SAM
(to Bette, re: visor)
Can you?--

Bitter Bette flips down her visor and a PICTURE falls out onto her lap. She picks it up.

BITTER BETTE
Is this you--

COWBOY
On my wedding day. I thought I
lost that a long time ago.

SAM
You're so young.

COWBOY
Just turned twenty five.

Sam nabs the photo from Bitter Bette and examines it closely.

SAM
Is she pregnant?

COWBOY
What? No.

SAM
But she gave you an ultimatum?

COWBOY
Not at all.

SAM
So, she's from Canada?

COWBOY
Actually, we got married because we
were in love back then.

BITTER BETTE
And now?

Bitter Bette knows there's more to this story. There always
is.

COWBOY
And now, she's taking a little
time. She needed some space, her
own address, that sorta thing.

BITTER BETTE
So she moved out?

COWBOY
I didn't say that.

BITTER BETTE
That's cause you said everything
but that.
(to Sam)
She moved out.

A beat as Sam takes in Cowboy's situation.

SAM
But, your ring?

COWBOY
Right where she left it. Somebody's
gotta fight the good fight.

Sam contemplates her engagement ring and her own good fight.
She checks out the picture again.

SAM
She looks Canadian.

INT. BUS - SECONDS LATER

As Wyatt enters, the driver shuts the doors behind him. He
makes his way past couple after couple. Old, young. Pretty,
not-so-pretty. Hand in hand.

Wyatt finds an empty seat next to a pair in their seventies,
working on a crossword puzzle. This is HARRY and MAUDE. As
Wyatt sits, he spots the banner hanging above the driver.

CATHOLIC COUPLES' RETREAT 2006

Harry and Maude watch him. Then.

MAUDE

We renew our vows every year.
This'll be our fifty-third trip
down our fifty-third aisle.

WYATT

Fifty-three, huh?

HARRY

Do you blame me?

Harry longingly looks at Maude. Wyatt politely smiles.

MAUDE

Tell us, nice young man like
yourself, are you married?

WYATT

Me? No, ma'am. Just barely though.

MAUDE

Oh.

(to Harry)

What does that mean? I don't get
what that means.

HARRY

I'm not sure, Maude.

Maude and Harry turn to Wyatt.

WYATT

If you wanna know the truth...

MAUDE

We're Catholic. We always want to
know the truth.

INT. LAS VEGAS TAXI

Trixie, Billie and Alex are in the back. Leo climbs into the
front with the a non-English speaking CAB DRIVER.

LEO

Golden Nugget Hotel and Casino.
And make it zippy. It's my
daughter's wedding day.

The cab driver looks in his rear view mirror at Billie in the
middle.

CAB DRIVER
 (broken English)
 Ah, shotgun wedding.

LEO
 (proudly)
 Nope. Not this time.

INT. TANKER TRUCK - AN HOUR LATER

Sam looks at her watch, defeated and mentally disheveled.

SAM
 This has got to be the worst
 engagement ever. I now only have
 three hours to find my dress, track
 down my groom and get to the chapel
 -- where, let's not forget, there'll
 be a crate full of doves just waiting
 to crap on me. Oh, great, I say
 'crap' now.

BITTER BETTE
 Honey, I'm sure a lot of brides
 feel like you do.
 (off her look)
 What do I know?

Sam is not doing well. And everyone knows it.

COWBOY
 What do you want to do?

SAM
 Besides cry and feel sorry for
 myself and cry some more? This.
 Whether he likes it or not, Wyatt
 is going to do the right thing.
 Doves are not returnable.

BITTER BETTE
 It's like you're my flesh and
 blood.

Cowboy thinks about what Sam just said. Sam notices.

SAM
 What?

COWBOY
 Maybe this isn't the right thing.

SAM
 I'm sorry?

COWBOY
I've been thinking.

SAM
Well, stop it.

BITTER BETTE
Yeah, knock it off.

SAM
(then, to Cowboy)
Okay, what do you mean maybe this
isn't the right thing?

COWBOY
It just struck me. Why do you want
to be with someone who doesn't want
to be with you?

This hits Sam hard. She swings back.

SAM
Why do you?

Sam and Cowboy are both left speechless.

BITTER BETTE
Good God, why does anyone? Now, if
you're done seeing whose tears are
wetter, there's something up ahead,
one o'clock.

Up a mile or so, a BILLOWY FLUFF OF WHITE is on side of road,
occasionally moving with what breeze there is.

Sam leans forward.

SAM
What is it?

BITTER BETTE
Well, now, I'm not sure.

And then Bitter Bette is.

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)
Probably just someone's old sheet--
(changing topic)
So what were we talking about?

SAM
A sheet? Why would there be a
sheet in the desert? I can't look.

Sam covers her eyes. Cowboy brings the truck to a stop.

COWBOY

Sam, I don't think that's a sheet.

SAM

Is it?

BITTER BETTE

Does it have intricate beading on the bodice?

SAM

With one hundred and twelve hand-sewn beads?

Bitter Bette starts silently counting.

BITTER BETTE

Gimme a minute.

EXT. TANKER TRUCK

Sam's face against the window, sees her dead dress. A MUFFLED SCREAM.

A HALF HOUR LATER --

THE WEDDING DRESS

Is still on the side of the road. Covered in dirt, tire marks, road junk. Caught in a bare, brown desert bush.

Sam stands over it, looking as if she's just stumbled upon a mass grave. Her friends wait by the truck. After another second, Cowboy walks over.

SAM

Go away. I'm mad at you.

COWBOY

Hate to disappoint you but, it's not me you're mad at.

He bends down and extracts the dress from the bush.

SAM

It looks like it was dragged to death.

COWBOY

Looks like it was a lot of things to death.

Cowboy stops himself.

COWBOY (CONT'D)

You know what Maya Angelou always says?

(off her look)

I drive a truck for ten to twelve hours a day. If someone's made a book on tape, I've listened to it, twice. Maya says you can tell a lot about a person by how they handle three things: tangled Christmas tree lights, the rain, and lost luggage--

SAM

Cowboy, please--

COWBOY

Now haven't seen you with a box of Christmas lights or deal with rain but I have see you lose a few things. A ring and a human to name two. And I have to say, no one handles it better.

SAM

Better? Better than what?

COWBOY

Well, better than me for one.

Sam doesn't know what to make of Cowboy.

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Cowboy and Sam wait in the cab. Each in their own thought. The dress carcass hangs in the back. Bitter Bette opens the door and climbs in.

BITTER BETTE

Well, couldn't find any of those beads. Chewed up old toothpicks, on the other hand? I could build a house.

SAM

Cowboy?

COWBOY

I know the drill. Doves aren't returnable--

SAM

Can you drive me to Vegas? It's time to tell my family the truth.

BITTER BETTE

What?-- No. We can't give up.

SAM

We're not. I am. This is a lose lose situation. If I continue on this wild goose chase and force Wyatt to marry me, I'll end up like Cowboy. And if I don't, I'm you.

BITTER BETTE

Gee, thanks.

EXT. NEW MEXICO - CONTINUOUS

Cowboy's TANKER TRUCK does a U-turn, whipping up dust and dirt from the shoulder, and starts for Vegas.

An old battered road sign. LAS VEGAS 120 MILES.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt finishes telling the story to Harry and Maude.

MAUDE

With a gun?

WYATT

With my gun.

A beat.

MAUDE

Well. That's just the sweetest thing I've ever heard.

WYATT

See what I'm say-- Sweetest? The gun was loaded, with bullets, I said that, right?

MAUDE

She must really love you.

HARRY

Reminds me of our courtship.

MAUDE

I didn't have a weapon.

HARRY
You had that body.

MAUDE
What do you mean *had*?

Wyatt, perplexed, just stares at Harry and Maude as COWBOY'S TANKER PASSES THEIR BUS, going the same direction.

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Silence. Bitter Bette is about to speak but thinks twice about it. Then can't stop herself.

BITTER BETTE
Okay, I have to say something.

SAM
I wish you wouldn't.

BITTER BETTE
Yeah, well, I wish you didn't say what you just did back there but you did, so we're even. Look, forget about me and my agenda and forget about the World's Most Sensitive Truck Driver over there. I just don't want you to forget about your dream, Sam.

SAM
That's just it. I think it's time I did. I can't keep chasing someone who doesn't want to be caught.

These spoken words sink in for both Sam and Cowboy.

EXT. GAS STATION - SAME TIME

The ORANGE BUS is being refueled.

INT. GAS STATION BATHROOM

Maude washes her hands. She then dries them, throws the paper towel into the open trash can and does a double take.

A CRUMPLED PIECE OF PAPER

Maude knows that crumpled up face anywhere.

EXT. GAS STATION

Harry and Wyatt sit on a curb by the store, watching the BUS DRIVER, sharing Cheetos. Wyatt's duffel bag is between them.

WYATT

Where'd y'all get this bus anyway?

HARRY

Some famous skateboarder. Our church got it for practically nothing when he shattered his knee. Lucky us, huh?

MAUDE (O.S.)

Oh, I think Wyatt's the lucky one.

Maude joins them and produces the wrinkled flyer.

MAUDE

Can you believe he ran away from her? Look how cute they are.

WYATT

She made a flyer?-- 'Course she did. She kidnapped me. Why wouldn't she make a flyer? Can I see that please?

Maude hands Wyatt the flyer and he stuffs it deep in his bag.

MAUDE

Wait, you need medication--

WYATT

I don't--

As Harry shoves his hand into Wyatt's bag and pulls out what he thinks is the flyer and hands it to his wife:

WYATT

Hey!

MAUDE

(re: paper)
Harry, this ain't it.

Harry reaches to take it back, Maude slaps his hand.

MAUDE

Go away. These are wedding vows.

Harry glances suspiciously at Wyatt.

MAUDE

(reading)
They're Sam's.
(to Wyatt)
Ten years? You made your fiancée wait ten years?

WYATT

No-- Yes-- She's not my fiancee!
 Look, I know this is your
 anniversary and your skateboarder
 bus and I really appreciate you
 splitting your Cheetos, Harry, but--
 what is wrong with you people?! I
 was kidnapped. With a gun.
Against my will. I was a state
 away from being forced into a 'til
 death do you part' situation and
 you two keep turnin' this into a
 Hallmark Hall of Fame movie!

MAUDE

Knowing how much she loves you, it
 would make a good one.

WYATT

It's not love, it's insanity.

HARRY

True love does make you do crazy
 things.

MAUDE

That's the only reason that can
 explain why you're sitting here
 with us and not standing at an
 altar with her.

Frustrated, Wyatt grabs the vows and shoves them back in his
 bag. As he does, his bag falls off the curb. An embossed
 keepsake flute ROLLS OUT and DOESN'T BREAK. They all witness
 this.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - LATER

A beautiful blue cloudless desert day.

Cowboy's TANKER TRUCK passes one behemoth CASINO after
 another. And then it pulls into...

THE GOLDEN NUGGET.

The tanker rolls up to valet. It sticks out like a sore
 thumb. Cowboy jumps out and tosses the keys to the VALET
 ATTENDANT in a red vest and top hat. He's clueless.

INT. HOTEL

Slot machines. Roulette wheels. SCANTILY-CLAD WAITRESSES.
 Bitter Bette, Sam and Cowboy enter. On a mission. Then Sam
 stops.

SAM
I can't do this.

COWBOY
Yes, you can.

SAM
As soon as I tell them, it's all gonna be real. The kidnapping. The robbery. The fact that my boyfriend of ten years would rather be a fugitive than marry me.

COWBOY
Sam, what's real is that you deserve someone who worships the ground you walk on, and I'm sure your father would agree.

Bette takes a good look at Cowboy. It is obvious he worships the ground she walks on.

BITTER BETTE
I know your mother would.

Sam is surprised to find Bitter Bette agreeing with Cowboy.

BITTER BETTE (CONT'D)
Keep the dream, Sam. But let's not waste it on Wyatt anymore.

SAM
I still have to face them though.

BITTER BETTE
Says who?

INT. LEO'S HOTEL ROOM

Leo in a suit, trying to tie his tie. Alex's teasing Billie's hair in the background. It's getting big. The phone RINGS. Leo whips his tie off in frustration and answers it.

LEO
Y-ello.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOTEL PHONE BOOTH

Sam is on the phone. Cowboy and Bitter Bette stand outside the glass doors.

SAM

Daddy--

INT. LEO'S HOTEL ROOM

LEO

Sammy! Where the hell are ya?!

ALEX

Well, it's about time.

INT. HOTEL PHONE BOOTH

SAM

Actually, I'm downstairs--

LEO (O.S.)

Good. The limo's picking us up in ten minutes and you're gonna need to lower your tie expectations.

SAM

Ten minutes?--

LEO (O.S.)

It's twenty after, right?

SAM

(re: watch)

Yeah. Well, twenty five after--

INT. LEO'S HOTEL ROOM

Leo hits his watch.

LEO

Damn China people.

(re: Billie's big hair)

Alex, what the hell you doin'? You wanna lose a dove in that thing?

(then, back to Sam)

Stay put. We'll be right down.

INT. HOTEL PHONE BOOTH

SAM

I'll be here.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - MINUTES LATER

Sam, Cowboy and Bitter Bette.

SAM

So I'm gonna go.

COWBOY

I thought you said he's on his way down.

SAM

They are. Which is why I need to go. You'll think of something.

BITTER BETTE

Already did. Wyatt was in a terrible accident and died. Same result but as a grieving almost widow, you'll never have to talk about it.

SAM

Thanks.

She hugs Bitter Bette then turns to Cowboy. He isn't ready to let her go.

COWBOY

Sam, you don't want to do this.

SAM

You're right. I didn't want to do any of this.

Sam turns and hops towards the exit. Just as her feet touch the sensor mat, the automatic doors whip open. A blast of hot air hits her, and:

LEO (O.S.)

Sammy!

Sam stops frozen.

LEO (O.S.)

Sammy, where you goin'?

The doors remain open as she turns to face her family. Her father and her sisters walk past Bitter Bette and Cowboy.

SAM

Daddy. I was just... looking for the limo. It's not here yet.

LEO

What happened to your foot?--

SAM

Nothing-- Wow, look at you. Love the no tie look.

COWBOY
She had a hunting mishap.

LEO
Since when do you hunt, and who is
this?

SAM
Since yesterday. And this is
Cowboy. He's a cowboy--

COWBOY
I'm a friend of Sam's. I met your
daughter and Wyatt on the way out
here.

They shake hands.

SAM
And that's Bette. She's my
waitress.

Leo is instantly smitten by Bitter Bette.

LEO
Betty? As in Boop?

BITTER BETTE
As in Davis, you jackass.

Bitter Bette and Leo shake hands. It's a moment. Bitter
Bette looks back to the action. Leo doesn't.

ALEX
(to Sam)
Why aren't you dressed?

BILLIE
What happened? Pee on a stick?

SAM
I'm not pregnant, Billie.

ALEX
Where's Wyatt?

SAM
Wyatt? He's, uh-- Well--

TRIXIE (O.S.)
Well, he better be here somewhere.

Sam turns around to find Trixie behind her. She dressed to the nines, in a super tight, low cut dress. It could very well be inappropriate.

TRIXIE (CONT'D)

I didn't fly all the way out here for the shrimp cocktail and busy carpet patterns. Although I do enjoy a good shrimp cocktail.

SAM

Trix! You're here?!

TRIXIE

You think I'd let you get married without a maid of honor?

SAM

I thought you always said I could do better than Wyatt.

TRIXIE

You can. But you're my best friend, Sam. If Wyatt's the one you want to spend the rest of your life with, then who am I to stop you?

Trixie and Sam hug.

SAM

You have no idea how glad I am to see you.

TRIXIE

Ditto. Have you ever traveled on a plane with your sisters? They're loud and elbow-y and--

(re: ring)

Holy crap, who'd you rob to get this?!

SAM

Wyatt got it for me.

TRIXIE

(a little sad)

Really?

Leo makes a move on Bitter Bette.

LEO

I'm Leo, did I say that?

BITTER BETTE

Only like a thousand times.

Leo's intrigued. Sam picks up on this.

SAM
Daddy? Can I talk to you?

EXT. HOTEL

Sam and her father out at valet.

LEO
She's gonna be at the wedding, right?

SAM
There's something you need to know.

LEO
You're pregnant.

SAM
What?-- No! Look, the truth is, there was this terrible accident--

Leo spots something behind Sam.

LEO
Wait. Wyatt might wanna hear this.

The ORANGE BUS is at valet and Wyatt steps out of it. Carrying the duffel, he crosses over to Sam and her father.

SAM
Wyatt?

WYATT
There's my bride.

SAM
Uh-huh.
(then)
Daddy, can you give us a sec?

LEO
Take what you need. I'm gonna go call Tony and let him have it for being late and then tell him we're gonna need some more time.

SAM
Okay but, Daddy? Bette may not be your cup of tea.

LEO
 Yeah, but she just may be.
 (to Wyatt)
 Appreciate the call, Wyatt.

WYATT
 Just doing what's right, sir.

As Leo heads back into the hotel, he checks his reflection in the doors and undoes his top button.

Sam turns back to her bigger problem at hand, Wyatt.

SAM
 You were gonna be in an accident--
 What the hell are you doing here?!

WYATT
 You cuss now?

SAM
 Yes I do.

WYATT
 I'm here, Sam, because we're getting
 married.

SAM
 Are you serious? Because you can't
 be serious.

WYATT
 You love me, right?

Déjà vu. Sam isn't enjoying it.

SAM
 Okay, now my head hurts. Can I see
 that please?

Wyatt hands her the duffel bag.

WYATT
 Answer the question.

Sam digs in her toiletry bag, pulls out a bottle of aspirin and tries to open it.

SAM
 This is so weird-- I don't get
 headaches-- If I could just get
 this opened-- I'm not a child!

Wyatt takes the bottle from Sam and pops it open. He hands it back to her.

WYATT

Do you love me?

SAM

Of course I do, Wyatt--

WYATT

Of course you do. I was all about gettin' away from you -- I never stopped to ask myself where I was goin'. This time away-- it made me realize I'm never going to find anyone who's gonna love me like you do.

SAM

Right.

Sam shakes out two aspirin and swallows them dry.

INT. LOBBY

Alex plays nickel slots while Billie looks at a food menu from the bar. Trixie puts on lipstick, like a sad clown. Leo joins Bitter Bette who waits next to Cowboy.

LEO

Did you miss me?

BITTER BETTE

About as much as I miss my menstrual cycle.

ALEX

Daddy? Where's Sam?

LEO

Outside, talking to Wyatt.

Both Cowboy and Trixie's countenances instantly change.

TRIXIE

Excuse me.

Trixie crosses off to the bathroom as Cowboy gets up and heads outside.

LEO

Hey, was there an accident or something?

BITTER BETTE

Keep it up, slick, and there will
be but it won't be no accident.

Flustered by her own feelings, Bitter Bette follows Cowboy as
Leo looks after his feisty new friend.

EXT. CASINO

Wyatt and Sam sit on the curb. Sam holds her VOWS and rubs her
temples. Cowboy stands silently behind them. Bitter Bette joins
him. Leo and the sisters are a step behind her.

WYATT

Look, I'm not saying I was right.

SAM

You shot me!

Alex leans into Bitter Bette.

ALEX

He shot her?

BITTER BETTE

(shrugs)

I'm just her waitress.

Wyatt and Sam.

WYATT

I said I was sorry.

SAM

(confused)

I know. I know.

WYATT

So. Do you forgive me?

SAM

No. Don't you see, Wyatt? The
damage has been done. To us. To
me. You should see my mother's
dress. I'm sorry, but there's
nothing you can say or do that'll
change my mind.

WYATT

But, the ring?

Sam slides off her ring and hands it to him. An unexpected
gesture.

Wyatt sits with it for a minute then digs in her toiletry bag and takes out a box of floss. He pulls off a long strand and proceeds to wrap it around the ring's band.

SAM

What're you doing?

Newly sized, he puts the ring back in an empty ring box.

WYATT

Just trying to fix something I
screwed up a long time ago.

Wyatt gets down on one knee and offers her the ring box.

WYATT

Samantha Lee Judd, will you marry
me?

SAM

Wyatt?-- You're kneeling on
asphalt. Why're you kneeling on
asphalt?-- Don't answer that. I'm
unarmed, you know that, right?--
And doesn't that hurt?

WYATT

I worship the ground you walk on,
Sam, and if it's asphalt, so be it.

Sam can't believe these words just came out of Wyatt's mouth. She looks back at Cowboy. He manages to muster up a smile for her -- but only because she's looking for one.

WYATT (CONT'D)

I haven't always done the right
thing. Partly because I was
scared. Mostly because I was dumb.
But I'm not that scared, dumb guy
anymore. What'd you say?
(re: asphalt)
It's harder than it looks.

Sam takes the ring and puts it on. It's a perfect fit.

SAM

I thought you'd never ask.

She and Wyatt embrace as Cowboy slips back into the casino.

A CORK IS POPPED.

MAUDE (O.S.)

Champagne?

An emotional Sam looks up and Maude offers her a glass of champagne in a keepsake flute. Harry holds the other one.

SAM
Yes, please.

INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER

A wedding dress ZIPPER is zipped up.

Sam turns around in her mother's dress and faces Trixie. The gown has seen better days. Chunks of beads missing, still covered in tire marks and dirt despite attempts at cleaning. Still, Sam is beaming. Until she sees Trixie is nothing short of apathetic.

SAM
What?

TRIXIE
Nothing.

SAM
It looks like it flew out of a truck, doesn't it?

TRIXIE
I didn't say that.

SAM
You haven't said anything.
(then)
What happened to you supporting my decision?

TRIXIE
I'm here, aren't I?

SAM
And somehow I find myself wishing you weren't.

TRIXIE
Look, I'm trying. It's just-- It's harder than I thought it'd be, okay?

SAM
No, it's not okay. I love Wyatt and he loves me, and I've broken more laws than I'd like to admit to get us to this next step, so I'm sorry, Trixie. I just don't think I can care how you feel anymore.

Trixie GAGS.

SAM

Okay, now you're just being mean--

Trixie gags again. Then THROWS UP in a plastic coin bucket on the dresser. Sam automatically reaches for her friend's hair, pulling it from her face and the bucket.

SAM (CONT'D)

I meant sick. Are you okay?

TRIXIE

(with head in bucket)

I'm fine.

SAM

Are you sure? Your head in a bucket of nickels isn't coming off as fine.

Trixie stands up and takes in a deep breath. Fake smile.

TRIXIE

See? Fine. I think with all the excitement and this dress, I just forgot to eat, and, Jesus, it's hot in here. Is it hot in here?

Sam fans her with the room service menu as she notices Trixie's ERECT NIPPLES poking through her skintight dress.

SAM

Little bit. If you're hungry...
(re: menu)
They have a nice grilled chicken sandwich here--

TRIXIE

A chicken sandwich sounds--

Trixie THROWS UP again. Sam takes her hair, like an old pro.

INT. HOTEL BAR

Cowboy works on a stiff one. He twirls his wedding ring on the bar. Next to an 8 x 10 manila envelope. The BARTENDER comes by with the bill.

BARTENDER

Anything else?

COWBOY

Just a pen, my friend.

The bartender slides him a pen and walks away. Cowboy takes the last sip of his drink then pulls out the contents of the envelope. His DIVORCE PAPERS. He turns to the last page and signs. It feels surprisingly good. He returns the paperwork to the envelope and seals it. He takes out his wallet and places a ten on the bill. And then his WEDDING RING. Ready to move on, Cowboy picks up his envelope and walks away.

INT. HALLWAY - TEN MINUTES LATER

Bitter Bette, all cleaned up for the wedding, hurries down the hall to Sam's room. She KNOCKS on the door.

BITTER BETTE

Shug, you almost ready? The doves are on overtime and your father's a wink away from a restraining order--

Sam opens the door. She's had better days.

INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM

Sam and Bitter Bette face the closed bathroom door. WATER RUNNING and GAGGING is heard from behind it.

SAM

We're gonna need another minute.

INT. HALLWAY ALCOVE

Bitter Bette inserts money into a vending machine. Wyatt passes by and then comes back.

WYATT

I can't believe you're here.

BITTER BETTE

Not as surprised as I am that you're here.

WYATT

Yeah, well. What's the hold up? Sam's father's giving me a look.

BITTER BETTE

Stand in line.

Bitter Bette selects a soda. A ginger ale pops out.

INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM

Sam leans into the closed bathroom door.

SAM
 Trixie? Are you okay?

TRIXIE (O.S.)
 No.

SAM
 I'm sure once we get some food in
 you--

TRIXIE (O.S.)
 I'm an awful person, Sam. Food is
 not going to change that.

SAM
 What're you talking about?

TRIXIE (O.S.)
 I did something bad.

INT. HALLWAY ALCOVE

Wyatt and Bitter Bette.

WYATT
 (a little nervous)
 What do you mean she's sick? Like
 sick sick? Why's she so sick?

BITTER BETTE
 (suspicious)
 Well, now, that's a good question.

INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM

Trixie's still in the bathroom.

SAM
 Sweetie, I'm sure whatever you did,
 it's not half as bad as you think
 it is.

TRIXIE (O.S.)
 What's the worst possible thing a
 person could do?

SAM
 I don't know-- Murder?

TRIXIE (O.S.)
 Okay, the worst possible thing a
 friend could do.

SAM
Wouldn't that still be murder?--

TRIXIE
Think!

Sam stops to think and catches her reflection in the mirror. She sees the situation for the first time. Her dress is a disaster. Tire marks. Dirt. Chunks of beads missing. Her best friend is vomiting in the bathroom.

Then something in the mirror catches her eye. She turns and faces the window. Her PERFECTLY CLEAR BLUE SKY has a TEENY TINY DARK CLOUD forming in the center of it.

SAM
NO!

Trixie, a pathetic mess, now stands behind her in the middle of the room.

TRIXIE
(a mile a minute)
Sam, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean for it to happen, I didn't, but you know how tequila makes me forget my boundaries and Wyatt didn't order enough food and I was going to get rid of it, I was, I just couldn't. What if it didn't ever happen for me again?

SAM
What're you talking about?

INT. HALLWAY ALCOVE

WYATT
It was a mistake.

BITTER BETTE
Most of you are.

WYATT
I'm gonna need my wallet back.

BITTER BETTE
Sure thing just as soon as you give Sam back her hope and optimism and that dream you ruined for her.

INT. HALLWAY

Trixie is standing outside Sam's room. In shock. Fidgeting with a room key. A 'do not disturb' sign hangs on the knob. Bitter Bette rounds the corner with the ginger ale.

TRIXIE

She wants to be alone.

Bitter Bette takes the room key from her hands and replaces it with her soda.

BITTER BETTE

Your ride's leaving.

Disgusted with herself, Trixie leaves.

INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM

A pen on hotel stationery.

SAM (V.O.)

(as she writes)

*'Dear Larry, enclosed is the
engagement ring I stole yesterday.
Thanks for loaning me a moment.
With apologies, Martha.'*

Sam, still in her dress, folds the letter as buckets of RAIN fall outside the window. The sadness is palpable. She takes the note, the certificate of authenticity and the ring, and slides them into an envelope. She addresses it to the Diamond Discount Center.

Bitter Bette KNOCKS and enters, carrying the do not disturb sign.

BITTER BETTE

I've been trying not to disturb but
it's hard-- I saw Trixie.

SAM

I'm glad you're here.

Sam, doing her best to function, hands Bitter Bette the envelope. If she mentions anything of importance, she knows she will die.

SAM (CONT'D)

Can you mail this for me?

BITTER BETTE

Sure. Of course.

(then)

Why don't I just go do it now?

SAM

Can you tell my dad while you're at it? I just--

BITTER BETTE

I'd be happy to. I mean, not happy. I'll do it. For you.

Sam takes off Bitter Bette's necklace and hands it to her.

SAM

And here. He's not dating anyone, you know.

INT. LOBBY - FRONT DESK

Cowboy is at the front desk with his envelope.

COWBOY

So, it'll go out first thing?

FRONT DESK CLERK

Bright and early.

Bitter Bette shows up. Her necklace is back on.

COWBOY

I thought you'd be wrangling doves by now.

BITTER BETTE

There's been a change of plans.

Bitter Bette hands the clerk Sam's envelope. Cowboy sees it.

INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM

Sam stares out the window at the rain. Tears silently stream down her face. A KNOCK at the door.

MAID (O.S.)

Housekeeping.

The maid walks in. She starts tidying -- Windex on the mirror, refilling the coffee bar, etc. -- as she talks to Sam.

MAID

Oh, sorry, Miss. You didn't have your sign out. If there's a sign out, I don't bother the guest. No sign, I assume you want cleaning.

SAM

That's okay--

MAID

I can come back later. I mean, it'll be tough. Lots of late check outs, lots of early check ins.

SAM

Oh. No, stay. I was just about to go out and get some fresh air anyway.

INT. HOTEL DINER

Alex and Leo are drinking coffee as Billie polishes off a plate of buffalo wings from the buffet. Bitter Bette approaches them.

ALEX

Finally.

BITTER BETTE

Quick question. What's the cancellation policy with the doves?

INT. ELEVATOR

Sam, still in her wedding dress, watches the numbers decrease. They stop on the eleventh floor. The door opens and a happy couple, arm in arm, step in.

WOMAN

(re: Sam)

Aww.

MAN

Let me guess, about to get married?--
Just got married?

SAM

Actually, neither.

INT. LOBBY

Cowboy enters an elevator and the doors shut just as Sam's elevator doors open and she emerges. The guessing game is still going on. Sam can't take it.

MAN
(calling off)
Quinceanera?

INT. SAM'S HOTEL ROOM

The maid is making the bed. Cowboy knocks on the open door as he walks in.

COWBOY
Did you see--

MAID
A woman in a wedding dress? She went to get some fresh air. I offered to come back. Not that it would've been easy. I mean, with all the back tracking and people stealing my soap and toilet paper. I am only one person...

Cowboy's gone.

EXT. HOTEL

It's POURING. Sam exits the hotel. The rain and her teardrops fall at the same speed. The Valet Attendant spots her.

VALET
Well, here's come the bride--

Sam ignores him and keeps on going. Right into the rain.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE STRIP

Wetter than wet, Sam just walks. Devoid of any emotion. She arbitrarily turns and steps into the crosswalk just as a LIMO flies past her, almost hitting her. EMPTY WET CANS noisily follow in its wake. A JUST MARRIED SIGN sits in the back window and mocks her.

Sam stops and stands there. Watching the car full of happiness get further and further away from her. Her depression finally consumes her. She spins around, arms wide open and eyes closed, and faces the oncoming traffic. Cars whiz past her and HONK.

A SET OF BRAKES SCREECH.

Sam braces for the end. It won't be long now.

COWBOY'S TANKER TRUCK

Pulls up next to her with the window down. Sam's eyes are still tightly closed.

COWBOY

What am I gonna do with you?

Sam opens one eye and sees it is Cowboy.

SAM

Either hit me or keep moving.

COWBOY

This isn't your wedding day.

SAM

Thank you.

COWBOY

He isn't supposed to be your groom.

SAM

Yeah, I just figured that out. Can you please go now? I'm kinda in the middle of something here.

COWBOY

It's called a road. Don't make me count to three.

SAM

Count to a hundred and three. I'm not moving.

Sam closes her eyes tighter and holds her arms out wider. Hoping to be hit or saved. She's not sure which. Cowboy gets out of the truck.

COWBOY

It's raining.

SAM

Really?

An ANGRY DRIVER passes by.

ANGRY DRIVER

Get your whore out of the road, buddy!

SAM

I'm not a whore, asshole!

(then, to Cowboy)

And I'm not handling myself well so stop acting like I am.

(MORE)

SAM (cont'd)

I am almost thirty-five years old. Do you know what happens after a woman turns thirty five? Nothin' nada zip zap life stops. Hope disappears. Any expectations for a husband, family, two-car garage? Out the window. On-line dating and step-children and endless syringes of Botox shoved into my forehead are all I have to look forward to now and you know what? Just not that interested. So, why don't you do yourself and everyone else a favor and get back in your truck and go.

A TRANS-AM ASSHOLE drives by, HONKING his horn.

TRANS-AM ASSHOLE
Move it, jackwipe!

COWBOY
That's not a bad idea.

Cowboy grabs Sam and throws her over his shoulder.

SAM
What're you doing?--

COWBOY
One hundred and thuh-ree.

He shoves her into the front seat.

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Cowboy's driving down the strip with Sam. They're both soaked.

SAM
You should've hit me the first time. Save my family dove money.

COWBOY
Sorry. Swerve for squirrels. Always have, always will.

A beat. Cowboy tosses her a hand towel from the back seat.

COWBOY (CONT'D)
I have a theory.

SAM
I don't care.

COWBOY

Everything happens or doesn't happen for a reason. Like your wedding for example. It didn't *not* happen because Wyatt got away or shot your foot or even slept with your best friend.

(off her look)

I ran into your waitress. It didn't happen cause it wasn't supposed to happen. And all those things, they were just there as a back up.

SAM

This is supposed to make me feel better?

COWBOY

No, but you know what will.

INT. TAXI - SAME TIME

Wyatt and Trixie are in a taxi. The tension is thick and steamy. So steamy the windows are beginning to fog up.

WYATT

You were gonna take care of it.

TRIXIE

You were gonna tell Sam.

WYATT

Well, she knows now, doesn't she?

EXT. BRIDGE

Over the Las Vegas Strip. The TANKER is pulled off to the side. Cowboy and Sam stand next to the rail. The rain has just stopped. Sam takes off her promise ring and looks at it.

COWBOY

That one's the wrong size, too?

SAM

Amazing, huh? You know, I thought if I did everything right with Wyatt and was patient and loving and flossed, he'd marry me. And he didn't. And then I thought if I just helped him get to the next step, help him take that leap of faith that's so hard for men his age to take, he'd marry me.

(MORE)

SAM (cont'd)

And he ran away. My last hope was that he'd realize how much I loved him and he'd come back and he'd marry me. And he did. Do you know I never once thought, am I supposed to marry him?

COWBOY

That's all part of my theory.

Another sweet but subtle bonding moment.

SAM

On the count of three...

SAM/COWBOY

One. Two. Three!

With everything she has, she throws it into oncoming traffic.

THE RING TRAVELS SOME SERIOUS DISTANCE.

Sam smiles with satisfaction.

INT. TAXI - SAME TIME

The windows are now completely fogged. Wyatt and Trixie both sit with their arms crossed.

WYATT

I loved her!

TRIXIE

I loved her!

WYATT (CONT'D)

Sure you did!

TRIXIE (CONT'D)

Obviously!

Wyatt rolls down his window so he can see out of it just as SAM'S PROMISE RING bounces off the truck next to them, FLIES IN HIS WINDOW and pelts him in the face.

WYATT

OW!!!

INT. TANKER TRUCK

Sam and Cowboy drive away.

SAM

There's something you should know. My Christmas lights? It actually takes me twice as long to take them down as it does to put them up and I may be rounding down.

COWBOY
You don't think I knew that?

He smiles. She smiles back.

COWBOY (CONT'D)
What'd you say I give you a ride
home?

SAM
You know, that'd be great. Well,
it would be if I still had one.

COWBOY
Buckle up. We've got plenty of gas
til we find you a new one.

SAM (V.O.)
So, there I was, thirty-four and a
half years old, starting over, and I
was handling it much better than I
thought I would. I guess I just knew
everything was going to be okay.

A little crack of BLUE SKY peeps out of the dark clouds.

SAM (V.O.)
All the signs were there.

A sign: YOU'RE LEAVING LAS VEGAS

SAM (V.O.)
And I was finally on the right
road...

CUT TO:

Over BLACK.

SUBTITLE: ONE YEAR LATER

EXT. A SMALL TEXAS TOWN - EARLY MORNING

The same depressing small town. The morning sun is back.

SAM (V.O.)
Or at the very least not on a
really wrong one...

A SQUIRREL... scurries across a telephone line... down a
pole... over a "DON'T MESS WITH TEXASS" sticker... into an
apartment complex parking lot...

EXT. SHERWOOD FOREST APARTMENT COMPLEX

...and under a BLACK EXTENDED CAB PICK UP TRUCK that faces out of its parking spot. It's filthy. As evident by the dirt graffiti: "LYING ASSHOLE!" The driver's side mirror still hangs by a metal thread...

...and in the back window, an EMPTY GUN RACK.

INT. BATHROOM

A box of AMMUNITION.

SAM (V.O.)

Like some people I used to know.

A pair of female hands with a not-so-perfect MANICURE clumsily load bullets into a SHOTGUN. Sam's PROMISE RING is on the middle finger of the left hand.

INT. BEDROOM

A clock radio -- the numbers flip from 5:59 to 6:00.

COUNTRY MUSIC fills the room.

An OFF-SCREEN SHOTGUN is cocked.

A hand finds its way to the snooze button and hits it. The MUSIC turns off. It returns to its owner and lifts his eye mask. It's Wyatt again. With another...

BARREL OF A SHOTGUN in his face.

TRIXIE (O.S.)

Mornin', baby.

Trixie stands above him, with his shotgun aimed at him in one arm and their FIVE-MONTH-OLD BABY in the other.

WYATT

I'll get my shoes.

FADE OUT:

THE END