



# ***TAKE ME TO THE RIVER***

***DRAFT: DECEMBER 17, 2013***

***CONSTANCE CONGDON***

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**CAST LIST**

{6M;3W;(plus 1 M in three roles)}

SHERM CAMPBELL a lifetime farmer from a long line of farmers, age 78.

HENRY FOX a Native American man, Ute Nation, age 35, works for the Department of Natural Resources as a ditch rider, someone who checks water usage from canals. Henry grew up in the area and was married to Mamie Campbell, Sherman's only daughter. They are divorced, her idea.

MAMIE STEINMETZ 37, daughter of Sherm, recent widow of Lou Steinmetz, the mother of Simone, a neurotic little dog only heard or seen in her carrier, usually zapped on Valium. Mamie was formerly married to Henry.

BODIE CAMPBELL, Sherm's youngest son, and since the oldest Campbell son, Bruce, was killed in the first Gulf war, Bodie is the only brother. Age 33

THERESA MONTOYA, the middle-aged (55+) daughter of the Campbell's long-time neighbor, Jose Montoya. The Montoya farm abuts part of the Campbell land. Theresa and her brother have tried to keep their place, a former cattle ranch, working. Theresa is a close family friend who, after Sherm's wife died ten years ago, became Sherm's lover.

HANNAH JEFFERSON, African-American, 40 plus, born in a nearby city, she has spent two decades in the area, working in finance and real estate. Has a crush on Bodie and hopes it's visa versa.

DALE LEONARD, age 40, a former hometown boy, went to the first Gulf War with Sherm's oldest son, Bruce, and two of Theresa's brothers but survived, came back and got a degree in environmental science and now works for the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. Lives in Denver.

CARL--a mouthy local farmer, fed up, has four sons with questionable futures.

**OTHER CHARACTERS** {Played by ONE actor: Sherriff, Bar Employee, George Vega from the DNR, Roger MacDonald}

- SHERRIFF a small-town lawman, Hispanic, knows everyone, also a rancher—most people pronounce his name, Roberto, as “Roberdo,” making no effort to roll either of the “r”s or elongate the “e.”
- BAR EMPLOYEE, at Roy’s bar.
- ROGER ROGER, a British businessman, looking to invest in western land.
- GEORGE VEGA, a government official from the DNR.

**PLACE(S)**

Northeastern Colorado, exterior places on the Campbell farm and by the river, the interior of the local Nazarene Church, with occasional visits to the lobby and conference room of the local high-end motel, and a brief scene at a poolside in Scottsdale, Arizona. There is one permanent object onstage—an antique pump head with a handle above a well near the house.

**TIME**

2007

**THIS PLAY IS DEDICATED TO MY COUSIN LAVERNE SHERMAN KIRBY,  
1922–2009**

{The playwright is eternally grateful for the invaluable and continual online consulting on all things farming/ranching from the residents of the Flying W ranch in Yuma, Colorado}.

**STAGING**

The space should allow for fluid staging. The interiors can be done using the theater as an interior and by bringing up the house lights to include the audience. The exteriors are out on the land, in front of the Campbell house, in some scenes; in back of the house in Scottsdale in one other scene. Lawn chairs sitting on the mother’s old garden can do for furniture. As mentioned earlier, old-fashioned pump is on the Campbell property and could just stay visible, as a symbol, until it is actually used in the last scene of the play.

**ACT ONE**

SCENE ONE~

[DAYTIME, COLORADO, OUT ON THE LAND BELONGING TO SHERMAN CAMPBELL AND HIS FAMILY. A NATIVE AMERICAN MAN, **HENRY FOX**, DRESSED IN WRANGLERS, WORKSHIRT AND COWBOY HAT, ENTERS RUNNING, GASPING FOR AIR, LOOKS AROUND AND THEN SEES HIS PURSUER OFFSTAGE SOMEWHERE. HE RUNS AGAIN, TRYING TO FIND A PLACE TO HIDE, EXITS DESPERATELY. **SHERMAN CAMPBELL** ENTERS, WITH A RIFLE AND AIMS IT AT WHERE HENRY EXITED, AND SHOOTS]

[Blackout]

SCENE TWO~

[OUTSIDE, SCOTTSDALE, AZ. Phone rings—it's the marimba ring from Apple and loud. **MAMIE STEINMETZ**, a middle-aged woman who looks fabulous and stylish, in a Scottsdale, AZ, kind of way, enters, trying to find the phone to turn it off. She's outdoors, by her swimming pool.

**MAMIE**

[can't stand it anymore]

Oh my god. HUSH!!! Shut up!!! Shut uppppppp!!!

[barking stops. We hear her phone beep to go to voicemail. This starts the barking up again]

Oh my god in heaven. BE QUIET!!!!!!

[the barking stops, SIMONE adds a couple of yips that tiny dogs make, as that is what she is]

Simone, always the last word.

**MAMIE'S VOICE ON ANSWERING MACHINE MESSAGE**

Hi. You have reached the home of Mamie Fox-Steinmetz. Please leave a message. If you want to see the house, please send an e-mail to "chaz at scottsdale realty one word no caps no spaces dot org."

[MAMIE just looks at the answering machine. Lights up on her brother **BODIE CAMPBELL**, age 33. He's in Colorado, where the family ranch is, calling her on his cell phone. We hear his voice on the answering machine and in person. He's frantic and angry]

**BODIE [in another space]**

[We see him talking on his cell phone, calling from Colorado. His voice comes from Mamie's landline answering machine]

Mamie, it's Bodie. Your brother? You need to call home. Me. **Not Dad.** Call me. Soon. Dad just shot HENRY. In the butt. Call me. You're probably standing right there. Dammit!!

**MAMIE**

What? Oh, Henry! You always had such a perfect behind. Life is so cruel! What else can happen to me?!!

[MAMIE exits]

**[END OF SCENE TWO]~**

**SCENE THREE~**

[Lights up on SHERM in the Sherriff's office. BODIE, his 33-year-old son, enters. The SHERRIFF (Roberto), greets BODIE]

**SHERRIFF**

Hey. I'll leave you alone. No deputy today so I've got to be on the phone.

[SHERRIFF exits]

**SHERM**

I didn't do anything but exercise my rights.

**BODIE**

Dad! What the hell?

**SHERM**

What the hell is right. That rifle has been in the family for four generations and they confiscated it!

**BODIE**

What did you think you were you doing with the rifle, Dad?

**SHERM**

What are rifles for?

**BODIE**

It's been in the cabinet. Behind glass. For as long as I can remember it.

**SHERM**

I've been carrying it.

**BODIE**

I haven't noticed it gone.

**SHERM**

I put it back. When I'm done.

**BODIE**

Done doing what?

**SHERM**

Patrolling the wells.

**BODIE**

You mean, after I check the wells every morning, you go out there and check them again?

**SHERM**

Yes. And cut that tone. You're talking to me like I'm senile.

**BODIE**

How long have you been doing this?

**SHERM**

A while.

**BODIE**

Dad! Don't wig out on me. I need you.

**SHERM**

I'm doing what I have to do. No one believes me. There are people trying to tap our wells. I haven't seen any machinery yet, but I've seen people checking them out.

**BODIE**

What. . .people?

**SHERM**

Not white people. Figures, mostly. Kind of murky. Like mirages. But today I saw a real three-dimensional person.

**BODIE**

It was Henry.

**SHERM**

I know that now. But do you blame me?

**BODIE**

"Blame you?" I don't know what to do with you, Dad. Dad. It's so crazy, Dad.

**SHERM**

It's crazy times, son.

**BODIE**

Have you told anyone about these figures, whatever, you're seeing?

**SHERM**

I'm telling you.

**BODIE**

Have you told Theresa?

**SHERM**

No. I just get up and deal with them.  
Does Theresa know I'm in the pokey?

**BODIE**

You're not "in the pokey" yet. Henry's not pressing charges.

[**SHERRIFF** re-enters]

**SHERRIFF**

Henry's out of the emergency room and is on his way. And Theresa is here.

**SHERM**

Oh god.

[**THERESA** enters. She is not happy. **BODIE** and **SHERM** freeze.]

**THERESA**

Gracias, Roberto.  
Que pasa, Bodie.

[to **SHERM**]

What the HELL did you think you were doing?!!

[switches to Spanish without even realizing it]

{IN ESPAÑOL, to SHERM} I'm lying there, in our bed, and I look over you are gone and I think, "oh, he's gone to the toilet," but then, there's no flush, and I think, I'm going to give him hell about that, but, nooooo, no sound, and I get up to look for you, Sherman—

{IN ENGLISH}

--and you are nowhere to be found. And the gun cabinet is open and I think—

{IN ESPAÑOL }

--"dear Virgin of Guadalupe," what the hell is going on, and then the phone rings, and it's Bodie telling me that you are down at the Sherriff's office because—

{IN ENGLISH}

Henry was in the emergency room because you tried to shoot him!! Have you gone crazy??

{IN ESPAÑOL }

Have you turned into some senile old man, wandering off shooting people, in the night?

**SHERM**

{in ENGLISH}

It was daytime.

**THERESA**

[to SHERRIFF]

Your deputy told me you could book Sherman for attempted murder!

[in ESPAÑOL]

How could you even think that? What kind of man are you that could book some crazy old man for murder?

**SHERRIFF**

I sent the deputy home. Because I'm not going to do that.

{in ESPAÑOL}

And he's not some "crazy old man."

{in ENGLISH}



I know he's not crazy, Theresa. He's just angry about the same things we're all angry about. You should understand that. I'm glad your father missed all this.

**THERESA**

{In ENGLISH}

You leave my father out of this. How dare you be glad he's dead?

**SHERRIFF**

{in ENGLISH}

Maybe we should all be dead. Nothing but heartbreak coming our way.

**SHERM**

Oh, Hell, what's a little attempted murder in the history of the west? Bodie, your mother's grandfather killed two men on the oil fields of Oklahoma. Never was hassled about it. Part of his job. Dammit, her uncle saw two people murdered right before his eyes, one of them a naked hooker. But now everyone in the area trying to pretend it's always been nice. Naked hookers? Hell, no, our hookers are the best-dressed women in town.

**BODIE**

Dad! Is it because you think you're on the way out you can do things like this?

**SHERM**

[about his sexual prowess]

On the way out? You ask Theresa if I'm on the way out. I'm still a vital man, son.

**BODIE**

I'm sure you are.

**SHERM**

You must hear Theresa and me at night.

**THERESA**

What are you saying to him? And for Roberto to hear!

[THERESA starts to leave, SHERM grabs her gently]

**SHERM**

Don't leave, baby. Please.

[She stays]

**BODIE**

That's not the point, Dad.

**SHERM**

What was Henry doing around our wells?

**BODIE**

Henry's a ditch rider, for the Department of Natural Resources. He's just doing his job.

**SHERM**

Why was he at one of our wells if he's a ditch rider? Why isn't he out reading gauges, seeing if those surface water s.o.b.s are stealing water? We don't irrigate from surface water, never have. We have wells that go into the ground and get the water under OUR land.

[HENRY enters. He's trying to walk normally, to minimize his injury]

**HENRY**

[to SHERMAN]

This kind of stuff doesn't help, Sherm. You can take your grievances to the water court.

**SHERM**

And how long will that take? Crop will be dead by then. Used to be, we called the Chief Engineer and he'd come down and look and say, "Yep, you need more water. Take it." And that would be that. But now, we have to hire a lawyer, get on the docket, and hope to god I ain't dead nevermind the damn crop--by the time the case even gets heard!

**HENRY**

I'm not pressing charges. It was an accident. The rifle discharged because it's old. Like you, Sherman. And that is what I told the hospital.

[he exits. SHERRIFF exits to get the rifle]

**SHERM**

If I had wanted to hit you, I would have!!

**THERESA**

[in ESPAÑOL]

Oh, my dear God, Blessed Mother--

[SHERRIFF enters with the rifle, hands it to Bodie with a slip of paper for BODIE to sign]

**THERESA**

He's getting the gun back?! I'm going home.

{in ESPAÑOL }

Men. They are all alike. No wonder the world is so messed up.

{in ENGLISH, to BODIE and SHERM}

No, in English. So both of you can understand me. "Men. They are all alike. No wonder the world is messed up."

[She exits]

**BODIE**

Thanks, Roberto.

**SHERRIFF**

[about the rifle]

That's a beauty.

**SHERM**

Opened the West.

**SHERIFF**

Well, keep it away from him.

**SHERM**

Roberdo, tell me something.

**SHERRIFF**

Yes, Sherman?

**SHERM**

You still farming?

**SHERRIFF**

I'm running cattle--just a few head.

**SHERM**

So basically you're farming grass.

**SHERRIFF**

Yeah, well, we're all farmers, some kind or other.

**SHERM**

You need water just like me, BUT you get your water from the ditch. You don't need to worry about people trying to get water from your wells.

**BODIE**

Dad--

**SHERRIFF**

It's alright, Bodie.

Sherman, those ditches were dug as long ago as any of your wells. And the fact is, all this water comes from the river, one way or another. We don't have an aquifer up here, so it's all the river. So no one is in more danger than anybody else. You say you've been seeing people around your wells. I don't know who or what they are, but the next time there's any gunplay involving you, I will confiscate your weapon and throw your ass in jail.

**BODIE**

Dad, go sit in the truck! Please!

**SHERM**

Don't talk to your father that way. I'm still your father. I bet Roberdo here doesn't talk to his father that way. Mexican sons respect their dads.

**BODIE**

Papi, go sit in the truck. Por favor.

**SHERM**

[with no Spanish accent]

Adios, Roberdo. Vaya con dios.

[SHERM exits]

**BODIE**

I just wanted to get your opinion. He's seems okay?

**SHERRIFF**

I don't think he has Alzheimer's or anything. I'm not a doctor, but he seems all there. He's always been, with all due respect--

**BODIE**

He's always spoken his mind.

**SHERRIFF**

Like you. And like me. Now with this meeting coming up, you know, I can understand his worries. I just want to say that the meetings have been heating up and I'm sick and tired of being asked to bend over and take whatever the Department of Natural Resources has in store for us.

**BODIE**

I hear you, Roberto.

**SHERRIFF**

So I know that this Dale Leonard is a friend of yours. But he's gone to the other side.

**BODIE**

He was my brother's friend. They were in the service together. They were in Iraq. He came back Bruce didn't. So we're not really friends. It's complicated.

**SHERRIFF**

Well, two of Theresa's brothers. I knew those boys. But Dale moved to Denver, went to college, and started working for the DNR and I don't really see them as on our side, anymore. They've become the enemy. And now he's got an Indian working for him. How can Henry work for those people?

**BODIE**

Henry put in the time and got that degree and everything.

**SHERRIFF**

Well, yeah, because he's Indian, right? They got those handouts, all the time. Free schooling. You're too easy on them. And everyone. When are you going to get mad, Bodie? Look at Carl, he's not taking it anymore. I've expected to hear more from you, Bodie.

**BODIE**

Well, since I got sober, I've been trying to listen more and you know be less of an asshole.

**SHERRIFF**

Look, Bodie, you always made sense to me.  
I can't be there today so, don't let them get away with any  
bullshit.

**BODIE**

Well, there is some bullshit on both sides.

**SHERRIFF**

No, there isn't! Stop being so reasonable, Bodie! Your dad's got  
the right idea! There will be blood! And maybe that's what we  
need to get our lives back!

**BODIE**

That's scary to hear from a sherriff.

**SHERRIFF**

Things are gonna get worse, so lock up the guns. And hide the  
key.

[END OF SCENE 3]~

**SCENE FOUR~**

[Back in Scottsdale. MAMIE is on her cell phone]

**MAMIE**

What I'm saying, Chaz, is that something's gone wrong at home.

No, I can hear it in my brother's voice. I can't get it out of  
my head.

Bodie. BO-DEE. You met him at my husband's funeral.

I know. I know. It's hard to believe. I'm sure I was adopted.  
Who are these hillbillies who keep haunting me with their  
bullshit? Why can't I have a life, Chaz? And the dogs are so  
sad--Simone was always **my** baby, so it's not so bad for her, but  
Mooshie keeps looking for Lou everywhere. I miss Lou.

I know he's dead! AND WHY CAN'T YOU SELL THIS HOUSE? ARE YOU A  
REALTOR OR NOT? Sorry, Chaz. Sorry, baby.

"Staging"? We're selling a house, not putting on a musical.  
Oh, just give me the list.  
Yeah.

Yeah.

Oh, that's ridiculous.....

What is this--"Staging" or an exorcism?

Dog odors? DOG ODORS? My dogs are immaculate!

ALL RIGHT! Just have them come in and do it! And I'll find some place to stay in the meantime. . .

**BODIE'S VOICE ON THE LANDLINE ANSWERING MACHINE**

Mamie! This is Bodie!

[MAMIE holds her cell phone out so Chaz can hear the message on the answering machine]

**BODIE'S VOICE ON THE LANDLINE ANSWERING MACHINE (con'd)**

You have to call me. Something's happened! Stop hiding!! Call me!!

**MAMIE**

[back on cell phone to CHAZ]

Did you hear that?

I can't go there. I won't. They want to suck me back into that life they're stuck with. I got out, Chaz. I escaped.

No, I can't live with them that's absurd.

Lou invested in property out there, but we didn't build. I wouldn't let him when I realized my family might be neighbors. I could pitch a tent on that land except Simone can't stand dirt. I'm JOKING. ABOUT THE TENT. NOT THE DIRT.

Stop saying that!

You know that thing you always say!

"It's not the end of the world--it's only real estate!"

[She clicks off the phone]

Colorado. I feel you coming to get me.

Lou! Why did you leave me??

[Dogs barking. She exits, yelling at them]

Mama's coming, darlings!!

**[END OF SCENE 4]~**

**SCENE FIVE~**

[INTERIOR. NAZARENE CHURCH SANCTUARY. *Lights up on the house, since the audience is part of the meeting now.* Strangely inappropriate table (from a nearby bar) holds whatever equipment is needed for the visual aids, in this case, map of the United States. OGALLALAH AQUIFER is in blue. In attendance is CARL, a local, and HANNAH, an African American realtor. Up by the power-point map is DALE, an employee of the Department of Natural Resources. The audience serves as the rest of the meeting. SHERM and BODIE enter]

**CARL**

[faux fear of SHERM]

Everybody duck!

**SHERM**

I'm not armed. And any of you would have done the same thing.

**CARL**

We don't see people around our wells, Sherm.

**SHERM**

You will, Carl. All of you will.

**DALE**

Hello, Sherman. Bodie. Can we start now? Okay?  
Now this is a map of our country.

**SHERM**

See? You're already in trouble there, Dale. This isn't my country because I live in what the rest of the United States call the Flyover States. Now that's where big airplanes dump the contents of their toilets to save on jet fuel--on their way to Los Angeles or what s that other place filled with the rest of the smart people? New York City.

**CARL**

And Denver. Big water-suckin' beast of a city.

**DALE**

I read your letter to the editor, Carl.



**CARL**

Are you telling me you read the local newspaper down there in Denver?

**DALE**

I'm from here. You know that.

**CARL**

How would I know that, Dale?

**DALE**

I drove all the way up here from Denver to talk to you all personally because I am from here. Wait a minute--

[remembers something, takes a piece of paper out of his pocket and reads from it]

The Nazarene Church, and we thank them for letting us use the sanctuary, because the meetings have been getting quite large. Anyway, they've asked, are asking us, to remember that all parts of the church are God's House and we should be treated with respect. No smoking, swearing--

**CARL**

--and dancing, folks. Keep all the dancing to a minimum. Do you know why Nazarenes are against having sex standing up?

**HANNAH**

Oh, god, Carl...

**CARL**

Because it might LEAD to dancing. Hannah. I know your folk go to one of those big mega-churches in Colorado Springs.

**HANNAH**

You want these nice people to think this is our community? Some of them are not from here, you know.

**CARL**

Are you from here?

**HANNAH**

I've been here for fifteen years, Carl. What does it take?

**CARL**

Try three generations.

**SHERM**

Four.

**DALE**

Is this how it's going to be? Am I going to be interrupted and heckled all through this? May I remind you that we have guests at this meeting, people who don't know us or the situation we find ourselves in.

**SHERM**

"Situation"? "We find ourselves in"? Dale—you're talking like a first-grade teacher.

**DALE**

First grade teachers get more respect.

[about the image on the power point]

This is a map of all the land beyond the hundredth meridian and that blue area that looks like Great Britain upside down and is about the same size as Great Britain is the Ogallalah Aquifer. One half of our state irrigates from that source.

**CARL**

The Ogallalah Aquifer's got nothing to do with me.

**DALE**

They're all interrelated.

**CARL**

Well, let's all hold hands and sing Kum-bai-yah.

**SHERM**

Okay, then, Carl, but you'll be next. So don't make light of any of this.

**CARL**

Don't you know what ridicule is? That's our only weapon when they've got us by the you-know-what. How many meetings have we sat at for the last year and been nice and been thanked for our input. It's not like anybody even listens to us.

**DALE**

I didn't have to drive all the way up here to--

**SHERM**

To what?

**DALE**

To. . .um give an update.

**BODIE**

An "update"?

**DALE**

I have responsibility to inform the community at large since all of you pay my salary through your taxes.

**CARL**

Uh-oh, something big is coming.

**DALE**

We get our water from the river. Either from one of the ditches, canals, that were dug a long time ago. Or from wells that go into the ground and pump river water.

**BODIE**

Pump what?

**DALE**

River water.

**BODIE**

Our water comes from the ground below our land.

**DALE**

What isn't shown on this map is the riparian zone. Which runs below the surface and flows from the river. And that's where--

**BODIE**

Where what?

[THERESA enters]

**DALE**

Hi, Theresa.

**THERESA**

Sorry, I'm late. Sherman, we got a phone call--

**SHERM**

Shhh. Listen to Dale.

**THERESA**

Don't tell me what to do! {in ESPAÑOL}: "You think you're out of trouble with me?"

**DALE**

[back to his talk]

That's where our problem arose.

**BODIE**

What "*problem?*"

**DALE**

Look, folks, Kansas is suing us.

**HANNAH**

"Us"? Who is "Us?" You keep saying "us!!"

**CARL**

Well, not you, Hannah.

**HANNAH**

Why? Because I'm "urban?" I am a member of this community.

**SHERM**

What *problem*, Dale?

**CARL**

[to HANNAH]

Hannah, you are from Colorado Springs, which is nothing but another huge water-sucking beast that's always making raids on other peoples' water.

**HANNAH**

All that water they "stole" was gotten legally, through due process of law.

**THERESA**

Well, why not? Those places got all the lawyers.

**CARL**

And they breed them in Boulder.

**BODIE**

Except the gay ones and they adopt.

Look folks, we're the fastest growing minority in America. You hear what happened in Scott City?

**DALE**

That's Kansas, Bodie.

**BODIE**

What difference does it make? They're just arbitrary lines. The land don't know if it's in Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas.

**CARL**

Scott City does get some of our water—I mean, the water we've been "stealing."

**BODIE**

They're still farmers. Like us. And they're dying out there, living under the same goddam no-rain sky. And so, they go to the Scott City lake.

**HANNAH**

They have a lake?

**SHERM**

From a long time back.

**BODIE**

Yes! And it's a source of water, but this is the part that gets to me. They can't use it! They've got crops dying in the fields but they can't go to this big source of water right there on the same land. And why? Because of the Riffle Beetle. Yeah, it's the habitat of this bug. It's *habitat*. As if it's some celebrity. And we can't disturb it. Because it's a rare bug, this Riffle Beetle. And we might cause its extinction. As the tree-huggers say, "Once a species is gone, we can't make another." Well, why would you want to make another? It's a damn bug! And It's the farmer that's gonna be extinct. And all the farming will be done by big agri-business, run by suitcase farmers, because that's what they are. Just like the Ess Oh Beez that caused the dustbowl. Plowing up thousands of acres and then, when the crop price goes down, just abandon the land and let the wind just blow it wherever the wind blows. What do they care? They don't live there. They don't have family buried there. Some of them NEVER EVEN SET FOOT THERE.

**CARL**

How does this information help us, Bodie?

**BODIE**

It's evidence, Carl.

**CARL**

We need more evidence that we're-

**THERESA**

We are in a church. Dios mio.

**SHERM**

*Everybody pipe down!*

**DALE**

Thanks, Sherm. So this is what's happened. We, up here in northeastern Colorado share a river with Kansas and Nebraska.

**SHERM**

What's that got to do with our wells?

**DALE**

We are reconsidering the placement of what is called the riparian zone. We've been doing some measurements. Henry--. I don't see him. But he's been working hard on this.

**BODIE**

See, Dad? That's all he was doing.

**SHERM**

ALL he was doing? It's worse than I thought.

**DALE**

If you'll just let me put this all into context. So Kansas suing us--why? Look at this map. Here's the river. And because we are upstream, we have senior rights to the use of that river. "First in time, first in right", is the phrase that's been used for as long as we all have been here. It's basically the Rule of Capture. And that has been the way we have dealt with property in America.

**BODIE**

What are you saying, Dale?

**DALE**

Well, we had a drought. We're still in it. And what happened is that farmers who use groundwater pumped what they needed to save their crops. And after a season or two of that, folks downriver from us noticed that the river wasn't providing the allotment due to them.

**BODIE**

So Kansas put a call on the river.

**DALE**

That's right.

**BODIE**

And you guys sided with them.

**DALE**

No, the Department of Natural Resources came in and did an impartial accounting, an audit, a measurement of the water. And we ended up owing Kansas.

**THERESA**

So how much money do we owe Kansas?

**BODIE**

They just got a nine million dollar settlement from Colorado for the Arkansas River.

**DALE**

That's a regular payment. Colorado has to pay Kansas for taking the Arkansas\* River. But they don't want money, Bodie. Or Sherm.

{\*in this part of the country, "Arkansas" is pronounced with the emphasis on the second syllable, and "kansas" is pronounced the same as the state of Kansas: "ar KAN sas."}

**BODIE**

Well, what do they want?

**DALE**

They want the water.

**SHERM**

What?

**BODIE**

They can't have the water. What are you talking about?

**SHERM**

Hold it right there. We've got a crop in the field that you all said I could plant because god knows we can't do anything without you people with your college degrees telling us even though more than anybody in Denver, we know we're in a damn drouth.

**BODIE**

And I bet nobody at the DNR pronounces it "drouth" because none of them have been around long enough to remember what the old timers called it. There's no memory of anything in this country and all we do is repeat the same stupid cow puckie over and over.

**DALE**

Back to the DROUTH. The Department of Natural Resources went in and did very thorough measurements and decided, this is the State of Colorado speaking here, that the only solution to make up the water we owe Kansas, is to order a well curtailment.

[long pause]

**SHERM**

So you're going to order us to shut down some wells. Just say it, Dale.

**DALE**

Every well within six miles of the river will have to be closed.

**SHERM**

Oh my god. Oh my god.

**BODIE**

Four of our wells are easily within six miles of the river. Are you saying that we're going to have to shut them down?

[beat as DALE knows what he s going to say is nearly a death sentence]

**DALE**

Yes.

**BODIE**

[To DALE]

How can you just stand there and say that?

**DALE**

It's not easy.

**CARL**

It seems pretty easy, Dale. You're still standing. I mean, what have you got to lose?

**SHERM**

I can't believe you. You grew up here.



You went to Iraq with my son.

**DALE**

I'm just the messenger. I can't change the facts.

**SHERM**

But you did change the facts!! Suddenly, the riparian zone is under my wells! And I'm taking water from the river!

**BODIE**

What did you think about when you were driving up here with this hard news? You had to start at dawn. Looking at this prairie as the sun is coming up? Even dry as it is, it's where you're from. It's got to have part of your heart, Dale.

**DALE**

Look, Bodie. All the poetry in the world won't change the facts. I'm not here to do poetry. I'm here to do facts: There is a finite amount of water in this desert. And this "prairie" is a desert.

**BODIE**

Well, that is the first time anyone's accused me of poetry.

**THERESA**

So you're saying, Dale, that the great prairie, the grasslands, is a desert? Look at it! It doesn't look anything like a desert! Go to Mexico. There's some desert for you!

**CARL**

Have any of you geniuses thought about this? If you cut off our water, all of this will turn into another dust bowl? How would they like that down in Denver? Getting topsoil in their designer beer?

[HENRY enters]

**DALE**

[welcoming him]

Hey, Henry. Glad you're here. Sit down.

**HENRY**

I'll stand. If that's all right, Dale.

**CARL**

Henry! What kind of Indian are you? Working for them?

**HENRY**

An Indian with a college degree and a good job. Think of me as an immigrant, working his way up the ladder. Just like you were, a few generations ago, Carl.

**DALE**

Henry. Just sit down.

**HENRY**

[looking straight at SHERM]

I can't sit down, Dale, thanks to somebody in this room.

[SHERM laughs]

**SHERM**

I knew I got you!

**BODIE**

Dad!

**DALE**

I heard about this. Violence of any kind is not going to help. And I can't believe. . .YOU, Sherman.

**CARL**

You're sounding like a preaching peacenik there, Dale.

**DALE**

I was in the first Gulf War, Carl. With Bruce Campbell and two of the Montoya boys and I'm the only who came back.

**CARL**

And all four of you joined up because you didn't have the money to go to college and there were no jobs in the area. Am I right? Or am I wrong?

**DALE**

Look, folks, we're getting off topic.

**CARL**

Since when is our children's future off-topic?

**DALE**

How can I make this clear? Not only is there a limited amount of water in this desert, we have to share that limited amount of water, which, as we found out in the 1930s, isn't enough. Do I have to remind you that every single drop of water in the West

is owned by somebody? Even natural rain or godwater, as my father you remember my dad worked at Murdoch's Farm Equipment for years. Godwater was what he called rain. So, even it has to be accounted for. So, God gave you a good rain. Well, that s so many acre-feet you received, and that many acre-feet will be subtracted from your allotment for that year. So, any comments now?

**HENRY**

I haven't heard a word in this meeting about the Indin rights to this water. I was hoping I wouldn't have to be the one to bring it up. I was hoping someone else actually thought about it.

**DALE**

Henry? What are you doing? We're off topic again.

**HENRY**

That's the problem--Indin rights are always "off-topic."

**CARL**

The Indians got more water than they know what to do with. Always have.

**HENRY**

We have the same rights to the water that flows through our land as you do.

**CARL**

But you're not farming. You don't use the water!

**HENRY**

We use it for spiritual renewal.

[CARL starts humming, "Kum by ya"]

**HENRY**

Alright. For fishing, then. People eat fish. There's your commerce. Okay? The point is you want to close some of our wells, and we're not the ones who overused the river.

**BODIE**

OVER-use? We had crops in the field that were dying and we had to save them. If that's over use, then--.

**CARL**

Look, Henry. I got nothing against you people. But we had a helluva drouth. And we have as much right to survive as you.

**SHERM**

We didn't cause this drouth.

**HENRY**

You didn't?

**BODIE**

*Hell, no!*

**HENRY**

Than who did? God?

**CARL**

How can he even talk about God? They're a bunch of heathens! Always have been. They just pretended for all those god-fearing, hard-working missionaries back then. They didn't change. I have to say it.

**HENRY**

I'm a Methodist.

**SHERM**

Henry, you take back what you said about us causing this drouth or -

**HENRY**

Or what? I got another buttock. But you can't shoot me because I'm not running away. I'm staying and saying this to your face. Have you all thought that maybe you just don't belong here? That this land was never meant for this much "civilization" as you like to call it?

**SHERM**

Don't start up with that crap. Did you honestly believe that you could keep all this land? You're part of the world. People needed land. And they took it. Right. We did. We fought for it. And you lost. And that's the way it is!!

**DALE**

Hold it!! Everybody! Henry, help me. That is part of your job.

**CARL**

Let's take a deep breath. AHHHHHHMMMMMMMMM.  
Why does it work for those hippies?

**SHERM**

They got nothin' to lose.

**HENRY**

Except the earth.

**SHERM**

Look, Henry. I don't give a damn about "the earth." What I care about is dirt. My dirt. My topsoil.

**HENRY**

Only because it makes you money.

**SHERM**

You nearly grew up in my house! You were like a second son to my wife.

**BODIE**

*Third* son. *Third* son, Dad!

**SHERM**

[doesn't acknowledge BODIE'S remark]

And you can talk to me that way? No, son. I care about my topsoil because I'm a farmer. It's what I am. It's not what I do. For a living. Now you look me in the eye and tell me I don't belong here.

[HENRY stares at SHERM, unable to say, "you don't belong here."]

I don't know what's go into you. Too many of those White-Men-Are-Evil classes at Boulder.

**HENRY**

Sherman, you shot me!!! How could you do that?!

**DALE**

Any more questions I hope not? And Henry, you and I need to talk after this.

**SHERM**

[to HENRY]

I swear I didn't know it was you, son. I've been seeing people around our wells.

**BODIE**

Dad..

**SHERM**

"Don't sound crazy." I got it.

**THERESA**

I have a question. I want to know what the surface water people are doing about this drought. Are their golf courses still green? Their lawns? Water in their swimming pools? Fountains in their malls? And are they washing their cars all the damn time or just hosing down the driveway for the hell of it?

**DALE**

Thank you, Theresa! And to answer: All of that, Theresa. All that recreational use, including fountains, all the residential use, long showers, flushing even two gallons of water every time you use the toilet, all of that only accounts for a small percentage of the water use. It's agriculture that takes sixty to eighty percent of the water. Always has.

**THERESA**

But we grow things with it! We grow food for everybody! Without our water, what are people going to eat?

**CARL**

Carrots from China.

**SHERM**

Or mega-corporate crap food going in, coming out, it's the same food value.

[long pause]

**CARL**

Dale?

**DALE**

I drove all the way up here to bring you the facts. I don't know what to say. I've got some handouts if you all would like to read further. My contact info is on them.

**BODIE**

When do we lose those four wells?

**DALE**

Effective immediately.

[BODIE tackles DALE, HENRY tries to stop him. BODIE stops himself short of hitting DALE, gets a hold on his anger, tries to calm his own breathing. HENRY helps DALE up]

**DALE**

Bodie. Ask yourself: would a week or even a month more of irrigation save your crop?

[BODIE can't answer. HENRY helps DALE carry stuff offstage and they exit].

**SHERM**

[to BODIE]

I'll ride home with Theresa. Son?

[THERESA and SHERM exit. HANNAH re-enters]

**HANNAH**

You all right?

**BODIE**

Are you kidding me?

**HANNAH**

Want to have a drink later?

**BODIE**

No, no. I'm back on the wagon. Got eight months.

**HANNAH**

And I'm not your favorite person right now.

**BODIE**

No, you're too "urban"--what the hell--

[looks up toward "god"]

We're in a church, dammit.

**HANNAH**

It's another code word for "Black."

**BODIE**

But what was all that? We're fighting for our lives and all you can do is keeping saying you're a member of this community?

**HANNAH**

Carl drives me crazy.

**BODIE**

Carl drives everybody crazy. And he's just saying what everybody else is too nice to say, so far, anyway.

**HANNAH**

I want to show you some options.

**BODIE**

"Options." Is that what young urban professionals are calling a come on? We are in a church, Hannah.

**HANNAH**

I'm serious. There's this businessman from somewhere in Britain. With some ideas about another kind of future for this area, if you will.

**BODIE**

If I will what? Sell to developers?

**HANNAH**

You may be begging them in a few months.

**BODIE**

You trying to save me? Or get me to turn on my dad?

**HANNAH**

I'm not trying to do anything. I just see the writing on the wall.

**BODIE**

And what does it say?

**HANNAH**

It says, "Change or die." Look at my people.

**BODIE**

Realtors?

**HANNAH**

No, African Americans--*Black people*, okay? We've had to remake ourselves again and again.

**BODIE**

But you're still African-American or Black or whatever the code word is, and no matter what you are on the outside, no matter what you do for a living, you still have something in you that's the same. I'm a farmer. If I change what's on the outside, who am I, Hannah? All I care about is the land. That's the only



place I feel right. It's the only thing that's even sacred to me.

**HANNAH**

You sound like an Indian.

**BODIE**

So be it.

**HANNAH**

So you've finally become a Native American.

**BODIE**

I have.

**HANNAH**

Alright. The next wave of conquerors is coming, so prepare to be exterminated.

Baby.

[She kisses **BODIE**, sees **CARL** entering, and exits]

**CARL**

What is it with you Campbells? Why have you given up on white people? Your sister and Henry. Your dad and Theresa and don't deny it everybody knows it. And you? I know we don't have any lips or butts, but it's all the same when the lights are off, isn't it?

Don't look at me that way, Bodie, I'm not a racist. I'm just an observant man.

[picks up odd-looking table used in Dale's presentation]

I came back for this. It belongs in Roy's Bar. Didn't seem right about using anything up around the altar, and the podium was too, too-something-for Dale. So I went and got this for him. Why, I don't know, considering what he had to say.

[Tries one last time to say what's on his mind]

Will you tell me—

[looking for someone to listen to him. **BODIE** is looking busy. Maybe **CARL** addresses the audience]

Tell me where is there a place for poor white folks? Are we all going to end up working for Wal-Mart? Because without our farms, we're at the mercy of minimum wage.

[BODIE exits]

**CARL**

[yelling at "God"]

I have four young sons. Should they just go ahead and enlist right now? Get it over with?

[he exits]

**[END OF SCENE 5]~**

**SCENE SIX~**

[In Roy's Bar, in town. BODIE sits, staring at a shot glass with a drink in it. HENRY enters, picks up the shot glass, smells it, and then tosses the contents away]

**HENRY**

[towards the "bar"]

Two cokes? Thanks.

[about the liquor on the floor]

Oh, and bring some napkins. Sorry about the. . .

[HENRY sits down gingerly]

**BODIE**

I wasn't going to drink it.

**HENRY**

Uh-huh.

**BODIE**

I just ordered it.

**HENRY**

Uh-huh.

**BODIE**

I've been sitting here for quite a while.

**HENRY**

Yeah.

**BODIE**

Are you fired?

**HENRY**

No.

**BODIE**

Sorry about your wound. Thanks for not pressing charges.

**HENRY**

It's just a graze but man does it hurt.

[BODIE reaches for his wallet, puts out a couple of twenties]

**BODIE**

Here's for a new pair of Levis.

**HENRY**

No....

[BODIE insists and they struggle. BODIE manages to get the money stuffed into some part of HENRY'S clothing]

**BODIE**

Any more struggling and people will think we're dating.

**HENRY**

You win.

**BODIE**

I'm afraid all this is going to kill Dad.

**HENRY**

I'm more worried about you, brother.

**BODIE**

"Brother," like when we were kids. Let's try to hold on to that—

**HENRY**

That—what?

**BODIE**

Loyalty.

**HENRY**

I can't take sides, Bodie.

**BODIE**

But you did take sides.

**HENRY**

You mean all that about Indian rights? I have to say that. What kind of a man am I, if I don't? I couldn't respect myself.

**BODIE**

But what about us? We're family.

**HENRY**

How are we family? I was married to your sister.

**BODIE**

You practically grew up in our house.

**HENRY**

So the farm is mine, just like it's yours.

**BODIE**

You know how hard this is on Dad and me, what's left of the Campbells.

**HENRY**

So you're losing your land. Well, come talk to my people, we've been through once or twice! Think about the little curios you can make for tourists. Maybe have a replica of a farmer next to that cigar store Indian at the rock shop.

[beat]

**BODIE**

Did you know this news was coming?

**HENRY**

Yes. But how would telling you ahead of time—how would that have helped? I was taking measurements on all your wells to be sure the data was correct.

Look, Bodie, I need this job.

**BODIE**

I'm losing *my* job. I am going to be without livelihood. I'll have to get a truck driving job. If there are any.

**HENRY**

Are things so bad that Mamie might come home?

**BODIE**

What?

**HENRY**

I just thought she might be coming since--

**BODIE**

--our father has lost his mind?

**HENRY**

I didn't mean that.

[beat]

**BODIE**

You're secretly happy that Dad shot you.

**HENRY**

At least we'd have something to talk about. Mamie and me.

**BODIE**

Henry, my brother, you are pathetic!

**HENRY**

A little bit. Love is a mystery, Bodie.

**BODIE**

A misery. Because it seems like you lost everything but you haven't. Just your heart. You haven't lost your way of life.

**HENRY**

No, that happened to my ancestors.

**BODIE**

Well, it happened to my ancestors, too. We were burned out in Scotland and thrown off our land. And I think it just happened again!

**HENRY**

I know I was hard on him. Your dad. But I had to say all that.

**BODIE**

We keep coming back to the same place. Don't you ever just get sick and tired of history? Isn't it hard enough to just live now?

**HENRY**

You can't escape from history. And it keeps on repeating itself.

**BODIE**

You are so wise and all that happy horseshit. And yet you want to see Mamie again?

**HENRY**

Look, I can't help it. I think about her and how much she's been through.

**BODIE**

How can she manipulate you without any contact? How does she do it? Look, Henry, her two million dollar house doesn't seem to be selling. And her fat cat husband died and left her with a portfolio of investments that are controlled by a trustee because Lou knew that Mamie can't hold onto a dollar. Brother, you are schizoid when it comes to her and need some major something. A hit with a two by four. You are a smart man. You finished college.

**HENRY**

It was paid for. Maybe that was the problem. She never saw me strive. I'm too collaborative. I'm tribal, man. I'm not a wheeler-dealer businessman. Like Lou. Was.

**BODIE**

Businessmen are tribal, too, Bro. It's just a different tribe. I wish Dad was more tribal. He's still in that homesteader mentality. One man on his land taking care of his family. Everybody else is out to get what you have. We need help. We may need to ask our neighbors for help. Dad wouldn't even ask to borrow a truck. He'd help other people because that made him feel strong. But ask for help? Never.

[**HANNAH** enters]

**HANNAH**

I appreciated everything you said about Indian rights.

**HENRY**

No, you didn't.

**HANNAH**

What is up with you?

**HENRY**

Meetings bring out the beast in me. All those words. Like on treaties. B.S., B.S., and more B.S.

**HANNAH**

Like on slave contracts? Only nobody went back on those words.

**BODIE**

Oh my god. Am I seeing some kind of who got screwed most in America contest?

**HANNAH**

And who has the cushy government job?

**HENRY**

And who is the brown-skinned capitalist? And latest stealer of property?

**BAR EMPLOYEE**

[enters with Cokes, then cleans up the liquor HENRY dumped at the top of the scene]

Yeah. Roy, the owner?, back in his office where he can still hear you? wants me to say that if you all were drinking booze, he'd cut you off. On account of you're too rowdy. My opinion? Start drinking something stronger than Coke.

[BAR EMPLOYEE exits]

**HANNAH**

I'm going to the Ladies.

**HENRY**

Are you shirking this argument?

**HANNAH**

I have to pee, Henry. You want to argue with that?

[She exits to the restroom]

**HENRY**

Mamie always did that, when we fought.

**BODIE**

Which was a lot. I slept on your couch, now and again. I heard you two. I'm just reminding you. I feel you slipping. You were more than a brother-in-law to me. You were a brother.

**HENRY**

Don't you think it breaks my heart to see this happen to your family? Which was my family? Sherm was like a dad. And your mom-

**BODIE**

--loved you more than she loved me. No, first was Bruce, then you, then Mamie, then. . .who is that other kid? Right, *Bodie*. Me.

**HENRY**

Not true. She loved you more than she loved Mamie.

**BODIE**

Think about that, Henry. Her own mother had her doubts about Mamie. Look. I'm going to say something here. We've both been in the rooms. You stayed sober and I m still struggling. But listen to me: Mamie is a drug. And there's no cure but abstinence.

**HENRY**

Oh, she'd never sleep with me again. I know that.

**BODIE**

What I'm saying is do not go to the liquor store. Do not even pass it. Don't go near it. Even if she calls you.

**HENRY**

Does she have my number?

**BODIE**

No, but I do. I have your number. It's 911-NO MAMIE. You got it?

[HENRY nods. Beat. Neither of them move]

**HENRY**

I'm not leaving you in this bar.

[HANNAH re-enters]

**HENRY**

All I'm saying is that You are a political animal, Hannah. You should run for office someday.

**HANNAH**

Would you vote for me?

**HENRY**

Absolutely. You are one hard-ass woman.



**HANNAH**

Wow. All that time in the gym paid off.

**HENRY**

You know what I mean.

[Henry exits]

**BODIE**

What do you want?

**HANNAH**

You.

**BODIE**

I think you're on the wrong side for that, Hannah.

**HANNAH**

I'm on the winning side, Bodie. For once. I'm going to win.

**BODIE**

Winning is lonely.

[He exits. She shouts after him]

**HANNAH**

So is losing, Bodie!

**BAR EMPLOYEE**

[re-enters, hands open, like "what are you doing?"]

**HANNAH**

Sorry to disturb your very busy establishment!! People are leaving in droves. Like me!

[SHE EXITS]

[END OF SCENE 6]~

**SCENE SEVEN~**

[Outside, by the River. **SHERM** is looking at it. **THERESA** enters].

**SHERM**

There it is. Everything. It was so wide I couldn't fling a silver dollar over it. Like George Washington across the Potomac.

And now. Pathetic little stream. Like me. Hey, you didn't hear that!

**THERESA**

That rock we used to sit on and you were always worried about us falling into the water which was deep and flowing with such power? It's behind us. Way back there.

**SHERM**

Sad thing is, it's not deep enough to drown myself.

**THERESA**

Sherman...don't talk like that. Stop it.

**SHERM**

Come over here.

**THERESA**

I'm not coming over there. You just want to love me up.

**SHERM**

Look--the river has gotten more narrow but, somehow, my wells have gotten closer to it. Can you explain that to me? Come on. Come here and explain it to me.

[She goes to him. They embrace and it gets slightly sexual]

**SHERM**

I'm still strong. I can still put in a long day's work. And night, too.

**THERESA**

Look. I know where this is going. You're trying to convince me that there's another way. Look at me: I'm not going back into the cattle business, Sherman. What Pancho and I sent to the feedlot two years ago, that was it. We're not starting up again.

**SHERM**

It's the only way. I'll have two wells left. Two wells is enough to raise cattle.

**THERESA**

How you going to pay the men to run the cattle business, Sherman?!! It takes more than just Bodie and you. The amount of work, seeing my father, that last season when half the herd got conjunctivitis, all of us working to get the animals headed up and into the squeeze chute, then my dad putting on their eye patches with tag glue. Because that's all Papi could do of that

whole chore. Arthritis, injury, body too beat up. I couldn't blame my brothers for leaving after Papi died. They didn't think of themselves as sons of migrant workers, they were the sons of Jose Montoya, who owned his own place. And they just couldn't see themselves spending their lives hauling range cubes out to feed the cattle at dawn every day. And now I've got a lot of land with nothing on it except switch grass because I couldn't afford to put in corn and get the ethanol subsidy, even though Bodie offered to do a lot of the work.

**SHERM**

Me, too.

**THERESA**

Hola, Sherman! Wake up! There are three of us—you, me and Bodie. How can we do the work that needs to be done? And we can't afford to hire hands! Want to go into town and get some migrant workers? Have them live in shacks?

**SHERM**

You gonna lecture me now?

**THERESA**

A man approached me--

**SHERM**

A man approached you? I'll kick his ass. I know I'm too old for you, but, I'm not gonna go away without a fight.

**THERESA**

Sherman, if I leave you, I'll leave you because I want to, not because someone won me in a *fight*.

**SHERM**

Don't leave me.  
Or leave me, if you want to.

**THERESA**

I'm not going to leave you. I'm not going to leave you. I've known you my whole life. I've always looked up to you and I still do. Good God. Relax. This man it has nothing to do with. . .love. He wants to build a wind farm on my land.

**SHERM**

A what?

**THERESA**

He wants to lease my land, build a wind farm, and I think you should do the same thing. Now, you can still farm, but you won't need water because you can't irrigate because of the electrical wiring that sends the power to the grid.

**SHERM**

But how can I get a decent yield on any crop without irrigation?

**THERESA**

But you could still farm.

**SHERM**

And what? Break even? That makes farming some kind of hobby. Like I'm some plastic Farmer Campbell in a Farm set in some goddamit to hell toy store! Solar arrays. Growing that other crop, the Black Vomit Nut. All crazy! Four generations struggling so we can grow something called the Black Vomit Nut!

**THERESA**

I just thought I'd let you know that I'm trying to find other ways of saving our butts.

**SHERM**

They all involve leaving me. Was that the phone call that made you late to that meeting? You knew how important it was.

**THERESA**

Okay. Mamie's coming. That was the phone call that made me late to the meeting.

**SHERM**

You do think I'm senile. And you've called in the cavalry. And you and Mamie, and Bodie's probably in on it, are gonna railroad me into turning my farm over to some eco-nazis while you strap me into some rocking chair on the front porch!

**THERESA**

That is not happening!! Sherman!! How could you even think such a thing!! I love you!!

[taking his face between her hands]

You are my love!!

**SHERM**

I want to believe that.

Did you tell her about me seeing people around the wells?

**THERESA**

Good lord, no. I don't want her to think--.

[THERESA stops herself]

**SHERM**

Think what? Think what, Theresa?

**THERESA**

You know how Papi was that last year when he knew it was his last.

**SHERM**

You thought he was crazy. Oh, I remember that.

**THERESA**

Well, he started seeing the skinless steer. But everybody knows it's not possible. Because a steer could never escape the packing plant. By the time they're skinned, their hooves are cut off. They couldn't go anywhere. They're dead first thing wham, anything on that conveyor belt is dead. But he started seeing it, more than once, crossing a field, or the highway, and say, "There it goes. He's heading back to the ranch." And that last day, Papi was on the porch and he wandered off. . .and we found him. . .

**SHERM**

[comforting her]

Shhhh. Shhhhh, baby. I know you think that's what's happening to me. That I'm getting these visions because. . . Maybe it's true. After Jose died, that packing plant went in that can do a thousand head a day. A factory.

**THERESA**

Don't say it. You're not going to die on me.

**SHERM**

Well, when I do die, I hope to God I am on you. Because that way, it wouldn't be so bad.

[They kiss]

Let's go home. It's getting dark. Where are my keys?

**THERESA**

Here. I got them.

**SHERM**

You think I'm too old to keep track on my damn keys?

**THERESA**

No. Why would you even think that?

**SHERM**

Sometimes I feel like I've been cut from the herd and I'm being circled. Because I'm weak. Remember? It's a great life if you don't weaken. And I'm weakening, baby.

**THERESA**

We're not in a herd. We are human. And no one's circling you. Good lord, Sherman. You gotta trust people, Sherman. Why don't you trust people?

**SHERM**

Because I've been raised by Mother Nature.

[says it in a way that Mother Nature won't hear him]

And she's a bitch.

**THERESA**

You afraid to say that out loud?

**SHERM**

Don't tempt. . .her.

**THERESA**

Come on. Things get way too big out here.

**SHERM**

Just a few days of rain and it'd come back. As long as the folks upstream don't take it all. I have hope. Always. It's getting on to dark. You drive. My night vision. . .

[they exit]

[END OF SCENE 7]~

**SCENE EIGHT~**

[**HANNAH** and **BODIE** walking in the dark. **BODIE** has a flashlight. It's night and they're out on the prairie somewhere]

**HANNAH**

My shoes will never be the same.

**BODIE**

Why don't you have—

**HANNAH**

All I have is girly shoes.

**BODIE**

That's why you don't fit in.

**HANNAH**

It's all about the shoes. Right.

**BODIE**

It's my birthday. Can't we just go to a restaurant?

**HANNAH**

They're right up here.

[sees something]

--shhhh.

There.

**BODIE**

Uh-oh.

**HANNAH**

What is it? What are they doing?

**BODIE**

They're water witching.

**HANNAH**

What?

**BODIE**

Some. . .BODY has hired a water witcher to find water.

**HANNAH**

But that's bullshit. Water witching.

**BODIE**

No, it's not. An old Water witcher plotted all this land out here—Roberto's great-grandfather--and he was right. What it is, is illegal. "You can't walk to water," is what the laws say. That means if you don't have it already plotted on a well map, you can't go digging for it.

**HANNAH**

So they could be right? They could find water?

**BODIE**

Hush!

[BODIE'S PHONE emits a message tone. He checks it]

**BODIE**

My sister's here. From Arizona.

**MALE VOICE IN THE DARK**

Who is it?

[BODIE and HANNAH freeze. BODIE turns on his flashlight and reveals the man as ROBERTO, the SHERRIFF]

**BODIE**

Roberto, what are you doing?

**SHERRIFF**

What does it look like I'm doing?

EARNING MONEY!!

And you'd love to know who hired me, Hannah.

**HANNAH**

[to BODIE]

I'm not in on this.

**BODIE**

But you want to be.

**HANNAH**

Like you are all innocent? Did your folks homestead a hundred years ago out of the goodness of their hearts? You were here to make money.



**BODIE**

We were here to make a life.

**SHERRIFF**

Life is money, Bodie. This is America. Vote me a salary raise and I'll give up witching.

**BODIE**

Working for the enemy. Who are they?

**SHERRIFF**

Some company, that's all.

**BODIE**

Do you even have the gift, Roberto?

**SHERRIFF**

What does it matter, Bodie? They pay me. I'm not making it. Two girls want to go to college. You know how great that is? They don't want to be beauticians. Or even get married. They're NOT PREGNANT. They've got the grades.

**BODIE**

Well, if you feel so fine about what you're doing, why are you doing it in the dark?

**SHERIFF**

Because it's illegal. Not *immoral* or *unethical*.  
Now, my advice is we should all get out of here. It's a cool night—perfect for rattlers.

[ROBERTO exits]

**HANNAH**

Good god!

**BODIE**

He's just trying to scare you.  
You ARE "urban."

[sound of clicking]

It's just a grasshopper. Jesus.

**HANNAH**

At night? Let me go.

**BODIE**

How did you know where to look? For Roberto.

**HANNAH**

I didn't know it was Roberto.

**BODIE**

Hannah...come on. You knew where to bring me.

**HANNAH**

I know something is up but I don't know where the money's coming from. But I'm pretty sure I know what it's for.

**BODIE**

Homes?

**HANNAH**

Recreation. Both.

**BODIE**

Is everyone in on it? This wholesale slaughter of a way of life?

**HANNAH**

Not everyone. But I plan to be.

**BODIE**

Then you and I are over.

**HANNAH**

We never were, Bodie. I'm going to be forty. Too soon!

**BODIE**

Well, I know one damn thing. Theresa's land starts over there. And she would never sell. Her father would haunt her.

**HANNAH**

Better hire some ghostbusters, then.

[more clicking.]

I am leaving. I need a drink.

[She exits. BODIE follows]

**BODIE**

I've got the flashlight. Slow down.

[They are gone]

[END OF SCENE EIGHT]~

**SCENE NINE--**

[Inside the lobby of The Marriott. A very drunk BODIE sits in one of the chairs and waits. Bad music is playing. MAMIE rushes in wearing a bathrobe with a towel on her head]

**MAMIE**

I came right down. What's the emergency?

**BODIE**

You're back home. THAT'S THE EMERGENCY FOR YOU!! I know you hate it here. Except you're not really home, are you? This is the Marriott and they are all somewhere else. Better. That's why people stay in them. With their perfect little narrow venetian blinds you can't see anything out of. Look at you. You look like some rag head. All you need is an AY KAY.

**MAMIE**

Bodie, I was just getting out of the shower. You're going to be nice. Okay?

[They try a hug. MAMIE stops it]

Have you been drinking?

**BODIE**

Oh gosh. Maybe. Mamie. Maybe Mamie Baby Mamie Maybe. Maybe.

**MAMIE**

I'm going to get you some coffee.

**BODIE**

I've already had three cappuccinos at MacDonald's. Are those cappuccinos? Why does everybody like them. They taste like shit.

**MAMIE**

Coca-Cola is good. Caffeine.

**BODIE**

No caffeine, big sister. Talk. I need talk. Why aren't you staying with us? At home? Have you even seen Dad?

**MAMIE**

I came here first. To break in slowly. I mean, Theresa is there.

**BODIE**

Mom's been dead for ten years. She's good to him.

**MAMIE**

She used to babysit us!

**BODIE**

Still is. Me. I'm a mess, Mamie. I keep up a front for Dad. But it's hard.

**MAMIE**

Is something wrong with Dad?

**BODIE**

Hell, yes. He's seeing things that aren't there! He shot Henry in the ass because Henry was around one of our wells.

**MAMIE**

It's going to leave a scar. The stitching isn't as good as it should be. I wish we were in Scottsdale. They know how to sew up a gunshot wound. Plastic surgeons, everywhere.

**BODIE**

You've seen Henry's. . .wound?

**MAMIE**

Henry moved me in here. I had a lot of luggage. So he took that and I got Simone and brought her in the rental car. Mooshie is in a kennel back in Scottsdale. They have couches and televisions, for the dogs, so it's more like a home.

**BODIE**

You are from Mars. And I wanted you to come back. What was I thinking? Is Henry still here?

**MAMIE**

That is none of your business.

**BODIE**

Oh my god. Poor bastard.

**MAMIE**

Poor bastard? Why? What's wrong with me?

**BODIE**

Oh, Jeez. Give me a minute. Or a couple of days.

**MAMIE**

Look, I didn't come down her to be insulted. You have no idea what I've gone through, Bodie. I loved Lou.

**BODIE**

I know. I know. That's what you said at the funeral. Over and over. And why was it so damn fast? And what was with that wooden coffin? It looked so...well, cheap. And that weird singing at the gravesite.

**MAMIE**

Lou was Jewish. And that's the way they do it! And now you're insulting my husband's religion. I am so alone!!!

**BODIE**

Yeah, you are, but you're a survivor, Mamie. It's a good thing. I mean that. You—you believed in the right things, the workable things. I always thought I and Dad and Mom and Bruce--that we were in the right. And you and Lou—those were False Values. Make money to, you know, make more money.

**MAMIE**

Bodie, you're trying to have a serious conversation and you're drunk.

**BODIE**

Okay--four of the six wells we need to run our farm, they have been "curtailed." That means shut down. That means no crop. That means I--this drunk guy here--me--I don't have a trade. So what the hell am I going to do? Work at Jiffy-Lube? TODAY IS MY BIRTHDAY!!

**MAMIE**

Happy Birthday. I'm sorry I forgot to--

**BODIE**

Buy me that red fire truck I always wanted? Those Hot Wheels? What will the little boy do? Well the little boy is 33-years-old and is currently unemployed. You know why Henry was around one of our wells? He was checking his GPS to see how close all of our wells are to the river. So they can cut our allotment down even more.

**MAMIE**

So why don't you and Dad just quit?

**BODIE**

And do what? Didn't you hear me? I should've gone into the military, like Bruce. And Pedro and Jesus, Theresa's brothers.

**MAMIE**

They didn't come back, honey lamb.

**BODIE**

But Dale did. And got an education. But where would that have left Dad? And I'd be the prick that comes and closes the wells. I feel like sitting on the border of Kansas and Colorado with my butt on Colorado and my gun aimed at anyone who touches our River. And that includes Nebraska.

**MAMIE**

Did you have any dinner, sweetie pie?

**BODIE**

You're calling me pet names because I'm drunk. You're trying to "handle me."

**MAMIE**

I just know how you get. Nobody can shut you up and you're always sorry you said too much or talked a bunch of—

**BODIE**

It's the COLORADO River, not the CALIFORNIA River!!! You know what? This is what we should do. This is what they DESERVE. We should build a dam, stopping the river from flowing into Kansas. Or anywhere. All water flows OUT of the state of Colorado. So it's all ours, by rights. If there was ever a clear-cut case of Right of Capture, it's here.

[MAMIE gets up and exits]

**BODIE**

Where you going?

**MAMIE**

[from offstage]

Just over here. I'm getting you a Coke.

**BODIE**

Because we have the watershed, y'all. Every spring, right before the thaw, those snow storms come in and dump all that money right on our mountains, on top of all the frozen assets already there. Who needs that mint in Denver where they make that paper money and those metal coins that aren't pure anything? We have a store, in the Rockies, of pure white gold that melts by itself and flows down the big rock candy mountains: water, the new money, the more valuable than gold or silver money, water.

[MAMIE re-enters with a Coke and a coffee from a coffee machine]

**BODIE**

Have you been listening?

**MAMIE**

Keep your voice down, a little?  
And drink your coffee or your coke. Or both.

[Rejecting them]

**BODIE**

And we also have those other metals that everybody wants. Don't you realize I know I am drunk and that I have been trying to sober up so I can talk to you? Listen to the words that I am trying to say: Molybdenum! The world can't make steel without it. And I should get credit for saying, Molybdenum. How drunk can I be if I can say Molybdenum.

**MAMIE**

A wide-awake drunk.

**BODIE**

Natural gas. And oil shale up in Rifle. And we are rich, this little kick-ass country in the middle of the West. All we need to do is point all our missiles outward, just daring someone to send one in the air to get us. Which is impossible. You know why???? WE HAVE THE NORTH AMERICAN AIR DEFENSE COMMAND right here.

**MAMIE**

Drink the Coke.

**BODIE**

Did you ever take cocaine? And that reminds me Aspen. Oh, and here's the cherry on top of this little potion of righteousness. We impound all the ski resorts. We hold all the Euro-trash and stars and celebrities in big holding pens. Like one of those places where they put people who don't have a country any more. And we torture them a little, just a little. Like, "See all your credit cards inside this Gucci bag?" BLAM! We blow it all to hell. And we don't let them do their nails--men, too. And we take away their SHOES. AND we take all their cell phones, blackberries, I-phones, everything and put them in a pile and have a tank from Fort Carson roll over them, back and forth, back and forth. And we don't let them bathe. And we give them four bottles of Evian water and say, Okay, this is it bathing, drinking. That's all you get for one day.

**MAMIE**

What will they do with the empty bottles?

**BODIE**

Oh, listen to you, Miss Scottsdale, getting all ecological on me here. We collect them at the end of the day and refill them with tap water. And sell them back to them! That s what all those designer water companies do.

**MAMIE**

What will they pay us with since we've taken all their money?

**BODIE**

You are being such a bitch to me right now. You're trying to make me feel stupid.

**MAMIE**

No, Bodie. You are drunk. And I am a bitch as long as it rhymes with rich. When I'm not rich which I am on the verge of being, then it's not so nice a term. And Mom loved you.

**BODIE**

Then why did she name me what she did. Yeah. I may not have gone to college, but I know what a metaphor is. And this one has a curse inside it. But you're my sister and I love you. She named me Bodie just that. Do you know what Bodie is?

**MAMIE**

A drunk?

**BODIE**

That's mean.

**MAMIE**

I know.

**BODIE**

That s true, though. I am a drunk. But "Bodie" is the name of a ghost town. It's like Mom knew I'd be the last.

**MAMIE**

Oh poor me, poor me, pour me another.

**BODIE**

Oh, save the AA slogans for somebody sober enough to pay attention. Listen, this is what I want you to understand. I have seen the future and I'm not in it. Hannah IS the future.



**MAMIE**

Who's Hannah?

**BODIE**

Somebody's got to handle the love part, the home part. You can't just work your ass off all day, come in, take a shower, eat, take care of the business, bedcheck on the animals and go to sleep.

**MAMIE**

I didn't mean to question, Bodie. I just don't remember her name.

**BODIE**

She wants to be my girlfriend. *Wanted* to. She's a realtor.

**MAMIE**

You mean "realtor."

**BODIE**

But it's not real. It can't be. She's one of those People. People whose trade is making money. I grow things. Then I'm paid. They skip the middle part. Go straight to the money. I'm telling you, those people always have plans and they are always scary plans. There's money out there, stalking us.

**MAMIE**

I wish it would stalk me.

**BODIE**

No, you don't mean that. I need to sleep.

**MAMIE**

[grabs the luggage cart]

Here. Here's a nice place. Curl up here and Mamie will go get you a pillow.

**BODIE**

Don't need one. G'night.

[BODIE passes out on the luggage cart. MAMIE sighs].

**MAMIE**

Poor little brother. Never had a life to call your own. Oh, what's happening to me. Been here barely 24 hours and I'm falling for this romantic Western family crap again. This is not

some movie, Mamie. It's just our little lives! It's a mirage!!  
This is the land of mirages!!

[END OF SCENE NINE]~

**SCENE TEN~**

[SHERM in a lawn chair, near the house. He wakes up from a dream]

**SHERM**

Theresa!

Baby?

MAMIE enters, holding her dog carrier]

**MAMIE**

Hi, Daddy.

**SHERM**

Baby!

[He goes to her. They embrace]

**SHERM**

I'm not doing too well. But I'm not crazy. I'm not crazy.

**MAMIE**

I know, Daddy.

**SHERM**

People will try to tell you I am. But I am not. Here. Sit down.

**MAMIE**

Wasn't this Mom's garden?

**SHERM**

Yeah. Only marigolds still hanging on. God, they're stubborn.  
Speaking of stubborn, where's Bodie?

[BODIE enters, still a mess. MAMIE and SHERM just stare at him.]

**BODIE**

Ooooooo. Tough crowd. Should have brought my banjo.

[Suddenly really nauseous, BODIE exits quickly into the house]

**MAMIE**

I should help him?

**SHERM**

Bodie knows how to get to his bed. I've seen him crawl. And he always hits the pot. He just lost the battle, tonight, Sweetie. The battle with John Barleycorn. That's alright. As long as he wins the other ones. For me. The world is cracking, baby, and things are seeping in through the cracks. Things only an old man can see.

Is that chair okay? Who's that in the carrier?

**MAMIE**

It's Simone. I gave her a valium.

**SHERM**

Got one for me?

Joke.

It's good to see you, kiddo.

**MAMIE**

What are you doing out here, Dad? You look so lonely and forlorn.

**SHERM**

How many times you use that word "forlorn" in Scottsdale?

**MAMIE**

It's never forlorn in Scottsdale, Dad. They kick you out if you're "forlorn."

**SHERM**

Why are you here? Did Bodie call and scare the hell out of you? Because I'm here to tell you that I am fine. Alright, I've been seeing people around our wells. I know that. But it's—I've come to realize—it's part of this dream. Just had it again. I never paid any attention to my dreams, never gave a damn, never believed in all that dream analysis bullshit. But this one. Keeps coming back. And every time, there's more and more of it.

**MAMIE**

I don't think you're crazy, Dad. I'm here because I had to leave because they're staging my house to sell it and I'm—I'm a little broke right now.

**SHERM**

You're talking Martian right now, but that's okay. Theresa said you're not staying here, you're at the Marriott.

**MAMIE**

Yes, Theresa. That was a surprise. She was our babysitter, Dad.

**SHERM**

And now she's mine. Okay? A man's got to have some emotional life! I'm living with this fear. Makes me sick. It just never occurred to me that I wouldn't have a working farm to leave to you. You do look a little peaked. Better than at Lou's funeral. I called when we got home and then nothing from you.

**MAMIE**

It's been difficult, Daddy. I left here for Lou and, frankly, never looked back. Didn't want to. I know that's mean. But, look at this place. After Mom died, and—this garden? Why did you let it go? It was the only pretty thing about the place. I could never see it—what you saw it in. I'm so tired. I hear my own voice but I don't recognize it. I become a different person out here. I forget who I am. Or who I became. Mamie Steinmetz.

**SHERM**

Mamie Fox-Steinmetz. Sound like a furniture store.

**MAMIE**

I added Henry's last name. Because we WERE married, Dad. It's only respectful.

**SHERM**

If you say so, honey.

**MAMIE**

Alright. It sounds rich. Because I'm not anymore.

**SHERM**

Compared to what? You are my own child and you know nothing about me. How can we be so different? You live ON the land. I AM the land. Dead garden or not. I was born on the tail end of the real dust bowl. And we had got out of there. My Dad got us out. Well, really, my Dad's wife. She had this baby, right after she came to us. Little girl. We was still in Kansas. And a big one come. Ten o'clock in the morning. You could hear them. They crackled and gave off sparks from static electricity. She grabbed us both and head for the house, one under each arm, like two baby pigs, and we were squealing, but we didn't make it to house. We couldn't see the house. So Mama squatted down and put us under her skirts. But it didn't do no good, especially for the baby. When the tail end of the storm finally passed us, Mama gathered us up and we got to the door. It was just a few yards

away, but that don't do you any good if you can't see your hand in front of your face. Well, the door was blocked with dirt, so she opened a window and put me through and handed me the baby. You sit tight with her and I'll dig out the door. And she did. And I sat, like a good boy, with this baby in my lap, until she got the door opened. And then she saw that the baby wasn't alive any more. So she gathered it up and just screamed. Not crying. Just hollering. Like cows do after we separate out the calves. And she carried on like that for about an hour. Then my Dad come in the door, not looking too good himself, he'd been in south forty and had jumped into the water trough, and here s his new wife with this dead baby and mud all over them both cause of the tears and slobber from all that yelling and Mama had no hair on the back of her head it'd been sheared off by the wind with all that dirt in it, as sure as if you'd took a piece of sandpaper and sanded the back of her head. And that was it. We were gone to Colorado by Sunday. To live with my dad's brother. On this place. This place that's been in the family for two hundred years.

**MAMIE**

And those people around the wells. They're trying to take it away or something?

**SHERM**

Watch that tone. I hear your "tolerance" of me. What I'm saying is that they're trying to take the water and that's the same thing. That well with the pump. That's the first well we dug even before I got here as a boy. It's dry, but I keep that old hand pump maintained. Out of respect. None of this would be here without the water. And if I ever get close to someone trying to steal our water, I'll shoot 'em. I think I made that clear with Henry.

**MAMIE**

Where's—

**SHERM**

I don't know. Maybe she left me. Her truck has gone. We'd come dependent on it. I'll need a new truck. How am I going to afford that?

**MAMIE**

So that's all Theresa was. The truck. That's a relief.

**SHERM**

She's much more than the damn truck!! I don't know what I am to her. But I'm not kidding myself--I've always been realistic. I

just thought I'd die before she got tired of me. I don't know why the land is wearing out. I'm still vital. Probably go to Hell with a hard on.

**MAMIE**

Daddy!

**SHERM**

Oh. I'm sorry. Heaven. I'll go to Heaven with a hard on. That's where your mom is. I want her to be glad to see me.

**MAMIE**

This is very inappropriate for your daughter to hear.

**SHERM**

You were born on a farm, Mamie. You groomed the balls of that boar for your 4-H project. You won a blue ribbon.

**MAMIE**

It's different with a hog, Dad. Sparkle was not my father.

**SHERM**

And you've turned into somebody I don't recognize. Have you had some of that plastic surgery? Your eyes look different. Like you're surprised.

**MAMIE**

I am surprised, Daddy--you tried to shoot Henry. You always liked him.

**SHERM**

He's working for the enemy, Hon.

**MAMIE**

The enemy? Have things gotten that bad?

**SHERM**

Yes. It's possible. That they were always "that bad." It's just possible that me owning my own land, that my father owning his own land, and his father, and his father before him, that we never owned any of it. That it was always the property of the government. That the government just used us. To open it all up. To kill the Indians. The buffalo.

**MAMIE**

But we're the government. There is no "they." That's what you always taught us.

**SHERM**

There's always someone with more power, trying to take what we kill ourselves earning, away. There's always someone with more power sending our sons off to kill somebody else.

**MAMIE**

I need to take Bodie's truck to get back to the hotel. I'll bring it back and Bodie can drive me back to the motel tomorrow or something good-night, Daddy.

[She kisses him on the cheek].

Good-night, Daddy.

[She doesn't get a response from SHERM and just leaves. He speaks as if she were still there]

**SHERM**

So it's Christmas and I'm trying to decorate like your mother used to but everything I put up falls down. And then I think, in the dream, oranges. Oranges in the kids' stockings. And that would be enough. So I open this box of oranges, on the kitchen table, the ones your mother ordered every Christmas and I look and every single one of them is dried up, almost hard. And brown. And half the size they're supposed to be. I pick one up and it turns blue and then brown in my hand. And I know it's the Earth. And then I get this awful feeling, and I'm afraid to look up, but, of course, I do. Because that's what you do in nightmares, you do whatever you dread. And the next thing I know, I'm staring the most enormous range of mountains moving towards me and then I know the oceans have dried up and those are foreign mountains bearing down on us and I start calling all the names of you kids. And that wakes me up. Or Theresa.

His cell phone rings and he picks up the call].

**SHERM**

[on the phone]

Theresa! Thank god.

Where are you?

I know.

Don't hang up don't hang up.

I'm sorry. Whatever you need to hear.

Theresa, baby. . .

[But he's distracted by something he sees out in the dark. Suddenly alert, he drops his cell phone and exits into the house. We hear glass breaking. He emerges with the rifle and heads out into the dark. We hear THERESA'S voice from the dropped cell phone]

**THERESA'S VOICE**

[from dropped cell phone]

Sherm? Sherman!! Sherman!!

[END OF SCENE 10]~

[END OF ACT ONE]



**ACT TWO**

**SCENE ONE~**

[Two months later. INTERIOR. The conference room of The Marriott. On the stage, we see a screen. Lights bump down awkwardly on the audience and a video, with sound, begins, awkwardly on the screen. It contains: Sound of native American flute music accompanying a video of an ad for a planned community. The ad should start with beautiful views of a western wild countryside and then reveal the ad's purpose: "to sell property. OR it could be done live with slides and a live female actor with a mike. Whichever it is, the narrator voice should be one of those really cheesy, breathy voices that sound almost like the voice on one of the call-me-for-sex ads. When the audience returns for the second act, they should have the "prospectus" on their chairs]

**VOICEOVER**

Nestled in the heart of the west is your future home in the West, Tamarisk, a beautiful year-round community with two golf courses and three lakes and new homes--

[Lights up on HANNAH with the audience as the rest of the potential investors. **ROGER MACDONALD**, representing a British company is present. He has gone too far with unsuccessful efforts to look "western cowboy," obviously dropping some cash at The Spirit of the Red Horse shop in the airport.]

**ROGER**

Can you hold? Yes. My fringe has gotten tangled in the coiled binding of this prospectus.

[HANNAH stops the power point]

I want to follow along, but where are the maps and the floor plans and the elevations?

**HANNAH**

Start with page four.

[Shows him on the prospectus]

**ROGER**

Oh, I've got it. . .

[HANNAH clicks on the power point and it continues]

**VOICEOVER**

Be part of the first wave to pick out your floor plan and model home today. All the architecture is designed to blend into the western landscape that you will call home. It's a Home in the West in the heart of the west. Tamarisk, Colorado.

Lake Como, named after one of the most beautiful lakes in Italy, will be suitable for all kinds of boating and water sports. The other two lakes, named after western heroes, Cody and Hickock, interlock, creating canals—

**ROGER**

Stop. Stop. That unfortunate internal rhyme has got to go and there is too much verbiage, in general. Just turn this off and read me the script.

**HANNAH**

[reading very quickly]

Located between the Lake Como beach and the Geronimo golf course, this elegant home will be built to your specifications, whether you want a state-of-the-art professional kitchen with your own Viking stove—

**ROGER**

Hang on. Let's say I'm the husband, the one with the *checkbook*? And I'm getting very restless.

**HANNAH**

Each home is situated for fantastic views--

**ROGER**

What is there for me while my "wife" is cooking on the Viking stove? I've been looking at the view for two bloody hours by now.

**HANNAH**

Each three-car garage has extra height for those larger vehicles you may want to house. An RV the size of a tour bus will fit or, for fun, that big wheel off-road vehicle you've always wanted to own. Plus a small garage for your golf cart.

**ROGER**

Finally, something *for* the husbands. I'll get to my people about this—they have got to understand that when you turn the lights down, all the men will go to sleep. Now let me tell you, Hannah "JEFFERSON," is it? what my philosophy is. Your people have been

responsible for the website, am I right? Where are your people, by the way?

**HANNAH**

I have a silent partner.

**ROGER**

No, I mean, where is your staff?

**HANNAH**

I gave them the day off. We've been working very hard.

**ROGER**

Are you sure you have the money for all of this?

**HANNAH**

With your help, we will.

[beat. He regards her]

**ROGER**

So this is my line of attack. If you've ever read Steve Krug's book, Don't Make Me Think, you know that once the consumer starts to think, you've lost them. They're riding this fantasy wave where they click and everything is available and in a sequence we want to control, right?

**HANNAH**

We have thought of that. That's why we have hyperlinks. On the website. Have you seen the website at all?

**ROGER**

Yes. I've got it on my I-Pad. And don't get defensive, luv. I'm also wondering. Shouldn't we show the congestion, etc., of Denver? Or the seedy parts of, what is that town, Boulder?

**HANNAH**

What do you consider the seedy parts of Boulder?

**ROGER**

Some large university is there, so students. And where there are students, there is drug activity.

**THERESA**

[from the audience]

Denver's too far away from where you're going to build this to compare.

**HANNAH**

Theresa! What are you doing here?

**ROGER**

[about THERESA]

Who is this?

**HANNAH**

Theresa Montoya is a local rancher we're in negotiations with--

**THERESA**

Negotiations done.

**HANNAH**

[shows ROGER a document]

--this is her land. This is the golf course.

**ROGER**

And who owns this?

**HANNAH**

The Campbells. They're not selling.

**ROGER**

So far.

**HANNAH**

Is Sherman with you?

**THERESA**

That's a stupid question.

**HANNAH**

I heard he had another episode.

**THERESA**

He's fine. Stubbornness is not an "episode."

**ROGER**

[to HANNAH]

How exclusive is this community going to be?

**THERESA**

You mean, are you going to let in brown people? I'm not here to move in.

**HANNAH**

There'll be no restrictions. For heaven's sake, Theresa, look who you're talking to.

**THERESA**

Oh, you're brown, too. I forgot for a moment.

**HANNAH**

There's nothing wrong with making money!!

**THERESA**

Hey, that's why I'm here. You cannot count on old ways, any more than you can count on old men.

**ROGER**

I'm sure that's true. Although, frankly, I'm only pretending to know what you're talking about. But we're not here for some philosophy that seems to permeate this landscape. All this vastness makes one say big, important things. And BELIEVE THEM. But let's stay on task, shall we? What we're trying to do is **sell** an exclusive gated community in what must appear as the perfect location.

**THERESA**

I've been looking at materials for other planned communities and I have a problem with the word "location" because that makes the potential buyers think of where Tamarisk is, in relation to other places. And it's not near anything. That's the draw.

**HANNAH**

Good. . .point, Theresa. How about, "setting"? "Setting" is like from the movies and implies a narrative? And that's what we want to encourage in potential buyers--to see themselves in this narrative of living this western dream? In a beautiful setting. Not location.

**ROGER**

Alright. Next subject. I've done some research on desert communities. Palm Springs, for example. But you should look at Palm Springs for what NOT to do.

**HANNAH**

What's that?

**ROGER**

Let in a bunch of tacky stores.

**HANNAH**

Macy's is not a tacky store. And. . .stores. We need stores. This is an American community and people need to shop.

**ROGER**

Even the time-share people?

**HANNAH**

That's what Americans do on vacation, and in real life, they shop, Mr. MacDonald. We don't have quaint places with big cathedrals full of history. We have the outdoors. And stores.

**HANNAH**

Yes, after a couple of gondola rides, people will be done with all that.

**ROGER**

If people won't be using the water features, then why are they in all our plans? Why have you and your backers, which you expect me to be one of, spent all this money, enormous sums of it, to bring in lakes and canals, and water features?

**THERESA**

THAT'S how we get them to buy! Without the water, they're just buying a very expensive home on empty dry land where they have to have a wolf spider in the house to eat the scorpions.

**HANNAH**

Theresa. . .

**THERESA**

I'm just telling the truth. He needs to understand. You don't want him pulling out halfway through, do you?

**ROGER**

I've been here three days and I've yet to see a scorpion. Besides, I've just finished a project in Australia. The drought there is worse than here and they have funnel spiders. And my company made one hundred and fifty million pounds. People need places to live. That's not going to change. So let's concentrate on the buyers. We don't want them to think about the desert or high plains as what they are, we want them to see a beautiful little town, with stores, and lakes and canals. And green—Ohio or Iowa, or however you pronounce it, but in the West, with the big sky.

**HANNAH**

And plenty of water. And the narrative—we are building out on the land just as people have done for a century. We're pioneers.

**ROGER**

So where is the immediate funding on your side coming from? Right now.

**HANNAH**

We have a silent partner.

**ROGER**

That doesn't work for me.

[sound of a small dog barking. Then HANNAH'S cell phone rings and she picks up the call]

**HANNAH**

[on phone]

You're here. I can hear your dog—

**MAMIE**

[entering, with SIMONE in her carrier]

I need water!! Right now!!

[SOMEONE PRODUCES A BOTTLE OF WATER AND GIVES IT TO MAMIE]

I need a cup!!

[MAMIE OPENS THE DOG CARRIER AND JUST POURS THE WATER INTO IT]

There, there. Poor baby.

[MAMIE takes a sip of the bottled water, looks at the brand]

What brand IS this?

Oh, god.

Well, we have to take what we can find.

[SOMEONE gives MAMIE a styrofoam coffee cup. She examines it]

A little coffee won't hurt her. But the Styrofoam is lethal. I'm learning so much about the environment. A plastic island in the ocean. As big as Texas. Horrible. Probably China's fault. They

don't care about the environment. All those people! So many people! And they eat d-o-g-s!!

[SIGHS. Pours water into the cup and puts it into the dog carrier]

There, baby. Poor sweetheart. Mommy nearly cooked you driving all the way over here. Hello. I'm Mamie Fox-Steinmetz. You must be Mr. MacDonald. Hello, everyone. I'm so glad the plans include a recreational center. I was thinking that we need to attract a campus of the University here. Maybe for the future. Or a community college. Where senior citizens can take crafts? And exercise? But that could mean students—younger ones. But we need some culture. Not as in what's that word, "diversity," but like art galleries and acapella singing groups and variety shows? Oh, Theresa? Excuse me, everyone, Mooshie is coming in on the shuttle and I have to return this rental car so I hope you can drive me.

**ROGER**

So you would be the silent partner.

**MAMIE**

That would have been my husband, Lou. He believed in that. He wanted to invest and not think about it. But I want to get involved. I want to be part of this new community we're going to build here—Theresa, what are you doing here?

**THERESA**

I've added my land to the parcel. I plan to be a loud partner, too. Think of me as a "pioneer."

**ROGER**

"Pioneer." Say, could we use that name for something? One of the golf courses?

**HANNAH**

No. Not--

**MAMIE**

"Pioneers," the word, "pioneers" brings up images of people in covered wagons and oxen and lots of dust-----

**HANNAH**

Really badly dressed people. Struggling.

**ROGER**

So something special about the *setting*.



**MAMIE**

I see we've got two golf courses planned: "Aspen Ridge" and "Geronimo's Vista"--and another one if we get a certain celebrity golfer to come on board. . .SO, here's some copy--oh, this is so exciting: Do you want to live in a--

**THERESA**

--pristine?"

**MAMIE**

That's it!

**HANNAH**

"Discover Tamarisk."

**THERESA**

"Conquer Tamarisk." Too strong?

**HANNAH**

Irony won't help us. Are you sure you're on our side?

**ROGER**

Wait. There's another side? Will there be opposition to this project? Demonstrations??

**MAMIE**

No. No no no no no. I brought the original business plan my husband Lou drew up a long time ago for this land. This was when he thought the Campbells would be on board. . .

**ROGER**

[finding a name on the business plan document]

--who is this?

**HANNAH**

He's running for office now, so he dropped out.

**ROGER**

Why am I looking at this.

**MAMIE**

I just wanted Lou to be remembered. And to show you that there have been plans for this area for a long time.

**THERESA**

A long time.

**MAMIE**

So we're moving forward? Mr. MacDonald?

**ROGER**

Call me Roger. Jolly Roger. Just one comment: Lake Como? Gondolas? Geronimo? Do we have too much in the way of Italian references. For instance, Don't we have anything more western American?

**THERESA**

I think we should name something after Pancho Villa. Pancho's Place.

**ROGER**

Now, I love *that*.

**MAMIE**

[to THERESA]

Who are you?

**THERESA**

A white girl, Mija. At last.

[END OF SCENE ONE]

**SCENE TWO~**

[Same day. Out in the fields. BODIE and SHERM are loading up some gear boxes, etc., (machinery) from one of the wells they've dismantled].

**BODIE**

What did Grandpa Buchanan say? "Don't worry if the mule's gone blind, keep loading the wagon." What stupid advice, huh? That's what made this country great. Don't worry about the consequences, just keep working. Head down. Nose to the grindstone.

**SHERM**

I didn't make you believe in any of those.

**BODIE**

You didn't give me a heads up, either, Dad. "Rain follows the plow." What the hell was that?

**SHERM**

Never heard that one.

**BODIE**

Well, thousands of homesteaders heard it and believed it.

**SHERM**

Bodie—none of this happened because of some slogans. You know that. It was no-choice-in-the-matter-balls-out-survival. It was the momentum of everything that had to be done every single day. You've been spending too much time with Henry. You can't look at our lives in that schoolbook way. He does that because he doesn't have anything else. His grandmother got tired of the poverty on the rez and took him with her. So you go with the money and you lose your culture. Would you rather be wearing a kilt and dead-drunk in a ditch somewhere?

**BODIE**

They don't wear kilts over there any more, Dad.

**SHERM**

Well, go back there if you're not happy with America.

**BODIE**

Which place, Dad! Mom's family are all mongrels. They got Irish and Welsh and some French and German and god knows what else.

[Beat. SHERM can't find something to say]

**SHERM**

What were we arguing about?

**BODIE**

Nothing, Dad.

**SHERM**

Canadians. There's a shit load of Canadians on your mother's side. What are you gonna do about that?

**BODIE**

[about one of the gear boxes]

All I know is that I'll never have to repair this piece of crap again.

**SHERM**

That is from the first well ever dug in this county.

**BODIE**

[about another one of the gear boxes]

I can use one of these for that one on well number five that's always breaking down.

**SHERM**

Good idea.

**BODIE**

A little more enthusiasm.

**SHERM**

I'm doing what I can.

**BODIE**

I know, Dad.

**SHERM**

Where are the guns?

**BODIE**

They are stored somewhere safe.

**SHERM**

You didn't think I'd notice?

**BODIE**

Your noticing doesn't bother me. It's your possession of a fire arm that scares me. After I cleaned up the glass and put everything back and put a padlock on the whole thing and that was fine—

**SHERM**

For weeks.

**BODIE**

Last night, I awoke, suddenly, and thought, that's not secure enough, so I moved them, all, to somewhere safe. From you.

**SHERM**

That's a helluva note.

**BODIE**

I know.

**SHERM**

Can't trust your own father.

**BODIE**

I know.  
And I miss him, Dad.

**SHERM**

I'm right here. You don't think I'm tracking. But here's a quote for you, "The less you bet, the more you lose when you win."

**BODIE**

What?

**SHERM**

That's Wyatt Earp.

**BODIE**

But it doesn't make any sense.

**SHERM**

It does make sense. But the point is, Wyatt Earp got rid of the Clanton boys and saved the town. It's what you do, son. NOT what you say that matters.

**BODIE**

Okay. Well, this is what you did. You wandered off last night. I saw the flashlight moving towards well number 5.

**SHERM**

I'm not crazy.

**BODIE**

Crazy people always say that!  
Is it because you miss Theresa?

**SHERM**

That I'm nuts? That's some of that television psychology. "My mother spoke sharply to me, so I can't get it up." Besides, I've been lonely and left before, son. My mother. Your mother.

**BODIE**

You're lonely?

**SHERM**

Well, of course, I'm lonely! Aren't you? What kind of a man can't admit he's lonely! Where's that Hannah you were swapping spit with?

**BODIE**

She went to the other side.

**SHERM**

The other side of what?

**BODIE**

The issue, Dad! She's one of the developers!

**SHERM**

Well, to hell with her, then.

**BODIE**

And I think Theresa is, too.

**SHERM**

At least Theresa knows what's what.

**BODIE**

You're defending her?

**SHERM**

Theresa is still about survival, son. She's paid her dues. She's not just a money-grubber.

**BODIE**

I don't get the difference there, Dad.

**SHERM**

People who just make money to buy stuff when they got enough and just sit around and hire people to take care of it and only think about their comfort and what their friends think about their lifestyle, whatever, THOSE are the people that are the problem, son. Theresa isn't one of those people. She could sit on her behind for the rest of her life and not be one of those people.

**BODIE**

Where did you go last night?

**SHERM**

I've been seeing folk. I've been seeing people on the property. They're coming for our water, son.

**BODIE**

WHAT WATER, DAD???

**SHERM**

Well Number 5 and 6. Somebody's driving up the road.

**BODIE**

Don't change the subject—

[sees what his father is seeing]

--Damn. You're right.

**SHERM**

Is it Theresa?

**BODIE**

It can't be. It's not her pickup, anyway. It's new.

[END OF SCENE 2]

**SCENE THREE~**

[Mom's old garden--same lawn chairs. MAMIE sits in one with the dog carrier with Simone inside. Her luggage is everywhere. THERESA, enters from the house, with a beverage in a glass, hands it to MAMIE. MAMIE sniffs the drink]

**THERESA**

Sugar tea.

**MAMIE**

Do you have—

**THERESA**

--no. It's sugar. Real sugar. From sugar beets. My family *used* to pick sugar beets. But—

**MAMIE**

Oh, Theresa, stop! I didn't expect you to carry my luggage. I just got tired, that's all. I hope Daddy has told Bodie I'm moving back in because I don't want to argue with my brother. Drunk, it's possible. But sober, he's too—he says mean things.

**THERESA**

How mean could Bodie be? I've known him since he was a little boy and he always was the sweetest—

**MAMIE**

--but not to me. Never to me. Look, I know you think I'm a spoiled brat. You always thought that. But can you please just cut me some slack. I can't afford my house anymore and I can't sell it because the market is just terrible. And now I have to move back in with my father. And what money I had I can't have because it's earmarked for investment with this Pirate guy from England.

**THERESA**

Oh, I know. My stock and bonds just plummeted. I had to sell my yacht.

**MAMIE**

[purposely speaking bad Spanish]

Que lastima. Su barca es adios. At least you've got something to invest!

[SHERM and BODIE enter. BODIE goes for MAMIE. SHERM just looks at THERESA. He's so glad to see her, but afraid of setting her off]

**BODIE**

What are you doing here? What's with the luggage? YOU ARE NOT MOVING BACK IN HERE, YOU WHORE OF BABYLON. You betray your father, your family, break their, OUR hearts, and care more about your little dog--

[THERESA moves toward SHERM, her hand out. He grabs her and lifts her in a hug]

**MAMIE**

Dogs. Mooshie is in the other kennel box.

**BODIE**

Oh?? Well, let's see how they like farm life.

[BODIE grabs the dog carrier with SIMONE in it and exits. MAMIE runs after him]

**MAMIE**

Stop!!! Bodie!!! Stopppp!!! Simone is fragile!!

[offstage, we hear struggling].

**SHERM**

Nice pickup.



**THERESA**

I sold. The land.

**MAMIE**

[offstage]

NO. no, oh my god, SIMONE!!!

[MAMIE re-enters, sobbing]

Daddy!! Daddy!! He let my dogs go!! They'll die out there!! Do something!!!

**SHERM**

They'll find their way back.

[BODIE re-enters and attacks MAMIE]

You two stop or I'm going to get the hose. We still have enough water for that.

**THERESA**

STOP!!!

[grabs BODIE]

Be nice to your sister and carry her luggage into the house.

[MAMIE exits. BODIE picks up some luggage and exits into the house]

**SHERM**

[to THERESA]

You always did have the touch with that boy.

**THERESA**

He knows I love him best.

**SHERM**

Kids are like that.

I always loved Bruce best.

**THERESA**

Bodie knew that.

**SHERM**

That's a shame.

**THERESA**

You did your best.

**SHERM**

Who loved Mamie most?

**THERESA**

Her mother.

**SHERM**

She did. I remember that. And Henry. Dorothy loved Henry the best, too.

Who loved you the best?

**THERESA**

Papi. And then maybe Pancho.

**SHERM**

And after Dorothy died, me. I loved you the best.

**THERESA**

That's true, Sherman?

**SHERM**

Still is.

[LONG BEAT. They look at each other]

**THERESA**

It's just a Toyota. Even though I'm going to live in a condo, I couldn't break the habit, couldn't see myself in a car. But, at least, I didn't get a huge Dodge Ram or something. No need to haul much, just stuff to the auction and when I move.

**SHERM**

You kept the homestead?

**THERESA**

No. That's where they're planning a recreational center. But I'm staying there for another six months.

**SHERM**

What about that wind farm idea?

**THERESA**

That was nothing but a band aid. It's over, Sherman. And the money! Pancho and his girlfriend can buy a house in Denver.

**SHERM**

Oh, baby, is this really happening?

**THERESA**

I could never stay here again, Sherman. I couldn't stay within 100 yards of Mamie. Look, why couldn't you stay with me?

**SHERM**

We've got working wells and what's left of that crop. There will be some yield. Not decent, but. . .

**MAMIE**

[re-enters]

Henry's on his way over. Dad. What should I do? He wants to see you. Wanted to make sure you were here.

**THERESA**

Mamie, he's not going to ask for your hand again. He didn't the first time. You guys ran off and got married as I remember.

[BODIE enters on the cell phone]

**BODIE**

It's Henry on the phone. It's bad news, Dad.

[hands SHERM the phone]

**SHERM**

Yeah?

[SHERM sighs, xs to the lawnchair, sits]

I gotta sit down here.

How can they do that? How can they just arbitrarily decide?

I don't see the point of a lawyer, Henry, and—

--oh, that's nice, son, but I don't want you spending your money—

Yeah.

Yeah.

Dale's suggestion? I'll be sure to read it. It's on the document?

Right, son.

[He clicks off the phone]

Distance. It's been moved to twelve miles and that does it for all of our wells.

Henry's coming over with the papers, whatever. As if seeing it in black and white will help.

**MAMIE**

Daddy. I'm so sorry.

[SHERM exits into the house, turns to look at THERESA. She follows him and exits, too. MAMIE turns to BODIE]

Bodie. . .I. . .

**BODIE**

It's awfully hard for me to say this, Mamie: it's not your fault. But you get to stay out here and talk to Henry. I'm taking the truck. Tell Dad I'm not going out drinking or anything. I just have something to do.

**MAMIE**

What? There's still daylight left. Isn't there work to be done around here?

**BODIE**

How is it no one has shot you yet? I'm going to Pine Ridge Mall to talk to the Marine recruiter. Okay? And if you tell Dad, I WILL find a way to kill you.

[BODIE exits. MAMIE is at a loss, then sees something]

**MAMIE**

Simone? SIMONE!! You're alright???

[She exits to get her and we hear her talking to her dogs]

Where have you been? Where is Mooshie? Mooshie!!!!

[HENRY enters]

**HENRY**

This was your mother's old garden. Boy, these chairs need to be redone. You can buy those kits. I should do that. For Sherm.

**MAMIE**

[re-entering with SIMONE wrapped in a shirt or sweater, something Mamie was wearing]

Oh, Henry. Thank god you're here. We need to take Simone to the vet. Her backside is all kind of wet. See?

**HENRY**

[examining the dog]

Did you ever spay her?

**MAMIE**

Well, no. I wanted her to have the full female experience. And I was going to breed her.

**HENRY**

She's been bred.

**MAMIE**

By what? Mooshie is fixed!

**HENRY**

Mamie—Simone has been—has had sexual intercourse. With some dog-like species, right? And what would that be?

**MAMIE**

A. . .coyote?

**HENRY**

Better she got. . .mated with, than eaten.

**MAMIE**

Oh my god. Can we have it extruded? Is there a morning-after pill for dogs??

**HENRY**

Mamie—something more important has just happened.

**MAMIE**

More important?

**HENRY**

What I have here is some paperwork for your dad. It explains how his last two wells have to be curtailed. And Dale included a plan for possible recovery through—well, your dad needs to ask for help from the other farmers—

**MAMIE**

Help? Daddy doesn't ask for help.

**HENRY**

Let's put Simone down. I mean, let's put her in her carrier. She's tired.

**MAMIE**

I'll give her another valium.  
Or, maybe, I'll take it this time.

[Mamie downs the valium]

Water. Water!!

**HENRY**

Use your spit.

**MAMIE**

Why are you so mean to me all of a sudden?

**HENRY**

Many moons, Brave Arrow sought White Goddess. Many moons Brave Arrow carried flame for White Goddess. Flame set Brave Arrow's pants on fire. Luckily, Brave Arrow woke up before his genitals were charred.

**HENRY**

Mamie, look up there. See that planet?

**MAMIE**

Are you trying to get close to me, Henry?

**HENRY**

No, I want you to look at that planet.

**MAMIE**

What? What planet?

**HENRY**

Mars. You can see it this time of year.

**MAMIE**

It's a plane.

**HENRY**

Oh, for chrissakes—

Crap, it is a plane. Well, pretend it's Mars. Okay?

Good.

Now, they think they found water on Mars. And where there is water, there is life. So, consider this: What if Mars was us millions of years ago? What if Mars were this blue planet on the edge of the Milky Way Galaxy? And what if, we became Mars? It's a good name, Mars, for how we behave down here.

**MAMIE**

I don't get it.

**HENRY**

It's a way of looking at our present situation. Here. On earth.

**MAMIE**

You always thought you were smarter than me. And I couldn't stand that. You were the handsomest boy in the county and so damn pure. You were Mama's special little pure Indin boy. And I got you. But now I'm gonna get you in another way. I've been reading up on this stuff. So listen to this, Mr. Henry Fox Smarty Pants. All of the condos built and all of the condos that may be built, take up a tiny percent of the water that agriculture uses. Agriculture is a big water-sucking beast. NOT condos! So all these white people and all their children can have all the condos they want.

**HENRY**

And what should they eat, then? If there's no farms except big factory farms that only care about profit? You never wanted children. So think about this--take Simone here. What do you want in her tiny little body? Good, nutritious food or crap? Because we are what we eat. And this vulnerable little animal would be disease-ridden and brain-damaged if she had the diet of some children in this country. Water is money, Mamie. So how do you want to spend it? So here, take your doggie. And make sure your dad reads Dale's note.

**MAMIE**

One last word, Henry? What is all your moral superiority going to do for you? Is it good to be right? Will that give you a nice place to live? And a hot, white woman to curl up next to?

[HENRY exits]

[END OF SCENE THREE]

**SCENE FOUR~**

[The next evening. A large public meeting. Most of the community is there. Dale is presiding. HENRY is there and a new official, GEORGE VEGA]

**DALE**

Thanks to everyone for coming on such short notice. This meeting was my idea because I know that this community is under some major pressures from the outside, from-

**CARL**

The robber barons have moved in here and dry-gulched this entire area. And Sherman Campbell's daughter Mamie is leading the charge. Tamarisk, Colorado. Doesn't exist yet but they've broken ground for one of the golf clubs. And those rolls and rolls of grass-covered sod--they're everywhere. "Fore!" Get used to that. "Fore!"

**DALE**

[reading from a piece of paper]

We want to thank the Elks Lodge for letting us meet here. I don't think there's a single Elks member here, but thank you.

**CARL**

No. We're gonna solve all our problems today. Right, Dale? Because we've run out of animals. The Lions, Moose and Squirrel--we've been there. The Nazarene Church is still recovering. That leaves us The Odd Fellows Hall which has been a taxidermy store and gun shop for the last several years.

**DALE**

Carl. I'm going to just come out and say it. I am sorry one of your sons enlisted. But if you could just do something about your anger. And be quiet.

**CARL**

I'm proud of my son.

**BODIE**

[entering]

Sorry.

**DALE**

Hey, Bodie. Is-



**BODIE**

My dad coming? Him and Theresa--

[THERESA enters. Sees that they're expecting Sherm to be with her—she shakes her head "no" and sits]

I'll represent him. I know what he thinks.

**DALE**

No problemo. So who is sitting over here? It's George Vega, from the EPA. The Department of Natural Resources, for whom I work, sent him up here with me and that's fine because, quite frankly, I'm tired of being the fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse.

**CARL**

Famine, Disease, Violence, CONQUEST and the most evil of bureaucracy.

**DALE**

Thanks, Carl. No, I mean that.

[GEORGE VEGA takes the stage]

**GEORGE**

This is what the future, folks. The Secretary of the Interior is going to hold everyone sharing the Colorado River responsible for its present shape. It's blue instead of brown, nearly devoid of silt, in fact. Its banks, once landing places, have been overgrown by the weed, tamarisk, the kudzu of the West. So the forecast for more water in the states of the Four Corners will be bleak. Let me be specific. Very soon, upper intake will stop and Hoover Dam will stop generating electricity. Then, all of those states will be dealing the third or fourth round of cuts and life will get really ugly. I know that there is a commercial venture here that promises more growth, for housing, but not farms or ranches. And I urge you to consider it.

**BODIE**

If there's one thing we don't need, it's growth. Sir.

**GEORGE**

This crisis isn't about growth, it's about maintenance of the cities that are already there. Will they continue to exist. What is civilization in the southwest and the west going to be?

**CARL**

You're basically scaring the hell out of me. And I thought I was already there.

**GEORGE**

I'm scared, too.

**HENRY**

Why? It'll be job security for you, Mr. Vega.

**GEORGE**

And for you?

**HENRY**

Just tell me this: why should farmers have to pay the price for this bad decision to build cities, any cities, in The Great American Desert?

**CARL**

Come on, Henry, it not like somebody decided it. It just happened. You know, cities happen. Like ant hills. They are a by product of populations.

**GEORGE**

Let me ask you this. How much agriculture should there be in the most arid area of the United States? Have you seen the bathtub ring around Lake Mead? It looks like the White Cliffs of Dover. It represents a 100-foot drop in its water table since 2000. Lake Mead could run completely dry in a few years. So that's just a broad outline. For the future. The very near future.

[beat]

**DALE**

Well. Thank you, George. Anybody have any questions so far?

**BODIE**

Yeah. I have a question. What the hell is going to happen to us?

**DALE**

I proposed an idea to Sherman, but I don't see him. . .

**HANNAH**

(Raising her hand)

Dale! Dale!

**DALE**

Hannah—

**HANNAH**

Right. Well, I have come here to more fully explain what the community of Tamarisk, Colorado has to offer. Oh come on, Bodie. Wake up! It's over!! We're in a drought that's just a series of droughts because that's God's way of telling humans they need to find another way to live!!

**BODIE**

And who will grow the food, genius?

[Sherm enters quietly]

**SHERM**

Theresa?

**THERESA**

Why won't you let people help you!

**HANNAH**

We know a lot of people here are really upset about it because we, as a community, haven't even been able to find a way to deal with the water shortfalls we have to make up. However, what people here are not seeing--

**BODIE**

'Scuse me, Hannah, but you're using "we." I think you lost your "we" status when you joined the Tamarisk people.

**HENRY**

So we're talking about more wasting of water. Golf courses, green lawns. And then all the septic systems, city sewers, daily use--

**GEORGE**

[to Dale]

I thought he worked for us.

**DALE**

He's not a puppet, George I hired him for his brain. And, guess what, his mouth came with the deal.

**GEORGE**

You may not want to hear this, but cities are ecologically more efficient. Because the destructive impact of human populations is concentrated in one area--

[HENRY and BODIE start to talk at the same time:]

**HENRY**

Like Los Angeles!!???

**BODIE**

Talk about a water-sucking beast!!

**CARL**

So someone DOES listen to me.

**GEORGE**

Look at it this way: a city of millions of people vs. a handful of farmers and ranchers.

**HENRY**

But farmers and ranchers settled this land.

**GEORGE**

No, they took it from the Indians. Don't you have anything to say for your people?

**HENRY**

My "people" are right here in this room. Excluding you, of course.

**BODIE**

What happened, Henry?

**HENRY**

Did a re-count on my herd. Reality check. Keep on topic, Bodie.

**BODIE**

[to GEORGE VEGA]

So all of our history up to this point. All the struggles to ranch and farm—that was just a way to settle this area so cities and tract housing could be built? Like Las Vegas? Like Tamarisk?

**DALE**

You have something else to say, Sherm? The letter I wrote to you? The second part of it, that is.

**GEORGE**

I have this to say. When did agriculture become the sacred calling? Your ancestors immigrated for a *better* life. Is that farming?

**THERESA**

"Our" ancestors and not yours?

**GEORGE**

Mine were already here. I am Indian and Spanish land grant.

**THERESA**

{in ESPANOL}

Then how can you be so callous?

**GEORGE**

I don't speak Spanish.

**THERESA**

For godsakes, say something, Sherman? Go ahead.

**SHERM**

Okay. Alright. The idea. . .the idea is to form a committee sort of thing and all of us, well, you, because I have no water to give. All of you give up a certain amount of our water then no one person will be put out of business. We'll all contribute to make the shortfall. We'd just plant fewer acres, each of us. I've got a crop that's deader than a doornail. But by next planting season. . .we can have figured it all out. And I know that I'm the one hurting the most. So, I guess, what I'm asking is for your. . .help. Because I need your help.

[long beat]

**CARL**

I don't know, Sherm. I'm pretty tired. I'm tired of looking at the weather report, like it's news from the front. I'm tired of fighting a battle that we're bound to lose. And it don't look like I'm going to have sons to pass it all on to. Or anything to pass on. That's by way of saying--

**BODIE**

Carl! Not you, of all people.

**CARL**

Why not me? Time's change. People don't. But our times do it for us. Are you keeping your land, Theresa? I know you're not. And all of you here have been talking to these Tamarisk robber-barons.

[nobody speaks]

**GEORGE**

Look, I talk to farmers all the time.

**HENRY**

But do you listen?

**DALE**

What Mr. Vega is going to say to you is that small farmers all over this country are in trouble. And most of them have only one option: go bankrupt. You, us, here have a chance to sell your land and actually make a profit.

[sound of barking. Bodie's cell phone rings. He turns it off. Sherm's cell phone rings. He turns it off. Henry's cell phone rings. He answers it]

**HENRY**

We're in the middle—  
You listen to ME. Curb your damn dogs yourself.

[He hangs up on her]

**BODIE**

What do you want this country to look like? One tacky housing development after another—one big ugly pre-fab sprawl from Colorado Springs to the Wyoming border. "Where do you live?" "I live at 87954231 zero East JESUS Street, in Uglytown, Colorado, POPULATION GROWING BY THE MINUTE." And eating tacky food. Shit going in. Shit coming out. We are waste.

[MAMIE enters. EVERYONE looks at her]

**MAMIE**

Bodie! No class. This family has never had any class. I swear to you—I'm adopted!!  
I had to pay some stranger to watch my dogs. Daddy, do you have change for a twenty? I hate to give that little brat more than a five for a tip.

**SHERM**

Mamie. . .sit down.

**HANNAH**

Look, I'm here to say that this Tamarisk offer is a done deal. And it's a good deal. And I suggest that any of you take the offer you're given. If you want to see the beginnings of a beautiful golf club at the "nineteenth hole," we're having a grand opening next Thursday. It sits right up against the edge

of the eastside of Sherman Campbell's property. He hasn't sold to us yet. But we're sure he'll come around. I feel you all have stopped listening to me, so I'm going to go. Mamie will carry on.

[She looks at BODIE. He looks away. She exits]

**MAMIE**

I know you all hate me. And I don't much like those people, except Hannah, but that British guy. He. . .kicked one of my dogs.

**BODIE**

What are you, Patty Hearst?

**MAMIE**

No, she liked her captors. I just like their ideas. And, beside which, they have all my money.

**SHERM**

So, what are you here for, Mamie? Do you have something to say?

**MAMIE**

Dad. My house sold and all of it is going into the Tamarisk deal. I've signed you up for a condo. You have to do this. Because, you're 75 and Bodie will eventually—

**BODIE**

NEVER.

**MAMIE**

I mean, what should I do, Daddy?

**SHERM**

Do what you want. That's what you kids have done, every single one of you, living and dead. Except Bodie. He's the only one of you who ever thought about the farm. And thought about me.

**BODIE**

Thank you, Dad.

**MAMIE**

I'm sick of this Grandma Moses, American Gothic nightmare! Dad, if you insist on trying to work that cold comfort farm, you will fail. And so will Bodie. And who will have to bail you out? Me. Don't you understand that if that happens, you'll drag me down with you!!

**SHERM**

I apologize for my this woman formerly known as my daughter. If anyone here would like to contribute some of the water they have left after all these curtailments, I'd appreciate it. Without it, the Campbell farm is closed.

So don't everyone speak at once.

All right. Good-bye. No hard feelings.

[He exits]

**BODIE**

[to HENRY]

I need you to drive me somewhere.

**HENRY**

Let's go. I think I'm finished here. There's nothing I can say that hasn't been said a hundred years before. And none of makes any difference. Because nobody's listening.

[They exit]

**[END OF SCENE FOUR]**

**SCENE FIVE~**

[SHERM is standing outside. It's dusk. BODIE and HENRY enter. They are wearing what looks like warpaint on their faces]

**BODIE**

Well, Dad, we're going to be getting some water.

**SHERM**

What? Is it going to rain?

**HENRY**

Rain doesn't describe it.

**SHERM**

Storm coming?

**HENRY**

Helicopters.

**BODIE**

Field's on fire.



**SHERM**

Ours?

**BODIE**

Oh yeah.

[SHERM looks and can see the glow]

**SHERM**

Boy howdy. Look at that.

**HENRY**

It's amazing how fast a dead crop can burn.

**SHERM**

You know, I think we've been doing it all wrong. For thousands of years. Dead crops are so much easier to take care of.

**BODIE**

Went to enlist a few days ago. Recruiter wouldn't take me. I'm too old. Besides, I was doing it for spite, Dad.

**SHERM**

Well, what's a little spite. Here and there. Whatever happens, I'm not selling the original homestead. I know that. So it's just you and me, son. Is that Mamie's make-up on your face?

**BODIE**

War paint.

**SHERM**

Looks good.

[sound of helicopters]

**BODIE**

Here they come. "Hurry, boys. It's a wildfire. Heading West."

**SHERM**

It'll be a shame if it spread to the golf club.

**BODIE:**

Yeah.

**SHERM**

Let's just sit and watch it.

**HENRY**

Great idea.

[They cross to Mom's garden and sit in the folding chairs. After a beat, **SHERM** begins staring in another direction]

What are you looking at?

**SHERM**

Them.

**BODIE**

Oh, Dad. You're gonna break my heart.

**SHERM**

You got a Western heart, Bodie. They're unbreakable.

**BODIE**

I'll be back in a minute.

**SHERM**

No beer for me.

[**BODIE** EXITS. **SHERM** keeps staring at the old dry well in the yard. He crosses to it. Pumps the handle, water comes out]

**HENRY**

Oh my god! Not in thirty years!!! Water pressure from the capped wells must have done it.

[**BODIE** re-enters with two beverage cans—it's Coke, gives one to **HENRY**]

**BODIE**

It's just Coke, Dad.

[sees the water pump]

There's never been water in that pump.

**SHERM**

That's why they're here.

**BODIE**

Who?

**SHERM**

[gestures to screens and the walls of the theater where images of all the water-impooverished people of world can be seen]

Them.

**BODIE**

What is he seeing?

[THERESA enters from the house]

**THERESA**

Sherman? I'm here. Don't leave me!

**SHERM**

Baby, look!

**HENRY**

Sherm! We're making a statement. People will hear it.

**SHERM**

No need! *They're* here. Listen.

[NOW EVERYONE can hear the sound human voices filling the theater, first whispers, then louder. The word they are saying is the same word in all the world's languages, "Water" and we can all see what Sherman has been seeing throughout the play: on the screen that's been used for all the powerpoint presentations and on the walls of the theater, even on the faces and bodies of the audience, wherever possible, appear images of people from all over the world.]

**SHERM**

[ALMOST jubilant, raises his arms as if "presenting" the images]

There they are!! The people I've been seeing! And none of you believed me!

[He exits into the images, and out into the prairie, just like THERESA'S father did that day he saw the skinless steer.]

[**BODIE and THERESA and HENRY, stand closer to each other for comfort, staring at the images and where SHERM has disappeared**]

**THERESA**

Do you see them? The figures?

**BODIE**

The people. Yes. I see them.

**HENRY**

I do, too. I see them. Like the skinless steer. Like the ghost dancers.

**THERESA**

Then that means we're all like Papi. And now Sherman. We wandered too far. And now. . .

**HENRY**

We're gone.

[BLACKOUT]

**END OF PLAY**