

THE NAGUAL

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FADE IN:

TITLE:

20 YEARS AGO

BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A tall dark girl, pretty as a model, and an older Native American man run breathlessly through the trees in the POURING RAIN.

JULIA AZUETA (17) slips and falls and JUAN AZUETA (40), her father, helps her to her feet.

Hurries her forward to a break in the trees when the BLARE of a train's horn suddenly pierces the night.

A Union Pacific FREIGHT TRAIN coasting by, all black and ghostly in the diffused moonlight and relentless rain.

Juan and Julia tear after the train.

Catch it and board, climbing in through an open door on one of the stock cars.

INT. STOCK CAR - NIGHT

Both father and daughter drop to the floor, totally spent. Lie there and breathe when something loud lands on the roof.

Juan bolts up and rushes to the door. Tries to close it but the BROKEN ROLLERS are stuck to the track.

A SHADOWY FIGURE

Climbs off the roof onto the side of the car.

Moves like a spider along the louvers, her frightful dark shape visible through the gaps.

JUAN

Backs away from the door. Pulls out a wad of cash from his jean jacket and hands it to Julia.

JUAN

Here, take it.

JULIA

No, Dad, no--

JUAN
Take it, I said!

Juan stuffs the cash in Julia's coat. Grips her shoulders.

JUAN (CONT'D)
Listen to me, mija! Get away from
here. Go as far as you can. Run!
Hide! And whatever you do, don't
ever look for me! You hear me,
NEVER look for me!

Juan takes off a BLACK EAGLE'S TALON strapped around his
neck and moves Julia behind him.

The strange figure coming closer to the door, her claw-like
nails CLICKING on the louvers.

JULIA
Oh, Daddy!

Juan grips the talon, steels himself.

Goes to the door.

When whatever's out there leaps onto him in a flash and they
both fall off the train.

JULIA (CONT'D)
NOOOOOO!

Julia rushes to the door and looks back at her dad.

JUAN AND THE SHADOWY FIGURE

Rolling as one down an embankment.

Juan coming out on top, TALON RAISED.

Stabbing again and again.

A PURPLE MIST spewing from the body of the shadowy figure.

Forming a cloud around Juan.

JULIA

Watches the image of her father recede from sight, growing
fainter and fainter until he's finally lost from view.

She turns away and slumps down to the floor, devastated.

Hot tears parting the dust on her cheeks.

A TITLE OVER BLACK:

PRESENT DAY

FADE IN:

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

A car with LOUISIANA PLATES turns into a small trailer park, passing a sign:

RAGIN CAJUN TRAILER PARK

Following the car we pick out one of the trailers - a '95 Airstream Excella 28, a bus-like mobile home with polished aluminum coachwork.

A young man inside peels back a curtain and peeks outside.

INT. JULIA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

SAM AZUETA, alias GARCIA (17) is at the window looking outside. His mom, JULIA AZUETA, alias GARCIA (37) just steps away cooking in the tiny kitchen.

Sam is tall and dark, half-black; a shy, sheltered young man.

Julia, still with fashion model looks, seasoned now, wiser and maternal, a woman of serenity, intellect and action.

JULIA

Is that her?

SAM

No.

Sam lets go of the curtain and turns.

JULIA

Relax, Sam. I'm sure I'm going to like her.

Sam half-smiles, not so sure.

MOMENTS LATER

Sam opens the door for RANI TANDON (19), Indian-American, cool, confident, beautiful, and dressed to show it.

RANI

Hi, Sam. I'm not late, am I?

SAM

No, no, come on in, perfect timing.

Rani steps inside and gives Sam a kiss. Turns to Julia.

RANI

Hi!

Julia, a bit taken aback by her teen-aged son's extremely sexy girlfriend, forces a smile.

LATER

The three of them eat dinner, the clink of silverware on plates resounding like church bells in the awkward silence.

JULIA

So, Rani, how old are you?

Rani stops eating and looks at Sam.

JULIA (CONT'D)

It's okay, I know you're older than Sam. I just want to know if I should offer you wine.

RANI

Oh, I just turned nineteen. I'm what...

(checks with Sam)
sixteen months older than you?

SAM

Seventeen.

Rani turns to Julia and smiles.

RANI

Yeah. But no thank you, no wine for me, I'm driving.

Sam looks at his mom for a sign of approval as if Rani had passed a test. Julia just fills her own glass and drinks.

EXT. JULIA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Sam sits with his arm around Rani outside the trailer.

RANI

She hates me.

SAM

No she doesn't.

RANI

She hardly said two words all night.

SAM

My mom's just like that. Really, you're fine. I just think she was surprised at how pretty you are.

RANI

Did you tell her what I do?

SAM

No.

RANI

Good. Don't.

SAM

She won't care.

RANI

That's what they all say. Believe me, she'll care.

SAM

Hey, what do you mean "that's what they all say"? How many boyfriends have you had?

Sam tickles Rani and she LAUGHS.

RANI

Lots and lots! Millions!

INT. JULIA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Julia sits on her couch with her wine listening to the LAUGHTER outside. Ponders it knowingly and smiles.

INT. BEDROOM - JULIA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

A nightstand clock clicks to: 3:10 A.M.

Julia sleeping, fitfully, having a nightmare. She bolts up. Puts her head in her hand, troubled.

Lights and MUSIC from a neighbor's party come through the blinds.

MOMENTS LATER

Julia opens the fridge and sheds light on the kitchen. Pours herself a glass of water. Drinks it and checks on Sam...

Sound asleep in a fold-down bed at the other end of the trailer.

Half-under the covers, his long legs hanging over the undersized bed.

Julia adjusts Sam's blanket. Looks around the small space that amounts to his room.

A plaque with Army medals and a photo of his father in his Green Beret uniform on the wall above Sam's head. The same green beret worn in the photo hung from the bedpost.

Julia studies her boy's handsome face - not so much of a boy anymore.

BEEP! BEEP! The sound of a truck's horn takes us to

INT. JULIA'S BLACK 2017 F150 - DAY

Julia tapping her horn, peering out the windshield for Sam who emerges from the trailer carrying a gym bag.

SAM

(entering)

Okay-okay-Mom, easy on the horn!
What do you wanna' do, piss off the
neighbors?

Julia throws her arm across the seat and backs up the truck.

JULIA

You're going to be late. And if our
loud meth head neighbors want to
party till four then they can get up
at seven.

Julia LAYS ON THE HORN once more then drives away, getting a CHUCKLE out of Sam.

EXT. AVENUE - LOUISIANA TOWN - DAY

Julia's truck cruises down the road.

INT. JULIA'S TRUCK - SAME

Sam rolls down the window and feels the wind on his face.

Julia looks over at him and it's in her eyes - he is the light of her life.

After a time Sam turns to Julia.

SAM

You never said what you think of Rani.

JULIA

She's very pretty.

SAM

And?

Julia weighs what to say.

JULIA

Mature. I think she's a very mature young woman.

SAM

Too mature for me?

JULIA

I didn't say that.

SAM

But it's what you think.

Julia just drives, lets it sit.

SAM (CONT'D)

She wants me to go camping with her.

JULIA

Oh. When?

SAM

Tonight. She wants to pick me up after work.

Julia notes the gym bag at Sam's feet.

JULIA

Sounds fun. Where're you going?

SAM

Tug Lake.

JULIA

She has a boat?

SAM

No. She's going with some friends. They're all gonna' rent one.

There is a moment here where Sam wrestles with a decision and Julia awaits the outcome.

SAM (CONT'D)

You think I should go?

JULIA

What do you think?

SAM

I don't know.

JULIA

Have you met her friends?

Sam shakes his head "no".

JULIA (CONT'D)

Just do what feels comfortable.
Okay, Sam? I'm sure she'll
understand.

Sam smiles at his mom then looks again out the window, his mind on something other than the passing urban sprawl.

EXT. NORTH SIDE CYCLES - DAY

DOUG KEOUGH (40) a tall muscular biker with a moustache, tattoos and a knife on his hip, works in the open garage.

Julia and Sam arrive in the truck and he waves hello.

INT. JULIA'S TRUCK - DAY

Sam picks up the gym bag between his feet.

JULIA

What have you got there?

SAM

Clothes, swim trunks.

JULIA

So you're going to go?

SAM

Yeah, I'll go. Rani said they'd pick me up after work and go straight to the lake, so I won't see you till Sunday.

JULIA

All right, go ahead, have fun. But no drinking and driving. Okay? Not even a boat.

SAM

I don't drink, Mom.

JULIA

Well, you can if you want. You're a young man. Just be responsible.

SAM
I'm not legal.

JULIA
Yeah, so? Neither am I.

SAM
Thanks, Mom. See you Sunday.

Sam gets out and walks into the GARAGE passing Doug who sets down his tools and approaches the truck.

DOUG
Mornin', Sam. Hey, do me a favor
and start on that Harley over there.
The guy wants it by noon.

SAM
Okay. I'll get right on it.

Doug comes up to Julia's truck.

JULIA
Hey, handsome.

Doug leans on the open window and gives her a kiss. Julia tweaks his bushy mustache.

JULIA (CONT'D)
When are you gonna' shave this thing,
it tickles.

DOUG
I thought you liked tickling.

JULIA
Not under my nose.

Doug smiles and takes a moment to admire his girlfriend, Julia as taken with Doug as he is with her.

JULIA (CONT'D)
(re: Sam)
How's he doing?

DOUG
He's fine, he learns fast. Already
does a great detail. He's a good kid.

JULIA
You two getting along?

DOUG
Yeah...
(MORE)

DOUG (CONT'D)

(glances at Sam)
He's still in his shell but cracks
are forming.

JULIA

Oh hey, Happy Birthday.

DOUG

That's not 'til tomorrow.

JULIA

Yeah, I know, but I have a present
for you, a surprise.

DOUG

I hate surprises.

JULIA

You won't hate this. Sam's going
camping for the weekend with his new
girlfriend so I've got the place to
myself. I thought I'd have you over
for dinner. How's that for a present?

DOUG

Sounds great, but why not my place,
there's more room?

JULIA

What's the matter, you don't like my
tin can? C'mon, we're always at
your place. This time it's my dinner,
my kitchen, my treat. All right?

DOUG

Sure, okay.
(checks Sam)
So Sam's got a girlfriend.

JULIA

Yep, first one, and she's drop-dead
gorgeous.

DOUG

Good for him.

JULIA

I don't know about that, she's a
little... worldly.

DOUG

What's the matter, afraid she's gonna'
take away your little boy? They all
grow up sometime.

JULIA

Yeah, I know. I just want him to be careful.

DOUG

What for? Where's the fun in that?...
I'll see ya' tonight.

Doug gives her another kiss then backs away from the truck and Julia waves and drives off.

EXT. AVENUE - LOUISIANA TOWN - DAY

Julia turns onto the main thoroughfare and cruises along. Passing a 1995 WHITE F150 on the other side of the median.

JUAN AZUETA - THE NAGUAL

At the wheel.

Juan's older now, over sixty, with long gray hair. Gone is any semblance of Julia's loving father, replaced by a man with a dark interior - a NAGUAL (nah'wahl) or sorcerer, a black-hearted member of a venomous breed.

The Nagual checks out the small Southern town as he drives. The eagle's talon around his neck and a leather pouch on the seat beside him - his medicine bag.

His PHONE CHIMES.

He pulls it out and checks a text:

CRAWFISH BAR 10 AM

EXT. STREET - LOUISIANA TOWN - DAY

The Nagual walks down a sidewalk in a rough part of town. Stops and looks across the street at a rundown bar.

A sign out front with a smiling crawfish clutching a beer.

INT. CRAWFISH BAR - DAY

A sweaty fat slob of a PRIVATE EYE (40s) sits at a table in the otherwise empty bar nursing a highball.

An OLD BARTENDER, the only other animate object in the place, preps his bar, scooping ice from a bucket onto some beer.

The Nagual enters and stops in the doorway, letting his eyes adjust to the dimly lit room.

Private Eye looks at the Nagual and moves out a chair.

CLOSE ON:

Photographs in a Manila folder: surreptitious shots of Julia and Sam in her truck and outside their trailer.

The Nagual perusing the photos that are part of a report.

PRIVATE EYE

I finally tracked her down about a week ago. After what happened in Maine she got real clever, that's why it took so long to find her. Now she's constantly on the move, never stays anywhere for more than a few months, and she keeps changing her name. Goes by Julia Garcia now. Changed your grandson Sam's name too. She homeschools him and teaches online, lives in a trailer so she can leave at the drop of a hat.

The Nagual holds up a photo of Julia and Doug at a cafe.

NAGUAL

Who's this?

PRIVATE EYE

The boyfriend, name's Doug Keough. He's got a motorcycle shop out on Lebleu Road. He's legit now, but he's done time, used to belong to one of the local biker gangs, the Renegades, along with his twin brother. I'd give him a wide berth if I were you.

The Nagual gives the photo of Doug a second look, nods stoically, then takes an envelope from his jean jacket and lays it on the table.

Private Eye picks it up and flips through the cash inside.

PRIVATE EYE (CONT'D)

Do I need to count it?

The Nagual just stares at the fat sweaty man.

Private Eye wipes his brow with a handkerchief then opens a briefcase and puts the money inside.

When he does the Nagual deftly slips a pinch of green powder into Private Eye's drink.

PRIVATE EYE (CONT'D)

Well, I guess that settles it then.

Private Eye polishes off his drink, picks up his briefcase and stands. Looks at the Nagual, curious about something.

PRIVATE EYE (CONT'D)

You know there's just one thing here
I don't quite understand. Don't
mind my asking but why are you so
hellbent on finding your grandson?
It's her kid. If she wants to raise
him on her own, what's it to you?

NAGUAL

The boy has my blood.

The Nagual's response is more of an accusation than a statement of fact and it gives Private Eye the creeps. He smiles awkwardly then makes a beeline for the door.

After he's gone, the Nagual's gaze turns to the empty glass.

EXT. CRAWFISH BAR - DAY

Private Eye steps outside and looks up at a sky of Stygian darkness. Rushes over to his car through a sudden DOWNPOUR.

INT. PRIVATE EYE'S CAR - DAY

He ducks into an older Cadillac DeVille. Lays the briefcase on the seat and opens it, checking the money again.

EXT. BACKWOODS ROAD - SWAMP - DAY

Private Eye drives out of town through the pouring rain, peering through the overloaded wipers.

He travels deeper into the swamp.

Takes a turn down a tree-lined road then becomes disoriented.

He pulls over and opens his glove box. Takes out a map from under a gun.

Gets his bearings. Then pulls a U-ey and quickly brakes.

The rain-blurred shape of a man suddenly there in the road.

PRIVATE EYE

(mutters)
What-the-hell?

Private Eye waits a moment then BEEPS the horn.

PRIVATE EYE (CONT'D)

C'mon, get out of the way!

He BEEPS again but the man won't move so he rolls down his window and sees it's the Nagual.

PRIVATE EYE (CONT'D)

Hey, what are you doing out--

He stops mid-sentence and stares in disbelief as the Nagual walks toward the car, GROWING TALLER as he comes, elongating like a stretchy-man with incredibly long arms that nearly touch the ground.

The freaked-out Private Eye throws the car in reverse.

Whips it around and floors it.

THE 8 CYLINDER SEDAN

Flies down the rain-soaked road, splashing through puddles.

PRIVATE EYE

Driving like a man possessed.

Eyes darting. Hands tight to the wheel.

He opens the glove box.

Fumbles for his gun and drops it on the floor.

Looks up at a sudden bend in the road.

Spins the wheel.

Whips around the turn.

And runs into the Nagual again, now nearly TEN-FEET-TALL.

The terrified Private Eye slams the brakes.

Turns the car.

The back tires sliding off the road. Spinning in mud.

The huge blurry figure comes toward him through the rain.

Private Eye reaches for the gun, but only manages to push it away with his fingertips. He bolts up.

Throws the car in reverse.

Wheels it around and speeds off the other way.

The Cadillac fishtailing down the road through the downpour.

Around another bend.

And straight into the HUGE MAN again. His impossibly long arms reaching out for the car.

Private Eye clenches his jaw. Floors it. And drives straight into the man, BAM!

The big car CRUNCHES to a halt. Glass shattering. Airbags deployed.

Private Eye pinned between the crumpled dash and the seat.

THE NAGUAL

Standing at the side of the road in the pouring rain. The wrecked Cadillac bent around a tree at the edge of a STREAM.

The Nagual walks up to the car. Reaches in through a blown-out window and takes the cash from the briefcase.

The bleeding, dazed Private Eye slumped over the wheel gazing at the Nagual through a mist of white smoke.

The Nagual moves away from the car that teeters on the edge of the murky stream. The RAIN POURING DOWN.

Loosening the earth under the wheels.

Sending the old Cadillac sliding down the embankment into the stream where it vanishes under the caramel-colored water.

The Nagual calmly observes its passing then turns and walks off through the rain.

INT. RANI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Rani lingers in bed half under the sheets gazing dreamily at a photo of Sam on the nightstand.

Someone KNOCKS softly on the door.

RANI

It's open.

ASHLEY LUM (18) a petite, bright-eyed brunette opens the door and pops her head in.

ASHLEY

Hey, Rani. Better get up if you want to go camping, it's almost two.

RANI

Okay, thanks.

ASHLEY

So is your new boyfriend coming?

RANI

Yeah, I think so.

ASHLEY

Oh cool, I can't wait to meet him.
Hey, I picked up some Kona coffee.
Do you want some?

RANI

No, but save me some orange juice.

ASHLEY

I already did. I hid it where no one will
ever look for it - behind the dish soap.

RANI

Is anyone else up?

ASHLEY

Rob, of course, he's already loading
the van. And I heard Mister America
doing his push-ups. So if you don't
want to wait for the bathroom you
better hurry.

Ashley shuts the door and Rani lies there a moment thinking.
A black and white cat jumps up on her bed and she pets him.

RANI

Good morning, Zeb.

INT. HALLWAY - RANI'S HOUSE - DAY

Rani pads down the hall in shorts and a tank-top when GENO
MIGNOLE (20) a muscular, Alpha male comes out of a door at
the end of the hall and suddenly races her to the bathroom.

Rani winning, shutting the bathroom door in his face.

GENO

(bangs the door)

Shit! That's twice this week!

KITCHEN - LATER

Rani sits at a table eating a breakfast of orange juice and
yogurt. Ashley nearby doing dishes, gazing out a window at
the driveway where her boyfriend...

ROB LEARY (18) a lanky, unkempt guy wearing glasses, loads
camping supplies into the back of an old VW van.

ASHLEY

Look at him, he's like an ant, he never stops moving. God, it gets on my nerves...

(looks back at Rani)

Especially in bed.

Rani looks out at Rob placing cases of beer in the van.

RANI

Rob's nice, Ash and he's really into you.

ASHLEY

(lamentably)

Yeah, I know.

RANI

Hey, c'mon, remember, it's what's inside that counts.

ASHLEY

No, it's what's inside me that counts.

The two friends LAUGH.

BROOKE SCHRAG (21) a stacked, blonde, quintessential stripper with a cosmetic addiction walks in and goes to the fridge.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Good morning, Brooke.

BROOKE

What's so good about it?

(opens the fridge and turns)

All right, who drank the last of the orange juice!

Rani, with her back to Brooke, drains her glass. Brooke looks at Rani as the guilty party then storms out of the kitchen.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

Fuckin' roommates!

Rani and Ashley look at each other and SNICKER.

EXT. OFFICE - DOUG'S GARAGE - DAY

Doug waits on the phone at his desk, frustrated, a "Blue Screen of Death" on the crashed computer in front of him.

Sam walks in from the garage carrying his gym bag.

SAM

Hey, Doug. I got everything put away so is it okay if I take off?

DOUG

What time is it?

SAM

Almost five.

DOUG

Yeah, all right. I'll see you Monday. Hey, good job today.

SAM

Thanks.

(re: computer)

Are you having any luck with that?

DOUG

No, it's a nightmare.

SAM

Who's that, tech support?

DOUG

Yeah, supposedly. There's a number on the screen, but for all I know it's from a fake web site. Now they've got me on hold.

SAM

Just remember if they ask for money it's a scam.

ONLINE SCAMMER ON PHONE (V.O.)

Sir, are you there?

DOUG

Yeah, I'm here.

Doug gives a thumbs up to Sam who waves goodbye and leaves.

ONLINE SCAMMER ON PHONE (V.O.)

Thank you for your patience, sir, but I am sorry, in order to help you with this it will require advanced troubleshooting and for that there is a charge of ninety-five dollars. Would you like to proceed?

DOUG

Yeah, sure. Why not? Just hold on a sec', let me grab my gold bars.

(MORE)

DOUG (CONT'D)
Okay, now open your mouth...
(looks at the phone)
HERE THEY COME!

WHAM! Doug slams down the phone.

EXT. DOUG'S GARAGE - DAY

Sam sits outside gazing up at a gray overcast sky, picks up his bag and stands when the old VW van pulls in off the street.

INT. VAN - DAY

Rani looks out at Sam from the third row seat.

RANI
There he is.

Ashley, sitting beside Rob in the second row seat, views Sam then turns to Rani.

ASHLEY
Oh my God, Rani, he's gorgeous.
Where'd you find him?

Brooke, in the front passenger seat, looks up from filing her nails to check out Sam.

BROOKE
Where else? At the club.

RANI
We met at the mall. I don't date
guys from the club.

Geno, at the wheel, chimes in.

GENO
You hooked up with me.

RANI
That's different, you work there.
And I wouldn't call our one date
"hooking up". All we did is go to a
movie.

BROOKE
Yeah, stupid. And don't talk about
dating other women in front of me,
I hate that.

Brooke goes back to filing her nails and Geno mocks her, pantomiming her words: "*I hate that*".

Rani taps Rob on the shoulder.

RANI
Hey, let me out.

ROB
(rolling a joint)
Hang on, I'm almost finished.

Rob licks the papers then slides open the door. Takes in a great view of Rani's shapely ass as she exits the van.

Ashley elbows him.

ASHLEY
Don't look!

ROB
What? It's right there. What do you expect me to do?

Rani walks up to Sam and greets him with a kiss. Leads him back to the van.

RANI
(entering)
Hey, everyone, this is Sam.

A chorus of AD LIBBED GREETINGS assail Sam: "*Hi!, Hey, Sam, Howzit, brah,*" etc.

SAM
Hi.

Sam tries to enter the van but Rob puts out his arm.

ROB
Hey, wait a minute. You got your cell?

RANI
No, he doesn't, Rob. I told him it's a no cell phone weekend. And what does it matter, there's no service out there anyway.

SAM
Yeah, I left it at home.
(raises his hand)
I swear.

Rob drops his arm and Sam gets in the 3rd row seat with Rani. Rob fires up the joint and offers it to Sam.

ROB

Well, bro, welcome to the Magical
Mystery Tour. Wanna' hit?

SAM

No, that's all right, I don't smoke,
but thanks.

ROB

Sure, man, no problem, just more for me.

Rob takes a hit and turns back in his seat. Sam looks over
at Rani who smiles and takes his hand.

EXT. DOUG'S GARAGE - DAY

The van pulls out on to the street and speeds away.

Doug, closing up the garage, watches it go. He pulls down
the garage door. Locks it then goes back to his office.

INT. OFFICE - DOUG'S GARAGE - DAY

Doug takes some cash from a register then lowers the blinds
when the phone RINGS.

DOUG

Hello, North Side Cycles.

CUT BETWEEN: Julia in her TRAILER and Doug in the garage.

JULIA

Hey, it's me.

DOUG

I'm just closing up. I'll be there
in ten minutes.

JULIA

Sam get off okay?

DOUG

Yeah, he just left.

JULIA

Were they drinking?

DOUG

Not that I could see. But come on,
stop worrying, he's a good kid. Let
him have some fun.

JULIA

I know, I'm just being a mom.

DOUG

You can take "being a mom" a little too far, you know. He's gotta' get out of the nest someday.

JULIA

You think I'm too protective?

DOUG

It's not what I think that matters.

Julia takes a moment to consider Doug's advice. Changes tone.

JULIA

Hey, what do you want for dessert, peach pie or chocolate mousse?

DOUG

How 'bout just you.

JULIA

Yeah, and how would you like that, a la mode on the couch or back in the bed?

DOUG

How 'bout we start in the bed and see where we end up.

JULIA

Well then hurry up, handsome, and get over here.

DOUG

All right, I'm on my way.

Doug sets down the phone and takes keys off the desk when the office door opens and an old man walks in - the Nagual.

He halts in the doorway and stares at Doug.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

EXT. CEMETERY - TWILIGHT

A white granite headstone rises out of a sea of grass; one of hundreds of graves arrayed across the cemetery.

The Volkswagon van passes by in the distance, traversing the green landscape under a gray belt of gloom.

INT. VAN - TWILIGHT

Sam gazes out the window at the abodes of the dead, his own ghostly reflection staring back at him from out of the glass.

ASHLEY
 (turns around)
 So, Sam, what high school do you go to?

Sam, stirred from a reverie, takes a moment to answer.

RANI
 Sam's not from around here. He and
 his mom travel a lot so he's
 homeschooled.

ASHLEY
 No. Seriously? What are you like
 really religious?

SAM
 Not especially.

Rob turns and looks back at Sam.

ROB
 Hey, I'm religious. I'm a devoted
 member of the S-B-R-R church.

ASHLEY
 S-B-R-R? What's that?

ROB
 (holds up a joint)
 Sex, drugs and rock-n-roll, babe.

ASHLEY
 There's no B in that? What's the B for?

ROB
 The B is for...
 (searches for an answer)
 BABE, babe.

Ashley turns from her hopeless boyfriend.

GENO
 (into the rearview mirror)
 Hey, Sam, do you play sports, football
 or anything?

SAM
 No, I'm not into sports.

Geno looks side-eyed at Brooke and bends his wrist in an
 effeminate manner to indicate what he thinks of Sam.

INT. JULIA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Julia lights a candle on a table set for two.

Opens a small oven and checks a roast.

Looks at a clock - 6:35.

Picks up her cell phone and calls Doug.

CUT IN: DOUG'S OFFICE - his cell phone on his desk RINGING.

Julia hangs up, puzzled.

RESUME: Doug's cell phone RINGING one last time, going still.

Doug nearby lashed to a chair. Head drooped. Eyelids heavy. A fine yellow powder all over his face.

DOUG'S EYES

Are bloodshot, drugged.

He rolls his head deliriously. RECALLS glimpses of...

The Nagual blowing the yellow powder in his face.

The room swirling. All the lights refracted and colorful.

The wicked face of the Nagual coming in and out of view, everything in trails like an acid trip.

END DOUG'S RECALL.

THE NAGUAL

Pulls a knife from his belt and walks up to Doug tied to the chair. Grabs him by the hair and calmly cuts off Doug's ear.

Doug barely reacting, so deep is he under the fog of the drug.

The Nagual wraps up the ear and puts it in his medicine bag.

Stanches the blood then takes out a needle and thread and starts stitching the wound.

EXT. TUG LAKE - NIGHT

The Volkswagon van descends an access road to the large dark lake where a cloud-veiled full moon hangs over the horizon.

EXT. BOAT RENTAL SHOP - TUG LAKE - NIGHT

The van pulls into the parking lot of the isolated shop, the shopkeeper's car the only other vehicle in sight.

INT. BOAT RENTAL SHOP - NIGHT

A big gray tom cat lies on a counter.

Geno, with Brooke, puts down a credit card and pets the cat.

A wiry OLD MAN behind the counter eyes the young couple skeptically then rings up the sale.

He pulls keys off a rack then holds them back from Geno.

OLD MAN

You know I don't really like rentin' boats at night. You sure you've been out there before?

BROOKE

Yeah, lots of times. And there's a full moon tonight. We'll be fine.

OLD MAN

All right, just be careful.
(hands the keys to Geno)
It's the first slip on the left.
You can't miss it. But no drinkin' while operating the boat. Understand?

GENO

Oh no, sir, of course not. We're Quakers, we don't drink.

Geno and Brooke saunter out of the store, Brooke unable to contain her LAUGHTER.

The Old Man watches them go then pets his cat.

OLD MAN

Quakers, my ass, arrogant punks if you ask me. That's all this country produces anymore.

EXT. DOCK - TUG LAKE - NIGHT

Geno and Brooke join the others waiting on the dock with their supplies: coolers, tents, beach chairs, cases of beer, etc.

GENO

All right, load it up. Let's go!

TWIN MERCURY MOTORS

RUMBLE to life.

A BEECHCRAFT 150 Pleasure Boat pulls away from the dock, a trail of white foam in her wake.

INT. JULIA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Julia sits on the couch with a glass of wine watching TV, preoccupied with concern and anger about Doug.

She picks up her phone and calls Doug again. Hangs up. Puts on her coat and opens the door.

Startled by the dark shape of a man outside the trailer. Julia GASPS! And the man steps into the light.

JULIA

Shit, Doug! You scared the hell out of me. Where've you been? I was just coming to look for you.

Doug turns and reveals a bandage over his left ear.

JULIA (CONT'D)

What happened?

DOUG

I caught a tree branch riding my bike. Sorry, I shoulda' called.

MOMENTS LATER

Julia pours a drink and hands it to Doug. He takes it and the bottle of bourbon on the counter and heads for the couch. Julia looks after him, concerned.

She joins Doug on the couch and tucks up beside him.

JULIA

You want dinner? You must be hungry.

DOUG

No, I'm good.

Doug drains the glass and pours himself another drink, clearly shook-up about his "accident".

JULIA

What did the doctor give you?

DOUG

Nothing. I didn't go to the hospital.

JULIA

Why not?

DOUG

Look, don't make a big deal out of it, all right? It's not that bad.

Julia looks at the large bandage covering his ear, not entirely convinced.

JULIA
Your bike okay?

DOUG
Yeah, it's fine.

Doug drinks and Julia just sits with him for a time, present, but not at all in his hair. After another drink Doug relaxes a bit. Looks at Julia and smiles.

DOUG (CONT'D)
You never know what a fuckin' day's gonna' bring, do ya.

JULIA
No, baby, we don't.

Julia takes Doug's arm and lays against his shoulder. Doug looks down at Julia's head, chokes up and stares into space.

HIP CONTEMPORARY MUSIC plays over the scene and takes us to:

TUG ISLAND AT NIGHT

To campfire smoke rising toward a full moon and canopy of stars.

A radio BLARING OUT the song. Three tents around the fire. Beach chairs, coolers, stacked tree branches for firewood.

The group of friends in a semicircle in chairs or lounging on blankets, their faces aglow in the dancing light of the fire.

Geno and Rob chug beers seeing who can be first to finish. Rob GAGS and spills beer down his shirt. Geno wins and crunches his can... BUURPPP!

BROOKE
That's so gross. I swear, Geno, you act like you're twelve years old.

GENO
Twelve? No way, at least fourteen. I was still a virgin at twelve.

Geno and Rob, already buzzed, CRACK UP.

ASHLEY
Hey, do you think there's anyone else on the island?

ROB
Did you see any other boats?

ASHLEY

No.

ROB

Then there's no one else here. We could run around naked if we wanted to.

GENO

Yeah, I bet you'd like that, wouldn't you, running around with your little ass hanging out.

ROB

Bite me, bud.

GENO

Hey, weren't you a swimmer, Rob? Didn't you wear one of those little Speedos? Did you bring one of those?

BROOKE

I wouldn't talk, Geno. You put on one of my panties once.

ROB

(laughs)

Oh yeah, I can picture that: the big tough jock wearing a little panty.

GENO

Ah, shut up, I put it on as a joke.

BROOKE

Yeah, but what did you do when I left the room?

Brooke grins at Rob then gets a beer from a cooler.

ASHLEY

Ah, come on, you guys, this stuff is so old. Can't you find something more mature to talk about?

GENO

Okay... BURRRPPP!
(belches in Ashley's face)
How's that?

Rani looks at Sam who appears sidelined by her friends' banter.

RANI

Wanna' go for a walk?

EXT. WOODS - TUG ISLAND - NIGHT

Rani and Sam walk down a dark trail through the trees.

SAM

Where're you taking me?

RANI

It's right over here. C'mon.

EXT. COVE - TUG ISLAND - NIGHT

Rani and Sam emerge from the woods into an idyllic cove with calm shimmering water and a great view of the full moon.

SAM

Oh wow, this is nice.

RANI

I thought you'd like it. I used to come here a lot when I was younger. I was in the Girl Scouts and every summer we came out here to camp.

They sit down on the beach.

SAM

You were a Girl Scout?

RANI

Yeah. What?

SAM

Nothin'. It's just that your motor runs pretty hot for a Girl Scout.

RANI

Yeah, well I'm not so much of a girl anymore. Or didn't you notice.

Rani kisses Sam then leans against him and they're quiet for a time, stilled by the serenity of the lake.

RANI (CONT'D)

I can remember sitting here a long time ago on a night just like this thinking how beautiful it was. I used to imagine that one day I'd share it with someone I loved.

Sam looks in her eyes, kisses her. The two lovers make out, Sam really heating up. Suddenly Rani pulls back.

RANI (CONT'D)

Hey, let's go swimming. C'mon, the water's warm.

SAM

I don't know.

RANI

C'monnn.

Rani gets up and strips down to her underwear then walks into the water. Sam waiting, admiring her breathtaking body.

Rani dives into the water and Sam hurries out of his clothes and runs in after her.

INT. BEDROOM - JULIA'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Julia and Doug lie asleep in bed.

JULIA'S EYES

Moving back and forth under her eyelids, dreaming, reliving a terrible day from her past.

FLASHBACK (DREAM)

RAIN. An old blue trailer lies out in a meadow deep in the BELLINGHAM WOODS, draped in the shadows of an expiring DAY.

A white 1995 Ford F150 pulls up and parks.

Juan Azueta (40) Julia's father, steps out of the truck and takes his tool box from the bed. Approaches his home through the rain.

At the trailer door he stops and turns, senses something.

Juan looks out over the meadow at the heavy forest that surrounds his home and does a double-take on an

OLD WOMAN

Among the trees, a perfectly motionless witch-like figure with a mass of frizzy gray hair.

JUAN

Glares at her like a defiant opponent, his dark eyes shaded with dread and hate.

INT. JUAN'S TRAILER - NIGHT

JULIA (17) cooks dinner over a stove, glances over her shoulder as her father walks in.

JULIA

Hey, Dad. Perfect timing. I got home early from school so I got started on dinner, my fabulous beef stew without the beef. It's ready...
 (tasting it with a spoon)
 Only I think I burned it.

She takes the stew off the stove and turns to her dad who sets down his toolbox and stares solemnly at his daughter.

JUAN

Get your things.

Juan's words have all the effect of Medusa's head. Julia freezes, stone-still, tears welling up in her eyes.

JULIA

(breathes out)
 No... no, Dad, not again.

Julia SOBS and Juan rushes to her side.

JUAN

I know, mija, I know. C'mon, don't be afraid. We have to hurry.

INT. JUAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A drawer is yanked out of a desk: two packs of hundreds taped to the back.

Juan stuffs them in his jean jacket then bolts out the door.

JULIA - IN HER BEDROOM

Throws clothes in a bag. Zips it up.

Starts to leave then stops and takes a photo off a mirror, a picture of her with her father that she puts in her shirt.

She dashes from the room.

MEETS HER FATHER AT THE FRONT DOOR

Juan motions for Julia to be quiet then shuts off the lights.

Cracks open the door and peeks outside at the steady rain, THUNDER and lightening in the black dome of the sky.

EXT. JUAN'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Juan and Julia make a run for the truck.

Scramble inside and start it up.

And the old Ford takes off through the rain, its back tires kicking up mud.

INT. F150 - ESCAPING - NIGHT

Juan jams the truck in gear and guns the V-8. Peers out at the road through the overworked wipers and pooling rain.

Julia turns in her seat and checks behind them.

JULIA
C'mon, Dad, go! Go!

THE F150

Tears down the FOREST ROAD.

Weaves around a turn, headlights sweeping the trees.

Landing on the Old Woman at the side of the road.

Julia SCREAMS!

JULIA (CONT'D)
NOOO!

Juan steps on it and drives straight at the woman.

Who leaps out of the way with all the nimbleness of a goat.

The truck speeds past her and skirts the trees. Branches SCRAPING the window.

Juan pulls back on the road and Julia looks behind them.

Nothing there but the HALO OF LIGHT that surrounds the truck, and the pitch darkness beyond it.

Suddenly the Old Woman leaps out of the dark into the light, BOUNDING after the truck like some kind of bizarre kangaroo.

JULIA (CONT'D)
She's coming, Dad! SHE'S COMING!!!

Juan floors it and whips around a turn.

The Old Woman in pursuit, bounding into the light behind the speeding truck. There one moment, gone the next, appearing and vanishing like a strobe effect as she chases after them.

Each time she sails in from out of the dark she lands closer to the truck... closer and CLOSER until she finally leaps through the pouring rain and lands in the bed.

She rushes the cab. SMASHES her fist through the glass and grabs Julia's hair.

JULIA (CONT'D)

DADDY!!!

Juan steers with one hand and reaches back with the other.

The Old Woman pulling Julia out of her seat.

Juan sees a turn. Whips around it.

And the Old Woman is flung out of the bed into the trees.

An hysterical Julia falls back in her seat.

JULIA (CONT'D)

(crying)

Oh God, Daddy! Oh God!

Juan speeds down the road.

Negotiating turns and shifting gears.

When from out of the darkness behind the truck comes the Old Woman again, bounding after them at an amazing speed.

Her face set in a grimace, her eyes filled with hate.

Julia grabs her dad.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Faster, Dad! FASTER!

Juan looks back at the woman then again at the road when a HUGE STAG leaps into their path.

Juan cranks the wheel.

But hits the deer.

That SMASHES into the windshield.

THE F150 CAREENING OFF THE ROAD

Plowing through the brush until it SLAMS into a tree and CRUNCHES to a halt.

A DAZED JUAN AND JULIA

Stagger out of the wreck and take off through headlight beams filled with smoke and rain.

Straight into the path of the Old Woman who SCREECHES and lunges at Julia.

Juan grabs the Old Woman and throws her off his daughter, takes Julia's hand and escapes into the woods.

Hurries her forward to a break in the trees when BAAANNNTTTT the BLARE of a train's horn suddenly pierces the night.

And JULIA BOLTS UP IN BED. Ending the FLASHBACK-DREAM.

Julia takes a moment and breathes. Looks at a clock:

3:05 A.M.

She lies down and goes back to sleep.

INT. BEDROOM - JULIA'S TRAILER - DAY

The bedside digital clock flips to 7:00 A.M.

Julia rolls over and blinks from the bars of sunlight streaming through the blinds.

She puts on coffee in the KITCHEN. Empties the trash and carries it outside.

EXT. JULIA'S TRAILER - DAY

Julia drops the trash in a bin behind the trailer. Bends down and pets a friendly cat at her feet.

JULIA

No fish bones today, handsome. Sorry.

She looks up and the Nagual is suddenly there with a bloody knife in one hand and SAM'S HEAD IN THE OTHER.

Julia SCREAMS. Bolts up IN BED. Sweating. She looks through the dark at the nightstand clock: 3:15 A.M.

Falls back and lays her arm over her eyes, exasperated.

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

A tow truck winches the P.I.'s car from out of the swamp, sludge and brown water pouring out of every seam in the frame.

SHERIFF LEROY DICK (40s) wearing a Smokey the Bear hat, stands on the stream bank observing the vehicle recovery.

Sheriff Dick is stern but honest, civil but not friendly. A man who knows his best days are behind him and doesn't much care.

A burly TOW TRUCK DRIVER approaches him, weaving through EMERGENCY PERSONNEL and vehicles that cover the scene.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
Where do you want me to drop the car?

SHERIFF
Take it to our yard. It's evidence.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
Where's that? I just got this job.

SHERIFF
You got a GPS, don't ya? Use it,
look it up.

Tow Truck Driver hands over an invoice and the Sheriff signs it.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
(reads the signature)
Sheriff Dick?

SHERIFF
Yeah. What?

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
That's appropriate.

Tow Truck Driver walks off and the Sheriff goes to a young
DEPUTY in his car talking with dispatch on the radio.

SHERIFF
Got anything?

DEPUTY
(to dispatch)
Roger that. Hold on.
(to the Sheriff)
It looks like this guy was a private
eye out of Phoenix. He registered
with our office a week ago working a
missing persons case.

SHERIFF
Who was he after?

DEPUTY
He didn't say, didn't want our help
either. We found some footprints
next to the stream and this was on
the floor.

The deputy holds up an evidence bag with the gun.

DEPUTY (CONT'D)
So unless this guy was fishing with
bullets, I'd bet someone else was
here. And these were in his pocket.

He hands the Sheriff another plastic evidence bag with several wet photos of Julia and Sam.

The Sheriff checks it out, turns the bag over. "*Julia Garcia 1268 Casanova Road*" written on the back of one of the photos.

INT. JULIA'S TRAILER - DAY

Julia works at her desk in sight of Doug still asleep at the far end of the trailer beyond an open bedroom door.

On a shelf beside her are volumes on Aztec and Mesoamerican Studies, including works on Shamanism, Folklore and Myths.

Julia takes out a book entitled:

"Mesoamerican and Aztec Sorcery"

Opens it to a chapter on:

"NAGUALS"

She flips through the pages, picking out strings of words:

"Naguals are powerful sorcerers in Mesoamerican cultures..."

"...they can tap into a spiritual realm that enables them to defy the physical laws of our world."

Julia turns to a COLORFUL DRAWING that shows a Nagual being chased through a jungle by conquistadors on horseback.

CLOSE ON: The Nagual soaring through the air with a cluster of LUMINOUS TENTACLES extending out of his torso, reaching fifty feet ahead of him onto the trail, pulling him along.

On a facing page is a sub-heading:

"Nagual Powers"

Julia runs her finger down a list of powers:

"Shapeshifters..."

"The Possession of Animals..."

"Control of the Manitous (or Spirits) of Objects and Plants..."

"Masters of Spells, Potions and Charms..."

"Inhabiting Dreams..."

Julia stops on this phrase and reads:

"The appearance of a Nagual in a dream can often mean that the person has been targeted by a Nagual, or that the sorcerer will soon enter their life."

Julia snaps the book closed. Frightened. Comprehending a danger. She puts the book back on the shelf.

Looks at a PHOTO on the wall, the one picture of her father she managed to save.

She stares at it and thinks. Looks at other photos:

She and her deceased husband ELLIS in his Army uniform.

Sam at different ages.

FOCUSES on a photo of she and Ellis next to FIVE-YEAR-OLD SAM on his little bike out in a park. REMEMBERS that day.

EXT. PARK - DAY - FLASHBACK

Fall. The colorful glory of New England in autumn.

Julia (25) sits on a blanket under a chestnut tree bathed in a golden light that clarifies her beauty.

ELLIS, late 20s, and SAM (5) on a nearby bike path that runs through the trees. Ellis taking the training wheels off of Sam's small bike.

Julia goes to them with mild concern.

JULIA

Ellis, you sure you want to do that?
He's only five.

ELLIS

Ah, he'll be all right, he's ready.
These just get in the way.

Julia is not so sure. Little Sam looks up at her.

FIVE-YEAR-OLD SAM

I'm a big boy, Mama. I don't need
trading wheels.

JULIA

(touches Sam's cheek)
I know, baby. Mommy just wants you to be
safe.

ELLIS

(removes the last wheel)
All right Sam, c'mon, get up here.

Ellis helps Sam onto the bike.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

Okay, you ready? Now pedal hard.

Ellis gives the bike a shove and little Sam pedals for all he's worth. He takes off wobbling at first but then straightens out and heads down the path.

Ellis turns to Julia and smiles.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

I remember when I first learned to ride a bike. It was great. I felt like a cowboy on his horse with the whole world open to me.

Julia watches Sam.

He tries to turn and the bike tips over.

Julia starts to go to Sam but Ellis detains her.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

Hang on, he's got it.

Sam gets the bike upright and takes off again.

Julia smiles at Ellis then looks again at

Her little boy riding off through the trees, taking his first big step out into the world.

The sound of a CAR PULLING IN marks the END OF THE FLASHBACK and brings JULIA out of her reverie.

She looks out at the sheriff's car pulling up to the trailer.

EXT. JULIA'S TRAILER - DAY

A concerned Julia meets the Sheriff who steps out of his car carrying the bag of photos, adjusting his hat.

SHERIFF

Mornin' ma'am. Are you Julia Garcia?

JULIA

Yeah. Why? What's this about? Has something happened to Sam?

SHERIFF

Is Sam your husband?

JULIA

No, my son.

SHERIFF

I'm sure your son is fine, ma'am.
This isn't about him. I'm here
regarding a Mr. Nick Behrens. Does
that name ring a bell?

A relieved Julia shakes her head.

JULIA

No.

The Sheriff takes the private eye's driver's license from
his pocket and shows Julia.

SHERIFF

Have you ever seen this man?

JULIA

I don't think so. Who is he?

SHERIFF

A private detective. We pulled his
car out of the swamp this morning with
him in it. He had these with him.

He hands Julia the bag of photos.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

We think someone hired him to investigate
you. Did he ever contact you?

Julia looks over the photos in the sealed bag:

- *One of her coming out of a grocery store.*
- *Another of her and Sam outside their trailer.*

Dismay flashes in Julia's eyes at the sight of the photos.
She hands them back and puts up a front for the cop.

JULIA

He never spoke to me. And I don't
know why anyone would be taking my
picture.

SHERIFF

You sure you've never seen him?
These private eyes are clever fellows:
ex-cops, a lot of them. He might
have posed as someone else just to
get close to you - a delivery man,
someone looking for directions. You
sure he never made contact?

JULIA

I'm sure.

SHERIFF

How about someone who might be looking for you, know anything about that?

Julia does and it shows in her face.

JULIA

No one's looking for me.

The Sheriff doesn't buy it and that shows too.

SHERIFF

Are you married, Ms. Garcia? Got an ex-husband who might want to track you down?

JULIA

My husband's dead, he was killed in Iraq.

SHERIFF

I'm sorry to hear that. I lost a nephew in the same stupid war. WMDs my ass.

Julia meets the Sheriff's attempt at rapport with a blank stare.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

How 'bout an old boyfriend? You're an attractive woman. Got anyone in your past who might be looking for you, any enemies?

JULIA

No, I told you no one's looking for me. I have no enemies, no angry ex-lovers and I'm not running from the mob. And I have no idea why this asshole was taking my picture. Maybe he's a creep stalking me, or maybe he was hired by one. But this sort of thing happens to women all the time and I've got more important things to worry about, like paying the bills. So if you don't mind I'd like to go back to work.

SHERIFF

Okay. Fair enough, Ms. Garcia. Sorry to bother you.

The Sheriff turns to go but then pauses at his car door.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Oh, by the way, what is it you do?

JULIA

I'm a teacher.

SHERIFF

Yeah. Where?

JULIA

I teach online for small colleges.

SHERIFF

So you work from home?

The Sheriff takes in the trailer.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Kind of a mobile lifestyle, isn't it?
House on wheels, take your job with
you wherever you go.

JULIA

Yeah. What of it?

SHERIFF

The what of it, ma'am, is that I
wouldn't want you to pack up and
leave town until this matter is
resolved. Understood?

JULIA

I thought this was a free country.

SHERIFF

It was yesterday. Today you're up
to your neck in a possible homicide.
I'd stay put if I were you.
(tips his hat)
Have a nice day.

The Sheriff gets back in his car and drives away.

INT. JULIA'S TRAILER - DAY

An anxious Julia comes in and grabs her cell off her desk.
Calls Sam and his phone RINGS on a table across the room.

JULIA

Shit!

Julia moves swiftly into her bedroom.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Doug, get up! I have to go!

DOUG
 (groggy)
 What? What's going on?

JULIA
 I have to leave. Sam's in trouble and he needs my help. I have to find him.

DOUG
 What kind of trouble?

JULIA
 Just, get up, okay. I don't have time to explain. I have to go. C'mon, take a shower. I'm gonna' hook up the trailer.

Doug swings his long frame out of bed and stands.

DOUG
 Hey, wait a minute, hold on. Just slow down a sec'. What are you talking about? Are you leaving town?

Julia holds Doug's gaze in a moment of truth.

JULIA
 I'd stay if I could. I swear. You're just gonna' have to trust me on this, but I don't really have a choice.

DOUG
 All right, babe, all right. I don't need to know. It doesn't matter. Just let me help. Okay? Whatever this is, I'm with you and Sam - no matter what.

Julia tears up and Doug hugs her.

CUT TO:

A GAS DISPENSER METER

Rotating past "20 Gallons".

Julia fills up at a GAS STATION then gets back in the TRUCK.

JULIA
 Did you find it?

DOUG

(checking his phone)
Yeah, the quickest way to the lake
is I10 to 287 then north on highway
59, it's a little south of Tyler.

JULIA

Yeah, that figures, out in the middle
of nowhere.

Julia puts the truck in gear and drives off.

INT. SHERIFF'S CAR - DAY

The Sheriff pulls up to a drive through window and picks up
some DUNKIN' DONUTS and coffee.

He parks. Eats. Thinks. Picks up his radio.

SHERIFF

Hey, Karen, run a check for me will ya.
It's on a Ms. Julia Garcia, 1268 Casanova
Road. See what pops up and get back to me.

KAREN (V.O.)

Ten four, Sheriff, but it might take
awhile. I'm by myself.

SHERIFF

Where's Lem?

KAREN (V.O.)

He called in again. He had another
fight with Maybellene and she
handcuffed him to the bed. His
neighbor's over there now with a
hacksaw.

SHERIFF

Well, just get to it when you can.
And tell Lem he needs to divorce
that witch.

KAREN (V.O.)

I tell 'em all the time but he won't
listen, that boy's in love.

The Sheriff replaces the mic and spills his coffee.

SHERIFF

Ah shitt!!!

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Julia's truck speeds past the cemetery on the way to Tug Lake, a caretaker mowing the grass between the graves.

INT. JULIA'S TRUCK - DAY

Julia and Doug travel in silence for a time then Julia looks over and sees blood trickling from the bandage on Doug's ear.

JULIA
You're bleeding again.

Doug touches his ear, gets blood on his fingertips.

JULIA (CONT'D)
There's some tissue in the glove box.

Doug takes out the tissue and dabs his ear.

JULIA (CONT'D)
How's it feel?

DOUG
It's all right.
(looks slyly at Julia)
But I can only hear half of what
you're saying.

Julia grins at his joke. Drives for a time, thinking.

JULIA
I want you to know I really appreciate
this, your trusting me. Just know
it's nothing illegal. Okay?

DOUG
Wouldn't matter if it was.

JULIA
There's someone looking for us,
someone I want to keep away from Sam.
I can't tell you more than that.

DOUG
Why don't you let me talk to him?
I'll set him straight.

Julia takes a beat, her mind on something distant and obscure.

JULIA
If I thought it would work, Doug, I
swear, I'd let you try. But just trust
me, it would only make things worse.

DOUG
 You can't run forever, babe. That's
 no way to live.

Julia looks at Doug then back at the road, knows it's true.

INT. NAGUAL'S TRUCK - DAY

The Nagual follows behind Julia's truck with Doug's severed ear laying on his lap. He shuts his eyes and LISTENS TO JULIA AND DOUG'S CONVERSATION.

DOUG (V.O.)
 Hey, what do you got in the trailer
 for first aid? I want to change
 this bandage.

JULIA (V.O.)
 Nothing that size. There's a truck
 stop up ahead. We can get something
 there.

DOUG (V.O.)
 Shit, it won't stop bleeding. Now
 look at this, it's dripping all over
 my shirt.

A FOUR-YEAR-OLD BOY - TRAVELING IN A CAR

Alongside the Nagual's truck looks out his window at the Nagual driving down the road with his eyes closed.

FOUR-YEAR-OLD BOY
 Mommy, that man's driving with his
 eyes closed.

BOY'S MOM
 Sit back in your seat, Randy. And
 don't stare at the other drivers, it
 isn't polite.

The boy looks again at the Nagual...

Who opens his eyes and looks at the boy then suddenly flicks out a long FORKED TONGUE like a snake.

The frightened little boy throws himself back in his seat with his eyes as wide as saucers.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - DAY

Julia's truck and trailer pull into the truck stop.

After a few cars pass the Nagual's truck pulls to the side of the road outside the truck stop and waits.

EXT. BEACH - TUG ISLAND - DAY

The three couples play chicken-fight in the water:

Rani atop Sam's shoulders battling Ashley atop Rob: the girl's hands clenched together, pulling each other, LAUGHING, the boys under them struggling to stay upright in the water.

Suddenly Brooke, atop Geno, crashes into the pair and they all tumble over in a heap.

The boy's toned bodies glistening wet, the girls adjusting bikinis that slip out of place, everyone CRACKING-UP, wrestling, frolicking in the water.

LATER

They all sit on the shore resting and soaking up the sun. Ashley and Rob stand up.

ASHLEY

Hey, we're going to walk around the island. Do you guys wanna' come?

GENO

(stands)

Yeah, I'll come. But why don't we jog around it?

BROOKE

Yeah, right, Tarzan. Why do you always have to turn everything into a workout? It's so obnoxious.

GENO

So I like to stay in shape, what's wrong with that? I'm trying to get a scholarship, you know. I don't want to spend my whole life in our podunk town. I got bigger dreams than that.

ROB

Yeah, you're dreamin', Geno, if you think you're gettin' a football scholarship: I've seen you play.

GENO

Not football, asshole - rugby.

ASHLEY

Rugby? What's that?

ROB

You know, it's that stupid English game that started with two guys fightin' over a watermelon.

Brooke stands and gives Geno the once over.

BROOKE

Geno, why don't you drop the act. You don't bodybuild because you want a scholarship, you're just compensating for something else. And we all know what that is.

Brooke gives Rani an "I got him again" look then walks off down the beach with Geno hurrying after her.

GENO

(voice fading)

Hey, you know what, I've had all of that crap I can take! First you tell people I'm weak in the sack and now you start in with this shit! I've only got so much patience you know!

Ashley listens to them argue then turns to Rani and Sam.

ASHLEY

I bet they get married.
(after a beat)
You guys comin'?

Rani checks with Sam who shakes his head "no".

RANI

No, you go ahead, we'll stay here.

ASHLEY

Okay, suit yourself. If you want, you can go back and get the fire going. I've got some great spicy chicken I was gonna' cook for lunch.

RANI

Sure, that sounds good. We'll see you there.

Ashley walks after Rob who is already following Brooke and Geno down the beach.

Rani checks with Sam.

RANI (CONT'D)

You sure you don't want to go?

SAM
No, I like it here.

RANI
(re: her friends)
I guess they get old after awhile,
don't they?

SAM
Nah, your friends are all right. I
like them, really.

RANI
You're too nice.

Rani moves over and straddles Sam who sits in the sand with his arms braced behind him.

RANI (CONT'D)
Have I ever told you that I love
your hair,...

She runs her hands through Sam's thick black hair.

RANI (CONT'D)
That you have beautiful lips...
(touches them)
And beautiful eyes...

She touches each one then puts her arms around Sam's neck.

RANI (CONT'D)
And a beautiful....

And we don't hear the last word as her mouth comes close to Sam and they kiss, fall back in the sand and make out.

After a time Rani lays her head on Sam's shoulder.

RANI (CONT'D)
Sam.

SAM
Yeah?

RANI
What are you thinking?

SAM
Nothin' really. I'm just happy.

RANI
Happy with me?

SAM
Yeah, of course.

RANI
How happy?

SAM
I don't know, about as happy as I
can be, I guess.

RANI
Are you going to leave me, Sam?

SAM
No. Why would you say that?

RANI
I mean one day. Don't you think
you'll get tired of me, want someone
else?

SAM
(rising up on an elbow)
Hey, what's the matter? Why are you
talking like this?

RANI
I know it's dumb, but it's just a
feeling. Everything is so perfect
right now - I'm just afraid it's
gonna' end.

Sam gazes into Rani's gorgeous brown eyes.

SAM
That's up to us, isn't it?

RANI
I'll never leave you. I know that.
Never.

SAM
Then you've got nothing to worry
about.

Sam kisses Rani, holds her as if to never let her go.

EXT. BOAT RENTAL SHOP - TUG LAKE - DAY

Julia's truck and trailer pulls up to the shop and parks
near the Volkswagon van.

She and Doug step out of the vehicle.

JULIA
I'll rent the boat. Can you check
on the trailer? I forgot to lock
the windows before we left.

DOUG
Yeah, sure.
(reaches for his wallet)
Here, let me pay for it.

JULIA
No, I got it.

Julia heads inside then thinks of something and turns.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Hey! While you're in there get my gun.
It's in the drawer next to the bed.

DOUG
You think you need your gun? Just
how bad is this guy?

JULIA
Bad enough.

Julia enters the shop and Doug stares after her for a time
then turns and looks up at the access road where the Nagual's
truck approaches the lake.

INT. BOAT RENTAL SHOP - TUG LAKE - DAY

Julia walks through the quiet little store. Reaches the
counter when the Old Man suddenly pops up startling Julia.

OLD MAN
Sorry, ma'am. Didn't mean to scare
ya, just feedin' my cat.

Julia peers over the counter at the big gray tom eating a fish.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
That's Badu. He's an ill-tempered tom,
but he keeps the rats in check. I give
em a fish every time he gets one.

He picks up a black rat by the tail from behind the counter
and shows Julia. Drops it in the trash then puts out his hand.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
Idus Newbury, pleased to meet ya.

Julia hesitates and the Old Man figures it out.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Oops, sorry.
(wipes his hand on
his pants)
You here to fish?

JULIA

No. I just want to rent a boat for
the day. My boyfriend and I want to
check out Tug Island.

OLD MAN

Well, you won't be alone. A bunch of
kids went out there last night.
Hopefully they'll keep their clothes
on. These kids, they like to go
skinny-dippin'. I know, I seen em.

The Old Man grins lasciviously, revealing a few brown stems
he calls teeth.

JULIA

(icy)
Must have been your lucky day.

Old Man drops his head, shamefully. Takes out a rental sheet.

EXT. TUG LAKE - DAY

Julia's rented boat speeds across the water.

EXT. JULIA'S BOAT - DAY

Doug stands at the helm with Julia beside him loading her
gun. She drops a bullet, picks it up and loads it.

DOUG

When was the last time you shot that gun?

JULIA

Quite awhile ago.

Doug grins and puts out his hand. Julia hands him the gun
and he tucks it in his pants.

DOUG

You know I'm a felon, right?

JULIA

I wouldn't be dating you otherwise.

They drive for a time then Julia looks over at a large locker
that reads: "LIFE PRESERVERS".

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Hey, do you want a life vest?

DOUG
 No. What for? The water's calm.

JULIA
 It may be calm, but it's still deep.

Julia goes toward the locker and Doug's gets a look of concern. Thinks quickly.

DOUG
 Hey, come on, forget that. Look,
 we're almost there.

Doug points to a SMALL GREEN ISLAND a half mile off the bow.

Julia stops and looks out at the island. Forgets about the life preserver and comes back to Doug.

PAN OVER

To the locker and hold, suggesting what might be inside.

CUT TO:

SIX ORANGE LIFE PRESERVERS

Floating under the dock, confirming our fears.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The Sheriff writes a ticket at the side of the road for a woman with heavy makeup and a red beehive hairdo.

SHERIFF
 (hands her the ticket)
 Next time do your make-up at home.

BEEHIVE HAIRDO WOMAN
 Sixty dollars!

SHERIFF
 (sarcastic)
 It's supposed to be \$120, but seeing
 how you work for the circus I gave
 you a break.

The sheriff tips his hat and walks back to his car as the woman calls out behind him.

BEEHIVE HAIRDO WOMAN (O.S.)
 Smartass!

INT. SHERIFF'S CAR - DAY

The Sheriff enters his car and the RADIO CRACKLES to life.

KAREN (V.O.)

Sheriff, I've got that background check you wanted.

SHERIFF

Roger that, go ahead.

KAREN (V.O.)

She's going under an alias now, her real name is Julia Azueta and she's used several names over the last few years that I can find. Nothing pops up recently but ten years ago she hit the jackpot: arrested in Portland, Maine for the murder of her husband. Apparently she set fire to their cabin with him inside. But the charges were later dropped due to a lack of evidence.

SHERIFF

Was she married to anyone else? Anyone in the military?

KAREN (V.O.)

Nope, just the victim, but it looks like he was an Army sergeant who served in Iraq.

SHERIFF

All right, Karen, thanks. Ten-four.

The Sheriff hangs up. Starts the car and flips a U-ey.

EXT. BEACH - TUG ISLAND - DAY

Doug idles up to the small pier where the other BOAT is docked.

MOMENTS LATER

Julia and Doug step off the pier onto the beach when Doug stops and looks back.

DOUG

Hey, wait a sec', hang on, I wanna' get some water. Knowing these kids I'll bet they only brought beer.

Doug hurries back onto the BOAT. Grabs two waters from a cooler then unlocks the life vest locker with the boat keys.

Rejoins Julia. Hands her a water which she opens and drinks.

DOUG (CONT'D)

You know this is going to embarrass
the hell out of Sam.

JULIA

Yeah, I know. But that's the least
of my worries.

Julia starts up the beach toward the trees and Doug follows.

EXT. JULIA'S RENTED BOAT - DAY

The life vest locker opens and the Nagual crawls out.

He looks out at the empty beach.

Goes to the side of the boat and opens the gas tank. STUFFS
A TOWEL INTO IT and lets it hang over the side.

Crosses the PIER to the OTHER BOAT.

Sabotages it in the same way.

INT. TENT - DAY

Sam makes love to Rani in their tent, their gorgeous brown
bodies entwined in an embrace.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Geno, Brooke, Rob and Ashley come out of the trees.

GENO

HA! Look. See. I told you I'd
find it.

(to Brooke)

And you thought we were walking in
circles.

BROOKE

We were. This island's not that
big. It doesn't take an hour to go
around it.

Brooke plops down in a beach chair.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

God, I'm tired. Whose dumb idea was
this camping trip anyway?

ASHLEY

Yours.

BROOKE
Don't remind me.

Geno opens a cooler and takes out a beer. Tosses one to Rob.

ROB
Hey, where're Rani and Sam?

The four friends look around.

Geno points to Rani's zipped up tent then pokes his index finger into his fist to indicate their screwing.

ROB (CONT'D)	GENO
Hey, man, hurry up in there!	Yeah, I got next!

Geno and Rob crack up LAUGHING.

BROOKE
Oh, c'mon you guys, shut up. I swear I'm embarrassed just to be with you.

ASHLEY
Yeah, if we wanted to date ninth graders we'd hang out at a high school.

GENO
Nah, tried it, it doesn't work, they just run you off.

Geno smiles wickedly at Ashley who just shakes her head. The tent unzips and Rani and Sam come out. Rob WHISTLES.

RANI
Cut it out, Rob. We were just talking.

GENO
Yeah, right, talkin' and humpin'.

ROB
(to Rani and Sam)
I don't know what you guys are so embarrassed about. That's all I came here to do, that and get stoned.

ASHLEY
(aside to Brooke)
Lucky me.

Ashley wiggles her pinky at Brooke, mocking Rob's manhood. Turns and walks away from the campsite.

ROB
Hey, where're you goin'?

ASHLEY
To the bathroom, if you don't mind.

Ashley walks on into the trees. Stops behind a pine.

IN HER EYE-LINE

Is Geno, standing among the others drinking a beer. He takes a sip, looks directly at Ashley.

Who motions for him to come.

Geno nods at Ashley then LAUGHS at someone's joke, play acting for the others.

And Ashley moves off into the trees.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Julia and Doug walk along the trail through the woods.

Moments after they pass the Nagual steps out of the brush behind them, stares after them then re-enters the trees.

THE NAGUAL

Winds his way through the trees and underbrush when he comes upon a DEAD CROW rotting on the ground.

He takes off his eagle's talon. Digs a hole with it then sets it aside.

Takes Doug's severed ear from his medicine bag and puts it on top of the crow. Takes out a weed and his lighter.

Burns the weed and blows the smoke over the ear and crow. CHANTS over them briefly then buries them both in the ground.

Suddenly a large KINGSNAKE comes slithering out of the brush.

The Nagual goes after it and forgets about the EAGLE'S TALON left behind him on the ground.

He catches the snake and holds it up to his face, stares into its eyes with a mesmerizing gaze.

CUT TO:

ASHLEY RISING INTO FRAME

Tits out, beads of sweat and a gratified grin on her face.

ASHLEY
You like that?

A shirtless Geno lies on the ground under her, the two of them off in the BUSHES.

GENO
Oh, yeah.

Ashley moves up onto his chest, straddling him.

ASHLEY
Okay, now it's my turn.

Suddenly they hear VOICES and Ashley quickly buttons her shirt.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Oh shit! Who's that?

They crouch down in the brush and look through the leaves at the vague shapes of Julia and Doug walking by on the trail.

Geno and Ashley keep their voices low.

GENO
We better go back.

ASHLEY
Not together. Are you crazy? I'll go first.

Ashley points a finger playfully at Geno.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
And don't forget, you owe me.

She gives him a kiss then heads back to the campsite.

Geno waits a moment then heads back a different way.

He moves through the TREES AND UNDERGROWTH and comes upon the black eagle's talon laying on the ground.

Geno picks it up, briefly admires it then puts it on and hides it under his shirt. Moves on.

EXT. CAMPSITE - TUG ISLAND - DAY

Julia and Doug come off the trail into the campsite clearing with its trio of tents and small fire.

Brooke, Rob, Rani and Sam on beach chairs around the fire. Sam and Rani with their backs to the trail.

ROB
 (drinking a beer)
 Hey, check it out, visitors.

Sam and Rani turn and look.

JULIA
 Hi, Sam.

Sam comes to his feet with a Coke in his hand, dumfounded.

SAM
 What are you doing here?

JULIA
 I'm sorry, Sam. The last thing I
 want to do is to intrude on you and
 your friends, but something bad has
 happened and I have to talk to you.

Sam just stands there and stew, temper rising. Suddenly
 Ashley comes out of the trees.

ASHLEY
 Hey, cool, visitors. Hi, I'm Ashley.

RANI
 It's Sam's mom, Ash.

Rani gives Ashley a look: this isn't cool.

JULIA
 (to Ashley)
 Hi.
 (to Sam)
 Look, I know this is embarrassing,
 but trust me it's very serious.
 (glances at the trees)
 Now can we talk?

Sam stares at his mom, fuming.

SAM
 No.... No, I know what's comin' and
 I can't believe it! I mean FUCK!
 (throws away his Coke)
 Why can't you just let me live a
 little!

Sam storms off, brushing past Geno who returns to camp.

GENO
 Whoa! Easy, bro. What's up?

Geno turns and takes in the two strangers and somber mood.

GENO (CONT'D)
 Okay, cool, some drama. So what'd I miss?

RANI
 (goes after Sam)
 Oh shut up, Geno.

Julia looks over at Doug who gives her an "I told you so" look.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY

The Sheriff's car pulls into the trailer park.

INT. SHERIFF'S CAR - DAY

The Sheriff drives between the mobile homes. Comes to the empty space where Julia's trailer was parked.

Picks up the mic and calls dispatch.

SHERIFF
 Karen?

KAREN (V.O.)
 Yeah, Sheriff.

SHERIFF
 It looks like our Ms. Garcia has left town. Put out a description of her vehicle and trailer and see if we can track her credit card use.

KAREN (V.O.)
 Ten four. Oh, and Sheriff, the coroner called, he's been trying to reach you.

SHERIFF
 Did he say what for?

KAREN (V.O.)
 Yeah, he found some unusual substance in the drowning victim's stomach. He won't know for sure until the toxicology report is in but he thinks the deceased may have been drugged.

SHERIFF
 Roger, that. I'll give him a call.

The Sheriff sets down the mic and ponders the news.

EXT. COVE - DAY

Sam sits in the sand gazing out at the coppery gleams of light on the surface of the lake.

Rani comes out of the trees behind him and sits quietly by his side. After a time...

SAM

I don't know why I get so mad at her. You know she's never raised her voice to me, not even once.

RANI

(takes Sam's arm)

She loves you very much, Sam. I can see that.

SAM

Yeah, she's a good mom.

(tears up, fights it)

She's had it so hard, you know. Been on her own since she was seventeen, pretty much raised me by herself. I hardly knew my dad. I was only seven when he died and before that he was off fightin' in the war. But now I just want her to let me go. What's wrong with that?

RANI

Nothing. You gotta' live your own life.

SAM

Yeah, well then why do I feel so bad?

RANI

Because you're good, and good people always feel bad. Don't you know that?

SAM

She's going to want us to leave town, for sure. I just know it. It's been like that every time.

RANI

I'll come with you. I'll drop everything and go. I don't care.

Sam looks fondly at Rani, touched by her devotion.

RANI (CONT'D)

But can I bring my cat?

Sam smiles and they kiss.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Julia stands off by herself. Doug sitting with the others, hanging out, waiting.

Doug scratches his ankle then pulls up his pants revealing a large BLACK SPOT on his leg.

He touches it, unnerved and quickly covers it up.

Brooke looks around at all the glum faces.

BROOKE

God, this is such a buzz-kill.

She stands and walks off toward the trees.

GENO

Where are you goin'?

BROOKE

Oh, I'm off to my gold lavatory to bathe in pink champagne! Where do you think I'm going?

MOMENTS LATER

Brooke enters a SECLUDED AREA OF THE WOODS, drops her shorts and squats down.

The kingsnake slithering towards her, the VISAGE OF THE NAGUAL visible in the black pool of its eye.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Julia stands off by herself at the edge of the camp.

SAM (O.S.)

Mom.

Julia turns.

Sam and Rani come out of the trees holding hands. Rani lets go of Sam's hand and smiles at Julia as she walks by.

MOMENTS LATER - JULIA AND SAM

Are alone in the woods.

SAM (CONT'D)

Before you say anything, I want you to know that Rani and I have decided to move in together. So if you want to go, it's all right, but this time I'm not going with you.

JULIA

Do you love her?

SAM

Yeah, I do.

JULIA

Then you listen to me. That girl is in danger. All of your friends are in danger.

SAM

What are you talking about?

JULIA

There is someone coming after us, someone really bad. He's been after us for years. That's why we keep moving, why we live the way we do. I can't stay anywhere for very long because he always finds us!

SAM

Then why don't you just go to the police?

JULIA

I can't.

SAM

Why? Because you've done something illegal?

JULIA

No, because they won't believe me.

SAM

I don't believe you! And, you know what, this time I'm not going. I'm done with this! Okay? That's it!

Sam tries to walk away but Julia grabs hold of him.

JULIA

You stay right here!

SAM

(breaks free)

No!

JULIA

Sam! Listen to me.... Please! You have no idea what this person is capable of. It's so much worse than anything you can possibly imagine! And he's coming for us!

SAM

What for, huh? Who is this guy?

Julia searches for the right words, dives in.

JULIA

You know what I study, right, the Mesoamericans, the Aztecs, their myths and legends. Well some of them are true. This man is a sorcerer!

SAM

Oh, this is crazy. I'm not listening to this.

JULIA

Just think back, Sam. Remember all those times we packed up and left in the middle of the night. When I pulled you out of school and away from your friends and you hated me for it. It was him. It was always him. The night your father died? The fire? He never stops. No matter where I go, no matter how cleverly I hide, he always finds us.

Sam gauges his mom, sees the truth in her eyes.

SAM

What does he want?

Before Julia can answer we hear Brooke SCREAM.

CUT TO:

BROOKE

Lying on the ground in the WOODS, SCREAMING hysterically, the large kingsnake latched on to her face.

Geno, Rob and Doug rush up onto the scene from out of the trees, stop short at the sight of Brooke and the snake.

ROB

Oh, shit, look at that!

Brooke's CRIES turn to WHIMPERS.

Doug pulls out the knife on his hip and quickly severs the snake's head, but it doesn't let go of Brooke's cheek.

BROOKE

Help me...pleaseee!

GENO

Get it off her, man! C'mon!

Doug pries at the snake's mouth with the knife, but it only bites down harder and Brooke SCREAMS!

DOUG

C'mon, let's get her back to camp.

Doug carefully picks up Brooke and carries her away with Geno and Rob following.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Brooke lies under a blanket, shivering. Julia at her side examining the snake head with the others gathered around her.

BROOKE

(voice quavering)

Please, get it off...it hurts!

Julia probes at the fangs when from within the elliptical black pupil of the snake COMES THE WICKED FACE OF THE NAGUAL!

Julia pulls back, stunned. She quickly picks up a twig and puts it in the fire then touches it to the snake's eye.

GENO

What are you doing?

The snake head HISSES, falls to the ground and squirms away. Spooking Ashley who SQUEALS and jumps back.

Julia quickly kicks the snake head into the fire where it bursts into flames, HISSING.

CUT IN:

THE POV OF THE SNAKE

Viewing Julia through the flames. And

THE NAGUAL

On his knees in the WOODS with his eyes closed. Suddenly jerking back as his eyes pop open and he comes out of a trance.

RESUME JULIA

Standing over the fire watching the snake head burn to a crisp. She takes out her cell to call for help.

SAM

Mom, there's no service out here.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

But there's a radio on the boat.
You can call for help from there.

JULIA

All right, c'mon, everyone, let's go! Take your personal things but leave everything else. You can come back for it later.

Julia goes over to Doug.

JULIA (CONT'D)

We've got to get her to a hospital.
That was a kingsnake. It's not poisonous, but she's already in shock.

Doug goes to Brooke and picks her up in the blanket, the others put on shirts or grab purses, wallets and such.

ASHLEY

Hey, Geno, put out the fire.

JULIA

No, wait!

Julia grabs a branch off a pile of firewood. Ties a towel around it and lights the torch.

ROB

What's that for?

JULIA

Nevermind. C'mon!

Julia leads them all out of the campsite into the trees.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Julia holds out the torch and hurries down the trail, scanning the trees for any sign of the Nagual.

Doug right behind her carrying Brooke. Followed by Geno, Sam, Rani and Rob with Ashley in the rear.

Ashley catches her blouse on a branch and stops to remove it while Rob and the others move out of sight up the trail.

Ashley frees her blouse and turns to the NAGUAL suddenly there. He covers Ashley's mouth and shoves her against a tree.

Takes out a vile from the medicine bag slung from his shoulder and pours a dark liquid into her hair.

A terrified Ashley stares into the evil eyes of the Nagual, the dark liquid percolating in her hair and trickling down her neck, BINDING HER HAIR AND SKIN TO THE BARK OF THE TREE.

CUT TO:

JULIA AND THE OTHERS

Arriving on the BEACH before a SETTING CRIMSON SUN and the two boats moored to the dock.

Rob, last out of the trees, stops and looks back.

ROB
Hey, where's Ashley?

Everyone turns to Rob.

ROB (CONT'D)
She was right behind me!

JULIA
When did you see her last?

ROB
I don't know, just a few minutes ago. She was right there!

Julia turns to Doug.

JULIA
Get the girl to the hospital. I'll find Ashley.

DOUG
I'm not leaving you.

GENO
Hey, what's going on?

ROB
Yeah? What's with the fuckin' torch? And why are you so freaked out?

JULIA
All right, now listen to me, all of you, and do exactly what I say.
(to Geno, re: Brooke)
You, take her and get her ashore. Use the boat radio to call for an ambulance. Go on, hurry!

Doug hands Brooke over to Geno who carries her to the boat.

JULIA (CONT'D)
All right, all of you go with him.
Get off this island. Doug and I
will find Ashley.

ROB
Hey, wait a minute, you're not my boss.

DOUG
(grabs Rob's collar)
Oh, yeah? What was that?

Rob quails before the fierceness of Doug.

DOUG (CONT'D)
Yeah, that's what I thought. Now get
on the fuckin' boat!

Doug shoves Rob who stares helplessly at the two older adults
then storms off cursing.

ROB
Fuck! This is so fucked! I wish I
never came on this trip! I hate
camping!

Julia turns to Sam and Rani.

JULIA
You too, Sam, take Rani and get out
of here.

SAM
Mom, I don't want to leave you.

JULIA
We'll be right behind you on the
other boat, as soon as we find Ashley.
Go on now.

Sam hesitates.

RANI
(takes Sam's arm)
C'mon, do what she says.

Sam lets Rani pull him away and they head for the boat.

IN THE WATER

The Nagual surfaces at the back of JULIA'S BOAT. He takes out
a Zippo lighter and lights the towel stuck in the gas tank.

Swims off to the other boat.

EXT. KID'S BOAT - SUNDOWN

Geno lays Brooke down on a cushioned bench in the stern. As he does so the eagle's talon comes out of his shirt.

At the side of the boat is the Nagual holding onto the gunwale, spying on Geno and Brooke, spotting his eagle's talon around Geno's neck.

He lowers himself into the WATER. Swims past a BURNING TOWEL stuck in the gas tank then slips below the surface.

ON THE BEACH

Julia and Doug approach the trees when BOOM!

The KID'S BOAT SUDDENLY EXPLODES!

Julia drops the torch and ducks down with Doug.

ON THE BOAT

Geno is blown out of the cab into the water.

Rob and Brooke ENGULFED IN FLAMES.

Sam and Rani knocked off the PIER by the concussion, burning wood from the boat cascading out of the sky around them.

JULIA

Gets up and looks around.

Sam lying in the water at the shoreline.

JULIA

Sam!

Julia rushes to her son with Doug right behind her, when

BOOM!

The SECOND BOAT EXPLODES! Showering the beach with debris.

Rani, near Sam, cringing, covering her ears.

Julia and Doug falling flat to the sand. Burning pieces of the boat landing all around them.

Down the beach the Nagual comes out of the water onto the shore where he stops and looks over at

JULIA

Lying on the sand, staring back hatefully at the man she once called father.

RANI

At the water's edge, looks down the beach at the strange old man, watching incredulously as

THE NAGUAL

Turns toward the trees then suddenly leaps and bounds across the sand with supernatural spring, launching himself TWENTY FEET THROUGH THE AIR before vanishing into the woods.

While in flight, light from the sunset VERY FAINTLY reveals a cluster of LUMINOUS TENTACLES extending out of the Nagual's abdomen into the trees ahead of him, launching him forward.

NOTE: The Nagual is tapping into a separate reality with his power (or Chi if you like). The scene should resemble the drawing of a Nagual fleeing the conquistadors in Julia's book.

JULIA AND DOUG

Get up and run to Sam and Rani. Reaching the young couple as they stagger out of the shallows.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Sam! Rani! Are you all right?

SAM

Yeah, Mom, we're okay.

(looks around)

Holy shit! He blew up the boats!

Suddenly they HEAR A SCREAM come from the trees.

RANI

That's Ashley!

Doug pulls Julia's gun from his waistband.

DOUG

Wait here!

JULIA

No, Doug, we can't separate. C'mon, everyone, stick together.

RANI

What about Geno and Rob, and Brooke?

Everyone turns and looks at the INFERNOS engulfing the boats.
After a moment.

JULIA
C'mon, let's go.

Julia turns and heads up the beach.

Stops and picks up the discarded torch then leads them all
into the trees just ahead of another SCREAM!

CUT TO:

ASHLEY - ON THE TRAIL

CRYING OUT in agony! Her torso now completely stuck to the
tree. Her thin arms and legs turned into branches, her skin
transformed into bark.

The Nagual arrives and pries Ashley's wooden torso away from
the tree and she SCREAMS once more.

The horrible metamorphosis completed before our eyes as her
HEAD SHRIVELS UP INTO WOOD. Contorting her face, reshaping
her eyes and mouth into what looks like the knots of a tree.

The Nagual looks back down the trail.

Julia's torch coming his way.

He picks up Ashley, now resembling a large broken branch,
heaves her over his shoulder and runs off up the trail.

JULIA AND DOUG

Hurry down the trail in sight of the Nagual disappearing
around a bend carrying what looks like a branch on his
shoulder.

Julia and the others reach the bend and pause on the shadowy
trail. Doug picks up some sandals.

RANI
Ashley's.

Julia leads on, the FLICKERING TORCH held before her.

MATCH CUT TO:

THE FLAME OF A LIGHTER

Igniting a cigarette in LISA'S BEDROOM.

The Sheriff having a smoke after sex with his girlfriend,
LISA PRIDGEON, an attractive black woman in her 30s.

LISA

Can you stay?

The Sheriff looks at his watch.

SHERIFF

No, I gotta' get back. I'm workin' on somethin'. Hey, what do you got in the fridge?

LISA

Not much. I haven't been shopping.

SHERIFF

Why don't you pick up some steaks and I'll come back when I get off.

LISA

(playfully)

I thought I just got you off?

SHERIFF

Oh yeah, you did. Now I'll be lucky if I can walk to my car.

He gives her a kiss then slips out of bed and walks naked to his clothes, pretending to wobble. Lisa LAUGHS, hugs a pillow and watches him dress.

LISA

You sure you want to eat steak so late? You won't sleep well.

SHERIFF

I don't sleep anyway. That's what happens when you get old: you add weight and lose sleep.

LISA

Yeah, well I like you just the way you are.

The Sheriff puts on his pants and smiles at Lisa. Takes cash from his wallet and lays it on a table.

SHERIFF

Get some good cuts, okay? Porterhouses if they have em and some onions.

LISA

You want beer with your steak?

SHERIFF

No. I'm not any good to you on beer.

LISA
 You're not that great without it,
 but I'm not complainin'.

Lisa smiles at her lover, something sweet and easy between them. The Sheriff puts on his boots and stands to go.

SHERIFF
 Neither am I.

INT. SHERIFF'S CAR - NIGHT

The Sheriff gets in his car and takes a moment to look out at the BACKWOODS SHACK that Lisa calls home.

He reflects on it, wistfully, then starts the car when Karen's voice comes over the radio.

KAREN (V.O.)
 Hey, Sheriff, you there?

SHERIFF
 (picks up the mic)
 Yeah, go ahead.

KAREN (V.O.)
 We got a hit on Ms. Garcia's credit card. She used it about an hour ago at a rental shop out at Tug Lake.

SHERIFF
 What the hell's she doin' out there? All right, thanks. Hey, did Lem check in?

KAREN (V.O.)
 Yeah, he finally showed up but now he's out on a call. Do you need him?

SHERIFF
 No. Just let him know I'm gonna head out to the lake and check things out, so he'll be on his own for awhile.

KAREN (V.O.)
 Roger that.

The Sheriff hangs up. Puts his car in gear and drives off.

EXT. TRAIL - WOODS - NIGHT

Julia leads the way with the torch as darkness has set in. Doug behind her with Julia's gun, followed by Rani and Sam.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The Nagual enters the campsite carrying Ashley.

Sets her down by the other branches of firewood, looks back at the trail, then starts breaking Ashley into pieces.

DROPS OF BLOOD SEEPING out of a branch that was her arm, her leg, her now limbless torso.

Julia's torch approaches through the trees.

The Nagual monitors it. Completes his task then darts away.

MOMENTS LATER

Julia leads the others into the CAMPSITE where they stop and look around, everything eerily quiet.

DOUG

All right, now what?

Before Julia can answer she SEES

The Nagual step out from behind a tree holding his knife. He looks at Julia and points the knife at Sam.

Julia picks up a blanket and lights it on fire.

Walks boldly toward the Nagual.

SAM

Mom, no!

JULIA

Stay back, Sam! You too, Doug,
just stay where you are!

Doug puts out his arm to hold back Sam.

JULIA (CONT'D)

He's not yours! Do you hear me! He
will never be yours! Never!!! Now
leave us alone!

Julia hurls the burning blanket at the Nagual and it catches fire to some brush.

The Nagual stands behind the flames glaring at Julia then backs up into the trees and disappears.

And Julia immediately springs into action:

She scoops up more blankets and hands them to Doug.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Cut these into strips. Sam, help him, make some torches.

RANI

What about Ashley?

Julia looks at Doug and Sam then back at Rani.

JULIA

Ashley's dead.

RANI

(stunned)

How do you know that?

Julia uses the torch to rekindle the fire.

JULIA

I just know, all right. She's dead.

(more to herself)

If she isn't, God help her.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

Showing them working as a team:

Doug cutting the blankets into strips with his knife.

Rani taking branches off of the pile to use for torches, just missing the pieces with BEADS OF BLOOD on them.

Sam wrapping the branches with the strips of cloth.

Julia lighting them.

The four of them jamming the lit torches into the sandy soil around the camp perimeter.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Nagual peers through the trees at

Julia, Doug, Sam and Rani setting up the RING OF TORCHES.

He squats down and takes out a Snickers bar. Unwraps it, eats it and bides his time.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Julia and Doug set the last two torches in place.

Doug reaches under his shirt and rubs his stomach. Comes up with blood on his hand.

He turns away from Julia and checks his abdomen, all BLACK AND COVERED WITH SORES.

Doug pulls down his shirt and just stands there silent and immobile with his back to Julia.

JULIA

Hey, Doug, are you all right?

DOUG

(turns)

Yeah, sure. I just don't know what to make of all this...

(smiles bravely)

But I'm good.

Doug adjusts one of the torches that has tilted over. Julia observing him, more than a little concerned.

EXT. CEMETERY - ROAD TO TUG LAKE - NIGHT

Sheriff Dick drives along the dark highway. Looks out at the night sky and thinks of something that produces a smile.

Starts SINGING an old Beatles' song:

SHERIFF

*Bright are the stars that shine, dark
is the sky. I know this love of mine,
will never die. And I love her.*

The CAR drives off toward a pale SKULL-LIKE MOON on the horizon.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Sam and Rani kneel next to the fire making back-up torches. Julia nearby watching the trees for any sign of the Nagual.

RANI

Ms. Garcia.

JULIA

(turns to Rani)

Call me Julia.

RANI

Who is he? No ordinary man can move like that?

JULIA

He's not an ordinary man. What do you know about Aztec mythology?

Rani's blank expression is answer enough.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Yeah, I know, it's a silly question, but it's my field. I've been studying it all my life and not by accident.

Doug wanders over, interested.

JULIA (CONT'D)

The man pursuing us is a nagual, an Aztec sorcerer.

RANI

You mean like a witch-doctor?

JULIA

Sort of, I guess, if that helps you understand it. He is very powerful and he wants Sam, though he'll settle for me.

SAM

Why? What's he want with us? What are we to him?

JULIA

You haven't guessed? He's your grandfather, my father. Or at least he was at one time. Now he's something else.

Julia pauses, suppresses a wave of sadness then continues.

JULIA (CONT'D)

When I was seventeen he saved my life from another nagual, my own grandmother, his mom. But it cost him. If a descendant of a nagual kills them by any means other than fire then the nagual's power transfers into them, possesses them and turns them into a sorcerer. He knew that. So before he took his own mother's life he made me promise to run and hide and to never look for him. It wasn't until you were seven that he first found us. And we've been running from him ever since.

SAM

Why didn't you tell me?

JULIA

That was your dad's decision. He didn't want you to grow up in fear. And he was right about that. The nagual wants your blood. With it he will renew himself, become young again.

Rani is incredulous.

RANI

Oh c'mon, this can't be real.

JULIA

You saw him. Didn't you? How real was that? I know it's hard to believe. That's why we keep running. Who's gonna' help us, the police? All they'll do is lock me up.

DOUG

You said "If not Sam, he'd settle for you." What did you mean by that?

JULIA

The blood of any one of his descendants will restore his health, heal any wounds, illnesses, make him young again. So he would gladly kill me, but he prefers Sam because he is the "Young Blood", the one selected. Centuries ago among the Meso-Americans, and later the Aztecs, a nagual would select a child, one of their own grandchildren, to be renewed by their blood. Then they would take another, younger wife or husband and produce more children. Later, to sacrifice one of their offspring, and so on.

RANI

So is he immortal?

JULIA

No. A nagual is flesh and blood and can be killed like anyone else. It's just that with their great power that's not so easy to do. Still, if he were shot dead or killed in a car accident his power would die with him.

SAM

But if you or I kill him then we become like him, a sorcerer.

JULIA

Yeah, damning our souls forever.
That's why I fight him with fire.

Julia picks up a torch and lights it.

JULIA (CONT'D)

It's the one thing a nagual truly fears. Because if he dies by fire, no matter who kills him, then the ancient power inside him dies with him and the long line of the nagual is finally ended.

There is a quiet moment while all this sinks in.

Julia looks over at Doug who stares transfixed by something in the trees.

THE NAGUAL

Standing in the woods beyond the torches.

Julia turns to Doug while holding the torch.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Shoot him.

Doug hesitates, but then pulls the gun from his waistband.

THE NAGUAL

Just stares fiercely at Doug.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Go on, Doug, SHOOT HIM!

Doug aims and fires, BANG!

And the NAGUAL LEAPS LIKE A CAT ONTO A TREE, his long, claw-like nails digging into the bark.

Doug FIRES AGAIN... BAM! BAM! BAM! Tracking the Nagual who leaps from tree to tree.

The bullets SLAMMING into the trees. Showering bark, but missing the Nagual.

Everyone turning to follow the track of the Nagual.

Who leaps from a tree as Doug fires, BANG!

And the Nagual twists in mid-air and crashes to the ground behind some brush.

Everyone freezes. Till Julia holds out the torch and creeps forward.

She comes to the edge of the camp. Peers into the trees. When something suddenly comes barreling out of the brush beside her!

Everyone turns. Rani clinging to Sam.

RANI

He's coming!!!

CRACK! CRACK! SMASH! Branches shatter and bushes part as Geno suddenly staggers into the campsite reaching out for them, his once handsome face now BURNT TO A CRISP.

Rani SCREAMS!

As Geno stumbles forward and collapses at her feet.

EXT. BOAT RENTAL SHOP - TUG LAKE - NIGHT

The Sheriff's car pulls in next to Julia's truck and trailer.

Sheriff Dick gets out, takes in the truck and trailer and VW van then approaches the shop.

KNOCKS on the front door. After a moment the Old Man answers in his bed clothes.

OLD MAN

Yeah, what is it? Oh, good evening, Sheriff. Somethin' wrong?

SHERIFF

Sorry to bother you after hours but I need your help with something. Did you rent a boat to a woman earlier today?

OLD MAN

Yeah, I've got a couple of boats out. One to some kids and another to some gal and her boyfriend. Why? What's this about?

SHERIFF

Where'd the woman go?

OLD MAN

She said she was goin' out to the island. Is she wanted for somethin'? She ain't gonna' steal my boat, is she?

SHERIFF

I don't know, maybe. Come on, open up. I need a boat.

OLD MAN

It's dark as hell out there. There's no tellin' what you'll run into.

SHERIFF

Yep, sure is. That's why you're coming with me. Go on, get dressed.

The Old Man weighs objecting but then thinks better of it and just leaves the door open and walks away scratching his ass.

OLD MAN

Ah shit! Shit! Shit! Shit! Why does everything always happen to me!

A SEARCHLIGHT

Mounted on the deck of a boat comes out of the dark.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - TUG LAKE - NIGHT

The Old Man steers the boat with a scowl on his face. The Sheriff sitting behind him in the cab smoking a cigarette.

OLD MAN

Somethin' wrong with this country when the cops can wake a man up in the middle of the night and use em as a taxi! It ain't right!

SHERIFF

(indifferently)

It's not the middle of the night.

OLD MAN

It is to me. I'm up every mornin' at three. And you can be sure as hell I'm gonna' file a complaint about this. What's your name anyway?

SHERIFF

Sheriff Leroy Dick.

OLD MAN

Dick?

The Sheriff gives him a "what of it" look. The Old Man stares out over the moonlit lake and repeats it to himself.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Dick.... Rough name to go through
life with.

SHERIFF

A lot rougher on my sister...Anita.

It takes a moment but then the Old Man gets it and CHUCKLES.
Looks over at the Sheriff and smiles.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Julia kneels over Geno under a blanket with Rani and Sam
just an arm's length away sitting on a sleeping bag.

Doug over by the torches keeping watch with Julia's gun.

RANI

(re: Geno)

Is he going to live?

JULIA

I don't know, maybe. He's in bad
shape. How are you holding up?

RANI

I'm totally freaked out, other than
that I'm fine.

Julia rubs Rani's shoulder.

JULIA

You're quite a girl. Sam's lucky to
have you.

(takes in Sam)

Why don't you two try and get some
sleep. Doug and I will keep watch.
In the morning we'll make our way to
the beach and try and signal for
help, get Geno to a hospital.

Julia gets up and goes over to Doug. Sam scoots back on the
sleeping bag and Rani tucks into his arms and they spoon.

JULIA (CONT'D)

(approaching Doug)

Anything?

DOUG

No. You think I got him?

JULIA

Maybe. But I wouldn't go out there
to check.

They watch the trees in silence for a time. Then...

JULIA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I didn't tell you about this.

DOUG

That you've got a crazed sorcerer chasing after you and Sam? Yeah, go figure, I woulda bragged about that.

Doug gets a smile out of Julia. Then they're quiet for a time, as if angels were passing. Julia yawns.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Babe, you look exhausted. Why don't you try and get some sleep.

JULIA

I can't.

DOUG

C'mon, just sit down and shut your eyes for a few minutes. I got this.

Doug puts his arm around her.

JULIA

(her reluctance
weakening)

No.

DOUG

C'mon, take a break. I'll wake you if a leaf falls.

JULIA

All right, just for a bit.

Julia sits down in one of the beach chairs and stretches out her legs, lays her head back and shuts her eyes.

EXT. CLEARING - WOODS - NIGHT

The Nagual sits among the trees. A BLOODY GASH on his neck where Doug's shot grazed him.

He opens his medicine bag. Takes out supplies and makes a potion, his heavy-lidded eyes looking demon-like in the pale light of the moon.

He dumps some purple fungi out of a leather pouch into a ceramic pestle. Grinds it up with a mortar.

Takes out a small, dried colorful frog the size of a cracker and a porcupine quill, breaks them up and mixes them in.

Adds a small plant with tendril-like roots and part of a wolf's jaw, a small section of gum with teeth.

The Nagual CHANTS. Mixes it all into a purple paste.

That he applies to his wound and around his whole neck. The bits of quill, plant and teeth sticking to his skin.

He raises his arms and looks skyward.

NAGUAL

Metsali no temini, chiuva tikaki!

Chiuva tikaki!

The Nagual rolls his head around, CHANTING hypnotically.

A gust of wind RUSTLES through the trees.

The FULL MOON suddenly entombed in clouds.

As the Nagual CHANTS, rolling his head round and round, conjuring up the forces of black magic.

He rolls his head faster and faster.

Until a thin CREASE forms in the paste around his neck.

It slithers across his throat like a worm. Encircles his neck, growing wider and WIDER while the Nagual CHANTS.

NAGUAL (CONT'D)

Nechmaka ue lelistli, lelistli!

Tecoco lica nikhmikti, nikhmikti!

Suddenly the purple paste splits apart and the Nagual's head separates from his neck.

It tips over onto his back. Hangs there disgustingly then finally peels off and drops to the ground and rolls away.

Leaving behind the headless body slumped over on the ground.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Nagual's head tumbles through the trees.

Picks up speed and rolls out onto the trail.

CUT TO:

DOUG - IN THE CAMPSITE

Staring out at the tangled depths of the forest.

Julia nodded off in a chair behind him.

Sam, Rani and Geno asleep beside the fire.

Doug looks up at the FULL MOON coming out of the clouds.

HEARS THE WHISPERS OF THE NAGUAL issuing commands.

Doug yields to the power of the Nagual. He takes the gun in his hand and tucks it in his belt.

Stands immobilized in the bewitched silence when from out of the trees comes the HEAD OF THE NAGUAL.

Rolling horribly over the ground, the long gray hair in strands across its face.

It tumbles up to the campsite.

Rolls along the perimeter until it comes to two of the taller torches then quickly rolls past them under the flames.

All the while Doug standing like a zombie, powerless to stop the Nagual's breach of the camp.

The head rolls past Julia dozing in the chair. Up to Geno lying at the side of the fire.

The NAGUAL'S HEAD stares hatefully at the burnt young man then shoots out a frog-like tongue and snatches the eagle's talon off of Geno's neck.

Having retrieved the talon, the Nagual suddenly VOMITS A GREEN OOZE laced with plant tendrils onto Geno's face.

The white worm-like tendrils squiggling into every orifice in Geno's head.

Geno CHOKES on the green ooze bubbling from his mouth.

Rani opens her eyes and SEES

The Nagual's head staring straight at her, SNARLING WITH WOLF'S TEETH.

A horrified Rani SCREAMS and scrambles backward onto SAM.

RANI
NOOOO! SAMMMM!

Julia wakes up and bolts to her feet.

The Nagual's head bites down on the eagle's talon then rolls rapidly away.

Right past a befuddled Julia and under the torches.

JULIA

Doug, shoot it! SHOOT!

Doug just stands there unable to move as the Nagual's head rolls off into the trees.

Rani, all over Sam, CRYING HYSTERICALLY.

RANI

Oh my god, it was just a head! Just a head, Sam!!!

Julia wheels on Doug.

JULIA

What the fuck, Doug! You were supposed to wake me! What were you asleep!

Before Doug can answer Geno starts GURGLING LOUDLY, choking on the ooze.

Julia rushes to his aid only to pull up at the sight of

GENO'S HEAD COMPLETELY COVERED WITH GREEN OOZE, the worm-like tendrils squiggling from his ears, nose and mouth.

Julia stares at him, horrified.

When suddenly BLOOD, OOZE AND TENDRILS BURST REVOLTINGLY OUT OF GENO'S EYES and he QUIVERS VIOLENTLY AND DIES.

Julia and Sam stare at Geno's body, stunned to silence.

Rani turned away, holding Sam. Her SOFT WHIMPERING the only sound in the heavy silence.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - TUG LAKE - NIGHT

The Sheriff and the Old Man come upon the TWO BURNT BOATS and field of debris in the water.

SHERIFF

What-the-hell?

OLD MAN

(shocked)

Look what they did to my boats. Those punk kids. Look what those punks did to my boats!

He takes in the wreckage... and smiles.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
 Hot damn! Now I collect the insurance
 and retire. Cambodia here I come!

The old man does a jig.

The Sheriff observes him.

SHERIFF
 You crazy old man. Call this in.

OLD MAN
 I can't. This boat's radio doesn't
 work.

SHERIFF
 You're not supposed to rent boats
 with broken radios.

OLD MAN
 I didn't rent this boat. Did I?

The Sheriff takes out his cell. No service.

SHERIFF
 Ah shit, what next!

OLD MAN
 Oh, those don't work out here. I
 coulda' told you that.

SHERIFF
 All right now, listen. You wait
 right here and if any other boats
 come around, you signal them over
 and call this in. Got it?

OLD MAN
 Signal with what?

SHERIFF
 Flash your lights, or use that flare
 gun if you to.

Indicates a flare gun attached to the bulkhead.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
 Just don't let them pass on by.

The Sheriff steps onto the damaged pier and hurries ashore.

OLD MAN
 (calls after him)
 Yeah, sure thing, Sheriff!
 (MORE)

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Hey, you want anything else? Want me to order you a pizza while I'm at it!

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Nagual's head rolls through the brush up to his body lying on the ground.

Positions itself next to the purple paste on the neck and the magic paste cavitates, melds and links up with the head.

The reunified Nagual sits up and puts on the eagle's talon, head drooped, drained by his bout of sorcery.

Then in a perfect trailer moment he lifts his head and reveals his BLOOD-RED EYES.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Doug stands with downcast eyes, ashamed. Julia beside him, Sam and Rani watching from off to the side.

JULIA

What happened? What did he do to you?

Doug looks up, teary-eyed.

DOUG

I'm sorry, babe. You know I'd never do anything to hurt you. But he's got a hold of me. It's like I have no will of my own.

JULIA

What happened to your ear, Doug? Show me.

DOUG

I'm sorry, babe. God, I'm sorry.

Julia waits and Doug slowly complies. He removes the bandage revealing his stitched wound all matted with blood.

DOUG (CONT'D)

He made me do it. See...

Doug lifts his shirt and shows Julia his NECROTIC ABDOMEN.

DOUG (CONT'D)

It's everywhere!
(sobs, then smiles
ironically)
Some birthday, huh?

Doug raises the gun to his head.

JULIA
No, Doug, DON'T!

BANG! Doug shoots himself.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Sheriff comes down the trail shining the flashlight when he HEARS THE SHOT come from deep in the woods.

He turns the flashlight on the trees then shines it back on the trail - the NAGUAL SUDDENLY THERE.

Blowing a blue powder in the Sheriff's face, BLINDING HIM.

The Sheriff wipes his eyes then draws his gun. Shines his flashlight on the trail.

SHERIFF'S POV:

Of the FULL MOON ALL CHECKERED WITH COLORS, the trees in the flashlight now with WAVERING TRUNKS and MELTING LEAVES.

THE SHERIFF

Staggers forward holding out his flashlight and gun.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Julia covers Doug's body with a blanket and wipes away tears. Picks up her gun and tucks it in her pants.

Sam lays a blanket over Geno and turns to Julia when one of the torches goes out!

Julia looks around the campsite.

Most of the torches nearly burned out.

JULIA
Rani, get that fire going! Sam,
help me with the torches!

Rani goes to the pile of branches and adds some to the fire.

Julia lights two back-up torches and takes them to the perimeter. Sam following her lead, replacing torches.

Suddenly Rani SCREAMS and drops a branch. Backs away from ASHLEY'S BRANCH-LIKE ARM wriggling at her feet.

Ashley's other branch-like body parts SQUIRMING all over the ground.

Rani SCREAMS again and turns and runs straight to Sam who grabs her and hides her face from the horror.

Julia rushes over then stops and looks down at Ashley's limbless body squirming at her feet, the poor girl's wooden face all twisted in pain.

HER EYES PLEADING with Julia.

ASHLEY
(squeaks out)
Pleaseeee... help me!

A horrified Julia grabs Ashley's branch-like torso and throws into the flames.

Where it catches fire, OOZES BLOOD then finally stops moving, mercifully ending Ashley's pain.

MOMENTS LATER

Julia lays one of Ashley's branch-like legs on the fire. Steps back beside Sam and Rani and watches it burn.

THE BURNING EMBERS

Of Ashley flutter off into the night like fireflies, taking all the hopes and dreams of the young woman with them.

Julia stares into the fire for a moment then senses something and turns and looks to the trees

AT THE NAGUAL

Standing beyond the ring of torches watching the results of his handiwork, smiling wickedly.

JULIA

Pulls out her gun and aims at the Nagual when the Sheriff suddenly bursts of the bushes pointing his gun.

SHERIFF
Drop it, lady!

Julia turns to the Sheriff then looks back at the Nagual who is suddenly gone.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
NOW!

Julia drops the gun.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Get over there with the others!
C'mon, move!

Julia complies and the Sheriff wipes his eyes, a fine blue powder all over his face.

The Sheriff looks at the covered bodies of Geno and Doug.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

What the hell's goin' on out here?

JULIA

There's a man...
(re: the bodies)
He killed our friends. He's still
out there!

The Sheriff blinks and stares at Julia and the two teenagers:

SHERIFF'S POV:

Like something out of an acid trip with Julia, Sam and Rani cast in colorful auras, all of their movements in trails.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Are you all right?

The Sheriff comes forward weaving side to side.

The world around him BLURRY and DREAM-LIKE, the people in front of him swaying like seaweed in a current.

SAM

Mom, get back here! Look at his face!
There's something wrong with him.

Julia backs up to Sam and Rani.

THE NAGUAL

Watching all this from within the trees.

THE SHERIFF

Stops mid-stride and just stands there hallucinating, SEEING:

Julia, Sam and Rani as RUBBERY-PEOPLE WITH WOLFISH FACES.

The Sheriff raises his gun and fires, BAM-BAM-BAM!!!

Sending Julia, Sam and Rani scrambling for cover.

The Sheriff stops firing and looks at his gun which is MELTING LIKE ICE CREAM.

He drops it and stares at his hands suddenly COVERED WITH ANTS that crawl up his arms onto his face.

SHERIFF

AHHHHHH!

Julia, Sam and Rani watch as the Sheriff wipes his arms and claws at his face trying to get rid of the imaginary ants.

THE SHERIFF'S POV:

Shows ants all over him and a DREAM-LIKE CAMPSITE with a small FOUNTAIN in its midst.

THE SHERIFF

Runs to the fountain - which is really the fire - and thrusts his hands into it to wash off the ants!

He SCREAMS in pain! Pulls back from the flames and runs off into the woods with his shirt on fire.

Julia, Sam and Rani staring in disbelief as the burning Sheriff vanishes among the trees.

IN THE WOODS

The Sheriff runs past a tree when the Nagual suddenly steps out and JABS HIS KNIFE DEEP IN THE SHERIFF'S GUT.

The Sheriff drops to his knees clutching the wound. Looks up at the stars and mutters softly...

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Lisa...

Drops face-first on the ground and dies.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Julia retrieves her gun then turns to Sam and Rani.

JULIA

Come on, he must have a boat!

She looks into the woods and SEES

The Nagual step out from behind a tree holding his knife.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Go on, RUN!

Sam and Rani take off running and Julia hurries after them.

EXT. TRAIL - WOODS - NIGHT

They all run down the trail, branches lashing them as they pass.

RANI

Out front, pushed to her limit. Breathing hard. Sweating. She trips and falls and Sam nearly stumbles over her.

Sam pulls Rani to her feet and runs on while Julia stops and looks back

AT A BEAM OF MOONLIGHT

Spotlighting the Nagual rounding a bend behind them.

JULIA

FIRES a shot. Turns and runs.

Catches up to Sam and Rani farther up the trail.

MOMENTS LATER

They come out onto the BEACH. Stop and breathe.

JULIA
(seeing the boat)
There! Go!

Sam helps a breathless Rani run to the boat.

Julia behind them FIRING SHOTS into the trees.

BANG! BANG! CLICK. Julia runs out of bullets, throws the gun aside and takes off for the boat.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - NIGHT

The Old Man comes off a chair at the SOUND OF THE SHOTS. Takes a flare gun from a drawer and hurries to the bow.

Sam and Rani at the water's edge.

OLD MAN
(pointing the flare gun)
Now just hold it right there!

Sam and Rani stop and look up, breathing hard.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
Who are you? And where's the sheriff?

JULIA

(arrives, breathless)

The sheriff's DEAD! And the man who
killed him is right behind us! Now
let us on that FUCKING BOAT!

The Old Man looks up the beach.

The shadowy figure of the Nagual emerges from the trees,
his long knife glinting in the moonlight.

OLD MAN

All right, lady, c'mon! C'mon, get
up here!

Julia, Sam and Rani race down the small pier on to the BOAT.

The Old Man lays the flare gun on the console. STARTS THE
MOTOR and cranks the wheel.

The bow rising out of the water.

The hull turning parallel to the beach.

THE NAGUAL

Stops short in the sand and MUTTERS A SPELL over his knife,
draws it back then hurls it like a boomerang.

ON THE SHERIFF'S BOAT

Sam helps Rani to a seat in the stern.

Julia rushing to the helm, joining the Old Man, looking back
at the Nagual standing out on the beach.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Don't worry, ma'am. He ain't going
anywhere.

WHOO-WHOO-WHOO-WHOO-WHOO! The silvery blade comes WHIRLING
out of the night and WHACK! Slices through the neck of the
Old Man then continues on its flight!

JULIA

(jumps back)

NOOOO!

The OLD MAN'S HEAD FLIPS INTO THE AIR, bounces off a gunwale
and drops over the side.

The headless corpse raising its arms, BLOOD SPURTING FROM
ITS NECK LIKE OLD FAITHFUL.

Rani SCREAMS! And Sam pulls her into his arms and holds her.

The Old Man's corpse reaching out for Julia, taking a step then collapsing on the deck.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The Nagual's knife lands on the beach.

He walks over and picks it up then wades into the water and retrieves the severed head. Looks out at

THE SHERIFF'S BOAT

MOTORING off into the night.

JULIA

At the helm with the throttle down.

Sam behind her in the stern wrapping a blanket around Rani who stares at the headless corpse, horrified.

SAM

(turns her head)

Don't look at it, baby. Just hold on. I'll be right back.

Rani wipes away tears and nods. Sam grabs a deck towel and goes and covers the corpse.

Joins Julia at the helm and points to some lights in the distance.

SAM (CONT'D)

Look, Mom, there! That must be the dock.

Julia turns the boat in that direction.

THE NAGUAL

Stands on the beach watching the boat speed across the lake.

He holds up the Old Man's severed head and SPEAKS A SPELL into its ear while keeping his eyes on the receding boat.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - NIGHT

The towel covering the Old Man's corpse suddenly moves.

Julia and Sam, with their backs to it, unaware.

A shaken Rani tucked up into a ball on the seat in the stern with her arms around her legs and her head down.

The HEADLESS CORPSE RISES UP behind Julia and Sam and walks toward Rani.

The ROARING MOTOR drowning out the corpse's footsteps as it approaches Rani, reaching for her, getting closer and CLOSER.

RANI

Looks up at the headless corpse right in front of her.

RANI

SAAMMMMM!

Sam and Julia turn.

Rani scrambling to the side of the boat, the headless corpse reaching after her!

Sam grabs a fire extinguisher and charges the corpse. Hauls back and swings like Barry Bonds.

SAM

Get away from her!

BAM! Sam belts the zombie and it tumbles over the side.

Rani comes off the deck and hugs Sam.

Julia turned around at the helm watching it all. She looks back over the bow.

The boat lights suddenly illuminating a SAND BAR.

Julia cranks the helm when...

BOOM! THE BOAT STRIKES THE SAND BAR AND RUNS AGROUND.

Julia thrown against the helm.

The flare gun knocked to the deck.

Sam and Rani tossed about in the stern.

A can of fuel jolted loose from a locker.

Cap knocked off. FUEL SPILLING OUT.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The Nagual hears the DISTANT MOTOR falter and die.

He tosses aside the Old Man's head, sheathes his knife then dives into the water.

Swims like a turtle. Faster and FASTER!

Until he comes up out of the water onto his feet and begins hopping after the boat like the witch-like figure from Julia's past, BOUNDING TWENTY FEET AT A TIME across the lake.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - AGROUND ON THE SAND BAR - NIGHT

Julia, Sam and Rani come to their feet.

SAM

What happened?

JULIA

We hit a sand bar!

RANI

(points behind them)

Hey, look, what is that?

Back toward the island a vague object comes across the moonlit lake, getting closer and CLOSER but hard to make out.

Until the MOON CLEARS A CLOUD and reveals the NAGUAL BOUNDING AFTER THEM ACROSS THE WATER CLUTCHING HIS KNIFE.

SAM

Mom, he's COMING!

Julia turns back to the helm and throws the boat in reverse.

The PROPELLER spins.

The BOW vibrates.

But the boat remains stuck to the bar.

The Nagual getting CLOSER!

SAM (CONT'D)

C'mon, Mom, hurry!

Julia works the throttle into forward and reverse trying to free the boat.

GUNNING the motor.

The propeller spinning at top speed.

The hull shaking.

The bow UNDER THE WATER moving slowly off the sand.

Until Julia throws it into reverse once more.

And the BOAT BREAKS FREE OF THE SAND BAR just as the NAGUAL SOARS IN OUT OF THE DARK aiming for the deck.

Julia cranks the wheel.

Spins the boat.

And the Nagual overshoots them.

Sweeping with his knife as he sails by.

CUTTING SAM'S ARM!

Before SPLASH-LANDING in the shallow waters of the SAND BAR.

Sam drops to a knee with BLOOD GUSHING from his arm.

JULIA

Sam!

SAM

I'm all right, Mom! GO!

Julia guns the throttle and cranks the wheel.

And the BOAT SPEEDS AWAY.

EXT. SAND BAR - TUG LAKE - NIGHT

The Nagual comes to his feet on the sand bar and looks out at the escaping boat.

Wipes his knife on the back of his hand: SAM'S BLOOD SUDDENLY MAKING THE NAGUAL'S OLD HAND YOUTHFUL AGAIN.

The Nagual grins then takes off running.

He tears across the sand bar.

Leaps out onto the lake.

Then BOUNDS ACROSS THE WATER again in hot pursuit of the boat.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - TUG LAKE - NIGHT

Julia drives full speed toward the lights of the dock.

Rani in the stern with Sam, pressing a towel on his wound.

She tosses aside the BLOOD-SOAKED TOWEL then tears off part of her shirt and ties it around the wound.

The two of them keeping watch from the stern.

OUT ON THE LAKE

The Nagual travels across the water like a skipping rock, following in the wake of the boat.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - TUG LAKE - NIGHT

Julia looks astern.

JULIA
Sam, take the helm!

Sam hurries over and takes the wheel. And Julia goes to Rani who looks out over the stern for any sign of the Nagual.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Let me know as soon as you see him
then get over to Sam.

Rani nods, her eyes bright with fear.

Julia knocks over a deck chair and breaks off a leg.

Wraps it with a towel and makes a torch.

She dips it in the SPILT GAS pooled in the stern. Takes out her lighter and ignites the torch. When...

RANI
There he is!

Julia turns, just in time. As the Nagual sails in from out of the dark wielding his knife.

Julia swings the torch. Nails the Nagual. Who CATCHES FIRE and flips over the boat into the water.

Sam, in the cab, cranks the helm. Steers toward the DOCK now close enough to see.

Julia and Rani look back for the Nagual, now nowhere in sight.

CUT TO:

THE NAGUAL - SWIMMING UNDERWATER

Propelling himself like a torpedo in quick short bursts.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - NIGHT

Sam throttles down and eases up to the dock.

Julia holds out the torch and waves Sam and Rani ashore.

JULIA
Go on! Run to my truck! GO!

Julia leaps onto the dock and runs after them. Their FOOTSTEPS CLATTERING off the old wooden planks.

Julia gets halfway down the dock when the NAGUAL SMASHES THROUGH A PLANK AND GRABS HER LEG.

Julia drops the torch into the water and falls into the gap. Holds on for dear life with the Nagual hanging from her legs.

Sam and Rani turn to come back.

JULIA (CONT'D)
No, Sam! GO!

And JULIA DROPS OUT OF SIGHT.

Sam runs up to the hole in the planks and looks down for his mom but sees only the rippling black water ten feet below.

SAM
MOM! MOM!!!

Rani joins Sam and looks down at the water.

RANI
No, Sam! NO!!

Suddenly the Nagual shoots out of the water like a Sea World porpoise, his claw-like hands and wicked face coming straight for Sam.

He grabs Sam's ankle. Holds him fast.

When Rani picks up a broken plank and swings at the Nagual.

RANI (CONT'D)
NOOO!

BAM! She hits him and he falls back in the water.

Rani drops the plank and helps Sam to his feet and they run for their lives.

They tear down the dock, up the path to the PARKING LOT, and race across it. Rani diverting toward Julia's truck.

SAM
(grabbing Rani)
No keys!

Sam leads Rani on to the

RENTAL SHOP

Where they stagger to a stop and POUND on the front door.

SAM (CONT'D)
 Open up! C'mon on!
 Help us!

RANI
 Let us in, please!

No one answers so Sam steps back and kicks open the door. Pulls Rani inside then SLAMS the door behind them.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

The pale SKULL-LIKE MOON peeks out of a bank of clouds, the only witness to the Nagual climbing up through the planks onto the DOCK. Walking ashore past

JULIA

Lying below at the WATER'S EDGE, the Nagual's knife protruding from her leg. Julia looks up, bleeding and breathless, SEES

the Nagual heading toward the shop.

She grabs the knife, clenches her jaw and pulls it out.

JULIA
 (groans)
 OHHHHH!

Julia tears off part of her shirt and ties it around her leg. Takes a moment to recover then starts crawling up a muddy slope at the side of the dock.

INT. RENTAL SHOP - NIGHT

Sam and Rani pile chairs and furniture against the broken front door. Catch their breath and look around at the numerous windows.

SAM
 Close the shutters! I'll look for a
 weapon!

Rani hurries to a window and closes the shutter.

Sam vaults over the sales counter and rummages around. Comes up with a shotgun from under a shelf.

Opens it - no shells.

He searches drawers. Finds shells and loads the shotgun.

Rani closes a second shutter. Darts to another window then leaps back and SCREAMS!

RANI
 NOOOOOOO!

The Nagual right outside the glass.

Sam rushes up from behind Rani and FIRES THE SHOTGUN. BOOM!
He blows out the window. Glass shattering!

Sam and Rani stare out the paneless window, waiting on edge
for any sign of the Nagual!

They creep forward. Peek outside. When the Nagual suddenly
appears at a window across the room.

RANI (CONT'D)

Sam, over there!

Sam pivots and FIRES the pump-action shotgun. BOOM! BOOM!
Missing the Nagual. But obliterating a shelf.

FLASHES OF THE NAGUAL whiz by the other windows. Sam tracking
him! FIRING wildly.

PUNCHING holes in the walls and blasting out a SKYLIGHT with
his wild shots, shattered glass raining down from the ceiling.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

Julia crawls up the muddy slope next to the dock. BLOOD
PULSATING from her thigh with every bend of her leg.

She reaches the top of the slope, greeted by RANI'S CRIES
and FLASHES OF GUNFIRE coming from the shop.

Julia comes to her feet holding the knife. Takes a step but
then SLIPS AND SLIDES DOWN THE MUDDY SLOPE.

Crashing into a log at the water's edge, her wounded leg
buckling beneath her.

JULIA

(grimacing)

Ohhhh!

CUT TO:

THE NAGUAL

Moving quiet as a ghost across the RENTAL SHOP ROOF.

He removes the EAGLE'S TALON from around his neck. Creeps
over to the SKYLIGHT and peers into the shop.

DOWN BELOW

Sam and Rani creep around the room, breathless and scared.

RANI
 (whispers)
 Where is he?

Sam eyes the shattered windows and barricaded door.

UP ON THE ROOF - THE NAGUAL

Spies the young lovers through the blown-out skylight. Picks up some shattered glass and flings it over the side.

SAM AND RANI

Wheel at the CRASHING SOUND, Sam FIRING!

Blasting out another window while the Nagual slips in through the skylight behind them and crawls across the ceiling like some kind of bug.

He hangs over them. Ready to spring. When

PLOP! PLOP! PLOP!

Drops of water from his wet clothes land on Rani's cheek. She looks up. SCREAMS!

RANI (CONT'D)
 NOOOOOO!

The Nagual drops down, grabs Rani and puts the eagle's talon against her throat.

Sam turns pointing the shotgun.

SAM
 Let her go! Let go or I'll shoot!

The Nagual lifts Rani's chin with the sharp tip of the talon.

RANI
 (terrified)
 Sam! Please!

SAM
 All right! All right, stop! Don't hurt her!

Sam lowers the shotgun.

SAM (CONT'D)
 I'll do whatever you want, just please... leave her alone.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

Sam and Rani are marched onto the boat by the Nagual armed with the shotgun.

JULIA - UNDER THE DOCK

Following their progress through the slats overhead.

She slips into the water. Wades past the piles and discarded life vests then submerges with the knife.

EXT. SHERIFF'S BOAT - NIGHT

Sam starts the boat. Pulls away from the dock.

Revealing Julia hanging onto a small platform over the stern.

THE NAGUAL - ON DECK

Holds the shotgun against Rani, the eagle's talon now tucked in his belt.

SAM
(looks back)
Where're we going?

The Nagual points across the moonlit lake.

NAGUAL
Out there.

SAM
What do you want with her? You've got me, don't you. Why don't you just let her go?

The Nagual thinks on it, eyeing Sam.

NAGUAL
(into Rani's ear)
Can you swim?

RANI
(terrified)
Yeah.

NAGUAL
Too bad!

He shoves Rani to the rail and aims the shotgun at her.

When Sam CRANKS THE HELM and unbalances them both.

The gun FIRING.

Missing Rani who falls backward into the water.

The Nagual thrown forward onto the deck. The shotgun knocked loosed from his hand.

Sam goes for the gun.

Causing the pilotless boat to speed in a circle.

THE OUT OF CONTROL BOAT

Circles back to Rani who dives underwater out of its way.

JULIA

Clinging to the platform. Her legs dragging in the water.

She holds on but loses the knife, swept out of her hand when it touches the water.

Julia pulls herself up the platform and spills over the stern onto the deck where Sam and the Nagual fight for the shotgun.

The Nagual prevailing. Knocking Sam down.

Pumping the shotgun. Aiming at Sam. When WHACK! Julia buries a fishing gaff deep in the Nagual's back.

NAGUAL (CONT'D)

ARRRRGGGHHH!!!

The Nagual arches in pain and FIRES!

Missing Sam, but BLOWING OUT THE WINDSHIELD.

The pilotless boat BANKING.

Unbalancing them all.

Julia thrown forward into the cab and down to the deck.

Sam and the Nagual tossed about in the stern, the shotgun knocked out of the Nagual's hand and over the side.

The flare gun sliding around in the cab.

As the OUT OF CONTROL BOAT spins wildly in the water.

RANI

Surfacing. Diving again. The BOAT COMING RIGHT AT HER.

THE NAGUAL

Grabs Sam, chokes him and drives him to his knees.

He pulls out his talon, RAISES IT OVER SAM when he suddenly slips on the pool of GAS sloshing around in the stern.

Julia lying in the cab sees the flare gun. Grabs it. Aims.

JULIA
SAM!! MOVE!!!

Sam leaps aside and Julia FIRES.

WHOOSH! The flare hits the gas and it bursts into flames, ENGULFING THE NAGUAL IN A WALL OF BLUE FIRE.

NAGUAL
ARRRGGGHHH!!!

The BURNING NAGUAL lights up the night like a human torch.

Spins in a circle then bumps into a gunwale and falls over the side.

Julia jumps up and stops the boat.

Goes to Sam and helps him to his feet. Holds him tight, overjoyed he's alive.

After a moment they both turn and look in the water at the Nagual bobbing in the lake like a floating candle.

His burning hands reaching out for them, his dark eyes locked on his daughter and grandson as his horribly charred face slowly slips under the water.

MOMENTS LATER

The boat idles up to Rani and Sam helps her on board.

JULIA - AT THE HELM

Looks back at Sam wrapping a blanket around Rani, the exhausted girl laying her head on his shoulder.

The touching moment produces a smile from Julia who turns and steers for shore, toward the blue and red lights of cops arriving at the lake, their FAINT SIRENS carried in on the wind.

EXT. RENTAL SHOP PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Julia sits on a gurney with a bandage around her leg, the open door of an AMBULANCE directly behind her.

Nearby, Sam and Rani are escorted by a cop into his car, Sam pausing at the door and looks over at his mom.

There is a moment here, one of lingering gazes where Sam appears to be looking back on a chapter in his life.

He turns the page and gets in the car with Rani.

Julia smiles knowingly.

Follows the car with her eyes as it drives away - her young man taking another big step out into the world.

Julia turns and looks out at the lake, at its tranquil surface shimmering in the moonlight.

Two paramedics place her in the ambulance. Get in and drive away. Lights flashing as the car moves off into the night.

PAN OVER TO THE DOCK

To the placid lake water lapping against the SHERIFF'S BOAT.

Suddenly a burnt hand shoots out of the water and grabs hold of the small platform attached to the stern.

The Nagual, burnt beyond all recognition, crawls across the DECK, his dying breaths coming in GASPS.

With his last ounce of strength he reaches out and lays his hand on the towel soaked with Sam's blood.

After a moment the blood bubbles and liquefies, melding into the charred fingers of the Nagual, healing his burns.

THE END