

MAIN ROAD

written by

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EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

STILL, save for the barely swaying weeds. It's dark. Vacant. A narrow dirt road can't prevent the isolated feel of the landscape.

The MOON SHIMMERS in black sky. The THRUM of nothingness floats in the air. Until-

SOUNDS of a vehicle approaching. It inches into view-

INT./EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Two people inside. DAVE (24), and JACK (27). Jack holds a GPS in the passengers while Dave drives.

JACK

Three minutes. Almost there.

He looks up at empty space. Furrows his brow.

DAVE

Seriously? Shouldn't there be *something* ahead?

JACK

Look, I don't know. Let's just trust this thing. I mean, if it's fucked then we're fucked.

Dave SCOFFS.

DAVE

Well, that's a nice thought.

JACK

Okay, I was exaggerating. I still have service. We're good.

DAVE

You wanna know the real issue?

He points to the fuel gauge, which isn't looking so good. Jack SIGHS. Looks at the GPS.

JACK

Two minutes.

LATER

They keep driving, looking warier than before. Until a BRIGHT sign appears up ahead...

DAVE
(Relieved)
Fuck, I was getting worried.

JACK
What about? We apparently got here
five minutes ago.

He holds up the GPS. They both laugh.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

It's barely a gas station at all. Two pumps, but only one that isn't covered in duct tape. The shop itself is dingy, fluorescent lights FLICKERING gently. They exit the car-

DAVE
Well, it's better than nothing,
right? Or being stranded in the
desert.

JACK
But is it better than having our
organs harvested?

DAVE
(Laughing)
Shut the fuck up.

Dave starts filling up.

JACK
Hey, I got the gas.

He starts towards the shop.

DAVE
What, you sure?

JACK
Yeah, when we get to the strip,
just get me a beer... or ten.

Dave chuckles, shakes his head. Jack enters-

INT. SHOP - NIGHT

It's *extremely* small. Looks bigger on the outside. He nods to the CASHIER, 50s, balding. Meek-looking, who halfheartedly reciprocates.

He goes to the cooler. There's only a few red bulls inside. He takes two. Also a bag of trail mix. He walks up to the counter-

JACK

Hey.

The cashier says nothing.

JACK (CONT'D)

Okay. I got gas on that pump...

He gestures to it.

JACK (CONT'D)

Right there. And also these-

He puts the beverages and trail mix on the counter.

CASHIER

That's thirty-four fifty.

JACK

(Surprised)

Wow. Not bad.

He tosses cash on the counter.

JACK (CONT'D)

Keep the change, yeah?

As he starts to leave-

CASHIER

Where are you heading?

Jack turns back.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

I mean, this late at night? Is it such a great idea to go anywhere?

JACK

Well, I mean Vegas is only a couple hours away. I think it's fine.

CASHIER

You've been taking the main road so far, huh? The dirt one?

JACK

Yeah... something wrong with that? I mean, it's the only road there.

A beat. The Cashier SIGHS.

CASHIER
Yeah, you're right. But don't take
it anymore.

Jack's expression drops.

JACK
What?

CASHIER
From here, just go straight.
Directly straight. Until you reach
pavement. Shouldn't take too long.

JACK
What, you mean across the terrain
that's rocky as fuck?

A beat.

JACK (CONT'D)
That'd mess up the suspension in
the car.

CASHIER
Drive slow then. Just don't follow
that road anymore.

Jack shakes his head. *What the fuck?*

JACK
And might I ask why? Is it quicker
or something?

CASHIER
Yes. But that's not the only
reason.

JACK
Well? What's the other one?

He stares at Jack for a while. Off centered, almost as if
he's staring *past* him.

CASHIER
People who continue on that road
never wind up at their destination.

Jack stares back now, somewhat amused.

JACK
Right, okay... thanks for the
input.

He exits the store. The cashier keeps staring.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Jack slides into his seat. Dave's already waiting. He passes him a red bull.

DAVE
Sweet, needed that.

JACK
Yo, you wouldn't believe what the
guy said to me in there.

DAVE
And what's that?

JACK
That we shouldn't take that road.

He points to it.

DAVE
You mean the only fucking road
there is?

Jack shrugs.

JACK
He said we should go straight till
we see a paved one.

DAVE
But why?

JACK
I don't know. He said it's quicker.

DAVE
Well, he might know what he's
talking about, but I'm not risking
it. Besides, we're almost there.

JACK
Right, yeah. Fuck that.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Following the car... it looks small in the vast, empty space.

INT./EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Crushed cans sit in the back seat. Jack struggles to keep his eyes open.

DAVE

Don't you fucking fall asleep.

Jack perks up.

JACK

Why does it matter?

DAVE

I dunno, it's unfair.

JACK

Wanna let me drive then?

DAVE

Uh...

JACK

(Laughing)

Thought so, jackass. Leave me alone.

Jack leans his head back.

LATER

Jack's still sleeping... he stirs a bit. But JERKS awake when-

DAVE (O.S)

(Frantic)

JACK! Jack, look at this!

JACK

Jesus Christ! What the fuck!

DAVE

Look out the window!

He does, seeing-

CARS, in the moonlight. All around them. But they're empty. Some are upside down. Jack can't hide his horror.

JACK
Wh... what? Holy shit. What is
this?

DAVE
What? You think I know!

JACK
Fuck...

As they keep driving, more cars keep appearing.

JACK (CONT'D)
Just forget it. Let's get outta
here, it's probably nothing.

DAVE
Jeez...

The car starts RUMBLING...

DAVE (CONT'D)
No... for fuck's sakes!

...before coming to an abrupt stop. They stare. GAPING...

DAVE (CONT'D)
What the hell... when does *this*
ever happen?

JACK
What do you think it is? Engine
failure?

DAVE
No fucking way. I got everything
checked before-

He stops dead in speech. His expression fades, staring out
into the black. Jack doesn't speak. Follows Dave's gaze to-

The field of cars. But one of the doors is opening...
slowly...

JACK
Wh...what...

They look at each other. Faces drained.

JACK (CONT'D)
Get the pistol ready.

DAVE
Way ahead of you...

He takes a GUN out of the glove compartment. They keep watching the car. The door's WIDE OPEN now, but what did it's still obscured...

Dave keeps watching it... Jack surveys the rest of the area. Their voices are quieter now-

DAVE (CONT'D)
(Shaky)
Are there any more?

JACK
I can't count them all...

They keep silent.

JACK (CONT'D)
One's right behind us. I didn't see how it got there.

DAVE
Can you see who's in the passenger's?

A beat.

JACK
No.

They both breath heavy now. Dave SWALLOWS, tries the ignition. A no-go.

DAVE
(Under his breath)
No, no, no, no...

He does it again. Again... but not even a sound comes out of it this time... In fact, there is no sound anymore. Not even the sounds of breathing...

The two stare at each other. Not muttering a word. Jack looks out the window to see-

A figure. No. More like a shadow, standing straight by the dead car. Starts advancing.... Like deer in headlights, they just stare at it inching closer... until-

SOUND comes back into the world. BREATHING is audible again. The car starts up as suddenly as it stopped.

DAVE (CONT'D)
What the fuck?

JACK
 (Gravely)
 Go...

Dave shifts gears, TEARS away. Jack looks back, sees multiple shadow figures watching them go. He sits back, PANTING.

LATER

They're silent. Once again, they're surrounded by nothingness.

DAVE
 (Shaky)
 Should have listened right?

He forces a chuckle. Jack stares blankly.

JACK
 He... the Cashier said something else as well.

DAVE
 Yeah?

JACK
 People who take this road never reach where they want to go...

DAVE
 Well, maybe he was warning us. About fucking assholes waiting to rob people in the desert at night.

JACK
 Did those look like people?

DAVE
 Come the fuck on, let's be real here. That's all they were. People trying to steal our shit...

A longer beat.

JACK
 Why did the car stop-

DAVE
 Look, it could've been anything. I'll get it looked at ASAP. Boot the GPS up.

Jack shakes his head. Takes it out. His face ILLUMINATES from the screen.

JACK
Forty-five minutes. Three minutes
till we reach a town.

DAVE
Okay... okay. We're good.

LATER

And they keep on. It's dark. Vacant. Swaying weeds like before...

JACK
We should have reached the town by
now...

DAVE
Look, it's probably a newer one.
Shit's old anyways.

He laughs haphazardly. Jack doesn't look so sure. He keeps watching the road as they sit in silence. Until up ahead-

A GLOW. *Could it be?* The two stare at it. Expressionless. Speechless. Until a familiar BRIGHT sign comes into view.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Are you fucking kidding me.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

The car pulls into the station.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

They sit there. Ghost-white once again. Faces sunk. Defeated.

DAVE
How the fuck... did we just go in a
circle?

JACK
(Blankly)
Couldn't tell ya...

Dave SLAMS the steering wheel. Jack doesn't react.

DAVE
Watch the car, I'm going in for
DETAILED directions.

He exits.

INT. SHOP - DAY

Dave enters. The Cashier's already looking at him, but he doesn't seem to notice, more focused on the task at hand..

He approaches the counter. The Cashier says nothing. Stares with the same off-center expression as before. Dave puts on a smile-

DAVE
(Flustered)
Hey uh, we were here a while ago,
bought some gas.

He EXHALES. Composing himself.

DAVE (CONT'D)
But we seem to have gotten turned
around somehow... and ended up here
again. Now, I heard you were
telling my buddy that we should
just go straight? Could you
elaborate on that? Maybe give us
some details?

A beat.

CASHIER
You didn't listen.

DAVE
What?

CASHIER
(Under his breath)
You took the road.

DAVE
Yeah, but...

Dave trails off. The Cashier looks at him dead-center now.

CASHIER
You didn't listen. It's too late
now.

CLOSE on Dave's face. Contorted. Confused. Trying to grasp those words...

CUT TO:

BLACK

END